



LUKE

WRITER

The writer of this New Testament document is Luke, the beloved physician (Cl 4:14). He was a Gentile, but was not an eyewitness to the life and death of Jesus. Luke's authorship of this document is affirmed because of the close relationship in writing style and vocabulary between the documents of Luke and Acts. Both books were written to Theophilus. Luke 1:1-4 and Acts 1:1 are similar in expressing the purpose of writing, and thus, indicate that there was a common writer for both documents. The relationship between the two documents is especially indicated in Acts 1:1 when the writer of Acts refers to the "former account," a reference to the document of Luke.

Another important evidence that establishes the relationship between Luke and Acts is the fact that both books have a common literary structure in the Greek language. The vocabulary and writing style of both books are similar, and thus, offer strong evidence that both came from the pen of the same writer. In reference to the style and grammar, both are written with a scholarly structure of the Greek language that would only be natural from the hand of a physician.

In order to establish the author of Acts, Bible students identify him as one of the close companions of Paul on his missionary journeys. This is determined by identifying who is included in the pronouns "we" of what is commonly referred to as the "we sections" of the document of Acts (See At 16:10ff; 20:6; 21:1-18; 27:1ff; see Pl 24; 2 Tm 4:11). These sections identify the author to be with Paul at par-

ticular times during his travels. Luke accompanied Paul on many of his journeys. At one time Luke stayed in Philippi (At 16:12,40), and then later rejoined Paul (At 20:3-31). He was probably left by Paul to establish the newly converted disciples in Philippi. This may account for the spiritual strength of the Philippian disciples that is revealed in the Philippian letter. Luke is assumed to be this companion of Paul, and thus, this companion and author of Acts is also identified as the author of Luke.

DATE

The book was written at approximately the same time as the book of Acts. The document was probably written as a defense document on behalf of Paul who was in Rome to defend himself against false accusations (See comments in intro. to At). The first imprisonment of Paul was around A.D. 61-63. When Paul was in Caesarea, Porcius Festus kept Paul in prison for two years. However, Paul was informed by God that he must bear witness in Rome (At 23:11). In knowing that God wanted him to testify concerning the truth of Christianity before the Roman court, Paul appealed to be tried before Caesar when he was before Festus in Caesarea (At 25:11,12). During the two years Paul and Luke were in Caesarea, and knowing that God wanted Christianity to be put on trial before the Roman court in Rome, Luke certainly took the opportunity to do his research in order “*to compile an account of those things that have been believed among us*” (1:1). Therefore, during Paul’s custody in Palestine, as well as the time before the trial in Rome, the documents of Luke and Acts were prepared for Paul’s trial before Caesar’s court. The document of Luke, therefore, was probably written in A.D. 60 or 61.

PURPOSE

Luke’s purpose for writing is expressed in 1:3,4. “... *it*

seemed good to me also, having an accurate understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, that you might know the certainty of those things you have been taught."

Luke wrote in order to give an accurate historical account of the teachings and events in the life of Jesus. The underlying reason for this purpose of writing is to affirm the very foundation upon which Christianity is based. That foundation is that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ, the Son of God. Since such is true, then those who believed and behaved accordingly, cannot be accused of acting as insurrectionists against Rome. Particularly, the case in point would be that the apostle Paul so behaved because he was driven by the fact that he experienced this Jesus who was more than a man. The behavior of Paul, as well as all Christians, can be explained only in the fact that Jesus was the Son of God and was raised from the dead (See intro. to Acts).

RECIPIENT

The document was addressed to the "most excellent Theophilus" (1:3; see At 1:1). Luke refers to this Gentile with the complimentary title of "most excellent." Theophilus was no common individual, but one who was evidently a government official. He may have been connected in some way with the defense of Paul in Rome, possibly being even Paul's converted defense advocate who would stand for him before the Roman court. Or, he could have possibly been the representative of the Roman court. Neither possibility is verifiable by the study of either Luke or Acts. We simply speculate such because of the events that were occurring in the lives of Luke and Paul at this time in the history of the church. Whatever the case, Theophilus in some way played a significant role in the lives of both Luke and Paul. For some reason, the Holy

Spirit thought it urgent that two inspired New Testament documents be written to this individual. For this reason, it is our belief that Theophilus had some direct bearing on the future of Paul's life since the document of Acts concentrates so heavily on the activities of Paul and why he lived as he did as a disciple of Jesus. The document of Acts leaves Paul in Rome to stand before Caesar, and thus, both the documents of Luke and Acts as companion volumes, are presented to Theophilus on behalf of Paul.

LITERARY STYLE

One of the interesting characteristics of the books of both Luke and Acts is the fact that the writer uses a prolific literary style in Greek to write the documents. For Greek students, these two documents are the most challenging to study in the original language. But what else would we expect from a physician?

In writing to a Gentile, Luke does not quote much from the Old Testament. His emphasis is on the life and teachings of Jesus in order to show that Jesus was not just another Jewish Rabbi of Palestine. He was not promoting another invented religion of the many thousands of the Roman Empire. The document was thus written in a literary style that would be presentable to a Roman official as a document to prove that Jesus was the actual Son of God.

Purpose For Writing

(1:1-4)

Outline: (1) Formal introduction (1:1-3), (2) Knowing for certain (1:4)

Chapter 1

FORMAL INTRODUCTION

1:1 *Many have undertaken to compile an account:* This would not be a reference to the inspired documents of Matthew, Mark or John, which books were probably not written at this time. Luke's reference here was to unin-

spired records of Jesus' activities and teachings that had been verbally circulated. These uninspired records had some inaccuracies concerning the life and teachings of Jesus. Some of these accounts had come to the attention of Theophilus, and thus, gave an inaccurate account of Jesus' life and teachings. Luke's purpose was to write an inspired record, and thus, give an accurate account of the life and teachings of Jesus in order to give Theophilus a correct understanding of who Jesus was and what He taught. Luke thus assumes inspiration here by calling on Theophilus to accept what he writes as accurate. The circulation of inaccurate accounts of Jesus necessitated that the Holy Spirit, through the inspired pen of Luke, write an accurate narrative "*of all that Jesus began both to do and teach*" (At 1:1). ***Believed among us:*** One could translate this phrase, "Fully established among us." These are the things that were established among Christians as true concerning the life and teachings of Jesus. Therefore, by the time Luke wrote this document around A.D. 60, all truth had been revealed that established the foundation of Christianity (See comments Jd 3). Luke's argument here was that Christianity was not a developed religion as myths, fables and legends. The beliefs of Christians exploded out of the life of Jesus in a period of only four to five years. Three of these years were the ministry of Jesus. In another one or two years after the resurrection of Jesus, the gospel of Jesus was going into all the world (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:16; At 6:7; 8:4). Luke's argument is that one could explain this rapid growth of Christianity only in the fact that such was initiated and nurtured by God.

1:2,3 *Eyewitnesses and ministers of the word:* Luke was not a personal eyewitness of the life and death of Jesus. However, he had spoken to those who were. These eyewitnesses were possibly Mary, the mother of Jesus who was probably in her 80s at this time. The eyewitnesses here

would have been the apostles who were to bear witness of Jesus before the world (At 1:2). ***Accurate understanding of all things from the very first:*** Luke traced the life and work of Jesus from the beginning of Jesus' ministry to the expansion and growth of the church throughout the Roman Empire. Luke uses here the past tense, thus indicating that he had completed all his research by the time he wrote this document. He may have had his research notes in hand and was either in Caesarea, on his way to Rome, or actually in Rome when the Holy Spirit directed him to write an accurate account of all that Jesus began both to do and teach (See 2 Tm 3:16,17; 2 Pt 1:20,21). ***Write to you an orderly account:*** Reference here is not to a strict chronological order, for in some cases Luke does not seek to be strictly chronological in reference to the ministry of Jesus. What is meant is that he was setting forth the events of the life and teachings of Jesus in an accurate form. He wanted Theophilus to understand the correct historical account of what actually happened concerning the particular events that took place in Jesus' life, as well as, the correct nature of His teachings. Luke was correcting all the word-of-mouth information that had come to the attention of Theophilus concerning what Jesus did and taught (At 1:1). ***Most excellent Theophilus:*** See At 1:1. The term "excellent" was often used in Roman society as a respectful address to government officials, and thus, Theophilus was probably a government official (See At 23:26). Add to this the fact that the name "Theophilus" includes the Greek word for "God." Names that included the word for God were given in society to those of social or official standing. The name means, "one who loves God." Theophilus evidently came from a very religious family to receive such a name.

KNOWING FOR CERTAIN

1:4 *You might know the certainty:* Luke could only

affirm this confidence in his writing if he knew that he was writing by inspiration of the Holy Spirit. To say such by writing on his own would only manifest an attitude of arrogance, for he would have been exalting his writing above the writing of others who would also not have been writing by inspiration. But because this document is an inspired document, Luke affirmed inspiration on the basis of the Holy Spirit, not his personal ability to give an accurate account of what he had not personally experienced. ***Taught:*** The Greek word here refers to being instructed by word of mouth. The same word is used in Acts 18:25 and Romans 2:18. Theophilus had no other written document concerning the life and teachings of Jesus. Luke thus assumed the insufficiency of word-of-mouth communication to give an accurate account of the life and teachings of Jesus. For this reason, the Holy Spirit has inspired the records of the life and teachings of Jesus to be written for all time. The beliefs of Christians, therefore, must be based on the written word of God and not primarily on the proclamations of those who preach the word. Any religion, therefore, that does not focus on a study of the word of God in order to establish and confirm one's belief, is a religion that will lead people astray after the proclamations of those who do not know the Bible (See comments 2 Tm 4:1-5). For this reason, one's belief must be based on the Bible and not on either traditions or feelings (Rm 10:17). The very fact that the Holy Spirit inspired this document to be written, as well as the rest of the New Testament, is evidence that God intended that the church be based on the truth of the written word of God (See 2 Tm 3:16,17; 1 Pt 4:11).

Preparation For Ministry

(1:5 – 4:15)

Outline: (1) The announcement of John (1:5-25), (2) The announcement of Jesus (1:26-38), (3) Mary visits Elizabeth (1:39-56), (4) The birth of John (1:57-80), (5) The birth of Jesus (2:1-7), (6) The angels and the shepherds (2:8-

21), (7) Presentation at the temple (2:22-40), (8) Jesus visits Jerusalem (2:41-52), (9) John the Baptist (3:1-22), (10) Beginning of Jesus' ministry (3:23-38), (11) The temptation of Jesus (4:1-15)

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF JOHN

Luke is unique with reference to the contents of this chapter. He is the only recorder of the life and ministry of Jesus who gives the details of this chapter.

1:5 Herod: This is Herod the Great, the son of Antipater. Herod reigned from 40 B.C. to 4 B.C. He was appointed procurator of Judea in 47 B.C. by Julius Caesar. He was thus a Roman-appointed king, not a God-anointed king over Israel. Herod died April 1, 4 B.C. according to our calendar today. Jesus was born sometime within the two years before the death of Herod. Since Jesus was about thirty years old when He began His ministry, and His ministry was approximately three and a half years in length, He would have been crucified in A.D. 30. According to our calendar today, therefore, the church would have been established in A.D. 30 (See intro. to At). **The division of Abijah:** This was the eighth group of the twenty-four groups of priests that King David had designated to minister in the tabernacle (2 Ch 8:14; 24:1-10). **Daughters of Aaron:** Elizabeth was a descendant from the Old Testament priestly tribe of Levi. This tribe originated from Levi the son of Jacob through Leah (Gn 29:34). Aaron was of this tribe, and thus, he was the father of the Levites whom God separated to be the priestly tribe of the nation of Israel (See Nm 36:7,8). Elizabeth was possibly the cousin of Mary who was the mother of Jesus (vs 36).

1:6-11 Both Zacharias and Elizabeth were obedient to the commandments of God. **Blamelessly:** They were such in reference to their duties before God, but not in reference to being without sin (See Rm 3:9,10,23). Zacharias and Elizabeth were old in age. As a Jewish woman, she had suffered one of the greatest embarrassments of a Jewish

wife. She could have no children (See vs 25). **To burn incense:** See Ex 30:6-8. **The temple of the Lord:** Reference here is to the sanctuary of the temple. Twice a day the priests would perform the duty of burning incense in the sanctuary of the temple. **The time of incense:** This was around 3:00^{am}. **An angel of the Lord:** Gabriel (vs 19). **Altar of incense:** This was an article of furniture in the temple and was located near the veil that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place in the temple.

1:12-14 Fear fell upon him: Zacharias was a righteous man. He realized that he was in the presence of a heavenly being, and thus, responded with fear because Gabriel was a representative of God (2:9; compare Jg 13:6,21,22; Dn 10:12,19; Rv 1:17). **Call his name John:** See 1:57,60,63. **Many will rejoice:** The emphasis of the Greek text here is that many will leap for joy because of this birth. They would do such because of the miraculous events that surrounded John's birth, which events signified that the hope of Israel was about to be realized (1:58; Mt 3:1).

1:15 Great in the sight of the Lord: John would be the greatest of all prophets because He would be the forerunner of the Messiah and Son of God (Mt 11:11). **Will drink neither wine nor strong drink:** John would come in the life-style of a Nazarite, and thus, he would conform to the Nazarite laws (Nm 6:1-21). He would refrain from strong drink as a commitment to the sanctity of his calling (Compare Ep 5:18). **Filled with the Holy Spirit:** Though he would work no miraculous wonders throughout his ministry, John would have a miraculous relationship with God from the time of his conception (vs 41). He was the prophet of God to the people for the purpose of preparing the way for the Son of God. He was filled with the Spirit in the sense that God had revealed to him the message he was to speak.

1:16,17 John's mission in preparing the way for the Lord would be to call people to repentance (Mt 3:1-12). He would call people to accept the Messiah who would come after him. *The spirit and power of Elijah:* John would be the fulfillment of Malachi 4:5,6 (Mt 3:2; 17:9-13). He would manifest in his ministry the same zeal and enthusiasm for the Lord as the prophet Elijah. He would emulate the power of righteousness and commitment that God would expect of one totally dedicated to His service. *Turn the hearts of the fathers:* See Mt 4:5,6. John would cause fathers to consider their children and disobedient people to listen to the wisdom of righteous people. He would do this in order to prepare the hearts of people for the coming Son of God.

1:18 Being in the presence of Gabriel did not seem to be proof enough of what the angel said. Unlike Mary, to whom the angel later appeared, Zacharias sought for verification. As a result, the sign the angel gave was punishment for Zacharias because of his doubt in what Gabriel said.

1:19-21 Gabriel's first proof was that he was the divine messenger from God. Such should have been proof enough for Zacharias to believe what he said. *Gabriel:* This name means "man of God." Such was this angel for he was a revealer of God's message. *You will be mute:* Verse 62 indicates that Zacharias was either deaf already from old age, or lost his hearing with his speech when Gabriel pronounced this punishment for his lack of faith. Zacharias was evidently greatly shaken by the vision, for he tarried a long time in the sanctuary. Those who were waiting for him outside began to worry because he stayed far beyond the time that was necessary to perform the required duties in the sanctuary.

1:22 *Perceived that he had seen a vision:* It was probably obvious that Zacharias had experienced something in

the temple. His appearance and lack of speech indicated that something had occurred. The first indications that something had happened was confirmed when Zacharias had to use hand signs in order to communicate with them because he could neither hear nor speak. Zacharias remained in such a condition until the birth of John.

1:23-25 *The days of His service:* When Zacharias completed his priestly service according to the time allotted to the division of the priests of Abijah, he and Elizabeth returned home. *Elizabeth conceived:* Her womb was opened by God in her old age and she was thus able to conceive (See Gn 18:11-15). Such was a miracle of God. *Hid herself five months:* She possibly wanted to conceal herself for the purpose of thanking the Lord for what He had done for her in her old age. In her pregnancy, God had taken away the embarrassment that she could not have children (See Gn 30:23).

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF JESUS

(Mt 1:18 - 2:12)

1:26,27 *Sixth month:* This is the sixth month after Elizabeth conceived (vs 36). *Gabriel:* See verse 19. *Nazareth:* Because Luke was writing to a Gentile, Theophilus, he had to name this city, for it was unknown to his reader. *A virgin:* Mary was a young woman who had never had sexual intercourse with a man. She was a virgin in order to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 where Isaiah prophesied that a virgin would conceive in order to bring forth the Messiah (See Gn 3:15; Mt 1:23). *Engaged:* The KJV reads "betrothal." The Jewish engagement was not as binding as marriage, but it was more than a promise of marriage. The Jewish engagement took place about one year before the couple actually lived together after a formal marriage. It was a binding relationship that was established before the marriage vows were made and the union

consummated. ***The house of David:*** This is stated by Luke to reaffirm that prophecy is here being fulfilled. Both Joseph and Mary (vs 69; 3:23ff) were descendants of King David of Israel.

1:28-30 *You who are highly favored:* Gabriel announced that Mary was favored among all women because she was chosen by God to give birth to the incarnate Son of God (vs 30). At this time, however, Mary did not understand all that was happening, nor did she understand that she was selected by God to bring the Messiah and Son of God into the world. ***You have found favor with God:*** Mary was chosen by God to be the means by which the Son of God would be incarnate in the flesh of man. She was not chosen because of any special holiness or good works on her part. There were many young women of her time who had the same spiritual qualities. It was only by the grace of God that she was chosen. She did not earn the right to be chosen for this unique work of God to bring the Redeemer into the world.

1:31-33 *Jesus:* This Jewish name means “salvation.” The Greek word is a form of the Old Testament Hebrew name “Joshua.” Matthew records the reason for the name in Matthew 1:21. ***Son of the Most High:*** That is, He would be the “Son of the Most High” God (See vss 35,76; 6:35; 8:28; 19:38; Mk 5:7). Jesus was the Son of God in the sense that He originated from God (Jn 20:30,31). ***Throne of His father David:*** Jesus was to fulfill the prophecy that was given to David that One would sit on his throne (2 Sm 7:12,13). Such would not be a reign on earth, for the authority of the throne of David was always in heaven. Therefore, when Jesus ascended to the throne of God in heaven, He would reign from heaven at the right hand of the Father (Dn 7:13,14; Ep 1:20-22; Hb 8:1). ***He will reign:*** After the ascension, Jesus began His reign (Rm 5:17; Ep 1:20-22; Ph 2:8-10). He is now reigning and will reign at the

right hand of God until He comes again (1 Co 15:24-28). Reference here is not to a physical reign of Jesus on this earth. Gabriel was speaking of a spiritual reign in the hearts of men, for the kingdom of Jesus is not of this world (Jn 18:36-38). The kingdom is within the hearts of those who have submitted to the reign of Jesus (See comments 17:20,21; Mt 6:9,10). **House of Jacob:** This is the house of Israel, the spiritual Israel of God (Gl 3:7; 6:16). This is the same as the house of God that was prophesied by Isaiah (Is 2:2,3). The house of God is the church (1 Tm 3:15). Therefore, among all things over which Jesus now reigns, He reigns over those who have submitted to His word. **Forever:** See Ps 89:36,37; Dn 2:44; 7:13,14. Jesus would reign “forever” in the sense that His reign would last throughout its intended time of existence. Because the reign was ordained of God, it would certainly come to pass (Mt 19:28; Mk 9:1). It would extend until the time when kingdom reign would be returned to God (1 Co 15:28).

1:34,35 *Since I do not know a man:* Mary here reaffirmed that she was a virgin who had never had sexual intercourse with a man (vs 27; Mt 1:23). Therefore, the conception of Jesus was the miraculous work of God. Jesus would be the “only begotten” Son of God (Jn 1:14-16). One cannot accept Jesus without accepting this fact concerning His conception and birth. Since Jesus was to be the Son of God, then we would expect no other type of conception and birth. If He were just another good teacher of Palestine, then any normal birth would do. However, such was not the case with the conception and birth of the One who was specifically sent into the world. Therefore, any theology of man that does not accept the miraculous conception of Jesus cannot be based on this most fundamental teaching of the New Testament. One cannot accept Jesus as the Son of God without accepting His miraculous conception.

1:36-38 *Elizabeth has also conceived:* God also miraculously opened the womb of Elizabeth in order that she conceive through the impregnation of the seed of Zacharias, her husband. However, the Holy Spirit miraculously made it possible for Mary to conceive by the power of God. At the time this announcement was made to Mary, Elizabeth was six months pregnant with John. ***Nothing will be impossible:*** The almighty power of God in reference to man is here revealed (See Jr 32:17). What man cannot do, God can. And in reference to the events of this context, all is outside the control and power of man. It was thus God's work to bring the Savior of humanity into the world. ***Let it be:*** Contrary to the response of Zacharias, Mary exercised great faith in accepting the words of the angel as truth.

MARY VISITS ELIZABETH

1:39,40 Mary left to visit Elizabeth immediately after Gabriel appeared to her. From where she lived in Nazareth (2:4), it was a long journey to the city where Zacharias and Elizabeth lived. The city was probably Juttah (Ja 15:55). Mary remained with Elizabeth for approximately three months (vs 56).

1:41 *Leaped:* The Greek word used here was commonly used to refer to the leaping in play of young children and animals. There was a leaping of the unborn infant that was not like the natural movements of unborn babies. This leaping was meant to signal Divine intervention, and thus the presence of God in the pregnancy. ***Filled with the Holy Spirit:*** The result of Elizabeth's being filled with the Holy Spirit resulted in her miraculous declarations of verses 42-45. Thus being filled by the Holy Spirit in this context refers to being inspired by the Holy Spirit to make declarations concerning the work of God (See At 6:3).

1:42-45 *Blessed are you:* Verse 28 (Compare Jg 5:24). Mary was especially blessed by God for being chosen to be

the woman who would give birth to the Son of God. ***Mother of my Lord:*** Mary was the mother of the Lord only in the sense of being the earthly mother through whom Jesus would be born. By inspiration, Elizabeth acknowledged Jesus as the Lord even before He was born. ***Blessed is she who believed:*** When the message of Gabriel came to Mary, she believed. She did not doubt the work of God in her life. ***Told her from the Lord:*** In verse 46, as well as here, the word “Lord” refers to God. In verse 43 the word refers to Jesus. Therefore, Jesus, as the manifestation of the God-head on earth, is here identified with the one God (See Jn 1:1-4; 10:30).

1:46-56 In this context, Mary is also filled with the Holy Spirit in order to declare by inspiration the word and work of God. She magnified God for considering her lowly state. From the time of these events and onward, the world would call her blessed (11:27). With the birth of the Son, she proclaimed that God did not come to the proud of this world. He came to the lowly and common people. God has visited His people, Israel, in fulfilling the promise that was made to Abraham concerning his seed (Gn 12:1-3; 17:7,19). Through the One she would bear, God would fulfill what He promised to the fathers (See Gn 3:15; 49:10; Is 7:14; 9:6; Dn 7:13,14). Jesus was the fulfillment of the seedline promise.

THE BIRTH OF JOHN

1:57,58 At the end of nine months after conception, Elizabeth gave birth to John. The neighbors and relatives rejoiced because she had brought forth a son in her old age (Compare Rm 12:15). It was a time of excitement and speculation concerning the hope of Israel. The ones who were directly connected with what was happening were very anxious about the miraculous events that surrounded the birth of John.

1:59-63 *The eighth day:* See Gn 17:12; Lv 12:3; Ph 3:5. *Circumcise:* Jewish male children were to be circumcised the eighth day after birth (See Gn 17:9-14; Rm 4:11). *After the name of his father:* It was customary in Jewish culture to name the son after the name of the father or an ancestor in the family. *He will be called John:* This child would not be named after the father or an ancestor as was the custom of the Jews. He would be named according to the God-given instructions through Gabriel (1:13,63). The name John means “the Lord’s gift.” *Made signs to his father:* Zacharias could neither speak nor hear because he did not at first believe Gabriel concerning the announcement that Elizabeth would conceive (1:18-20). From the time of the announcement by Gabriel, until the time of the naming of John on the eighth day after birth, Zacharias could not hear or speak. *His name is John:* Zacharias’ faith was restored in what Gabriel had said because he followed the instructions of Gabriel concerning the naming of the child.

1:64-66 Zacharias’ first words were words of praise to God for the great things He was accomplishing through Elizabeth and himself. *Fear came on all:* The people responded with reverential awe concerning the miraculous events that surrounded the birth of John. These events occurred from the time Zacharias could not speak until the time when his tongue was loosed in order to praise God. Everyone recognized that something great was happening, though they did not fully understand the significance of the events. However, they did recognize that God was working in the birth of this child. *The hand of the Lord was with him:* See At 11:21. God providentially cared for John from the time of his conception and birth until it was time for him to be delivered into the hands of Herod for his death.

1:67-79 *Filled with the Holy Spirit:* The result of this filling with the Holy Spirit was the inspired preaching of Zacharias. These words included giving thanksgiving to

God for raising up One who fulfilled the promises made to the fathers. Included here also is a prophecy of John's relationship to Jesus and a statement of John's glory as the forerunner to the Christ (Mt 3:1). Verses 68,69 discuss Jesus as God's salvation to bring light to those who are walking in darkness. There are more than three hundred prophecies in the Old Testament concerning the Messiah and surrounding events that were at this time in the process of being fulfilled (See 1 Pt 1:10-12). **Holy covenant:** See Gn 12:1-3; 22:16; Hb 6:13-15.

1:80 *The child grew:* John grew spiritually, physically and mentally (See 2:40,52). ***Was in the deserts:*** John remained in the sparsely inhabited areas or wilderness. It was here that he conducted his ministry. When God calls great men to lead great movements, He must spiritually and mentally prepare them for the task for which He calls them. He often led His great leaders into deserts.

Chapter 2

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

(Mt 1:18 - 2:12)

2:1 *Caesar Augustus:* This was a name taken by Caesar Octavianus who reigned as Caesar of Rome from 43 B.C. to A.D. 14. Roman Caesars who followed him adopted the name "Caesar" as it embodied the concept of what the Roman head of state should be to promote unity and peace throughout the Roman Empire. Octavianus brought an era of peace to the Empire. He established an environment within the Empire that was conducive to the birth and growth of Christianity throughout the Roman controlled regions of the world. ***All the world:*** Reference here was to all the territory that was under the domain of the Roman Empire (See Mt 24:14; At 11:28; 19:27; Rm 1:8). ***Census:*** Archaeologists have discovered the actual censuses that were taken by the Roman government every fourteen years from

A.D. 20 to A.D. 270 (See At 5:37).

2:2-4 *Quirinius was governor of Syria:* This enrollment of Roman inhabitants was taken while Quirinius was governor between 10 B.C. and 7 B.C. Archaeological inscriptions prove that Quirinius also ruled as governor again in A.D. 6. ***His own city:*** The Jews had to register at the city where their ancestral records were kept. For Joseph and Mary, this meant the city of Bethlehem that was referred to as the city of David (Gn 35:16-20; Jg 17:9; 19:1; 1 Sm 16:1; 17:12). Both Joseph and Mary were of the lineage of David, and thus, both had to register in Bethlehem. The long journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, while Mary was pregnant, does manifest their submission to the law of the government.

2:5 *Engaged:* The relationship between Mary and Joseph was still at this time not a fully consummated marriage under Jewish law. Jewish law considered the engagement legally binding to the point that the woman was considered a wife. However, their relationship was not a marriage in that it had not been fully consummated. Therefore, Mary was considered to be Joseph's wife, though they had not been formally married according to Jewish law.

2:6,7 *Days were completed:* Her nine month pregnancy had come to an end while they were in Bethlehem. This means that she made the journey of over one hundred kilometers from Nazareth to Bethlehem while she was probably in her eighth month of pregnancy. ***Her firstborn son:*** Luke's record of Jesus being her firstborn proves that there were other children to be born later to Mary and Joseph (See Mt 13:55; Mk 6:3). If Mary had no other children, then Luke would have used the Greek word *monogene* which means "only son." ***Swaddling clothes:*** These were the customary strips of cloth that were wrapped around newly born babies. Luke gives us these details in order to affirm that there were eyewitnesses to the birth who gave

these details. **Manger:** Jesus was laid on the straw of a manger from which the animals fed. **No room ... in the inn:** It was not that they could not afford a room in the inn. Because of the masses of people coming to the small village of Bethlehem to be registered, there was simply no room left. Unfortunately, today there is still no room in most people's hearts to give birth to faith.

THE ANGELS AND THE SHEPHERDS

2:8-11 *Shepherds dwelling in the fields:* There were shepherds in the area near Bethlehem who lived in the countryside in order to watch over their flocks. When the angel appeared to them, they were overcome with great fear because of the glory of the Lord (See Ex 20:19; 24:16; 33:20; Nm 14:10; Jg 13:22; Mt 17:5). ***Good tidings of great joy:*** No greater announcement has been made in the history of the world. The angel is here announcing to the shepherds that which would later be proclaimed to the world. The coming of the Savior of the world would be good tidings of great joy to all those who realize that they are captives of sin. These are those who realize that they are in sin because they know that all have sinned (Rm 6:9,10,23). They realize that man cannot live according to law without sin. They realize that there is no atonement in good works. The manifestation of the grace of God through Jesus, therefore, was the salvation for which men had been waiting since the sin of Adam. Those who experienced these events had no idea that the mystery of the cross would be revealed through this small babe. ***A savior ... who is Christ the Lord:*** See Is 9:6; Jn 1:29. The Christ (Hebrew, "Messiah") is the anointed One of God who had come to fulfill the eternal purpose of God. That purpose was to make it possible for men to come into an eternal covenant relationship with God (See Ps 2:2; Dn 9:24,25; Jn 1:41; 4:25). He would be Lord of heaven and earth. All things would be brought under

His control (See At 2:36,37; 11:16; 12:11,17; Ep 1:20-22; 1 Pt 3:22).

2:12-15 *A sign:* The sign was how they found the baby Jesus. They found Him wrapped in birth clothes and lying in a manger in Bethlehem according to what they had been told. The angels came from heaven and appeared before the shepherds (Compare Ps 103:21; Dn 7:10). This awesome sight of heavenly angels singing praises to God was certainly an astonishing experience. The birth of the Son was God's goodwill to man, for Jesus was the manifestation of the grace of God to all men (Ti 2:11). *Let us now go to Bethlehem:* In leaving their flocks, the shepherds made haste to go to Bethlehem to see the newly born infant. We must understand that at this time in the history of Israel, the Jews had been following the prophecies of the prophets who prophesied of events that would transpire during the interbiblical period. They knew that what was prophesied concerning the coming of the Messiah was soon to happen. Their acceptance of the signs surrounding the birth of Jesus, therefore, was based on their expectation that God was bringing to pass the fulfillment of prophecy.

2:16-18 *Made known abroad:* After witnessing Jesus in the manger as the angels had revealed, the shepherds went forth and proclaimed to everyone they encountered what they had seen. These were the first evangelists of God going forth to proclaim the good news of the coming of the Savior. As a result of the shepherds' proclamations, the people wondered at the events that surrounded the birth of Jesus. They were certainly puzzled that their national Savior would be born in such a humble environment. Jesus came to minister to the common people of the world, and thus, had a humble birth.

2:19,20 *Mary ... pondering them in her heart:* Mary did not understand all that was happening. She, as well as others who had experienced all the miraculous events sur-

rounding the birth of Jesus, did not understand that the events surrounding Jesus' birth were events that pointed to Him as the Messiah (See comments 1 Pt 1:10-12). The mystery of God's plan for man's sins through Jesus had not yet been made known. Luke here records that Mary later put these things together, possibly during the ministry of Jesus thirty years from this time of His birth. It would be then that she would deduct that truly she had given birth to the Savior of the world. ***They had heard:*** The shepherds had heard the angels. However, they were probably informed by Mary and Joseph concerning all the surreal events that surrounded the conception of both John and Jesus. Christianity is built upon the foundation of the sonship of Jesus. Luke's evidence for the sonship of Jesus begins with the events that surrounded the conception and birth of both Jesus and John. He testifies to the fact that their conceptions and births were not obscure events that took place without public notice. Neither did Jesus or John just arise out of society as good teachers and invent another religion of the Roman Empire. Miraculous events surrounded both the conception and birth of both men. Miraculous events surrounded their ministries. Such events were witnessed by thousands of people. As a result of their work, thousands would believe. This is Luke's apologetical evidence that the beginning of Christianity was not as those religions of men that develop out of myths, fables and legends. The beginning of Christianity occurred through the ministry of one person over a period of three years. It was not that Jesus was just any person. He was the incarnate Son of God, and for this reason He had great impact on the world.

2:21 *Eight days were completed:* The Jews circumcised all male babies on the eighth day after birth (Lv 12:3). This was the day for the formal naming of children, though Jesus had been named at the time of conception (1:31; Mt 1:21).

PRESENTATION AT THE TEMPLE

2:22-26 *Days of her purification:* A mother that had given birth was unclean for forty days after the birth of a son and eighty days after the birth of a daughter (See Ex 13:2; Lv 12:2-8; Nm 8:16; 18:15). Mary and Joseph observed all legal requirements in reference to the Sinai law. *Law of Moses:* Reference here is to the Sinai law that is also referred to as the “law of the Lord” (See vs 23), or simply “the law” (Ne 8:1,3,7,8,14,18; Mk 7:10). *Every male:* Ex 13:2,13,15. *A pair of turtledoves:* The law required the offering of a lamb. However, in case of poverty, a pigeon or turtledove could be offered (Lv 12:2,8). What is implied in their offering, therefore, is that they were poor people. Nevertheless, though they were poor, they brought their offering. Being of a poor state does not excuse one from bringing his offering to God. *Consolation of Israel:* Simeon was looking for the Messiah who would come to deliver Israel (Mk 15:43). The Messiah was thus referred to as the “hope of Israel” who would restore Israel to her former national glory (See At 13:32-34; 26:6-8; 28:20). *Holy Spirit was upon him:* This statement reveals that Simeon was miraculously guided by the Holy Spirit. Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, God had promised Simeon that he would not die until he saw the Anointed One from God. Such was promised to him in order that others through him might know that the Consolation of Israel was near.

2:27-32 Simeon was directed by the Spirit to the temple on this particular occasion (Mt 4:1). *The parents:* The Holy Spirit had caused the conception of Jesus, but Joseph and Mary were the legal earthly parents of Jesus. The miraculous events surrounding the conception and birth of Jesus had been revealed to Simeon. *Your salvation:* It would be through Jesus that the redemption of Israel and all mankind would come. *Before the face of all peoples:*

Jesus would not only be salvation to Israel, but to all people (Mk 16:15,16). The Gentiles would be touched by the light of the revelation of God through Jesus (Is 9:2; 42:6; Jn 8:12).

2:33,34 Joseph and Mary were still at this time unaware of the significance of what the child would be. The words of Simeon were a revelation to them concerning what the baby Jesus would become to all men. ***Fall and rising of many in Israel:*** Because of what Jesus would preach, many would stumble because of their pride and religious arrogance (See Is 8:14; Mt 21:42-43; At 4:11; Rm 9:33; 1 Co 1:23; 1 Pt 2:7,8). The pride of many religious leaders would hinder them from believing in Jesus. They would cling to their religious positions and traditions instead of submitting to Jesus. Nevertheless, others would humbly submit themselves to Jesus and follow His teaching (Rm 6:4,9; Ep 2:6). They would humble themselves because they were not trapped in the pride and religious structures of the religious leadership of Israel. ***A sign:*** The life and teachings of Jesus would be the opportunity for people to either obey or disobey God. Many religious people would speak against Him because He would not conform to their system of traditional religion (See comments Mk 7:1-9). It was the mission of Jesus to call the sons of Abraham by faith out of national Israel, for national Israel was coming to a close.

2:35 ***The thoughts of many hearts may be revealed:*** Jesus would be the occasion where the faith of people would be revealed. Those who did not accept Jesus would have the hardness of their hearts revealed to all. Those who accepted Him would have their humble hearts revealed. One's reaction for or against Jesus would thus be the judgment one brings on himself (See comments Jn 12:48). ***A sword will also pierce:*** Mary, the mother of Jesus, would witness the rejection of Jesus by many people. She would witness

His crucifixion as the result of religious leaders who led people astray into deceptive religious thinking (Ps 42:10).

2:36 *Anna ... of the tribe of Asher:* Asher was one of the tribes of the northern ten tribes of Israel that were taken into Assyrian captivity in 722/721 B.C. (Ja 19:24). A remnant of these tribes returned from captivity when Cyrus released those captives who wanted to return to their homelands in 536 B.C. Therefore, a remnant of Asher, as well as a remnant of all twelve tribes of Israel, were in Palestine for the establishment of the promised new covenant. It was the new covenant that God was about to make with the new Israel of God that would include all nations (See Jr 31:31-34). It was this remnant that was fasting and praying for the coming of the Messiah of Israel. ***Lived with a husband:*** Anna had married and lived with her husband for seven years before he died. At the time of the events recorded here, she was an older woman who had given herself to the ministry of the Lord in the temple. Her ministry was fasting and prayer.

2:37 Depending on the translation of this verse, Anna was either a widow unto her age of eighty-four, or she had been a widow for eighty-four years, thus making her at this time ninety-one years old. ***Served God with fastings and prayers:*** Anna had given herself to the ministry of the Lord. Her service to God was in fasting and prayer. Thus, fasting is a service to God, as well as, prayer (See Mt 4:1,2; 6:16-18; 9:14,15; 15:32; At 13:1-3). Older brothers and sisters who cannot give themselves to the physical demands of some ministries, can at least give themselves to the ministry of fasting and prayer. These are services that older brothers and sisters should be rendering on behalf of the saints.

2:38 *Redemption in Jerusalem:* See vs 25; At 28:20. Faithful Jews came to Jerusalem every year for the Pass-over/Pentecost feast. When they came, there was much discussion concerning the coming of the Messiah. They

came looking for the One who would redeem Israel. It was a common belief that God would bring forth the Messiah in Jerusalem since this city was the center of Jewish religion. The hope for redemption was not in reference to redemption from sin, but redemption from the oppression of foreign nations. The nationalistic Jews hoped that in the Messiah they would be redeemed from the occupation of the Roman Empire, and thus enjoy again their independence as in the days before the Babylonian captivity in 586 B.C. They had been under the occupation and control of the Babylonians, Persians, Greeks, and now the Romans. But they believed that God would send a Redeemer who would restore them to national independence. What they failed to understand was that when they went into apostasy before the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities, they would never again enjoy freedom as an independent nation. The price of their apostasy throughout history was occupation of their promised land by foreign powers. The Bible student must not be confused with the "Israel" that exists today in the land of Palestine. At the time of the establishment of the church, national Israel was assimilated into the spiritual Israel, the church (See comments Gl 3:26-29). In the plan of God, national Israel no longer exists as a favored people after the establishment of the spiritual Israel in A.D. 30. At the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, all genealogical records of the Jews were destroyed, and thus no Jew today can trace his ancestry to any Jewish family that existed at the time of the coming of Jesus.

2:39,40 Immediately after performing all things that were required by the law, it may have been that Joseph and Mary returned to Bethlehem which is about ten kilometers south of Jerusalem. While in Bethlehem, they may have been visited by the Magi from the East (Mt 2:1-12). After the brief visit of the Magi, Joseph and Mary fled into Egypt

(Mt 2:13-18). After Herod the Great died in 4 B.C., they then returned to their home in Nazareth of Galilee (Mt 2:19-23). ***Filled with wisdom:*** The Greek text refers to Jesus becoming full of wisdom (See 1:80; 2:52). He grew up as the son of a carpenter. The favor of God was upon Him throughout His childhood. There is no inspired record of Jesus' childhood except for the mention of His trip to Jerusalem with His parents at the age of twelve in the following verses. Neither are there any records that He worked any miracles as a youth. The first miracle He worked was in Cana of Galilee at the beginning of His ministry (See comments Jn 2:1-11).

JESUS VISITS JERUSALEM

2:41,42 *Feast of the Passover:* All Jewish males over the age of twelve were required to attend the feast of Passover (See Ex 12:1-48; Dt 16:1,16). Jesus' earthly parents possibly came every year to this feast. ***When He was twelve years old:*** This may have been the first time that Jesus made the journey. ***Custom of the feast:*** See Ex 23:14,15.

2:43-45 *Fulfilled the days:* The Passover took one day and the feast of Unleavened Bread, which immediately followed, took seven days. The terms Passover and Unleavened Bread are often used interchangeably to refer to the events of both feasts as one (Ex 12:15,17; 23:15; Lv 23:4-8). Pentecost came fifty days later on the day after seven weeks from the Passover. These two events, Passover and Pentecost, were often observed together. Those who came from long distances would stay in Jerusalem the entire period between Passover and Pentecost. ***Supposing Him to be in the company:*** The extended family and close friends from a particular region usually made the long trip together to attend these feasts. There would have been a great multitude going from Nazareth. In such cultural environments, all the families cared for the children of every

individual family. In this situation, Joseph and Mary were supposing that someone was watching over some of their children. However, there was a miscommunication somewhere among the family members, and consequently, it was not known that Jesus intentionally stayed in Jerusalem. We must not assume that Joseph and Mary were delinquent in their parental duties. It was Jesus' plan to stay behind. He wanted to be about His Father's business at the young age of twelve.

2:46 *After three days they found Him:* This would include the one day journey from Jerusalem, one day return to Jerusalem, and then, one day searching in the city for him. They were possibly able to find Him because His discussions in the temple with the teachers had caused some stir among the people. *Sitting in the midst of the teachers:* Jesus was where there would be discussion concerning the Scriptures. It was the work of the Rabbis (teachers) of Israel to expound on the Old Testament and to give their interpretations of the law. *Hearing ... asking:* Such is the nature of those who are interested in religious matters. It is the nature of God's people to be in the presence of those who want to study the Bible. They listen and ask in order to learn from others concerning their understanding of God's word. In the case of Jesus, the teachers of the law were amazed concerning His knowledge and interest in discussions concerning the word of God.

2:47,48 *All who heard:* Jesus was not only listening and asking questions, He was also stating what was truth (See Mt 7:28; 13:54; 22:33). At the age of twelve, He was knowledgeable enough of the Old Testament to discuss it intelligently with the most educated scholars of Israel. *All ... were astonished:* What Jesus did on this occasion was completely out of character with His normal behavior as an obedient child. Mary could not understand why He had done such for she at this time did not know the extent of

Jesus' purpose for coming into the world. She did not view Him as the Son of God, but as her son for whom she was responsible. ***Why have You treated us this way:*** Their amazement was linked to the fact that Jesus willingly stayed behind in order to encounter the Rabbis after everyone had left Jerusalem following the feasts. It was His chance to have a private conversation with the Rabbis. The Greek text here emphasizes the fact that Mary gave Jesus a stern rebuke. The fact that she rebuked Him reveals that she did not understand who Jesus was.

2:49 This brief statement manifests that Jesus knew in His youth that He must be about the work for which He came into the world. ***Must be about My Father's business:*** It was necessary that He do the work of the Father (Jn 9:4). This statement was made before the beginning of His official ministry that began when He was about thirty years old. In a generic sense, therefore, He, as well as all sons of God, must be about their Father's business. In this case, Jesus was doing the Father's business. When He reached the age of thirty, He would do His business in reference to fulfilling the eternal plan of redemption through the cross. Simply because we have only this record of Jesus speaking concerning the word of God in His youth, we must not assume that this was a unique case. We would assume that His ministry of teaching began long before His official mission to the cross began at the age of about thirty.

2:50 *They did not understand:* The mission and work of Jesus was not known to Joseph and Mary when He was a youth (Jn 7:15,46). They knew something was very unusual about Him, but they did not know that He was the One sent into the world for the redemption of mankind. For twelve years no unusual happenings had occurred in Jesus' life, and thus, the miraculous events that surrounded His birth may have lost their original impact on their minds (See 1:32,35; Mt 1:20). The time would come, however,

when they would understand the significance of what happened on this occasion.

2:51,52 Subject to them: The time would come when all would be made subject to Him (Ph 2:8-11; 1 Pt 3:22). But in His youth, Jesus was subject to His earthly parents in all things (See Ep 6:1,2). **Jesus increased in wisdom and stature:** It would be eighteen years before the beginning of His earthly ministry. During this time, He increased in wisdom and physical stature. The fact that the Holy Spirit mentions the physical growth of Jesus emphasizes the fact that Jesus, as a carpenter's son, grew to be a physically stout person. We do not know the extent of Jesus' omniscience while He was in His youth. However, we would assume that His wisdom would guard His conduct in order to behave in a subjective manner as the son of Mary and Joseph.

Chapter 3

JOHN THE BAPTIST

(Mt 3:1-12; Mk 1:1-8)

3:1 Tiberius Caesar: Tiberius was the stepson of Augustus Caesar. The provincial affairs of Rome were under Tiberius' control from A.D. 11, though he became Caesar of Rome only on September 17, A.D. 14. He ruled for the next 23 years as Caesar. It was near this time that Jesus began His three year ministry toward the cross (vs 23). **Pontius Pilate:** Pilate was appointed governor of Judea in A.D. 26 and continued until A.D. 36. **Herod:** Herod Antipas ruled from 4 B.C. to 39 A.D. His nephew denounced him to Caesar Gaius to have schemed a plot against Rome. He was subsequently deposed to exile. Herod Antipas was the younger son of Herod the Great through Malthace. He inherited the Galilean and Peraean portions of his father's kingdom (See 13:31,32; 23:7ff; Mk 6:14-28). **Philip:** He was the son of Herod the Great through

Cleopatra of Jerusalem. **Lysanias:** It is not exactly known when Lysanias ruled in Abilene.

3:2 Annas: He was appointed high priest by Quirinius around A.D. 6. However, he was deposed by Valerius in A.D. 15, though the Jews continued to recognize him as high priest. The Jews continued to recognize him as such because he was probably the head of a family of priests.

Caiaphas: He was named high priest around A.D. 18 but was deposed in A.D. 36. From these dates it is probable that Jesus was baptized and began His ministry in A.D. 26. Since He was about thirty years old when He began His ministry, this would mean that the crucifixion would have been during the Passover in April of A.D. 30 according to our calendar today (See intro. to At). **John ... in the wilderness:** John was already in the wilderness when the word of God came to him to preach (1:13).

3:3 Baptism of repentance for the remission of sins: According to the word of God, John preached repentance and baptism. By their immersion (baptism), repentant individuals were professing to John and others their submission to God. In doing such, they were being prepared to receive the coming kingdom reign of Jesus (Jn 1:23,24). The Greek phrase here literally means, “immersion of repentance for remission of sins.” The penitent believer was immersed in much water (Jn 3:23). John’s immersion was a command of God (7:30; Mt 21:23-27), and thus, for remission of sins (1:76,77; Mk 1:4). The immersion in the name of Jesus today is also for remission of sins (At 2:38; 22:16). However, John’s immersion was unto repentance, whereas, the immersion in the name of Jesus that was enacted on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 was because of repentance. Repentance and immersion were the conditions upon which one would receive the remissions of sins (At 2:38). John’s immersion was in preparation for the coming immersion in the name of Jesus in obedience to the

gospel (See comments Rm 6:3-6; 1 Co 15:1-5).

3:4-9 By preaching the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, John came to prepare the way for Jesus, the Messiah of Israel. Multitudes went out from Jerusalem in order to hear his preaching. The religious leaders of Jerusalem also went out to John. It is here that John's direct approach to their hypocritical religiosity is proclaimed. It may be here that John was identifying the nature of these religious leaders for the sake of those who heard. He at least made them see themselves in their religion that they had created after their own desires (See comments Mt 3:1-10; compare Is 40:3-5; 52:10). We must keep in mind that the true enemies of John and Jesus were religious leaders. If a religious leader today conducts himself in the manner as those who opposed John and Jesus, then they will reap the condemnation of God (See comments Mt 24 – 25; 3 Jn).

3:10,11 *What will we do:* John's call for fruit worthy of repentance was that people accept the life of participating in the lives of others (See Is 58:7; 2 Co 8:14). When one shares, he accepts a community life-style that is considerate of others. Selfish people have a hard time accepting these conditions for becoming subjects of the kingdom. For this reason, the Pharisees, who were lovers of money, found it hard to accept the teachings of Jesus (See 16:14).

3:12-14 Publicans, or tax collectors in Palestine, were Jews who were commissioned by Rome to collect taxes (7:29). They were allowed a percentage of what they collected. John here calls on these tax collectors (publicans) to be just and fair in their dealings (19:8). John commanded soldiers not to leave their responsibilities to which they had been assigned. They were not to abuse their power as soldiers or extort money from people by imposing their position on others. The directions that John gave in verses 10-14 focuses on one being considerate of others by doing

that which is good. John's teachings that he received from God, as well as what Jesus later taught, encouraged those behavioral practices that uplift society. God's law promotes right social conduct on the basis of loving our neighbor as ourselves (See comments Mt 22:36-40; Gl 5:13,14,22,23).

3:15-18 See comments Mt 3:11,12. ***People were in expectation:*** They were in expectation because they understood that the prophecies were coming to fulfillment. They were thus searching for the One who would be born to be the Messiah of Israel. For this reason, they approached John, for they thought that he might be the one for whom they were waiting.

3:19,20 The Jewish historian, Josephus, recorded that Herod imprisoned John because he was afraid that John would stir up the people in rebellion against his reign. Actually, the reason why Herod imprisoned John was because John said that it was not right for Herod to have Herodias as his wife (Mk 6:17).

3:21,22 See comments Mt 3:13-17.

BEGINNING OF JESUS' MINISTRY

(Mt 3:13-17; Mk 1:9-11)

3:23-38 ***As was supposed:*** Luke wants us to know that those in the community of Galilee and Palestine who did not believe in Jesus as the Son of God, considered Jesus simply to be the son of a carpenter. ***The son of:*** Matthew gives the genealogy of Jesus according to Joseph's lineage that goes back to David (See comments Mt 1:1-17). Luke's account of the genealogy follows Mary's lineage back to David, and then to Adam. One could suppose that the reason for giving Mary's lineage from the beginning of mankind was that we might conclude that Jesus was the fulfillment of the promise of the seed that was made in Genesis 3:15. The Seed was Jesus who would crush the head of Satan (See comments Gl 3:15-18). Satan was crushed when

Jesus went to the cross, and three days later, was victorious over death by His resurrection. God had preserved the seed-line promise from Adam to the cross. Thus, the spiritual death problem of all people that results from sin and separation from God (Is 59:1,2; Rm 3:9,10,23; 6:23) was answered at the cross (Rm 5:12; 1 Co 15:3). The physical death problem that Adam introduced into the world was answered by the resurrection of Jesus. But as in Adam all will die, so in Christ all will be made alive (1 Co 15:4,20-22; Hb 2:14). The good news of Jesus (the gospel) is that He came to answer, not only our spiritual death problem, but also the problem that it is appointed unto all men that they should physically die (Hb 9:27).

Chapter 4 THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

(Mt 4:1-11; Mk 1:12,13)

4:1-13 See comments Mt 4:1-11. It must be noted that neither Matthew nor Luke recorded the exact chronological order of the temptations. The emphasis of neither writer concerning the temptations was on listing the order of the temptations in the ministry of Jesus, but on the fact and nature of the temptations. Jesus was able to be tempted. He was tempted in all ways as we are tempted. He was tempted after the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eyes and pride of life (1 Jn 2:15,16). It was Satan's purpose through all these temptations to turn Jesus from His ministry. Since the mystery of the gospel was not known before its revelation at the cross (1 Pt 1:10-12), we assume that Satan knew nothing about the gospel. He knew only that the Son of God would in some way crush him (Gn 3:15). And since the Son of God was now incarnate on earth, Satan knew that his hour had come. *Until an opportune time:* Throughout His ministry, Jesus was tempted by Satan to leave the purpose for which He came into the world, that is, to ac-

comply with the redemption of mankind (Hb 4:15). Jesus was later discouraged by Peter to go to Jerusalem. However, at that time Jesus knew that it was Satan working through Peter to turn Him again from His death (Mt 16:23).

4:14,15 *Power of the Spirit:* See comments Mt 4:12-17. Jesus was now under the full power of the Holy Spirit to carry out His ministry. In His incarnation He had given up an equality with God (Ph 2:6-8). It was now the Spirit's working through Him to accomplish the miraculous works of His ministry in order to fulfill the purpose of His coming into the world. The need of the Spirit to work through Him explains the extent of the incarnation. Jesus truly became as man in order to identify with those whom He sought to deliver from the confines of the flesh (See Ph 2:5-11).

The Galilean Ministry

(4:16 – 9:50)

Outline: (1) Rejection in Nazareth (4:16-30), (2) Healing a demoniac (4:31-37), (3) Jesus' work of healing (4:38-44), (4) The miracle of the fish (5:1-11), (5) A leper is healed (5:12-26), (6) The call of Matthew (5:27-32), (7) Teaching on fasting (5:33-35), (8) New wineskins (5:36-39), (9) A sabbath controversy (6:1-11), (10) Commissioning the twelve (6:12-16), (11) Sermon on the plain (6:17-49), (12) Healing a centurion's servant (7:1-10), (13) Raising a widow's son (7:11-17), (14) Messengers from John (7:18-35), (15) Anointing of Jesus' feet (7:36-50), (16) The ministry of women (8:1-3), (17) Parable of the sower (8:4-15), (18) Purpose of the lamp (8:16-18), (19) Jesus' physical family (8:19-21), (20) Calming a storm at sea (8:22-25), (21) Healing a demoniac (8:26-48), (22) Raising of Jairus' daughter (8:49-56), (23) Limited commission of the twelve (9:1-6), (24) Herod and John (9:7-9), (25) Feeding of the five thousand (9:10-17), (26) Peter's confession (9:18-22), (27) The cost of discipleship (9:23-27), (28) The transfiguration (9:28-36), (29) Faith and a demoniac boy (9:37-45), (30) Dispute over greatness (9:46-50)

REJECTION IN NAZARETH

4:16 This rejection of Jesus in Nazareth took place at the beginning of Jesus' ministry. The rejection of Matthew 13:54-58 took place at the close of His ministry. The residents of Nazareth had two chances to hear Jesus, but they would not listen on either occasion. *As His custom was:*

As was the custom of the Jews, Jesus went to the synagogue to listen to the reading of the Sinai law and the Prophets. However, the Sabbath assembly in the synagogue was not a part of the Sinai law. The synagogue came into existence in Palestine after the Jews' return from Babylonian captivity 536 B.C. Keep in mind also that not all Jews in a community met in the synagogue simply because the synagogues were not large structures. The synagogue was a Jewish cultural center where reading of the law and Prophets could be heard. ***Stood up to read:*** The Jews' custom was that the Sinai law be read only while the reader stood.

4:17-19 *The prophet Isaiah:* This particular scroll was twenty-three feet long (seven meters), which length was determined by the length of the Isaiah Scroll that was discovered in the Dead Sea area in 1947. There are more prophecies concerning Christ in Isaiah than any other prophet (See in order Is 61:1,2; 49:8,9; 58:6). ***Unrolled the scroll:*** Some translations use the word "book." However, a scroll was not in the format as the books that we have today. A scroll was a roll of papyrus paper or leather on which the word of God was written. Jesus unrolled the scroll and read from the prophet Isaiah.

4:20 *Eyes of all ... were fixed on Him:* Everyone knew who Jesus was. He had grown up in the town of Nazareth. They had heard of the miraculous happenings that surrounded His conception and birth. They knew of Him as a wise and obedient child of Mary and Joseph. They also knew that He was one who had been very knowledgeable of the Old Testament Scriptures since childhood. With intense interest, therefore, they were expecting something of Him at this time because the age of thirty was the accepted age at which one began any ministry among the Jews. They possibly expected Him to make some formal announcement of His intentions concerning His life. He did, but what they heard was not what they expected. He claimed

to be the specific fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecies concerning the Messiah.

4:21 *Scripture has been fulfilled:* The Jews knew that the scripture from which Jesus quoted referred to the Messiah. When Jesus made this statement, they knew that He was making application of the scripture to Himself. Therefore, this would be the announcement and beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry and work toward the cross in order to bring about what Isaiah had prophesied. Their concept of the ministry of the Messiah was nationalistic, but Jesus' destiny was spiritual. They would not be delivered from the occupation of foreign powers. They would be delivered from their bondage in sin.

4:22-24 It was difficult for them to accept these words from the mouth of a local carpenter's son (Jn 6:42). They could accept Him as a good teacher, but not as the Messiah of Israel. Jesus spoke in a manner that was appealing. The eloquence of His speech commanded their attention. ***Physician, heal Yourself:*** They had heard of the healing of the nobleman's son that Jesus worked in Capernaum a few days earlier (Mt 4:13; Jn 4:46-54). They asked Him for such a miracle in Nazareth in order that the hearsay concerning His other miracles be confirmed in His own country. ***No prophet is accepted in his own country:*** Those of one's own home town are slow to accept the greatness of one who is from that town (See Mt 13:57; Jn 4:44). Those of Nazareth were surely proud of Jesus as a teacher. But it was difficult for them to accept Him as the Messiah who had been promised through the prophets.

4:25,26 *Great famine:* See 1 Kg 17,18; Js 5:17. The widow of Zarephath was a Gentile. It was to this woman alone that Elijah, the prophet of God, was sent. God sent Elijah to her because she accepted him. Jesus teaches that the messengers of God are sent to those who accept them. God's evangelists, therefore, should go to those who are

receptive to teaching (Mt 7:6).

4:27 *None ... cleansed except Naaman:* Naaman was a Gentile. It was by God's grace that he was cleansed while many Israelites at the time who were lepers remained unclean (2 Kg 5:1-14). His faith led him to Elisha, whereas those who ignored the prophet did not seek him. Those who are accustomed to the prophets of God are often those who reject what the prophets say. In this case, Jesus was saying that those who were accustomed to Him in Nazareth would reject Him, though others throughout the world would receive Him.

4:28-30 *Filled with wrath:* These Jews of Jesus' home town were greatly prejudiced against the Gentiles. When Jesus said that the Gentiles would receive the prophets of God before the Jews would, such greatly angered the Jews. They could not accept the fact that others would be more righteous and privileged than they. Their religious prejudices at this time in Jesus' ministry were stirred to the point of an attempted murder of Him (See Jn 8:37; 10:31). ***Passing through the midst:*** The multitude may have become so confused in what they were about to do that Jesus simply walked through them and on His way (Compare Jn 8:59; 10:39; 18:6). Whatever the case, Jesus simply passed through them on His way to more receptive people. We must keep in mind that though these people did not respond to Jesus at this time, when they later considered all that Jesus did in fulfillment of the prophecies concerning the Messiah, some would believe. This event was early in His ministry. It occurred before they had all the facts concerning His fulfillment of prophecy (See At 6:7).

HEALING A DEMONIAIC

(Mk 1:21-28)

4:31,32 Luke explains to Theophilus, his Gentile reader and recipient of this document, the location of Capernaum

in reference to Nazareth because Theophilus was unfamiliar with the area of Palestine (See Mt 4:13; 11:23; Jn 4:46). ***Astonished at His teaching:*** The authority by which Jesus taught astonished the people because He did not teach as the Rabbis of Israel who resorted to quotations from the fathers in order to establish authority for their teaching (See Mt 7:28,29). Jesus' emphasis was not on teaching the traditions of the fathers as did the Pharisees and scribes. The foundation of His teaching was on the fact that His word originated with Him as the Son of God. Jesus was the authority by which all would be judged, from this time in history and forever (See comments Mt 28:18; Jn 12:48).

4:33-35 *Spirit of an unclean demon:* See comments Mt 4:24 (Mk 1:23). ***To destroy us:*** Satan and all his angels knew their destiny. It would be destruction in a fiery hell (Mt 25:41). All those who would align themselves with the work of Satan, therefore, have assigned to themselves the same destiny. ***The Holy One of God:*** Even the demons knew who Jesus was. They asked for no mercy, nor did they seek to bargain with Him. They simply recognized that Jesus had been given authority over all things, including them and their destiny (Mt 28:18; Jn 13:3; 17:2; see 1 Pt 3:22). ***Hold your peace:*** The Greek word here literally means "to be muzzled." Jesus controlled their speech and would not allow them to proclaim who He was. ***Did not hurt him:*** The demons convulsed the man, but they did not physically hurt him.

4:36,37 *He commands the unclean spirits:* God allowed demons to possess people in the 1st century for this very reason. Such offered the opportunity to prove that Jesus had absolute authority over all the forces of darkness (See Mt 28:18; Jn 13:3; 17:2). There was nothing outside the control of Jesus during His earthly ministry. He was controlling the environment of people who surrounded Him. He had such control in order to take Himself to the cross

(Jn 10:17,18). In this, and similar cases where Jesus confronted demons, the absolute authority of Jesus over demons is manifested. If God had never allowed demons to possess people in the 1st century, then we would never have known His absolute power over them. ***His fame ... went out:*** Because many people knew of the demon possessed man, his healing spread throughout the whole region of Galilee.

JESUS' WORK OF HEALING

4:38,39 See comments Mt 8:14-17. This miracle was worked for the benefit of Peter in order that he remain focused on the ministry and work of Jesus (Mk 5:23). ***Immediately she arose and ministered to them:*** The healing was instantaneous. Such is the nature of true miracles. She was effectively healed in order to be able to immediately serve those who were present. This is not as the false miracles that are worked by those who preach contrary to the word of God. True miracles are undeniable and instantaneous. They cannot be denied, even by unbelievers. In defense of Christianity, Luke wanted Theophilus to know that the miraculous works of Jesus were not as the trickery of false teachers who claim to work miracles. If the miracles were not true, then the people would not have been able to distinguish between true miracles and the magical tricks of false teachers who were among them.

4:40,41 See comments Mt 4:23-25. The friends of the sick went out and brought their sick friends to Jesus in order that they be healed (See Mt 8:16,17). The sign of true friendship is to bring one's friends to Jesus. ***Knew that He was the Christ:*** Even the demons recognized that Jesus was the Messiah of Israel. However, Jesus would not allow them to speak such lest His messiahship be rejected because it came from the mouth of demons (See Mk 8:29). At this time in His ministry, Jesus needed no testimony by

others concerning who He was.

4:42-44 *Went into a desert place:* Jesus had been working hard with the people. His humanity was manifested in this departure to a solitary place where He could be alone and physically rest. *The people sought Him:* The multitudes did not care that Jesus was exhausted. They did not honor His desire to be alone for rest and prayer. Because of their desire to be with Him, they sought for Him. *Came to Him:* When they discovered where Jesus was, they selfishly came to Him, not considering His needs, but their own. *Tried to keep Him from leaving them:* They were as sheep without a shepherd. They wanted Jesus, the teacher and healer, to stay with them. They did not understand His mission, nor were they considerate of His personal needs. *I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also:* Such was the mission of Jesus (19:10). But the people were here more concerned about keeping the preacher to themselves than in allowing him to preach the good news to the lost. And so it is today. *He preached in ... Galilee:* Though the people do not understand the mission of the evangelist, he must continue regardless of their short-sighted desires to keep him to themselves. When disciples covet preachers, thousands of lost souls never have a chance to hear and obey the gospel (Rm 10:14,15). Evangelists must never allow any group of disciples to steal them away from the lost to whom they must go in order to preach the gospel (See 19:10; Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15,16).

Chapter 5

THE MIRACLE OF THE FISH

5:1-7 See comments Mt 4:18-22. *Launch out into the deep:* After instructing the multitudes from the boat, Jesus sought to manifest to the disciples the power and authority of the One who did the teaching. *At Your word:* Reluctantly, and because of their friendship with Jesus, Peter and

the others went out into the deep water of the Sea of Galilee (See Ps 33:9).

5:8,9 The miracle of the catch was so evident that it had the impact on the minds of the beholders as described here. And such is the nature of a true miracle. Since miracles were worked for the purpose of confirming the message and messengers of God (Mk 16:20), their manifestation must be so evident that their impact upon the minds of the beholders is life-changing (See Mk 5:42; 10:24,26; At 4:14-16). The false miraculous works of those who would seek exaltation among the people cannot compare to the true miracles of God (See comments At 8:9-25).

5:10,11 *You will catch men:* These are some of Jesus' first words to the disciples concerning the evangelistic nature of their work (See Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15,16). They would catch the hearts of men through the preaching of the gospel. *They left all and followed Him:* This is the sacrifice the disciple of Jesus must be willing to make in order to follow Jesus (See 14:25-35). With sacrifice comes the opportunity for spiritual growth as one is forced to depend on God. The disciples knew of Jesus and His teachings before they forsook all to follow Him. However, it was the impact of His power, as manifested in the preceding miracle, that convinced them that He was one to be followed. Once one truly understands who Jesus is, he has no difficulty in following Him. Those who do not follow actually do not believe that He is the Son of God. They do not believe that He will do what He said He would do to those who do not obey the gospel (Mt 24:41; 2 Th 1:7-9).

A LEPER IS HEALED

(Mt 8:1-17; Mk 1:40 - 2:12)

5:12-16 See comments Mt 8:2-4. *He ordered him to tell no one:* Luke wrote this document to Theophilus as a defense document for the cause (Christ) of Christianity (See

intro. to Lk and At). His argument to prove that Jesus was not a religious fanatic who sought attention through magical tricks is manifested in commands as this that Jesus often issued to those He healed. If Jesus were as the sorcerers of the many religions of the Roman Empire, then He would have been working wonders in order to impress the people. ***His fame was spreading:*** The testimony of Jesus' miraculous works did not come from a few obscure magical tricks He supposedly performed. The testimony came from hundreds who were affected by His healing hand. The time would come, however, when they would have to accept Him for who He was, not how He could heal their physical infirmities. ***Withdrew ... into the wilderness:*** See comments 4:42-44; 9:10.

5:17-26 See comments Mt 9:1-8. The purpose of this miracle was to prove that Jesus was God on earth. The faith of the paralyzed man's friends moved them to take him to Jesus. Jesus presented the opportunity for the accusation to be made by the scribes and Pharisees by forgiving the man's sins. The scribes and Pharisees were correct to state that only God can forgive sins. Jesus was not speaking blasphemies because He was God in their midst. If He were speaking blasphemies, then He would have been blaspheming Himself. ***But that you may know:*** For this reason Jesus forgave the man's sins first, and then, healed him. The One who had the power to heal, also had the authority to forgive. It is only God who can forgive sins, for sin is against God. In forgiving the man's sin, therefore, Jesus was affirming that He was God against whom sin is committed.

THE CALL OF MATTHEW

(Mt 9:9-13; Mk 2:13-17)

5:27-32 See comments Mt 9:9-13. ***Follow Me:*** See Mk 10:28; Jn 12:26; 21:19,22. Matthew did not blindly

follow Jesus. He was acquainted with Jesus' teachings and miracles before this call. The disciples did not follow Jesus because He was a popular personality. They followed Him because they were convinced that He was the Messiah and because of what He taught and did (See comments Jn 1:41-51). Those who follow people because they are popular personalities are often led astray by the one they follow. They are led astray because they have given their right to make decisions for themselves over to the personality they have committed themselves to follow. In this way those who are blind concerning their knowledge of the word of God are able to lead those who are also blind.

TEACHING ON FASTING

(Mt 9:14,15; Mk 2:18-20)

5:33-35 *The disciples of John fast often:* It was a common religious practice of those in the 1st century to deny the lust of the flesh by fasting. The disciples of John carried on with this practice as did most Jews. ***Then they will fast in those days:*** Jesus, as the bridegroom, has now gone into heaven. These are the days of fasting for His disciples about which He spoke in this text. Thus the disciples of Jesus fast in this dispensation of time until the bridegroom comes (See comments 2:37; Mt 6:16-17; 9:14,15; At 13:1-3). They are fasting in anticipation of His coming.

NEW WINESKINS

(Mt 9:16,17; Mk 2:21,22)

5:36-39 See comments Mt 9:16,17. These were days of great change. The world would never be the same again. Jesus did not come to put the new wine of His teachings and covenant into the old wineskins of the traditions of the Jewish religious leaders (See comments Mk 7:1-9). Neither did He come to add an appendage to the Sinai law.

The law had to be taken away in order that He establish a new law and covenant (See comments Jr 31:31-34; Rm 7:1-4; Cl 2:14). New teaching demanded new wineskins. Throughout His ministry, the old wineskins of the Pharisees and scribes finally broke, and then, they plotted and carried out their scheme to kill Jesus. And so it is today when the truth of the gospel is preached among those who are more concerned with keeping the traditions of the fathers than the truth of God's word. The point of Jesus' message concerning the wineskins is that His message must be accepted above all other teachings one may have received in the past that would hinder one's obedience to God. No tradition or religious heritage should stop one from accepting Jesus and His word. Before the cross, God spoke to His people through the fathers of families (Hb 1:1,2). He spoke to Israel through the Sinai law. Jesus is now the only way into eternal life (Jn 14:6). Those who would seek to bypass Jesus have established a false religion, one that is created after the inventions of men who seek to serve themselves and not God.

Chapter 6

A SABBATH CONTROVERSY

(Mt 12:1-14; Mk 2:23 - 3:6)

6:1-11 See comments Mt 12:1-14. One accusation against Christians by those who did not know Jewish history was that Christianity was just another sect of Judaism. Luke includes in his defense of Christianity several confrontations, as this Sabbath controversy, in order to manifest to the world that there was conflict between what Jesus taught and what was taught by the Jewish leaders in Palestine at the time Jesus came into the world (See comments Mk 7:1-9; Gl 1:13,14). Simply because the Messiah arose out of Israel in fulfillment of promises made to Abraham (Gn 12:1-3), did not mean that Christianity was an append-

age to the Judaism of Jesus' day. Jesus lived under the Sinai law, and thus He kept the Sabbath. His confrontation with the religious leaders of His day concerning the Sabbath was in reference to their twisted views of the Sabbath. Jesus did not live contrary to the day of rest for which the Sabbath was designated. He honored the Sabbath rest and the Sabbath as a sign of God's covenant with Israel. However, He did not bow to the inconsistent laws the religious leaders had attached to the Sabbath.

COMMISSIONING THE TWELVE

(Mt 10:2-4; Mk 3:13-19)

6:12-16 See comments Mk 3:13-19. *Continued all night in prayer to God:* Jesus' prayer all night was for a very specific purpose. On the next day after His night of prayer, He called twelve of His disciples and designated them as "apostles." The generic meaning of the word "apostle" means "one who is sent." These twelve apostles were Christ-sent apostles, and thus different from the church-sent apostles who would be specifically sent out by the early church (See At 14:4,14; Gl 1:19). These were Christ-sent apostles because they were personally called and sent out by Jesus (See comments At 1:21,22). The church-sent apostles would be called and sent out by the church. When it came time for His departure from this world, Jesus made specific promises to the Christ-apostles that do not apply to anyone else (See Jn 14:26; 16:13).

SERMON ON THE PLAIN

This sermon probably took place at a different location and time than the one recorded in Matthew 5 – 7. This sermon is chronologically placed here after the calling of the twelve apostles, whereas the sermon of Matthew 5 – 7 came before this time. Also, Luke states that this sermon took place on a plain, whereas the sermon recorded by Mat-

thew took place on a hill or mountain. The recording of similar content in these two sermons by Matthew and Luke indicates the independence that the Holy Spirit allowed the writers in recording the teachings of Jesus that pertained to their themes. Under the direction of the Holy Spirit, each writer chose that material or incident in the life and teaching of Jesus that harmonized closely with the Holy Spirit's desired theme for each particular book. Thus those teachings that Jesus repeated several times throughout His ministry were recorded by the inspired historians in accordance with the themes and purposes of their particular documents. Though the Holy Spirit used the writers to select different material, we must assume that they were under the direction of the Holy Spirit both in selection and inscription of the events of Jesus' life and His teachings. The writers could not and did not record everything that Jesus said or did throughout His earthly ministry. If they had, then the New Testament would be a volume far too large to either copy or print and distribute throughout the world (Jn 20:30,31; 21:25). The Spirit inspired writers of the New Testament to write those things that would satisfy the spiritual thirst and hunger of those who were hungering and thirsting after righteousness.

6:17-19 *Stood in the plain:* The sermon of Matthew 5 – 7 took place on a hill or mountain (Mt 5:1,2). This sermon took place on a level place. ***A great multitude of people:*** Jesus' healing of all those in this multitude set the stage for the principles of His teaching that He would deliver in the following verses.

6:20-23 Compare comments Mt 5:3-12.

6:24-26 *Woe:* Jesus pronounced four woes on those who have materialistically satisfied themselves at the sake of others. The wealthy had consumed riches on themselves and forgotten the needs of their fellow man (Js 5:1-6). They had gluttonously lavished themselves in their world of ma-

terialistic living. They had rejoiced in the self-satisfaction of their own environment without any concern for the poor (Pv 14:13; Js 4:9). They had conformed to the status quo of the day in order to remain in the company of worldly politicians and religious leaders. However, Jesus said that their end was coming. Their artificial and unreal world of materialistic living was about to come apart. The ax was laid at the root of national Israel and its destruction was soon to come in A.D. 70 with the consummation of national Israel (See comments Mt 24). In this destruction, all those Jews who had selfishly consumed the world on their own lust would lose their material wealth (See comments Js 5:1-6).

6:27-36 Compare comments Mt 5:39-48. In these verses Jesus contrasted the abundant life of love and mercy with the selfish life of those who lived without regard for others. He portrayed the loving spirit of a good neighbor and citizen as God would have men live in harmony with one another on earth. If societies practiced these principles, there would be no need for police and jails (See comments Mt 22:37-40; Gl 5:13,14).

6:37-42 Compare comments Mt 7:1-6. **Forgive:** See comments Mt 18:21-35. **Give:** It is the nature of godly people to behave as God. God is a giver, and thus, godly people give (At 20:35). The love that is taught in verses 27-36 must be carried into action. Those who love their brothers do not stand in judgment over them. **With the same measure that you use, it will be measured to you again:** The thrust of what Jesus states here is that we will be dealt with in final judgment by God in the same manner by which we treat our fellow man (See Js 2:13). Therefore, when we measure mercy to others, God will in turn measure mercy to us. **Can the blind lead the blind:** Those who are not of the nature of the preceding verses cannot spiritually lead the people of God (See Mt 15:14;

23:16,19,24). Those who are spiritually dead cannot lead unto a spiritual life those who are also blind. One cannot lead above and beyond his own spiritual stature. **As his teacher:** Those who disciple others will lead them to be like themselves. If the teacher is spiritually blind, so also will be the student (Compare Jn 13:16; 15:20). **Remove first the beam from your own eye:** The context of verses 39-42 is in reference to those who are religiously hypocritical in their judgment of others. In the context of the religious environment into which Jesus came, the religious leaders gave a pretense of religiosity through the outward performance of the regulations of Judaism, but inwardly they were spiritually dead (See comments Mt 23; Mk 7:1-9). They knew and obeyed all the traditions of religion, but forsook the truth of God. Such is the nature of traditional religion. Traditional religion is established when social or religious companions conform to the accepted behavior of a religious sect. When religious people become traditional in their doctrine and behavior, they often overlook the word of God in order to obey their traditions (See comments Mk 7:1-9). It is not wrong to do things traditionally. However, when the traditional manner of doing something becomes the only way it must be done, then the tradition in religion becomes law, and thus, is wrong. Traditional religions are validated by the tradition, not by the word of God. Therefore, when the tradition is broken, the adherents become very agitated, not because Scripture was contravened, but because tradition was broken. The agitation of the leaders against those who break the traditions that validate the existence of their religion often becomes vehement. In the context of the ministry of Jesus, it led to His crucifixion.

6:43-45 Compare comments Mt 7:18-27. **For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks:** One's heart is manifested by how he behaves. Christians have the responsibility of judging according to the fruit that one pro-

duces. However, our judgment cannot be a true judgment of the heart, for the outward performance of religious deeds can deceive those who observe such deeds. The outward performance of religion can be carried on without the dedication of one's heart. Nevertheless, those who work from the heart will do that which is good to all men (See comments Gl 5:13,14).

6:46-49 Lord, Lord: See comments Mt 7:21-23. **Foundation on a rock:** This is the one who hears the word of Jesus and does it. He is motivated to obedience by his love of Jesus and His word (Jn 14:15). One cannot claim to have Jesus as his Lord if he does not obey what Jesus says. But there will come an end to those who hear and do not obey. Jesus' point is that our religious beliefs and social behavior must be founded upon Him. Those who would reject Him, reject the foundation upon which eternal life is based. There is no other foundation upon which one can build for eternal life than Jesus. It is for this reason that all must be sacrificed if necessary in order to come to Jesus. **Does nothing:** This is the great apostasy that prevailed in Israel before God brought the destruction of the Assyrians and Babylonians. This was the same reason Israel would face another destruction in A.D. 70 with the destruction of national Israel. It is not enough to know the truth. If one does not do the will of God, he cannot claim to be of God.

Chapter 7

HEALING A CENTURION'S SERVANT

7:1-10 This healing is different than the one that is recorded in Matthew 8:5-13. Here the Greek text emphasizes that a bondservant was healed (vs 2). However, the Greek word that is translated "servant" in Matthew 8:6 is *pais*, or a young boy. The young boy in the Matthew 8 account could have been the centurion's slave. Consider also that the centurion of Matthew appears to be a Gentile

who is not a believer in the God of Israel (Mt 8:8). The centurion in this account is a Jewish proselyte. The centurion in Matthew 8 personally went to Jesus, whereas this centurion sent the elders. It is important that Bible students not force similar events in the records of the ministry of Jesus to be the same event. Many similar events occurred in the ministry of Jesus. The individual writers, as in this case, recorded similar but different events. There is thus no contradiction between Luke and Matthew in the record of these similar healings by Jesus. ***He ... built us a synagogue:*** In the ruins of ancient Capernaum, archaeologists have discovered a synagogue that was built during the time of the Herods. This is probably the very synagogue that was built by this centurion. ***Great faith:*** It was the faith of the centurion that resulted in the healing of his servant. The faith of the servant had nothing to do with the healing, and thus, it was not a condition for his healing. It is erroneous to assume that faith was ever a condition upon which Jesus or the disciples healed anyone. Jesus did not make faith a condition for healing. If faith were such a condition, then the power of God to heal would be limited to the will of man. Those who place emphasis on faith as a condition for healing are focusing their attention on the one being healed and not on the God who heals. One's healing by a true miracle in the New Testament was never determined by the measure of faith he had. If faith were a measure for healing, then those who would not have been healed would have considered themselves inadequate. Miracles were not given as a benevolent act of God for humanity. After all, Jesus did not heal everyone of Jerusalem and Palestine (See comments At 4:1-16). Miracles were given for the purpose of confirming the message and messengers of God (Mk 16:17-20; Jn 3:2; Hb 2:2,3). Therefore, the primary focus of miracles was on God, His message and His messengers.

RAISING A WIDOW'S SON

7:11 *A city called Nain:* There are many archaeological remains of this particular city. It was a large city of the area since it was fortified with walls and gates. There is a small city in the Plain of Jezreel today that is a few kilometers south of Nazareth that some believe is the site of the same city that existed during Jesus' day.

7:12-15 Luke is the only recorder of the ministry of Jesus who mentions this miracle of Jesus. *Was a dead man carried out:* A funeral procession was in progress at the time Jesus arrived. This dead man was being carried outside the city in order to be buried at the local cemetery. *She was a widow:* Since the man was the only son of this widow, he would probably have been the only means of support for the woman. *He had compassion:* The compassion extended beyond the moment of sorrow because this son was the livelihood of the widow. *I say to you, arise:* The open coffin was an open pallet upon which the wrapped body of the dead was laid and carried. Without any formalities, Jesus simply commanded the dead to arise (Compare At 9:40). Such was not a performance, but simply the act of the power of God released through the word of the incarnate Son of God. *He who was dead sat up:* This was certainly a spectacular occurrence in the lives of those who carried the dead man. This was done by Jesus in order to accomplish exactly what happened as a result of the miracle. The report of what had happened on this occasion concerning this resurrection, and others like it, was proclaimed throughout the region.

7:16,17 *Fear came upon all:* All those who were present became fearful because they recognized the presence of the supernatural. They correctly deducted that it was God who had allowed the One in their presence to do such a miraculous work, for they identified Jesus as a prophet through whom God was visiting His people. (For

a study of the three recorded cases where Jesus raised people from the dead, see 7:11-17; 8:41,42,49-56; Mt 9:18,19,23-26; Mk 5:22-24,35-43; Jn 11:35-53).

MESSENGERS FROM JOHN

(Mt 11:1-19)

7:18-29 See comments Mt 11:1-15. **Tell John:** The first proof of His messiahship was the fact that He had authority over the supernatural, and thus worked miracles among men (Is 35:5; Jn 3:2). Jesus' second proof was that the poor had the good news of the Messiah preached to them (4:18; Is 61:1). **Messengers:** The Greek word here is *angelos*. This word is also applied to the angels of God who are messengers from God. It is also used here in reference to messengers sent out by men. In the context here, these messengers were sent from John to Jesus in order to inquire if Jesus was the expected Prophet of Israel (Zc 9:9). Jesus did not answer John with a direct statement that He was the Prophet. The Jews expected that the Prophet, or Messiah, would come in order to restore national Israel to its fame as in the days of David and Solomon (At 1:6). But Jesus would not be an earthly king. He would not proclaim Himself to be such on earth (See Jn 18:36-38). His evidence that He was the Messiah was based on two proofs. **Least in the kingdom:** Reference here is not to a kingdom reign that was yet to be established. John was in the kingdom of God while he lived. He was an obedient subject of the kingdom reign of the Father that was in existence at the time he and all mankind lived before and during the ministry of Jesus. Not all men were obedient subjects in the kingdom of God. However, all were under the kingship and headship of the Father (See 1 Ch 29:11,12). When Jesus ascended to the right hand of God, He assumed kingship of this kingdom (See comments Dn 7:13,14; At 21:24-28). **Even the tax collectors declared the righteousness of**

God: The work of Jesus among the poor manifested specifically the grace of God among men. God did not send either John or Jesus to live luxurious lives in the cities of Palestine. They were sent to those whom society considered lower class citizens. Such clearly manifested to all that God's grace would go where the sophisticated of the cities would not go. His message would go to the receptive of the humble people who would gladly receive Him.

7:30-35 See comments Mt 11:16-19. ***But the Pharisees and lawyers:*** Because of their presumptuous positions in the religious hierarchy of their self-made religious society, these religious leaders could not lower themselves to either John or Jesus whom they considered unworthy to be heard. They thus stumbled over their pride in accepting the One who could deliver them from the intimidation of a religious world that had been misguided by those who defended the institutional religiosity of Judaism (See comments Mk 7:1-9). ***This generation:*** This generation of religious leaders was like unconcerned children playing their games in the market places while people went about searching for food. They went about playing their religious games and politics and were unaware of people shopping here and there for spiritual food in order to feed their hungry souls. Instead of feeding the people with spiritual food, they were too busy playing their religious political games among themselves in the religious and political world of the cities. ***Wisdom is vindicated by all her children:*** The result of exercising wisdom proves the wisdom itself (Mt 11:19). Truth may be suppressed for a short time, but in the end it prevails over all who would work against it.

ANOINTING OF JESUS' FEET

We must not confuse this anointing of Jesus' feet with the anointing by Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, in Bethany immediately before Jesus' death (Jn 12:1-8). This

particular anointing is recorded only by Luke for he wants to show to Theophilus the great admiration and respect people at this time had for Jesus.

7:36 *Pharisee's house ... reclined to eat:* This was not the only occasion when Jesus went in and ate in a Pharisee's house (11:37; 14:1). The invitation of the Pharisee indicates that not all the religious leaders of Israel fell under the rebuke of verses 30-35 and Matthew 23. Not all the religious leaders were of the evil heart of those who eventually sought to kill Jesus (See Jn 3:1,2; At 6:7). Not all the religious leaders had fallen victim to the bondage of the religiosity of Judaism. Jesus knew that there were many receptive religious leaders among the Jews. As a disciple of Jesus, one should follow this example of Jesus. One should make every effort to seek out those who are searching (See At 6:7).

7:37-39 This unidentified woman came to Jesus while He was in the house of the Pharisee. Her remorse over her sinful state was manifested in this most humble gesture of anointing and washing of Jesus' feet. Her penitence was expressed by the outpouring of her emotion. ***What sort of woman:*** The host of Jesus thought to himself these words of judgment concerning Jesus. He was right in judging that a true prophet would know the character of the past life of the woman. However, he was wrong in assuming that Jesus did not know (See 15:2).

7:40-42 *Graciously forgave them both:* God's grace is poured out on all who will receive the free gift. Only God can forgive sins because it is against God that sin is committed. Therefore, in forgiving sins, Jesus was claiming to be God. ***Which of them will love him more:*** God's forgiveness through grace motivates a loving response (See comments 2 Co 4:15). Herein is the key to Christian behavior. Christians love because God first loved them (1 Jn 4:19). The disciples of Jesus are motivated into action be-

cause of the loving action by which God moved toward them (See comments 1 Co 15:10; 1 Jn 4:19). Love is the primary motivation that moves one toward obedience of the commandments of God (Jn 14:15; 1 Jn 5:1-3).

7:43 Those who have come the longest way out of a life of sin in response to God's grace usually appreciate their salvation more than those who have lived by Christian principles before their obedience to the gospel by immersion into Christ. When we feel truly forgiven, we live truly thankful lives (2 Co 4:15).

7:44-48 Simon had failed to perform the customary duties of a host that showed respect to a guest. The humble actions of the woman went far beyond what even a host would perform toward his guest. She did more for Jesus than those who considered themselves righteous in the eyes of God. She manifested her great love, and thus, she received forgiveness. When anyone responds to the grace of God that was revealed on the cross (Ti 2:11), and then obeys the gospel by immersion in water, God forgives that person's sins (At 2:38; 22:16).

7:49,50 *Who is this who also forgives sins:* There were evidently other Pharisees who were guests at this particular meal. They thought it presumptuous of Jesus to forgive sins (See 5:21; Mt 9:6). *Your faith has saved you:* The woman's faith in who Jesus was moved her to submit to Jesus. She did not have a simple belief in Jesus. Her actions were the manifestation of her great faith (Mt 9:2,22).

Chapter 8

THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN

8:1-3 With the twelve, the ministry of Jesus expanded throughout all the region of Galilee because He delegated preaching responsibilities to the twelve in order to preach to the cities. Their preaching tours were in preparation for the preaching of the gospel on the day of Pentecost in A.D.

30 (See comments At 2). **Certain women:** In the travels of His ministry, there were certain women who gave themselves to minister to the physical needs of Jesus and the twelve. They were not sent to preach as were the apostles, but their ministry to the physical needs of Jesus and the disciples was their ministry to proclaim the good news of Jesus. Mary of Magdalene, out of whom Jesus had cast seven demons, was one of these women (Mk 16:9). Joanna and Susanna, who were evidently business women, provided for much of the needs of Jesus and the disciples. These women would later become great witnesses to the life, teaching and resurrection of Jesus (See Mt 28:10; Mk 16:1).

PARABLE OF THE SOWER

(Mt 13:1-13; Mk 4:1-20)

8:4-8 See comments Mt 13:1-13. As explained in verses 11-15, this parable might be referred to as the parable of the soils. Jesus explains that the good news of the kingdom is received in different ways by different people. However, their life-style manifests what they feel in their hearts. Satan thus steals away the effect of the good news out of impure hearts. But the heart that is searching, and is thus receptive to learning and growth, will produce much fruit. We cannot find the searching unless we are searching for them. The one who is searching for hope realizes that there is something missing in his life. He realizes that he cannot fulfill that which is missing by either material things or the theologies and philosophies of men.

8:9,10 See comments Mt 13:10-23. As prophesied, Jesus spoke the mysteries of the kingdom in parables in order to reveal truth to those who were of an open heart and mind (Is 6:9). However, the truth was concealed by the parables from those who were religiously prejudiced (Mt 13:3).

8:11-15 See comments Mt 13:18-23.

PURPOSE OF THE LAMP

8:16-18 It is the purpose and nature of the lamp to produce light for all who are in its presence. So it is with the gospel. It is the nature of the gospel to be light. Because of this nature, it is the purpose of the gospel to provide the light of life to all the world (See Mt 5:14). The gospel is the death of Jesus for the sins of the world. It is His resurrection for our hope (See comments 1 Co 15:1-4). When this message is preached, people find their way out of darkness and into eternity. ***That will not be revealed:*** The omniscient God who created all things was in their midst (See Cl 1:16). What Jesus was teaching would bring to light the hidden secrets of men. Their response to His teaching would reveal the nature of their hearts. Any negative reaction one would have to His teaching would judge one to be of the nature of those about whom God spoke in Isaiah 6:9,10: “*Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.*” One’s inability to understand is not because the message is difficult to understand. It is because he is suffering difficulty in humbling himself before God (See comments Hb 5:11,12). ***Whoever has, to him more will be given:*** Those who humbly hunger and thirst after God’s righteousness will be filled (Mt 5:6). Those who search for truth will find truth. However, those self-righteous religious leaders who thought that they had a special relationship with God by their physical lineage from Abraham, would be rejected (See comments Mt 21:33-44). One is trusting in the wrong things if he believes he is religiously right before God through self-justification by perfect law-keeping or meritorious works. His trust in such things will hinder his discovery of the truth of God’s grace. When one seeks to validate his faith by his own religious performances, he is not basing his faith on the grace of God (See comments Ep 2:1-10).

JESUS' PHYSICAL FAMILY

(Mt 12:46-50; Mk 3:31-35)

8:19-21 See comments Mt 12:46-50; Mk 3:31-35. On this occasion, Mary and the physical brothers of Jesus sought to see Him. This was reported to Jesus, and thus, an opportunity arose to teach concerning the adding of spiritual relationships to one's physical family relationships. *Who hear the word of God and do it:* Jesus was not showing disrespect to His mother and brothers. He was teaching that one's spiritual relationship with those who have committed themselves to obey God is greater than one's physical relationship with his family (See comments 14:25-35). Those who are obedient to the word of God are thus in fellowship with one another because of their common obedience to the gospel (Jd 3). One's physical family is extended when he becomes a disciple of Jesus. Disciples are related to one another through a common covenant that they have with God, and thus their relationship is greater than any physical relationships of this world.

CALMING A STORM AT SEA

(Mt 8:23-27; Mk 4:35-41)

8:22-25 See comments Mt 8:23-37. The omniscience of Jesus to know of the coming storm certainly allowed Him to see this opportunity to teach the disciples that they must depend on Him. Every storm of life should move one to depend on God. *He fell asleep:* Jesus fell asleep before the storm. However, He remained asleep while it was in progress. When the disciples finally relented to the fact that they were going to perish, they awakened Jesus. *Where is your faith:* Their lack of faith was manifested in their fear of death. They knew that they were in the presence of One who had already commanded the elements and healed the sick. They needed to put their trust in Him, and in doing such, not be afraid of death or any crisis that life may

bring. *They were afraid:* See 4:36; 5:26. The miracle manifested the extent to which Jesus had control over all things. Realizing such moves one to reverential awe and fear of the power of God. The more we understand the power of God, the less we fear the things of this world.

HEALING A DEMONIAIC

(Mt 8:28-34; Mk 5:1-20)

8:26 See comments Mt 8:28-34. Luke's record of this particular case of Jesus' casting out demons is given in more detail than Matthew's account because of His purpose for writing (See Mt 8:28-34). In writing a defense of Christianity by explaining the divine power of Jesus, Luke explains how this demoniac, who was well-known in the country of the Gadarenes, was healed by the command of Jesus. The demoniac was well-known in the country because of the uncontrolled rage by which he terrified everyone.

8:27 *There met Him a certain man:* There were two demon possessed men on this particular occasion, though one is the outspoken representative in reference to this confrontation with Jesus. *For a long time:* This man had been possessed for an extended period of time, and thus was known throughout the region. His terrorizing of the community had led to his banishment to the graveyard. *Wore no clothes:* When Satan gets hold of one's character, he or she wants to take off his or her clothes. There is no shame in a devil-controlled life. *Stayed ... in the tombs:* When Satan has control of one's life, he lives in an unnatural environment. He is rejected by the community, and thus lives alone only where the community does not live.

8:28 *Jesus, Son of the Most High God:* This demon, as well as other demons, confessed more than most men confess today (4:41). The demon here begs for mercy from the omnipotent Son of God. He does not bargain in order to negotiate a deal with Jesus concerning his destiny of

destruction (Mt 8:29; 25:41). He knew that his destiny was sealed and could not be changed. God had determined that Satan and his angels (demons) would eventually suffer the punishment of hell (Mt 25:41; 2 Pt 2:4; Jd 6).

8:29 *He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out:* As God on earth, Jesus had absolute authority and power over even the worst of Satan's work among men (Jn 13:3; 17:2). Satan has no indigenous or subjective power or authority over Jesus or anyone else. His power is by the willingness of men to be deceived. By such deception he has captured the minds of the masses of the world. In the cases of demon possession in the 1st century, the individuals who were possessed had voluntarily allowed themselves to be controlled by the demons. Once they were possessed, the demons took control. We must keep in mind that God has not given Satan the power to take control of one's life as he so chooses. *Kept bound:* When Satan controlled the life of an individual in the 1st century through demon possession, society did not trust the person the demon controlled. *Broke the bonds:* It was not that he was given supernatural power to do such, but that the adrenaline was released into the body of a hysterical individual who was often out of control.

8:30,31 *Legion:* A Roman legion was comprised of 4,000 to 6,000 men who were greatly feared by all. It was not that there were several thousand demons in this person. There were many. The many who controlled this individual thus caused terror in the community through the possessed man. *The abyss:* This is the place of torments and captivity to which Jesus would destine all demons by His victory of the cross and resurrection (See Rm 10:7; Ep 4:8; 2 Pt 2:4; Jd 6).

8:32,33 Spirits seek to be embodied. Here the demons choose the body of pigs over the abyss. *He permitted them:* It is interesting to note that the demons whom so many

people feared, had to ask permission from the One (Jesus) they refuse to obey. And so it is today. People will refuse to submit to Jesus as Lord because they desire to submit to the wicked ways of Satan. They will refuse to submit to Jesus of whom the demons had to ask permission. They refuse to submit to the Lord of all things by submitting to the will of Satan whom Jesus will eventually cast into eternal destruction (Mt 25:41).

8:34-37 *Sitting at the feet of Jesus:* When one is in his right mind he will be at the feet of Jesus (See 10:39; 17:16; Mt 28:9; Mk 7:25; Jn 11:32). He will seek to be led to correct his life and the evil influence he has had on others (See Jn 14:15; 15:14). ***They were afraid:*** They were afraid of what they did not understand. But if they truly understood who was in their midst—the Son of God before whom all will be judged (At 17:30,31)—they would have been afraid to ask Jesus to leave. ***Asked Him to depart from them:*** If they truly knew whom they asked to depart, surely they would not have done so. Nevertheless, the superstitious religious beliefs of the ignorant will hinder them from understanding the truth. On this occasion, the superstitious beliefs of the Gadarenes moved them in fear to ask the Son of God to depart from their region. And so it is in many places of the world today. Most people are more afraid of giving up their superstitious beliefs than fearing the One who can destroy soul and body in hell (Mt 10:28).

8:38,39 *Begging Him that he might be with Him:* When the mercy of God is poured out on one who could not deliver himself by his own means, the natural response is to be close by the one who showed the mercy (Compare 2 Co 4:15). Those who truly appreciate the loving mercy of God, want to be with God. One appreciates God's mercy when he understands how far God had to come in order to deliver us from our sinful situation. ***Show what great things God has done for you:*** Jesus asked this healed demoniac

to give witness to others concerning what God had done for him, for it was God who actually worked on this occasion. It is thus the work of God that motivates others to obey God (See 1 Co 15:10). The most powerful witness in any community is the converted life of those who previously wrecked the community by their ungodly living. God seeks to send converted people back to repair the lives of those who were ravaged by their wicked living.

8:40-48 See comments Mt 9:20-22. In the healing of both the woman with a hemorrhage of blood and Jairus' daughter, the touch of Jesus released power from God. The woman reached out to touch Jesus (vs 44) and Jesus reached out and took the hand of the dead daughter (vs 54). In cases as these two miracles, the result was the same. Power went out from Jesus to those who were spiritually touched by Him. *Your faith has made you well:* It was her faith that moved her to reach out and touch Jesus (7:50). It is active faith that produces results in the kingdom (Js 2:14-26). The faith was not a condition for her healing. Her faith was the motivation that put her in contact with the source of healing.

RAISING OF JAIRUS' DAUGHTER

(Mt 9:18,19,23-26; Mk 5:22-24,35-43)

8:49-56 See comments Mt 9:18,19,23-26. It was not Jesus' practice to go through ceremonial performances in order to stimulate the curiosity of people to view His miracles. In this case, only Peter, James and John, with the father and mother, were permitted to be in the presence of the miracle when the daughter was raised. When unleashing the miraculous power of God, Jesus did not conduct a theatrical performance in order to draw attention. True miracles were never worked in order to satisfy the idle curiosity of man. When reading the record of any miracle in the Bible, one must always keep in mind the purpose for

which the veil of the natural world was set aside to reveal the supernatural realm of God. The purpose of the miracle was to signal to man, who is confined to the physical world, that there is a realm beyond the physical world. This would be the realm of God's dwelling. It was supernatural because it was above the natural laws of this world. Therefore, when Jairus' daughter was raised, the laws of the supernatural were allowed to touch the natural body of the young girl. She came to life as the supernatural laws of God's realm of existence superseded the laws of nature. For this reason, those who are in the presence of God will never die (See comments 2 Th 1:6-9).

Chapter 9

LIMITED COMMISSION OF THE TWELVE

(Mt 10:5-15; Mk 6:7-13)

At this time in the document of Luke, Luke seems to change his emphasis to focus on the cross. In His change of emphasis, he records some teachings of Jesus that are found only in his writing.

9:1-6 See comments Mt 10:5-15. *He sent them to preach the kingdom:* Equipped with the power over demons and the power to heal, the twelve were sent forth by Jesus to preach the same message that He and John the Baptist preached. They were to preach the good news of the kingdom of God. Their preaching would prepare people for the Pentecost event that would come and the preaching of the gospel on and after the day of Pentecost. *Take nothing for your journey:* This limited commission was to be a test of the disciples' faith. They were to put their trust in God and the benevolence of those to whom they went. At the same time, it would be a test of hospitality on the part of those who received them. Those who received the messengers of Jesus would be receiving Jesus. In sending forth the disciples in this manner, Jesus was laying the founda-

tion on which the disciples would later go forth after the establishment of the church. These who were sent forth on this occasion would remember the receptive homes to which they could go after the establishment of the church in Acts 2. ***They ... went through the towns, preaching the gospel:*** Jesus sent the disciples out on more than one preaching tour during His ministry. There was much teaching to be done during His three and a half year ministry. More teaching was needed than what He could personally do. Therefore, He sent the disciples to prepare the hearts and minds of the people to accept Him as the Messiah, and later, as the Son of God. He also sent them out in order to prepare them for the ministry they would be given after the Pentecost of Acts 2. The disciples had observed Jesus' teaching. It was now time for them to begin teaching as He did.

HEROD & JOHN

(Mt 14:1-12; Mk 6:14-29)

9:7-9 See comments Mt 14:1-12. Luke records the inquiry of the perplexed Herod in order to illustrate that even kings wondered concerning who Jesus was. In his document to prove that Jesus was the Son of God, Luke is bringing us to the same confession that Peter made in verse 20, that Jesus is the Christ of God.

FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND

(Mt 14:13-21; Mk 6:30-44; Jn 6:1-13)

9:10-17 See comments Mt 14:13-21. The feeding of the five thousand took place sometime before the confession of Peter in verses 18-21. Matthew records, that at the time Jesus called on the disciples to make the confession that He was the Christ and Son of God, He asked them first to recall the feeding of the four thousand and five thousand (Mt 16:9,10). Luke's purpose here, however, was to lead Theophilus to understand that the nature of the miracle of

feeding the multitudes should move us to make the same confession concerning Jesus. It was a miracle of creation, and thus, should prove beyond doubt that Jesus was the Son of God (See comments Cl 1:16).

PETER'S CONFESSION

(Mt 16:13-20; Mk 8:27-30)

9:18-21 See comments Mt 16:13-28. *His disciples were with Him:* Jesus and the disciples were at this time at Caesarea Philippi (Mt 16:13). It was here that they were together for a private meeting. At this meeting, Jesus called on them for a confession of who He was. *Some say:* At this time in the ministry of Jesus, there was great speculation among the people concerning who He was. *The Christ of God:* Peter spoke for the rest of the disciples. Their confession at this time was that they believed Jesus was the Messiah, the anointed one of God who had come from God to deliver Israel. Matthew recorded all that Peter said. “*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God*” (Mt 16:16; see Jn 6:68,69).

9:22 *The Son of Man must suffer many things:* It was from this time that Jesus began to prepare the disciples for His suffering and the cross that He must endure in order to accomplish the destiny for which He was sent (18:31-33; 23:46; 24:46; Mt 16:21; 17:22).

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

(Mt 16:21-28; Mk 8:31 – 9:1)

9:23-27 See comments Mt 16:21-28. *Take up his cross daily:* Commitment to serve Jesus is an everyday work in one's Christian life. Those who have committed themselves to serve have dedicated their entire lives to Jesus (Rm 12:1,2; Gl 2:20). Jesus' point is not that we concentrate on denying things, but on denying ourselves. When one denies himself, all things of this world are put into their cor-

rect perspective in reference to the kingdom (See comments Mt 6:31-34). **Whoever will lose his life for My sake:** Those who control the lusts of the flesh in this life will enjoy the abundance of life (Jn 10:10). Those who have committed themselves to Jesus will not only receive the abundant life in this life (Jn 10:10), they will also reap eternal life in the new heavens and earth to come (See 17:33; Jn 12:25). **What profit:** It is senseless to profit that which is of this life at the expense of that which is beyond this life? It is senseless because no man with the goods of this world can make an exchange for the heaven that is to come (See 16:19-31; Mt 16:26; Mk 8:36; At 1:18,25). **Ashamed of Me and My words:** Those who are ashamed of letting their spiritual light shine before men as a result of Jesus living in their hearts are certainly not worthy subjects of an eternal dwelling in the presence of God (See 12:9; Mt 10:33; Mk 8:38; Rm 1:16; 2 Tm 2:12). **They see the kingdom of God:** See Mt 16:28; Mk 9:1; At 7:55,56. They would not see a physical kingdom of thrones on earth as a physical kingdom of this world. They would see the power of the kingdom reign of Jesus that would be manifested from heaven (24:49; At 1:8). And such they did see when the Holy Spirit was poured forth on the apostles on the day of Pentecost (At 2:1-4). This great event happened before many died who were alive during Jesus' ministry. Jesus' kingdom reign was not postponed or delayed from the time He said it would be established. He wanted His disciples to know that it would be established in their lifetime.

THE TRANSFIGURATION

(Mt 17:1-13; Mk 9:2-13)

9:28-36 See comments Mt 17:1-13. **Went up on a mountain:** Some believe this may have been Mount Hermon that is 2,814 meters (7316 feet) above sea level. It would have been an isolated location for the event of the

transfiguration. Great prophets in the Old Testament experienced the glory of God on mountains. Jesus possibly wanted these three disciples to experience the same (See Ex 24:15; 1 Kg 19:8). In this case, Moses represented the Sinai law and Elijah the prophets. This event was to proclaim to the disciples that things were changing. The voice out of heaven proclaimed, “*This is My chosen One. Hear Him!*” (vs 35; see Ps 2:7; Is 41:1; Mt 3:17; 12:18; Mk 1:11). It was time for all men to listen to Jesus (Jn 12:48; Hb 1:1-3). ***Let us make three tabernacles:*** Peter made the mistake that many religious people make today. They want to memorialize a place by building a monument for God. However, God does not dwell in buildings or with monuments that are made with the hands of those He created (See 1 Kg 8:27; At 7:48-50; 17:24). God needs no physical structures on earth to symbolize either His being or presence. His presence is manifested through the lives of those who dedicate themselves to following after His will. It is the human temple of those who give themselves to holy living that manifests His presence, not temples made with the hands of men. ***Cloud:*** See Ex 24:15-18; Ps 97:2. ***Told no one in those days:*** Because they did not understand the full significance of the experience, it was not to be spoken to others until after all things had been revealed to them (See Mt 17:9; Mk 9:9).

FAITH AND A DEMONIAK BOY

(Mt 17:14-23; Mk 9:14-32)

It was at this time that Jesus concluded His ministry in Galilee. It was only a few months before the cross. Because the disciples did not understand all the implications of His death to come, He became more specific with them in teaching as He drew near to the cross.

9:37-42 See comments Mt 17:14-23. ***Your disciples ... could not:*** Jesus identified that the reason the disciples

could not cast out the demon was because of their lack of faith (vs 41). Without Jesus, they could do nothing. Without faith in Him, the power that came from God could not be exercised through them.

9:43-45 *The Son of Man will be betrayed:* The disciples had accepted Jesus as the Messiah. However, they could not connect the Old Testament prophecies of the death of the Messiah with Jesus (See Is 53; Ps 22). They still had the common Jewish belief that the Messiah would come with the mission to deliver Israel physically from the oppression of foreign governments (See At 1:6). His prophecy of His death was to prepare them for the crucifixion. Though they were not expecting the crucifixion, they would later understand that during His ministry, Jesus knew that His crucifixion would happen.

DISPUTE OVER GREATNESS

(Mt 18:1-5; Mk 9:33-50)

9:46-48 See comments Mt 18:1-5. *There arose a dispute among them:* The fact that they did not understand the death and resurrection of Jesus, but had their minds on earthly kingdoms, is manifested in the fact that they disputed among themselves concerning who was the greatest. They maintained this carnal rivalry unto the evening of the last Passover meal He ate with them (See 22:24; Mk 9:33-37; 10:35-45).

9:49,50 *Because he does not follow with us:* The disciples had evidently developed some sectarian arrogance in reference to their companionship with Jesus. Because this unknown disciple was not in the inner circle of disciples, John and the others forbade him from doing good. But Jesus counters their sectarian spirit and behavior. He says that all good must be commended (See 11:23; Mt 12:30). There are those who do good works in the community. The community reaps the effects from the good that

is done. Some even do their good works in the name of Jesus. The cause of Jesus is furthered by such. However, because those who do these good works are not in a covenant relationship with the Lord, their good works are all in vain in reference to their salvation. Only when one is in a covenant relationship with God through obedience to the gospel will his works follow with him into eternal glory (See comments 1 Co 15:58; see Rv 14:13). In order for one's good works not to be in vain, he must be in the Lord (See comments Rm 6:3-6; Gl 3:26,27).

The Perea Ministry

(9:51 – 18:30)

Outline: (1) Destiny in Jerusalem (9:51-56), (2) Total commitment (9:57-62), (3) Sending of the seventy-two (10:1-16), (4) Return of the seventy-two (10:17-20), (5) The hidden things (10:21-24), (6) The good Samaritan (10:25-37), (7) Mary and Martha (10:38-42), (8) Jesus teaches on prayer (11:1-4), (9) Parable of a persistent friend (11:5-8), (10) God answers prayer (11:9-13), (11) The authority of Jesus (11:14-28), (12) The sign of Jonah (11:29-32), (13) The light of the body (11:33-36), (14) Woe to the Pharisees (11:37-44), (15) Woe to the scribes (11:45-54), (16) Warnings against insincere religiosity (12:1-12), (17) Trusting in the world (12:13-21), (18) Trusting in God (12:22-34), (19) Watching servants (12:35-40), (20) The unfaithful servant (12:41-59), (21) Necessity of repentance (13:1-5), (22) Parable of the unfruitful tree (13:6-9), (23) Healing on the Sabbath (13:10-17), (24) Definition of the kingdom (13:18-21), (25) Entrance into the kingdom (13:22-30), (26) Evil intentions of Herod (13:31-35), (27) Healing a man with dropsy (14:1-6), (28) Parable on humility (14:7-14), (29) Parable of the great supper (14:15-24), (30) The cost of discipleship (14:25 – 15:2), (31) Parable of the lost sheep (15:3-7), (32) Parable of the lost coin (15:8-10), (33) Parable of the prodigal (15:11-32), (34) Parable of good stewardship (16:1-18), (35) The rich man and Lazarus (16:19-31), (36) Warnings to the disciples (17:1-10), (37) The grateful leper (17:11-19), (38) The nature of the kingdom (17:20,21), (39) The day of the Son (17:22-37), (40) Parable of the persistent widow (18:1-8), (41) Parable of the Pharisee and publican (18:9-14), (41) Jesus and children (18:15-17), (42) The rich young ruler (18:18-30)

DESTINY IN JERUSALEM

9:51-54 Beginning at this point in Luke's narrative, it is difficult to establish the chronological order of Jesus' activities. The orderly arrangement of the written material

itself is apparent, but chronology as it relates to the actual sequence of Jesus' ministry is difficult to determine. An orderly arrangement of the last six months of Jesus' ministry is indicated by John (See Jn 7:10; 10:22,40-42; 11:1-17,54; 12:1). ***For Him to be received up:*** Jesus was fully conscious of the fact that at this time His death was near (Is 50:7; Mk 16:19; At 1:2). His death was not unexpected because He knew that He was the Lamb who was slain before the foundation (creation) of the world (Is 53; Ps 22; Rv 13:8). ***He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem:*** Jesus now focuses with determination on the cross, and by doing such, emphasizes teaching that the disciples will later understand after the resurrection and ascension (Mk 10:32). ***A village of the Samaritans:*** Jesus sent messengers ahead to prepare His entry into a village of the Samaritans. However, when the Samaritans realized that Jesus was headed for the feast in Jerusalem, they rejected Him. ***Do You want us to command fire:*** The sons of thunder wanted to act immediately against those who rejected Jesus (Mk 3:17). However, Jesus was going to Jerusalem where He would be rejected. It was time now that the disciples also learn rejection. They had been with Jesus for about three years, living in a fellowship environment where the people in Galilee were accepting them by asking for Jesus. Now they must learn rejection without desiring to retaliate (Compare 2 Kg 1:10-12). God would render vengeance by the harsh judgment that would eventually come in A.D. 70 upon those who rejected Jesus (See comments Mt 24). Vengeance, therefore, must be left to God. The disciples must learn to control themselves in reference to those who would reject them.

9:55,56 *Rebuked them:* In reference to the spirit of the world that would retaliate, James and John did know their spirit (See Rm 8:15; 2 Tm 1:7). However, they did not understand that their spirit of retaliation was actually

the spirit of the world. In reference to the spiritual nature of the kingdom, they would have to understand that vengeance belongs only to God because He is the one who is rejected when His messengers are rejected. Jesus came to seek and to save those who were lost (19:10; Jn 3:17; 12:47). His disciples must also have a spirit of saving the lost, not a spirit of retaliation and destruction.

TOTAL COMMITMENT

(Mt 8:19-22)

9:57-62 See comments Mt 8:19-22. At this time in the ministry of Jesus, commitment to follow Him was demanded by Jesus. There were certainly others who were following Jesus other than the immediate twelve. Jesus taught that all must commit themselves to follow Him. They, as He, must be willing to sacrifice any permanent place of dwelling (vs 58; see Lk 2:7; 8:23). They must even put Him before social responsibilities and family relationships (vss 59,60; see comments 14:25-35). It was now a time to look forward and not back. Those who look back are not of the nature that is demanded by the kingdom reign of Jesus. When one looks back, he is often questioning his faith in the One who is before him. When the kingdom reign of heaven is done on earth in the hearts of men, then kingdom business must always supersede that which is of this world (Mt 6:31-34; 2 Tm 4:10). One cannot trust in God as he does kingdom business while at the same time he looks back in order to trust in his own accomplishments.

Chapter 10

SENDING OF THE SEVENTY

This section of events and teachings are found only in Luke's document.

10:1 This is a different preaching tour than the one that Matthew mentions in Matthew 10. In some manu-

scripts, the text reads “seventy-two.” ***Seventy others:*** During His ministry, Jesus prepared more individuals for the work of preaching than the twelve apostles. In this case, seventy-two disciples were commissioned to heal the sick and preach the gospel of the kingdom throughout the cities of Palestine (vs 9). ***Two by two:*** For protection, credibility and mutual encouragement, Jesus sent them forth two by two. ***Into every city and place:*** Jesus was nearing the end of His ministry, therefore, He sent these disciples out in order to prepare the way for His coming and teaching in these cities. It was important that a great amount of teaching take place throughout Palestine before the events of the coming Passover/Pentecost feast. The Passover/Pentecost to come would be the most traumatic Passover/Pentecost in the history of the Jews. Jesus wanted a great amount of teaching that He was the Messiah. He wanted the Jews to know this before they came to Jerusalem for the feast. Jesus wanted everyone to know who He claimed to be. When the people would call for His crucifixion at the feast, they would all be witnesses to His crucifixion. They would thus be of the remorseful thousands who would repent on Pentecost (See At 2:41).

10:2 *Send out laborers:* See comments Mt 9:37,38. Herein is an imperative for the disciples in their prayers. They must pray for more evangelists (See 1 Co 3:9; 2 Th 3:1).

10:3-6 See comments Mt 10:7-16. They were to carry no excess baggage that would slow them down on their journey. They were not even to carry an extra pair of sandals. They must go as they were. They must learn to put their trust in God to take care of them. They were on an urgent mission because the Passover/Pentecost of A.D. 30 was nearing. ***Do not greet anyone along the way:*** There was an urgency about this mission. They were to waste no time on the road, but to make their way immediately to the

villages and towns to which Jesus was about to go. Jesus wanted everyone in Palestine to know that He was the Christ, the Son of the living God. ***Peace to this house:*** This greeting was to determine if the hosts would receive them into their homes. If these messengers were received into any home, God's blessing would be on that home. The disciples must learn to accept the hospitality of those who want to have fellowship with the preaching of the gospel (See comments 3 Jn 1-8).

10:7,8 *Eating and drinking such things as they give:* They were not to complain about the food they were given or be disrespectful concerning what they were served to eat. They must eat what they were served and be thankful for it. It was not a time to ask questions about food. Their mission was more important than their food. ***The laborer is worthy of his hire:*** They were to receive the hospitality of the host without feeling that they should repay money for what they received (Mt 10:10; 1 Co 9:4-8; 1 Tm 5:18). The evangelist must graciously receive that which is given to him because he receives it not for himself, but for the One for whom he labors. ***Eat such things as are set before you:*** These messengers were Jews and were going into Gentile areas. In view of the Sinai law restrictions concerning Jews eating certain foods, the seventy-two were to become all things to all men. They were instructed to eat what was set before them without causing any disturbance (Compare 10:9-16; Cl 2:16; see Mt 16:10-20; 1 Co 9:7; 10:27).

10:9 The seventy-two are here commanded to heal others. They were also to cast out demons (vs 17). However, they were not commanded to raise the dead as the twelve were in Matthew 10:8. One of the signs of the Christ-sent apostles was probably that they could raise the dead (See comments 2 Co 12:12). ***The kingdom of God has come near to you:*** The kingdom reign had come near in the sense

that the King was on earth ministering among men. However, He was about to ascend to the throne of David in heaven in order to receive all authority (Mt 28:18). The first official announcement that He had ascended to reign on the throne of David would soon be made in a few months (See At 2:25-36).

10:10,11 The command to the seventy-two was to proclaim the good news of the coming kingdom reign. The emphasis of their preaching at this time was on the proclamation of the kingdom reign that was soon to be established. They preached repentance in view of the coming kingdom reign of King Jesus. ***Wipe off against you:*** The Jew's wiping off of the dust of another land—that which was considered a polluted land (Am 7:17) in contrast to Israel's holy land (Ez 45:1)—was a symbol that meant rejection and repudiation of the inhabitants of that land. Jesus instructed the disciples here to do such in order to indicate that they had relieved themselves of the blood of responsibility of those who rejected them (See At 13:15).

10:12 ***In that day:*** Israel as a whole had a great opportunity to repent during the ministry of Jesus, because the Son of God was on earth and personally ministering to them. They thus received greater responsibility because they had received a greater witness to the work of God. Their rejection of Jesus would result in greater judgment. In A.D. 70 their rejection would result in the destruction of national Israel. ***Sodom:*** See Gn 13:13; 18:20; 19:24; Is 13:19; Jr 49:18; 2 Pt 2:6; Jd 7.

10:13,14 The inhabitants of these cities were judged with great judgment because they had received the personal witness of the Son of God, and yet, there was no repentance (See Jh 3). ***Chorazin:*** See Mt 11:21-23. ***Bethsaida:*** See Mk 6:45; 8:22; Jn 1:44; 12:21. ***Mighty works:*** Many miracles were worked in these cities of Israel during the personal ministry of Jesus. Mark records only one miracle

that was worked in these cities (Mk 8:22). But Luke records that Jesus had worked many miracles in these cities. Thus, the New Testament does not record all the miracles that were worked by Jesus throughout His ministry (Jn 20:30,31; 21:25). **Tyre and Sidon:** These were Gentile cities (Gn 10:15; 49:13; Is 23; Ez 26-28; 29:18). The ancient cities of Tyre and Sidon would have repented if they had the opportunity the cities of Israel had during the personal ministry of Jesus. **Sackcloth and ashes:** Sackcloth was a very coarse material that was often made of goats' hair and was black in color (Rv 6:12). It was worn for many purposes by the Jews (See Gn 37:34; 2 Sm 3:31; Jb 16:15; Ne 9:1; Et 4:1; Dn 9:3; Jl 1:8). Jesus' use of sackcloth and ashes here is His revelation that the cities of Tyre and Sidon would have mourned over their sinful state and repented long before His immediate audience repented. Their repentance would have resulted from their recognition that they were not right with God. On the other hand, these to whom Jesus preached, but did not repent, felt religiously right with God, and thus, were not moved to repentance. Those who refuse to allow the word of God to direct their lives will refuse to turn to God because they believe that they are righteous before God on the basis of their own performance of law and good works (See comments Mk 7:1-9; Cl 2:20-23).

10:15,16 Hades: Reference here is to the unseen abode of the dead, not the Gehenna of destruction that will follow the final judgment (See Mt 25:46; 2 Th 1:7-9). Capernaum had exalted herself to be seen, but she would go to the abode of the unseen. Her religious arrogance would be the occasion for her judgment (Compare Mt 24:35ff). When Saul persecuted Christians, he was persecuting Jesus (At 22:8). Since Jesus works through those who carry out His mission, it is important that we receive His messengers in order to receive Him. Those who do not receive the evangelists of Jesus are rejecting Jesus. Some individuals and

churches would do well to be warned by what Jesus states here (See comments 3 Jn 1-10).

RETURN OF THE SEVENTY-TWO

10:17,18 *Demons are subject to us:* The demons were subject to the command of the seventy-two because it was by the authority of Jesus that they could unleash the power of the supernatural in order to control any work of Satan. Jesus had total power over Satan, even through His disciples (See comments Mt 4:24). ***Satan fall from heaven as lightning:*** As lightning strikes from heaven to earth, Jesus here metaphorically pictured the fall of the power of Satan. Emphasis is not on Satan himself, but the fall of his power that was manifested through the casting out of demons. Satan was being disarmed by Jesus and openly led captive by His power and authority. Satan's power through sin would fall by the cross (1 Co 15:3). His power through physical death would fall through the resurrection of Jesus (1 Co 15:20-22; Hb 2:14). His final fall will be in the final judgment (Mt 25:41).

10:19,20 *Tread on serpents and scorpions:* These metaphors are symbolic of the disciples' conquest over the works of Satan (See Rm 8:38,39; 2 Co 10:3-5; Gl 5:19-21; Ep 6:10-18). Through the word of Jesus, the disciples had all power over the deceptions of Satan. Through the works of Jesus, they had all power over the being of Satan. ***Nothing will by any means hurt you:*** Jesus here instills confidence in the disciples. It is a confidence that they will surely need after the cross and resurrection when they go forth to preach the gospel (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15-20). They must remember that their rejoicing over the subjugation of Satan to them on the mission trip they had just completed was not as important as their salvation. The miraculous power that Jesus had entrusted to them for this trip was not as important as the salvation that they had received from Jesus.

Names are written in heaven: Jesus made this statement in order to reassure the disciples (See Ps 69:28; Is 4:3; Dn 12:1; Ph 4:3; Hb 12:23; Rv 13:8; 20:12).

THE HIDDEN THINGS

10:21,22 *You have hidden these things:* God was revealing the mystery, the gospel, that had been hidden from man since the creation of the world (See Ep 3:8-13; 1 Pt 1:10-12). However, the gospel would continue to be hidden from those who considered themselves wise. It was hidden from them, not because it was not revealed, but because of their own arrogant attitudes toward Jesus (See Rm 9:11-17; 1 Co 1:22,24,26,27; compare Mt 16:17; 18:3,4; Lk 9:47,48; 2 Co 4:3,4). See comments Mt 13:10-17. ***Delivered to Me:*** See Mt 28:18; Jn 3:35; 5:27; 13:3; 17:28. ***Except the Father:*** Because men are not omniscient, they cannot know the nature of the relationship between the Father and Son (See Jn 1:18; 6:44,46). No one can know all that God is. For this reason, Jesus was revealed in order to reveal the Father (Jn 1:1-5; 6:44; 10:30; 14:6; 17:6,25,26).

10:23,24 *The things you see:* The disciples could walk by fact, not by faith, because they stood in the presence of the Son of God. They personally experienced the unveiling of the realm of the supernatural. They were specifically blessed for living in such a time that God had chosen to personally reveal Himself through the Son. It is by their testimony that we believe. The immediate disciples were blessed because of their privilege of personally experiencing the Son of God. However, we are more blessed today because we believe, but we have not personally experienced the Son of God in the flesh (See comments Jn 20:29). ***Many prophets:*** Many Old Testament prophets looked forward to the days of the unveiling of the mystery. They did not understand the eternal plan of God (1 Pt 1:10-12). However, by faith they knew that God would reveal a marvelous thing.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

10:25 This encounter of Jesus with a lawyer (scribe) was different than the encounter that is recorded by Matthew and Mark (Mt 22:34-40; Mk 12:28-34). With the encounter that is recorded by Matthew and Mark, it was Jesus who responded with the statement to love God with one's total being. Here Luke records an encounter where a lawyer addressed Jesus with similar statements. ***A certain lawyer:*** This was a scribe, or one who was a lawyer of the Old Testament and Jewish religious traditions. The first of the two questions he asked was presented in order to set a trap for Jesus.

10:26-28 ***You will love the Lord your God:*** See comments Mt 22:34-40. The lawyer knew this principle of the Sinai law (Lv 19:18; Dt 6:5; Mt 19:19). In order to establish a spiritual relationship with God, one must first love God. Love is manifested by one's response to the commandments of God (Jn 14:15). When one loves God, he responds with obedience to God (See 18:20; Mt 7:21-27; 19:17; 1 Jn 4:19). Therefore, it is upon the principle of love that all law in reference to God is based (See comments Rm 3:31). ***Love ... your neighbor as yourself:*** Our relationship with our fellow man is based on the fact that we manifest love to one another (See comments Gl 5:13,14; 1 Jn 4:19). This principle of love is based on one's acceptance of one's self. We love others as we have concern for ourselves. However, Jesus would later give the principle of loving as He had loved us (See comments Jn 13:34,35). This was a sacrificial love of giving oneself for the benefit of those who do not deserve our love.

10:29 ***Justify himself:*** The lawyer's neighbor would extend far beyond what he presumed. One's neighbor did not have cultural boundaries as those that were established between the Jews and the Gentiles (See Mt 5:43). When Jesus answered the lawyer's questions, the lawyer would

be put in a position of having to love a Samaritan whom the Jews despised.

10:30-37 *A certain priest ... a Levite:* These were the respected religious leaders in the community of the Jews. Many of these leaders manifested an outward appearance of religious behavior, but many had little compassion in their hearts toward the needs of their fellow man. Jesus here manifests the hypocrisy of their religious beliefs and behavior. The nation of Israel had spiritually fallen and these religious leaders were more concerned over their religious positions and ceremonialism than over the people. They had focused primarily on their own preservation as religious leaders, instead of putting the spiritual needs of the people first. *A certain Samaritan:* The Samaritans were a crossbreed between Jews and the Gentiles who were brought into Palestine after the Assyrian captivity of 722/721 B.C. They were despised by the Jews because they were not considered pure Jews (See Jn 4:9). They had not preserved their national identity as Jews, and thus, those Jews who could trace their genealogy to their ancestral Israelites considered themselves racially superior to the Samaritans. The religious leaders of Israel during Jesus' day would not associate with the Samaritans. They would not practice the principle of loving one's neighbor as himself as Jesus previously stated. The scribe had asked who his neighbor was in order to justify himself (vs 29). But one cannot perform his own invented religion, and at the same time, violate the very principle upon which the law of God hangs. That principle is that one love God with the totality of his being and to love his neighbor as himself (See comments Mt 22:37-40). When one is driven by love, he applies the law of God to his behavior (See comments Rm 3:31). *Go and do likewise:* True religion that is pure and undefiled before God is to minister to the needs of all men (Js 1:27). All humanity is the neighbor of the Christian.

“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Gl 6:10). **Wine:** The alcohol of wine was used in ancient times to cleanse wounds.

MARY & MARTHA

10:38-42 Martha: Martha, with her sister Mary and brother Lazarus, lived in Bethany (Jn 11:1; 12:2,3). **Sat at the Lord’s feet:** She, as well as her brother and sister, were students and followers of Jesus’ teachings (See At 22:3). **Distracted with much serving:** At the time Jesus was present in the house, Martha’s priorities were wrong. She was doing a needed and good work. However, the situation demanded a change in her priorities because the end of Jesus’ ministry was drawing near. It was a time to listen to Jesus for the last time. **Mary has chosen that good part:** It is good to care for the physical needs of the hour. However, the spiritual needs of man are always more important. One must not use the service of physical needs as an excuse to neglect the spiritual food that is more important. In this case, Mary sensed the finality of the hour, and thus, she concentrated on what Jesus had to say. Her priorities were determined by what was most important at the time.

Chapter 11

JESUS TEACHES ON PRAYER

This teaching on prayer took place at a different time than the time when Jesus taught on this subject in Matthew 6:7-15 (See Mt 7:7-11). We must keep in mind that Jesus taught on key subjects as prayer on more than one occasion.

11:1 Teach us to pray: The disciples were spiritually minded. However, they had been with Jesus long enough to realize that their prayers needed guidance. They also realized that new things were coming, and thus needed to

learn to pray according to the will of God in reference to what was to come with Jesus' leadership. They realized that Jesus was moving them toward new things, and thus, they possibly felt here that they should change their prayer requests to be in harmony with His will and mission (1 Jn 5:14). After the establishment of the church in Acts 2, these disciples went forth and made disciples in areas of idolatrous worship. One work of the Holy Spirit that was later given through the laying on of the apostles' hands was the gift of prophecy, which gift included the direction in prayer by the Holy Spirit (See comments 1 Co 14:14,15; Jd 20; see Rm 8:26,27). The newly converted did not know how to pray according to the word of God, and thus, they needed direction by the Spirit. Today our prayers are directed by the word of God because we have the written word that guides our thinking.

11:2-4 See comments Mt 6:7-15. Jesus is not teaching that we should recite this prayer word for word as a ritualistic prayer. He simply gives an example of what should be general content of the prayer of the disciples. ***Your kingdom come:*** One must not believe that the establishment of the kingdom reign of Jesus when He ascended to the right hand of God was dependent on the prayers of the disciples. God was going to establish Jesus as King regardless of the prayers of the disciples or the rejection of the Jews. Emphasis here was on the will of the Father being done on earth as it was done in heaven. When the will of the Father is done in the hearts of men, then the kingdom reign of God is established on earth (See comments 17:20,21). Jesus reigns in the hearts of those who have submitted to His will. When the first official announcement of His kingdom reign was made in Acts 2, and people submitted to His kingship. His kingdom reign was manifested on earth through the obedience of about 3,000 people. The church was the manifestation of the kingdom reign of Jesus on earth. There-

fore, when one would pray for the kingdom to come, emphasis is on people accepting the kingdom reign of Jesus in their hearts by obedience to His will. When people do such, the will of the Father is done on earth as it is done in heaven. If we make the request, therefore, we are asking that the gospel be preached in a particular area in order that the kingdom reign of Jesus be established in that area. The one who prays, therefore, may be God's answer to the prayer (See comments Mt 9:37,38). When the kingdom reign of Jesus comes into one's heart, he is moved to be obedient to the King to take the gospel into all the world (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15,16).

PARABLE OF A PERSISTENT FRIEND

11:5-8 Jesus here continues with the subject of prayer that was stimulated by the disciples' requests concerning prayer. The lesson of this parable is that our heavenly Father is a willing listener. He is ready to answer the prayers of those who stand in an obedient relationship with Him (See 1 Jn 5:14). Jesus taught that the disciples to continue in their prayers. In this case, He was teaching that one continue in requests for a specific thing, though in some things one need pray only once and God will answer (See comments Js 5:17,18). One prayer that is according to the will of God will unleash the power of God.

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER

11:9-13 See comments Mt 7:9-11. *Ask ... seek ... knock:* See Ps 50:14,15; Is 55:6; Jr 33:3; Mt 7:7,21,22; Mk 11:24; Jn 14:7; Js 1:5,6; 1 Jn 3:22. *Give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him:* Keep in mind that Jesus was here talking directly to the apostles. He was giving them instruction for their prayers that would be applicable to them in their lives as His special Christ-sent apostles to the world. This verse should be compared with the parallel statement He made in

Matthew 7:11. On the occasion of Matthew 7:11, Jesus said that the Father gives “good things.” Here Luke records that He said He gives the Holy Spirit. Emphasis, therefore, is on the good things that would come as a result of the Holy Spirit. Jesus was directing the apostles toward the miraculous work of the Holy Spirit that would come in fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel 2:28. The apostles would be immersed in the Holy Spirit in the coming Pentecost (At 2:1-4). From this would come the miraculous gifts of the Spirit that would be imparted to the early Christians through the laying on of the apostles’ hands (See comments Mk 16:17-20; At 2:38,39; 8:18; 19:1-6; Rm 1:11). The good things of the Holy Spirit, therefore, would go throughout the world as a result of His initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the apostles in Acts 2. Therefore, in this dispensation of the Holy Spirit, we partake of the good things of the Spirit that originated from the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost in A.D. 30.

THE AUTHORITY OF JESUS

(Mt 12:22-30,43-45; Mk 3:22-27)

11:14,15 *Casting out a demon:* See comments Mt 4:24; 9:32-34; 12:22,24. ***Mute:*** In this case of demon possession, the demon hindered the speech of the man whom he possessed. This case of possession is similar to the one that is recorded in Matthew 12:22-37, though it is probably not the same case (See comments Mt 12:22-37). ***By Beelzebub:*** Or, Beelzebub. See comments Mt 9:34; 12:24. At this time in the ministry of Jesus, there were many in the multitudes who were making and seeking accusations against Jesus because of what He taught and said. These religiously misguided individuals could not answer His arguments, nor could they deny His works. However, because of their unrighteous hearts, their hypocrisy was manifested by their unwillingness to accept Jesus regardless of

the miraculous works that He worked. Those who are arrogantly religious have closed their minds to the truth. Regardless of what is said and done by a righteous proclaimer of the truth, those who are of a closed mind and unrighteous heart will continue to reject truth. They will twist what they hear in order to slander those they oppose, as they did with Jesus on this occasion.

11:16-23 *Sought ... a sign:* See Mt 12:38; 16:1; Mk 8:11. *Divided against itself:* See comments Mt 12:22-30. If their accusations against Jesus were true, then His kingdom would fall. However, what is manifested by their accusation is the fact that they could not deny that Jesus was doing the work of the kingdom of God. If they did admit that Jesus was doing the work of the kingdom, then they would have confessed that their efforts were against the kingdom of God. Therefore, they had to assign the work of Jesus to Satan because of their claim that they were of the kingdom of God. *When a stronger than he comes:* Jesus here states that He is stronger than Satan. The work of Jesus casting out demons was to prove this point. God had given Satan control over the realm of darkness, but such in no way can be compared to the One who had created all things in the first place (Is 53:12; Cl 2:15; see comments Cl 1:16). We often do not consider the extremity between Jesus and Satan that is here expressed in a few words. Jesus created all things. This would include all things that are perceived through the senses of men, that is, the material world. He also created all that is of the unseen world (Cl 1:16). This would include Satan himself. Satan certainly was not created evil as he now is. He was created as a spirit being who free-morally gave up his intended habitation of dwelling (See 2 Pt 2:4; Jd 6). As a created being, therefore, Satan has no indigenous power. He can act only insofar as God allows Him to act. He is thus allowed to work in order to create an environment of evil choices for

free-moral individuals who desire to rebel against God. In the context here, Jesus wants us to understand that He has all authority to devastate the work of Satan. ***Divides his spoils:*** The time was approaching when Jesus would despoil the household of Satan in reference to his spiritual control over men (Cl 2:15; Hb 2:14). The gospel was about to be revealed. ***He who is not with Me:*** It was now time in the ministry of Jesus for people to choose sides (Mt 12:30; Mk 9:40). Those who did not choose to give themselves to Jesus would identify themselves as servants of Satan.

11:24-26 Compare comments Mt 12:43-45. Jesus now warns that if one does not accept Him as the revelation of God to man, then his heart will be hardened even more. He will be hardened because he has rejected the direct manifestation of the Son of God. There were many people during the personal ministry of Jesus who rejected Him. Since there were many who personally rejected the Son of God when He was on earth, then we should not be surprised that there will be many today who will also reject Him.

11:27,28 *Blessed:* This woman of the multitudes, called Mary, was blessed because she was the mother of Jesus who was the Son of God (1:28,48). Her admission and proclamation affirmed that Jesus was no ordinary child or teacher of Israel. Jesus replied that even more blessed are those who willingly hear God's word and obey (Ps 1:1,2; 112:1; 119:1,2; Is 48:17,18; Mt 7:21; Js 1:25). It is not good enough to hear only. One must have an active faith that follows the direction of God through His word (See comments Js 1:22; 2:14-26). Without an active faith, one's faith is dead.

THE SIGN OF JONAH

(Mt 12:38-42; Mk 8:11,12)

11:29-32 Compare comments Mt 12:38-45. It is possible that these words of Jesus were spoken at a different

time than the similar words that are recorded in Matthew 12:38-45. ***Jonah was a sign:*** The sign that was given through Jonah was his deliverance from the belly of the whale after he had been there for three days (Jh 1:17; 2:10; 3:3-10; Mt 12:39,40). Similarly, the sign of Jesus' resurrection after three days in the tomb would be the signal to His generation that He was from God (Rm 1:4). ***Queen of the south:*** See 1 Kg 10:1-9; 2 Ch 9:1-8. ***Condemn them:*** Those who repented before the coming of Jesus repented on the basis of hearing the word of God. Those of Jesus' generation did not repent though they both heard and saw the Word of God. Therefore, those who repented without personally seeing Jesus will rise in judgment over those of Jesus' generation who were standing before Jesus who was the Son of God. He was the incarnate Word of God who had come into the world, and yet, they did not repent (Jn 1:1-3,14). Those who stood before Him, therefore, and rejected His teaching would be judged faithless by those who never saw Him but believed. Those who believe without ever having seen Him are more blessed (See comments Jn 20:29).

THE LIGHT OF THE BODY

11:33-36 Compare comments Mt 5:15; 6:22,23 (Lk 8:16; Mk 4:21). Jesus illustrated that God's true moral light had come into the world through Him (Jn 1:1ff; 8:12). However, only those who have an unprejudiced and pure heart are able to see this revelation from God. They are able to see because they are humble in heart (Compare comments Mt 5:1-16). ***Full of light ... of darkness:*** Emphasis of the context is not on the light, but on the hearts of those who behold the light. One's reaction to the light, therefore, judges whether his heart is either full of light or darkness. The spiritual condition of the beholders of the light will judge whether one is either for or against Jesus. Judgment,

therefore, is the responsibility of the individual. Jesus came in order to present the occasion for one to judge himself. For this reason, Jesus made the statement of John 3:18,19 at the beginning of His ministry. Men may judge one another on the basis of laws that they have established for themselves. The authority of the judge lies in the fact that other men have devised the laws by which he judges. However, with God and His laws the judgment is different. Men did not formulate the laws of God that have been delivered to man. God gave His own laws. He has a right to do such because He is God. Therefore, when a representative of God delivers His law to the listeners, it is the authority of the God-ordained law that judges, not the messenger of the law. When one negatively reacts to the preached law of God, then that person has judged himself in reference to the divine standard of God's law. God's messengers are only the mediums through whom God works to deliver His judgments to the people.

WOE TO THE PHARISEES

11:37 Jesus frequently ate with those who were considered the religious leaders of the community. It was His work to work with all who would accept Him and what He taught. He also ate with those the religious leaders considered to be sinners in the community (5:29; 7:36; 14:1; 19:5; Jn 2:1-11; 12:1,2). One should never refuse an opportunity to teach and preach the word of God in order that all men have an opportunity to receive and obey the will of God.

11:38,39 Compare comments Mt 15:1-20; Mk 7:1-23. *Clean ... outside ... inward ... wickedness:* Such was a description of what their legal-oriented religion had done to their lives. On the outside they professed religiosity by the performance of religious codes and ceremonies. However, their performance of their religious works did not change their hearts. They could thus maintain an outward

performance of religious rules, but at the same time maintain wickedness in their hearts (See comments intro. to Gl).

11:40,41 God made the whole man. He made man in a way that the outward behavior of the individual should naturally manifest his inward character (See Gn 1:26,27). Anything different from this would be hypocrisy. Therefore, one's inner holiness must be manifested by outward obedience to the will of God.

11:42-44 *Woe to you Pharisees:* In the house of this Pharisee, Jesus directly addressed the hypocritical religion of the Pharisees (See comments Mt 23). *Disregard justice and the love of God:* By emphasizing a pretense of a just heart before God by their religious performances, they neglected justice toward their fellow man and obedience as a result of their love of God (Mt 23:23; Jn 5:42). *Love the best seats:* See 14:7; 20:46; Mt 23:6; Mk 12:38,39. They loved to be seen for their religious presence and performances. They loved being accepted and recognized as religious leaders and given special attention for such. *Unmarked graves:* They covered their inner dead hearts by the outward performance of their religious rites and rules. Thus, men could not see their true hearts because of their pompous religious actions that were only on the outside. Their religious activities deceived others into thinking that they were spiritually driven from within.

WOE TO THE SCRIBES

11:45 *Lawyers:* These were the scribes who were the interpreters of both the Sinai law and the Jewish oral and written religious traditions that had been handed down from generation to generation in Israel. In times of dispute, they made application of the law and traditions in reference to those who were in dispute. *You insult us also:* These lawyers were of the same religious behavior as the Pharisees. They concentrated on the outward appearance of religious

behavior, but their hearts were wicked.

11:46 *For you load men with burdens hard to bear:* These scribes were interpreters of the law. They often bound on others interpretations and opinions of the law that were not a part of the law. The fact that the people could not keep all the scribes' opinions and interpretations of the law is manifested in the fact that Jesus here identifies their system of religion as a burden to the people (At 15:10). One who is legalistic will always bind the burden of man-made religious codes on the hearts of others in an effort to supposedly guarantee salvation through perfect keeping of law (See comments in intro. to Gl).

11:47,48 *You build the tombs of the prophets:* These hypocritical religious leaders built beautiful tombs to honor God's Old Testament prophets. At the same time, they rejected the word of the prophets (Mt 23:29; At 7:52). They were actually of the same evil spirit as those who killed the prophets because they spoke the truth of God concerning the apostasy of Israel. *You approve the deeds of your fathers:* The scribes were behaving after the same manner as their fathers who killed the prophets of God. Not long after the time Jesus delivered this stern rebuke to the legalistic scribes, they joined with the other religious leaders in order to devise a plot to murder Jesus. They were more concerned with their power and positions as religious leaders than with the word of the Son of God who was in their presence.

11:49 Jesus refers here to His own prophecy of sending out His prophets and apostles with the message of the gospel (Mt 23:34). But the Jews who rejected His apostles and prophets would deal with them in the same manner as the fathers of the rebellious Jews in the Old Testament (See At 4). They would persecute and kill the prophets and apostles of Jesus.

11:50,51 Compare comments Mt 23:35,36. All the

rejection that antagonistic religious leaders had heaped upon the messengers of God would come upon Jesus' generation in that God would bring national Israel to a close. The nation would terminate with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. **Abel:** See Gn 4:8; 2 Ch 26:16. **Zechariah:** See 2 Ch 24:20,21. Jesus' generation of Jews would suffer the consequences of the sins of rejection by the fathers whose traditions had become so binding in Jesus' generation that many were blinded to the coming of Jesus (See comments Mk 7:1-9). They were blinded because they could not leave their traditional religion in order to accept the teachings of Jesus. The religious traditions were given more authority in religious matters than the word of God.

11:52 *Taken away the key of knowledge:* These scribes who had bound where God had not bound did not allow the kingdom reign of God to control their lives. They were more concerned with their religious traditions, and numerous religious laws where God had not bound, than they were with the word of God. In binding such on the consciences of the Jews, they hindered others from also entering into the kingdom reign of God (Mt 23:13). Others were hindered because they were intimidated by the legalistic scribes and Pharisees who functioned as guardians of Judaism. The scribes and Pharisees thought that they had all the answers to the law and correct interpretations of prophecy, and thus, there was no more need for study and reconsideration of the prophecies. If anyone did not conform to their interpretations and opinions of the law, then they were judged heretical in reference to Judaism. Therefore, they allowed no objective Bible study by individuals who wanted to reconsider the prophecies concerning the kingdom and Messiah. They thus shut out of the kingdom those who sought God by faith.

11:53,54 *The scribes and the Pharisees began to vehemently rail at Him:* Such was only the natural reaction

of all those who have satisfied themselves with their own created religions after the desires and traditions of men. When one's religious tradition is under attack, he often resorts to vehement attack because he knows his faith is not based on the word of God, but on his own traditions or emotional hysteria. If one is financially sustained by the man-made religion that he upholds, he will vehemently attack those who would endanger his livelihood through the preaching of the truth. ***To catch Him:*** The legalist seeks to catch his opponent in some type of verbal trap in order to defeat his opponent. The foundation of his argumentation is not based on love and mercy, and a search for truth. It is based on the arrogance of his own ability to verbally out perform his opposition. Luke here records the behavior of legalistic religionists in order that we identify the behavior and character of such in their opposition to the truth of God.

Chapter 12

WARNINGS AGAINST IN SINCERE RELIGIOSITY

12:1 ***The leaven of the Pharisees:*** Jesus identified the leaven as the insincere religiosity of the Pharisees (See comments Mt 16:6). They were insincere, and thus hypocritical, because one could perform the outward ceremonies of the religion without dealing with one's heart. Judaism had digressed, as in the times of the prophets, to a religion of social politics. It was a code of regulations to which people were intimidated to conform. But in the performance of the outward obedience of codes and regulations that gave the appearance of religiosity, one could leave his heart unchecked (See comments Cl 2:20-23).

12:2,3 ***Nothing covered:*** One's response to the grace of God, either negatively or positively, reveals his heart. Jesus' coming was the occasion that offered the opportunity for all men to either accept or reject Him. The re-

sponse of each individual to Jesus would bring judgment into his or her life (See comments Mt 10:26-33; compare 1 Co 4:5; Ep 5:13).

12:4,5 This discourse is directed primarily to the disciples who would suffer at the hands of persecutors. The disciples must not fear the persecutors who can kill the body. They must walk in fear of God who has the power to cast one into the punishment and destruction of Gehenna (See Ps 119:120; see comments Mt 10:28).

12:6,7 See comments Mt 10:29-31. God cares for those who are His. In these words, Jesus reassured the disciples because they did not know the extent of the persecution into which He was sending them. They would later remember these words in the heat of persecution in order to be comforted by the fact that God cares for His friends (vs 4).

12:8,9 See comments Mt 10:32,33. *Confess Me before men:* The Christian confession is more than words that often give only lip service to God. Jesus calls on the commitment of one's life by sacrificial living (Rm 12:1,2; see Rm 10:9; 2 Tm 2:12; 1 Jn 2:23). Disciples must offer a living confession before those whom they live.

12:10 One could speak against Jesus during His ministry. However, in the time of the Holy Spirit after the events of Acts 2 when the kingdom reign of Jesus was announced, one could not reject the work and word of the Holy Spirit and expect to be saved. The Holy Spirit's work through the apostles and prophets was God's last appeal to all men to repent. As a result of the Spirit's appeal through the apostles, many did repent (At 2:36-38,41; 6:7; see comments Lk 12:32; Mk 3:29). These are the last days wherein God is working among those of this world. There will be no more dispensations of opportunity for men to respond to God, and thus have the opportunity to enter eternity.

12:11,12 These words were directed specifically to the twelve because it was to them that Jesus gave the special

promise of the inspiration of the Spirit. The Spirit would reveal to them all truth that was necessary for the community of God's people (See Lk 24:44; Jn 14:26; 16:13,14). The time of these trials before courts would happen after the establishment of the church in Acts 2 (Compare 21:15; At 4:8-12; see comments Mt 10:19,20).

TRUSTING IN THE WORLD

12:13-15 It was the privilege of the older brother in the Jewish culture to receive a double portion of the inheritance. However, he also had the responsibility of caring for the mother and unmarried sisters (See Gn 25:29-34; Dt 21:17). With the inheritance came also the responsibility. But this brother who asks Jesus to divide the inheritance had his mind focused on the material things of the inheritance and not the responsibility of the family. Jesus thus warned against being deceived into believing that material possessions added security to one's life. ***Beware of all covetousness:*** Materialism is the exaltation of the things of this world above that which will go beyond the destruction of this world (See 20:25; Cl 3:1-5; 1 Tm 6:6-10,17; Js 4:4). Materialism is idolatry. It is the consumption of the wealth of this world upon one's own pleasures in order to bring self-satisfaction. When one has a great amount of money, he has the opportunity to spend in order to enjoy possessions and activities that bring pleasure. However, such possessions and activities are personally enjoyed by the individual. The thinking of the materialist thus changes. He spends his money and enjoys the results. He becomes a self-oriented personality. The poor man does not fall into the trap of this materialistic thinking because he does not have enough money to establish the behavioral pattern of spending money in order to continually reap the material benefits. His spending is for survival, not for possessions and pleasure.

12:16-21 The lesson of the parable is the deception of material possessions. Jesus does not condemn material things. He condemns such only when the material things possess the individual, and thus, direct one's mind away from that which is more important than the material (See 18:22; Mt 19:21). One must keep in mind that ambitions to acquire worldly treasures do not profit toward the edification and growth of the soul that must be spiritually prepared for eternal dwelling (See Jb 27:16-19; Ps 39:6; Ec 2:18,19,26). There is no spiritual profit in spending one's life in the acquisition of the things of the world, when in the end, the things of this world will be destroyed and one is left with a life that has been wasted on acquiring material things.

TRUSTING IN GOD

12:22-28 Compare comments Mt 6:25-33. *Life is more than food:* In contrast to the error of the materialistic person of the preceding parable, Jesus reminded the disciples that true life is more than the food that the body consumes. It is more than the activities in which one can participate in order to entertain himself. *God feeds them:* Faith in God draws one away from the material world in order to trust in God as the provider of all that is necessary for life. The abundant life results in one's reliance on God as the provider of both our physical and spiritual needs (Jn 10:10).

12:29-34 *Seek His kingdom:* Matthew records that Jesus said one must seek the kingdom first (Mt 6:33). Only in seeking first the kingdom of God can one maintain the correct priorities of the Christian life. It is when one places God first in all things that God takes care of him in all ways. *Give you the kingdom:* All the threats and oppositions of the religious leaders that Jesus would encounter in these last months of His earthly ministry would not hinder the establishment of His kingdom reign in heaven. Though

the Jews as a whole rejected Jesus (Jn 1:11), God would establish the kingdom of Jesus (See Dn 7:18,27). The establishment of the kingdom did not depend on the will of man. ***Sell what you have:*** In the context of this statement of Jesus to the disciples, He was preparing them for their coming mission to all the world. They must dispense with anything that would hinder them from the mission He would soon give them to preach the gospel to all the world (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15; see comments Mk 10:17-22). This did not mean that they were to give everything away that they owned, for all the apostles had wives for whom they had to care (See comments 1 Co 9:5). ***For where your treasure is:*** The direction of one's energy determines the focus of his heart. If our lives are consumed with the earning and possession of material things, then our hearts are directed toward such. However, if our minds and hearts are focused on that which is above, then the direction of our lives will be pointed toward heavenly things (Rm 12:1,2; Cl 3:1,2). Our work for the necessities of life takes second place to that which is above this world. When material things are in their right priority, they become spiritual in the sense that we consider such to be blessings from God. It is not that material things are wrong. When material blessings are used for the work of God, then they are a blessing to many. The rich man who continually focuses his material blessings toward the propagation of the gospel is a blessing to the kingdom of God (See comments 1 Tm 6:6-10,17; 3 Jn 1-8).

WATCHING SERVANTS

12:35,36 The lesson here is similar to the one given by Jesus in the parable of the ten virgins (See comments Mt 25:1-13). Jesus' emphasis is that the servants be ready through active service in kingdom business. One must be prepared for the master by maintaining service. Those who

have a heart of service will always be watching for the master. They are looking for the coming of the master because they are ready (See comments 2 Pt 3:11-13).

12:37,38 *Blessed:* Servants who watch, maintain their preparedness by humble service (See Jn 13:4-8). Thus one can identify those who are focused on eternity by the good works in their lives (Js 2:14-26). ***Second ... third watch:*** According to the Roman accounting of time, these were times of the night. Therefore, the master could come at any time. In fact, when Jesus comes some people will be in the night on the earth, whereas others will be in the day. Jesus' point is that one must always be prepared for the coming of the Lord. Being prepared meant that one was continually working in the vineyard.

12:39,40 Compare comments Mt 24:43-51; Mk 13:33; 1 Th 5:2,6. ***Be ready:*** Those who have made it their priority to consume their time and energies with the things of this world have diverted their attention away from being prepared for the coming of the Son of Man. The materialist does not want the master to come because His coming will upset his comfortable way of life. In the historical context of what Jesus is saying, many of the rich to whom Jesus came, were not prepared to receive Him. They were more concerned over the things of the world than the fulfillment of prophecies concerning the Messiah. Jesus was the Son of Man (the Messiah) in their midst and they were not spiritually prepared to accept Him (See comments Mt 24:36-39). Specifically, the Pharisees and Sadducees were lovers of money, and thus, they were not prepared to have Jesus upset their financial use of religion to consume things upon their own lusts (See comments 16:14; Mt 15:3-6).

THE UNFAITHFUL SERVANT

12:41-46 Compare the parable of Mt 24:45-51. ***To us:*** Peter wondered concerning the application of the preced-

ing parable. The parable was for the disciples, though they did not understand the great persecution into which they were going. **Faithful and wise steward:** The twelve must become faithful to the mission Jesus was going to give them (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15). They must be wise in the application of the truth that would be revealed to them (Jn 14:26; 16:13,14). In general, every disciple must exercise the same faithfulness and wisdom with the truth that has been revealed through the apostles. **Cut him in two:** This is the severe punishment of being cut off from the presence of God (See 1 Sm 15:33; Dn 2:5; 3:29; Hb 11:37). The disciples must be careful not to engage in the affairs of this life to the extent that they are distracted from their mission (See comments 2 Pt 3:3,4). If they forget the coming of the Lord, they will become slack in their work. Jesus uses the fact that He is coming again as a stimulus to keep the disciples energetic about their preparedness for His coming. For this reason, neither He nor the apostles ever gave a specific date for the final coming of the Lord. The very reason He here leaves the specific time of His coming out of this parable and other teachings is evidence that there is no specific date stated in Scripture concerning either the coming of Jesus in judgment on Jerusalem or the end of the world.

12:47,48 Beaten with many stripes: One stripe is severe in its punishment upon the unfaithful steward. The succession of stripes continues over a longer period of time. The point is that the one who receives many stripes receives the severity of stripes over a longer period than the one who receives only one stripe. **Did not know:** Ignorance is no excuse. Those who are ignorant of the will of God will be lost. They will be lost because the law of sin and death under which they live cannot deliver them from the bondage of sin (See comments Rm 4, 5; Gl 3, 4). Salvation, therefore, is by grace in Christ (At 4:12; 2 Tm 2:10; see

Rm 1:16; 2 Th 1:7-9). Those in ignorance of the master's word will be beaten because they had no remedy for their sin that separated them from God. **Beaten with few stripes:** The duration of their beating will be less than the one who knew, but became unfaithful. Jesus emphasizes the fact that punishment will match the crime. The duration of the punishment for the unfaithful steward will be longer than for the one who did not know (See Mt 25:14-30; Js 3:1). However, both will be beaten, but one longer than the other. After the stripes have matched the crime, the end result of both will be their destruction from the presence of God (See comments Mt 10:28; 2 Th 1:7-9). Some have affirmed that Jesus' emphasis here is on the degrees of the severity of the punishment, not the duration. In other words, those who receive many stripes will receive more severe punishment than those who receive few stripes. This is true to a limited extent. Receiving more stripes is more severe than a few. From this reasoning it is assumed that there are degrees of punishment in an endless hell. But we would question the concept of an endless hell, simply because such challenges the justice of God. If the punishment is far beyond the crime, then the justice does not meet the crime, and thus God would be unjust to administer stripes without end. We must keep in mind that the text says "many stripes," not stripes without end. If the stripes were without end, then at some time during the beating after just punishment had been rendered, God would become fiendish in His punishment of the wicked. We must never allow our understanding of Scripture to bring into question the justice of God.

12:49,50 *Fire on the earth:* The preaching of the gospel would cause great turmoil among men because many would reject the gospel by remaining in their own religious beliefs (At 8:1-4). We must consider these statements of Jesus in view of how God worked in punishment on Israel

in her history when she went into apostasy. When the northern kingdom of Israel went into apostasy, God brought the Assyrians upon them in order to destroy the kingdom. He brought the Babylonians upon the southern kingdom, and subsequently destroyed Jerusalem because they had rejected God. Judgment was again looming in the near future with another destruction, the destruction of national Israel in A.D. 70. Because Israel had again rejected God, specifically, the Son of God, she would again suffer the fire of judgment. **Baptized:** The Greek word *baptizo* is used here. It is used to refer to the great suffering into which Jesus would be immersed in order to ignite the fire of judgment that would go throughout humanity by the preaching of the gospel (Mt 20:18,22,23; Mk 10:38).

12:51-53 Division: Obedience to the gospel would cause religious division within families, among friends, and wherever men would seek to obey traditional religions and subjective emotions instead of God's word (See Mt 10:24-36; Jn 7:43; 9:16; 10:19; At 14:4). The gospel would bring great division among Jewish families.

12:54-56 Compare comments Mt 16:1-5. Jesus here turns to the multitudes. He specifically turns to those who were caught up in the traditional religion of the Jews that had been handed down from the fathers (Mk 7:1-9). **Hypocrites:** They were zealous to perform the outward ceremonies of their religion, but were corrupt in their hearts. They legally performed the regulations of their religion, but failed to obey the commandments of God (See comments Mt 15:1-9; Cl 2:20-23; intro. to Gl). **You can discern:** They could understand the changing of the weather by the changing of the signs of nature. However, they could not understand that the great miraculous works of Jesus indicated that something was about to be changed in Israel. Change was happening, but they were too afraid to flow with the wave of change that would eventually overwhelm Judaism and na-

tional Israel. They were in times of change, but their fear of change moved them to fight against Jesus who was causing the change. Their failure to recognize a spiritual paradigm shift from the old wineskins to the new, left them victims of themselves in the destruction of Jerusalem that would come in forty years from the time these statements were made.

12:57-59 Compare comments Mt 5:25,26. Jesus was the judge in this case who was preaching the truth by which men would judge themselves. Those of Jesus' audience who rejected Him, judged themselves. They would face their own judgment in the destruction of national Israel in A.D. 70, and finally, in their eternal condemnation in final judgment. It was the time, therefore, that they should be seeking reconciliation with the Judge who was in their midst (See comments Jn 12:48).

Chapter 13

NECESSITY OF REPENTANCE

13:1 All that is known of this incident is what Luke records here. The indication is that Pilate sent soldiers to execute punishment on some insurrectionist Galileans while they were offering the sacrifices of the Passover. The reason some evidently brought this incident to the attention of Jesus was an effort to justify themselves in their own sin. In order to divert Jesus' previous teaching from direct application of themselves, they asked Jesus this question. A common belief among the Jews was that calamity was an indication of sin in the life of an individual (See Jn 9:2; At 28:4). Since those who suffered at the hands of Pilate were punished, they reasoned that they were deserving of such because of their sin.

13:2,3 *Do you suppose:* All sin results in the same consequence. Sin separates one from God (Is 59:2), and thus, causes spiritual death (Rm 3:23; 6:23). One cannot

justify his own sin by pointing out the supposedly greater sin of someone else. **Repent ... perish:** There is possibly a double meaning with Jesus' call for their repentance. One would certainly eternally perish as a result of sin that separates one from God. One sin will cause one to perish (Jn 2:10). And unless one repents of sin, he will perish from the presence of God (2 Th 1:7-9). In the historical context of national Israel, however, they would perish in the destruction of Jerusalem if they did not accept Jesus as the Messiah and Savior of the world.

13:4,5 Those eighteen: Jesus challenged the teaching that calamity was a sign of sin. The eighteen who perished were the victims of an unfortunate accident. Everyone knew that they were not sinners according to how sin was understood by those who made the accusation in verse 1. In this context, however, Jesus says that if those in Jerusalem did not repent, they would perish in a similar calamity. They did not repent, and thus, they suffered the calamity of the destruction of Jerusalem wherein over one million Jews died (See comments Mt 24). Though they would suffer physical death in the destruction of Jerusalem, they would suffer eternal condemnation when Jesus comes again (2 Th 1:7-9). **Repent:** In order to escape destruction, one must change his thinking and life in order to submit to the will of God (At 3:19; 17:30,31; 2 Pt 3:9). Repentance means that one must not only change his thinking, he must change his behavior to conform to that which he knows he must do. A remorseful heart that does not lead to a change in one's life is useless in reference to one's salvation.

PARABLE OF THE UNFRUITFUL TREE

13:6-9 The ax was laid at the root of national Israel (Mt 3:10). The nation was soon to be cut down. The meaning of this parable is that Israel (the fig tree) was planted years before the coming of Jesus who came to receive its

fruit (See Gn 12:1-3). However, Israel was unfruitful in that many in Israel strayed from God to follow after their own traditional religion (Mk 7:1-9). Nevertheless, Jesus (the vinedresser) pleaded to God on behalf of Israel (Mt 23:37). But Israel would not repent, and thus, the tree was cut down in A.D. 70 (See comments Mt 24). The lesson of the parable is that God expects fruit. He expects fruit because fruit is the indication of an obedient heart. If there is no fruit, then there is no active faith. And without an active faith, no one can be saved (See comments Js 2:14-16).

HEALING ON THE SABBATH

13:10-13 *Spirit of infirmity:* We do not know specifically what this infirmity was. Since the sick woman could not straighten herself, some believe it was a deformity in her back. *Jesus saw her:* This is a case where Jesus took the initiative to heal the woman. He did so because she had not come to Him seeking to be healed. *Immediately she was made straight:* True confirming miracles that confirmed God's message and messengers before unbelievers were instantaneous. They could be recognized as miraculous even by those who did not believe in Jesus (At 4:14-16).

13:14 *Ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation:* The ruler did not deny the miracle. His indignation resulted from the fact that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath. He evidently had little concern for humanitarian works in view of the fact that one of the traditional regulations of the Sabbath was broken. Such indicates the judgmental harshness of legal religion in reference to the weightier matters of the law as love, mercy and justice. Those who promote legal religions are more concerned over conformity to their humanly devised regulations than the will of God (Mk 7:1-9; compare also Mt 12:10; Mk 3:2; Lk 4:16; 6:1-6; 14:1-6; Jn 5:16; see comments in intro. to Gl).

13:15,16 *Hypocrites:* All those present who felt that Jesus was violating a Sabbath law, as interpreted by the religious leaders, fell under the condemnation Jesus gives. The binding of their interpretations of the Sabbath law had led them away from God's original purpose for the Sabbath. At the time of Jesus, the Jews were more concerned with the scribes and Pharisees' interpretations and opinions of the Sabbath law than the original intent of the Sabbath. If humanitarian healing on the Sabbath contradicted what they believed was a violation of Sabbath law, then their interpretation was wrong. In fact, Jesus points out that they were more concerned for their animals on the Sabbath than for their fellow human being.

13:17 *All His adversaries were ashamed:* Those who were the adversaries of Jesus were in bondage to their beliefs because they had bound that which God had not bound. Their interpretations of the law had led them astray from the One who originally gave the law. Their antagonism against Jesus manifested that their religious beliefs did not originate from God, but from themselves. When those with contradictory beliefs could not answer Jesus, they were embarrassed before the people. ***All the people:*** It seems that the common people who were not of the social group of religious leaders, were receptive to the teachings of Jesus. They rejoiced over the work of Jesus. However, those who were bound by the politics of religious leadership suffered with indignation because Jesus threatened their social religious status. Jesus upset their institutional religious fellowship, and thus, He became the subject of their indignation.

DEFINITION OF THE KINGDOM

(Mt 13:31-33; Mk 4:30-32)

13:18,19 See comments Mt 13:31-33; Mk 4:31,32.
Mustard seed: The kingdom reign that originates from the

God of heaven is planted in the hearts of men when men submit to the will of the Father (17:20,21). When the will of the Father is done on earth as it is done in heaven (Mt 6:9,10), then the kingdom has come. The beginning of the process of submitting to the will of God starts small as a mustard seed in the lives of a few disciples. From this small start the influence of the kingdom grows throughout society. During the ministry of Jesus there were only a few disciples. However, this would change. From those small beginnings the kingdom reign of Jesus has spread throughout the world to millions of hearts.

13:20,21 *Leaven:* Once the seed of the kingdom is planted in the hearts of men, as leaven is placed in the bread, then the growth begins. In time, the influence of the kingdom spreads throughout society (Mt 13:33). The kingdom thus starts small and then has the characteristic of gradually growing throughout the hearts of people. Workers in the kingdom, therefore, should always be patient. It takes time for one's labors to bring forth fruit. Patient laboring in the vineyard will bring forth fruit. The seed of the kingdom will produce if one is patient for the fruit. The result of the leaven is fruit. If the leaven is not spreading, it is dead. Disciples that are not multiplying themselves throughout their communities are dead, and thus cannot be identified as the leaven of the kingdom.

ENTRANCE INTO THE KINGDOM

(Mt 7:13,14,21-23)

13:22 *Went through the cities and villages:* As the prophets of the Old Testament, Jesus journeyed through the population centers in order to teach. He was laying the foundation upon which the disciples would reap a great harvest after the cross, resurrection and beginning of the new covenant in Acts 2. ***Toward Jerusalem:*** Jesus was near Jerusalem in the town of Bethany when He raised

Lazarus from the dead. The resurrection of Lazarus took place on this final trip to Jerusalem (Jn 10:22-42).

13:23,24 *Few who are saved:* This question stimulated Jesus' teaching concerning the narrow gate. It is a fact of historical significance. Throughout history few people are obedient in comparison to the population of the world. As in the few eight souls who were saved in Noah's ark, so few who will be obedient to the gospel at any one time in history (1 Pt 3:20,21). ***Strive to enter:*** See 1 Co 9:24-27; Ph 3:12; 1 Tm 6:12; 2 Tm 4:7. ***Narrow gate:*** The gate is narrow, not because it is the fault of God, but because of the unwillingness of men to submit to the will of God. Men make the gate narrow because of their own rebellion against God (See comments Mt 7:13,14). ***Will not be able:*** They cannot enter because they are either trapped by their love of the world, or are caught in the deception of their own devised religions. Many religious people cannot enter because they have tried to make their own gate through which to enter. Since they have convinced themselves that their gate is the right gate, they will not seek to enter the true gate (Jn 14:6; At 4:12).

13:25-27 *Lord, Lord:* The context and nature of the teachings of Jesus here seem to indicate that His teaching is in reference to the last days of national Israel. Jesus was at this time personally in their presence, eating and drinking with those who would reject Him. However, there would come a time when they would finally realize that they should have accepted Him. But it will be too late when they come to this realization. God's judgment through the proxy of the Roman Empire would have already been set in motion. Only the total destruction of national Israel would quench the fury of Rome and the justice of God for Israel's rejection of His Son. At the time of the destruction, many who had formerly rejected Jesus would accept Him. However, at the end of the world there will be no second chance.

When Jesus comes in the end, all choices to obey Him will be terminated. ***Depart from Me:*** Compare comments Mt 7:13-23; 8:11ff; 19:30; 20:16; 25:10-12,41; Ti 1:16.

13:28 *Weeping and gnashing of teeth:* See Mt 8:12; 13:42; 24:51. This figure does not only refer to pain or torment, but also to the anguish of losing that for which one hoped and thought he had secured. The religious leaders thought that they were right in their religion. However, when they finally realized through the total destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the Jewish State in A.D. 70 that God had rejected them, then they would weep and gnash their teeth, realizing that God had rejected them.

13:29,30 *They will come:* The obedient of all the world would come to submit to the kingdom of God. The kingdom would not be exclusively for the Jews, but for Gentiles throughout the world (Is 45:6; 49:12; Cl 1:13; Hb 11:8-10). When Jesus came, He came to release God's people from a specific territory or land. Their land would be the world, not the land of Palestine. His word would go into all the world, and thus, He would have disciples throughout the world (Compare comments Jn 4:19-24). Those who were obedient to His word in all nations would come into a covenant relationship with Him, and thus be the universal church in all the world (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15,16). They would not be identified by their possession of a land or physical structure, or an assembly of like-minded people, but by their love and individual covenant relationship with God. ***Last who will be first:*** Those people the self-righteous religious leaders considered to be last, will actually, because of their humble hearts, be the first to submit to the will of God by obedience to the gospel (See comments Mt 20:16). And so it is in reference to those who have constructed their own religious means by which they would enter the kingdom. Those who trusted in their own religion in Jesus' day did not realize the futility of Judaism

until God destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70. After the destruction, however, they began to understand that God had finalized national Israel (Compare At 6:7).

EVIL INTENTIONS OF HEROD

13:31 Herod Antipas had arrested John the Baptist because John had a great following of people. This report by some of the Pharisees that Herod was seeking to kill Jesus was, according to these Pharisees, for the same reason. However, it is improbable that Herod wanted to kill Jesus for he later had the chance to kill Jesus at the time of Jesus' trials, but did not (See 23:11). These Pharisees were proclaiming this lie in order to intimidate Jesus into ceasing His teaching. At least, they wanted Him to depart from their region. When false religious leaders cannot refute the truth, they will often resort to civil government in an effort to do away with their opposition.

13:32 *Tell that fox:* The Greek word here is "she fox." Jesus was not intimidated by the cunning practices of Herod. He would continue on with His predetermined ministry regardless of the wickedness of Herod. Those who teach the truth must never be intimidated by those who are more concerned with maintaining their religious traditions than hearing the word of God. In this case, Jesus would not be intimidated by the power of the state that would set its powers against His destiny. The power of the state must never be allowed to determine the work and mission of the disciples of Jesus. The disciples must obey God above all men who would rise up in opposition against their faith. ***I must walk today:*** Jesus had set His face toward Jerusalem, the place where it was predestined that He die on the cross for the sins of man (Rv 13:8). Nothing would change His destiny. No man or government would detour the eternal plan of God for the salvation of all men.

13:34,35 See comments Mt 23:37-39. Jesus here ad-

dressed “Jerusalem” in the first person. He was God on earth who would have forgiven the city as He forgave Nineveh, if only she would repent. The inhabitants of the city were not willing to gather unto God because they had forsaken the commandments of God and gone after their own religion (See comments Mk 7:1-9). **Your house:** The temple was now desolate of any significance in reference to God. It was now their house. God had forsaken it because the religious leaders had stolen the vineyard. They would in a few days from the time Jesus made these statements kill the Son of the owner of the vineyard (See comments Mt 21:33-45). In their religious ignorance the religious leaders crucified the Son of God.

Chapter 14

HEALING A MAN WITH DROPSY

14:1-6 As on many other occasions, Jesus never refused an invitation and an opportunity to teach. He came with a message, and taught everywhere there would be those who would listen (Mt 4:23). **Dropsy:** This may have been a disease that was manifested by the accumulation of water in limbs of the body. It would be associated with edema in modern medical terms. Only Luke, the physician, records this particular miracle of Jesus. **They closely watched Him:** It seems that there may have been a group of Pharisees and scribes present at this gathering. They sought for an opportunity to accuse Jesus of violating their Sabbath traditions. Religious leaders with evil motives seek opportunities for accusations, not truth to be discussed. **Is it lawful:** If they answered Jesus’ question by saying that it was not lawful to heal on the Sabbath, then they would have been perceived to be unmerciful toward the person who was healed (See Mt 12:10). If they answered yes, then they would have no opportunity to accuse Jesus of healing on the Sabbath. **Ox fall into a pit:** From what Jesus here says,

they valued their animals more than they did the humanitarian act of healing someone on the Sabbath (13:15; Mt 12:11,12).

PARABLE ON HUMILITY

14:7-11 From how Jesus addressed the religious leaders at this time at the close of His ministry and destiny of the cross, He builds their antagonism against Him. He stirs their anger against Him in order that they rise up to have Him crucified. ***Chose the best places:*** The pompous character of the religious leaders moved them to choose places of prominence and notoriety when in public gatherings. The principal seats were seats where the honored guests were expected to be seated. But in this teaching, Jesus provided a lesson on humility for those who would seek to be noticed. ***Do not sit down in the highest place:*** One should not seek recognition for the sake of exalting himself before others. Those who behave in a manner to be noticed in public will invariably be embarrassed because of their over exaltation of themselves. ***Sit ... the lowest place:*** This is good advice for those who would use religion as a means to exalt themselves among men (See 18:9ff; Pv 25:6,7; Ez 21:26). Many preachers would do well to follow this advice. ***Will be humbled:*** See Jb 22:29; Ps 18:27; Pv 29:23; Mt 23:12; Lk 18:14; Js 4:6; 1 Pt 5:5.

14:12-14 ***Blessed because they cannot repay you:*** True hospitality is shown by being benevolent to those who cannot repay. It is giving in a manner where one does not receive any benefit as a result of the giving. Unlike the Pharisees who formed social groups in order to entertain themselves, Christians would do well to invite to their love feasts those who are poor (Ne 8:10-12; Mt 25:34-40). Jesus does not condemn feasts among friends, but he does speak against having such for the purpose of gaining an invitation to another feast for one's own gratification. Jesus'

point is that one should show a spirit of giving without motives of reaping something from the giving.

PARABLE OF THE GREAT SUPPER

14:15 *Eat the bread in the kingdom:* While still at the feast in the Pharisee's house that Luke records in 14:1, the opportunity now shifts for Jesus to change the subject concerning feasts to a parable. The parable is in reference to the great feast of spiritual food that God has prepared for all. This feast was provided through the establishment of the kingdom reign of Jesus (Compare comments Mt 22:1-14).

14:16,17 *Great supper:* Many of the Jews thought that the messianic era of an earthly kingdom would be inaugurated with the celebration of a great feast. However, such would not happen. In this parable, Jesus seeks to correct their misconceptions. They must come to His kingdom feast upon the basis of repentance (13:3-5). *Invited many:* The invitation was going out at the very time Jesus was sitting at the Pharisee's table. All must come to the spiritual feast of righteousness in the kingdom reign of Jesus.

14:18-20 *All ... began to make excuse:* God (the man who prepared the supper) prepared the kingdom reign of the Son (the great supper). The messengers of the kingdom (the apostles and evangelists) went out to invite the Jews to come to the spiritual feast of the Messiah's kingdom. However, the Jews who were invited were too concerned over the material things of life (piece of ground, oxen, marriage) to give attention to the seriousness of the invitation. Jesus' point is that the Jews stumbled over the things of this world. They thought that the Messiah should establish some type of an earthly kingdom reign where they would enjoy more of the world's possessions. The Jews presumed that the kingdom reign of the Messiah would be

of this world where they could possess the world and live a very materialistic life of comfort.

14:21-24 *Go out quickly:* Those who were gratified with their own religions and material possessions did not receive the message of Jesus. Therefore, God sent His messengers to those who were receptive. In this case, the receptive were the common people of society. The lesson is that when one realizes the unreceptive attitude of certain groups, he must go to those who are receptive in order that God's house be filled. In this parable, the host did not tell his servant to linger with the unreceptive. Once the lack of receptivity was discovered, he told the servant to go quickly to those who were receptive to his invitation. ***Compel them to come in:*** The receptive, including the Gentiles, were constrained to submit to the kingdom reign of God by the appeal of the gospel (1 Th 2:12; 2 Th 2:14). People are compelled to come to Jesus by the appeal of the cross. Jesus draws people to Himself by His loving sacrifice for their sins (Jn 12:32). Those who are not drawn by love are not of the nature that characterizes the kingdom of God. ***None of those men ... will taste of my supper:*** The religiously comfortable and materialistically obsessed will not submit to the kingdom reign of Jesus. Therefore, they will not enjoy the salvation that Jesus offers simply because they have chosen to maintain their own life-style that is patterned after religious traditions and the world (See comments Ep 2:1-4). If one would come to Jesus as a disciple, he or she must make every sacrifice that is necessary to be obedient to Jesus.

THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP

14:25-27 See comments Mt 10:34-42. ***Great multitudes went with Him:*** People were following Jesus to Jerusalem for various reasons. However, it was at this time in Jesus' ministry that He was nearing Jerusalem and the

cross. In the following discourse, He sought to sift out of the multitudes those who were not willing to pay the cost of being a true disciple. These are hard words for those who are not willing to commit themselves totally to Him. Many will not pass the test. But those who do will have a tremendous influence in the world with their lives. ***Hate ... father ... mother ... wife ... children ... brothers ... sisters ... own life:*** Matthew says, “*He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me*” (Mt 10:37). Luke’s use of the word “hate” means that one must love his family less than he loves Jesus. In order to be a disciple of Jesus, one cannot love his family and his own life more than he loves Jesus. If any situation develops in one’s life when he must make a decision between following and serving Jesus or his own family, his eternal destiny would dictate that he follow Jesus (See comments Mt 22:37-40; see Dt 13:6; Rm 9:13; Rv 12:11). ***Cannot be My disciple:*** Jesus calls for total commitment. He calls for the sacrifice of one’s entire life (See 9:23; Rm 12:1,2; Gl 2:20; 6:14). Many cannot be disciples simply because they are not willing to pay the price of discipleship. The evangelist must understand that there are many to whom he will preach who do not desire to meet the qualifications of self-denial that Jesus here calls on people to make in order to follow Him. He must accept the fact, therefore, that some people will not be disciples of Jesus because they are not willing to pay the cost of discipleship.

14:28-30 *First sit down and count the cost:* Counting the cost of what it will take to be a disciple assumes that one may make the decision to turn away from the gospel. Though Paul was a chosen vessel for God’s work, Jesus first showed him all things that he had to suffer in order to carry out his mission (See comments At 9:15,16). The early disciples were shown what the cost of discipleship would be in their lives. They, as well as all disciples, must go

through many sufferings in order to be saved (At 14:22; Rv 2:10; see Rm 8:18). **Begin to mock him:** Those who convert to Jesus, and then fall away, will be mocked by those who never wanted to become disciples in the first place (See 2 Pt 2:20-22).

14:31-33 Before a king goes to war with the enemy he must first consider whether he has enough power to win the battle. Before one becomes a disciple he must first consider whether he can win the battle (Ep 6:10-18). Jesus' emphasis here is that one must seriously consider his call to discipleship. His emphasis is on the seriousness by which we must consider being a disciple. Those who do not take their discipleship seriously will inevitably become indifferent and lukewarm. Their attitude of indifference and lukewarmness will be as leaven, and thus, affect the entire group of disciples (See comments Rv 3:15,16). **Asks for terms of peace:** Jesus is the King who is coming against all those who have not obeyed the gospel. He is coming with destruction (2 Th 1:6-9). If one would have peace with King Jesus at the time of His final coming, then he must sit down and consider Jesus' conditions for peace. His conditions begin with obedience to the gospel (See comments Rm 6:3-6; 1 Co 15:1-4). **Forsake all that he has:** The rich young ruler who wanted to be a disciple of Jesus had to pay this price because his riches stood between him and commitment to Jesus (See comments Mk 10:17-31). If one wants to be a disciple of Jesus, he must be willing to forsake all that is necessary in order to be such (9:61; 12:33; Ph 3:7-11). If he is not willing to forsake all for Jesus, then that which he is not willing to forsake will eventually be his stumbling block over which he will fall as a Christian.

14:34,35 **The salt has lost its saltiness:** When salt loses its saltiness, it is good for nothing, and thus, it is thrown out into the rubbish heap. So it is with a disciple. When a Christian loses his Christian influence in the community,

he is good for nothing with reference to influencing people to come to Jesus. His bad reputation repels people from Jesus. The light of the gospel that dwells in the hearts of humble people draws the lost to the cross (Mt 5:13-16; Mk 9:50). Therefore, when one considers becoming a disciple of Jesus, he must consider whether he will be a positive influence for Jesus or a negative influence. Those who are not willing to forsake all for Jesus, will be a negative influence for Jesus. Those who are willing to pay the price of discipleship will reap the life about which Jesus spoke in John 10:10. *“I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”* They will enjoy the fullness of life because they will understand the purpose of life and their eternal destiny in the presence of God. The abundant life, therefore, has nothing to do with wealth. On the contrary, it is gospel living in response to the gospel.

Chapter 15

15:1,2 In this chapter Luke brings together several parables of Jesus that deal with the condition of the lost and their opportunity for salvation. ***Tax collectors ... sinners drew near to Him:*** See Mt 9:10-15. These were those who were judged to be sinners by the Pharisees and scribes because they did not conform to their code of religious behavior. However, the hearts of some of these tax collectors and supposed sinners were humble enough to know that Jesus had the words of life. They did not stumble over their religiosity in order to find in Jesus that which they knew they needed in their lives. ***Receives sinners:*** This is the work of Jesus and all who would claim to be of Him (19:10; see comments Rm 14). Those who seek Jesus are those who realize their own sin. When one is religiously self-righteous, he will not seek God’s grace through Jesus. He will remain in his own self-deception and turn away from the One who can spiritually heal him of sin. The dis-

ciples of Jesus, therefore, must never turn away from one who is seeking eternal life.

PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP

(Mt 18:12-14)

15:3-7 See comments Mt 18:12-14. *He loses one of them:* The fact is that one loses himself when he strays from the flock. When lost, he cannot find his way back, and thus, he is hopeless in a situation where he cannot save himself. However, from God's viewpoint, it is He who loses a sheep. When a sheep strays, it is He who provides the grace for the lost sheep to be restored to the flock. *Go after the one:* Once it is discovered that the sheep has strayed, the owner immediately goes after the stray (See Jr 31:10-20; Ez 34:11-16; 1 Pt 2:25). Good shepherds know the flock well enough to know when a sheep goes astray. They love enough to go after lost sheep. *Rejoice with me:* All those who are in the fold of the sheep are identified as such because they rejoice over the fact that a lost sheep was found (Rm 12:15). They rejoice because they are of the same nature as the shepherd. His mission is their mission. They are identified to be of the flock because their desire is the same as the shepherd of the flock. However, those who are of a judgmental attitude will not willingly receive the lost sheep back into the fold (See comments 15:27-32). Their nature excludes them from being identified with the flock. Only gospel obedient people are of the flock of God who offered His Son for the flock.

PARABLE OF THE LOST COIN

15:8-10 *Coins:* The coin here was a drachma which was a valuable coin. It was often worn around the neck by married women in a ten-piece garland. Jesus' emphasis in this parable was on the value of just one soul. *Sweep the house:* With diligence, God desires to find those who are

lost. **Rejoice with me:** As in the parable of the lost sheep, so here again Jesus emphasizes the rejoicing of God over the salvation of those who are lost. Those who cause rejoicing in the presence of the angels of heaven are those who save the lost by the preaching of the gospel. In the cultural context in which Jesus presented these parables, there were racist Jews who did not associate with either the Samaritans or Gentiles. In the community of God that Jesus would establish, however, all those who come to Him in obedience to His lordship must accept one another regardless of their cultural background (See comments Jn 4:1-26; Gl 3:26-29).

PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL

15:11-16 This parable describes the behavior and attitude of two sons. The younger son foolishly took his inheritance and wasted it in riotous living until he ended up in the worst of conditions. It took tragedy in his life to bring him to his senses. At the same time, the older son remained faithful to his duties. In the context of this chapter, and the presence of the Pharisees and scribes, the older son would represent the attitudes of these religious leaders who judged the Gentiles unworthy. Those whom the scribes and Pharisees considered unrighteous are here pictured coming back to God with a repentant attitude. The Jews thought that God had made the promise of Genesis 12:3 exclusively to them. However, the promise was that in Abraham all nations of the earth would be blessed (See comments Gl 3:26-29).

15:17-19 When the prodigal son finally realized the depths to which he had digressed in life, he humbled himself in order to return and seek the work of a slave in his father's house (See Ex 9:27; 10:16; Nm 22:34; Ja 7:20; 1 Sm 15:24,30; 26:21; 2 Sm 12:13; Ps 51:4; Mt 27:4). And so it is with those who come to Jesus. Those who have

been humbled by life are receptive to the message of the One who would be their Lord, and thus, direct their lives to an abundant life (Jn 10:10; 1 Pt 5:5,6; see comments Mt 5:1-16). Those who have come the longest way in changing their lives in order to accept the lordship of Jesus are often those who have a greater appreciation of God's grace (Compare comments 2 Co 4:15).

15:20,21 Once the prodigal son had made the decision to return, and was in the process of returning to his father, the father embraced him and accepted him back into the family. However, when the prodigal was in the pig pen, the father did not search him out and drag him back home. The son had to make the decision for himself in order that his repentance bring forth fruit in his life. In the company of Jesus on this occasion were the tax collectors and "sinners" whom the Jewish religious leaders had judged unworthy of God's acceptance. But those who were humbled by their life in the pig pen wanted to draw near to Jesus (vs 1).

15:22-24 As the Father rejoiced over the one lost sheep (vs 7) and the lost coin (vs 10), so here there is rejoicing again over one who has realized the sin of his life (See 9:60; 15:32; Mt 8:22; Rm 11:15; Ep 2:1-5; 5:14; Cl 2:13; 1 Tm 5:6). In the historical context of Jesus' ministry, the common people, Samaritans and Gentiles were coming to Jesus. Those who were considered religiously unclean by the Jewish religious leadership were the ones who were receiving the message of the kingdom.

15:25-30 *The older son ... became angry:* The older son could not understand why the father would show grace and mercy to one who had rebelled against the father. The older son had remained faithful to his duties, and thus, judged the younger son to be undeserving of the mercy of the father. So also was the legalistic attitude of the Pharisees and scribes concerning any whom they had judged to be sinners. They could not understand how God could ex-

tend grace and mercy to those who had been rebellious against the commandments of God (See comments Ep 2:1-10). To them it was inconceivable that God would reach out to the Gentiles or Samaritans.

15:31,32 The Pharisees and scribes had maintained their institutional religiosity. However, they also developed an arrogant attitude toward those who were not of their cultural or religious fellowship and heritage. They thus became judgmental of all those who were not submissive to their system of Judaism. But Jesus teaches here that if they would remain faithful to the Father, they must change their attitudes toward the Gentiles and Samaritans who were coming into the kingdom by their submission to the will of God. They must come out of their isolation and embrace the Gentiles and Samaritans who were to be invited by God through the preaching of the gospel.

Chapter 16

PARABLE OF GOOD STEWARDSHIP

16:1,2 Jesus spoke this parable to the disciples, but the message of the parable was about the religious leaders of Israel. *A certain rich man:* God had entrusted the religious leaders of Israel with the spiritual care of the nation (Mt 23:2; Rm 3:2). They were to lead the nation spiritually by directing the minds of the people toward God and the hope of Israel. However, because of their love for power, positions and possessions, they were moved by their love of money in their relationship with the people. They viewed the people as a source for sustaining their support. Their ministry was based on maintaining the financial support of the people, not on ministry to the people. *A steward:* The religious leaders were entrusted with the heritage of God, but they became materialistic with their holdings (vs 14). They took advantage of the people and consumed the material things of Israel upon themselves because they were

lovers of money (See comments Mt 15:1-9). ***Give an account:*** The presence of the Son of God in their midst meant that it was the time that they should give account of their stewardship before God. But these stewards would soon kill the Son and seize upon His inheritance (See comments Mt 21:33-45). Their greed moved them to do that which was contrary to the will of God.

16:3,4 *I cannot dig:* These religious leaders had lived off the coveted contributions of the people for a long time. They had been full-time religious leaders in society for so long that they could not make a living for themselves with their hands. Instead of correcting their life-style in reference to God, which meant that they would lose their full-time positions as religious leaders, they schemed as to how they might maintain their positions. When Jesus came, their financial security was endangered, and thus they rose up against Jesus.

16:5-8 *He had acted shrewdly:* The master did not commend his dishonesty. He commended his shrewdness to seize the opportunity to take care of himself. The steward had dealt in a shrewd manner with the possessions that did not belong to him. His actions were selfish in that he was looking out for himself and not for the stewardship that was entrusted to him. And so, the Pharisees were looking out for themselves in reference to the threat that Jesus made concerning their full-time support from the multitudes.

Children: Unrighteous religious leaders who are lovers of money will behave as the world in order to guard their financial support. They are more concerned for themselves than for the spiritual well-being of the people.

16:9-12 Jesus applied the lesson of the parable to those to whom it was directed. He taught that the righteous leaders should be wise about taking care of their spiritual life as the shrewd steward took care for his material life. ***Worldly wealth:*** This would be material possessions that

are acquired in this world. The possessions within themselves are not wrong. What is wrong is how they were acquired and idolized (See 1 Tm 6:10; 2 Tm 4:10). The Pharisees, who were lovers of money (vs 14), were not faithful to God in what they had acquired (See comments Mt 15:3-6). They could not be good stewards of God's heritage because they had proved themselves dishonest by taking advantage of the people in order to take care of their own material well-being. If one cannot be trusted with the correct use of material things, he cannot be trusted to do right if entrusted with the care of the flock of God. Therefore, one's correct use of material things will determine one's right to eternal life. A man's faithfulness is measured by what he does with what he has (See comments At 2:44,45; 4:32-37; 3 Jn 1-8).

16:13,14 See Mt 6:24; Cl 3:1-3; Js 4:4; 1 Jn 2:15. One cannot take his possessions with him into the dwelling of the new heavens and earth, but he can take the results of his giving (See 12:21; Mt 19:21; 2 Co 4:7; Gl 6:10; see comments 1 Co 15:58; Rv 14:13). **Lovers of money:** It is not the money that is evil, but the love and selfish use of it (See Mt 23:14; 1 Co 5:10,11; 6:10; 1 Tm 6:10). It is not sin to be rich. Riches are wrong when they lead one into sin (See comments 1 Tm 6:6-10,17; 1 Jn 3:16,17). In this context the lovers of money were the religious leaders in the community. Because they were lovers of money, they viewed their positions as an opportunity for gain. They viewed the people as an opportunity to sustain themselves as full-time workers in religious matters. **Scoffed:** Literally, they turned up their noses at Jesus.

16:15 **God knows your hearts:** One may self-righteously approve of himself as right in the eyes of God, but God knows what is in our hearts (1 Ch 28:9; 2 Ch 6:30; Ps 7:9; Pv 15:11; Jr 17:10). One may seek to gain the approval of others by religious performances (10:29; Mt

6:2,4,16), but what is important is what is in one's heart. Our acceptance by others in the religious world should not determine how we behave. What is most important is being accepted by God. We can know that we are accepted by God if we love Him and keep His commandments (Jn 14:15; see comments 1 Jn 5:1-4).

16:16 The Jews lived under the Sinai law and prophets. However, John the Baptist, though he lived under the Sinai law, began the introduction of a new dispensation. It was a new dispensation of grace and truth (Jn 1:17). *Forcing his way into it:* The Jews had an earthly concept of the kingdom of the Messiah. They thought that the reign of the Messiah would be over a kingdom of this world (See comments At 1:6). Based on this misunderstanding of the nature of the kingdom, many tried to press Jesus into being an earthly king in order that they might establish this earthly kingdom. They were eager to rebel against Rome in order to set up the Jewish State in the glory that it enjoyed during the days of David and Solomon. But such was not in the minds of the prophets who spoke of Jesus as the Messiah of a spiritual kingdom (17:20,21; Jn 18:33-37).

16:17 Jesus did not destroy the purpose for which the law was given. He came to fulfill the Sinai law. Once the law was fulfilled, it had accomplished the purpose for which it was given to Israel (See comments Mt 5:17,18; Cl 2:14; Rm 7:4). Once the law was fulfilled, then the Israelites were brought under the established law of Christ (See comments Jr 31:31-34). Today people should look to the law of Christ for salvational guidance and to the Old Testament for learning about the ways of God and wisdom (Rm 15:4; 1 Co 10:11).

16:18 See comments Mt 19:18,19; compare comments Rm 7:1-4.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

In order to illustrate further the situation of the Pharisees who loved money (vs 14), Jesus revealed the following case concerning the life and death of a rich man and a poor man. In telling this story of the rich man and Lazarus, He reveals facts about life after death that are nowhere else explained in the Bible.

16:19-21 *Rich man:* In Jesus' illustration, the individual who is not here named represented the privileged few. Their riches had made them grow callous to the needs of the poor. ***Lazarus:*** Lazarus was a beggar who was of a condition that was repulsive to others. His condition was so deplorable that others had to lay him at the gate of the rich man in order to beg. ***Desiring to be fed:*** Lazarus did not seek the wealth of food at the rich man's table. He sought only that which the rich man would never eat.

16:22,23 Lazarus died, his body was buried, and his spirit was taken by angels to a place of comfort. He went to be with the Lord (See 2 Co 5:1-8; 12:1-4; Ph 1:23). The rich man also died, his body was buried, and his spirit was taken into torments in hades. The spirits of both went to a specific place and were not allowed to roam at will among men. When one dies, the spirit returns to God who gave it (Ec 12:7). At death, one's destiny is sealed (Hb 9:27). There is no second chance after death. ***Hades:*** This Greek word simply means the "unseen abode of the dead." When one dies, his spirit goes into a realm where it cannot be perceived by the living. In this case, the spirit of the rich man went into a realm of torments. The rich man's torments were different than the torment that one would receive in the flesh, for at the time of the rich man's torments, he was disembodied. In both cases, neither the rich man nor Lazarus were left floating in space. They were without bodies, and thus, in a disembodied state of existence in some realm dwelling that had been prepared by God. It was not

the eternal state of dwelling for Lazarus, for he was still disembodied. The righteous will be in the eternal presence of God in an embodied state (See comments 2 Co 8; 1 Th 4:1-13) ***Lifted up his eyes ... and saw:*** His perception was not as that which would be experienced by the physical eyes of a physical body because his physical body was in the grave. There is evidently a different manner of perception and communication after death that we do not understand this side of death.

16:24-26 The rich man did not ask for deliverance from his predicament. He asked for relief. He realized the hopelessness of deliverance from his condemnation to torments. ***Finger ... water ... tongue ... flame:*** These are metaphorical statements that refer to that which is beyond the physical. The hadean world is a realm of existence that is beyond this physical world. ***A great gulf fixed:*** There is no hope for those who die in sin. The rich man had received final judgment, for he could not be delivered from his state of condemnation. He could not go to Abraham's bosom, neither could he return to this world in order to warn his brothers. Lazarus could not go to him, nor could he return to this world. There is finality of destiny after death. Our realization of such should motivate us to be prepared for death.

16:27-31 The living cannot communicate with the dead, neither are the dead allowed to send someone to communicate with the living. ***They have Moses and the prophets:*** This is why it is unnecessary for the dead to communicate with the living. It is the responsibility of the living to turn to God's word in order to be directed by God. In the context here, Jesus was referring directly to the Pharisees and scribes who should be listening to Moses and the prophets who spoke of the coming of the Messiah who was standing before them (See Is 34:16; Jn 5:39,45; At 15:21; 17:11). If one will not listen to what God says through His word,

then he will not be delivered from the destiny that the rich man was experiencing. ***If one goes to them from the dead:*** They would not listen to someone who was resurrected. Jesus resurrected Lazarus who was the brother of Mary and Martha, but the Jews would not listen to him because they devised a plot to murder both him and Jesus (Jn 11; 12:10). When Jesus was resurrected from the dead, people would not and still do not listen to Him. The point is that if one will not listen to God through His word, he is not of an open and humble heart to listen to any miraculous witness that God might give.

Chapter 17

WARNINGS TO THE DISCIPLES

17:1,2 See Mt 17:19-21; 18:6,7, 21,22; Mk 9:23,29,42. Jesus now turns to the disciples in order to warn them concerning apostasy. Satan will use deceived men to tempt the disciples to fall away (Rm 14:13; 1 Co 8:12,13). If the disciples are inclined to believe the deceptions of Satan, then they will be in danger of falling away after the enticing words of those who speak well through the deceptions of false doctrines (See comments Mt 24:23-25). ***Offenses will come:*** Because of their commitment to Jesus, they will be scoffed and mocked (See Mt 18:6,7; 26:24; Mk 9:42; 1 Co 11:19; 2 Th 1:6; Jd 11).

17:3,4 See comments Mt 18:14,20-25 (See Ps 119:164). ***Forgive him:*** There is no sin too great that we can commit against one another that we should not forgive. However, it is difficult for one to forget. Forgiveness means putting thoughts of the offense out of our minds, though we might have to live with the consequences of the offense. Nevertheless, we must forgive. Such is necessary because of the great mercy God has had on those who have sinned against Him (See comments Mt 18:22-35; Js 2:13). Unlike man, God is able to forget our sins (Hb 10:17). He is able to do

so because it is against Him that sin is committed. However, regardless of our inability to totally forget, we must carry on with forgiveness. Forgiveness is for the benefit of the one who is sinned against. If one does not forgive, his unforgiving attitude will hinder his spiritual growth. An unforgiving spirit leads to a bitter spirit.

17:5-10 Increase our faith: The disciples were startled by what Jesus just said concerning forgiveness. They sensed that they might be in a situation where they might not be able to forgive. They were not asking Jesus to miraculously give them faith. They were asking Him to help them to learn how to forgive when sinned against. In the future, they would learn to forgive by the many experiences wherein they would suffer at the hands of those who would unjustly persecute them. Since God forgives our sins, in order to be like Him we seek to forgive those who sin against us. **Faith as a ... mustard seed:** See comments Mt 17:20; 21:21 (Mk 9:23; 11:23). It is our faith that gives us the power to allow God to work through us in order to accomplish His work. **A bondservant:** The slave obediently serves his master. He does all that is required of him. When he has done his duty, he asks the master what is yet to be done. When the disciples have done all that they think is required of them as disciples, they will still lack. In reference to their salvation, they owe more than they can ever repay. When considering the reward of eternal heaven for one's few years of service on earth, one can never put God in debt to pay us with salvation. It is because of God's grace that we receive the reward that far outweighs the small price of service Christians must pay by faithfulness to their duties as slaves of God on earth. Therefore, when the disciples of Jesus asked what they lacked, the answer will always be that they lack too much to complete. Grace assumes that we lack, and for this reason, it is not possible for anyone to save himself through meritorious works.

THE GRATEFUL LEPER

17:11-13 *He went to Jerusalem:* This was Jesus' journey to Jerusalem in order to go to the cross. This was the end of His three and a half year earthly ministry. Therefore, the statements He now makes are in reference to the end of the ministry as He focused on the cross. Luke's historical mention of Jesus' going to Jerusalem in 9:51; 13:22; 17:11 probably corresponds to John's statements of Jesus' going to Jerusalem in John 7:2; 11:17; 12:1. Between verses 10 and 11 in this context Jesus went to Bethany, Ephraim, Samaria and Galilee (See Jn 11). ***Ten men who were lepers:*** Because of their leprosy they could not associate with society, for they were considered by the law to be unclean (See Lv 13:45,46; Nm 5:2).

17:14-16 *Show yourselves to the priest:* After a leper was cleansed of his disease, he was to present himself to a priest in order to receive confirmation that he was clean (5:14; Lv 13:1-6,45-49; 14:1-32). ***Glorified God ... giving Him thanks:*** It was the Samaritan who was thankful for his healing (5:25; 18:43). This one who was rejected by the Jewish society was shown mercy by God, and thus, God's mercy stirred thanksgiving in his heart. The natural inclination of those who have received mercy from God is to give their lives in thanksgiving for what they have received (See comments At 13:46-48; 1 Co 15:10; 2 Co 4:15).

17:17-19 Jesus asked the questions here to stimulate all to think concerning their obligation of returning thanks to God for all that He would do in showing mercy to man. The gratitude of the one leper in contrast to the ingratitude of the nine, illustrates how often men forget God's blessings in both the material and spiritual realms. Christians give their lives to God for all that God has done for them in saving them through the grace of the cross. Those who are ungrateful will not serve God with zeal. Lazy Christians

will be lost because they showed no gratitude for what God did for them through the cross.

THE NATURE OF THE KINGDOM

17:20,21 These Pharisees did not understand the nature of the kingdom. They were asking from their understanding that the kingdom of God would be a physical kingdom of this world where Israel would enjoy prosperity and national sovereignty (At 1:6). They thus asked this question because they had misunderstood Jesus' previous teachings concerning the nature of the kingdom. They were here possibly seeking for a sign of the coming of the kingdom (See 3:16; 11:2-31; 13:20; 16:16; Mt 16:1-4). ***Does not come with observation:*** A physical kingdom would come with observation. One could see the king reigning on a literal throne in Jerusalem. But such would not be the nature of the kingdom that Jesus would establish. ***The kingdom of God is within you:*** The kingdom reign of Jesus was never intended to be a physical kingdom as those of the world. The metaphorical use of the word "kingdom" indicates that the kingdom of God is something greater than a physical kingdom of this world. It is a kingdom with authority and rule that originates from God out of heaven and is manifested in the hearts of those who submit to Jesus as King and Lord (Dn 2:44; 7:13,14; see comments Jn 18:36-38; Ph 2:5-11). Therefore, "*The kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit*" (Rm 14:17). The kingdom of God involves relationships, relationships between God and man (justification), and man and man (peace and joy).

THE DAY OF THE SON

Verses 22-27 refer primarily to the consummation of national Israel in A.D. 70, though the judgment language that is used by Jesus in this context refers to any of God's

judgments, either in time or at the end of time. God's judgments in time illustrate His judgment at the end of time when Jesus will come to terminate all things of this world.

17:22-24 *When you will long to see:* Jesus turns to the disciples. He stated that the cataclysmic days of turmoil were coming when they would wish that they were back in the days of Jesus' presence and mercy during His earthly ministry (Compare Mt 9:15; 13:21; 24:30). *See here:* See Mt 24:23; Mk 13:21. *Do not go after them:* Jesus warned against following after false teachers (Mt 24:4,5). The coming of the Son of Man in judgment on Jerusalem would not be a hidden event. As lightning is seen by all, so will the coming He discusses here be known to all (Mt 24:27).

17:25-30 Jesus must first go to the cross. About forty years after the cross, all the events of judgment about which He spoke in this context would happen (Mt 26:67; 27:29-31; Mk 8:31; 9:31; 10:33). Not only would Jesus personally suffer, His body (the church) would also suffer the rejection of His generation (At 8:1-4). *Days of Noah:* In the days of Noah, Noah's generation rejected God's call to repentance through the preaching of righteous Noah (Gn 6:5-8; 7:6-24; 1 Pt 3:20). People were more concerned about worldly living and things than righteousness. When the flood came to destroy them, it was too late for repentance (Gn 7:1-23). *Days of Lot:* Likewise, in the days of Lot, the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were given over to unrighteous living (Gn 19; 2 Pt 2:6,7). In both the cases of Noah and Lot, the wicked were taken and the righteous were left. So it would be in the destruction of Jerusalem. The normal activities of the lives of unconcerned men would be occurring when the Roman armies came upon the Jewish State. The Jews never believed that their city, and especially the temple, would be destroyed by the will of God, even though it had been destroyed by the Babylonians in

586 B.C. However, the Christians knew that God would do such because they believed Jesus' prophecy concerning the destruction. For this reason, Christians stayed away from Jerusalem during the time preceding the destruction in A.D. 70. ***Son of Man is revealed:*** The phrase "Son of Man" was used by the Jews to refer to the Messiah. Jesus would be revealed as the Messiah because His prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem would have come to pass. This revelation of Jesus as the Messiah would be important in time, not at the end of time, because it would stimulate many Jews to reconsider who Jesus was.

17:31-33 *In that day:* Jesus now gives details concerning the time of the destruction (See comments Mt 24). There will be no purpose in considering the salvation of material goods in the time when the city is being destroyed, for all will be lost. When the Roman armies did come, Titus withdrew from his attack upon the city to return to Rome. But this withdrawal lasted only a short time. It was at this time that every faithful Christian remembered these words of Jesus, and thus, fled the region. ***Remember Lot's wife:*** Lot's wife hesitated by longing for those things she possessed in the city that were about to be destroyed. She thus looked back with the desire of returning to the city (Gn 19:26). ***Will preserve it:*** See comments 9:24; Mt 10:39; 16:25; Mk 8:35; Jn 12:25. Those who have committed themselves totally to Jesus will believe what He is here saying, and thus, they will be willing to leave all that they have in order to save their lives in the impending destruction.

17:34-36 See comments Mt 24:40. As in the days of Noah and Lot, the wicked are taken and the righteous are left. So it would be in the days of the destruction of Jerusalem. Those who would give heed to Jesus would spare themselves by believing this prophecy of the destruction. Those Jews in Jerusalem who rejected Jesus, and held on

to their possessions and way of life, would lose their lives by being taken away with the over one million Jews who were killed during the war. Those Jews who survived were sold into slavery.

17:37 The dead carcass is national Israel. The vultures of the Roman armies would gather overhead in order to devour the spiritually dead who rejected the Son of Man (See comments Mt 24:28). We must keep in mind that the end of Israel was to be in Christ. National Israel as an independent state ended with the Babylonian conquest of Judah and Jerusalem in 586 B.C. From that time to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, the land of Palestine was always an occupied land that was controlled by a foreign power. In the destruction of Jerusalem, ethnic Israel was to be absorbed into Christ where there is neither Jew nor Gentile (Gl 3:26-29). However, the nationalism of the Jews had grown too strong to accept the dissolving of Israel in Christ. The religion of the Jews had become so traditional that the religious leaders could not accept Jesus as the Messiah. Therefore, ethnic Israel became a dead carcass in reference to God's eternal plan. National Israel had served its purpose of bringing the Messiah and Savior into the world. It was now to be terminated. A.D. 70 was the termination of centuries of God's work among a people who had forgotten the very purpose for which they were called out of Egyptian captivity. Once the promises were fulfilled in the coming of the Son of God, there was no more need for national Israel.

Chapter 18

PARABLE OF THE PERSISTENT WIDOW

18:1-5 *Men should always pray:* It is the desire of the Father that His children approach Him in prayer. Prayer is the natural response of those who recognize their need for the help of God in their lives (See 11:5-10; 18:9-14; Rm

12:12; Ep 6:18; Cl 4:2; 1 Th 5:17). **Judge who did not fear God:** One who does not respect the law of God will often have little respect for man. **Give me justice:** Someone had wronged this woman. She thus made her plea to the judge for justice against the one who had wronged her. **He would not:** The judge seems to be unconcerned with doing his duties. It seems that he was more interested in getting rid of this pleading woman than in doing his job as a just judge. Nevertheless, because of the persistent pleading of the woman, the judge acted and dealt just judgment to the one who had unjustly treated her.

18:6-8 Bring about justice ... quickly: Jesus' lesson is that if an unrighteous and unconcerned judge would act upon the persistent requests of a pleading woman, then certainly the pleas of the righteous to a concerned God would bring justice to those who persecute His children (See Hb 10:37; 2 Pt 3:8,9; Rv 6:10). Therefore, Christians must believe that God will readily answer their prayers. Jesus here encourages Christians to continue in prayer for deliverance throughout their time of persecution. God would bring down judgment on those who persecute His flock. In the historical context of His statements here, Jesus foresaw the time between the establishment of the church in Acts 2 and the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. It would be during this time when the Jews would severely persecute Christians from city to city. However, after God's judgment on the nation of Israel in the destruction of Jerusalem, Jewish persecution of the church would be greatly curtailed. Nevertheless, persecution would eventually be launched against the church by the Roman State (See comments of Rv).

PARABLE OF THE PHARISEE & PUBLICAN

18:9 Trusted in themselves that they were righteous: Luke introduced this parable by telling us the meaning. It

was about legalistic religionists who justified themselves because of their performance of their religious codes and ceremonies (10:29; 16:15; Pv 30:12). Those who do not conform to their religious behavior are thus judged or condemned because they do not measure up to the legalists' self-imposed standards. Such was the nature of the religion of the scribes and Pharisees (See intro. to Gl; see comments Cl 2:20-23).

18:10-14 *A Pharisee:* The Pharisee boasted concerning his obedience to his self-imposed religious codes and traditions. He checked off his list of righteous deeds that he did and evil deeds that he did not do. He thus trusted in himself, feeling self-confident that his performance of law should satisfy God, and thus, put God in debt to save him (See comments Rm 3:20; Gl 2:16). *Tax collector:* The tax collector stood far from the Pharisee because he was judged unrighteous by the Pharisee. However, he stood close to God because he approached God on the basis of his spiritual inadequacies (See comments Mt 5:3-10). Because he recognized his spiritual poverty, he trusted in God's grace for his salvation. *Down to his house justified:* He was justified by his faith in God's grace, not by his perfect law-keeping or performance of good deeds (Hk 2:4; Rm 1:17; Gl 3:11; Hb 10:38). *Exalts himself:* See 14:11; Jb 22:29; Mt 23:12; Js 4:6; 1 Pt 5:5. Those who have self-righteously exalted themselves will be brought down. And so, God brought the arrogant Pharisaical religion of Jerusalem down in A.D. 70.

JESUS & CHILDREN

(Mt 19:13-15; Mk 10:13-16)

18:15-17 See comments Mt 19:13-15. In order to receive the kingdom reign of Jesus, one must humble himself as a child who is not presumptuous in his behavior. One must accept God's conditions and directives in reference

to righteous behavior and not be presumptuous by establishing his own self-justification. We must not come to God with preconceived ideas and beliefs that contradict God's word, lest we bring into the church of Christ religious practices that have been invented after the desires of men and not God (See comments Mk 7:1-9).

THE RICH YOUNG RULER

(Mt 19:16-30; Mk 10:17-32)

18:18-30 See comments Mt 19:16-30; Mk 10:17-32. As the Pharisee of verses 9-14, the rich young ruler was also trusting in his performance of law-keeping in order to justify himself before God. He boasted of all that he had done from his youth. However, according to Jesus he still lacked that which was necessary in order to be a disciple. He had to dispose of whatever hindered him from giving total commitment to God. In this case, as the twelve disciples of Jesus, he had to sell all that he had in order to follow Jesus. Therefore, one must not come to Jesus with his own self-righteousness as the Pharisee. Self-righteousness must be discarded for total dependence on God. When one comes to Jesus, he must, as the young ruler, discard that which would hinder total commitment to Him (See comments 14:25-35). Because some people cannot place total trust in God in all aspects of life and belief, they cannot be disciples of Jesus. There are those who create religions that conform to the level of commitment they are willing to give. Lukewarm Christians will convince themselves that God is pleased with their lukewarm discipleship (See Rv 3:15,16). They thus create a religion in which their consciences are not troubled by the commitment that Jesus demands (14:25-35). A lukewarm Christianity is not Christianity at all. Jesus calls upon our total commitment and dedication to Him without compromise.

The Jerusalem Ministry

(18:31 – 21:38)

Outline: (1) Destined to the cross (18:31-34), (2) Healing of two blind men (18:35-43), (3) The zeal of Zacchaeus (19:1-10), (4) Parable of the pounds (19:11-27), (5) The triumphal entry (19:28-40), (6) Lamentation over Jerusalem (19:41-44), (7) Cleansing of the temple (19:45-48), (8) Challenge of Jesus' authority (20:1-8), (9) Parable of the vineyard (20:9-19), (10) Paying taxes to Caesar (20:20-26), (11) Confrontation with the Sadducees (20-27-40), (12) Jesus, the Lord of David (20:41-44), (13) Denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees (20:45-47), (14) Sacrificial thanksgiving (21:1-4), (15) Judgment on Jerusalem (21:5-38)

DESTINED TO THE CROSS

(Mt 20:17-19)

18:31-34 See comments Mt 20:17-19. The preconceived ideas of the disciples concerning the nature of the kingdom and the work of Jesus still blinded them from understanding the destiny of Jesus. They knew the prophecies (See Is 53; Ps 22). They accepted Jesus as the Messiah. However, they failed to understand that the Messiah, as prophesied, must suffer at the hands of wicked men (See 2:50; 9:45; Mk 9:32; Jn 10:6; 12:16). The kingdom over which He would reign would not be a kingdom of this world (17:20,21; Jn 18:36-38). The disciples must now focus on that which is above this world because the hour was soon to come in Jesus' ministry when the world would unleash a blow of death against Him. His destiny to be the Savior and King was about to be fulfilled.

HEALING OF TWO BLIND MEN

(Mt 20:29-34; Mk 10:46-52)

18:35-43 See comments Mt 20:29-34. There were two blind men here as recorded by Matthew (Mt 20:30). However, Luke informs us that there was one who was the outspoken of the two. Luke's testimony here defines the nature of a true miracle. Miracles are to be believed because of the valid testimony of true witnesses. There were multi-

tudes present at this healing who could give testimony to what actually happened. Luke wants Theophilus to know that the miracles of Jesus were true happenings. They were not the invention of over zealous religionists who were promoting a new religion in the Roman Empire. The miracles Jesus worked were not the performance of a skillful person who deceived the people into thinking they were healed. The miracles that Jesus worked were a testimony that God was with Him (Jn 3:2; 20:30,31).

Chapter 19

THE ZEAL OF ZACCHAEUS

19:1,2 *Chief ... tax collector:* The name Zacchaeus means “pure.” He was a superintendent of Roman-sanctioned tax collectors in his region. Though we are not given information on how he became rich, we must assume that he was honest in his dealings as a tax collector because of what he said in this text. He was a righteous rich man as Gaius in 3 John 1-8. This is one case where it is possible for the rich to remain faithful to God regardless of their wealth (See 18:24-27; 1 Tm 6:6-10,12). Being rich is not wrong, for a righteous rich person is a blessing to the kingdom. Therefore, when a rich man becomes a disciple of Jesus, we must not think that he should give away everything that he has and become poor. Otherwise, he could not use his gift to make money to help others to feed the poor and preach the gospel to the world.

19:3-7 *He sought to see ... Jesus:* Though a rich man in a great position, Zacchaeus was driven to climb a tree in order to see Jesus. Jesus’ omniscience to know the minds of men allowed Him the opportunity to know this man by name (See 6:8; 9:47; Mt 9:4; 12:25; 22:18; 24:25; Mk 2:8; 5:30). ***Received Him joyfully:*** God will receive anyone who will receive Him with joy. ***A man who is a sinner:*** Those who assumed that Zacchaeus was a sinner made their

judgments as men judge. Zacchaeus did not conform to their code of religious conduct. He was thus classified with all tax collectors who were considered traitors to Israel because they worked for Rome in collecting taxes from the Jews. The multitudes here made the mistake of judging one to be a sinner because of his associations.

19:8 *Half of my goods I give to the poor:* The tense of the verb “I give” is progressive action. Zacchaeus continually gave to the poor. He was thus a benevolent man who had compassion on the poor (Ps 41:1). ***I restore to him fourfold:*** This restoration went beyond what the Sinai law required (See Ex 22; Nm 5:6,7; Lv 6:1-6), but was often what was required by Roman law in some cases. What Zacchaeus’ restoration policy manifested was his caution to deal justly with all people in reference to money. If he inadvertently miscalculated one’s taxes, he restored fourfold. He took every precaution, therefore, to guard his integrity.

19:9,10 *Salvation has come to this house:* Zacchaeus was a son of Abraham by faith (See comments Rm 2:28,29; Gl 3:7,26-29). By his faith he was saved for his faith moved him to respond to Jesus. We must not conclude that he was saved by faith only. Faith without an obedient response is of no profit in reference to one’s salvation (See comments Js 2;14-26).

PARABLE OF THE POUNDS

19:11 Luke gives us an inspired interpretation of the meaning of this parable. The Jews thought that the Messiah would establish an earthly kingdom reign with the Messiah reigning as king in Jerusalem (See At 1:6). They seem to have forgotten that God had terminated earthly kings that would come from the seed of David (See comments Jr 22:30). They did not realize that they were in the last days of national Israel which was coming to an end. The Jews’

belief in an earthly kingdom fostered the materialistic inclinations of the Pharisees and Sadducees, for both were lovers of money (16:14). Jesus did not fit into their concept of what and who the Messiah would be. Since He was nearing Jerusalem and the cross, Jesus gave this parable concerning their rejection of Him as the Messiah. They rejected Him because He did not conform to their teachings concerning the Messiah and the kingdom.

19:12-14 *To receive for himself a kingdom:* Jesus (the nobleman) ascended to the Father in order to receive a kingdom, glory and dominion. In fulfillment of prophecy, such would be what He would do not long after this time (See Dn 7:13,14; At 1:9,10). Jesus will return at the end of time. Verse 15 says that He will have already received the kingdom when He returns. He is not coming at the end of time in order to establish another kingdom. He is coming in order to terminate this present environment, and then, return kingdom reign to God (See comments 1 Co 15:25-28). *His ... bondservants:* The responsibility for carrying the gospel to all the world was given to the servants. They were to go about doing kingdom business throughout Jesus' kingdom reign. *Mina:* A mina was worth about three months' salary. *His citizens hated him:* Jesus came to the Jews, but the Jews rejected Him as their Messiah (Jn 1:11). They thus worked through the Roman authorities in Jerusalem in order to have Him crucified.

19:15-19 In Acts 1 Jesus ascended to receive kingdom reign at the right hand of the Father (At 1:9,10; Ep 1:20-22; see Dn 7:13,14). A few days later on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 Peter announced the kingdom reign of Jesus (At 2:29-36). From this day onward the servants were to do kingdom business. Some of the servants produced. However, some refused to work, and thus were unproductive. An unproductive servant has no place in the kingdom.

19:20-27 In the context of Luke's explanation as to

why Jesus gave this parable, the unproductive servant represented those of Israel who did not give their service to the King. They stumbled because of their unbelief. **Enemies ... who did not want me to reign over them:** Such were the Jewish religious leaders who did not want Jesus as their Messiah and King. He did not conform to their definition of the Messiah. Therefore, they sentenced Him to be crucified. However, the heirs of those who condemned Jesus were slain in the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (See comments Mt 24).

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY

(Mt 21:1-11; Mk 11:1-11; Jn 12:12-19)

19:28-36 See comments Mt 21:1-11. Jesus is now on His way into Jerusalem in order to accomplish the eternal plan of redemption for man that was in the mind of God before the creation of the world (Ep 3:8-13). We must keep in mind that from this time forward in His ministry, Jesus will confront the religious leaders in Jerusalem to the point that they will take Him to the cross (See comments Jn 10:17,18). **Bethphage and Bethany:** These were two towns east of Jerusalem on the hillside of the Mount of Olives. Mary, Martha and Lazarus lived in Bethany (Mt 26:6; Jn 12:1). **Colt:** It was the fulfillment of Zechariah 9:9 that Jesus proceed with the victory march into Jerusalem. The acquisition of the colt for Jesus' plan to triumphantly enter the city of Jerusalem was for the purpose of symbolizing the victory return of a conquering king. Jesus knew He would conquer Satan with the victory of the cross and His conquest over the tomb. Jesus also allowed the triumphal entry in order to provide the opportunity for the religious leaders of Jerusalem to manifest their envious hearts. Once their envy was stimulated, such would drive them to nail Him to the cross.

19:37-40 **Multitude of the disciples:** It was the dis-

ciples who had accepted Jesus as the Messiah. The Pharisees in the midst of the multitude were evidently motivated to jealousy because the disciples had accepted Jesus as the Messiah. Because they resented the disciples' loyalty to Jesus, the religious leaders asked Jesus to ask the disciples to be quiet concerning their praise of Him. The Pharisees had accepted Jesus as a teacher, but they did not accept Him as a king. Therefore, their rejection of Him was the fulfillment of the parable of verses 11-27 (Jn 1:11). ***Stones ... cry out:*** See Hk 2:11. This should be the response of those who recognize the sonship of Jesus. That which we would assume would never respond (stones), would give testimony to the sonship of Jesus. If the stones of the city of Jerusalem were in the mind of Jesus when He made this statement, the meaning would be that when Jerusalem was levelled by the Romans in A.D. 70, such would proclaim that God was with Jesus and His disciples, and had terminated national Israel (See Mt 13:43).

LAMENTATION OVER JERUSALEM

19:41-44 Jesus wept over the city of Jerusalem because it was caught up in the affairs of this world and religious heresy. The religious hierarchy of leadership had rejected the word of God, and thus, the religious leaders rejected the Son of God who was sent to redeem all Israel (Mk 7:1-9). Jesus also knew that because of their rejection, within forty years Jerusalem would be levelled to the ground by the Roman army (See comments Mt 24). The nation that had been the chosen by God to bring the Redeemer into the world was being terminated. National Israel was coming to an end because God had fulfilled His purpose for which she was created. National Israel was also rejected because she had rejected the Son of God. History was indeed repeating itself in Israel because they had again forgotten the law of God (See Hs 4:6; Mk 7:1-9).

The nation had a history of rejecting God. This was just another in a series of rejections for which they would pay the ultimate price. This was the final rejection and final judgment of the nation. In the eyes of God, the Jews as a chosen people were coming to an end (See comments Gl 3:26-29).

CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

(Mt 21:12,13; Mk 11:15-17; Jn 2:13-17)

19:45,46 See comments Mt 21:12,13. *My house:* In view of the fact that the physical temple was never in the plan of God for Israel (see comments 2 Ch 2-6), we must view this reference to the temple that Herod built to be metaphorical of the true house of God (See comments 1 Tm 3:15). Reference was to the people of God, not to a physical structure. *House of prayer:* Nowhere in the Old Testament was the physical temple of Solomon designated a house of prayer. The prophecy of Isaiah 56:7 was in reference to the present spiritual house of God, the church, which offers up prayers continually to God (1 Th 5:17; 1 Pt 2:5). The statement of Jeremiah 7:11 was in reference to a spiritually fallen Jerusalem whose religious leaders were more concerned about their own physical well-being than repentance. The religious leaders of Israel at the time of Jesus had turned from prayer to God to payments for sacrifices. They became as their forefathers before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C., which is the context of Jeremiah 7:11. The money changers in the temple had turned the temple into a market for selling at inflated prices the sacrifices that were necessary for the feast of the Passover. They were using the sacrificial responsibilities that were required under the Sinai law as an opportunity to make an unfair profit from the people. This same principle would apply to religious leaders today who take advantage of the spiritual hearts of the people in order

to maintain their financial well-being.

19:47,48 *Taught daily in the temple:* See 21:37; 22:53. The work of a teacher is to teach. Jesus taught daily in the place where religious people assembled because of their interest in the Old Testament Scriptures. It will be the practice of good teachers to teach daily. Their daily teaching will be in places where religious people assemble who are interested in the Scriptures. When there is much teaching going on concerning the word of God, there will be many responses. ***Sought to destroy Him:*** Luke's historical record of the plot of the Jewish religious leaders to kill Jesus was a testimony to Theophilus that Christianity was not a sect of Judaism. The Jewish religious leadership rejected Jesus. They did not accept Him as the Messiah and king of Israel. Therefore, the belief that Christianity was just another sect of Jewish denominationalism was not true. Those who led the Judaism of the day, rejected Jesus who was the Son of God. Jesus claimed to be both the Messiah and Son of God. The religious leaders could not accept either claim, regardless of the miraculous confirmation of Jesus. Therefore, these religious leaders deceived themselves into believing that they could violate one of the ten commandments—you will not kill—in order to silence the teaching of Jesus.

Chapter 20

CHALLENGE OF JESUS' AUTHORITY

(Mt 21:23-27; Mk 11:27-33)

20:1-8 See comments Mt 21:23-27. ***Preaching the gospel:*** It was at this time that Jesus spoke to all the multitudes concerning the sacrificial death and resurrection of the Lamb of God (Jn 1:29; Rv 13:8; see comments 1 Co 15:1-4). This is the good news for Israel for which those who were children of Abraham by faith had been waiting. ***Chief priests ... scribes ... elders:*** This was the local establishment of the religious leaders of Jerusalem who had been

consumed by the positions and traditions of Judaism (Mt 15:1-9; Mk 7:1-9). They had hijacked the people of God and brought them under their domination. **Confronted Him:** Jesus did not fit the mold of the traditional religious establishment. As a result, the religious establishment of Jerusalem rose up against Him. Not long after this time they would be agitated by the teachings of Jesus to the point of planning and carrying out a plot to murder Him. Such illustrates the extent to which traditional leaders of religion will go in order to protect their jobs and influence with the people over whom they have set themselves as protectors and judges. **By what authority:** Jesus was teaching by direct authority from God (At 4:7; 7:27). He was not teaching with the authority or approval of the Jewish fathers. He needed no diploma from their schools, or the laying on of hands from the religious leaders in order to teach. Since He was the author of the word He spoke, He did not need the approval of man (See Jn 12:48). It is through the authority of His word that men of God speak today. Those who would seek to be preachers and teachers of the word of God today, speak the authority of Jesus by preaching the word of God. God's teachers have the privilege of teaching the authority of Jesus, which is His word. The authority is in the Bible, not in the man (Jn 12:48; 2 Tm 3:16,17; 4:1,2). Jesus now has all authority (Mt 28:18). This authority is exercised among men through the preaching of His word, not some authority that religious leaders might assume in order to control His people (Compare comments Mk 10:35-45). **They answered that they could not tell:** Their answer was not based on the fact of recognizing the source of His authority. The Pharisee Nicodemus was of this group and had previously stated to Jesus, "*Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him*" (Jn 3:2). The authority by which Jesus spoke originated from God.

Though most of the Pharisees did not recognize this, they did understand that the miraculous works of Jesus originated from that which was beyond this world (At 4:14-16). Their concern was not in the fact of the miracles and teachings, but on maintaining their positions and influence among the people. If what Jesus was saying was true, then they would lose their positions and possessions. It is for this reason that they would not confess that He was the Son of God and Messiah of Israel.

PARABLE OF THE VINEYARD

(Mt 21:33-46; Mk 12:1-2)

20:9-18 See comments Mt 21:33-46. Jesus gave this parable in order to call on the religious leadership of Israel to unknowingly judge themselves. God (a certain man) had planted a vineyard (Israel). He gave the responsibility for spiritual leadership of the vineyard to the religious leaders of Israel (vinedressers). When Jesus (the beloved son) and the early evangelists (servants) came (harvest time), it was the time to reap those who were children of Abraham by faith. *What will the lord of the vineyard do to them:* Matthew's account mentions that the religious leaders answered this question (Mt 21:40,41). Their answer was that the owner (God) would destroy the wicked men who killed the son and seized the vineyard. Luke records that Jesus repeated their answer. And such was the fulfillment of the prophecy. The builders would reject the chief cornerstone by which the measurements of the entire house were determined (Ps 118:22,23; Is 28:16; Mt 21:42; 1 Pt 2:7,8). They rejected the Son of God, and thus, God would manifest His rejection of them by the destruction of the temple and Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

20:19 *They understood:* The religious leaders had no problem understanding this parable. As a result, their anger was agitated to the point of disposing of Jesus at that

very time (19:47,48). However, the common people were accepting the teaching of Jesus. Because of the religious pomp and pride of the religious leaders, they sought for an opportunity to do away with Jesus. If it were not for the hate of the religious leaders, therefore, Jesus would not have gone to the cross. As a result of the religious leaders' sinful attitudes, the multitudes were eventually turned against Jesus in order to have Him crucified. We must assume, therefore, that it was not the common people of Israel who rejected Jesus, but the religious leaders who deceitfully led them against Him.

PAYING TAXES TO CAESAR

(Mt 22:15-22; Mk 12:13-17)

20:20-26 See comments Mt 22:15-22. *Watched Him ... and sent spies:* The religious leaders were at this time on a witch-hunt (See comments Gl 2:4). Such is the behavior of legalistic religionists who seek to accuse, and thus, discredit others before the people by pointing out violations of their self-imposed religiosity they have confused with the word of God (Compare comments 3 Jn 9-12). In this case, they wanted to find some accusation against Jesus where He might have possibly contradicted Roman law. *He perceived their craftiness:* Men with evil hearts will debate issues in order to trap their opposition. Their motive is not to correct their opposition by the discussion of the truth, but to discredit their opponents. Those who would be wise would do well to use great wisdom in such debates in order not to fall victim to the work of Satan in the hearts of envious men. *They could not catch Him:* The religious leaders marveled at the wisdom by which Jesus answered their question that was meant to be a trap. Therefore, because they could not publicly discredit Jesus before the multitudes, they sought to do away with Him secretly by murder (vs 19; 19:47,48).

CONFRONTATION WITH THE SADDUCEES

(Mt 22:23-33; Mk 12:18-27)

20:27-33 See comments Mt 22:23-33. The autocratic Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection and life after death, sought to trap Jesus with a question that proposed a supposed dilemma. However, they did not know the law of Moses in reference to what they asked (See Dt 25:5-10).

20:34-40 In answering their question, Jesus also answered their disbelief in the resurrection. Moses lived four hundred years after the death of Abraham. However, he wrote that God was the God of the living (Ex 3:1-6,15). Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were still alive and in fellowship with God at the time Moses wrote. Contrary to the beliefs of the Sadducees, therefore, there is life after death. The scribes—many of whom were Pharisees—agreed with this teaching because they were theologically opposed to the Sadducees.

JESUS, THE LORD OF DAVID

(Mt 22:41-46; Mk 12:35-37)

20:41-44 See comments Mt 22:41-46. Matthew gives the account that Jesus here addresses the Pharisees. The Pharisees affirmed that the Messiah would come from the lineage of David. They were right. By His quotation of Psalm 110:1, Jesus reminded them that David addressed his descending “son” as Lord. Therefore, David considered his descendant to be more than a prophet. The Pharisees considered David to be a prophet, which he was. Since they considered him to be a prophet, then they must consider his descendant to be more than a prophet, just as David considered him to be more than a prophet by calling Him “son” (See Jn 4:19,20,42).

DENUNCIATION OF THE SCRIBES & PHARISEES

(Mt 23:1-36; Mk 12:38-40)

20:45-47 See comments Mt 23:1-13. Matthew recorded that this address was to the scribes and Pharisees. Many of the scribes were Pharisees, and thus, the denunciation was directed toward the religious establishment that held the people captive by their doctrines and traditions of men (See comments Mk 7:1-9). ***Devour widows' houses:*** Because the Pharisees loved money (16:14), they played on the consciences of widows to donate their houses for religious purposes. However, the motives of the Pharisees were selfish. They enjoyed all that was donated to God by the sincere hearts of those who wanted to please God (See comments Mt 15:3-6). They materialistically played on the sincere consciences of those who wanted to please God in order to satisfy their own love of money. They used religion as a means for material gain.

Chapter 21

SACRIFICIAL THANKSGIVING

(Mk 12:41-44)

21:1-4 ***Two copper coins:*** A mite was a small Jewish coin (*lepta*) of bronze or copper that was the smallest in value of Roman coins (Mk 12:42). It is also called a farthing or cent, depending on the translation (12:59). Out of her poverty this widow gave all that she had. Jesus did not ask that her contribution be given back to her because she, as all who come to Jesus, must express their sacrificial thanksgiving for their salvation (2 Co 4:15). When one becomes a Christian, his standard of living often comes down because of sacrificial giving. The materialist can never understand why the widow gave all that she had. He cannot understand because he usually gives as the rich in the context of this incident. The rich man has selfishly consumed so much upon his own desires by buying things and engaging in activities, that he does not understand the character of the widow who never had an opportunity to

enjoy excess wealth in her life. Her giving was easy because before she gave she did not consider whether the giving would endanger her life-style. She simply gave out of a heart of gratitude for all that God had done for her. It was not a matter of sacrifice, but a response to God's love that she felt in her heart. And such should be the response of everyone who has recognized the grace of God by which one is saved.

JUDGMENT ON JERUSALEM

(Mt 24; Mk 13:1-37)

21:5-36 See comments Mt 24. When studying this chapter, the Bible student must keep in mind that Jesus' primary emphasis was on the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. This historical event dramatically affected the lives of all Jews throughout the world, and the church in and around the area of Palestine, and specifically, the city of Jerusalem (See comments Mt 24). This event changed the historical environment in which the early disciples lived. It also greatly stirred world evangelism as Christian Jews fled from Palestine to find safety in the far corners of the world. The biblical interpreter, therefore, should not underestimate the impact of the A.D. 70 event upon the lives of the early Christians and the resulting proclamation of the gospel to all the world. Therefore, we must not underestimate the significance of this event that is mentioned throughout the New Testament.

21:37,38 *Teaching in the temple:* This was in the temple courtyard, not within the physical temple itself. This is a restatement of Jesus' daily work of teaching in the temple during these final days before the cross. Assembled in the temple courtyard were those who sought answers from God through study of the Old Testament Scriptures. In the evenings, Jesus evidently stayed with Mary, Martha and Lazarus in Bethany, whose house was on the slopes of

the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem (See 22:39; Jn 8:1,2).

The Redemption Ministry

(22:1 – 23:56)

Outline: (1) The betrayal scheme of Judas (22:1-6), (2) Preparation for the Passover (22:7-16), (3) The last supper (22:17-23), (4) Servanthood greatness (22:24-30), (5) Prophecy of Peter's denials (22:31-38), (6) The prayer in Gethsemane (22:39-46), (7) The betrayal and arrest (22:47-53), (8) The trials (22:54-71), (9) The trial before Pilate (23:1-5), (10) The trial before Herod (23:6-12), (11) The second trial before Pilate (23:13-25), (12) The crucifixion (23:26-43), (13) The death of Jesus (23:44-49), (14) The burial of Jesus (23:50-56)

Chapter 22

THE BETRAYAL SCHEME OF JUDAS

(Mt 26:14-16; Mk 14:10,11)

22:1,2 See Mt 26:1-5; Mk 14:1. *Sought how they might kill Him:* This desire by the chief priests and scribes manifests the extent to which Satan can deceive the human mind with religiously misguided beliefs. These religious leaders were meeting in order to devise some method by which they might physically remove their religious opposition.

22:3-6 See comments Mt 26:14-16. *Satan entered into Judas:* This is not talking about locating Satan literally inside Judas. Satan is not as God who alone can be everywhere and in all those who are His (At 17:28). What is meant is that Judas first conceived in his mind to betray Jesus, and then, he carried out his betrayal scheme (Mt 26:14-16; Mk 14:10,11; Jn 13:2). Satan was in him in the sense that he was carrying out the desires of Satan to betray Jesus. When anyone sets his course of life to do the will of Satan, Satan metaphorically dwells in that person in the sense that in his life he is carrying out the will of Satan. *In the absence of the multitude:* Judas knew where Jesus would be when he was away from the multitudes and by Himself. In such an environment he could secretly betray Jesus to the chief priests and scribes without causing a riot

among the people. His actions of betrayal were planned beforehand with the religious leaders.

PREPARATION FOR THE PASSOVER

(Mt 26:17-19; Mk 14:12-16)

22:7-13 See comments Mt 26:17-19. Preparation day was before the annual Passover and was in preparation for the Passover (Mt 27:62; Mk 15:42). The Passover was instituted to remember the Jews' deliverance from Egyptian captivity (Ex 10:2; 12:8,14). There is some question as to whether Jesus ate the actual Passover meal with the disciples on this occasion. Some Bible students believe that Jesus, the Passover Lamb, was either on the cross or in the tomb at the time the customary Passover meal was eaten. Therefore, it is assumed that He ate a pre-Passover meal with the disciples, and thus ate it during the Passover events that carried on for more than one day. What is of primary importance here is the fact that Jesus became the sacrificial lamb that was offered for the sins of mankind (Jn 1:29). He offered His blood in order that God pass over our sins. **Upper room:** Some believe that this may have been the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark (See At 1:13; 12:12).

22:14-16 *I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover:* See comments Jn 13:1-28; 19:14. Jesus had a strong desire to eat the Passover celebration meal with the disciples, though He may have been crucified before the actual time the Passover meal was eaten. If He did not eat the actual Passover meal at the customary time, then in view of His death He ate a special preparatory meal with the disciples on the day of Preparation. At the time of the Passover, the Preparation Day meal would have been considered a part of the entire Passover event. In eating a meal on this day, Jesus would have been eating with the disciples on the Passover. The Passover meal was a celebration of

deliverance from Egyptian bondage in anticipation of receiving the promised land in the future. The Passover meal was eaten in reference to celebration over something in the past, with hope for promises to be fulfilled in the future. Jesus wanted to celebrate their deliverance from sin through the cross. He also wanted them to celebrate what would take place in the future that would result from their forgiveness of sins. Though they did not understand the significance of what He was about to institute, they would fully understand after the coming of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2.

THE LAST SUPPER

(Mt 26:26-29; Mk 14:22-25; Jn 13:1-30; 1 Co 11:23-26)

22:17-20 See comments Mt 26:26-29; 1 Co 11:23-26.

Until the kingdom of God comes: In Acts 1:9,10 it is recorded that Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father to reign as king (Dn 7:13,14; Ep 1:20-22). He was reigning as king when Peter made the first official announcement of His kingdom reign on the day of Pentecost (At 2:36). It was then that the disciples began eating with the Lord at His table in His kingdom (See At 2:42; 20:7). However, we must affirm that more was in the mind of Jesus at this time than His kingdom reign that began with His ascension and will conclude with His final coming. Matthew records the words of Jesus, “*When I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom*” (Mt 26:29). Mark reads, “... *in the kingdom of God*” (Mk 14:25). When Jesus ascended to the right hand of God, the kingdom became His. When He returns again, however, He will return kingdom reign to the Father, that God may be all in all (1 Co 15:26-28). We would conclude, therefore, that what Jesus instituted here was in anticipation of eating the celebration feast of the Passover with all the disciples when they came into the eternal kingdom of heaven (See Rv 19:7-9). ***The cup:*** Emphasis is not on the container, but what was in the con-

tainer. The word “cup” is used to symbolize the contents of the cup. There is no spiritual significance to the container. It was only incidental to the institution of this great memorial representation of Jesus’ blood. The disciples were in an upper room, but such was also only incidental for the institution of the Supper. We must be careful not to concentrate on the incidental things and events surrounding the institution of the Lord’s Supper, and miss the significance of the memorial on which Jesus wanted us to focus. If one legalistically seeks to perform legally the incidentals of the Passover, he will lose the significance of what Jesus was trying to institute. ***This is My body:*** The bread that He used to represent His body did not become His literal body. The bread only became the representation of His body. Therefore, when the disciples partook of the fruit of the vine that was in the cup, and the bread that was in His hand, they were to remember His body and blood of the new covenant He would establish with them. They were to remember the blood of the covenant, the body that was sacrificed, and His universal body of disciples. Paul adds that the body represents the oneness of the universal body of believers (1 Co 10:14-17). Therefore, when brethren partake of the Lord’s Supper throughout the world today, they remember the oneness of the universal body of Christ (the church). To the Jews, the bread of the Passover had a great significance in reference to their past. They came from Egyptian captivity where “bread” meant life. The Egyptians lived from the grain that was produced from the crops of the Nile River. When the Nile flooded their lands, they were able to plant crops, eat the grain, and live. The water of the Nile came from the heavens, and thus, to the Egyptians, from the gods. Bread, therefore, signified life from the gods. When the Israelites went into captivity, God gave them manna from heaven (Ex 16). They lived throughout the wilderness wanderings because of the manna. Every

day they were reminded that they had life because of the manna from God. When Jesus came, He was the “Bread of life” that came down from heaven (Jn 6:35). When we partake of the bread during the Lord’s Supper, we partake of the life that we have in the body of Christ. If one is not in the body, therefore, he does not have life. It is for this reason that we are baptized into the body in order to have life (1 Co 12:13).

22:21-23 See comments Mt 26:21-25. Throughout the three years of His ministry, and at this time of the institution of the Supper, Jesus knew who would betray Him (Ps 41:9; Mt 26:21,23; Mk 14:18; Jn 13:21,26,27). He knew also that it was necessary that He be betrayed by one whom Satan would use. What is illustrated again in reference to God’s use of Satan’s evil, is what Satan has done throughout the centuries to destroy the seedline of woman to bring the Savior into the world. Regardless of Satan’s onslaught against the work of God, the Seed of woman came into the world for the salvation of all men (See Gn 3:15). God has even used Satan’s work through the religious leaders to condemn and kill Jesus in order that Jesus be the sacrifice for the sins of the world. We must always keep in mind that Jesus was in control of all that happened at this time in His ministry (Jn 10:17,18).

SERVANTHOOD GREATNESS

22:24-27 It was at this time in His ministry that Jesus washed the disciples’ feet (See comments Jn 13:3-17). He even washed the feet of Judas. Sometime during this meeting with the disciples, and after Jesus washed his feet, Judas left their presence in order to carry out his betrayal scheme (Jn 13:30). *Dispute among them:* See comments Mt 20:25-28 (Compare Lk 9:46-48; Mt 18:1-4; Mk 10:35-45). Because the disciples had an earthly concept of the kingdom, they thought there would be positions of power

in the kingdom. They equated the kingdom about which Jesus spoke with the physical kingdoms of this world (At 1:6; see comments Jn 18:36-38). ***Kings of the Gentiles:*** Jesus reminded them of what they already knew. In the world, those who are in authority are in positions of command where they can hand down decisions to those over whom they have been placed. ***Benefactors:*** This was given as a title of honor to rulers, especially to those who did good, for the title means “doer of good.” ***But you will not be this way:*** The leadership by authority that is seen in the world must not be brought into the community of God. The reason for the disciples’ dispute among themselves concerning who was the greatest must not be a motivation for desiring greatness among God’s community of servants. There will be no system of rank and authority in the kingdom of Jesus as is seen in the world. Whenever we think about what leadership should be in the community of God on earth, we must at least affirm that it should not be as the authoritarian leadership of the world. In the church, Jesus has all authority (Mt 28:18). He has not delegated any authority to man. Unfortunately, there are those who use the flock of God as an opportunity to exercise their desire to be first and have authority over others (See comments 3 Jn 9,10). They manifest their lust for power and control by intimidating the sheep into submitting to their demands (2 Pt 3:1-5). They steal the sheep of God by regimenting others to conform to their authority. They thus satisfy their selfish ambition by feeding their own egos (See At 20:29,30; Rm 16:17,18). Such leaders should never be among the community of God, because those who are such, serve themselves and not the flock of God (See comments 2 Pt 2). People can never enjoy a personal relationship with Jesus, if one who assumes authority on earth, stands between them and Jesus. ***The one reclining at the table:*** The disciples viewed themselves as sitting at the table and being served

by others. However, Jesus came to be the servant of all. Being God, He could have demanded submission. But He assumed the position of a servant. If the disciples would be as Jesus, they must view their lives as servants and slaves to the needs of others (See comments Mk 10:35-45). ***As the one who serves:*** Jesus was the creator of all things (Cl 1:16). He was the Son of God incarnate in this world (Jn 1:1,2,14). Though the disciples misunderstood the nature of His kingdom, they knew that Jesus had the right to reign with authority in any kingdom. However, He came to serve (See Mt 20:28; Jn 13:13,14; Ph 2:7). And in coming as a servant, He died for the sake of others. Such is the nature of the leadership in the kingdom over which Jesus now reigns with all authority (Mt 28:18). It is certainly not a kingdom that is of this world (Jn 18:36-38). It is a kingdom of slaves who have allowed the will of Jesus in heaven to reign in their hearts (See Mt 6:9,10). Any concept of leadership that one would conceive in reference to the community of God, therefore, must be centered around servanthood (See Mk 10:35-45). There is only one head of the universal body who continues as the controlling center of reference from which all authority comes. This is Jesus (Cl 1:18). There is only one Lord to which we are all slaves. This is Jesus (At 2:36; Ep 4:4-6). Anyone who would in leadership of the body seek the position of lording over the flock, or becoming the center of control for the organic function of the body, is setting aside the lordship and headship of Jesus. But there is now only one who has all authority (Mt 28:18). Any who would claim authority of the body in order to make laws for the body is taking authority from King Jesus.

22:28-30 *I grant to you a kingdom:* The apostles would reign in the sense that through them the Holy Spirit would deliver inspired direction (Jn 14:26; 16:13,14). They would bind and loose on earth that which God would de-

liver to them for the direction of His people (See comments Mt 16:18,19). Such would put them in a position of greatness, not because of either authority or power that originated from themselves as was characteristic with worldly kings and lords, but because of the power of God working through them. The authority they would manifest would not be in themselves, but in the revealed word of God that would originate from God through the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:26; 16:13). In the kingdom of Jesus, therefore, all authority must rest in the reign of Jesus from heaven (Mt 28:18; Jn 12:48). He is the final authority in the kingdom because He is the King (See comments Ep 1:20-23). ***Judging the twelve tribes of Israel:*** Their judgment of Israel would be through the revelation of God's word through them. Men would judge themselves as they either respond favorably to or reject the inspired truth that was preached by the apostles. Figuratively speaking, therefore, the apostles would be the judges of Israel when they preached the word of God.

PROPHECY OF PETER'S DENIALS

(Mt 26:31-35; Mk 14:27-31; Jn 13:36-38)

22:31-34 See comments Mt 26:31-35. ***Satan has desired to have you:*** Satan wanted to use one of those who was closest to Jesus in order to deter Jesus from His destiny (Compare Am 9:9; 1 Pt 5:8). We do not know when this asking by Satan took place. We do know that Satan could not simply possess or voluntarily take control of Peter in order to subject him to his control. He had to ask permission. Jesus prayed, and thus, Satan's desires were stopped. ***I have prayed for you:*** Jesus specifically prayed that Peter be strong. He also prayed for all the twelve on this occasion (Jn 17:9,11,15). His prayer was that their faith be strong enough to withstand the trials through which they were about to go in the next few days. It was a prayer

that they not be so discouraged that they fall away. **When you are converted:** Jesus knew that Peter would stumble because of the turmoil of the arrest, trials and crucifixion that were about to happen. But He also knew that afterward Peter would come to himself and return. Jesus knew a weakness in Peter that Peter did not know. Peter sometimes manifested a strong desire, but in reference to his desire to stand for Jesus during the time of the trials of Jesus, he fell short because of his lack of confidence (See comments Gl 2:11-13). **Strengthen your brethren:** See comments Jn 21:15-17 (At 1:15; 2:14; 2 Pt 1:10-15). One responsibility of Peter and the other disciples was to care for the flock of God (See 1 Pt 5:1-5). Though Peter would stumble, Jesus would still use him to introduce the kingdom of God on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 (Mt 16:18,19). Those disciples who would return to Jesus after stumbling, must allow themselves to be used by God to their greatest potential. Once one is restored, his stumbling should never be used to discourage him from doing his best for Jesus. When one's restitution is based on true repentance, he is restored to the flock. The forgiving spirit of the flock should encourage such a one to begin again his work for God. **To prison and to death:** Such would be the desires of a faithful disciple (Rv 2:10). He must be willing to suffer prison and death for the name of Jesus. Though Peter would stumble for a moment, he would eventually suffer prison and death for the name of Jesus because of his commitment to Jesus (At 14:22; Rv 2:10). He would overcome his weakness by faith in God (Ph 4:13).

22:35 Did you lack: Jesus reminded them of the times He sent them out on mission trips. During those trips they lacked nothing (9:3ff; 10:4ff; Mt 10:9ff; Mk 6:8). God will care for those who have committed themselves to serve Him (See Mt 6:33).

22:36 Jesus now looks toward their commission to all

the world (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15). They must use all they have in order to accomplish the mission to the world to preach the gospel to every creature. **Sword:** Jesus is not teaching that the kingdom is to be propagated by the use of weapons of war. This was not the spirit of Jesus, nor the nature of the kingdom (See Jn 18:36-38). He does, however, recognize the perils of their journeys and instructs them concerning self-defense. His thought here is that they must not die senselessly at the hand of some thief or murderer while on their journeys from one city to another. He also emphasizes the dangerous environment into which He was sending them. All things would change in the future. The environment of peace into which He sent them forth on the mission trips during His ministry would change. Now He was sending them into a hostile environment.

22:37 *Which is written:* See Is 53:12 (Mt 27:38; Mk 15:28). *Have a fulfillment:* Jesus' ministry had come to an end. He had accomplished all things that were to be accomplished during His earthly ministry as the Messiah of Israel. Now it was time to accomplish that for which He came into the world in reference to the eternal plan of salvation, that is, the atonement for the sins of mankind.

22:38 The Jews had previously planned to secretly murder Jesus (Mt 26:1-5). The swords here were possibly taken in order to be a means to intimidate those who might seek to carry out their murder scheme against Jesus. At least Peter, who swung a sword to kill Malchus, misunderstood Jesus. On the spur of the moment, he took aggressive action in order to defend Jesus. The swords were taken for defense, not aggression. However, at the time the mob came to take Jesus into custody, Jesus willingly relinquished Himself to them. It was time to go to the cross. Therefore, Jesus offered no resistance.

THE PRAYER IN GETHSEMANE

(Mt 26:36-46; Mk 14:32-42; Jn 18:1)

22:39-46 See comments Mt 26:30,36-46. The meal in the upper room was completed, and now, Jesus went to mentally prepare for the cross. ***Remove this cup from Me:*** The cup was a metaphorical expression that symbolized that portion of responsibility that was accepted by the Son of God to make the eternal sacrifice of the cross. It was a cup of suffering. His humanity would naturally not wish to suffer on a cross as a humiliated spectacle before a mocking crowd. However, His omniscience as Deity allowed Him the opportunity to know that the sacrifice had to be made. ***Not My will, but Yours be done:*** Before the creation of the world, Jesus knew that He had to drink of the sufferings of the cross (See Rv 13:8). He had created all humankind (Cl 1:16). And now it was time to die for His creation. He was thus committed to accomplish the eternal plan of God. It was a plan of redemption that had been predestined before the world began (Is 50:5; Jn 4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 8:29; see comments Ep 3:8-12). It was now time for the Son to submit to His destiny. ***An angel appeared:*** In the absence of the comfort of man, God sent the angel to bring strength through his presence with Jesus (See Mt 4:11). ***Being in agony:*** The intensity of the moment called for agony in prayer (Rm 15:13, see comments Cl 4:12). ***Rise and pray:*** The purpose for the prayer that was given here by Jesus was that they not enter into temptation, and thus, fall. In times of great turmoil, it is a time for agony in prayer in order that one not be tempted to forsake his faith or his work. Jesus did not ask the disciples here to pray simply as a mental exercise. Prayer accomplished that for which He asked them to pray. And so it is today. We must pray earnestly that we remain faithful to our calling. Those who have fallen away are usually those who have not agonized in prayer and fasting over their ministry.

THE BETRAYAL & ARREST

(Mt 26:47-56; Mk 14:43-52; Jn 18:2-14)

22:47,48 See comments Mt 26:47-56; Jn 18:2-14. These were the final hours before the cross. We must assume that all that happens was foreknown and foreplanned by God before the creation of the world (See Rv 13:8). What was about to happen was in the plan of God to save man. There are no surprises with God. **Judas:** See Ps 41:9; Mt 20:18; Lk 9:44; At 1:16,17. **With a kiss:** The common Jewish kiss of brotherly affection is here used by Judas for a totally opposite reason. Judas uses the kiss as a kiss of betrayal, not brotherly affection. The fact that Judas behaved in this manner manifests what had been lurking in his heart. His heart was not right with God, and because of this, Satan was able to use him to carry out the betrayal of the Son of God.

22:49-51 *One of them smote:* Peter lashed out with a sword and struck off the ear of Malchus who was a servant of the high priest (Mt 26:51; Jn 18:10). This was a moment of great anxiety. We should probably expect nothing less of Peter who was an impulsive person. **Permit even this:** Never would the kingdom of God be promoted with swords and physical violence (See Jn 18:36-38). The disciples must permit the betrayal and crucifixion to happen for it was the plan of God. Jesus here gave an example for all His disciples. It is better to suffer than to lash out (1 Pt 4:16).

22:52,53 *This is your hour and the power of darkness:* Jesus now relinquished Himself to the hands of those who sought to kill Him. It was their time to carry out their murderous scheme. All such schemes were the deception of Satan to supposedly destroy the Son of God. The chief priests and elders were allowing Satan to use them in order to accomplish what God had intended from times eternal. God always turns the work of Satan on himself. Little did Satan or the chief priests and elders know that God was

working their evil for the redemption of mankind (See comments Rm 8:28). We must also assume that Satan did not know what he was about to accomplish through his own evil work. The mystery of God's plan of redemption had been concealed from all men, angels, demons and Satan from the beginning of time (Ep 3:3-5; 1 Pt 1:10-12). Satan had no idea that he was actually carrying out the work of God by his evil work of having Jesus crucified (See At 2:23).

THE TRIALS

(Mt 26:57-75; Mk 14:53-65; Jn 18:24)

22:54-62 See comments Mt 26:57-75 (Concerning Peter's denials, see comments Mt 26:58,69-71; see Mk 14:54,66-72; Jn 18:15-18,25-27). Peter's denials of the Lord manifest the fact that those who are often supposed to be the most brave in discipleship can fall when the occasion brings out one's weakness (See vs 33; Gl 2:11,12). "*Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall*" (1 Co 10:12; see Rm 11:20). ***Peter followed at a distance:*** When Jesus was taken away, at least Peter stayed as close to Jesus as he dared. ***The Lord turned and looked at Peter:*** After the denials and the time of the cock crow of the early morning roosters, Peter was close enough to Jesus for Peter to see His face when He turned and looked at him. Jesus said nothing, but Peter remembered the prophecy of Jesus that he would deny Him. And so, Peter went out and cried bitterly in remorse over what he had done. He not only denied his friendship with Jesus, but he also denied the One he confessed to be the Christ and Son of God (See Mt 16:13-19). However, his bitter remorse indicated the nature of his heart. God can use men and women who recognize the error of their way and have remorse over their sin (See comments Mt 5:1-12). Their remorse manifests their repentant hearts.

22:63-65 ***Mocking and beating Him:*** This not only

begins the trials of Jesus, but also the humiliation He suffered from the hands of those He had created (Cl 1:16). Jesus was taken through a succession of trials. He stood before the Jewish authorities (22:64-71). He was then taken before Pilate, the Roman governor (23:1-5). He was then sent by Pilate to Herod (23:6-12). And finally, He was taken again before Pilate (23:13-25). The Jews had no authority to condemn one to death. Only Pilate, as a representative of Rome, could do this. Through all the trials, Jesus stood alone. The disciples had all fled. Jesus' knowledge of His destiny of the cross gave Him strength to carry out the plan of God. When Christians discover their destiny in the kingdom of God, they will also be as determined as Jesus to carry such to the end of their lives.

22:66-71 See comments Mt 27:1,2. ***You will not believe:*** They had both the miraculous evidence and the teachings of Jesus (Mk 14:61,62). Nevertheless, those who are moved by jealousy and evil motives will overlook all evidence in order to dispose of their opposition (20:5-7). Their motives will not allow them to accept the truth. It is for this reason that men must be cautious about their motives. The exhortation of Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 would certainly have applied to these who rejected Jesus regardless of the evidence. If one does not have a love of the truth, God will allow him to believe a lie. But in believing the lie, he will be condemned. ***The Son of Man will sit at the right hand:*** Jesus knew where He was going (See Ps 110:1; Dn 7:13,14; Ep 1:20-22). He was going to reign over all things as King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tm 6:15; 1 Pt 3:22). Every Christian should also know where he is going. The knowledge of one's destiny will take him through great trials as Jesus here focused on His destiny, not the suffering of the moment. ***Son of God:*** As He always had, Jesus affirmed that He was the Son of God (Mt 26:64,65; 27:11; Mk 14:62). He was not one in a succes-

sion of sons of God. He was the only begotten (*monogenes*) Son of God (See comments Jn 1:14; 3:16). Anyone who would accept Jesus for less than what He claimed to be will not reap the benefits of His sonship. We must believe who He is and that He rewards those who accept Him as the Son of God (See Hb 11:6).

THE FINAL HOURS

(Mt 27:1,2,11-26; Mk 15:1-15; Jn 18:28 – 19:16)

Chapter 23

THE TRIAL BEFORE PILATE

23:1,2 See comments Mt 27:1,2; Jn 18:28-38. *The whole multitude:* This was a delegation of accusers who came to the garden. *Perverting our nation and forbidding to give tribute:* Unrighteous men with evil motives will always resort to slanderous accusations against those they seek to destroy (See Mt 17:27; Mk 12:17; compare At 17:7). Since Jesus was sinless, the only means by which an accusation could be made against Him was through slanderous charges. *Our nation:* They had truly seized upon the vineyard of God and stolen the inheritance from the Son. It was no longer the Israel of God, but their nation.

23:3-5 *I find no fault:* According to Roman law, Jesus had committed no crime (Mt 27:11; 1 Tm 6:13). Credit must at least be given to Pilate for being objective. As Luke writes to Theophilus, he wants Theophilus to know that according to Roman law there was no crime found in Jesus. Jesus was crucified because of the envy and jealousy of wicked religious leaders who saw Jesus as a threat to their power and positions. *He stirs up the people:* The teachings of Jesus did stir up the people, but the people who were stirred up were not the common people. The religious leaders of Israel were stirred up because Jesus did not fit into their regimented code of religious rules and con-

duct (Mk 7:1-9). The nature of what He taught was contrary to the institutional religion that they had constructed after their traditions. He thus intimidated them to the point that they sought any means to remove Him.

THE TRIAL BEFORE HEROD

23:6-12 *He sent Him to Herod:* This trial before Herod Antipas, who ruled Galilee and Perea, the center of Jesus' ministry, is recorded only by Luke. In Luke 13:31 it is recorded that the Pharisees had lied by saying that Herod wanted to kill Jesus. But Luke here records that Herod did not want to kill Jesus, for he sent Jesus back to Pilate. ***Exceedingly glad:*** Herod's desire to see Jesus was because he had heard of the many miracles that Jesus had worked. He therefore wanted Jesus to perform a circus act of miracles before him in order to satisfy his idle curiosity (See At 4:26,27). ***Vehemently accused Him:*** The tremendous self-control of Jesus is most evident on this and other occasions. He knew what He was doing. He was taking Himself to the cross (Jn 10:17,18). In the midst of slanderous accusations by those who have evil motives, it is sometimes best to be silent as Jesus and simply move on with one's work. ***Pilate and Herod became friends:*** Enmity may have started between Pilate and Herod when Pilate had previously put down a probable insurrection in Galilee that was under Herod's jurisdiction (13:1,2). Whatever the reason for the enmity, the act of legal courtesy on the part of Pilate to send Jesus to Herod led to the dissolving of the enmity, and thus, the two became friends. Luke possibly recorded this in order to inform Theophilus that Jesus was not a cause for political division. Jesus' work centered around religious matters. It was the Jewish religious leaders, therefore, who put Jesus on the cross, not the government officials of Rome, though Jesus could be nailed to the cross only by the authorities of the Roman official, Pilate.

SECOND TRIAL BEFORE PILATE

23:13-17 See comments Mt 27:15-26; Jn 18:39 – 19:16 (Mk 15:6-15). *Have found no fault in this man:* Pilate perceived the truth concerning the slanderous accusations the religious leaders were making against Jesus. Neither he nor Herod could find anything that would be deserving of the punishment of death that the religious leaders wanted to inflict upon Jesus. *Punish Him and release Him:* In view of the fact that there was no cause for the death penalty, Pilate sought to soothe the anger of the religious leaders by scourging Jesus and letting Him go. We must not miss the point here that Pilate was inadvertently giving testimony that Jesus was innocent of all false accusations that were made against Him in reference to Roman law. Rome's authority in Palestine could find no fault in Jesus. Luke wanted Theophilus to know that Jesus was not an insurrectionist against the Roman government. Jesus did not break Roman law in Palestine. He was innocent of all negative gossip about Him that Theophilus may have heard, for at the time of Luke's writing, many erroneous things were spoken against Christ and Christianity in Rome (See At 28:22).

23:18-21 *Release to us Barabbas:* See Is 53:3; At 3:13-15. A Roman courtesy during the Passover/Pentecost feast was to release to the Jews a condemned Jew. In this case, Pilate was politically motivated to release a Jewish insurrectionist, Barabbas, who had committed murder, though he sought to release Jesus instead of Barabbas. It was the religious leaders who cried out that Jesus should be crucified. *Willing to release Jesus:* This again is another opportunity where Pilate sought to have Jesus released. But Jesus would not have it so. Jesus was using Satan's work through the misguided religious leaders to accomplish the atonement of the cross (At 2:23).

23:22-25 *He delivered Jesus to their will:* Pilate thus

relinquished to the demands of the envious religious leaders in order to maintain calm in a politically unstable environment. Little did those who sought Jesus' death know that they were accomplishing the will of God that the incarnate Word be crucified for the salvation of mankind and the ultimate destruction of the kingdom of darkness. Satan's desire to crush the seed of woman ultimately led to his own crushing (See Gn 3:15).

THE CRUCIFIXION

(Mt 27:27-44; Mk 15:16-36; Jn 19:16-27)

23:26-32 See comments Mt 27:27-44. *Great multitude:* This multitude that followed Jesus probably consisted of a great number of His disciples. At least many of the women who were disciples of Jesus followed in the procession where He carried His own cross to the site of the crucifixion. *Daughters of Jerusalem:* Jesus again made a prophecy concerning the great turmoil that was coming upon national Israel. He reminded the lamenting women to mourn for themselves in view of the fact that Israel was headed for a great national calamity (See comments Mt 24). *Criminals:* See Is 53:9,12. Both criminals were thieves (Mt 27:38,44; Mk 14:27). *Calvary:* See comments Mt 27:33,34 (Mk 15:22,23; Jn 19:16,17). This means the "place of the skull" (Ps 22:16-18; Mt 27:33-44; Jn 19:17,18).

23:34-38 *Father, forgive them:* The nature of God's grace toward all men is here revealed even in the last hours of the work of the Son of God on earth. His grace is extended because the multitude was carrying out this deed in ignorance of who Jesus was (See Ps 108:4; At 3:17; 7:60; 1 Co 4:12). See comments Mt 27:35-44 (Mk 15:24-32; Jn 19:18-22). *Parted His garments:* See Ps 22:18 (Mt 27:35; Mk 15:24; Jn 19:23). *Sneering:* Some were so calloused in heart that they would mock and sneer even at a person who was about to die (Ps 22:8,17; Zc 12:10). *This is the*

King of the Jews: Pilate had the sign placed above Jesus' head in order to mock the Jews (Mt 27:37; Mk 15:26; Jn 19:19).

23:39-42 At first both thieves railed at Jesus (Mt 27:44). However, one thief realized his predicament, which realization brought him to his senses. He asked Jesus to remember him when He came into His kingdom reign. At some time in the past this particular thief had learned of Jesus and His teachings concerning His kingdom. He may at one time have even been a disciple of either John or Jesus.

23:43 *Be with Me in Paradise:* Even on the cross Jesus continued to forgive sins. It is God who forgives, for all sin is against God. As the Son of God was hanging on the cross beside the thief, He had the authority to forgive sins, for sins were against Him as God (Mt 9:6). This thief was personally forgiven by the Son of God who had authority to forgive sins. Jesus' authority to forgive sins on earth was evidence that He was the manifestation of God on earth. ***Paradise:*** When Jesus died, He went in spirit to the Paradise of the hadean (unseen) existence (At 2:29-31). It was to this realm the repentant thief also went in a disembodied state. All the spirits of the righteous dead are now with Jesus in Paradise (2 Co 5:8; Ph 1:23). They are there in a disembodied state until the final resurrection of the dead when they will be reunited with a new habitation from God (See comments 1 Co 15; 2 Co 5:1-8; 1 Th 4:13-17). The other thief, however, did not go to Paradise in the hadean world (See comments 16:19-23). His destiny after death was not the same as the repentant thief.

THE DEATH OF JESUS

(Mt 27:45-56; Mk 15:33-41; Jn 19:28-30)

23:44-49 See comments Mt 27:45-56. ***Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit:*** It was Jesus' decision to die (Jn 10:17,18). When He had accomplished all that

was predetermined before the creation of the world in relation to the salvation of man, He gave up His spirit into the hands of the Father. The first part of the plan of redemption was accomplished. The resurrection remained. ***Beat their breasts:*** The crowd knew that they had crucified an innocent man. Their lust for blood that was driven by the envious hate of the religious leaders, finally exhausted itself in the events of the crucifixion. Their guilt was now apparent as they returned to Jerusalem. It would be the remorse of many of these that would later drive them to plead about fifty days later, “*Men and brethren, what will we do?*” (At 2:23,37). They had committed a deed that only grace and mercy could rectify. ***All His acquaintances:*** The disciples stood in unbelief. The One in whom they had hope would be the Messiah of Israel was now dead on a cross. They stood stunned and disillusioned (Ps 38:11).

THE BURIAL OF JESUS

(Mt 27:57-66; Mk 15:42-47; Jn 19:31-42)

23:50-54 See comments Mt 27:57-66. ***Joseph:*** This member of the Sanhedrin was a good and just man. Therefore, we must not assume that all the religious leaders of Israel were as wicked as many of the scribes, Pharisees and chief priests who were the majority that instigated the crucifixion. Joseph was bold enough at this time to go to Pilate to ask for the body of Jesus. The body was thus wrapped for burial and hurriedly placed in his own new tomb outside the walls of Jerusalem.

23:55,56 ***They observed the tomb and how His body was laid:*** Luke recorded this important detail for Theophilus. He did so because there would later be the rumor spread throughout the land that these women had gone to the wrong tomb three days after the burial. It would be claimed that they went to an empty tomb, found it empty,

and then spread a false hope that Jesus had arisen from the dead. Luke wanted us to understand that there was no mistake about where the empty tomb was located. The women had found the right tomb on the third day. It was empty. **Prepared spices and ointments:** Their intention was to return on the first day of the week (Sunday) in order to complete the burial preparations.

The Resurrection Ministry

(24:1-53)

Outline: (1) The resurrection of Jesus (24:1-8), (2) The appearances of Jesus (24:9-43), (3) Promises and Commissions to the apostles (24:44-49), (4) The ascension of Jesus (24:50-53)

Chapter 24

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

(Mt 28:1-8; Mk 16:1-8; Jn 20:1)

24:1-8 See comments Mt 28:1-8. Mary Madgalene, Mary, the mother of James, Joanna, the wife of Chuza, steward of Herod (8:3; 24:10), and Salome, the mother of James and John (Mt 27:56; Mk 16:1; Jn 19:25-27), all went to the tomb in order to complete the burial of Jesus. It was early Sunday morning. **Did not find the body of the Lord Jesus:** It was not that they did not find the right tomb. They did not find the body of Jesus. **Lord:** Luke now identifies Jesus as the Lord. Because He was the Lord, He had risen from the dead. Death could not keep in bondage the One who had brought to life all living creatures. Of the two angels that were present, one told the women that Jesus had risen and that they needed to tell the other disciples (Jn 20:12). **They remembered:** See Hs 6:1,2; Lk 9:22,44; 11:29,30; 18:31-33.

THE APPEARANCES OF JESUS

24:9-12 See comments Mt 28:8-10. The women immediately went to the disciples and told them that Jesus

had been raised from the dead. ***Their words seemed to them as idle tales:*** The disciples were not expecting the resurrection of Jesus. Luke wanted Theophilus to understand that the resurrection was not the invention of men who were so expectant of the resurrection that they hallucinated such in order to begin a new sect of religion. He recorded that when the resurrection was first reported, the disciples did not believe in the resurrection themselves (vs 25).

24:13-16 This event followed a few hours after the women had reported that Jesus was resurrected (vs 22). ***Two of them:*** These two disciples, one of whom was named Cleopas (vs 18; Jn 19:25), had given up hope in Jesus as the Messiah to establish a physical kingdom reign here on earth. They were thus on their way home. Luke adds this incident to reconfirm the fact that the disciples were not expecting the resurrection. Though the resurrection had been reported to them, they still did not believe (vs 25). ***Their eyes were restrained:*** As the disciples walked, they were discussing what had happened. They possibly reasoned concerning the fact that all the prophecies seemed to be fulfilled in Jesus, but something had gone wrong. Jesus joined them, but He did not allow their minds to perceive that it was actually Him in their presence.

24:17-24 In order to invite Himself into their conversation, Jesus asked a question. They were puzzled because of the question, for everyone from the rulers to the common people knew of the events that surrounded the death of Jesus (At 26:26). ***Jesus of Nazareth:*** Jesus was called a Nazarene because He grew up in the small village of Nazareth (1:26; 2:39; 18:37). ***Mighty in deed and word:*** Jesus had done many miraculous works and taught many good things (7:16; Mt 21:11; Jn 3:2; 12:17; At 2:22; 7:22). His reputation throughout all the region of Palestine was concerning His deeds and teachings. ***We were hoping that it***

was He who was going to redeem Israel: The statement of these two disciples explains the physical concept many of the disciples had concerning the nature of the kingdom reign of the Messiah. They thought that Israel would be redeemed from Roman occupation. They would be set free from foreign powers as God redeemed Israel out of Egyptian captivity. Their hopes, therefore, had been dashed by the crucifixion of the One they thought would reign in Jerusalem on David's throne. They told Jesus that the Messiah for whom they hoped was condemned to death and crucified. They thought that this was the end of the story, though the women had reported the resurrection. They had witnessed the death, but not the resurrection. **Third day:** The crucifixion took place on Friday since the events that are recorded here took place on Sunday. John 21:19 states that Jesus appeared to the disciples on this same day. **Some of ... us went to the tomb:** Peter and John had gone to the tomb to reconfirm the report of the women (See vs 12; Jn 20:3-6).

24:25-27 O foolish ones: See the prophecies of Jesus' death in Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22. The Jews sought for an earthly Messiah who would establish an earthly kingdom (At 1:6). This twisting of prophecy by the materialistic and nationalistic Jews clouded their correct application of the prophecies to Jesus who fulfilled all prophecies concerning the Messiah (See 1 Pt 1:10-12). Since Jesus fulfilled all the prophecies concerning the Messiah, then all the prophecies concerning the Messiah never referred to an earthly reign of Jesus on earth. **Beginning with Moses:** See Gn 3:15; 12:3; 22:18; Nm 21:9; 24:17; Dt 18:15; Ps 16:9,10; 22; 132:11; Is 7:14; 9:6; 53; Jr 23:5; 33:14,15; Ez 34:23; 37:25; Dn 9:24; Mc 5:2; 7:20; Zc 6:12; 9:9; Ml 3:1; 4:2. There are over three hundred prophecies in the Old Testament that refer to Jesus and the events surrounding His coming and establishment of His kingdom reign. All

these prophecies were fulfilled. It was not by chance that so many prophecies were fulfilled by one individual. The fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecies in Jesus is proof that Jesus was the Messiah of God, the prophet of God who would redeem all men from the debt of sin.

24:28-31 *They constrained Him:* These men hungered and thirsted after the word of God. Jesus' explanation of the prophecies took some time, and thus, these two men were motivated to study even more. ***Their eyes were opened:*** It was Jesus' desire that they now know who He was. He therefore made them aware of who He was. ***He vanished:*** Jesus disappeared from their sight. At this time Jesus was in His resurrected and changed body in which He could appear and disappear as He so chose. It was a real body, but one that was not limited as our physical body (See comments 1 Jn 3:2). Since He was God, He could appear or disappear in whatever form He so chose.

24:32 *He opened to us the Scriptures:* Jesus interpreted the prophecies in order that they might understand that the kingdom was going to be a spiritual kingdom, and not a physical kingdom of this world (17:20,21). The Messiah was to be a king, but not a king who would rule on this earth. Jesus had made application of the Old Testament Scriptures that spoke of the Messiah. He applied all the prophecies to the nature of who He was and how He would reign from heaven over all things.

24:33-35 The two men of Emmaus began their journey back to Jerusalem in the evening. It was possibly dark by this time. They found the eleven apostles still together and confused concerning the events that had happened, and especially, the report of the women who reported Jesus' resurrection. ***Appeared to Simon:*** Jesus appeared specifically to Peter (1 Co 15:5). For what reason we do not know. He may have appeared to him because of his denials during the trials. He wanted to reassure Peter that all was well.

He wanted to reassure Peter that he had greater things to do, for in only a few days from this time, Peter would be standing up and boldly proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus and His kingdom reign over all things (See At 2:16-36). Good leaders get over their mistakes and move on.

24:36-39 *Terrified and frightened:* They reacted with such emotions because they had never before experienced such (See Mt 14:26; Mk 6:49). ***A spirit does not have flesh and bones:*** Jesus here defined the nature of a spirit. At the same time He defined that He was not in the form of a spirit because He had flesh and bones. His actual body had been resurrected, but it had been changed. He was able to eat a meal and be touched in His resurrected body (See Jn 20:20,27; 1 Jn 1:1,2; 3:2).

24:40-43 His body still had the nail holes from the crucifixion (Jn 20:27). Luke wanted Theophilus to understand that the physical senses of the disciples proved that Jesus had risen from the dead. The disciples did not experience a hallucination. The pierced hands and feet proved that the Jesus, who stood before them, was the same Jesus who was nailed to the cross, and then buried in a tomb. ***Did not believe for joy:*** They were so excited that their emotions and thinking had not yet caught up with the reality of His presence. ***Ate before them:*** He did such in order to continue to prove that He was actually there in His resurrected body. They were not imagining something because they were anxious or expectant of His resurrection.

PROMISES & COMMISSIONS TO THE APOSTLES

After the resurrection, Jesus appeared to the eleven at different times and discussed different things with them concerning their future mission. The appearances occurred over a period of forty days. Luke recorded that Jesus on several occasions, showed Himself alive to the disciples (At 1:3). He spoke to them for forty days concerning His

kingdom reign. The teachings Jesus delivered during some of the appearances are recorded in Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-20; Acts 1:1-12 (See comments Mt 28:16-20; Mk 16:15-20).

24:44 *All things must be fulfilled:* All Old Testament prophecies concerning the work and reign of Jesus would be fulfilled when He ascended to the right hand of the Father not long from the time He made this statement. Therefore, He is not coming again in the future in order to fulfill more Old Testament prophecies concerning a supposed earthly kingdom reign. We must understand, therefore, that in this statement Jesus was affirming that all prophecies concerning His work and reign in reference to the disciples had now been fulfilled. There are no Old Testament prophecies yet to be fulfilled in reference to Jesus' kingdom reign. The New Testament prophecy of His return, and the kingdom of heaven that is to come, will be fulfilled when He comes again (1 Co 15:24-28). This event will be in fulfillment of prophecies that Jesus and the New Testament writers made concerning His final coming.

24:45,46 *Opened their understanding:* Here is a case where Jesus aided them through inspiration to understand the Scriptures concerning the fulfillment of prophecy in Him. This was something that was personally done by Jesus and specifically for the eleven apostles. ***The Christ should suffer:*** Without the cross, there would have been no salvation for mankind. Therefore, it was necessary that a manifestation of God through the Son be offered as a sufficient sacrifice for man's sin. Not only was Jesus' death necessary for purposes concerning redemption, but also to fulfill the promises made to the fathers of Israel (See Gn 12:1-3). In order for God to be found faithful, all that was promised concerning the blessing of the Messiah had to be fulfilled.

24:47 *Would be preached:* This was the great commission to the disciples (Mt 28:19,20; Mk 16:15). They

should preach the suffering Christ on the cross and His resurrection (See comments 1 Co 15:1-4). Repentance toward God and God's remission of man's sins in obedience to the gospel should be proclaimed to all men (See At 2:38; 3:19; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18). **Beginning at Jerusalem:** When Peter announced the kingdom reign of Jesus in Acts 2 on the day of Pentecost not many days from the time Jesus gave this commission, men and women submitted to the kingdom reign of Jesus (At 2:41,47). The church began as a result of men and women submitting to the kingdom reign of Jesus who is now at the right hand of God (See comments 17:20,21; Mt 6:9,10; At 2:29-36,41,47). From the event in Jerusalem, the fulfillment of Isaiah 2:1-4 began to take place in the history of the world.

24:48,49 *You are witnesses:* The apostles were the special witnesses of the sufferings and resurrection of Jesus that they personally experienced (At 1:8). They were to proclaim to others what they had seen. ***I send the Promise of My Father upon you:*** The antecedent of the pronoun "you" is the eleven apostles that Luke identified in verse 33 of this narrative. The special promise about which Jesus here speaks was specifically made to the eleven apostles. Luke wanted Theophilus to clearly understand that this, for he wrote in the second document to Theophilus, "*But you [the apostles] will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth*" (At 1:8). Any witness who proclaimed something different concerning Jesus than what the eleven proclaimed, was to be considered a false witness with false information. ***Clothed with power from on high:*** In Acts 2:1-4 the apostles were empowered from on high when they were baptized with the Holy Spirit. This baptism was the fulfillment of the promise that Jesus had made to them in this context and during His ministry. It was when they were

overwhelmed with the Holy Spirit that they received all truth that was to be delivered to those who submitted to Jesus (Jn 14:26; 16:13,14).

THE ASCENSION OF JESUS

(At 1:9-11)

24:50-53 See comments At 1:9-11. The ascension of Jesus to heaven took place around Bethany that is east of Jerusalem. *Carried up into heaven:* Jesus was bodily raised up to heaven in a cloud in order to assume His authority over all things (Dn 7:13,14; Ep 1:20-22; Ph 2:9-11). He is now at the right hand of God as King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tm 6:15). He is reigning over all things for the sake of His disciples (Ep 1:22,23; 1 Pt 3:22). He will reign until the last enemy, death, has been conquered (See comments 1 Co 15:24-28). *They worshiped Him:* Worship does not have to be commanded. It is the natural response of hearts that recognize the majesty of God. It is spontaneous in the hearts of those who come to understand the power, authority and presence of God. On this occasion, the disciples were visibly made aware of the deity of Jesus. The result of this awareness was that they poured out their worship of Him. *Returned to Jerusalem:* They returned to Jerusalem as Jesus had instructed in order to wait for the coming of the Holy Spirit, who would come in about six days on the day of Pentecost.

(Luke concluded this first defense of Christianity by giving evidence to the sonship of Jesus. Jesus was the cause that motivated thousands to become Christians. Luke then turned to write the document of Acts in order to explain the effect of the fact that Jesus was the resurrected Son of God.)

ABBREVIATIONS**OLD TESTAMENT**

Genesis - **Gn**, Exodus - **Ex**, Leviticus - **Lv**, Numbers - **Nm**, Deuteronomy - **Dt**, Joshua - **Ja**, Judges - **Jg**, Ruth - **Rt**, 1 Samuel - **1 Sm**, 2 Samuel - **2 Sm**, 1 Kings - **1 Kg**, 2 Kings - **2 Kg**, 1 Chronicles - **1 Ch**, 2 Chronicles - **2 Ch**, Ezra - **Er**, Nehemiah - **Ne**, Esther - **Et**, Job - **Jb**, Psalms - **Ps**, Proverbs - **Pv**, Ecclesiastes - **Ec**, Song of Solomon - **Ss**, Isaiah - **Is**, Jeremiah - **Jr**, Lamentations - **Lm**, Ezekiel - **Ez**, Daniel - **Dn**, Hosea - **Hs**, Joel - **Jl**, Amos - **Am**, Obadiah - **Ob**, Jonah - **Jh**, Micah - **Mc**, Nahum - **Nh**, Habakkuk - **Hk**, Zephaniah - **Zp**, Haggai - **Hg**, Zechariah - **Zc**, Malachi - **Ml**

NEW TESTAMENT

Matthew - **Mt**, Mark - **Mk**, Luke - **Lk**, John - **Jn**, Acts - **At**, Romans - **Rm**, 1 Corinthians - **1 Co**, 2 Corinthians - **2 Co**, Galatians - **Gl**, Ephesians - **Ep**, Philippians - **Ph**, Colossians - **Cl**, 1 Thessalonians - **1 Th**, 2 Thessalonians - **2 Th**, 1 Timothy - **1 Tm**, 2 Timothy - **2 Tm**, Titus - **Ti**, Philemon - **Pl**, Hebrews - **Hb**, James - **Js**, 1 Peter - **1 Pt**, 2 Peter - **2 Pt**, 1 John - **1 Jn**, 2 John - **2 Jn**, 3 John - **3 Jn**, Jude - **Jd**, Revelation - **Rv**