

## THIS IS NOT YOUR FATHER'S NT SURVEY THE GOSPELS

### A. Introduction

**Welcome to This is not your Father's NT survey – the Gospels.** I know what you're thinking. This class is supposed to be team taught by Steve Collier and Harold Carmen. So why is Steve Collier up here again for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time. I'm with you; I wish Harold could teach this week too, but Harold is out of town. I assure you will get to hear Harold for the next couple of weeks. Today we look at the gospels. Please to Mark Chapter 1. No Power Point. No Trivia Questions or prizes. Just Jesus. Richard just finished a class on John recently so we will focus on the other 3 – Matthew, Mark & Luke – known as the Synoptic Gospels.

### B. Basic Facts

1. **What are the gospels about?** Mark 1:1 Jesus the Son of God. Not Jesus - the good moral teacher like Confucius and Socrates. Not Jesus – a Jewish rabbi who later followers magnified to be something more than he was. No. Jesus – the Son of God. Is Son of God just some fancy title? No, Luke tells us plainly that Jesus was literally the Son of God – biologically, genetically, his Y chromosome came from a divine not human source. Jesus the Son of God – who performed miracles, healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, making the lame walk and lepers cleansed. He rebuked storms and they stopped. He raised the dead. Jesus - the Son of God. Jesus – who lived an incredible life. The NT he says never sinned. He had compassion when he needed to and was strong and forceful when he needed to. Jesus – the Son of God.

2. **Who gave us the gospels?** Luke 1:1-4. Eyewitnesses. People who actually knew Jesus, saw what he did, heard what he taught. Luke carefully investigated these things (Acts 21:17 Luke visited Jerusalem; had a chance to talk to people who knew Jesus; perhaps even Mary). Just as they were handed down. These are reliable accounts. Not made up. Not embellished. So that we might know the certainty of what we have been taught. Are you certain, brothers and sisters? Are your convictions strong that Jesus really was who he claimed to be. Really did the things the gospels say he did.

3. **When did the gospels take place?** Luke 2:1-7a. I said last week Augustus Caesar may be the most successful ruler in the history of the world. And yet. And yet. If you took a poll – name one thing Augustus Caesar did – most people would point to this – he issued the decree that made Mary & Joseph travel to Bethlehem. All of the great accomplishments of the greatest ruler of all time reduced to the minor role he played in the birth of Jesus. What is today's date? 2006 years from what? From this right here. The birth of Jesus. Not the birth of Augustus Caesar. Not the birth of Alexander the Great. Buddha. Mohammed. Genghis Kahn. Gutenberg. Shakespeare. Columbus. Darwin. No, it is Jesus birth that divides all of history into two parts. Jesus the most important person who ever lived from both a human standpoint and obviously also spiritually speaking. August Caesar died in 14AD. His step son Tiberius Caesar became the next emperor. Luke 3:1-2. So when did John the Baptist start his ministry? 29AD (14 + 15). I saw the Dead Sea Scrolls Exhibit in Charlotte back in May. They also

had ancient coins on display; one minted by Pontus Pilate that bore the date the 16<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar. If we assume, as most scholars do, Jesus began his ministry the year after John, that would be the 16<sup>th</sup> year of Tiberias. What year was that? 30AD. Look at Luke 3:23. If Jesus was 30, what year was he born? 1AD. These verses are why it is now the year 2006. The early medieval scholars who first dated these things didn't have all the information we do. The exact year of Jesus birth was probably a few years before 1AD, but of course Luke does say Jesus was "about" 30 years old.

11:30

### **C. What did Jesus teach?**

1. Turn to Matthew 4. In a minute I want to ask folks to share what convicted you the most from the Sermon on the Mount. We don't have a lot of time for in depth sharing so let's keep it real brief, 10 words or less, to tell us what Jesus said that convicted you the most. 4:17 Repent. The first word out of Jesus mouth when he began his ministry was repent. Also mentioned in Mark and Luke. In Revelation's letters to the churches, one of the last things Jesus ever said to his disciples was also "Repent." That's what he calls us to. To change. What are some things that convicted you from the Sermon on the Mount? For me it was don't call people fools or morons; I do that often esp at work. Who wants to share? Cover issues 3-6 below.

3. Jesus talks about unresolved conflict. He talks about a brother having something against you (note: not the other way around; not airing our grievances but making sure we are resolved with people we have wronged). Perhaps you know someone you wronged; someone you let down; someone you have neglected; perhaps even your wife or husband or your children. Let's make it right. Be humble. Apologize. Ask forgiveness. Renew our relationships. Do it quickly. Do it today.

4. Jesus talks about lust. How is it going brothers? Do we have people in the room involved with internet pornography? I am not asking for a show of hands. If that is where you are, the solution is simple. Repent. Confess it to someone spiritual you trust. Install some protection on your computer. Be urgent. Be serious. Do it today. How about sexual immorality? Perhaps someone in this room is involved in adultery, fornication or serious flirting and beyond that is headed in that direction. Repent. Confess. Get some help from someone who loves you and will help you. Today.

5. Jesus talks about money & priorities. The men talked about this on Thursday. Have we let our jobs and feeding our families and paying the bills and getting ahead take a higher priority than the kingdom of God? We need to repent. Turn this around. Make a decision to give more of your money, your time, yourself to the church. Giving, ushering, teaching, songleading, other ways to serve.

6. How about love? Jesus says we should love our enemies, but I think we have pulled back like the pagans and focused only on those who love us, those who are easy to love. Do you just hang out with people like you in the church? In the world race divides us and makes us enemies. Are we loving across racial lines in the church? Are we building relationships where it might not be natural and requires some extra effort? How about the lost? Have we neglected the lost? Let's decide to love deeply again. Plan some hospitality. Get together with someone you haven't for a while and renew relationships. Meet some new people in fellowship. Pull in new people.

7. Mat 5:20 Jesus says our righteousness should exceed that of the Pharisees. How do we apply that to our situation today? Well, a few years ago in the church we had a system of accountability, didn't we? We decided to abolish it in part because we felt it was legalistic like the Pharisees with lots of rules made by men. Here is my question: does your righteousness today exceed the righteousness you had back in the ICOC years? As a body, have we raised or lowered the standard of righteousness since we abolished the old system? I think the answer is obvious. By just about any measure you use, we have lowered our standards; we don't have the same expectations of ourselves or each other. I am not suggesting we go back to the old system of rules and statistics and structure; but I think we need to get back the spirit we had then, the zeal for God, the willingness to serve and sacrifice. Those weren't produced by the system of rules, but because of our commitment to Jesus and our love for God. The solution now is simple. Let's repent and raise our standards again; even, as Jesus said, higher than before. Make a decision today to repent of something specific from the Sermon on the Mount. Take action on it before your head hits the pillow tonight. Follow through. Then, let's share with each other on Thursday at midweek what we've done. Encourage one another with repentance and change and growth. Let's raise the standard again.

11:45

#### **D. What did Jesus do for us?**

He died on the cross for our sins. Turn to Titus 2. Richard showed the Passion of the Christ recently so I won't go into that again, but let's look at a verse that talks about what the grace of God should produce in us. Titus 2:11-14. Great definition of repentance. Say "no" to sin and start living a godly life. Jesus gave himself to redeem us – to save us from sin – but also to change us. To make us into a people of his very own – eager to do what is good. Let's be eager. Let's take the initiative. Don't wait to be told what to do. Let's raise our standards again because of Jesus and the grace of God.

#### **E. How did the story come out? How does it end?**

Mark 16:1-6. The tomb was empty! Jesus was not there. He rose from the dead. In Acts 1:3, Luke says he gave many convincing proofs he was alive. In I Cor 15:6, Paul says 500 people witnessed the resurrection of Jesus, most of whom were still alive when he wrote that letter. The resurrection of Jesus is not a myth; not a fairy tale. It really happened. Everything we believe hinges on this fact. As Paul said in I Cor 15:18, if it is not true, then our faith is futile; we are to be pitied above all men. But it is true! The resurrection proves that Jesus was the Son of God. Proves the gospel is true; proves the Bible is the Word of God; proves that we too one day will be raised and will live eternally with God. It is the reason for our hope and confidence. Brothers and sisters, the resurrection of Jesus should encourage us, fill us with joy, cause us to glorify God and declare His praises. It should put a bounce in our step, some zip into our lives, instill in us a breath of fresh air every time we think about it. Read I Cor 15:54b-57.

Sing Victory in Jesus.