

## Topic

### • I PREACHING, HEALING, TEACHING

#### • A Introduction

#### • 1 Matthew, Mark, Luke each present Jesus a with three-fold ministry

##### • a His ministry embraced

- (1) Preaching.
- (2) Healing.
- (3) Teaching.

##### • b Each of these three terms are used in a same technical manner by the evangelists

- (1) They did not mean what they mean to us today
- (2) If we interpret them using our understanding of the words, we lose the careful presentations the evangelists are offering us

#### • 2 These words are used by the evangelists with great precision

##### • a Mark: He offers us a section in which Jesus ministers equally to Jews (first) and to Greeks (afterwards)

##### • (1) Jesus crosses the Lake (the Sea of Galilee) separating, [as Mark incorrectly thinks] Jews and Greeks

##### • (a) What Jesus does on one side of the shore, He does on the other

- [1] He Preaches, Heals, and has Controversies with His foes
- [2] He engages in each of these on both sides of the Lake, the Jewish and the Greek/Pagan

##### • (b) Mark carefully observes one major distinction, one major reservation to the "equal treatment": Jesus never teaches Greeks

##### • (2) There are two miraculous Feedings of Crowds: 5000 and 4000

##### • (a) The 5000 refers to people who are Jewish

##### • [1] Mark 6:34

- [a] When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So he began teaching them many things. [Literally: "at great length"]
- [b] 35 By this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. "This is a remote place," they said, "and it's already very late.
- [c] 36 Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat."
- [d] 37 But he answered, "You give them something to eat." They said to him, "That would take eight months of a man's wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?"
- [e] 38 "How many loaves do you have?" he asked. "Go and see." When they found out, they said, "Five—and two fish."
- [f] 39 Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. 40 So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties.
- [g] 41 Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to set before the people. He also divided the two fish among them all.
- [h] 42 They all ate and were satisfied. 43 and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish.
- [i] 44 The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

##### • [2] All the numbers in the story have Jewish symbolism

- [a] The 5000 hints at the Jewish People formed by the 5 books of the Torah
- [b] The 12 baskets of bread crumbs suggest there is 1 for each of the 12 tribes of Israel

##### • [3] Jesus first teaches them

##### • (b) The 4000 refers to people who are Pagan, Greek, not Jewish

##### • [1] Mark 8:1

- [a] During those days another large crowd gathered. Since they had nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples to him and said,
- [b] 2 "I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. 3 If I send them home hungry, they will collapse on the way, because some of them have come a long distance."
- [c] 4 His disciples answered, "But where in this remote place can anyone get enough bread to feed them?"
- [d] 5 "How many loaves do you have?" Jesus asked. "Seven," they replied.

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- [e] 6 He told the crowd to sit down on the ground. When he had taken the seven loaves and given thanks, he broke them and gave them to his disciples to set before the people, and they did so.
- [f] 7 They had a few small fish as well; he gave thanks for them also and told the disciples to distribute them.
- [g] 8 The people ate and were satisfied. Afterwards the disciples picked up seven basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.
- [h] 9 About four thousand men were present. And having sent them away.
- [2] All the numbers in this story have pagan symbolism
  - [a] 4000 hints at those gathered
    - {1} From the 4 corners of the world
    - {2} And/or by the 4 winds
  - [b] 7 baskets of bread crumbs suggests 1 for each of the 7 deacons who minister to Greek speaking Christians in Acts
    - {1} Acts 6:1
      - {a} In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food.
      - {b} 2 So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables.
      - {c} 3 Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them 4 and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word."
      - {d} 5 This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism.
      - {e} 6 They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.
  - [3] There is no reference to Jesus teaching this crowd – we are not told why they stayed with Him
- b **Matthew: He offers us the most technically correct selection and use of terms**
  - (1) On two occasions he carefully uses the Greek terms for "preaching, healing, and teaching" to describe the mission of Jesus
    - (a) Matthew 4:23
      - [1] He went around all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness among the people.
    - (b) Matthew 9:35
      - [1] Jesus went around to all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom, and curing every disease and illness.
  - (2) Then in Chapter 10, Jesus sends forth the disciples (the Church) and He gives them a share in two of His missions: to preach and to heal
    - (a) Matthew 10:5
      - [1] Jesus sent out these twelve after instructing them thus, "Do not go into pagan territory or enter a Samaritan town. 6 Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.
      - [2] 7 As you go, make this proclamation: 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.' 8 Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, drive out demons. Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give.
    - (b) **Jesus (and Matthew) clearly do not include a mission to the disciples to teach!**
  - (3) Chapters pass and Jesus does not share the teaching mission with the disciples, the Church in embryo – from Chapter 11 through Chapter 27 including the death of Jesus
  - (4) Finally, in Chapter 28, in the last sentence of the Gospel, Jesus tells the disciples and the Church to teach!
    - (a) Matthew 28:16
      - [1] The eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had ordered them. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped, but they doubted.
      - [2] 18 Then Jesus approached and said to them, "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit.
      - [3] 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age."
    - (5) The conclusion we should reach from these facts is that the mission to teach should be shared only with those who have experienced Jesus' death and resurrection
- B It is important that we remember the distinction between these three terms
  - 1 **Preaching simply announces God loving us**

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- 2 If it is accepted, if it is believed in, (not “believed about,”) healing always results
  - a The preaching and its acceptance “saves” the person,
  - b The preaching and healing are intended to affect the whole person
- 3 The very experience of healing, in turn, demands the teaching
  - a Teaching offers guidelines to deepen the experience of healing
  - b And teaching offers cautions to protect it from harm
- C Damage is done when the correct order of experiencing the ministry is reversed
  - 1 After the preaching and healing, the teaching is a blessing,
  - 2 Before the healing (and preaching) are experienced, the teaching is a curse, a burden
    - a Sadly, most Christians today are taught long before they are offered the reality of the preaching
    - b They are burdened with rules and laden with accepting difficult doctrines
  - 3 And so the “Good News” becomes the “Fearful News”
- D Example:
  - 1 Matthew 5:38
    - a “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’
    - b 39 But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also.”
  - 2 As I grew up, I was taught about Jesus, but I was never offered Him and the experience of His love for me
    - a I was taught what I should do
      - (1) To avoid Hell
      - (2) And, therefore, to slip into Heaven,
    - b And I was taught what I should accept as truths of our faith (“believe about”)
    - c The focus of the teaching I received was not on what Jesus did
      - (1) He saved me
      - (2) And He offers me this salvation as a gift now
      - (3) He loves me as I am
    - d Rather, the focus was on an action I was ordered to do, a truth I was commanded to accept and a Heaven I would win later
    - e In short, I didn’t get the “preaching;” I only was offered the teaching
  - 3 When I heard the teaching about turning the other cheek, it was not Good News
    - a It convinced me what a poor Christian I was
      - (1) I never intended to turn the other cheek
      - (2) Rather, I schemed for months to get revenge
    - b I would leave Church each year depressed by the “Good News!
  - 4 Then I experienced the preaching and the start of healing
    - a I knew peace
    - b A few years later someone hurt me, and I began to resent him — really resent him
      - (1) At 2:00 AM, I couldn’t sleep
        - (a) I realized the guy I was hating was probably fast asleep
        - (b) I wanted to call him up and wake him up
      - (2) My first reaction added fuel to my anger
    - c Then I stopped and understood one part of the Sermon on the Mount
      - (1) Jesus didn’t tell me to turn the other cheek for his sake, for her sake
      - (2) But He gave the teaching as a guidance for my sake
      - (3) He died to give me His peace
        - (a) He didn’t want me to lose it over any small thing you or anyone else or everyone else did
        - (b) I’m too important in His heart for Him to watch me waste His peace on anyone who has offended me
    - d The teaching after the preaching and the healing became a blessing
- E Explanation of the Terms
  - 1 Preaching

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- a Mark 1:14
  - (1) Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, 15 and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."
- b Matthew 4:12
  - (1) When Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he left Judea and returned to Galilee. 13 But instead of going to Nazareth, he went to Capernaum, beside the Sea of Galilee, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. . .
  - (2) 17 From then on, Jesus began to preach, "Turn from your sins and turn to God, because the Kingdom of Heaven is near."
  - (3) Matthew uses "Kingdom of Heaven"
    - (a) Not to suggest a place where we go when we die
    - (b) But as a respectful way to avoid saying the holy name of God
- c "Kingdom"
  - (1) Can mean exactly that -- a place, a realm
  - (2) But it also can mean "Kingship" -- The actual ruling presence of some power
  - (3) Scripture scholars claim that in the NT the word almost always means "Kingship," "Rule," "Reign"
  - (4) **The term means that "God's power is here"**
    - (a) **God's power (love, service) is here in Jesus**
      - [1] **The power that was expected to enter the world to save us**
      - [2] Therefore let Jesus become the basis of our peace
    - (b) **"Jesus is here as a gift to you; accept Him"**
      - [1] Jesus is God loving, serving, healing, forgiving, cleansing you (and all of us!)
      - [2] **Let Him love, serve, heal, forgive, and cleanse you**
      - [3] Accept Him as a gift! unearned! incapable of being earned!
- d "Repent"
  - (1) This word also needs explanation
  - (2) **The Greek word is "Metanoia"**
    - (a) "Repent" suggests to us "guilt" or "sorrow"
    - (b) Neither meaning has anything to do with the Greek word "metanoia"
    - (c) **Both English words tend to have us turn our attention inward upon ourselves**
      - [1] **Jesus, on the other hand, calls us to turn our attention outward**
        - [a] **Upon Him first -- to accept His love as a gift**
        - [b] **Then upon our neighbors -- to share them as His love gift**
      - [2] Someone crushed with guilt and/or sorrow is useless to Jesus as a disciple since he/she can't witness
  - (3) **The word means "change directions"**
    - (a) If we were heading north, we should change to going south
    - (b) We were believing in ourselves; we should now believe in Jesus
    - (c) We were trying to save ourselves; we should now let Jesus save us
- 2 Healing: the immediate result of the preaching's acceptance
  - a It always occurs on the level of our Spirit
    - (1) I am offered serenity, peace
    - (2) I bask in the wonder of learning that God loves me!
  - b **So I can love myself!**
    - (1) I can love God's love in me!
    - (2) With my mind I can accept this miracle even when my feelings can't sense it
  - c The healings that Jesus performs are signs of the wholeness God wills for each of and for all of us
    - (1) Luke 7:20
      - (a) When the men came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptist sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?'"
      - (b) 21 At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind.

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- (c) 22 So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor."
  - (d) 23 Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me."
- 3 **Teaching: everything else!**
  - a It includes all the rules of living
  - b It includes all doctrines, teachings, theological ideas
  - c **The purpose of the teaching is no less important than that of the preaching and the healing; teaching is intended**
    - (1) **To safeguard the healing against threats like**
      - (a) Hate
      - (b) Lust
      - (c) Greed
    - (2) **To offer ideas on ways to broaden the reality of Jesus and His peace**
      - (a) By serving others
      - (b) Or by uniting with others in a viable community
- 4 Most Christians get introduced to teaching, not preaching
  - a **They are given the impression that salvation flows from**
    - (1) **Accepting the right truths -- no matter how difficult this acceptance may seem**
    - (2) **And obeying the rules and laws that a particular Church focuses upon as central**
  - b **This impression is completely wrong**
    - (1) **Salvation consists in the acceptance of Jesus and His love**
    - (2) **True religious truths are derived from this experience of Jesus and His peace**
    - (3) **Correct moral laws are derived from this experience of Jesus and His peace**
- II **SUNDAY SERMONS – WHAT IS CHRISTIANITY?**
  - A **Let me share a typical Catholic experience of sermon topics years ago**
    - 1 [See Figure 1]
    - 2 Week 1 **Church Law Demands abstaining from Meat Every Friday of the Year**
    - 3 Week 2: **We Must Reject the Evils of Evolution: The World Was Created in Seven Days**
    - 4 Week 3: **Since God Has Offered Us the Ten Commandments, Murder Is Evil**
    - 5 Week 4: **Jesus Challenges Us to Forgive Our Enemies**
    - 6 Week 5: **Jesus Will Return at the End of Time to Complete What He Has Begun**
    - 7 Week 6: **Jesus Is Fully God and Fully Man**
    - 8 Week 7: **An Infant Must Be Baptized within a Month of Birth Lest the Child Die before Baptism and Be Consigned Eternally to Limbo**
    - 9 Week 8: **How Wonderful It Is That Our Church Is Truly One As Witnessed by the Fact That Mass Is Celebrated Everywhere in the World in Latin** (Even back then it wasn't!)
  - B **All these topics seemed to be discussed, preached, and taught as being equally true, equally important**
  - C **Then the Vatican Council began changing the "accidentals" of the Catholic faith**
    - 1 **The Mass was translated from Latin into the language of each nation and celebrated in this vernacular tongue**
    - 2 **Abstinence from meat on Fridays was made voluntary**
      - a **Catholics were treated as adults capable of making their own choices for spiritual growth**
      - b **They were not to be treated as immature children needing parents (the Church) as their rulers**
  - D **At the same time Scripture scholarship opened up our understanding of literary forms, allowing us to interpret the Scriptures in the spirit in which they were originally written**
    - 1 **The Seven Day creation story was no longer taught as needing literal acceptance**
      - a **Evolution was allowed**
      - b **It was allowed provided we believe that God directly intervened in the creation of each person**
    - 2 **Limbo was no longer needed**
      - a **Baptism was no longer seen as a prerequisite for children to be admitted to Heaven**
      - b **Parents were urged to wait until the child was healthy before bringing the infant to Church for Baptism**

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- E Dazed by the rapid changes, some people lost their faith
  - 1 If some of these "truths" were no longer "true," what about the rest?
  - 2 Their concept of Christianity consisted of straight line truths, all equally true and important
  - 3 If one of these teachings could be changed or removed, then all of them could be
- F Here is true Christianity as it should be presented in sermons,
  - 1 [See Figure 2]
  - 2 Circle 1: Jesus: Christianity begins with the person of Jesus (Preaching)
    - a He is our faith
    - b He **saves us**
      - (1) By **forgiving us as we are**
      - (2) By **loving us as we are**
    - c No sermon should ever just assume His importance
      - (1) My experience at Protestant and Catholic funerals shows clergymen assume Jesus and talk about side issues
      - (2) We are not saved by the Bible, but by the acceptance of the God revealed by these Biblical texts
  - 3 Circle 2: Truths: The Christian experience of the love of Jesus leads to certain important conclusions, certain truths (Teachings)
    - a In **Scripture**:
      - (1) Murder is evil – it offends the service Jesus offers and calls us to receive it and share it
      - (2) The Final Coming of Jesus will complete our experience of the love He is offering us; He loves us too much to leave us incomplete in this love
    - b In The **Living Tradition of Church**:
      - (1) **Each of the Seven Sacraments communicate Jesus to us**
      - (2) They are all needed to round out our experience of Him
  - 4 Circle 3: Creeds: As a result of some serious misunderstandings of Jesus, Christians produced core summaries of their beliefs
    - a He can't be fully man – **Yes He is!**
    - b He can't be fully God – **Yes He is!**
    - c He can save the living, but **not the dead** – **Yes He can!**
      - (1) "He came to judge the living and the dead"
      - (2) 1 Corinthians 15:12
        - (a) Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead?
        - (b) 13 If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised:
  - 5 Circle 4: Theological Ideas: Theology is the result of Christians pondering and organizing their grasp of Jesus and the religion that flowed from an experience of Him
    - a **God gave us minds**
      - (1) He gave them to us because He wants us to use them
      - (2) Using them includes using them on our experiences of Jesus
      - (3) God did not fence off religion as the only area in which we are forbidden to use our minds
      - (4) **Religion is for humans, not for parrots**
    - b The Trinity tells us that one God is experienced by us in three persons, three aspects
      - (1) **The NT just makes references to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit**
        - (a) It never tries to reconcile these references with "One God"
        - (b) **Eventually, philosophy was adapted to the Bible and Tradition to produce Theology**
      - (2) **Theology's conclusion is that there is only one God but three expressions, Persons, "masks"**
        - (a) All are equal
        - (b) All are one
  - 6 Circle 5: Moral rules: These guidelines flow from all the above
    - a Since we are called to love and serve each other and all others, – **how can we murder?**
    - b Because we are forgiven, we must **forgive**

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- c We were not created to hoard the wonders of the universe; rather, we were called to **share our goods, our blessings, with others**
- d Since we have been graced freely with love, we must **love as freely**
- 7 Circle 6: Liturgy: Our ritual, our worship also flows from the earlier circles
  - a A "Feared God" is worshipped with awe
    - (1) The Dark Ages' introduced fear and superstition
      - (a) God was worshipped in a "magic" language unknown to the unclean multitude
      - (b) This language intensified the sense of "other" present among us
    - (2) **Outdated rites, strange vestments, gaudy altars added to the fear**
  - b A "Loving God" should be accepted and welcomed with gratitude
    - (1) He comes to us as we are
      - (a) **No special language is needed**
      - (b) The altar should look like a table
    - (2) **Our services should help us meet our God, not fear and avoid Him**
- 8 We must distinguish between the Changing and the Unchanging
  - a The Unchanging
    - (1) Hebrews 13:8
      - (a) "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever"
    - (2) Circle 1: Jesus Christ the Lord: He cannot change
    - (3) Circle 2: The truths He taught in Scripture and Tradition must remain the same
      - (a) **Of course we must separate truths which are unchanging from the details (facts) used to share these truths – Jonah was not swallowed by a "Big Fish"**
      - (b) And we must be careful to distinguish the words used (whose meaning change with time) from the truths the words communicate (which never change)
        - [1] "He will come to judge the living and the dead"
        - [2] The truth taught that Jesus can save (judge) the dead as well as the living
        - [3] It was misinterpreted to teach that Jesus will weigh all equally, dead and alive, in the scales of God's severe justice
    - (4) Circle 3: Jesus assures that the Creeds remain valid
      - (a) **But, they must be understood against the background of the errors they correct**
      - (b) **And they must be understood according to the meanings of the languages used to declare them**
        - [1] We must not read our meanings into these creedal terms
        - [2] "He descended into 'Hell'"
          - [a] The claim is confusing and upsetting because of our understanding of "hell"
          - [b] It is repugnant to Christians today to combine Jesus and Hell in one thought
          - [c] The word actually referred to the realm of the dead
            - {1} Hebrew "Sheol"
            - {2} The lower world, the depths, the pit
          - [d] **Jesus reached into the jaws of death and restored life**
  - b The Changing
    - (1) Circle 4: Theological ideas: New insights should deepen and correct our religious understanding
      - (a) All "interest" was condemned as "usury," a grave sin during the Middle Ages because it was seen as **unfair gain made off another's need**
        - [1] As feudalism yielded to capitalism, later reflection showed most "interest" is
          - [a] Justified by a risk of no repayment
          - [b] And necessary for the commerce needed to raise the poor out of their poverty
        - [2] So only excessive "interest" is condemned today
      - (b) **Limbo (treated later)**
        - [1] **It was created to keep God "loving"**
          - [a] It was a place where **unbaptized children went**
            - {1} Scripture seemed to say they couldn't go to Heaven

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- {2} But a Loving God couldn't consign them to Hell
- [b] John 3:5
  - {1} Jesus answered, "Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit."
  - {2} 6 What is born of flesh is flesh and what is born of spirit is spirit.
  - {3} 7 Do not be amazed that I told you, 'You must be born from above.'
- [2] They couldn't go to hell – God was too fair to punish them
- [3] But the reading of John seemed to say they couldn't go to heaven – God was too good not to bless them with a place of serenity, even though it was a far cry from heaven
- [4] **Today, John's scripture is no longer seen as demanding Baptism for infants to attain Heaven**
  - [a] Therefore, nearly no Catholics believe in Limbo
  - [b] The mercy and goodness of God no longer require Limbo to keep children out of Hell
- (2) Circle 5: Moral expressions should be refined as we understand Jesus and the meaning of His love more clearly
  - (a) Probably we will outlaw one day
    - [1] All war
    - [2] **All Capital punishment**
  - (b) We were close to denouncing all use of atomic weapons a few years ago
- (3) Circle 6: Liturgy should always make the Jesus of history present to this community of today
  - (a) **Jesus took flesh according to the customs of His time**
    - [1] He spoke Aramaic, maybe Hebrew, possibly Greek
    - [2] He dressed in their garments
    - [3] And He ate their food
  - (b) **Jesus must continue to take flesh according to the customs of each time and place**
    - [1] In the language of each local people
    - [2] In the dress of these people
    - [3] With the food customs of these people
- G Conclusion
  - 1 **All sermons should reflect the reality of the Circles**
    - a They should preach Jesus
    - b Normally, they should start and end in the center circle
  - 2 **These sermons should then go out to one of the other circles to reflect what the experience of Jesus means in a practical situation today in this Circle**
    - a Jesus washes us clean simply because we are dirty
    - b Therefore, as a Church we must always be open to all the unclean of the world
  - 3 If sermons begin in any outer circle (from Circle 2 on)
    - a **They must come into the center**
    - b **Otherwise they are offering us idol worship**
      - (1) They are giving us the impression that this truth or that rule will or can save us
      - (2) Jesus alone can accomplish our salvation
    - c Remember this each time you hear a sermon
      - (1) Has it introduced you to Jesus?
        - (a) Has it offered a deeper experience of Jesus?
        - (b) Has it focused you on the center circle?
      - (2) Or has it left you dangling out on a rim?
- III THE "LIFE OF JESUS"
  - A We know so **few hard facts about Jesus**
    - 1 He was born in **Bethlehem**
    - 2 He was raised in **Nazareth**
    - 3 He taught in both **Galilee and Judea**



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- a Made Capernaum his home base
- b Gathered some followers
- 4 He was crucified by Pontius Pilate
- 5 And He rose from the dead
- B Most of the facts of His life are hidden from us
  - 1 The Gospels maintain nearly complete silence about the years before He began His ministry
  - 2 And they maintain complete silence on some incidental points that are of key interest to us
    - a What did He look like? What was His physical appearance?
    - b Did He have any hobbies?
    - c We can infer that He had some language skills
      - (1) We know from a reference in Luke that Jesus was literate: He could read the scriptures
        - (a) Luke 4:14\*
          - [1] Then Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee, and news of Him went out through all the surrounding region. 15\* And He taught in their synagogues, being glorified by all.
          - (2) 16\* So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read.
          - [3] 17\* And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:
          - [4] 18\* "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me. Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; 19\* To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."
          - [5] 20\* Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. 21\* And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."
        - (2) More than His ability to read, this passage also implies an ability to read Hebrew since in a synagogue service the Torah was first read in this language, then in an Aramaic translation
        - (3) Aramaic was the language of His people so He must have spoken it
        - (4) Jesus possibly spoke and read Greek since it was the common commercial language of His time, a language both many Jews and Gentiles could comprehend
- C The NT silence about details of the life of Jesus results from the fact that the Church
  - 1 Did not preach about Jesus
  - 2 But preached Jesus
- D We are fairly sure
  - 1 Jesus called disciples, people to remain with Him
    - a They travelled with Him in Galilee and Judea
    - b He selected 12 for a special, symbolic position
  - 2 He taught -- especially using parables, stories which He told to prod thinking
  - 3 And He ministered mainly to Jews -- if not exclusively so
    - a He ministered in small towns or farm areas rather than in the large metropolitan areas (where Paul mainly focused his later ministry)
    - b His examples reflect this agrarian background: sheep, sowers, vines
      - (1) Mark 4:1\*
        - (a) Again Jesus began to teach by the lake. The crowd that gathered round him was so large that he got into a boat and sat in it out on the lake, while all the people were along the shore at the water's edge. 2\* He taught them many things by parables, and in his teaching said: 3\* "Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4\* As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up.
      - (2) Matthew 18:12\*
        - (a) "What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off?
      - (3) Matthew 21:33\*
        - (a) "Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey.
  - 4 Within 20 years of His death, massive changes occurred among His followers -- Paul's Churches were composed mainly of Greeks living in large cities

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- a There are few rural references in the letters of Paul
- b His examples come from large city life: athletic races, armor, buildings, lawsuits
- (1) Romans 13:12\*
  - (a) The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.
- (2) 1Corinthians 3:9\*
  - (a) For we are God's fellow-workers; you are God's field, God's building. 10\* By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as an expert builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should be careful how he builds.
- (3) 1Corinthians 6:1\*
  - (a) If any of you has a dispute with another, dare he take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the saints? 2\* Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if you are to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? 3\* Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more the things of this life! 4\* Therefore, if you have disputes about such matters, appoint as judges even men of little account in the church!
- (4) 1Corinthians 9:24\*
  - (a) Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize.
- IV A SUMMARY OF THE MESSAGE OFFERED THE WORLD BY THE EARLY CHURCH
  - A The long promised, long anticipated "Age of Fulfillment" is here
    - 1 This message connects the Old and New Testaments
    - 2 We must grasp the significance of this teaching, this building of the new upon the foundations laid in the old
      - a God doesn't alter His pattern of relating with us when He sends us Jesus, when we have dramatic encounters with Jesus today
      - b Rather God intensifies it
        - (1) Therefore, the OT is relevant and remains relevant
          - (a) God did not lead mankind "north" in the OT
          - (b) He did not then change our direction to "west" or "south" in the NT
        - (2) The same holds true for our personal lives
          - (a) God led us in one direction toward Him in the OT of our lives -- when we had partial knowledge of Him
          - (b) And then He intensified our directions to Him in the NT
        - (3) Consequently, all that goes before remains relevant
          - (a) It's easy to dismiss our history before our "conversion" as wasted time
          - (b) But our whole history has been fashioned by God to be used by Him through us
    - 3 But the Final Age has begun
      - a The great Day of the Lord announced by prophets has begun
        - (1) Joel 2:1
          - (a) Blow the trumpet in Zion, sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all who dwell in the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming. 2 Yes, it is near, a day of darkness and of gloom, a day of clouds and somberness! Like dawn spreading over the mountains, a people numerous and mighty!
        - (2) Amos 5:18
          - (a) Woe to those who yearn for the day of the LORD! What will this day of the LORD mean for you? Darkness and not light! 19 As if a man went to flee from a lion, and a bear should meet him; Or as if on entering his house he were to rest his hand against the wall, and a snake should bite him.
          - (b) 20 Will not the day of the LORD be darkness and not light, gloom without any brightness?
          - (c) 21 "I hate, I despise your religious feasts; I cannot stand your assemblies.
      - (3) We should remember the messages of both of these readings
        - (a) Before Amos, the Jews had looked smugly for the Day of The Lord
          - [1] They expected God to intervene against all His enemies
          - [2] They equated "God's enemies" with "their enemies"
            - [a] So they thought God would kill all their foes
            - [b] And they would live "happily ever after"
        - (b) From Amos on, the prophets gave a new interpretation to this old idea

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- [1] God would intervene decisively in history.
- [2] He would act against all His enemies
  - [a] Those outside Israel
  - [b] But also those within Israel – those violating the social demands of the covenant
- b Our God has decisively entered history.
- c And everything that this God offered us before is now being brought to completion in and by Jesus
- 4 There is nothing more to follow after this
  - a There is only one remaining event that will yet occur in history, the completion of what has begun
  - b But there are differing expectations about when this will occur
- 5 The “Synoptics” (Matthew, Mark, Luke) and Paul present one view
  - a Each of these seem to offer some future completion when Jesus returns
    - (1) We have a touch of the Spirit now
    - (2) We will receive the complete Spirit only when Jesus returns
  - b Great stress is placed upon remaining alert to welcome the Son of Man as He returns
    - (1) Matthew 25:1\*
      - (a) “At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2\* Five of them were foolish and five were wise.
      - (b) 3\* The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. 4\* The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. before keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.
      - (c) 5\* The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep. 6\* “At midnight the cry rang out: ‘Here’s the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!’
      - (d) 7\* “Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. 8\* The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.’
      - (e) 9\* “No,” they replied, ‘there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’
      - (f) 10\* “But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut.
      - (g) 11\* “Later the others also came. ‘Sir! Sir!’ they said, ‘Open the door for us!’ 12\* “But he replied, ‘I tell you the truth, I don’t know you.’
  - (2) In His fifth and final sermon in Matthew, Jesus offers several stories cautioning preparation for His return
    - (a) Matthew 24:32 – 33 The Fig Tree
      - [1] 32 “Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. 33 “So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors!
      - [2] Its leaves predict summer
      - [3] So watch out for the events that Jesus announced that will predict His return
    - (b) Matthew 24:37 – 39 The Days of Noah
      - [1] 37 “But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 “For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark.
      - [2] 39 “and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.
      - [3] People went about their lives unaware of the danger and were drowned
      - [4] The same kind of tragedy (though spiritual this time) will happen to the unprepared when Jesus returns
    - (c) Matthew 24:42 – 44 The Thief at Night
      - [1] 42 “Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. 43 “But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.
      - [2] 44 “Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.
      - [3] If an owner knew when a thief was coming, he’d keep watch and not lose his wealth
      - [4] We need to keep watch for Jesus
    - (d) Matthew 24:45 – 51 The Master and His Stewards
      - [1] 45 “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? 46 “Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.

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- [2] 47 "Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods.
- [3] 48 "But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' 49 "and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards,
- [4] 50 "the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of. 51 "and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
- [5] When the master returns, he will reward stewards who treated other servants rightly
- [6] And he, (Jesus,) will punish those who abuse their fellow servants
- (e) Matthew 25:1 – 13 The Five Wise and the Five Foolish Virgins
  - [1] 1 "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 "Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.
  - [2] 3 "Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 "but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 "But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.
  - [3] 6 "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' 7 "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 "And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.'
  - [4] 9 "But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' 10 "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.
  - [5] 11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'
  - [6] 13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.
  - [7] The wise virgins are prepared for a delay
  - [8] The foolish virgins are not
- (f) Matthew 25:14 – 30 The Wise Use of "Talents"
  - [1] 14 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. 15 "And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.
  - [a] 16 "Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. 17 "And likewise he who had received two gained two more also.
  - [b] 18 "But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. 19 "After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.
  - [c] 20 "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.'
  - [2] 21 "His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' 22 "He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.'
  - [3] 23 "His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' 24 "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed.
  - [4] 25 "And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' 26 "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed.
  - [5] 27 "So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. 28 "Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.
  - [6] 29 "For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. 30 "And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'
  - [7] Carefully "safeguarding" our talents until the end is not what Jesus wants
  - [8] He desires that we risk using these talents and He promises to reward us for taking the risks
- (g) Matthew 25:31 – 46 The Return and the Division into Sheep and Goats
  - [1] 31 "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. 32 "All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.
  - [2] 33 "And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.
  - [3] 34 "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'
  - [4] 35 'for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in;

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- [5] 36 'I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'
- (6) 37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink?'
- (7) 38 'When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You?'
- (8) 39 'Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'
- [9] 40 "And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'"
- (10) 41 "Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'"
- (11) 42 'for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink;
- (12) 43 'I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'
- (13) 44 "Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?'
- (14) 45 "Then He will answer them, saying, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.'"
- (15) 46 "And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."
- [16] People are judged according to the way they used their blessings to feed needs in the hearts of others
- [17] Jesus is challenging us today
  - [a] To develop our blessings
  - [b] To use them to help others
- 6 John offers us a very different view
  - a Everything that is to happen in history is being realized now!
    - (1) The Father is offering us all His love in the continuous re-giving of His Son
    - (2) The Son is offering us all His love in the continuous re-giving of His Life, His Spirit
  - b The gospel includes a few hints of some future completion, but it's stress is on recognizing who Jesus is now!
- B This Age is here in the ministry, death, resurrection of Jesus
  - 1 Not in the message of Jesus but in the person of Jesus
    - a Many Christians think our religion consists in
      - (1) Listening to
      - (2) And obeying what Jesus said
    - b They are wrong
  - 2 Christianity is Jesus
    - a Not what He said – "But who He is"
    - b What He said and did can help us experience who He is
  - 3 His preaching and teaching were works of power – He taught with "authority"
  - 4 His healings and exorcisms were works of power
  - 5 Together they were signs that our God was in our world
    - a Acting
    - b Acting to help us!
    - c Acting to save us!
- C The Kingship is most fully established in and by the death of Jesus, The Crucifixion
  - 1 The death of Jesus offers a rich symbolic meaning that is often overlooked
  - 2 St Paul challenges us: we preach Christ crucified!
    - a A stumbling block
    - b And a folly
    - c 1 Corinthians 1:22
      - (1) For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, 23 but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, 24 but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

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- (2) 25 For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.
- 3 Why "proclaim," ("joyfully announce,") the death?
  - a Why proclaim His death rather than His resurrection?
    - (1) By itself, Easter is a great event for Jesus, but what about us?
    - (2) Good Friday is the great event for us
      - (a) 1 Corinthians 11:26
        - [1] For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
      - (b) Galatians 6:14
        - [1] May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.
    - (3) Isn't it strange Paul doesn't say, "May I never boast except in the empty grave?"
  - b Good Friday shows us how much God loves us as we are
    - (1) Jesus died for sinners
    - (2) His death was both a real action and also a symbolic action
    - (3) We understand death: it is total
    - (4) Jesus offers us, as sinners, all of His life, all of His love
  - c Easter adds an additional note of joy once we have Good Friday.
    - (1) It assures us of the victory of the love of the cross
    - (2) Nothing in us or the world can kill this love
  - d Jesus died and rose
    - (1) The folly of the cross shows the wisdom of God
      - (a) Love changes lives
      - (b) Power, at best, only changes external behavior
    - (2) The weakness of the cross shows the power of God
      - (a) Love conquered and converted the world
      - (b) The empires based on the sword all collapsed into dust
      - (c) The persecuted Church has endured
    - (3) The victory of Jesus shows the victory of love and of service
      - (a) Of love over hate
      - (b) Of service over power
- 4 The death is seen as a "ransom" – but a ransom paid to whom?
  - a Mark 10:45
    - (1) For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many.
  - b For about 1000 years, many Christians have echoed a traditional understanding: the ransom was paid to God
    - (1) We have sinned
      - (a) We are guilty
      - (b) And a fine is due before we can be guiltless, pardoned, innocent again
      - (c) However, there is no way for us to pay the proper fine to God
        - [1] The infinite honor of God has been offended
        - [2] The fine must amend this infinite hurt
        - [3] But we are only finite and can never pay infinite amends
    - (2) Therefore, the Father sends Jesus
      - (a) Because He is innocent, He can pay a fine for others
      - (b) And because He is God Himself, His death offers the Father the proper fine
    - (3) Actually, this solution is not a solution – it creates a disturbing demagogue in place of our loving Father
      - (a) Our God is a God of justice
      - (b) How can His justice be satisfied by the death of an innocent person?

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- (4) This solution is not based upon even one clear teaching in the whole NT
  - (a) There are a few insignificant scripture hints that might be used to support this theses
  - (b) The solution, however, is based upon **our notion of justice not upon God's sense of justice**
- c Before this, a theologian, aware that the ransom would not be paid to God, offered a theory that sounds very strange to us: the ransom was paid to **Satan!**
  - (1) It was made to free us from His realm
  - (2) The quote from Jesus demanded that a ransom needed to be paid to **someone**
    - (a) Christians realized there was no need to pay it to Father
    - (b) But they couldn't believe who the true recipients actually were
    - (c) God's truth was too mind boggling for their culture
  - (3) No one accepts this theory of a ransom to Satan today
- d **There is a solution that defends God's justice and reflects the ministry of Jesus: the ransom is paid by God to us!**
  - (1) **Sin broke our intimacy with God:**
    - (a) Humanity strayed away from God
    - (b) We were lured by the beauty and good of the universe
    - (c) We chose things that were good but not good enough to satiate our need for infinite love
  - (2) God sought to win us back to His love
  - (3) Consequently, He offered us more than the whole universe could: Himself!
    - (a) Jesus emptied Himself on our behalf
    - (b) The Father gave all He has as a love gift: His Son
    - (c) The Son gave all He has as a love gift: His life, His Spirit
  - (4) **Remember that in the Temple sacrifice, the death and offering of the animal was intended to reflect**
    - (a) At-one-ment
    - (b) Not "satisfaction"
  - (5) **This solution is scriptural**
    - (a) **Paul challenges us to remember "You were bought at a price!"**
    - (b) **1Corinthians 6:20**
      - [1] **For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.**
    - (c) **1Corinthians 7:23**
      - [1] **You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of human masters.**
    - (d) He repeated the thought twice in the same letter
      - [1] We need to be shocked
      - [2] This is our worth
    - (e) Let's act it; let's live it
- 5 **Mark: only in the experience of total love is God recognized**
  - a **Mark 15:37**
    - (1) **Then Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. 38 And the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. 39 Now when the centurion, who stood facing him, saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, "Truly this man was God's Son!"**
    - (2) **"Truly this is the Son of God!"**
      - (a) This witnessing is made by a **pagan**
      - (b) The pagan was responsible for killing Him
      - (c) He makes his profession at the moment of Jesus' death because only then is our God correctly visible
  - b **Jesus as God is not recognized in any actions of lesser service**
    - (1) Not recognized by His disciples
    - (2) Not recognized by His family – not even by Mary, in Mark's Gospel
  - c **The death of Jesus is a sacrament: a sign of God's total love for us**
- 6 **It shows us that Jesus loves us all equally**
  - a **Death is 100%, so His love is 100%**

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- (1) Therefore it was offered equally for and to all of us
- (2) But He does not love us all the same
  - (a) To do so would ignore our individuality
  - (b) He loves each of us as we need to be loved
- b Death means also that Jesus can't take His love back!
  - (1) He can't stop loving us
  - (2) He must love us regardless of what we do
  - (3) This truth is why we know He died for sinners
- 7 The Cross, thus, breaks the cycle of evil; it removes the effects of sin
  - a Jesus takes all hate, suffering into Himself
  - b And all these die with Him!
    - (1) Colossians 2:13\*
      - (a) He forgave us all our sins, 14 having cancelled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.
  - c We are saved from these
  - d Saying that Jesus hates sinners destroys the meaning of the cross
- 8 There is an important corollary to the Cross: we can't fear a dead God!
  - a 1John 4:18
    - (1) 18There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love.
    - (2) There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.
  - b We resurrect Jesus too soon
    - (1) He was buried
    - (2) He remained dead for 1 1/2 days
    - (3) Who can fear a dead God?
  - c Let Him stay dead until all fear is gone from our religion
- D The Resurrection certifies the victory of the Kingship over the world.
  - 1 Jesus "is raised" from the dead
    - a Remember that the Biblical culture was different from ours
      - (1) Our culture
        - (a) Spotlights the individual
        - (b) Seeks achievement, accomplishment
        - (c) Has no respect for quitters
      - (2) The culture at time of Jesus
        - (a) Spotlighted the group, not the individual
        - (b) Was based on
          - [1] Gaining honor for the group
          - [2] Avoiding shame
    - b The ultimate public act of shame was crucifixion
      - (1) Philippians 2:5\*
        - (a) Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:
        - (b) 6\* Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7\* but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.
        - (c) 8\* And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!
        - (d) 9\* Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name.
        - (e) 10\* that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
        - (f) 11\* and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
      - (2) Jesus died shamed by the standards of His world
    - c But the Father's raising Jesus is eternity's greatest act of honor



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- (1) **By this raising, the Father announces that the world's values are not His**
- (2) He values service
- (3) He values emptying self not filling self
- 2 **The resurrection is not "revivification," coming back to life after death**
  - a For years that's what I thought it was
  - b It is much more than Jesus coming back from the dead
    - (1) Lazarus, the widow of Naim's son, and Jairus' daughter all died and came back to life
    - (2) Nevertheless they all died again
- 3 **Jesus enters into a new dimension of living**
  - a His Body no longer limits His Spirit
  - b Rather His Spirit shatters all the limitations of the flesh
- 4 **The act is never described in the canonical Gospels**
  - a It can't be described or experienced by us
    - (1) It can't be described in a picture based on "time"
    - (2) Nor can it be understood by anyone locked into time
  - b Here is a Geometric similarity
    - (1) Plane geometry can never understand a solid
    - (2) An object in plane geometry can merely experience being touched by an object from solid geometry
- 5 **People in time can be touched by and experience the Risen Jesus but they cannot fully understand Him or His new mode of existence**
- 6 **Easter must include the Ascension**
  - a Actually the entire return of Jesus from the dead is all one great mystery
  - b The Ascension is the Biblical way of teaching us
    - (1) **He never dies again**
    - (2) **And He shares the life, the godliness of God**
- 7 **The Risen Lord never appears to anyone just to impress them**
  - a His mission continues after Easter
  - b His appearances call and challenge people
    - (1) To **found the Church: reflected by John at the feeding of the 7 at Galilee**
      - (a) John 21:15
        - [1] When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."
        - [2] 16 Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."
        - [3] 17 The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."
      - (2) To **send people out with His mission:**
        - (a) Mary Magdalene
          - [1] Mark 16:1
            - [a] When the sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome .... went to the tomb ....
            - [b] 5 As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man, dressed in a white robe, sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. 6 But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed; you are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised; he is not here. Look, there is the place they laid him.
            - [c] 7 But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going ahead of you to Galilee; there you will see him, just as he told you."
          - (b) The eleven disciples
            - [1] Matthew 28:16
              - [a] Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted.

## Topic

- [b] 18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- [c] 20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."
- (c) **The whole Church**
  - [1] Luke 24:33
    - [a] That same hour they... returned to Jerusalem; and they found the eleven and their companions gathered together...
    - [b] .36 While they were talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."
    - [c] ... 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."
- E **The Holy Spirit in the Church is a sign of the present power of Jesus**
  - 1 Because Jesus is with the Father, He is able to offer us the Holy Spirit
  - 2 At Pentecost Luke offers us a symbolic description of the Church's reality
    - a The Spirit of Jesus is alive in His followers in this world
    - b Luke:
      - (1) He presents the Spirit as a mighty wind, breath, spirit -- all the same word in both Greek and Hebrew/Aramaic -- prompting us to mission
      - (2) **Babel is ended**
        - (a) Genesis 11:1
          - [1] Now the whole earth had one language and the same words... 4 Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves; otherwise we shall be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.
          - [2] 5 The LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which mortals had built. 6 And the LORD said, "... Come, let us go down, and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand one another's speech."
          - [3] 8 So the LORD scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. 9 Therefore it was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth."
        - (b) Acts 2:1
          - [1] When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. 2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, ... 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.
          - [2] 5 And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. 6 And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language."
      - (3) In Acts after Pentecost the Church continues to witness to Jesus, to carry on His mission
    - c **Matthew**
      - (1) "Go, therefore" -- Jesus is giving us a Mission
      - (2) "I am with you (ya'll) always" -- He offers us Empowerment for the mission
      - (3) Matthew 28:16
        - (a) Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain... And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
        - (b) 19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. 20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.
    - d **John**
      - (1) Jesus breathes on (en-spirits) the disciples
      - (2) **"Receive the holy spirit"** -- He interprets His sacramental action
      - (3) John 20:19
        - (a) When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week,... Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ...
        - (b) 21 Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." 22 When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.
        - (c) 23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."
    - 3 **The Church is called to continue the mission of Jesus in His Spirit, His power**

**Topic**

- a It is called to offer the world love
- b It is called to preach, to heal, to teach
- F **Jesus will return to complete what He has begun**
  - 1 Evil, disorder, sin are still part of the world in which the Church lives
  - 2 **Yet these were vanquished by Jesus**
    - a **1Corinthians 15:24\***
      - (1) Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. 25\* For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet.
      - (2) 26\* The last enemy to be destroyed is death
    - b His victory offers us hope
    - c But this victory is not yet the reality in which we live on earth
  - 3 **The Church must still spell out this victory**
    - a In its life
    - b And in its world
  - 4 The power of evil is still strong and must be defeated