

May 1

Jesus Seeks and Saves Zacchaeus

I will seek that which was lost, and will bring back that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick – Ezekiel 34:16

[Luke 19:1-10, Jericho] He entered and was passing through Jericho. There was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector, and he was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, and couldn't because of the crowd, because he was short. He ran on ahead, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and saw him, and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for today I must stay at your house." He hurried, came down, and

The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.

received him joyfully. When they saw it, they all murmured, saying, "He has gone in to lodge with a man who is a sinner."

Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, half of my goods I give to the poor. If I have wrongfully exacted anything of anyone, I restore four times as much."

Jesus said to him, "Today, salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost."

1. How do Bartimaeus and Zacchaeus reveal Jesus' "ransom"? How has he ransomed you?
2. How does Zacchaeus right his wrongs? What do you do? Why *must* Jesus stay with him?
3. Jesus, my wrongs have made me a "sinner" to men and to God; I joyfully receive your...

May 2

Having More to Get Even More

Surely they shall not see the land...those who despised me...but my servant Caleb, because he had another spirit with him, and has followed me fully, him will I bring into the land into which he went; and his seed shall possess it – Numbers 14:23-24

[Luke 19:11-28, Jericho] As they heard these things, he went on and told a parable, because he was near Jerusalem, and they supposed that the Kingdom of God would be revealed immediately. He said therefore, “A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. He called ten servants of his, and gave them ten mina coins, and told them, ‘Conduct business until I come.’ But his citizens hated him, and sent an envoy after him, saying, ‘We don’t want this man to reign over us.’

“It happened when he had come back again, having received the kingdom, that he commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by conducting business. The first came before him, saying, ‘Lord, your mina has made ten more minas.’

“He said to him, ‘Well done, you good servant! Because you were found faithful with very little, you shall have authority over ten cities.’

“The second came, saying, ‘Your mina, Lord, has made five minas.’

“So he said to him, ‘And you are to be over five cities.’

“Another came, saying, ‘Lord, behold, your mina, which I kept laid away in a handkerchief, for I feared you, because you are an exacting man. You take up that which you didn’t lay down, and reap that which you didn’t sow.’

“He said to him, ‘Out of your own mouth will I judge you, you wicked servant! You knew that I am an exacting man, taking up that which I didn’t lay down, and reaping that which I didn’t sow. Then why didn’t you deposit my money in the bank, and at my coming, I might have earned interest on it?’ He said to those who stood by, ‘Take the mina away from him, and give it to him who has the ten minas.’

“They said to him, ‘Lord, he has ten minas!’ ‘For I tell you that to everyone who has, will more be given; but from him who doesn’t have, even that which he has will be taken away from him. But bring those enemies of mine who didn’t want me to reign over them here, and kill them before me.’” Having said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

1. Why does Jesus tell this parable? How would it change their thinking? How about *you*?
2. How do you “have” or “not have”? What have you been given or have had taken away?
3. Lord Jesus, I want to hear you say, “Well done”, so I commit today to start faithfully...

May 3

Mary “Wastes” a Year’s Wages for Jesus

While the king sat at his table,
my spikenard spread its fragrance. — Songs of Solomon 1:12

[John 12:1-11, Bethany, Saturday] Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand. Many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. Then they sought for Jesus and spoke one with another, as they stood in the temple, “What do you think—that he isn’t coming to the feast at all?” Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had commanded that if anyone knew where he was, he should report it, that they might seize him.

Then six days before the Passover*, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, who had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. So, when Jesus was in the house of Simon the leper, they made him a supper there. Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with him. Mary, therefore, took an alabaster jar of a pound of ointment of pure nard—very precious—and *broke the jar, poured it on his head, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair as he sat at the table.* The house was filled with the fragrance of the ointment.

But when his disciples saw this, they were indignant *among themselves, saying, “Why this waste?” They grumbled against her.*

Then Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, one of his disciples, who would betray him, said,

“Why wasn’t this ointment sold for three hundred denarii, and given to the poor?” Now he said this, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and having the money box, used to steal what was put into it.

But Jesus said, *“Leave her alone! Why do you trouble the woman? She has done a good work for me. For in pouring this ointment on my body, she has done what she could—she has kept this for the day of my burial. For you always have the poor with you and whenever you want to, you can do them good, but you don’t always have me. Most certainly I tell you, wherever this Good News is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be spoken of as a memorial of her.”*

A large crowd therefore of the Jews learned that he was there, and they came, not for Jesus’ sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead. But the chief priests conspired to put Lazarus to death also, because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus. [Matthew 26:6-13, Mark 14:3-9] *Matthew and Mark insert this story within Judas’ meeting with the Jewish authorities, Tuesday before the Passover. This reordering juxtaposes Judas’ betrayal and Mary’s adoration.

1. Why this party? Who’s in the story? What are their roles? With whom do you identify?

2. Mathew, Mark, and John all contrast Mary’s actions with the plot to kill Jesus; why?

3. King Jesus, nothing that I do for you is wasted; help me remember that today as I...

May 4

The Lowly King Triumphs over Haughty Pharisees

Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion! Shout, daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, your King comes to you! He is righteous, and having salvation;
lowly, and riding on a donkey – Zechariah 9:9

[Luke 19:29-40, into Jerusalem, Sunday]
On the next day, it happened, when he drew near to Bethsphage and Bethany, at the mountain that is called Olivet, he sent two of his disciples, saying, “Go your way into the village on the other side, in which, immediately as you enter, you will find a donkey tied, and a colt tied with her, whereon no man ever yet sat. Untie it, and bring it to me. If anyone asks you, ‘Why are you untying it?’ say to him: ‘The Lord needs it.’ and immediately he will send him back here.” All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophet, saying,

“Don’t be afraid. Tell the daughter of Zion, behold, your King comes to you, humble, and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

[Zechariah 8:13, 9:9]

Those who were sent went away, and found a colt tied at the door outside in the open street just as he had told them, and they untied it. As they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, “Why are you untying the colt?” They said, “The Lord needs it.” And they let them go. They brought it to Jesus. They threw their cloaks on the colt, and set Jesus on them. His disciples didn’t understand

these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about him, and that they had done these things to him.

If these were silent, the stones would cry out

As he went, they spread their cloaks in the way, and

others were cutting down branches from the trees. As he was now getting near, at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works which they had seen, and a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took the branches of the palm trees, and went out to meet him, and cried out, saying, “Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, [Psalm 118:26] the King of Israel! Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is coming in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!”

Some of the Pharisees from the multitude said to him, “Teacher, rebuke your disciples!”

He answered them, “I tell you that if these were silent, the stones would cry out.” [Matthew 21:1-9, Mark 11:1-10, John 12:12-15]

1. Imagine being a disciple, the colt’s owner, the crowd, or a Pharisee; how would you feel?
2. How are you like a Pharisee now? How can you be more like the owner, or the colt itself?
3. Jesus, no one who praised your entrance came to save you on the cross, but today I will...

May 5

Jesus Triumphal Entry Ends in Tears and Preparation

Therefore I said, "Look away from me. I will weep bitterly. Don't labor to comfort me for the destruction of the daughter of my people. – Isaiah 22:4

[Luke 19:41-44, Jerusalem, Sunday]
When he drew near, he saw the city and wept over it, saying, "If you, even you, had known today the things which belong to your peace! But now, they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come on you, when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, surround you, hem you in on every side, and will dash you and your children within you to the ground. They will not leave in you one stone on another, because you didn't know the time of your visitation."

The multitude therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb, and raised him from

He saw the city
and wept over it

the dead, was testifying about it. For this cause also the multitude went and met him, because they heard that he had done this sign. The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, "See how you accomplish nothing. Behold, the world has gone after him."

When he had come into Jerusalem, all the city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?" The multitudes said, "This is the prophet, Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee."

Jesus entered into the temple in Jerusalem. When he had looked around at everything, it being now evening, he went out to Bethany with the twelve. [Matthew 21:10-11, Mark 11:11, John 12:17-19]

1. The crowd cheers while Jesus is weeps; why? Do you cheer? Should you weep? Why?
2. Why does Jesus enter the temple? How do you prepare for a big day? Do you pray?
3. Jesus, some cheered, others schemed, but you wept; please give me today your heart for...

May 6

Drawn to Jesus, the Ever-Living Crucified King of Light

His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, on the throne of David, and on his kingdom...to uphold it...forever – Isaiah 9:6-7

[John 12:20-36, toward Bethany, Sunday]
Now there were certain Greeks among those that went up to worship at the feast. These, therefore, came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we want to see Jesus." Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn, Andrew came with Philip, and they told Jesus. Jesus answered them, "The time has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Most certainly I tell you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life will lose it. He who hates his life in this world will keep it to eternal life. If anyone serves me, let him follow me. Where I am, there will my servant also be. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.

"Now my soul is troubled. What shall I say? 'Father, save me from this time?' But for this cause I came to this time. Father, glorify your name!"

Then there came a voice out of the sky, saying, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."

The multitude therefore, who stood by and heard it, said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him."

Jesus answered, "This voice hasn't come for my sake, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world. Now the prince of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." But he said this, signifying by what kind of death he should die. The multitude answered him, "We have heard out of the law that the Christ remains forever. [Isaiah 9:7] How do you say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up?' Who is this Son of Man?"

Jesus therefore said to them, "Yet a little while the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, that darkness doesn't overtake you. He who walks in the darkness doesn't know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become children of light."

1. How does the Greeks' question connect to Jesus' answer? How can you follow Jesus?
2. When was the world judged and Satan cast out? How do you walk in the light (Apr. 17)?
3. Jesus, you are mysterious, but my only job is to follow you: serving you by laying down...

May 7

Jesus' Signs and Words Reveal God, But Many Reject Him

In the year that king Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple – Isaiah 6:1

[John 12:36-50, toward Bethany, Sunday] Jesus said these things, and he departed and hid himself from them. But though he had done so many signs before them, yet they didn't believe in him, that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke,

"Lord, who has believed our report?

To whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?" [Isaiah 53:1]

For this cause they couldn't believe, for Isaiah said again,

"He has blinded their eyes and he hardened their heart,

lest they should see with their eyes, and perceive with their heart, and would turn,

and I would heal them." [Isaiah 6:10]

Isaiah said these things when he saw his glory, and spoke of him. Nevertheless even of the rulers many believed in him, but

because of the Pharisees they didn't confess it, so that they wouldn't be put out of the synagogue, for they loved men's praise more than God's praise.

Jesus cried out and said, "Whoever believes in me, believes not in me, but in him who sent me. He who sees me sees him who sent me. I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in me may not remain in the darkness. If anyone listens to my sayings, and doesn't believe, I don't judge him. For I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He who rejects me, and doesn't receive my sayings, has one who judges him. The word that I spoke, the same will judge him in the last day. For I spoke not from myself, but the Father who sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. I know that his commandment is eternal life. The things therefore which I speak, even as the Father has said to me, so I speak."

I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He who rejects me...the word...will judge him

1. Whose glory did Isaiah see (in Isaiah 6)? Why isn't his report (in Isaiah 52-53) believed?
2. How can rulers believe *and* reject Jesus? What judges them? Do you love men's praise?
3. Jesus, the Father's glory light streams through you; I see you by studying both Old and...

May 8

The Temple's Mountain Begins to Move

Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes?
Behold, I, even I, have seen it, says Yahweh – Jeremiah 7:11

[Mark 11:12-26, Bethany and Jerusalem, Monday and Tuesday] The next day, when they had come out from Bethany, as he returned to the city he was hungry. Seeing a fig tree afar off by the road having leaves, he came to see if perhaps he might find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing on it but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. Jesus told it, **“May no one ever eat fruit from you again!”** and his disciples heard it.

They came to Jerusalem, and Jesus entered into the temple, and began to throw out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, and the seats of those who sold the doves. He would not allow anyone to carry a container through the temple. He taught, saying to them, **“Isn’t it written, ‘My house will be called a house of prayer for all the nations?’ [Isaiah 56:7] But you have made it a den of robbers!”** [Jeremiah 7:11]

The chief priests and the scribes heard it, and sought how they might destroy him. For they feared him, because all the multitude was astonished at his teaching. The blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children who were crying in the temple and saying, “Hosanna to the son of David!” they were indignant, and said to him, “Do you hear what these are saying?”

Jesus said to them, **“Yes. Did you never read, ‘Out of the mouth of babes and nursing babies you have perfected praise?’”** [Psalm 8:2]

Jesus entered into the temple, and began to throw out those who sold

He was teaching daily in the temple, but the chief priests and the scribes and the leading men among the people sought to destroy him. They couldn’t find what they might do, for all the people hung on to every word that he said. Every day Jesus was teaching in the temple, and every night he would go out and spend the night on the mountain that is called Olivet. All the people came early in the morning to him in the temple to hear him.

When evening came, he went out of the city. As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away from the roots. Peter, remembering, said to him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree which you cursed has withered away.” The disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, “How did the fig tree immediately* wither away?” [*Perhaps withering began Monday.]

Jesus answered them, **“Have faith in God. If you have faith, and don’t doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree. For most certainly I tell you, whoever may tell this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ and doesn’t doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is happening; he shall have whatever he says. Therefore I tell you, all things whatever you pray and ask for, believe that you have received them, and you shall have them. Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone; so that your Father, who is in heaven, may also forgive you your transgressions. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your transgressions.”** [Matthew 21:10-22*, Luke 19:45-48, 21:37-38] *Matthew puts the cursing, withering, and noticing all together (*on Tuesday*). Matthew occasionally breaks chronology to join themes.

1. What does a fig tree represent? Does it relate to temple cleansing and mountain moving?
2. What irked the priests and scribes? Can you relate? How will you avoid their indignance?
3. Jesus, you were indignant about the temple, but my indignance is misplaced, please...

May 9

The Authorities Protect Their Image by Challenging Jesus

I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder; and the wisdom of their wise men will perish, and the understanding of their prudent men will be hidden – Isaiah 29:14

[Mark 11:27-33, Jerusalem, Tuesday] They came again to Jerusalem, and as he was walking in the temple, the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders came to him as he was teaching and preaching the Good News, and they began saying to him, “By what authority do you do these things? Or who gave you this authority to do these things?”

Jesus said to them, “I will ask you one question. Answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of

John—was it from heaven, or from men? Answer me.”

The baptism of John—was it from heaven, or from men?

They reasoned with themselves, saying, “If we should say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ If we should say, ‘From men’ we fear the multitude will stone us”—they feared the people, for all held John to really be a prophet. They answered Jesus, “We don’t know.”

Jesus said to them, “Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.” [Matthew 21:23-27*, Luke 20:1-8]

1. A day ago, authorities “couldn’t find what to do”; what do they do now? Is it successful?
2. Who are your authorities? How do they challenge Jesus’ authority? What will you do?
3. Jesus, I fear people, I challenge you, and I worry about what to say—not what is true...

May 10

The Authorities Have Refused the Way of Righteousness

I walk in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of justice
In the way of righteousness is life; in its path there is no death – Proverbs 8:20, 12:28

[Matthew 21:28-32, Jerusalem, Tuesday] Jesus said to them, “Most certainly I tell you that the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering into the Kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you didn’t believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes believed him. When you saw it, you didn’t even repent afterward, that you might believe him.”

“But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first, and said, ‘Son, go work today in my vineyard.’ He answered, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he changed his mind, and went. He came to the second, and said the same thing. He answered, ‘I go, sir,’ but he didn’t go. Which of the two did the will of his father?”

The tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering into the Kingdom...before you

They said to him, “The first.”

1. Does this story convict you? Who’s entering the Kingdom before you? What will you do?
2. What’s your “way of righteousness? How does unbelief avoid it? How will you repent?
3. Jesus, I serve an authority structure that pays you lip service, help me break out of it by...



God's Vineyard Takes the Fruit of Praise for Itself

For the vineyard of Yahweh of Armies is the house of Israel...He will be a sanctuary, but for both houses of Israel, he will be a trap and a snare for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Many will stumble over it, fall, and be broken – Isaiah 5:7, 8:14-15

[Matthew 21:33-46, Jerusalem, Tuesday]

“Hear another parable. There was a man who was a master of a household, who planted a vineyard, set a hedge about it, dug a pit for a winepress in it, built a tower, leased it out to farmers, and went into another country *for a long time*. When the season for the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the farmers, to receive his fruit. The farmers took his servants, beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they treated them the same way. Again, he sent another servant to them; and they threw stones at him, wounded him in the head, and sent him away shamefully treated. But afterward he sent to them his beloved son, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’ But the farmers, when they saw the son, said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him, and seize his inheritance.’ So they took him, and threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him.”

When they heard it, they said, “May it never be!”

The stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the head of the corner

But he said, “When therefore the lord of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those farmers?”

They told him, “He will miserably destroy those miserable men, and will lease out the vineyard to other farmers, who will give him the fruit in its season.”

Jesus said to them, “Did you never read in the Scriptures,

‘The stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the head of the corner. This was from the Lord.

It is marvelous in our eyes?’ [Psalm 118:22]

“Therefore I tell you, the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you, and will be given to a nation bringing forth its fruit. He who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces, but on whomever it will fall, it will scatter him as dust.”

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he spoke about them. When they sought to seize him, they feared the multitudes, because they considered him to be a prophet. [Mark 12:1-12, Luke 20:9-19]

1. When “prophets” criticize, how do you react? How have you rejected God’s correction?

2. How is God patient? What “fruit” does he want? How does he use his son’s rejection?

3. Jesus, I rejected you and the prophets, please forgive me and help me give you the fruit...



May 12

God's Invited Guests Prefer Their Own Celebrations

Wisdom...has prepared her meat. She has mixed her wine. She has also set her table. She has sent out her maidens...“Whoever is simple, let him turn in here!...Leave your simple ways, and live...The fear of Yahweh is the beginning of wisdom” – Proverbs 9:1-9

[Matthew 22:1-14] Jesus answered and spoke again in parables to them, saying, “The Kingdom of Heaven is like a certain king, who made a marriage feast for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the marriage feast, but they would not come. Again he sent out other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “Behold, I have prepared my dinner. My cattle and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the marriage feast!”’ But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his merchandise, and the rest grabbed his servants, and treated them shamefully, and killed them. When the king heard that, he was angry, and sent his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city.

*“Come to the marriage feast!”
But they made light of it*

“Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited weren’t worthy. Go therefore to the intersections of the highways, and as many as you may find, invite to the marriage feast.’ Those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together as many as they found, both bad and good. The wedding was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man who didn’t have on wedding clothing, and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here not wearing wedding clothing?’ He was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and throw him into the outer darkness; there is where the weeping and grinding of teeth will be.’ For many are called, but few chosen.”

1. How does context change the thrust of this parable (Apr. 10)? What is Jesus’ dinner?

2. Do you go your ways, treating his servants badly? Are you wearing wedding clothes?

3. Father, you’ve prepared a feast for your Son and invite me to eat his flesh to be made...

May 13

Hypocrites Hate Jesus' Authority, but He Calls them to God

What will I give to Yahweh for all his benefits toward me? I will take the cup of salvation, and call on the name of Yahweh. I will pay my vows to Yahweh, yes, in the presence of all his people...I will offer to you the sacrifice of thanksgiving – Psalm 116:12-14

[Matthew 22:15-22, Jerusalem, Tuesday]
Then the Pharisees went and took counsel how they might entrap him in his talk. *They watched him, and sent out spies, who pretended to be righteous, that they might trap him in something he said, so as to deliver him up to the power and authority of the governor.* They sent their disciples to him, along with the Herodians, saying, "Teacher, we know that you are honest, and teach the way of God in truth, no matter whom you teach, for you aren't partial to anyone. Tell us therefore, what do you think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not? *Shall we give, or shall we not give?*"

Give...to God the things that are God's

But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, "Why do you test me, you hypocrites? Show me the tax money."

They brought to him a denarius.

He asked them, "Whose is this image and inscription?"

They said to him, "Caesar's."

Then he said to them, "Give therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

When they heard it, they marveled, and left him, and went away. [Mark 12:13-17, Luke 20:20-26]

1. Who is your "Caesar"? What are his things? What are God's? How will you "give" them?
2. Do you pretend to be righteous? How? What can you do to stop being a hypocrite?
3. God, all that I have is yours, I fight against giving it to you and am a hypocrite when I...



May 15

The Greatest Commandment and the Greatest Misconception

Samuel said, "Has Yahweh as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Yahweh? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams" – 1 Samuel 15:22

[Mark 12:28-37] But the Pharisees, when they heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, gathered themselves together. One of the scribes came, and heard them questioning together. Knowing that he had answered them well, asked him a question, testing him, "Which commandment is the greatest of all?"

Jesus answered, "The greatest is, 'Hear, Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one: you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.' [Deuteronomy 6:5] This is the first commandment. The second is like this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' [Leviticus 19:18] There is no other commandment greater than these. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments."

The scribe said to him, "Truly, teacher, you have said well that he is one, and there is none other but he, and to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbor as himself, is more

important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul

When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the Kingdom of God."

No one dared ask him any question after that.

Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them a question as he taught in the temple, saying, "What do you think of the Christ? Whose son is he?"

They said to him, "Of David."

He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call him Lord, saying in the book of Psalms,

'The Lord said to my Lord, sit on my right hand, until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet?' [Psalm 110:1]

"If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son?"

The common people heard him gladly. No one was able to answer him a word, neither did any man dare ask him any more questions from that day forth. [Matthew 22:34-46, Luke 20:41-44]

1. How do you obey these commands? How will you today? What are your "sacrifices"?
2. Why does Jesus question the priests? Did they get it? What are your misconceptions?
3. Jesus, you came destroy Satan's work, but your life was not what most expected; please...



Jesus Shows How the Authorities Crave the Fruit of Praise

Thus says the Lord Yahweh: Remove the turban, and take off the crown; this shall be no more the same; exalt that which is low, and abase that which is high – Ezekiel 21:26

[Matthew 23:1-12, Jerusalem, Tuesday]
Then, *in the hearing of all the people*, Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to his disciples, saying in his teaching, “The scribes and the Pharisees sat on Moses’ seat. All things therefore whatever they tell you to observe, observe and do, but don’t do their works; for they say, and don’t do. For they bind heavy burdens that are grievous to be borne, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not lift a finger to help them. But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad, enlarge the fringes of their garments, *like to walk in long robes*, and love the place of honor at feasts, the

Whoever exalts himself will be humbled...whoever humbles himself will be exalted

best seats in the synagogues, the salutations in the marketplaces, and to be called ‘Rabbi, Rabbi’ by men, those who devour widows’ houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. These will receive greater condemnation. But don’t you be called ‘Rabbi,’ for one is your teacher, the Christ, and all of you are brothers. Call no man on the earth your father, for one is your Father, he who is in heaven. Neither be called masters, for one is your master, the Christ. But he who is greatest among you will be your servant. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.” [Mark 12:38-40, Luke 20:45-47]

1. What’s wrong with the scribes and Pharisees? How are you similar? What can you avoid?
2. What must you “observe”? What humbled you? Exalted? How will you be humble today?
3. Father, you are the true master, help me not make myself or another a master and instead...



May 17

The Scribes and Pharisees Lack Justice, Mercy and Faith

He has shown you, O man, what is good. What does Yahweh require of you, but to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God? – Micah 6:8

[Matthew 23:13-36] “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows’ houses, and as a pretense you make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.

“But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against men; for you don’t enter in yourselves, neither do you allow those who are entering in to enter. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel around by sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much of a son of Gehenna as yourselves.

“Woe to you, you blind guides, who say, ‘Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obligated.’ You blind fools! For which is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifies the gold? ‘Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obligated?’ You blind fools! For which is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifies the gift? He therefore who swears by the altar, swears by it, and by everything on it. He who swears by the temple, swears by it, and by him who was living in it. He who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God, and by him who sits on it.

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cumin, and have left undone the weightier matters of the law: justice, mercy, and faith. But you ought to have done these, and not to have left the other undone. You blind guides, who strain out a gnat, and swallow a camel!

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and

unrighteousness. You blind Pharisee, first clean the inside of the cup and of the platter, that its outside may become clean also.

Inwardly you are full of hypocrisy

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitened tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but inwardly are full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets, and decorate the tombs of the righteous, and say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we wouldn’t have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.’ Therefore you testify to yourselves that you are children of those who killed the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers. You serpents, you offspring of vipers, how will you escape the judgment of Gehenna? Therefore, behold, I send to you prophets, wise men, and scribes. Some of them you will kill and crucify; and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city; that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zachariah son of Barachiah, whom you killed between the sanctuary and the altar. Most certainly I tell you, all these things will come upon this generation.

“Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets, and stones those who are sent to her! How often I would have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me from now on, until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!’”

1. Which woes match the ones on Mar. 29? Which convict you? How will you change?

2. Why is Jesus so harsh? How does this cry over Jerusalem differ from that on Apr. 9?

3. Jesus, I’m a hypocrite, I bend rules to fit my own desires, I close other peoples’ minds...

May 18

A Widow Gives All She Has to God—and Shames the Rich

Elijah...said, "Please bring me a morsel of bread"...She said, "I don't have...but a handful of meal...for me and my son"...Elijah said..."Make me of it a little cake first"...She went and did according to the saying of Elijah – 1 Kings 17:11-15

[Mark 12:41-44, Jerusalem, Tuesday] Jesus sat down opposite the treasury, looked up and saw how the multitude cast money gifts into the treasury. Many who were rich cast in much. A poor widow came, and she cast in two small brass coins, which equal a

quadrens coin. He called his disciples to himself, and said to them, "Most certainly I tell you, this poor widow gave more than all those who are giving into the treasury, for they all gave gifts out of their abundance, but she, out of her poverty, gave all that she had to live on." [Luke 21:1-4]

She...gave all that she had to live on

1. If you had \$0.50 to live on, would you give it away? What can you trust God with today?
2. How are the "poor in spirit" blessed (Jan. 28)? How does it relate to this widow? To you?
3. Jesus, you won't be satisfied until I give *everything* to God; right now I'm holding on to...



The Disciples Gawk at Temple, Jesus Warns of Deception

The prophets prophesy lies in my name; I didn't send them, neither have I commanded them, neither spoke I to them: they prophesy to you a lying vision, and divination, and a thing of nothing, and the deceit of their own heart. — Jeremiah 14:14

[Matthew 24:1-9, leaving Jerusalem, Tuesday] Jesus went out from the temple, and was going on his way. His disciples came to him to show him the buildings of the temple

how it was decorated with beautiful stones and gifts. One of his disciples said to him, "Teacher, see what kind of stones and what kind of buildings!" But he answered them, "You see all of these great buildings, don't you? Most certainly I tell you, there will not be left here one stone on another, that will not be thrown down."

As he sat on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple, the disciples Peter, James, John, and Andrew, came to him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? What is the sign that these things are all about to be fulfilled—of your coming, and of the end of the age?"

Jesus answered them, "Be careful that no one leads you astray. For many will come in my name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will lead many astray. You will hear of wars *and disturbances* and rumors of wars. See that you aren't troubled, for all this must happen, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation,

Be careful that no one leads you astray

and kingdom against kingdom; and there will be famines, plagues, and earthquakes in various places. *There will be terrors and great signs from heaven.* But all these things are the beginning of birth pains. Then they will deliver you up to oppression, and will kill you. You will be hated by all of the nations for my name's sake.

"But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and will persecute you, delivering you up to synagogues and prisons, bringing you before kings and governors for my name's sake. It will turn out as a testimony for you. Settle it therefore in your hearts not to meditate beforehand how to answer, for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to withstand or to contradict. For it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit. You will be handed over even by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends. They will cause some of you to be put to death. You will be hated by all men for my name's sake. And not a hair of your head will perish.

"By your endurance you will win your lives."
[Mark 13:1-13, Luke 21:5-19]

1. List the signs; have they happened? How are they like birth pains? Can today be the end?
2. What can lead you astray? How can you endure? What tension is there in your family?
3. Jesus, you may come back even before I finish this prayer, so I commit to being ready by...



May 20

Jesus Warns of Destruction

Forces shall stand on his part, and they shall profane the sanctuary, even the fortress, and shall take away the continual burnt offering, and they shall set up the abomination that makes desolate – Daniel 11:31

[Matthew 24:11-28] Many false prophets will arise, and will lead many astray. Because iniquity will be multiplied, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end, the same will be saved. This Good News of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world for a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.

“But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is at hand. When, therefore, you see the abomination of desolation, [Daniel 11:31] which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand), then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take out things that are in his house. Let him who is in the field not return back to get his clothes. Let those who are in the midst of her depart. Let those who are in the country not enter therein. But woe to those who are with child and to nursing mothers in those days! For there will be great distress in the land, and wrath to this people. For these are days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. Pray that your flight will not be in the winter, nor

False prophets will arise, and will lead many astray

on a Sabbath, for then there will be great oppression, such as has not been from the beginning of the world which God created until now, no, nor ever will be. They will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled down by the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. Unless those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved. But for the sake of the chosen ones, those days will be shortened.

“Then if any man tells you, ‘Behold, here is the Christ,’ or, ‘There,’ don’t believe it. For there will arise false christs, and false prophets, and they will show great signs and wonders, so as to lead astray, if possible, even the chosen ones.

“Behold, I have told you beforehand. If therefore they tell you, ‘Behold, he is in the wilderness,’ don’t go out; ‘Behold, he is in the inner rooms,’ don’t believe it. For as the lightning flashes from the east, and is seen even to the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For wherever the carcass is, there is where the vultures gather together.” [Mark 13:14-23, Luke 21:20-26]

1. Daniel’s prophecy occurred in 167 B.C., 70 A.D. and may occur again; how does it help us?
2. Who are vultures? Is a carcass obvious? Is lightning? Do you follow crowds? How so?
3. Jesus, your words saved many from a siege in 70 A.D.; today I’ll preach the Kingdom by...



Jesus Tells of Coming to His Generation and a Future One

The day of Yahweh comes, cruel, with wrath and fierce anger; to...destroy...sinners. ...For the stars of the sky and its constellations will not give their light. The sun will be darkened in its going forth, and the moon will not cause its light to shine – Isaiah 13:10

[Matthew 24:29-44, outside of Jerusalem, Tuesday] “But immediately after the oppression of those days, the sun will be darkened, the moon will not give its light, [Isaiah 13:10] the stars will fall from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken; *There will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars; and on the earth anxiety of nations, in perplexity for the roaring of the sea and the waves; men fainting for fear, and for expectation of the things which are coming on the world,* and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky. Then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky with power and great glory. He will send out his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together his chosen ones from the four winds, *from the ends of the earth,* from one end of the sky to the other.

“Now from the fig tree (*and all the trees*) learn this parable. When its branch has now become tender, and puts forth its leaves, you know that the summer is near. Even so you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Most certainly I tell you, this

In an hour that you don't expect, the Son of Man will come

generation will not pass away, until all these things are accomplished. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. But no one knows of that day and hour, not even the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

“As the days of Noah were, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. For as in those days which were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ship, and they didn't know until the flood came, and took them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and one will be left; two women grinding at the mill, one will be taken and one will be left. Watch therefore, for you don't know in what hour your Lord comes. But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch of the night the thief was coming, he would have watched, and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore also be ready, for in an hour that you don't expect, the Son of Man will come.” [Mark 13:24-32, Luke 21:25-32]

1. What are “stars”? How could they fall in 70 A.D.? When will heaven and earth pass away?
2. What's the main point? If Christ returned today, how would you feel? Are you watching?
3. Jesus, you gathered Christians in 70 A.D. and will gather us all to heaven; please help me...



May 22

Jesus Urges Us to Keep Alert and Pray—He is Coming!

Give no sleep to your eyes,
nor slumber to your eyelids – Proverbs 6:4

[Matthew 24:45-51] “Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his lord has set over his household, to give them their food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his lord finds doing so when he comes. Most certainly I tell you that he will set him over all that he has. But if that evil servant should say in his heart, ‘My lord is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat his fellow servants, and eat and drink with the drunkards, the lord of that servant will come in a day when he doesn’t expect it, and in an hour when he doesn’t know it, and will cut him in pieces, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites. There is where the weeping and grinding of teeth will be.

Watch, keep alert, and pray; for you don’t know when the time is. *So be careful, or your hearts will be loaded down with carousing,*

Watch therefore...lest
coming suddenly he
might find you sleeping

drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that day will come on you suddenly. For it will come like a snare on all those who dwell on the surface of all the earth. Therefore be watchful all the time, praying that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will happen, and to stand before the Son of Man.

“It is like a man, traveling to another country, having left his house, and given authority to his servants, and to each one his work, and also commanded the doorkeeper to keep watch. Watch therefore, for you don’t know when the lord of the house is coming, whether at evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly he might find you sleeping. What I tell you, I tell all: Watch.”
[Mark 13:33-37, Luke 21:33-36]

1. How are you faithful and wise? How is your heart loaded down? How will you “watch”?
2. How do the 3 accounts differ? What is the main point? How does this help you watch?
3. Jesus, the cares of this life weary me and make me sleepy, but today I resolve to wake...

May 23

Half of Those Who Watch for Jesus Aren't Prepared

David said, "You are blessed, Yahweh...Keep this forever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of your people, and prepare their heart for you; and give to Solomon my son a perfect heart, to keep your commandments – 1 Chronicles 29:10-19"

[Matthew 25:1-13, near Jerusalem, Tuesday] "Then the Kingdom of Heaven will be like ten virgins, who took their lamps, and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. Those who were foolish, when they took their lamps, took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. Now while the bridegroom delayed, they all slumbered and slept. But at midnight there was a cry, 'Behold! The bridegroom is coming! Come out to meet him!' Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your

Watch therefore, for you don't know the day the ...Son of Man is coming

oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, 'What if there isn't enough for us and you? You go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' While they went away to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins also came, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us.' But he answered, 'Most certainly I tell you, I don't know you.' Watch therefore, for you don't know the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming."

1. Why 10 virgins, not just 2? How is this like earlier teaching (Apr. 8)? How will you enter?
2. What is the "oil"? Can it be borrowed? Have you got enough? How will you prepare?
3. Jesus, you give us ~70 years to prepare for death, and you delay your return because you...

May 24

How We Prove That God Made Us Good and Faithful

He who gathers in summer is a wise son, but he who sleeps during the harvest is a son who causes shame...The sluggard will not plow by reason of the winter; therefore he shall beg in harvest, and have nothing – Proverbs 10:5, 20:4

[Matthew 25:14-30, near Jerusalem, Tuesday] “For it is like a man, going into another country, who called his own servants, and entrusted his goods to them. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one; to each according to his own ability. Then he went on his journey. Immediately he who received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. In the same way, he also who got the two gained another two. But he who received the one went away and dug in the earth, and hid his lord’s money.

“Now after a long time the lord of those servants came, and reconciled accounts with them. He who received the five talents came and brought another five talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents. Behold, I have gained another five talents besides them.’

“His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

“He also who got the two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents. Behold, I have gained another two talents besides them.’

“His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a few things, I will set you over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

“He also who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you that you are a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter. I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the earth. Behold, you have what is yours.’

“But his lord answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant. You knew that I reap where I didn’t sow, and gather where I didn’t scatter. You ought therefore to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received back my own with interest. Take away therefore the talent from him, and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will be given, and he will have abundance, but from him who doesn’t have, even that which he has will be taken away. Throw out the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

Well done, good
and faithful servant

1. What are your talents? How do you invest them? What prevents or urges you to invest?

2. How do the two gift parables differ (May 2; 1 talent = 60 minas)? Why do some get more?

3. Jesus, you have left for another country, though you’re constantly with me, please help...

May 25

Jesus' Coming Will Expose How We Help Others

Eliphaz...answered...“You haven't given water to the weary...you...withheld bread”...Job answered...“if I...have eaten my morsel alone and the fatherless hasn't eaten of it (no...he grew up with me as with a father)...then...let my arm be broken – Job 22 and 31

[Matthew 25:31-46, near Jerusalem, Tuesday] “But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. Before him all the nations will be gathered, and he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will tell those on his right hand, ‘Come, blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry, and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty, and you gave me drink. I was a stranger, and you took me in. I was naked, and you clothed me. I was sick, and you visited me. I was in prison, and you came to me.’

“Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry, and feed you; or thirsty, and give you a drink? When did we see you as a stranger, and take you in; or

naked, and clothe you? When did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to you?’

As you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me

“The King will answer them, ‘Most certainly I tell you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’

Then he will say also to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry, and you didn't give me food to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and you didn't take me in; naked, and you didn't clothe me; sick, and in prison, and you didn't visit me.’

“Then they will also answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and didn't help you?’

“Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Most certainly I tell you, inasmuch as you didn't do it to one of the least of these, you didn't do it to me.’ These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

1. How does this make you feel? How would the rich ruler (Apr. 26) feel? What will you do?
2. How much helping is enough? How do you know? What's Jesus' point? What saves us?
3. Jesus, I'm concern with selfish, petty things, you want me out serving you by helping...

May 26

Jesus Ends the Disciples' Lesson, Judas Decides to Betray Him

I said... "Give me my wages..." So they weighed for my wages thirty pieces of silver. Yahweh said to me, "Throw it to the potter, the handsome price that I was valued at by them!" I...threw them to the potter, in the house of Yahweh. – Zechariah 11:12-13

[Matthew 26:1-5 and 14-16, Bethany and Jerusalem, Tuesday] It happened, when Jesus had finished all these words, that he said to his disciples, "You know that after two days the Passover and the feast of the unleavened bread is coming, and the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified."

Then the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people were gathered together in the court of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas. They took counsel together that they might take Jesus by deceit, and kill him. But they said, "Not

during the feast, lest a riot occur among the people."

**The Son of Man
will be delivered
up to be crucified**

Then *Satan entered into Judas*, one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot. *He went away, and talked to the chief priests and captains about how he might deliver him to them*, and said, "What are you willing to give me, that I should deliver him to you?" They *were glad, and* weighed out for him thirty pieces of silver. *He consented, and from that time he sought opportunity to betray him—to deliver him to them in the absence of the multitude* [Mark 14:1-2, 10-11, Luke 22:1-6]

1. Jesus ends a 2371-word answer (May 19-25) by talking of death; why? What did we learn?
2. What did Judas want? Why did Satan enter him? Could he enter you? How do you know?
3. Jesus, you chose 12 as your closest friends and one betrayed you; today I'll be faithful by...

Jesus Shows How to Serve Others, Even a Betrayer

My own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, who ate bread with me, has lifted up his heel against me. But you, Yahweh, have mercy on me, and raise me up – Psalm 41:9-10

[John 13:1-20] There arose also a contention among them, which of them was considered to be greatest. He said to them, "The kings of the nations lord it over them, and those who have authority over them are called 'benefactors.' But not so with you. But one who is the greater among you, let him become as the younger, and one who is governing, as one who serves. For who is greater, one who sits at the table, or one who serves? Isn't it he who sits at the table? But I am in the midst of you as one who serves. But you are those who have continued with me in my trials. I confer on you a kingdom, even as my Father conferred on me, that you may eat and drink at my table in my Kingdom. You will sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

Now before the feast of the Passover, Jesus, knowing that his time had come that he would depart from this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he came forth from God, and was going to God, arose from supper, and laid aside his outer garments. He took a towel, and wrapped a towel around his waist. Then he poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. Then he came to Simon Peter. He said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?"

Jesus answered him, "You don't know what I am doing now, but you will understand later."

Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet!"

Jesus answered him, "If I don't wash you, you have no part with me."

Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!"

Jesus said to him, "Someone who has bathed only needs to have his feet washed, but is completely clean. You are clean, but not all of you." For he knew him who would betray him, therefore he said, "You are not all clean." So when he had washed their feet, put his outer garment back on, and sat down again, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? You call me, 'Teacher' and 'Lord.' You say so correctly, for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Most certainly I tell you, a servant is not greater than his lord, neither one who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

"I don't speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen. But that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats bread with me has lifted up his heel against me.' [Psalm 41:9] From now on, I tell you before it happens, that when it happens, you may believe that I am he. Most certainly I tell you, he who receives whomever I send, receives me; and he who receives me, receives him who sent me." [Luke 22:24-30]

Blessed are you if you do them

1. How might Judas feel having his feet washed? Have you been betrayed? Will you serve?
2. How do you lord over others? How are you like Peter? What does "feet washing" mean?
3. Jesus, I can't just *know* the importance of serving, I have to *do* it in order to be blessed...

Jesus Gives Judas a Chance to Turn from His Plans

At meal time Boaz said to her, "Come here, and eat of the bread, and dip your morsel in the vinegar." – Ruth 2:14

[John 13:21-30] When Jesus had said this, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, "Most certainly I tell you that one of you will betray me."

The disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom he spoke. They began to be sorrowful, and to ask him one by one, "Surely not I?" And another said, "Surely not I?"

He answered them, "It is one of the twelve, he who dips with me in the dish. For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, even as it is written about him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would be better for that man if he had not been born."

One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was at the table, leaning against Jesus' breast. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, and said to him, "Tell us who it is of whom he speaks."

He, leaning back, as he was, on Jesus' breast, asked him, "Lord, who is it?"

It is he to whom I will give this piece of bread

Jesus therefore answered, "It is he to whom I will give this piece of bread when I have dipped it." So when he had dipped the piece of bread, he

gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. Judas, who betrayed him, answered, "It isn't me, is it, Rabbi?" He said to him, "You said it."

After the piece of bread, then Satan entered into him.

Then Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly."

Now no man at the table knew why he said this to him. For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus said to him, "Buy what things we need for the feast," or that he should give something to the poor. Therefore, having received that morsel, he went out immediately. It was night. [Matthew 26:21-25, Mark 14:18-21, Luke 22:21-23]

1. At this first mention of "betray", how did the disciples feel? And Judas? How would you?
2. Why does Jesus offer the morsel? Why does Satan enter Judas? Could he have been freed?
3. Jesus, my kinsman redeemer, I turn from my evil plans, grudges, selfish ambitions, and...

Jesus Tells His Disciples to Love, Despite Future Failures

Yahweh said to me, "Go again, love a woman loved by another, and an adulteress, even as Yahweh loves the children of Israel, though they turn to other gods" – Hosea 3:1

[John 13:31-38] When he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself, and he will glorify him immediately.

Little children, I will be with you a little while longer. You will seek me, and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you can't come,' so now I tell you. A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, just like I have loved you; that you also love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, where are you going?"

Jesus answered, "Where I am going, you can't follow now, but you will follow afterwards."

Peter said to him, "Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you."

Jesus answered him, "Will you lay down your life for me? *Simon, Simon, behold, Satan asked to have you, that he might sift you as*

A new commandment I give to you...love one another...like I have loved

wheat, but I prayed for you, that your faith wouldn't fail. You, when once you have turned again, establish your brothers."

He said to him, "Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death!"

He said, "Most certainly I tell you, Peter, the rooster won't crow until you have denied me three times."

But he spoke all the more, "If I must die with you, I will not deny you." All of the disciples also said likewise.

He said to them, "When I sent you out without purse, and wallet, and shoes, did you lack anything?"

They said, "Nothing."

Then he said to them, "But now, whoever has a purse, let him take it, and likewise a wallet. Whoever has none, let him sell his cloak, and buy a sword. For I tell you that this which is written must still be fulfilled in me: 'He was counted with transgressors.' [Isaiah 53:12] For that which concerns me has an end."

They said, "Lord, behold, here are two swords."

He said to them, "That is enough." [Matthew 26:33-34, Mark 14:29-31, Luke 22:31-38]

1. How had Jesus been glorified? How would he be? When? Why the new commandment?

2. Has your faith failed? How? Did you turn, and will you establish your brothers? How?

3. Jesus, you can send me out with nothing, or you can tell me to get prepared, either way...



May 31

The Last Supper's Culmination: Communion Inaugurated

I will make a new covenant...I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people...they shall all know me...for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin will I remember no more – Jeremiah 31:31-34

[Matthew 26:26-29] As they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks for it, and broke it. He gave to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body, *which is given for you. Do this in memory of me.*"

Likewise, he took the cup *after supper*, gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, "All of you

drink it, for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many for the remission of sins. *Do this, as often as you drink, in memory of me.* But I tell you that I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on, until that

day when I drink it anew with you in my Father's Kingdom." They all drank of it. [Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:19-20, 1 Corinthians 11:23-25]

This is my blood of the new covenant

1. The Supper's order differs in the gospels; why? How do we eat and drink Jesus (Mar. 4)?
2. When you take communion, what do you remember? How is your life different as a result?
3. Jesus, the disciples didn't realize the significance of this new ceremony; please help me to...