



THE MOST
IMPORTANT QUESTION
OF ALL TIME!

This booklet provides a brief introduction to the most important person who ever lived. If nothing else, may your curiosity about this person motivate you to read to the very end. The purpose of this booklet is to help you answer the most important question of all time: **Who is Jesus Christ?**

Jesus once asked the people following him, "Who do you say I am?" and he still asks this question today of every person on earth: "Who do YOU say I am?"

As you will soon learn in more detail, according to Jesus Himself, your answer to His question not only affects your life on earth, but your soul for all eternity.

To help you formulate your answer to this incomparably important question, we're going to look at 7 different points of reference:

The Prophecies About Jesus

The Birth Of Jesus

The Life Of Jesus

The Death, Resurrection And Ascension Of Jesus

The Testimony Of Jesus And His Father

The Testimony Of Others

History Itself

Let's get started!

1) The Prophecies About Jesus

To begin our introduction of Jesus we really need to start long before Jesus was born. In fact, over 500 years before Jesus was born, prophets of God (men who were led by the Spirit of God to speak about and write down future things that no one could possibly know) started writing about a future king who would one day come and change the world. His kingdom wouldn't be a temporary earthly kingdom, but an eternal heavenly one. These prophets were able to describe the location and circumstances of Jesus' birth, details about who Jesus' parents would be, his experiences and mission in life, vivid details of his death and miraculous resurrection and even offer a glimpse into Jesus' future heavenly kingdom. And again, this information was written down hundreds of years before Jesus Christ was born. Let's look more closely at some of these individual prophecies:

1) Jesus would be born in the city of Bethlehem...

*Micah 5:2 – “But you, O **Bethlehem** Ephrathah, are only a small village in Judah. Yet a ruler of Israel will come from you, one whose origins are from the distant past.”*

2) Jesus would be born to a virgin...

*Isaiah 7:14 – “All right then, the Lord Himself will choose the sign. Look! The **virgin** will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call Him Immanuel – ‘God is with us.’”*

3) Jesus will rule forever and over all...

Isaiah 9:6-7 – “For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. And the government will rest on His shoulders. These will be His royal titles: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. His ever expanding, peaceful government will never end. He will rule forever with fairness and justice from the throne of His ancestor David. The passionate commitment of the Lord Almighty will guarantee this!”

6) Jesus would be betrayed for 30 pieces of silver...

Zechariah 11:12-13 – “And I said unto them, ‘If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord.’”

7) Jesus would be rejected by the people and die on a cross like a criminal...

Isaiah 53:1, 3 – “Who has believed our message? To whom will the Lord reveal His saving power? He was despised and rejected – a man of sorrows, acquainted with bitterest grief. We turned our backs on Him and looked the other way when He went by. He was despised, and we did not care.”

Isaiah 53:8 – “From prison and trial they led Him away to His death. But who among the people realized that He was dying for their sins – that He was suffering their punishment?”

Psalms 22:14-16 – “My life is poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax, melting within Me. My strength has dried up like sunbaked clay. My tongue sticks to the roof of My mouth. You have laid Me in the dust and left Me for dead. My enemies surround Me like a pack of dogs; an evil gang closes in on Me. They have pierced My hands and feet.”

8) Others would cast lots for Jesus’ garments...

Psalms 22:18 – “They divide My clothes among themselves and throw dice for My garments.”

9) Jesus would be buried in a rich man’s grave...

Isaiah 53:9 – “He had done no wrong, and He never deceived anyone. But He was buried like a criminal; He was put in a rich man’s grave.”

10) Jesus would come back to life...

Psalm 16:10 – “For You will not leave my soul among the dead or allow Your Godly One to rot in the grave.”

11) Jesus would take away the sins of the world and return to his place of glory at the right hand of God in heaven...

Isaiah 53:5-6, 8, 12 – “But He was wounded and crushed for our sins. He was beaten that we might have peace. He was whipped, and we were healed! All of us have strayed away like sheep. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on Him the guilt and sins of us all. From prison and trial they led Him away to His death. But who among the people realized that He was dying for their sins – that He was suffering their punishment? I will give Him the honors of One who is mighty and great, because He exposed Himself to death. He was counted among those who were sinners. He bore the sins of many and interceded for sinners.”

Isaiah 53:10-11 – “But it was the Lord’s good plan to crush Him and fill Him with grief. Yet when His life is made an offering for sin, He will have a multitude of children, many heirs. He will enjoy a long life, and the Lord’s plan will prosper in His hands. When He sees all that is accomplished by His anguish, He will be satisfied. And because of what He has experienced, My Righteous Servant will make it possible for many to be counted righteous, for He will bear all their sins.”

Psalm 110:1 – “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit in honor at My right hand until I humble Your enemies, making them a footstool under Your feet.’”

Mark 16:19 – “When the Lord Jesus had finished talking with them, He was taken up into heaven and sat down in the place of honor at God’s right hand.”

Hebrews 10:12-13 – “But our High Priest offered Himself to God as one sacrifice for sins, good for all time. Then He sat down at the place of highest honor at God’s right hand. There He waits until His enemies are humbled as a footstool under His feet.”

ALL OF THESE PROPHECIES WRITTEN IN THE OLD TESTAMENT WERE FULFILLED BY JESUS!

Even more astounding, the old testament prophets wrote a combined total of over 300 prophecies about Jesus and HE HAS FULFILLED EVERY ONE.

Mathematically Speaking:

1 person fulfilling 8 prophecies: 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000

1 person fulfilling 48 prophecies: 1 in 10 to the 157th power

1 person fulfilling 300+ prophecies: Only Jesus!

Before he was even born, before he even lived and walked the earth, Jesus was already proven through the Old Testament prophets to be sent from God for a very important and special purpose.

Colossians 1:15-20 – The Son (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.

2) The Birth Of Jesus

We just looked at some of the prophecies of Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection that were written out by Isaiah and other prophets hundreds of years before he was born. Now let's look at the story of his birth in more detail. And remember, our goal here is to decide if Jesus was just a man, or something more.

Isaiah wrote that Jesus would be born of a virgin. This virgin turned out to be Mary, a young Jewish girl chosen by God to bring the baby Jesus into the world. We read slightly different versions of this story in three of the gospel accounts (Matthew, Mark and Luke):

Luke 1:26-38 – God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

From the very beginning of this story, we understand clearly that Jesus is not going to be like any other human being ever born. All people are conceived through sexual intercourse, but not Jesus. Jesus was God's son, come down from heaven, born of a woman, but through the power of the Holy Spirit. When Jesus was born, divinity entered humanity.

In reality, Jesus Christ existed with God in heaven before he was born on earth. In fact, according to the Bible, Jesus has always existed with the Father. Coming to earth was part of their plan all along and Jesus descended to earth willingly:

Philippians 2:5-7 – Have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

With the birth of Jesus, the Son of God became a son of Man. This had never happened before nor would it ever happen again so you would think that God would announce this event to the whole world with fanfare, pomp and majesty and although Jesus' birth was announced by angels, they did not share the news with the rich or mighty or powerful, but to poor shepherds who were out in the fields watching their sheep at night:

Luke 2:8-20 – And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds

said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

Joseph and Mary had traveled to Bethlehem because of a national census that was taking place, requiring them to be counted in the city of Joseph's ancestors. As we already saw, this inconvenient trip to Bethlehem fulfilled Micah's prophecy:

Micah 5:2 – “But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, are only a small village in Judah. Yet a ruler of Israel will come from you, one whose origins are from the distant past.”

When Joseph and Mary arrived at Bethlehem, they found the city overrun with visitors and every inn already overcrowded. Unable to find any suitable lodging, Joseph finally secured an animal stable for shelter right as Mary was going into labor! They had shelter, but not much comfort. Not ideal for any birth, but especially the birth of the SON OF GOD!?!?

Jesus, the Son of God, the Savior of the World, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, entered into the world surrounded by smelly animals, lowly shepherds, poor parents, mud-caked walls and a dirt floor. Why would the Son of God be born here? Why would God want His Son born in these conditions? Doesn't this prove that maybe Jesus WAS NOT SPECIAL? It could, but in reality God was already showing the world the kind of humble servant Jesus was going to be. ***Just as he was born in a dark and dirty stable, he would one day walk among and shine his light upon those hiding in darkness. He would care for and shower love and mercy on the unclean. Ultimately he would enter into every dark and sin-stained heart willing to receive him and birth a new spiritual life within.***

Another fascinating detail in the story of Jesus' birth is the visitation of the Magi, a group of wise men and astrologers who had studied the ancient writings of the Bible and the constellations and understood that the time for Christ's appearing had come. They traveled from the far east, following a star that led them to Jesus. And when they arrived, they

presented the toddler Jesus with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gold was symbolic of his kingship, frankincense of his priesthood and myrrh foreshadowed his death and burial. Mary and Joseph were awestruck at these events.

However, the Magi's visit didn't settle well with King Herod who was ruling over the Jewish people from his palace in Jerusalem. King Herod first welcomed them to his court and inquired about their arrival to his territory. After they told him about the king that had been born, he deceptively instructed them to find the baby and then report its location to him so he could also worship the baby. Of course, he had no such plans, but rather wanted to destroy any threat to his claim to the throne. After the Magi found and worshipped Jesus, an angel appeared to them and told them to leave quickly and secretly without telling King Herod. King Herod, upon learning of their departure and still with no knowledge of who or where the baby king was, was enraged and decided to kill ALL the male children in Bethlehem (also known as Ramah) that were two years old and under. This event had also been described hundreds of years before in the ancient prophecies of Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 31:15 – This is what the LORD says: "A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping, Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing consolation, because they are no more."

Before Herod began killing the children an angel appeared to Joseph and told him to take his family to Egypt where they would be safe until the death of King Herod. After Herod's death, Joseph and Mary return to Galilee, where they settled down and raised their son Jesus and his siblings that were born afterward. These events were prophesied about as well:

Hosea 11:1 – "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son."

Isaiah 9:1-2, 6 – Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan—The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in

the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

The birth of Jesus fulfills too many prophecies, involves too many miracles and angelic proclamations (isn't one enough?!) to be dismissed as a fairy tale or the birth of just another regular human being. God was up to something..

Luke 2:52 – And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

Jesus' very public ministry was soon to begin and the world would never be the same!

3) The Life Of Jesus

If the prophecies of Jesus and the miraculous birth of Jesus are not enough, the LIFE of Jesus will demonstrate even more clearly that he was more than just a man.

Jesus only lived to be about 33 years old and there are few stories about his childhood and none about his teenage and young adult years. When he turned 30 years old, Jesus' public ministry began and he would only have 3 years in which to complete his mission.

Jesus' public life begins with his baptism by John the Baptist and then He is led by the Spirit of God into the wilderness to be tested by the Devil for 40 days and nights. After successfully rejecting the Devils' temptations and lies, Luke (4:16-21) tells us:

(Jesus) went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

Right from the start of his public life, Jesus is connecting Himself to the prophecies of Isaiah and boldly proclaiming He is the Messiah, the Son of God, who has come to save the world. But anyone could say that, right? Talk is easy. Now, Jesus is going to back up his claim with power!

In Jesus' time, women and children were not viewed as equal with men. Also, there was division, hatred and racism between people

groups. Finally, the diseased and the crippled, the demon possessed, the poor and outcast were looked down upon by all. Jesus entered into this broken system to bring restoration to everyone regardless of status, ethnicity, appearance or ability. Jesus saw everyone for who they truly were, lost souls in need of a soul cleansing, attitude changing, hope bringing relationship with God. The irony is that the religious, healthy and rich often missed a life-changing experience with Jesus because they didn't recognize their NEED of God's help.

For the rest of this section, we're going to focus on Jesus' encounters and interactions with the people around him. These encounters shed a clear and undeniable light on the unique and special person Jesus was and back-up His own claim to be sent from God.

Below is a comprehensive list of real life characters who had personal experiences with Jesus in the 4 gospels of the Bible - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John - along with the details of their encounter (references are provided for further study):

The Jewish Fishermen: (Matthew 4, Mark 1, Luke 5)

Jesus' first disciples were all fisherman. These men were low on the status ladder, but they were hardworking and knowledgeable of their nation's history and the prophecies about their future Messiah. In one of their first encounters with Jesus, he was walking along the shore of the Sea of Galilee and told the fisherman to cast their nets one more time. They had been fishing all night and were tired and in the process of cleaning their nets and retiring for the day, but they decided to do what Jesus asked and lowered their net one last time and when they did, it was so overfilled with fish that the net began to break and they had to call other fishermen over to help them haul in the catch. Jesus called these fishermen to walk away from fishing and join him in the work of catching men and they all chose to follow him. They would spend the next 3 years walking, sleeping, eating, and serving alongside Jesus. Eventually, they would give their lives to tell His story around the world.

The Storm: (Matthew 8, Mark 4, Luke 8)

One of the first events that leave Jesus' disciples almost speechless in fear and awe and convinced that he not just an ordinary person is when they are in a boat crossing the Sea of Galilee and a terrible storm comes upon them suddenly and their boat is about to overturn. Jesus, meanwhile, is asleep in the boat! When they finally wake him up and ask him if he's just going to let them all drown and die, Jesus stands up in the boat and simply says "Be Still" and immediately the storm ends and the waters return to calm. His disciples looked at one another and said "Who is this man that even the winds and waves obey him?"

The Tax Collectors: (Luke 19)

Tax collectors in Jesus' time were Jewish men who worked for the Romans. They collected taxes from their own people to give to the Romans and they often charged extra and kept some for themselves. They were liars, cheaters and greedy thieves and for these reasons they were viewed as traitors and hated by most. Jesus called one tax collector, Matthew, to follow him and Matthew did so. Another tax collector, named Zacchaeus, heard about Jesus coming through town and because he was short he climbed a tree to see Jesus and that's when Jesus stopped under the tree and told Zacchaeus to come down and then asked if he could eat lunch in Zacchaeus' house. There was a great celebration in Zacchaeus' house that day as the tax collector's heart was changed by Jesus' visit and he decided to give back all the money he had stolen and committed to living for God. Others verbally attacked Jesus for eating with "sinners" and Jesus responded that it wasn't the healthy who needed a doctor, but the sick and that he had come to set sinners free. Jesus never played favorites and he always appreciated the humble over the proud.

The Demon Possessed: (Matthew 8, Mark 5, Luke 8)

Jesus often encountered people who were possessed by evil spirits (fallen angels who chose to follow Satan in rebellion against God). These people were spiritually oppressed, but it often resulted in physical manifestations. Every time Jesus

encountered these evil spirits, THEY KNEW WHO JESUS WAS AND ADDRESSED HIM AS THE SON OF GOD. These oppressed individuals were usually bound up to keep them from harming themselves or others or they were either exploited for their supernatural strength or abilities OR they were shunned by society and lived in isolation and poverty. Jesus approached them to set them free and give them a new life. One possessed individual was so violent and dangerous that he lived out in the wild, among the tombs where no one dared to go. When Jesus encountered this man, he commanded the spirits to identify themselves and they said they were called "Legion" because they were many. Jesus commanded them to leave the man and they immediately left him and the man was "in his right mind, sitting down calmly." The man asked to go with Jesus, but Jesus told him to return to his home and tell everyone what Jesus had done for him. Again, please don't miss this important fact...the DEMONS ALL KNEW AND OFTEN SPOKE ABOUT JESUS' TRUE IDENTITY AS THE SON OF GOD. They KNEW for a fact what the humans were starting to realize...JESUS was more than just a man.

The Pharisees:

The religious leaders of Jesus' time were almost unanimously against Jesus and His message because they did not believe He was the Son of God. They were jealous of Jesus' popularity and scared of losing control of the people. It didn't matter that Jesus was constantly PROVING who he was by the signs and wonders He performed. One of the most tragic and remarkable things about these religious leaders is that they couldn't even see the obvious through their pride and hatred. In many instances, Jesus PROVED who he was by SHOWING them a miracle to back up His claims about Himself, but they paid NO ATTENTION to the supernatural.

These next three encounters demonstrate just how blind and hard-hearted the religious leaders were:

The Healing of the Shriveled Hand: (Matthew 12:9, Mark 3, Luke 6)

Jesus went into a synagogue on the the Sabbath and there was a man with a shriveled hand in their midst. The religious leaders asked Jesus if it was okay to heal the man's hand on the Sabbath

and Jesus says yes and then he heals the man's hand right there in front of them all. Look at how the religious leaders responded!

*Matthew 12:13-14 - Then Jesus said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." So he stretched it out and it was completely restored, just as sound as the other. **But the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.***

The Blind Man: (John 9:25)

As Jesus was walking one day he came upon a man begging who was born blind. Jesus heals the man and immediately he can see. Many people knew this man and his family so once his sight is restored, he begins to tell everyone that Jesus had healed him. It causes quite a commotion because everyone knew he had been blind since his birth. Eventually the Jewish religious leaders call the man in for questioning and they asked him what happened and he told them that Jesus had healed him. They did not believe that the man had been blind so they summon the man's parents who confirm that this is their son and that he had been born blind and was blind all his life. So then they question the man again and notice how incredulous he is that these "religious" leaders can't see the obvious!

John 9: 24-34 - A second time they summoned the man who had been blind. "Give glory to God by telling the truth," they said. "We know this man (Jesus) is a sinner."

He replied, "Whether he is a sinner or not, I don't know. One thing I do know. I was blind but now I see!"

Then they asked him, "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?"

He answered, "I have told you already and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become his disciples too?"

Then they hurled insults at him and said, "You are this fellow's disciple! We are disciples of Moses! We know that God spoke to Moses, but as for this fellow, we don't even know where he comes from."

The man answered, "Now that is remarkable! You don't know where he comes from, yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners. He listens to the godly person who does his will. Nobody has ever heard of opening the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing."

To this they replied, "You were steeped in sin at birth; how dare you lecture us!" And they threw him out.

The Paralyzed Man: (Matthew 9, Mark 2, Luke 5)

One time Jesus was teaching in a crowded house and a group of people brought their paralyzed friend to Jesus on a mat, but because they couldn't get him into the house through the doors or windows, they removed the tiles from the roof and lowered their friend down into the room where Jesus was speaking. Jesus saw the faith of the paralyzed man and his friends and said this "Your Sins are Forgiven." When he said this, the religious leaders accused him of blasphemy (speaking evil against God). They were all THINKING to themselves "WHO CAN FORGIVE SINS BUT GOD?" JESUS KNEW THEIR THOUGHTS and said to them, what is easier to forgive sins or to heal a paralyzed person (Jesus' point: BOTH are impossible for regular human beings), but so that you can KNOW I have the power to forgive sins he said "stand up and go" and the man stood, took up his mat and walked away rejoicing. The religious leaders were indignant. Never-mind that they just witnessed a miracle! They were more concerned with their reputation and hold on power. Don't miss these very important facts about Jesus in this story: He knows people's thoughts (because He is God's Son), He can heal people (because He is God's Son), He can forgive sins (because He is God's Son)!

When we look at these stories of Jesus performing miracles right in front of people with no effect, it should cause us to pause and wonder about the condition of the human heart and mind. In fact, Jesus Himself declares in John 6:44 that "**No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them...**" We must pray that God's Spirit will draw us to the TRUTH of WHO JESUS IS!

Everything Jesus said and did was a picture of Grace and Truth working hand in hand. Jesus called out sin truthfully, but He embraced the sinner, gracefully. Jesus' conviction and

motivation both come from His love for the world He made. According to Jesus, love is the pinnacle of all that we do and say and everything else flows from this love. This is the clear response He gave in Matthew 22:36-40:

One of (the Pharisees), an expert in the law, tested Jesus with this question: "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Here are a few more important and life-changing encounters with the love of Jesus...

The Roman Centurion: (Matthew 8, Luke 7)

Jesus had an encounter with a Roman military officer who was the commander of 100 soldiers. This officer had heard about the miraculous things Jesus was doing and he believed they were true. He humbly approaches Jesus and asks Jesus to heal his servant. When Jesus agrees to go to the soldier's home, the officer says that he doesn't deserve to have Jesus come into his home and that if Jesus just says the words that his servant would be healed. He truly recognized the power of Jesus. Jesus is amazed by this Roman soldier's faith and he responded by giving the soldier what he asked for: his servant was healed at that very moment.

The 10 With Leprosy: (Luke 17:11-17)

One day Jesus encountered ten people who were leprosy. Leprosy is a disease that basically causes a person's flesh to rot which results losing all feeling in your fingers and toes. Almost completely eradicated in our day and age, during Jesus' time leprosy was common, debilitating and often terminal. People with leprosy were considered unclean and were ostracized from society and even from their family and friends. Here is the story of their brief, but life-changing encounter with Jesus:

Luke 17:11-19 - Now on his way to Jerusalem, Jesus traveled along the border between Samaria and Galilee. As he was going into a village, ten men who had leprosy met him. They stood at a distance and called out in a loud voice, "Jesus, Master, have pity on us!"

When he saw them, he said, "Go, show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were cleansed.

One of them, when he saw he was healed, came back, praising God in a loud voice. He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him—and he was a Samaritan.

Jesus asked, "Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Has no one returned to give praise to God except this foreigner?" Then he said to him, "Rise and go; your faith has made you well."

The Woman Caught In Adultery: (John 8)

One time the religious leaders brought a woman caught in the act of adultery and threw her down on the ground at Jesus' feet. They asked Him what they should do with her. Their law said that anyone caught in adultery should be put to death. These men were not seeking justice however, they just wanted to trap Jesus in a controversial position, but Jesus would and could never be outwitted. He simply looked at the judgmental men and said, "Whichever of you has never sinned, let him throw the first stone." The Bible says that all of the men, from oldest to the youngest, eventually dropped their stones and walked away. What just happened?! Jesus turned the light of God's truth on them. If these men threw their stones then they would be publicly saying that they were perfect and then the people would reject them because everyone knew only God was perfect. Jesus then turned to the woman caught in adultery and said "who is left to accuse you?" She replied, "No one Lord" and then Jesus said "Neither do I." WOW! The holy Son of God looked at this broken life of a woman and said "I do not condemn you." Jesus gave her what she needed most - forgiveness and restoration - a new life to live for Him. Then Jesus told her "Go and sin no more." This woman went on to follow Jesus and serve him for the rest of her life on earth. This is what Jesus does, he meets people where they are, in the dark and dirty places and He pulls them out into his glorious light!

The Samaritan Woman: (John 4:29)

Later Jesus would encounter another woman at a well. She was a Samaritan which was a people group that the Jews hated. Jesus wasn't concerned with racial division. Jesus met this woman at a well where she was drawing water. He told her about a Living Water that he offered which would satisfy her thirsty SOUL for all eternity. She didn't quite understand but she was curious. Then Jesus abruptly asks her to go and get her husband. She replied that she doesn't have a husband then Jesus does what he always does - he addresses the woman's true need, the need of her heart and soul "You are right when you say you have no husband for you have had 5 husbands and the man you are with now is not your husband." Now he has the woman's full attention! Soon this woman would run back to her town and tell all the people that she had met a man who knew things about her no normal person could know. Jesus would spend two days in this woman's town and many would come to believe in Him as their Lord and Savior.

The Rich Young Ruler: (Matthew 19, Mark 10, Luke 18)

Not everyone who came to Jesus for answers, received what they were looking for. One rich young man came and asked Jesus how he could inherit eternal life. When Jesus told him to obey God's laws the young man said that he had done that since he was young and Jesus knew that this young man had a good heart, but there was something lacking and Jesus addressed it:

"Go and sell all your possessions, give your money to the poor and come and follow me."

Jesus wanted this young man to trust Him completely, but the young man couldn't do it and walked away from Jesus sad.

Jesus hadn't told anyone else to go and sell everything and give it to the poor before following him, but He knew that this young man's riches and wealth were more important to him than living for God. Following Jesus today does not mean He will ask you to sell all your possessions, but He will ask you to make Him the most important thing in your life. Considering who He is and what He's done for you, He deserves top priority.

The Children: (Matthew 18:1-5, 19:14)

One time parents began bringing their children to Jesus so he would touch and bless them. Jesus's disciples became angry at these people and told them to take their children and leave Jesus alone (the disciples obviously thought Jesus had more important things to do than hang out with kids), but Jesus rebuked his disciples and said "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

Another time when the disciples asked Jesus "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" (hoping he might say something about them). Jesus called a little child to him, and placed the child among them. And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever takes the lowly position of this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me."

The next two encounters demonstrate that Jesus not only had power over spiritual forces and diseases, but even over death itself.

The Sick Woman And The Dead Girl:

Luke 8:40-56 - Now when Jesus returned, a crowd welcomed him, for they were all expecting him. Then a man named Jairus, a synagogue leader, came and fell at Jesus' feet, pleading with him to come to his house because his only daughter, a girl of about twelve, was dying.

As Jesus was on his way, the crowds almost crushed him. And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years, but no one could heal her. She came up behind him and touched the edge of his cloak, and immediately her bleeding stopped.

"Who touched me?" Jesus asked.

When they all denied it, Peter said, "Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you."

But Jesus said, "Someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me."

Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed. Then he said to her, "Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace."

While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. "Your daughter is dead," he said. "Don't bother the teacher anymore."

Hearing this, Jesus said to Jairus, "Don't be afraid; just believe, and she will be healed."

When he arrived at the house of Jairus, he did not let anyone go in with him except Peter, John and James, and the child's father and mother. Meanwhile, all the people were wailing and mourning for her. "Stop wailing," Jesus said. "She is not dead but asleep."

They laughed at him, knowing that she was dead. But he took her by the hand and said, "My child, get up!" Her spirit returned, and at once she stood up. Then Jesus told them to give her something to eat. Her parents were astonished, but he ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened.

But the news spread!

Jesus' Friends In Bethany:

Jesus had many followers, but there were some people with whom he had a special bond. Mary, Martha and their brother, Lazarus were one such group of people. These siblings lived in Bethany and although we don't know from Scripture how their relationship began, it's very clear in the gospel accounts that these three are close friends of Jesus' with whom he would often visit and stay with whenever he was in town. So when Lazarus becomes sick and the illness becomes more and more serious, this family knew who to call. Mary and Martha sent messengers to fetch Jesus and bring him immediately to their home so he could heal their brother. No doubt they had full faith that their close friendship meant everything would be just fine, they had nothing to worry about. Jesus purposely waited three whole days before

going to them and by the time he arrived, Lazarus was dead and buried, the neighbors and family were still mourning and the funeral was wrapping up. Lazarus' sisters were heartbroken, confused and most likely bitter towards Jesus. When Jesus arrived in Bethany, Martha went out to meet Jesus, but Mary stayed home. Here is how the story continues:

John 11:20-44 - "Lord," Martha said to Jesus, "if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask."

Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again."

Martha answered, "I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

"Yes, Lord," she replied, "I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world."

After she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary aside. "The Teacher is here," she said, "and is asking for you." When Mary heard this, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet entered the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. When the Jews who had been with Mary in the house, comforting her, noticed how quickly she got up and went out, they followed her, supposing she was going to the tomb to mourn there.

When Mary reached the place where Jesus was and saw him, she fell at his feet and said, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come along with her also weeping, he was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. "Where have you laid him?" he asked.

"Come and see, Lord," they replied.

Jesus wept.

Then the Jews said, "See how he loved him!"

But some of them said, "Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?"

Jesus, once more deeply moved, came to the tomb. It was a cave with a stone laid across the entrance. "Take away the stone," he said.

"But, Lord," said Martha, the sister of the dead man, "by this time there is a bad odor, for he has been there four days."

Then Jesus said, "Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"

So they took away the stone. Then Jesus looked up and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me."

When he had said this, Jesus called in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out, his hands and feet wrapped with strips of linen, and a cloth around his face.

Jesus said to them, "Take off the grave clothes and let him go."

These encounters, demonstrating Jesus' authority over death and life itself, serve as an exclamation point on His identity as the Son of God. This next and final encounter, puts an exclamation point on Jesus' identity as a loving and forgiving Savior.

The Criminals on the Cross: (Luke 23)

There is one last encounter Jesus had with two human beings right before he died on the cross. On the day of his death, Jesus hung on a cross between two criminals being crucified for their crimes. While many in the crowd of onlookers mocked and hurled insults at Jesus, one of the criminals also mocked him. The other criminal rebuked him and said "we are getting what we deserve, but this person has done nothing wrong". He then looked at Jesus and said, "please remember me when you enter your Kingdom" and then Jesus, in a final moment of compassion and forgiveness said to the criminal, "today you will be with me in

paradise." With Jesus' dying breath he was still seeking and saving the lost. Two criminals: one with a heart of pride and rebellion and another with a heart of repentance and faith. Jesus loved both, but he could only save and help the one who recognized WHO Jesus truly was.

Jesus, better than anyone, recognized that mankind's sin had left the world a broken and dark place. From the beginning of creation, mankind had rejected God's love and God's truth and God's ways and instead chosen to go their own way and the ways of man had caused all the sin, pain, suffering and heartbreak in the world. The world was a hopeless place for many, but when Jesus came, he brought light back into the world, hope for the hopeless, joy for the joyless, peace for the hurting.

John 16:33 – Jesus said, "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

In EVERY instance, in every encounter, Jesus' purpose was to restore a broken life, bring healing to the body, but most importantly, healing to the soul.

John 10:10 – "I have come that (you) may have life, and have it to the full."

These encounters took place during the time of Jesus' life described as his PUBLIC ministry which was from 30-33 years of age. All of these encounters and events took place in front of EVERYONE! In fact, twice Jesus took a basket of a few fish and loaves of bread and miraculously fed a crowd of over 10,000 men, woman and children until they were full and 12 baskets of food were left over! Thousands of people experienced the miraculous power of Jesus personally. No wonder the crowds continued to grow. No one like Jesus had ever walked the earth before and no one like Jesus would ever walk the earth again. He was not just a man - no man could do what he was doing - he was more than just a man, He was the Son of God.

4) The Death, Resurrection and Ascension Of Jesus

Philippians 2:8 – And being found in appearance as a man, he (Jesus) humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

If the life of Jesus was miraculous, amazing, unsettling and life-changing then his death was a shock to all the senses of humanity. This young and wildly popular public figure who could hold crowds of thousands captive with his words of life and truth, this gentle servant who spent countless hours ministering to the hurt and broken, this lonely soul who was rejected by his only family, deserted by his friends and ultimately condemned by those who he had helped, fed and healed...this man, this completely innocent and sinless man, would die a criminal's death - condemned for one thing only - claiming to be the Son of God.

Jesus would be arrested while praying in a garden, betrayed with a kiss by one of his own disciples who was greedy opportunist and tired of waiting for Jesus to set up His kingdom on earth. Jesus would be brought to a midnight (and illegal) trial and declared guilty by the religious leaders who refused to acknowledge him as the Son of God. They had no power to execute Jesus themselves so these Jewish leaders handed Jesus over to the Romans and convinced them that Jesus was a threat to Rome's peace and stability in the region. As a result, Pontius Pilate had Jesus tortured and then crucified. Jesus would die on a cross with a crown of thorns shoved onto his head and large spikes hammered through his wrists and ankles onto the wooden beams. During his trial, torture and crucifixion he would be mocked, spit upon, and insulted by the soldiers and spectators.

How could Jesus' death on the cross possibly confirm Jesus as the Son of God?! Wouldn't the cross emphatically prove the opposite? That Jesus was incapable of saving Himself, powerless to stop those against Him? Yes, it could, but once again things are not as they appear on the surface.

During Jesus' 3 years of ministry with his disciples, he told them on many different occasion and very clearly that he would

one day be crucified. They never really understood what he was talking about. They couldn't fathom that their Messiah, their Chosen One from God, would do anything less than set up an earthly kingdom to rule and reign over all the world. So even though Jesus told them again and again that he was going to die, they simply ignored his words. Jesus' disciples simply did not understand Jesus' true mission.

Matthew 16:21-23 - From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"

Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

In this one response we can learn so much about Jesus' ultimate mission in coming to earth: He came to die. No one but God the Father and God the Son, knew what truly had to be done. A penalty had to be paid for the sins of the world or the whole world would be condemned for all eternity. Jesus was about to accomplish the most important, miraculous, unbelievable and gut-wrenching rescue in the history of all time!

Jesus' body would be broken so we could be made whole. Jesus would be judged sinful so that we could be made righteous. Jesus would physically die so that we could spiritually live.

Jesus death on the cross was not an accident. Isaiah, in great detail, hundreds of years before Jesus was born, described the pain and purpose of his death:

Isaiah 53:3-11 - "He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain. Like one from whom people hide their faces he was despised, and we held him in low esteem. Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away. Yet who of his generation protested? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was punished. He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand. After he has suffered, he will see the light of life and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities."

After Christ's death and resurrection, Peter, a close follower and friend of Jesus, would write the following:

1 Peter 1:19-20 – "He paid for you with the precious lifeblood of Christ, the sinless, spotless Lamb of God. God chose Him for this purpose long before the world began, but now in these final days, He was sent to the earth for all to see. And He did this for you."

Jesus death on the cross was not an accident. Nor was it a moment of weakness. In reality, it was his moment of greatest strength! Can you imagine the willpower, self-control and obedience it took for Jesus to overcome the temptation to save Himself and not destroy those who were destroying him!?

He could have easily done it as he inferred to his disciples when they tried to protect him from being arrested in the garden of Gethsemane:

Matthew 26:47-56 - While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived. With him was a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people. Now the betrayer had arranged a signal with

them: “The one I kiss is the man; arrest him.” Going at once to Jesus, Judas said, “Greetings, Rabbi!” and kissed him.

Jesus replied, “Do what you came for, friend.”

Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him. With that, one of Jesus’ companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.

“Put your sword back in its place,” Jesus said to him, “for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. **Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than *twelve legions of angels? But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?**”

In that hour Jesus said to the crowd, “Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day I sat in the temple courts teaching, and you did not arrest me. But this has all taken place that the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples deserted him and fled.

(*A Roman legion at that time consisted of **6,000** soldiers. Twelve legions of angels would be 72,000 angels. quora.com)

Jesus could have put an end to his arrest, suffering and death at any moment, but that would have put an end to us. We needed him to see His mission through to the very end. Thank God Jesus wasn’t like us! We would have bailed at the first signs of distress. But don’t think that just because Jesus was the Son of God that this was somehow easy for him.

The miracles had definitely been easy for Jesus. Opening blind eyes, cleansing leprous skin, healing paralyzed limbs, even calling the dead back to life...these were and are easy for the Creator of all heaven and earth. Even His own resurrection will be easy. Jesus is the Son of God, through whom the universe and galaxies, planets and stars and all creation had been made with just a word. Goodness and life flows from Jesus like the breath from his lungs. Death is something else.

Willingly, purposely dying on the cross is not easy for any man, even the Son of God. The excruciating pain would be one thing, but for Jesus there was something more terrible and troubling...he knew that while on the cross His Father's holy wrath against all the sins of the world would fall on him. His perfect and beautiful relationship with His Father would be temporarily broken and severed. This is something we as human beings simply cannot understand or fathom, but this is why Jesus prayed in the garden, sweating drops of blood in great agony of soul:

“My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.” (Matthew 26:39)

Mark 14:36 - “Abba, Father,” he said, “everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.”

Luke 22:42 - “Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done.”

John 6:38 - For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me.

Jesus was and is the Son of God and this moment in the garden proves it beyond any other event. Father and Son had planned this redemption story long before creation and now together, they would fulfill it. No mere human being would have been able to finish this glorious, perfect and horrifying mission.

Less than 12 hours after uttering these words of surrender and obedience to His Father. Jesus would be hanging on the cross, using his legs to leverage his body upright to keep from asphyxiating and to get one more breath. As he hung there, with criminals on his left and right and as the soldiers at his feet cast lots to divide up his clothing he said:

“Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34)

John 19:28-30 - After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!" Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

The Bible says that the sky turned dark. An earthquake shook the land. Many dead people came back to life. The Roman soldier standing at the foot of the cross declared, "Surely this was the Son of God."

Three days after dying on the cross and being buried in a tomb, with armed guards watching over the entrance, the Bible describes the following event which shouldn't have come as a surprise to anyone, especially Jesus' closest friends and followers:

Luke 24 - On the first day of the week, very early in the morning, the women took the spices they had prepared and went to the tomb. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 'The Son of Man must be delivered over to the hands of sinners, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.'" Then they remembered his words.

When they came back from the tomb, they told all these things to the Eleven and to all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the others with them who told this to the apostles. But they did not believe the women, because their words seemed to them like nonsense. Peter, however, got up and ran to the tomb. Bending over, he saw the strips of linen lying by themselves, and he went away, wondering to himself what had happened.

Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; but they were kept from recognizing him. He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?"

They stood still, their faces downcast. One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?"

"What things?" he asked.

About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him; but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place. In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive. Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus."

He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.

As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them.

When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon." Then the two told what had happened on the way, and how Jesus was recognized by them when he broke the bread.

While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."

When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish,⁴³ and he took it and ate it in their presence.

He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."

Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

*When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. **While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.** Then they worshiped him and returned to Jerusalem with great joy. And they stayed continually at the temple, praising God.*

Jesus came from God. Through His life, death and resurrection, Jesus made a way for all mankind to know and please God. Then Jesus returned to His Father's side. But that was still not the end of God's plan...

John 14:1-3 "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."

WHY THE CROSS?

Before moving on to the next topic of discussion, let's look a little deeper at why Jesus was sent to die on the cross.

God is the Creator and Judge of all the earth. God is perfect and holy. A holy judge cannot acquit guilt without punishment. Holiness demands justice or it is not HOLY. Justice requires punishment or it is not JUST. If God does not punish mankind for sins committed, then HE IS NOT HOLY AND JUST.

The Judge says all have sinned, all are guilty and the punishment rendered for all mankind is eternal separation from the God they reject. But the Son of the Judge knows that His Father loves mankind, whom He created, and the Son also loves mankind and so the SINLESS Son steps in and says to the Judge, "Punish me in their place. Judge ME guilty and punish ME to satisfy your holy wrath against sin and uphold your justice. And then forgive THEM!" This is what Christ did on the cross. On the cross Jesus Christ fully and forever satisfied the wrath of God's holiness against all the sins of the world:

2 Corinthians 5:21 - God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

John 1:29 - The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"

AND NOW, FOR EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES THAT JESUS IS WHO HE SAYS HE IS AND THAT HE DID WHAT HE SAYS HE DID, THERE IS FORGIVENESS OF SINS, NEW LIFE IN CHRIST, RESTORED RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FATHER AND LIFE EVERLASTING!

Romans 10:13 - For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."

5) The Testimony Of Jesus And His Father

Jesus' own testimony about Himself is also important for us to consider. Now you may be thinking, anyone can saying ANYTHING about themselves. One's testimony about oneself is always suspect because people lie all the time and that is exactly the point we want to make. You see, people throughout history and many to this day, have said and continue to say that Jesus was a good man - a good teacher - maybe even a prophet sent by God, but he was surely NOT the Son of God.

These claims are easily challenged with a simple question: Can a liar - a compulsive liar - truly be a good man? Would you describe someone who constantly LIED about his identity as a GOOD person? A GOOD teacher? A prophet from God? Because here is the thing, if Jesus is NOT the Son Of God, then he constantly lied about Himself. Jesus Himself claimed numerous times to be the Son of God:

John 5:17-18 - In his defense Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working." For this reason they tried all the more to kill him; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

John 8:42-58 - Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I have come here from God. I have not come on my own; God sent me. Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me! Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me? Whoever belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God."

The Jews answered him, "Aren't we right in saying that you are a Samaritan and demon-possessed?"

“I am not possessed by a demon,” said Jesus, “but I honor my Father and you dishonor me. I am not seeking glory for myself; but there is one who seeks it, and he is the judge. Very truly I tell you, whoever obeys my word will never see death.”

At this they exclaimed, “Now we know that you are demon-possessed! Abraham died and so did the prophets, yet you say that whoever obeys your word will never taste death. Are you greater than our father Abraham? He died, and so did the prophets. Who do you think you are?”

Jesus replied, “If I glorify myself, my glory means nothing. My Father, whom you claim as your God, is the one who glorifies me. Though you do not know him, I know him. If I said I did not, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and obey his word. Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad.”

“You are not yet fifty years old,” they said to him, “and you have seen Abraham!”

“Very truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!” At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.

John 10:30-33 - “I and the Father are one.” Again his Jewish opponents picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus said to them, “I have shown you many good works from the Father. For which of these do you stone me?”

“We are not stoning you for any good work,” they replied, “but for blasphemy, because you, a mere man, claim to be God.”

Luke 22:70 (NASB) - And they all said, “Are You the Son of God, then?” And He said to them, “Yes, I am.”

Jesus also said the following unbelievable statements about Himself:

John 11:25-26 - Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

John 14:6 - Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

Revelation 22:13 - I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

These are either the words of a truth teller or a LUNATIC!

Jesus cannot just be a good person, good teacher or even a prophet. His own claims refute these descriptions. Jesus doesn't want accolades or acceptance, he demands belief, loyalty and obedience and if he is the Son of God, as was attested by the signs and wonders he performed, then He deserves it. Which is why even God Himself spoke out twice during Jesus' time on earth, testifying that Jesus was His Son:

Matthew 3:13-17 - Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?"

Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented.

*As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "**This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.**"*

Matthew 17:1-8 - After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light. Just then there appeared before them Moses and Elijah, talking with Jesus.

Peter said to Jesus, “Lord, it is good for us to be here. If you wish, I will put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.”

*While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “**This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!**”*

When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. But Jesus came and touched them. “Get up,” he said. “Don’t be afraid.” When they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus.

What amazing moments to have witnessed and heard! The voice of God the Father entered time and space, audible and clear, to proclaim that Jesus was indeed His son. We should pay close attention to the response of Peter, James and John: “they fell facedown”. Their actions point to a future day when all the world will do likewise:

Philippians 2:9-11 – Therefore God exalted (Jesus) to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

6) The Testimony of Others

We've looked at the prophecies written about Jesus in the Old Testament before he was born. We also read about the angels announcing Jesus' birth and the Magi visiting the toddler Jesus and bestowing him with special gifts.

We've looked at the miracles Jesus performed, the testimony He gave about Himself and the testimony of His Father.

After his death, resurrection and ascension into heaven, more and more testimonies would be written down and shared from first-hand, eye-witnesses and then countless believers and followers around the world who would profess a life-changing, personal relationship with the Son of the Living God.

1 John 1:1-3 - "The One who existed from the beginning is the One we have heard and seen. We saw Him with our own eyes and touched Him with our own hands. He is Jesus Christ, the Word of Life. This One who is life from God was shown to us, and we have seen Him. And now we testify and announce to you that He is the One who is eternal life. He was with the Father, and then He was shown to us. We are telling you about what we ourselves have actually seen and heard, so that you may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ."

The four gospels were written by 4 different followers of Jesus Christ. These men were his friends. They had first-hand knowledge of the things they wrote. They were eye-witnesses to the life of Jesus. THIS IS HUGE! A court of law requires that only one eye-witness be present for validation. Four eye-witness accounts provides proof beyond a doubt.

Luke 1:1-4 - Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

After Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to his 11 disciples, 500 () of his followers saw him in the flesh before he ascended back to heaven! These people would not and could not be silent about Jesus' call to believe in and follow Him. Jesus commanded them to "Go into all the world and make disciples" and that is exactly what they did.

Not long after Christ returned to heaven, Peter preached one of the first public sermons to an unbelieving crowd. By the time He was done testifying to what he had personally witnessed and experienced at Jesus' side, 3000 new believers were added to their number. Soon after that, another 5000 new believers joined their ranks. Not only were the followers of Christ testifying that He truly was the Son of God, but now Christ's followers were doing the same miracles that Jesus had done. Jesus had promised this would happen before he had left:

John 14:16-17, 26, 12-13 - And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

So now the Spirit of God was working and moving through the people of God to accomplish the will of God!

Let's stop here and take a close look at one of THE strongest arguments for the validity of Christ's resurrection:

If Jesus DID NOT come back to life then He DID NOT appear to His disciples. If his disciples had just stolen and disposed of Jesus' body and then deceitfully reported that Jesus had risen from the dead then although many might have been fooled, the

disciples themselves would have known they were making it all up. So answer this question: WHY WOULD ALL OF THE DISCIPLES BUT ONE, DIE A MARTYRS DEATH, PROCLAIMING TO THEIR DEATH THAT CHRIST HAD INDEED RISEN FROM THE GRAVE?! Some of these disciples were burned at the stake, some were sawed in two and one was crucified upside down. Lying to stay alive makes sense, but lying to speed your death makes no sense at all. The bold witness of Jesus' disciples even unto death is one of the strongest arguments that they really did encounter a resurrected and living Jesus Christ.

And the testimonies of others continues today. Ask any born again Christian why they believe and follow Christ and you will hear a personal testimony of how Jesus changed their life and empowers them to live for the glory of God. Jesus didn't come to establish a religion, but to restore humanity's relationship with God, Our Creator. We, who believe in Christ, can testify to this living and active relationship we are engaged in with the Living God!

The world can deny Jesus Christ all day until the end of time, but it means nothing to those who KNOW and EXPERIENCE Him as their Lord and Savior...personal experience trumps all. Even though we do not see Jesus, we taste and see the fruit of His presence, His power and His purpose in our lives.

John ends his gospel with the following statement:

John 20:30-31 - Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Ponder the countless Missionaries who have gone to the farthest corners of the earth just to tell one soul that he or she is loved by a God who sent His only son to save them from their sins.

Think of the revivals that have swept through cities, countries and continents as the Holy Spirit moved in power, leading

thousands upon thousands to confess and believe in the name of Jesus. These thousands have testified to thousands more.

Consider the hundreds of thousands of books that have been written by followers of Christ to share the good news of His coming to save the world.

And what of the hundreds of thousands of songs that have been written and continue to be written and sung in almost every language on earth to the glory and praise of God the Father and Jesus His Son?!

Today there are hundreds, if not thousands, of websites declaring the good news of Jesus Christ through studies, lessons, sermons and testimonies. I Am Second (iamsecond.com) is a website solely dedicated to producing and sharing first person testimonies of Christ followers.

But there are still more missionaries and revivals and books and songs and messages and testimonies to come! So many that one day the Apostle John described our gathering together in heaven in the Book of Revelation like this:

Revelation 7:9-12 - After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice:

“Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.”

All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying:

*Amen!
Praise and glory
and wisdom and thanks and honor
and power and strength
be to our God for ever and ever.
Amen!”*

7) History Itself

The life, death and resurrection of Christ has changed the world. So impactful was and is the life of Christ that the current year on our calendar is just a reminder of how long it has been since Christ was born and walked the earth.

So impactful was and is the life of Christ that over 2000 years after his death and resurrection, His followers continue to give their lives to the cause of grace and truth that He calls all people to know and follow. Followers of Christ, also called the Body of Christ - His church - have carried on His mission to bring physical and spiritual healing to all people: from the broken and neglected to the wealthy and powerful.

The world is still broken, but one person, one soul a time, lives are restored through faith and obedience to Christ.

What has the Spirit of God accomplished in the world through the church and the body of Christ (believers and followers of Jesus) in every country around the globe?

Well, just consider what the world would be like without the scientific contributions of Galileo Galilie, Isaac Newton and Blaise Pascal?

The music of Bach, Handel, Mozart, Beethoven?

The art of Leonardo Da Vinci and Michaelangelo?

The writings of St. Augustine, William Shakespeare, G.K. Chesterton, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, John Bunyan, Emily Dickenson, C.S. Lewis?

The examples and charity of William Booth, George Mueller, and Mother Theresa?

The convictions of John Newton, Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, and Billy Graham?

All of these people, full of grace and truth, standing on the convictions of Christ, moved by the power of Christ, have changed the world for good. But just as important as these famous individuals, are the nameless thousands and millions of everyday, unknown heroes who have lived sacrificially like Christ: loving God with all their heart and soul and loving their neighbor as themselves.

What would the world be like without the establishment of Harvard, Yale, Oxford and so many other institutions of higher learning that were ALL founded upon Christian principles?

How many sick and dying have been helped over the centuries and around the globe by the founding of hospitals and by doctors and nurses who felt the call of God on their lives to go to places where there were no medicines or care and be the hands and feet of Jesus to the sick and dying?

How many orphanages have opened around the globe to take care of the least of these? How many Christ followers answering God's command to look after orphans and widows have established charities to promote the welfare of the downtrodden, neglected and abandoned?

How many ministries answering God's call to visit prisoners in jail, have taken the message of Jesus' forgiveness and salvation into jails and prisons - to those whom society has labeled hopeless and condemned - only to see countless criminals reborn and made new?

Where would we be today in regards to woman's rights, the rights of the unborn, the fight against human-slavery and trafficking and genocide, alcoholism, addiction, rape and immorality if it weren't for the life of the church and the convictions, teachings and examples of believers all united and serving others in the power of God's Holy Spirit?

The church, the body of Christ, the witness and testimonies and miracles of contemporary Christ followers all point to a LIVING

God who is still at work in the world today, bringing healing, restoration and salvation to all who call on the name of Jesus!

Civilizations rise and fall. Earthly kingdoms come and go, but the will of God and the plans of God and the people of God cannot and will not be stopped:

Psalm 33:10-11 (NLT) "The Lord frustrates the plans of the nations and thwarts all their schemes. But the Lord's plans stand firm forever; his intentions can never be shaken."

1 John 2:17 - "The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever."

Finally, the Bible tells us that Jesus IS coming back. Not as the humble sacrificial lamb of God, but as the fierce Lion of Judah, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, to rule and reign forevermore over all His creation. Prepare for His return!

Matthew 24: 27, 30-31, 42 - "For as lightning that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man..."

And then all the peoples of the earth will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other...

Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come."

As we conclude this booklet about Jesus, we come back to the most important question of all time:

Matthew 16:13-17 - Jesus asked His followers, "Who do people say that I, the Son of Man, am?" They said, "Some say You are John the Baptist and some say Elijah and others say Jeremiah or one of the early preachers."

He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Jesus said to him, "Simon, son of Jonah, you are happy because you did not learn this from man. My Father in heaven has shown you this."

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

Jesus asks you today,
"Who do you say I am?"

**Believe in Jesus TODAY.
Follow Him all your TOMORROWS.
Know, Experience and Enjoy Him FOREVER!**

*The Gospel of Mark has been included with this booklet so you can read Mark's full account of Jesus' life on earth. Our hope and prayer is that the words of Jesus, the miracles of Jesus and the sacrificial love of Jesus will speak to your heart, captivate your thoughts, grip your soul and leave you convinced that he truly is the Son of God and the Savior of the world.

Watch the "Life of Jesus" movie in Chinese at www.renshiyesu.com

马可福音 1

施洗者约翰预备道路

¹有关上帝的儿子耶稣基督的福音是这样开始的。

²以赛亚先知书上说：

“看啊，
我要差遣我的使者在你前面为你预备道路。

³他在旷野大声呼喊，
‘预备主的道，
修直祂的路。’”

⁴果然，约翰出现了，他在旷野劝人悔改，接受洗礼，使罪得到赦免。⁵犹太全境和耶路撒冷的居民都到约翰面前承认他们的罪，在约旦河里接受他的洗礼。

⁶约翰身穿骆驼毛的衣服，腰束皮带，吃的是蝗虫和野蜜。⁷他传道说：“在我之后，有一位能力比我更大的要来，我连弯腰替祂解鞋带也不配。⁸我是用水给你们施洗，但祂要用圣灵给你们施洗。”

耶稣受洗

⁹那时，耶稣从加利利的拿撒勒来约旦河接受约翰的洗礼。¹⁰耶稣从水中一上来，就看见天开了，圣灵好像鸽子一样降在祂身上，¹¹从天上有声音说：“你是我的爱子，我甚喜悦你。”

耶稣受试探

¹²圣灵随即催促祂到旷野。¹³祂在旷野受撒旦的试探四十天。祂与野兽在一起，有天使服侍祂。

呼召四渔夫

¹⁴约翰被捕后，耶稣来到加利利宣讲上帝的福音，说：¹⁵“时候到了，上帝的国临近了，你们要悔改，相信福音。”

16 耶稣沿着加利利湖边走，看见两个渔夫——西门和他的弟弟安得烈正在湖上撒网捕鱼。 17 耶稣对他们说：“来跟从我！我要使你们成为得人的渔夫。” 18 他们立刻抛下渔网，跟从了耶稣。

19 耶稣往前走了不远，又看见西庇太的两个儿子雅各和约翰正在船上补网， 20 便立刻呼召他们。他们就辞别父亲和船上的工人，跟从了耶稣。

传道赶鬼

21 他们到了迦百农，耶稣在安息日去会堂里讲道。 22 那里的人都很吃惊，因为祂教导他们时像个有权柄的人，不像律法教师。 23 当时会堂里有一个被污鬼附身的人喊道：

24 “拿撒勒的耶稣啊，我们和你有什么关系？你是来毁灭我们吗？我知道你是谁，你是上帝的圣者！”

25 耶稣责备它说：“住口，从他身上出来！”

26 污鬼使那人抽搐了一阵，大叫一声，就出来了。 27 在场的人十分惊讶，彼此议论说：“这是怎么回事？真是充满权柄的新教导啊！竟然连污鬼都服从祂的命令。” 28 于是，耶稣的名声立刻传遍了整个加利利。

医病赶鬼

29 耶稣同雅各和约翰离开会堂，来到西门和安得烈家。 30 当时西门的岳母正发烧，躺在床上，他们立刻把这事告诉耶稣。 31 耶稣走到她的床边，拉着她的手扶她起来，她的烧立刻退了，便起来服侍他们。

32 日落之后，有人把病人和被鬼附身的人都带来见耶稣。 33 全城的人都聚在门前。 34 耶稣医好了许多患各种疾病的人，又赶出很多鬼。祂不准鬼说话，因为鬼认识祂。

在加利利传道

35 第二天清早，天还没亮，耶稣就起来独自走到旷野去祷告。 36 西门和同伴们四处寻找耶稣， 37 找到了，便对祂说：“大家都在找你呢！”

38 耶稣却回答说：“我们到附近的乡镇去吧，我也好在那里传道，因为我就是为这事来的。”

39 于是，耶稣走遍加利利，在各会堂传道，赶鬼。

治好麻风病人

⁴⁰ 有一次，一个患麻风病的人来到耶稣面前，跪下央求：“只要你肯，一定能使我洁净。”

⁴¹ 耶稣动了慈心，就伸手摸他，说：“我肯，你洁净了吧！”⁴² 那人的麻风病立即消失了，他就洁净了。⁴³ 耶稣让他回去并郑重地叮嘱：⁴⁴ “不要把这事告诉别人，要去让祭司察看你的身体，并照摩西的规定献祭，向众人证明你已经洁净了。”

⁴⁵ 但那人离开之后，却到处传扬这件事，以致耶稣无法再公开进城。祂只能待在城外的旷野，可是人们仍从各处来找祂。

马可福音 2

治好瘫子

¹ 几天后，耶稣回到迦百农。祂在家的消息一传开，² 立刻有许多人蜂拥而来，连门外也挤满了人。耶稣正给他们讲道的时候，³ 有四个人抬着一个瘫痪的人来见祂。⁴ 但因为人太多，他们无法抬到耶稣跟前，就拆掉屋顶，对准耶稣所坐的地方，将瘫子连垫子一起缒下去。⁵ 耶稣看见他们的信心，就对瘫子说：“孩子，你的罪被赦免了！”⁶ 有几个律法教师坐在那里，心里议论说：⁷ “这是什么话？简直是亵渎上帝！除了上帝之外，谁能赦罪呢？”

⁸ 耶稣立刻看透了他们的心思，就说：“你们为什么这样心里议论呢？”⁹ 对瘫子说“你的罪得到赦免了”容易呢，还是说“起来，收拾你的垫子走吧”容易呢？¹⁰ 但我要让你们知道人子在世上有赦罪的权柄。”于是祂对瘫子说：¹¹ “我吩咐你起来收拾你的垫子回家去吧。”¹² 那人就站起来，马上收拾好垫子，当着众人的面走了出去。众人都十分惊奇，赞美上帝说：“我们从来没见过这样的事！”

呼召利未

¹³ 耶稣又出去到了湖边。有一大群人围拢过来，祂就教导他们。¹⁴ 耶稣往前走的时候，看见亚勒腓的儿子利未坐在收税站里工作，就对他说：“跟从我！”利未就起来跟从了耶稣。

¹⁵ 后来，利未请耶稣和祂的门徒到家里坐席，同席的还有很多已经跟随耶稣的税吏和罪人。¹⁶ 有几位法利赛人的律法教师看见耶稣跟税吏和罪人同席，就问耶稣的门徒：“祂怎么会跟这些税吏和罪人一起吃饭呢？”

¹⁷ 耶稣听见了，就说：“健康的人不需要医生，有病的人才需要。我来不是要召义人，乃是要召罪人。”

论禁食

¹⁸ 约翰的门徒和法利赛人都在禁食的时候，有人来问耶稣：“约翰的门徒和法利赛人的门徒禁食，为什么你的门徒不禁食呢？”

¹⁹ 耶稣对他们说：“新郎还在的时候，宾客怎能在婚宴中禁食呢？新郎还跟他们在一起的时候，他们不该禁食。²⁰ 但有一天新郎将被带走，那时他们就要禁食了。

²¹ “没有人会用新布来补旧衣服，因为新布会把旧衣服扯破，破洞会更大；²² 也没有人把新酒倒进旧皮囊里，否则新酒会胀破旧皮囊，酒和皮囊都毁了。所以，新酒一定要装在新皮囊里。”

安息日的主

²³ 一个安息日，耶稣和门徒走过一片麦田，门徒一边走一边搓麦穗吃。²⁴ 法利赛人批评耶稣说：“看看你的门徒，他们为什么做安息日不准做的事？”

²⁵ 耶稣回答说：“大卫和他的部下在饥饿、缺粮时所做的是，你们没有读过吗？²⁶ 在亚比亚他做大祭司时，他进入上帝的殿吃了献给上帝的供饼，还给他的部下吃。这饼只有祭司才可以吃。²⁷ 安息日是为人设立的，人不是为安息日设立的。²⁸ 所以，人子也是安息日的主。”

马可福音 3

治好手枯的人

¹ 耶稣又进了会堂，那里有个人一只手是萎缩的。² 当时有好些人密切地监视耶稣，看祂是否会在安息日医治这个人，好找借口控告祂。

³ 耶稣对那一只手萎缩的人说：“起来，站在中间。”⁴ 然后问众人：“在安息日应该行善还是作恶？救人还是害人？”他们都不吭声。

⁵ 耶稣生气地看着四周这些人，为他们的心刚硬而感到极其难过。祂对那人说：“把手伸出来！”那人一伸手，手就立刻复原了。⁶ 法利赛人离开后，立刻和希律党的人策划怎样除掉耶稣。

群众跟随耶稣

⁷ 耶稣和门徒退到湖边，有一大群人从加利利来跟随祂。⁸ 还有很多人听见耶稣所做的一切，就从犹太、耶路撒冷、以土买、约旦河东，甚至泰尔和西顿一带来找祂。⁹ 耶稣见人多，就吩咐门徒为祂预备一条小船，以免人群拥挤祂。¹⁰ 因为祂医好了很多人，凡有疾病的人都想挤过来摸祂。¹¹ 每当污鬼看见祂，就俯伏在祂面前，大喊：“你是上帝的儿子！”¹² 耶稣却严厉地吩咐它们不要泄露祂的身份。

选立十二使徒

¹³ 耶稣上了山，把合自己心意的人召集到跟前，¹⁴ 从中选出十二个人，设立他们为使徒，让他们跟随自己，并且差遣他们出去传道，¹⁵ 赐他们赶鬼的权柄。

¹⁶ 这十二位使徒是：西门——耶稣给他取名叫彼得、¹⁷ 西庇太的儿子雅各和雅各的兄弟约翰——耶稣给他们取名叫“半尼其”，就是“雷霆之子”的意思、¹⁸ 安得烈、腓力、巴多罗买、马太、多马、亚勒腓的儿子雅各、达太、激进党人西门、¹⁹ 及后来出卖耶稣的加略人犹大。

耶稣和别西卜

²⁰ 耶稣刚进家门，人群又聚集起来，以致祂和门徒连吃饭的时间也没有。²¹ 祂的亲属听见这个消息，就出来要拉住祂，因为人们说祂疯了。

²² 从耶路撒冷下来的律法教师说：“祂被别西卜附体。”又说：“祂是靠鬼王赶鬼。”

²³ 耶稣叫他们来，用比喻对他们说：“撒旦怎能驱逐撒旦呢？²⁴ 一个国内部自相纷争，必然崩溃。²⁵ 一个家内部自相纷争，必然破裂。²⁶ 同样，撒旦如果与自己为敌，自相纷争，就站立不住，必然灭亡。²⁷ 没有人能进入壮汉家里抢夺他的财物，除非先把那壮汉捆绑起来，才有可能抢劫他的家。

²⁸“我实在告诉你们，世人一切的罪和亵渎的话都可以得到赦免，²⁹唯有亵渎圣灵的人永远得不到赦免，他们要永远担罪。”³⁰ 耶稣这样说是因为他们诬蔑祂被污鬼附身。

谁是耶稣的亲人

³¹ 这时候，耶稣的母亲和弟兄来了，他们站在外面，托人叫耶稣。³² 有许多人围坐在耶稣身边，他们告诉祂说：“看啊！你的母亲和兄弟在外面找你。”

³³ 耶稣说：“谁是我的母亲？谁是我的弟兄？”³⁴ 然后祂望着周围坐着的人说：“看啊！我的母亲、我的弟兄在这里。³⁵ 凡遵行上帝旨意的人就是我的弟兄、姊妹和母亲。”

马可福音 4

撒种的比喻

¹ 耶稣又到湖边讲道，周围聚集了許多人，耶稣只好上到湖边的船上坐下，众人都站在岸上。² 耶稣用比喻教导他们许多事，在教导中祂说：³“听着！有一个农夫出去撒种。⁴ 撒种的时候，有些种子落在路旁，被飞鸟吃掉了；⁵ 有些落在石头地上，因为泥土不深，种子很快就发芽了，⁶ 然而因为没有根，被太阳一晒就枯萎了；⁷ 有些落在荆棘丛中，荆棘长起来便把嫩苗挤住了，以致不能结实；⁸ 有些落在沃土里，就发芽生长，结出果实，收成多达三十倍、六十倍、一百倍！”⁹ 然后祂说：“有耳可听的，都应当听。”

¹⁰ 当耶稣独自一人的时候，十二使徒和追随祂的人来请教比喻的意思。¹¹ 耶稣说：“上帝国的奥秘只让你们知道，对于外人，我只用比喻，¹² 使他们‘看了又看，却不领悟；听了又听，却不明白，免得他们回心转意，得到赦免。’”

¹³ 耶稣又对他们说：“你们不明白这个比喻，又怎能明白其他比喻呢？¹⁴ 农夫撒的是上帝的道。¹⁵ 种子落在路旁，是指人听了道，撒旦立刻过来夺去了撒在他们心里的道。¹⁶ 种子落在石头地上，是指人听了道后，立刻欢喜地接受了，¹⁷ 但他们心里没有根基，不过是暂时接受，一旦为道遭受患难和迫害，就立刻放弃了。¹⁸ 种子落在荆棘丛中，是指人虽然听过道，¹⁹ 但生活的忧虑、钱财的迷惑和其他欲望把道挤住了，以致不能结出果实。²⁰ 种子落在沃土里，是指人听了道，领受了，又结出果实，收成多达三十倍、六十倍、甚至一百倍。”

灯的比喻

²¹ 耶稣继续说：“人会把灯拿来放在篮子底下或床底下吗？当然不会，他一定会把它放在灯台上。²² 隐藏的事是不能掩盖的，终会显露出来。²³ 有耳可听的，就应当听。”²⁴ 耶稣又说：“要好好思想你们所听到的，你们用什么量器量给人，就用什么量器量给你们，甚至要多给你们。²⁵ 因为凡有的，还要给他更多；凡没有的，连他仅有的也要夺去！”

种子生长的比喻

²⁶ 祂又说：“上帝的国就像一个人在地上撒种。²⁷ 他天天日出而作，日落而息。种子就在他不知不觉中渐渐发芽长大。²⁸ 大地会使种子生长，先发苗后吐穗，最终结出饱满的籽粒。²⁹ 庄稼成熟后，他就拿起镰刀来收割，因为收成的时候到了。”

芥菜种的比喻

³⁰ 耶稣说：“我们拿什么比作上帝的国呢？用什么比喻来解释呢？³¹ 上帝的国就像一粒芥菜种。它是种子中最小的，³² 但种在地里，却能长得比各样蔬菜都大，有粗大的枝条，可以让飞鸟在它的树荫中筑巢。”

³³ 耶稣用了许多类似的比喻，按照众人所能领悟的，把上帝的道讲给他们听。³⁴ 祂总是用比喻对他们讲论，只有单独和门徒在一起的时候，才把一切解释清楚。

平息风浪

³⁵ 那天晚上，耶稣对门徒说：“我们渡到对面去吧。”³⁶ 他们就离开众人，上了耶稣乘坐的船，一起渡到湖的对岸，还有其他船只跟着去。³⁷ 忽然，湖面上狂风大作，波浪撞击船身，船内几乎灌满了水。³⁸ 耶稣却还在船尾枕着枕头睡觉。门徒叫醒了祂，说：“老师，我们快淹死了，你怎么不管呢？”

³⁹ 耶稣起来斥责狂风，对着湖面说：“静下来！停下来！”于是就风平浪静了。⁴⁰ 祂对门徒说：“你们为什么这样害怕呢？你们还是没有信心吗？”

⁴¹ 他们极其害怕，彼此议论说：“祂到底是谁？连风浪都听祂的！”

马可福音 5

治好被鬼附身的人

¹他们来到湖对岸的格拉森地区。²耶稣刚下船，就遇见一个被污鬼附身的人从坟场迎面而来。³那人以坟场为家，从来没有人能把他捆住，就算用铁链也锁不住他。⁴尽管有人多次用铁链和脚镣锁住他，但他挣断了铁链，砸碎了脚镣。没有人能制服他。⁵他昼夜在坟场和山野间大喊大叫，又用石头砍自己。

⁶他远远看见耶稣，就跑过去跪下来拜祂，喊着说：⁷“至高上帝的儿子耶稣啊，我有什么关系？看在上帝的份上，求你不要折磨我！”⁸原来，耶稣已经对他身上的鬼说：“污鬼，从这人身上出来！”

⁹耶稣问：“你叫什么名字？”

他说：“我的名字叫‘群’，因为我们是一大群。”

¹⁰接着污鬼再三哀求耶稣，不要把它们逐出那个地区。¹¹当时有一大群猪在附近山坡上觅食。¹²污鬼就哀求耶稣说：“让我们到猪群里去，附在它们身上吧！”

¹³耶稣允许了，污鬼就离开那人，进入猪群。那群猪就一路奔下陡坡，冲进湖里淹死了，约有两千头。

¹⁴放猪的人都吓跑了。他们把这消息传遍了城里乡间，于是人人都跑来看个究竟。¹⁵他们到了耶稣那里，看见那一度被群鬼附身的人神智清醒、衣着整齐地坐在那里，都很害怕。¹⁶目睹这件事的人向他们讲述整个经过。¹⁷他们请耶稣离开他们的地方。

¹⁸耶稣上了船准备离开的时候，那被鬼附过的人恳求耶稣让他随行。¹⁹耶稣没有答应，只对他说：“回去见你的家人，将主为你所做的事和祂怜悯你的经过告诉他们吧！”

²⁰这人就回到低加坡里一带宣扬耶稣为他所行的奇事，大家都很惊奇。

耶稣医治有信心的人

²¹耶稣再坐船回到对岸，立刻有一大群人在岸边围着祂。²²人群中有一位会堂的主管名叫雅鲁，他一见到耶稣便俯伏在祂脚前，²³恳求说：“我小女儿快要死了，求你去把手按在她身上，医治她，救她一命。”

²⁴ 耶稣和他同去，一大群人跟着祂，拥挤着祂。

²⁵ 有一个妇人患血漏病已经十二年，²⁶ 经过许多医生的诊治，受尽痛苦，耗尽钱财，病情仍没有好转，反而更加严重。²⁷ 她听见耶稣的事，就夹在人群中挤到耶稣背后摸祂的衣服，²⁸ 心想：“只要摸到祂的衣服，我就痊愈了！”

²⁹ 她的血漏立刻停止了，她感到自己痊愈了。³⁰ 耶稣马上知道有能力从自己身上发出，便在人群中转过身来问：“谁摸了我的衣服？”

³¹ 门徒对祂说：“你看，这么多人在你周围挤来挤去，你怎么问谁摸你呢？”

³² 耶稣环视四周，要找出摸祂的人。³³ 那妇人害怕得发抖，她知道在自己身上发生了什么事，于是上前俯伏在耶稣面前，将实情说了出来。

³⁴ 耶稣说：“女儿，你的信心救了你。安心地回去吧！你的病好了。”

³⁵ 耶稣还在说话的时候，有人从雅鲁家中赶来，对雅鲁说：“你的女儿已经死了，何必麻烦老师呢？”

³⁶ 耶稣听了，便对雅鲁说：“不要怕，只要信。”³⁷ 于是，祂带着彼得、雅各和雅各的弟弟约翰去雅鲁家，不准其他人跟着。³⁸ 他们到了那里，只见在场的人嚎啕大哭，场面混乱。³⁹ 耶稣进去问道：“你们为什么大哭大嚷呢？这孩子并没有死，只是睡着了。”

⁴⁰ 这些人听了，都讥笑祂。耶稣让他们全部出去，然后带着孩子的父母和三个门徒进了房间。⁴¹ 祂拉着孩子的手说：“大利大，古米！”意思是：“小女孩，我吩咐你起来！”

⁴² 小女孩应声而起，并且可以走动，那时她十二岁。在场的人都惊奇不已。⁴³ 耶稣郑重叮嘱他们不要把这事张扬出去，又吩咐他们给女孩东西吃。

马可福音 6

拿撒勒人厌弃耶稣

¹ 耶稣带着门徒离开那地方，回到自己的家乡。² 到了安息日，祂开始在会堂里教导人，众人听了都很惊奇，说：“这个人从哪里学来这些本领？祂怎么会有这种智慧？祂怎么能行这样的神迹？”³ 这不是那个木匠吗？祂不是玛丽亚的儿子吗？祂不是雅各、约西、犹大、西门的大哥吗？祂的妹妹们不也住在我们这里吗？”他们就对祂很反感。

⁴ 耶稣对他们说：“先知到处受人尊敬，只有在本乡、本族、本家例外。”⁵ 耶稣不能在那里行任何神迹，只把手按在几个病人身上，医治了他们。⁶ 他们的不信令耶稣诧异，于是他就去周围的村庄教导人。

差遣十二使徒

⁷ 耶稣召集了十二个使徒，差遣他们两个两个地出去，赐给他们制服污鬼的权柄，⁸ 又吩咐他们除了手杖之外，不用带食物和背囊，腰包里也不要带钱，⁹ 只穿一双鞋子和一套衣服就够了。¹⁰ 他说：“你们无论到哪里，就住在那些接待你们的人家里，一直住到离开。¹¹ 如果某地方的人不接待你们，不听你们传的道，你们在离开之前要跺掉脚上的尘土，作为对他们的警告！”

¹² 使徒便出去传道，劝人悔改，¹³ 赶出许多鬼，为许多病人抹油，治好他们。

施洗者约翰遇害

¹⁴ 耶稣声名远播，希律王也听说了他的事。有人说：“施洗者约翰从死里复活了，所以能够行这些神迹。”

¹⁵ 也有人说：“他是先知以利亚。”

还有人说：“他是个先知，跟古代的一位先知相似。”

¹⁶ 希律听到这些议论，就说：“他一定是被我斩了头的约翰从死里复活了。”¹⁷ 原来希律娶了他兄弟腓力的妻子希罗底，并为她的缘故而派人逮捕了约翰，把他关押在监牢里。¹⁸ 因为约翰屡次对希律说：“你娶弟弟的妻子不合法。”

¹⁹ 希罗底对约翰怀恨在心，想要杀掉他，只是不能得逞。²⁰ 因为希律知道约翰是个公义圣洁的人，所以敬畏他，并对他加以保护。尽管约翰所讲的道理令他困惑不安，他仍然喜欢听。

²¹ 机会终于来了。希律在自己的生日那天设宴招待文武百官和加利利的显要。²² 希罗底的女儿进来跳舞，甚得希律和客人的欢心。王对她说：“你想要什么，只管说。”²³ 王还对她起誓说：“无论你要什么，哪怕是我的半壁江山，我都会给你。”

²⁴ 她便出去问她母亲：“我应该要什么呢？”

她母亲说：“要施洗者约翰的头！”

²⁵ 她马上回去对王说：“愿王立刻把施洗者约翰的头放在盘子里送给我。”

²⁶ 王听了这个请求，感到十分为难，但因为在众宾客面前起了誓，就不好拒绝。²⁷ 他立刻命令卫兵进监牢砍了约翰的头，²⁸ 放在盘子里送给这女子，她又转送给她母亲。²⁹ 约翰的门徒听到这个消息，就来把约翰的尸体领回去，安葬在坟墓里。

耶稣使五千人吃饱

³⁰ 使徒们聚集在耶稣身边，向祂报告事工和传道的经过。³¹ 耶稣对他们说：“你们私下跟我到僻静的地方去歇一会儿吧。”因为当时来来往往找他们的人实在太多，他们连吃饭的时间都没有。

³² 他们乘船悄悄地到了一处僻静的地方。³³ 可是有许多人看见他们离开，认出了他们，便从各城镇步行赶往那里，比他们先到达。³⁴ 耶稣一下船，看见这一大群人好像没有牧人的羊，心里怜悯他们，于是教导了他们许多道理。

³⁵ 天色晚了，门徒过来对耶稣说：“时候已经不早了，这里又是荒郊野外，³⁶ 请遣散众人，好让他们到周围的村庄去自己买些吃的。”

³⁷ 耶稣说：“你们给他们吃的吧。”

门徒说：“我们哪来这么多钱买东西给他们吃啊？”

³⁸ 耶稣说：“看看你们有多少饼。”

他们察看后，说：“有五个饼和两条鱼。”

³⁹ 耶稣吩咐门徒叫大家分组坐在草地上。⁴⁰ 于是众人坐下，有的五十人一组，有的一百人一组。⁴¹ 耶稣拿起那五个饼、两条鱼，举目望着天祝谢后，掰开递给门徒，让他们分给众人。祂又照样把那两条鱼分给众人。⁴² 大家都吃了，并且吃饱了。⁴³ 门徒把剩下的碎饼、碎鱼收拾起来，装满了十二个篮子。⁴⁴ 当时吃饼的男人有五千。

耶稣在湖面上行走

⁴⁵ 随后，耶稣催门徒上船，叫他们先渡到湖对岸的伯赛大，祂则遣散众人。⁴⁶ 祂辞别了众人后，就上山去祷告。⁴⁷ 到了晚上，门徒的船在湖中心，耶稣独自留在岸上。⁴⁸ 大约凌晨三点钟，祂看见门徒在逆风中摇橹，非常吃力，就从水面上朝门徒走去，想要从他们旁边经过。⁴⁹ 门徒看见有人在湖面上走，以为是幽灵，吓得惊叫起来。⁵⁰ 全船的人看见祂，都吓坏了，耶稣立刻对他们说：“放心吧，是我，不要怕！”

⁵¹ 耶稣上了船，来到他们那里，风便停了。门徒心里十分惊奇，⁵² 因为他们仍然不明白耶稣分饼那件事的意义，心里还是愚顽。⁵³ 他们渡到湖对岸，来到革尼撒勒，在那里靠岸，⁵⁴ 刚一下船，众人立刻认出了耶稣。⁵⁵ 他们跑遍那一带地方，用垫子把生病的人抬来，听到耶稣在哪里，就把病人抬到哪里。⁵⁶ 耶稣不论到哪一个城市、乡镇和村庄，人们总是把病人抬到街市上，求耶稣让他们摸一摸祂衣裳的穗边，所有摸过的病人都好了。

马可福音 7

传统与诫命

¹ 有法利赛人和一些律法教师从耶路撒冷来见耶稣。² 他们看到祂的门徒有些吃饭前没有照礼仪洗手。³ 因为法利赛人和所有的犹太人都拘守祖先的传统，总是先照礼仪洗手之后才吃饭；⁴ 从市场回来也要先洁净自己，然后才吃饭。他们还拘守许多其他规矩，如洗杯、罐、铜器等。

⁵ 他们质问耶稣：“为什么你的门徒违背祖先的传统，竟用不洁净的手吃饭呢？”

⁶ 耶稣回答说：“以赛亚先知针对你们这些伪君子所说的预言一点不错，正如圣经上说，

“这些人嘴上尊崇我，
心却远离我。

⁷ 他们的教导无非是人的规条，
他们敬拜我也是枉然。”

⁸ 你们只知拘守人的传统，却无视上帝的诫命。”⁹ 耶稣又对他们说：“你们为了拘守自己的传统，竟巧妙地废除了上帝的诫命。¹⁰ 摩西说，‘要孝敬父母’，又说，‘咒骂父母的，必被处死。’¹¹ 你们却认为人若对父母说，‘我把供养你们的钱财已经全部奉献给上帝了’，¹² 他就可以不奉养父母。¹³ 你们就是这样为了拘守传统而废除上帝的道，类似的情形还有很多。”

内心的污秽

¹⁴ 耶稣又召集众人，教导他们说：“我的话，你们要听明白，¹⁵ 从外面进去的不会使人污秽，只有从人里面发出来的才会使人污秽。¹⁶ 有耳可听的，都应当听！”

¹⁷ 耶稣离开众人，进了屋子，门徒问祂这比喻的意思。¹⁸ 耶稣说：“你们也不明白吗？你们不知道吗？从外面进去的，不会使人污秽，¹⁹ 因为不能进入他的心，只能进他的肠胃，最后会排出来，也就是说所有的食物都是洁净的。²⁰ 从人里面发出来的才使人污秽，²¹ 因为从里面，就是从人的心里能够生出恶念、苟合、偷盗、谋杀、²² 通奸、贪婪、邪恶、诡诈、放荡、嫉妒、毁谤、骄傲、狂妄。²³ 这一切恶事都是从里面生出来的，能使人污秽。”

外族妇人的信心

²⁴ 耶稣从那里启程去泰尔和西顿地区。祂进了一户人家，原本不想让人知道，却无法避开人们的注意。²⁵⁻²⁶ 当时有一个妇人的小女儿被污鬼附身，她听见耶稣的事，就来俯伏在祂脚前，恳求祂赶出她女儿身上的鬼。这妇人是希腊人，来自叙利亚的腓尼基。

²⁷ 耶稣对她说：“要先让儿女们吃饱，因为把儿女的食物丢给狗吃不合适。”

²⁸ 妇人说：“主啊，你说的对，但桌子下的狗也吃孩子们掉下来的碎渣呀！”

²⁹ 耶稣说：“因为你这句话，你回去吧，鬼已经离开你的女儿了。”

³⁰ 她回到家里，见女儿躺在床上，鬼已经离开了。

医治聋哑的人

³¹ 耶稣离开泰尔地区，经过西顿，来到低加坡里地区的加利利湖。³² 有人带着一个又聋又哑的人来见耶稣，恳求祂把手按在这个人身上。³³ 耶稣就带他离开众人走到一边，用手指头伸进他的耳朵，又吐唾沫抹他的舌头，³⁴ 望天长叹，对他说：“以法大！”意思是“开了吧！”³⁵ 他的耳朵立刻开了，舌头灵活了，说话也清楚了。³⁶ 耶稣吩咐他们不要将这事告诉人。可是耶稣越是这样吩咐，他们越是极力宣扬，³⁷ 听见的人都十分惊奇，说：“祂做的事好极了，甚至叫聋子听见，哑巴说话！”

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耶稣使四千人吃饱

¹那时，又有一大群人聚在一起，他们没有东西吃。耶稣就叫来门徒，说：²“我怜悯这些人，他们跟我在一起已经三天，没有任何吃的了。³如果让他们饿着肚子回家，他们在路上会体力不支，因为有些人是远道而来的。”

⁴门徒说：“在这荒野，如何找到足够的食物给这些人吃呢？”

⁵耶稣问：“你们有多少饼？”

门徒答道：“七个。”

⁶耶稣便吩咐大家坐在地上，然后拿着那七个饼祝谢了，掰开，递给门徒，让门徒分给大家，门徒就把饼分给大家。⁷他们还有几条小鱼。耶稣祝谢了，叫门徒分给众人。⁸大家都吃了，并且吃饱了，剩下的零碎装满了七个筐子。⁹吃的人约有四千。耶稣让众人回家后，¹⁰随即和门徒上船，来到大玛努他地区。

¹¹法利赛人出来盘问耶稣，要求祂从天上显一个神迹给他们看看，借此试探祂。¹²耶稣深深叹息道：“这世代的人为什么总是要看神迹呢？我实在告诉你们，没有神迹给这世代的人看。”¹³然后，耶稣离开他们，乘船回对岸去了。

防备法利赛人和希律的酵

¹⁴门徒忘了带饼，船上只有一个饼。¹⁵耶稣警告他们：“你们要谨慎，要提防法利赛人和希律的酵！”

¹⁶他们彼此议论说：“老师这样说，是不是因为我们没有带饼呢？”

¹⁷耶稣知道他们的心思，就说：“你们为什么议论没有带饼的事呢？难道你们还不明白、不领悟吗？你们的心还是愚顽吗？¹⁸你们有眼不会看，有耳不会听吗？你们不记得吗？¹⁹我掰开五个饼分给五千人吃的时候，你们捡了多少篮的零碎呢？”

门徒答道：“十二篮。”

²⁰耶稣又说：“我用七个饼喂饱四千人时，你们捡了多少筐零碎呢？”

门徒答道：“七筐。”

²¹ 耶稣接着说：“你们还不明白吗？”

治好伯赛大的瞎子

²² 他们到了伯赛大，有人带来一个瞎子，求耶稣摸他。²³ 耶稣拉着瞎子的手带他走到村外，吐唾沫在他的眼睛上，并把手按在他身上，问他：“你看见什么了？”

²⁴ 他抬头看了看，说：“我看见人们好像一棵棵的树，走来走去。”

²⁵ 耶稣把手按在他的眼睛上，他定睛一看，便恢复了视力，什么都看得清清楚楚。²⁶ 耶稣叫他回家，并对他说：“不要再进这个村子了。”

彼得宣告耶稣是基督

²⁷ 耶稣和门徒前往凯撒利亚·腓立比境内的村庄。在路上，祂问门徒：“别人说我是谁？”

²⁸ 他们说：“有人说你是施洗者约翰，有人说你是以利亚，有人说你是众先知中的一位。”

²⁹ 耶稣又问他们：“那么，你们说我是谁？”

彼得回答说：“你是基督！”

³⁰ 耶稣吩咐他们不要泄露祂的身份。

耶稣预言自己的受难和复活

³¹ 从此，耶稣便告诉他们，人子必须受许多苦，被长老、祭司长和律法教师弃绝，杀害，但必在三天之后复活。³² 耶稣清楚地把这些事告诉了他们，彼得就把祂拉到一边，劝阻祂。³³ 耶稣转身看了看门徒，斥责彼得说：“撒旦，退到我后面去！因为你不考虑上帝的意思，只考虑人的意思。”

³⁴ 祂叫众人 and 门徒一起过来，对他们说：“如果有人要跟从我，就应当舍己，背起他的十字架跟从我。³⁵ 因为想救自己生命的，必失去生命；但为了我和福音而失去生命的，必得到生命。³⁶ 人就是赚得全世界，却丧失自己的生命，又有什么益处呢？³⁷ 他还能用什么换回生命呢？”

³⁸“在这淫乱、罪恶的世代，如果有人以我和我的道为耻，人子在父的荣耀中与圣天使再来的时候，也要以他为耻。”

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¹耶稣继续说：“我实在告诉你们，有些站在这里的人会在有生之年看见上帝的国带着能力降临。”

登山变象

²六天后，耶稣带着彼得、雅各和约翰暗暗地登上一座高山。耶稣在他们面前改变了形象，³衣服变得洁白放光，世上找不到漂得那么白的布。⁴这时，以利亚和摩西在他们眼前出现，与耶稣谈话。⁵彼得对耶稣说：“老师，我们在这里真好！我们搭三座帐篷吧，一座给你，一座给摩西，一座给以利亚。”

⁶其实彼得当时不知说什么才好，因为他们都很害怕。⁷就在这时候，有一朵云彩飘来遮住他们，云彩中有声音说：“这是我的爱子，你们要听从祂。”⁸门徒立刻四处观看，发现没有其他人，只有耶稣和他们在哪里。

⁹下山的时候，耶稣叮嘱他们在人子还没有从死里复活之前，不要把刚才看见的告诉别人。

¹⁰门徒把这话谨记在心，彼此议论“从死里复活”这句话的意思。¹¹他们问耶稣：“律法教师为什么说以利亚必须先来？”

¹²耶稣回答说：“以利亚固然要先来复兴一切，但为什么圣经上说人子一定会饱受痛苦、遭人蔑视呢？¹³其实我告诉你们，以利亚已经来了，人们却任意对待他，正如圣经的记载。”

治好污鬼附身的孩子

¹⁴他们与其他门徒会合时，看见一大群人围住门徒，几个律法教师正在跟他们辩论。

¹⁵大家一看到耶稣，都十分惊奇，立刻跑上去迎接祂。¹⁶耶稣问门徒：“你们跟他们辩论什么？”

17 人群中有一个人说：“老师，我带了我的儿子来找你，因为他被哑巴鬼附身。 18 每次鬼控制他，把他摔在地上，他就口吐白沫，咬牙切齿，全身僵硬。我请你的门徒赶走那鬼，他们却办不到。”

19 耶稣说：“唉，这不信的世代啊！我要跟你们在一起待多久，容忍你们多久呢？把他带到我这里吧。”

20 他们把那孩子带到耶稣面前。那鬼一见耶稣，就使孩子抽搐，倒在地上打滚，口吐白沫。 21 耶稣问孩子的父亲：“他这样子多久了？”孩子的父亲回答道：“他从小就这样， 22 鬼常常将他扔进火里或水里，要害他的命。如果你能，求你怜悯我们，帮助我们吧！”

23 耶稣说：“如果你能？对于相信的人，凡事都有可能！”

24 孩子的父亲立刻喊着说：“我信！但我信心不足，求你帮助我！”

25 耶稣看见人群都跑了过来，就斥责那污鬼：“你这个聋哑鬼，我命令你从他身上出来，不许再进去！”

26 那鬼发出喊叫，使孩子剧烈地抽搐了一阵，就出来了。孩子躺在地上一动也不动，大家都以为他死了。 27 但耶稣拉着他的手扶他起来，他就站了起来。

28 耶稣进屋后，门徒悄悄问祂：“我们为什么赶不走那鬼呢？”

29 耶稣说：“要赶走这类鬼只有靠祷告^[a]。”

再次预言受难

30 他们离开那里，途经加利利。耶稣不想任何人知道祂的行踪， 31 因为祂在教导门徒。祂说：“人子将被交在人的手中，被他们杀害，但三天之后，祂必复活。” 32 门徒却不明白这句话的意思，又不敢问祂。

谁最伟大

33 他们回到迦百农的住所，耶稣问门徒：“你们一路上争论些什么？”

34 他们都沉默不语，因为刚才他们在争论谁最伟大。 35 耶稣坐下，叫十二个门徒过来，对他们说：“谁想为首，就该在众人中做最小的，做众人的仆人。” 36 祂领了一个小孩子来，叫他站在门徒中间，又抱起他，对他们说： 37 “任何人为我的缘故接待这样一个小孩子，就是接待我；凡接待我的，不单是接待我，也是接待差我来的那位。”

警戒犯罪

³⁸ 约翰对耶稣说：“老师，我们看见有人奉你的名赶鬼，就阻止他，因为他不是跟从我们的。”

³⁹ 耶稣说：“不要阻止他，因为没有人奉我的名行过神迹后，会很快毁谤我。⁴⁰ 不反对我们的，就是支持我们的。⁴¹ 我实在告诉你们，若有人因为你们属于基督而给你们一杯水喝，他也必得到赏赐。

⁴² “但若有人使这样一个小信徒失足犯罪，他的下场比把大磨石挂在他脖子上扔到海里还要惨。⁴³ 如果你一只手使你犯罪，就砍掉它！⁴⁴ 拖着残废的身体进入永生，胜过双手健全却落入地狱不灭的火中。⁴⁵ 倘若你一只脚使你犯罪，就砍掉它！瘸着腿进入永生，⁴⁶ 胜过双脚健全却被丢进地狱！⁴⁷ 如果你的一只眼睛使你犯罪，就剜掉它！独眼进上帝的国，胜过双目健全却被丢进地狱。⁴⁸ 在那里，

“虫是不死的，
火是不灭的。”

⁴⁹ “每个人都要被火炼，像被盐腌一样。⁵⁰ 盐是好东西，但如果失去咸味，怎能使它再咸呢？你们里面要有盐，要彼此和睦。”

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论婚姻

¹ 耶稣离开那里，来到犹太地区和约旦河东岸，人群又聚集到祂那里。耶稣像往常一样教导他们。² 一些法利赛人想试探耶稣，就来问祂：“男人可以休妻吗？”³ 耶稣反问道：“摩西怎么吩咐你们的？”

⁴ 他们说：“摩西准许人写休书休妻。”

⁵ 耶稣说：“摩西因为你们心硬，才给你们写了这条诫命。⁶ 太初创造时，‘上帝造了男人和女人。’⁷ ‘因此，人要离开父母，与妻子结合，⁸ 二人成为一体。’这样，夫妻不再是两个人，而是一体了。⁹ 因此，上帝配合的，人不可分开。”

¹⁰ 回到屋里后，门徒追问耶稣这件事。¹¹ 耶稣说：“任何人休妻另娶，就是对妻子不忠，是犯通奸罪。¹² 同样，妻子若离弃丈夫另嫁，也是犯通奸罪。”

祝福孩童

¹³ 有人带着小孩子来要让耶稣摸一摸，门徒却责备他们。¹⁴ 耶稣看见后很生气，对门徒说：“让小孩子到我这里来，不要阻止他们，因为上帝的国属于这样的人。¹⁵ 我实在告诉你们，人若不像小孩子一样接受上帝的国，绝不能进去。”¹⁶ 于是，耶稣抱起小孩子，把手按在他们身上，为他们祝福。

永生的代价

¹⁷ 耶稣正要上路，有一个人跑来跪在祂跟前，问祂：“良善的老师，我该做什么才能承受永生？”

¹⁸ 耶稣说：“你为什么称呼我‘良善的老师’呢？只有上帝是良善的。¹⁹ 你知道‘不可杀人，不可通奸，不可偷盗，不可作伪证，不可欺诈，要孝敬父母’这些诫命。”

²⁰ 那人说：“老师，我从小就遵行这些诫命。”

²¹ 耶稣望着他，心中爱他，便说：“你还有一件事没有做，就是变卖你所有的产业，送给穷人，你必有财宝存在天上，然后你还要来跟从我。”

²² 那人听了，脸色骤变，便沮丧地走了，因为他有许多产业。²³ 耶稣看看周围的人，对门徒说：“有钱人进上帝的国真难啊！”

²⁴ 门徒听了感到惊奇，耶稣便再次对他们说：“孩子们，进上帝的国多么难啊！²⁵ 骆驼穿过针眼比有钱人进上帝的国还容易呢！”

²⁶ 门徒更加惊奇，便议论说：“这样，谁能得救呢？”

²⁷ 耶稣看着他们说：“对人而言，这不可能，但对上帝而言，凡事都可能。”

²⁸ 彼得说：“你看，我们已经撇下一切来跟从你了。”

²⁹ 耶稣说：“我实在告诉你们，任何人为了我和福音而撇下房屋、弟兄、姊妹、父母、儿女或田地，³⁰ 今世必在房屋、弟兄、姊妹、父母、儿女或田地方面获得百倍的回报，来世必得永生。当然他也会受到迫害。³¹ 然而，许多为首的将要殿后，殿后的将要为首。”

耶稣第三次预言自己的受难

³² 在前往耶路撒冷的路上，耶稣走在众人前面，门徒感到惊奇，其他跟随的人也很害怕。

耶稣把十二个门徒叫到一旁，再把自己将要遭遇的事告诉他们，说：³³“听着，我们现在前往耶路撒冷，人子将被交在祭司长和律法教师的手中，他们要判祂死刑，把祂交给外族人。³⁴ 他们会嘲弄祂，向祂吐唾沫，鞭打祂，杀害祂。但是，三天之后祂必复活！”

雅各与约翰的请求

³⁵ 西庇太的两个儿子雅各和约翰上前对耶稣说：“老师，请你答应我们一个要求。”

³⁶ 耶稣问：“什么要求？”

³⁷ 他们说：“在你的荣耀中，求你让我们一个坐在你右边，一个坐在你左边。”

³⁸ 耶稣说：“你们不知道自己在求什么。我要喝的那杯，你们能喝吗？我要受的洗，你们能受吗？”

³⁹ 他们说：“我们能。”

耶稣说：“我要喝的那杯，你们也要喝；我所受的洗，你们也要受。⁴⁰ 不过谁坐在我的左右不是我来定，而是为谁预备的，就让谁坐。”

⁴¹ 其他十个门徒听见这事后，很生雅各和约翰的气。⁴² 于是，耶稣把他们叫来，对他们说：“你们知道，外族人有君王统治他们，有大臣管理他们，⁴³ 但你们不可这样。你们中间谁要当首领，谁就要做大家的仆人；⁴⁴ 谁要居首位，谁就要做大家的奴仆。⁴⁵ 因为就连人子也不是来受人服侍，而是来服侍人，并且牺牲性命，作许多人的赎价。”

治好瞎子巴底买

⁴⁶ 耶稣和门徒来到耶利哥。当耶稣和门徒及众人出城的时候，遇见一个瞎眼的乞丐坐在路旁乞讨，他的名字叫巴底买，是底买的儿子。⁴⁷ 巴底买一听到经过的是拿撒勒人耶稣，就喊道：“大卫的后裔耶稣啊，可怜我吧！”

⁴⁸ 许多人都责备他，叫他不要吵，但他却更加大声喊道：“大卫的后裔啊，可怜我吧！”

⁴⁹ 耶稣停下脚步，叫人带他过来。

他们就对瞎子巴底买说：“好了，起来吧，祂叫你呢。”

⁵⁰ 巴底买丢下外衣，跳了起来，走到耶稣面前。

⁵¹ 耶稣问他：“你要我为你做什么？”

瞎子说：“老师，我想能够看见。”

⁵² 耶稣说：“回去吧！你的信心救了你。”那人立刻得见光明，在路上跟从了耶稣。

马可福音 11

骑驴进耶路撒冷

¹ 耶稣和门徒将近耶路撒冷，快到橄榄山附近的伯法其和伯大尼两个村庄时，祂派了两个门徒，² 对他们说：“你们去前面的村庄，一进村就会看见一头从来没有人骑过的驴驹拴在那里，你们把它解开牵来。³ 若有人问你们为什么这样做，就说，‘主要用它，很快会把它送回来。’”⁴ 他们进了村子，果然看见有一头驴驹拴在街道旁一户人家的门外，就上前解开它。⁵ 旁边站着的几个人就问他们：“你们为什么要解开这头驴驹？”

⁶ 门徒依照耶稣的吩咐回答，那些人就让他们牵走了。⁷ 他们把驴驹牵到耶稣面前，将自己的外衣搭在驴背上，耶稣就骑了上去。⁸ 很多人把衣服铺在路上，有人将田间的树枝砍下来铺在路上。⁹ 大家前呼后拥，高声欢呼：

“和散那^[a]！”

奉主名来的当受称颂！

¹⁰ 那将要来临的我祖大卫的国度当受称颂！

和散那归于至高之处的上帝！”

¹¹ 耶稣进了耶路撒冷，来到圣殿，巡视各处。那时天色已晚，耶稣便和十二门徒出城前往伯大尼。

咒诅无花果树

¹² 第二天，他们离开伯大尼后，耶稣饿了。¹³ 祂远远看见有一棵枝叶茂盛的无花果树，就走过去找果子吃。到了树下，却什么也找不到，只有满树的叶子，因为当时不是收无花果的季节。¹⁴ 祂对那棵树说：“愿无人再吃你的果子！”祂的门徒都听见了这句话。

洁净圣殿

¹⁵ 他们来到耶路撒冷后，耶稣进入圣殿，赶走了里面做买卖的人，推翻了兑换钱币之人的桌子和卖鸽子之人的凳子，¹⁶ 不准人抬着货物穿过圣殿。¹⁷ 祂教导他们说：“圣经上不是记载‘我的殿必称为万民祷告的殿’吗？你们竟把它变成了贼窝。”

¹⁸ 祭司长和律法教师听到这番话后，就策划如何杀害耶稣，只是有些怕祂，因为百姓都对祂的教导感到惊奇。¹⁹ 到了傍晚，耶稣和门徒去了城外。

无花果树的教训

²⁰ 早上，他们又经过那棵无花果树，看见它连根都枯了。²¹ 彼得想起昨天发生的事，就对耶稣说：“老师，你看！昨天你咒诅的无花果树已经枯了。”

²² 耶稣说：“要对上帝有信心。²³ 我实在告诉你们，不论何人，只要有信心，毫不疑惑，就是对这座山说，‘从这里挪开，投进大海里！’也必定为他成就。²⁴ 所以我告诉你们，你们祷告时无论求什么，只要相信已经得到了，就必得到。²⁵ 你们站着祷告的时候，若想起有人得罪了你们，就要饶恕他。这样，你们天上的父也会饶恕你们的过犯。²⁶ 你们如果不饶恕别人，你们天上的父也不会饶恕你们的过犯。[\[b\]](#)”

质问耶稣的权柄

²⁷ 他们再次回到耶路撒冷。耶稣在圣殿里行走的时候，祭司长、律法教师和长老上前质问祂：²⁸ “你凭什么权柄做这些事？谁授权给你了？”

²⁹ 耶稣说：“我也要问你们一个问题，你们回答了，我就告诉你们我凭什么权柄做这些事。³⁰ 约翰的洗礼是从天上来的还是从人来的？请回答我！”

³¹ 他们彼此议论说：“如果我们说‘是从天上来的’，祂一定会问，‘那你们为什么不信他？’”

³² 如果我们说‘是从人来的’，又怕触怒百姓，因为他们都相信约翰真的是先知。”³³ 于是，他们回答说：“我们不知道。”耶稣说：“我也不告诉你们我凭什么权柄做这些事。”

马可福音 12

凶狠的佃户

¹耶稣用比喻对他们说：“有人开辟了一个葡萄园，在四周筑起篱笆，又在园中挖了一个榨酒池，建了一座瞭望台，然后把葡萄园租给佃户，就出远门了。

²“到葡萄成熟时，园主派一个奴仆去收取他该得的一份。³那些佃户却捉住那个奴仆，打了他一顿，使他空手而归。

⁴“园主又差另一个奴仆去。这一次，佃户不但侮辱他，还把他打得头破血流。⁵园主再派一个奴仆前往，他们却把他杀掉了。园主后来派去的人不是挨打，就是被杀。⁶最后只剩下园主的爱子，园主就派他去，以为那些佃户会尊重他的儿子。⁷这班佃户却彼此商量说，‘这个就是园主的继承人。来吧！我们杀掉他，产业就归我们了。’

⁸“于是他们抓住他，杀了他，把他抛到葡萄园外。⁹那么，园主会采取什么行动呢？他必定会来杀掉这些佃户，把葡萄园转给别人。¹⁰圣经上说，

“工匠丢弃的石头已成了房角石。

¹¹这是主的作为，
在我们看来奇妙莫测。’

你们没有读过这经文吗？”

¹²他们听出这比喻是针对他们说的，就想逮捕耶稣，但又害怕百姓，只好先离开了。

纳税给凯撒的问题

¹³后来，他们派了几个法利赛人和希律党人到耶稣那里，企图利用祂所说的话设计陷害祂。

¹⁴他们上前对耶稣说：“老师，我们知道你诚实无伪，不看人的情面，因为你不以貌取人，而是按真理传上帝的道。那么，向凯撒纳税对不对呢？¹⁵我们该不该纳呢？”耶稣看破他们的阴谋，就说：“你们为什么试探我呢？拿一个银币来给我看。”

¹⁶他们就拿来一个银币，耶稣问他们：“上面刻的是谁的像和名号？”

他们说：“凯撒的。”

¹⁷ 耶稣说：“属于凯撒的东西应该给凯撒，属于上帝的东西应该给上帝。”

他们听了这话，都很惊奇。

论复活

¹⁸ 撒都该人向来不相信有复活的事，他们来问耶稣：¹⁹“老师，摩西为我们写下律例，如果一个人死了，遗下妻子，又没有儿女，他的兄弟就当娶嫂嫂，替哥哥传宗接代。²⁰ 有弟兄七人，老大结了婚，没有孩子就死了。²¹ 二弟把大嫂娶过来，也没有生孩子就死了，三弟也是一样，²² 七个人都没有留下孩子。最后，那女人也死了。²³ 那么，到复活的时候，她将是谁的妻子呢？因为七个人都娶过她。”

²⁴ 耶稣说：“你们弄错了，因为你们不明白圣经，也不知道上帝的能力。²⁵ 死人复活之后，将不娶也不嫁，就像天上的天使一样。²⁶ 关于死人复活的事，你们没有读过摩西书有关火中荆棘的记载吗？上帝对摩西说，‘我是亚伯拉罕的上帝，以撒的上帝，雅各的上帝。’²⁷ 上帝不是死人的上帝，而是活人的上帝。你们大错了！”

最大的诫命

²⁸ 有一位律法教师听到他们的辩论，觉得耶稣的回答很精彩，就走过去问道：“诫命中哪一条最重要呢？”

²⁹ 耶稣回答道：“最重要的诫命是，‘听啊，以色列！主——我们的上帝是独一的主。

³⁰ 你要全心、全情、全意、全力爱主——你的上帝’；³¹ 其次就是‘要爱邻如己’。再也没有任何诫命比这两条更重要了。”

³² 那位律法教师说：“老师，你说的对，上帝只有一位，除祂以外，别无他神。³³ 我们要全心、全意、全力爱祂，又要爱邻如己。这样做比献什么祭都好。”

³⁴ 耶稣见他答得很有智慧，就告诉他：“你离上帝的国不远了。”此后，没人再敢问耶稣问题了。

基督的身份

³⁵ 耶稣在圣殿里教导的时候，问道：“律法教师为什么说基督是大卫的后裔呢？³⁶ 大卫自己曾经受圣灵的感动，说，

“主对我主说，
你坐在我的右边，
等我使你的仇敌伏在你脚下。”

³⁷既然大卫自己称基督为主，基督又怎能是大卫的后裔呢？”百姓听得津津有味。³⁸耶稣又教导他们，说：“你们要提防律法教师，他们爱穿着长袍招摇过市，喜欢人们在大街上问候他们，³⁹又喜欢会堂里的上座和宴席中的首位。⁴⁰他们侵吞寡妇的财产，还假意做冗长的祷告。这种人必受到更严厉的惩罚。”

穷寡妇的奉献

⁴¹然后，耶稣走到圣殿的奉献箱对面坐下，看大家怎样奉献。很多财主奉献了大量的钱。⁴²后来一个穷寡妇来了，投进了相当于一文钱的两个小铜钱。⁴³耶稣叫门徒来，说：“我实在告诉你们，这位穷寡妇比其他人奉献的都多，⁴⁴因为他们不过奉献了自己剩余的，但这穷寡妇却奉献了她赖以生存的。”

马可福音 13

预言圣殿被毁

¹耶稣走出圣殿的时候，有一个门徒对他说：“老师，你看！这是多么大的石头，多么宏伟的建筑啊！”

²耶稣说：“你看见这宏伟的建筑了吗？将来它要被完全拆毁，找不到两块叠在一起的石头。”

³耶稣面向圣殿坐在橄榄山上，彼得、雅各、约翰和安得烈私下来问祂：⁴“请告诉我们，这些事什么时候会发生？有什么预兆？”

⁵耶稣对他们说：“你们要小心，免得被人迷惑。⁶将有很多人冒我的名来，说，‘我是基督’，欺骗许多人。

⁷“你们听见战争爆发、战讯频传时，不要惊慌，因为这些事必然发生，只是末日还没有到。

8“民族将与民族互斗，国家将与国家相争，各处将有地震和饥荒。这些只是灾难^{1a}的开始。

9“你们要小心，因为你们将被送上法庭，将在会堂里受鞭打，又将为了我的缘故在官长和君王面前做见证。 10 不过，福音一定要先传遍天下。 11 你们被拘捕，受审讯的时候，不用预先考虑怎样辩解，到时候赐给你们什么话，你们就说什么话，因为那时候说话的不是你们自己，而是圣灵。

12“那时，人必把自己的弟兄置于死地，父亲必把儿子置于死地，儿女必反叛父母，置他们于死地。 13 你们将为我的名而被众人憎恨，但坚忍到底的必定得救。

大灾难

14“当你们看见‘那带来毁灭的可憎之物’站在不当站的地方时（读者须会意），住在犹太地区的人要逃到山上去； 15 在屋顶上的人不要下来，不要进房屋收拾行李； 16 在田间的人不要回家取外衣。 17 那时，孕妇和哺育婴儿的母亲们可就遭殃了！ 18 你们要祈求上帝使这些事不要在冬天发生， 19 因为那是上帝创造天地以来空前绝后的大灾难。 20 如果主不缩短灾期，恐怕没有人能活命，但为了祂所拣选的子民，祂已经缩短灾期。 21 那时，如果有人对你们说，‘看啊！基督在这里’，或说，‘基督在那里’，你们不要相信。 22 因为假基督和假先知将出现，行各种神迹奇事，如果可能，甚至会迷惑上帝拣选的子民。 23 你们要小心，我已经把一切预先告诉你们了。

人子降临

24“大灾难过后，
太阳昏暗，
月亮无光，
25 星宿陨落，
天体震动。

26 那时，世人必看到人子驾着云、带着极大的能力和荣耀降临。 27 祂必差遣天使从四面八方、天涯海角招聚祂拣选的人。

28“你们可以从无花果树学个道理。当无花果树发芽长叶的时候，你们就知道夏天快来了。 29 同样，当你们看见这些事情发生时，就知道人子快来了，就在门口。 30 我实在告诉你们，这个世代还没有过去，这一切都要发生。 31 天地都要过去，我的话却永远长存。

³²“但没有人知道那日子和时辰何时来到，连天上的天使和人子都不知道，只有天父知道。³³你们要小心，警醒祷告，因为你们不知道那日子何时来到。

³⁴“这就好像一个人在出远门之前，把家中的事交给仆人，让他们各做各的工作，又吩咐守门的人要警醒。³⁵所以你们要警醒，因为你们不知道主人什么时候回来，可能是黄昏，可能是夜半，也可能是黎明或早上。³⁶别让他突然回来时看到你们在睡觉。³⁷我劝你们也劝所有的人，要警醒！”

马可福音 14

谋害耶稣

¹再过两天就是逾越节和除酵节，祭司长和律法教师正暗暗地找机会拘捕、杀害耶稣。

²他们说：“我们不能在节期那天下手，以免在百姓中引起骚乱。”

耶稣受膏

³耶稣在伯大尼村患过麻风病的西门家里吃饭，有个女人带了一瓶极贵重的纯哪哒香膏进来，把玉瓶打破，将香膏倒在耶稣头上。⁴有些人生气地彼此议论说：“为什么这样浪费？⁵这瓶香膏可以卖三百多个银币^{la}来周济穷人。”他们就责备那女人。

⁶耶稣说：“随她吧！何必为难她呢？她在我身上做的是一件美事。⁷因为你们身边总会有穷人，你们随时都可以帮助他们，可是你们身边不会总有我。⁸她做了自己能做的。她是为我的安葬做准备，提前用香膏抹了我的身体。⁹我实在告诉你们，无论福音传到世界哪个角落，人们都会传扬这女人的事迹，纪念她。”

犹大出卖耶稣

¹⁰十二门徒当中的加略人犹大去见祭司长，要把耶稣出卖给他们。¹¹他们听了喜出望外，答应给他酬金。于是犹大伺机出卖耶稣。

最后的晚餐

¹²除酵节的第一天，就是宰杀逾越节羔羊的那天，门徒问耶稣：“我们该到什么地方为你准备逾越节的晚餐呢？”

13 耶稣就派了两个门徒，并嘱咐他们：“你们进城会看到一个人带着一瓶水迎面而来，你们就跟着他。 14 他进哪一家，你们也跟着进去，对那家的主人说，‘我们的老师问你，祂的客房在哪里，祂要和门徒在里面吃逾越节的晚餐。’ 15 主人会带你们到楼上一间布置整齐的大房间，你们就在那里准备吧。”

16 两个门徒出去，进了城，所遇见的果然和耶稣所说的一样。他们预备了逾越节的晚餐。

17 傍晚时分，耶稣带着十二门徒来了。 18 用餐的时候，耶稣说：“我实在告诉你们，你们中间有一个人要出卖我，他现在正和我同桌吃饭。”

19 他们听了都感到不安，一个一个地问耶稣：“不是我吧？” 20 耶稣说：“是你们十二个人中的一个，他现在正和我一起在盘子里蘸饼吃。 21 人子一定会受害，正如圣经的记载，但出卖人子的人有祸了，他还不如不生在这世上！”

22 他们吃的时候，耶稣拿起饼来，祝谢后，便掰开，分给门徒，说：“拿去吃吧！这是我的身体。” 23 接着又拿起杯来，祝谢后，递给他们，他们都喝了。 24 耶稣说：“这是我为万人所流的立约之血。 25 我实在告诉你们，从今天起，一直到我在上帝的国喝新酒的那日之前，我不会再喝这葡萄酒。”

26 他们唱完诗歌，就出门去了橄榄山。

预言彼得不认主

27 耶稣对他们说：“你们都要背弃我，因为圣经上说，

“我要击打牧人，
羊群将四散。”

28 但我复活后，要先你们一步去加利利。”

29 彼得说：“即使所有人都背弃你，我也决不会背弃你！”

30 耶稣说：“我实在告诉你，就在今天晚上鸡叫两次以前，你会三次不认我。”

31 彼得郑重地说：“就算要我跟你一起死，我也不会不认你。”其他门徒也都这样说。

客西马尼园的祷告

³² 他们到了客西马尼园，耶稣对门徒说：“你们坐在这里，我要去祷告。”

³³ 于是耶稣带着彼得、雅各和约翰向前走。祂觉得极其难过，非常伤痛，³⁴ 说：“我心里非常忧伤，几乎要死，你们留在这里警醒。”³⁵ 耶稣往前走了不远，俯伏在地祷告，如果可以，不要让那时刻临到祂。

³⁶ 祂说：“阿爸，父啊，你无所不能，求你撤去此杯。然而，愿你的旨意成就，而非我的意愿。”

³⁷ 祂回来，见他们都睡着了，就对彼得说：“西门，你在睡觉吗？你不能警醒一时吗？

³⁸ 你们要警醒祷告，免得陷入诱惑。你们的心灵虽然愿意，肉体却很软弱。”

³⁹ 耶稣又去祷告，所祈求的跟上次一样。⁴⁰ 祂回来时见他们又睡着了，因为他们困得眼皮发沉，也不知道对祂说什么。⁴¹ 祂第三次祷告回来后，对他们说：“你们还在睡觉休息吗？够了，时候到了，看啊，人子要被出卖、交在罪人的手里了。⁴² 起来，我们走吧。看啊，出卖我的人已经来了！”

耶稣被捕

⁴³ 耶稣还在说话的时候，十二门徒之一的犹大已带了一群人拿着刀棍迎面而来。他们奉了祭司长、律法教师和长老之命来捉拿耶稣。⁴⁴ 出卖耶稣的犹大预先和他们定了暗号，说：“我亲吻谁，谁就是耶稣，你们把祂抓起来，小心押走。”

⁴⁵ 犹大随即走到耶稣跟前说：“老师。”然后就亲吻耶稣。⁴⁶ 其他人就下手捉拿耶稣。

⁴⁷ 站在旁边的一个门徒拔出刀朝大祭司的奴仆砍去，削掉了他一只耳朵。

⁴⁸ 耶稣问那群人：“你们像对付强盗一样拿着刀棍来抓我吗？⁴⁹ 我天天和你们在一起，在圣殿里教导人，你们没有来抓我。你们现在这样做是要应验圣经的话。”

⁵⁰ 那时，门徒都撇下耶稣，各自逃命去了。⁵¹ 只有一个身上披着一块麻布的青年跟着耶稣。他们上去捉他，⁵² 他丢了那块麻布，赤身逃走了。

大祭司审问耶稣

⁵³ 他们把耶稣押到大祭司那里，众祭司长、长老和律法教师都来了。⁵⁴ 那时彼得远远地跟着耶稣，一直来到大祭司的院子，与卫兵们坐在一起烤火。⁵⁵ 祭司长和全公会的人正

在寻找证据控告耶稣，要定祂死罪，只是找不到。⁵⁶ 不少人作伪证控告祂，他们的证词却不一致。⁵⁷ 后来，有几个人站起来作伪证说：⁵⁸“我们听见祂说，‘我要拆毁这座人手建造的圣殿，三天内不靠人力另造一座。’”⁵⁹ 即使这样，他们的证词也不一致。

⁶⁰ 最后，大祭司在众人面前站起来质问耶稣：“你不回答吗？这些人作证控告你的是什么呢？”

⁶¹ 耶稣还是沉默不语，什么也不答。大祭司又问祂：“你是那当受称颂者的儿子基督吗？”⁶² 耶稣说：“我是！将来你们要看见人子坐在全能上帝的右边，驾着天上的云降临。”

⁶³ 大祭司便撕裂衣服，说：“我们还需要什么证人呢？”⁶⁴ 你们听见祂说亵渎的话了，你们看怎么办？”他们都判祂死罪。

⁶⁵ 有几个人向祂吐唾沫，蒙上祂的眼睛，挥拳打祂，嘲笑祂说：“你说预言吧！”卫兵押祂下去时，也打祂。

彼得三次不认耶稣

⁶⁶ 那时，彼得仍在院子里，大祭司的一个婢女走过来，⁶⁷ 见彼得在烤火，打量了他一番，说：“你也是那个拿撒勒人耶稣的同伙。”

⁶⁸ “我不知道也不明白你在说什么！”彼得一边否认，一边躲到外院去。那时，鸡叫了。

⁶⁹ 一会儿，那婢女又看见彼得，就对旁边的人说：“他是跟他们一伙的！”⁷⁰ 彼得又加以否认。

再过了一会儿，旁观的人也指着彼得说：“你一定是跟他们一伙的，因为你也是加利利人！”

⁷¹ 彼得又赌咒又发誓，说：“我根本不认识你们说的这个人。”⁷² 就在这时候，鸡又叫了。彼得突然想起耶稣曾对他说：“在鸡叫两次以前，你会三次不认我”，忍不住痛哭起来。

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耶稣在彼拉多面前受审

¹清早，祭司长、长老、律法教师 and 全公会的人商定后，便把耶稣绑起来押送到彼拉多那里。

²彼拉多问耶稣：“你是犹太人的王吗？”

耶稣回答说：“如你所言。”

³祭司长控告耶稣许多罪。

⁴彼拉多又问道：“你看，他们控告你这么多，你都不回答吗？”

⁵耶稣仍旧一言不发，彼拉多感到惊奇。

⁶每年逾越节的时候，彼拉多都会照惯例按犹太人的要求释放一个囚犯。⁷那时，有一个囚犯名叫巴拉巴，与其他作乱时杀过人的囚犯关在一起。⁸百姓聚来，要求彼拉多照惯例释放囚犯。

⁹彼拉多问：“你们要我为你们释放犹太人的王吗？”¹⁰因为他知道祭司长把耶稣押来是出于妒忌。¹¹但祭司长却煽动百姓，叫他们要求彼拉多释放巴拉巴。

¹²彼拉多只好问：“那么，这位你们称之为犹太人之王的，我如何处置呢？”

¹³他们喊着说：“把祂钉在十字架上！”

¹⁴彼拉多问：“为什么？祂犯了什么罪？”

他们却更大声地喊：“把祂钉在十字架上！”

¹⁵为了取悦众人，彼拉多释放了巴拉巴，命人将耶稣鞭打后带出去钉十字架。

耶稣受辱

¹⁶于是，卫兵把耶稣带进总督府的院子，集合了全营的兵。¹⁷他们给祂穿上紫袍，用荆棘编成王冠戴在祂头上，¹⁸向祂行礼，并喊着说：“犹太人的王万岁！”¹⁹他们用苇秆打

祂的头，向祂吐唾沫，跪拜祂。²⁰ 戏弄完了，就脱去祂的紫袍，给祂穿上原来的衣服，押祂出去钉十字架。

钉十字架

²¹ 亚历山大和鲁孚的父亲古利奈人西门从乡下来，途经那地方，卫兵就强迫他背耶稣的十字架。²² 他们把耶稣带到各各他——意思是“髑髅地”，²³ 拿没药调和的酒给祂喝，但祂不肯喝。²⁴ 他们把耶稣钉在十字架上，还抽签分祂的衣服。²⁵ 他们钉祂十字架的时间是在上午九点钟。²⁶ 祂的罪状牌上写着“犹太人的王”。

²⁷ 他们还把两个强盗钉在十字架上，一个在祂右边，一个在祂左边，²⁸ 这应验了圣经的话：“祂被列在罪犯中。”²⁹ 过路的人都嘲笑祂，摇着头说：“哈，你这要把圣殿拆毁又在三天内重建的人啊，³⁰ 救救你自己，从十字架上下来吧！”

³¹ 祭司长和律法教师也嘲讽说：“祂救了别人，却救不了自己！³² 以色列的王基督，现在从十字架上下来吧！让我们看看，我们就信了！”与祂同钉十字架的强盗也对祂出言不逊。

耶稣之死

³³ 正午时分，黑暗笼罩着整个大地，一直到下午三点。³⁴ 大约在三点，耶稣大声呼喊：“以罗伊，以罗伊，拉马撒巴各大尼？”意思是：“我的上帝，我的上帝，你为什么离弃我？”

³⁵ 有些站在旁边的人听见了，就说：“听，祂在呼叫以利亚。”

³⁶ 有人跑去把一块海绵蘸满酸酒，绑在苇秆上送给祂喝，说：“等等，让我们看看以利亚会不会救祂下来。”

³⁷ 耶稣大叫一声，就断了气。³⁸ 圣殿的幔子从上到下裂成两半。³⁹ 站在对面的百夫长看见耶稣喊叫^[a]断气的情形，便说：“这人真是上帝的儿子！”

⁴⁰ 有些妇女在远处观看，其中有抹大拉的玛丽亚、小雅各和约西的母亲玛丽亚并撒罗米。⁴¹ 耶稣在加利利时，她们已经跟随祂、服侍祂了。此外还有好些跟着祂上耶路撒冷的妇女。

安葬耶稣

⁴²那天是犹太人的预备日，也就是安息日的前一天。傍晚，⁴³亚利马太人约瑟鼓起勇气去见彼拉多，要求领取耶稣的遗体。他是一位德高望重的公会议员，一位等候上帝降临的人。⁴⁴彼拉多听见耶稣已经死了，十分惊讶，便把百夫长召来问个明白，⁴⁵得知耶稣确实已死，便将耶稣的遗体交给约瑟。

⁴⁶约瑟把耶稣的遗体取下来，用买来的细麻布裹好，安放在一个在岩壁上凿出的墓穴里，又滚来一块大石头堵住洞口。⁴⁷抹大拉的玛丽亚和约西的母亲玛丽亚都亲眼看到了安葬耶稣的地方。

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耶稣复活

¹过了安息日，抹大拉的玛丽亚、雅各的母亲玛丽亚和撒罗米买了香料，要去抹耶稣的遗体。²周日清早，太阳刚刚升起，她们就去坟墓那里。³途中她们彼此议论说：“谁能替我们滚开墓口那块大石头呢？”⁴她们抬头一看，那块大石头已经滚到一旁。⁵她们进了坟墓，看见一位身穿洁白长袍的青年坐在右边，吓了一跳。⁶那青年对她们说：“不要害怕，你们要找那位被钉十字架的拿撒勒人耶稣吗？祂已经复活了，不在这里。你们看！这是安放祂的地方。⁷你们快回去，告诉祂的门徒，特别是彼得，‘祂先你们一步去了加利利，你们将在那里见到祂，正如祂以前所说的一样。’”

⁸她们从坟墓出来，跑走了，战战兢兢，疑惑不已，什么也没有告诉他人，因为她们很害怕。

耶稣显现

⁹耶稣在周日清晨复活后，首先向抹大拉的玛丽亚显现，耶稣曾在她身上赶出七个鬼。

¹⁰玛丽亚赶到门徒那里，看见他们仍然在哭泣哀悼，¹¹就告诉他们耶稣已经复活了，还向她显现过，但他们不相信。

¹²此后，有两个门徒在去乡下的路上，看到耶稣以另一种形象向他们显现。¹³他们回去告诉其他的门徒，但门徒还是不相信。

最后的使命

¹⁴ 后来，当十一位门徒在一起吃饭的时候，耶稣向他们显现，责备他们又不信又固执，因为他们不肯相信那些人在祂复活后见过祂。¹⁵ 耶稣又对他们说：“你们要到世界各地去，向全人类传扬福音。¹⁶ 相信并接受洗礼的人必定得救，不肯相信的人必被定罪。¹⁷ 必有神迹随着信我的人，他们能奉我的名赶鬼，说新的方言，¹⁸ 又能用手拿蛇，万一喝了什么毒物，也不会受害。他们把手按在病人身上，病人就可痊愈。”¹⁹ 主耶稣说完这些话，就被接回天上，坐在上帝的右边。²⁰ 门徒出去到处传扬福音，主和他们一同工作，借着神迹证实他们所传的道。