

Jairus' faith was also rewarded. When Jesus arrived at Jairus' home, He put out the mourners; took Peter, James, and John in with Him; and, in the presence of her parents, raised the young woman from death to life. The parents were amazed, but Jesus urged them not to spread their excitement to all the neighbors, but to keep it quiet. Then, in keeping with His concern for what we might call "the little things," Jesus commanded them to feed her.

- (1) How did the following react to Jesus' question, "Who touched Me?"
- (a) The disciples: _____
- (b) The hemorrhaging woman: _____
- (2) What power did Jesus' robe have? _____

Answer these questions to test your understanding of this section. If you score below 90%, restudy the section. If you score above 90%, you should restudy any areas you did not understand.

CHECKUP

Answer true or false: (each answer, 5 points)

- (1) _____ All of Galilee was within fifteen miles of the Sea of Galilee.
- (2) _____ Although He was the God-Man, Jesus often became weary.
- (3) _____ The Gadarene demoniac lived among tombs.
- (4) _____ Demons must obey Jesus.
- (5) _____ The demons knew more about Jesus than most men did.
- (6) _____ God had no purpose in allowing the demons to enter the pigs.
- (7) _____ The people who owned the pigs wanted to take Jesus and make Him a King.
- (8) _____ Jesus wanted everyone to know that He had raised Jairus' daughter from the dead.

Complete these statements: (each answer, 8 points)

- (9) The (a) _____ did not wake Jesus from His sleep in the rear of the boat, but the (b) _____ did.
- (10) Jesus calmed the sea when the disciples had come to the end of their own _____.
- (11) Demons filled men and pigs with _____ impulses.
- (12) Jesus took _____ of His disciples into the room where Jairus' daughter lay.

Answer these questions: (each question, 10 points)

- (13) What two fears did the disciples experience in the incident of the calming of the sea?
- (a) _____
- (b) _____
- (14) Compare the view of the Gadarenes and the view of Jesus concerning the demon-possessed man before Jesus cast out the demons. _____

Score = 100

My Score = _____

III. CLOSING THE GREAT GALILEAN MINISTRY

A Visit to Nazareth

In Luke 4:28-30, we read how Jesus' fellow townsmen in Nazareth sought to kill Him. We might have thought, then, that Jesus would never return there; but, as an act of mercy, He went back as He ended this portion of His ministry. (Read Mark 6:1-6.) (In our discussion, we are assuming that this visit to Nazareth is different from the one recorded in Luke 4:16-30. Scholars are divided on this point.)

Regardless of their prejudices, it was impossible for men not to be impressed by Jesus. These wonderful impressions began when Jesus began His public ministry. Up to that time, He carefully avoided giving others hints of His future work. The townspeople of Nazareth felt this difference keenly. When Jesus first left their town, He was a carpenter following His (adopted) father's trade. When He returned, He startled them with His teaching and His power to heal. Unfortunately for them, they chose to remember Him as they had thought of Him previously. Especially as they looked around at His brothers and sisters, they felt that Jesus was one of them. He answered their prejudice with a proverb: ". . . A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house."

The townspeople were the losers. Instead of receiving great blessing through faith in Christ, they saw Him leave their town much the same as He had found it. Jesus' ministry of healing was confined to a few sick people. Mark tells us, ". . . He could there do no mighty work. . . ." (verse 5), and ". . . He marvelled because of their unbelief. . . ." (verse 6). These are two remarkable statements. He *could* do no mighty work because He *would* do no mighty work where He met skepticism. (Jesus, of course, could do anything He and His Father pleased. Compare Genesis 37:4 for a similar use of the word "could." Joseph's brothers *could* not speak peaceably to him because they *would* not.) The other statement is yet more remarkable. Jesus well knew the corruption and wickedness of the unregenerate heart, yet His townsmen's unbelief--including the unbelief of His own family--made Him marvel when He reflected upon it! God help us that we do not cause Christ to marvel at our lack of faith. We must pray like another man in the Gospels, "Lord . . . help Thou mine unbelief!"

- (1) What trade did Jesus follow before He entered His public ministry? _____

(2) Name Jesus' four brothers:

- (a) _____ (c) _____
(b) _____ (d) _____

Complete this sentence:

(3) A prophet is not without (a) _____, but in his own (b) _____, and among his own (c) _____, and in his own (d) _____.

Sending Forth the Twelve

(Read Matthew 9:35 to 10:15, now.) Jesus never performed His ministry as a mere duty to be completed as quickly as possible. His eyes and His ears were very much open to the needs of those among whom He moved. Repeatedly, He was ". . . moved with compassion on them. . . ." (verse 36) He thought of the multitudes as sheep without a shepherd. The men who pretended to be Israel's shepherds, such as the Pharisees, cared nothing for the sheep. They were sheep-shearers, not sheep-feeders. In addition to His own personal ministry, Jesus had two other answers to these crying needs. His first answer was prayer by His disciples to His heavenly Father. Jesus said, ". . . the harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." (9:37-38) This command is remarkable for two reasons. First, the request for laborers is the only thing recorded in the Gospels about which Jesus ever spontaneously told His disciples to pray. That He told them to pray for several things in the Model Prayer is true but only in response to their request, ". . . Lord, teach us to pray. . . ." (Luke 11:1) Think of it--just one spontaneous command about the subject matter of prayer is found in the Gospels from the lips of Christ. This prayer must be a tremendously important one. We must pray this prayer, "Lord, send forth laborers into Your harvest!" Second, this prayer is remarkable because it assumes that the Lord controls the harvest and selects the workers. He will send whom He will. If we try to pick out those who should go, we will fail. God will send them in His own time. How remarkable!

Jesus' second answer to the needs of the scattered sheep was to multiply His own ministry by sending His Apostles to preach and heal as He was doing. His first answer, prayer to His Father, could be carried out by all Christians of all ages. This second answer was more limited in scope. It was just to the sheep in Israel. It was just for a brief period of time. Of course, Jesus did something similar to this when He commissioned His Church to go into all the world. We might think of this sending the Twelve throughout Israel as a small picture of what He would do later, yet important differences are present. Besides the limited scope of this ministry, we also see the large emphasis on the miraculous, even to a command to raise the dead. Different scholars account for it in different ways, but the fact remains that no such emphasis on miracle-working has accompanied the preaching of the Gospel down through the ages.



In two other ways, this journey by the disciples around Palestine differs from later missionary work. First, the Twelve were to make no special preparations for this tour. What a contrast with the preparations of a modern missionary! (Of course, the modern missionary also knows that the Lord can provide all he needs. Thoughtful preparation is the usual means the Lord uses, but God may use any means He pleases with or without the missionary's effort.) Secondly, the Twelve were immediately to move on if any city or town rejected their message. With just a short period of time in which to work, they could not afford to stay long anywhere, especially in a place where they were not wanted. This passage, however, was surely *not* meant to show a pattern for missionary work in all ages. Many a missionary has sown the seed of the Gospel for many years before God has seen fit to give a harvest.

- (1) How do we know that the command beginning "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, . . ." is a very important command? _____

- (2) Name three differences between the commission Christ gave the Twelve and the way missionary work has been carried on through most of history.
(a) _____
(b) _____
(c) _____
- (3) What symbolic act were the Twelve to perform against a house or city which would not receive them? _____

Jesus had some final words of warning and encouragement for the Twelve before they left on their mission. (Read, now, Matthew 10:16-42.) Most of what He says applies not only to the Twelve but to workers for Christ in every age. The Christian is warned that the work will not be easy; it will not be popular; it will not be without great cost; but, finally, it will not be without reward.

It will not be easy because ". . . ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake. . . ." (verse 22) They will hate His messengers because all men since the fall of Adam naturally hate God and Christ. This hatred will result in murder, even among the members of the same family. Yet the Christian is not to fear. He is to boldly proclaim whatever Christ reveals. He is to keep this in mind: his enemies may destroy his body but they cannot destroy his soul. If he fears God Who can destroy both soul and body in hell, he need not fear anything else; for that same God Who shall cast wicked men into hell is a Father to those who have accepted Jesus Christ. In addition, if that were not enough Jesus Himself will speak up for the Christian in the day when God judges the secrets of men.

Jesus did not simply predict a division among men. He said He came to bring it. "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." (verse 34) Jesus will demonstrate who loves Him supremely and who does not. We see in this passage that Jesus demands the same kind of love that we must give to God, a love that transcends love for father and mother, or son and daughter. Jesus demands a love that gives up its own desires and ambitions for His sake. In making this demand of His followers, Jesus revealed His own consciousness that He is God.

Jesus had one final word of encouragement in this passage. Christian preaching will not be a failure. There will be men who receive the message that the Christian brings. In so doing, they will also receive Christ and His Father. Jesus is dividing the families of the earth in order to establish a new family of *little ones*, that is Christians may not be significant in the eyes of the world. These *little ones* will not necessarily do spectacular deeds. They may only give a cup of cold water to a fellow Christian, yet God will see it, and God will reward. Consider the widow and the gift of two mites in Luke 21:3-4. (Let us ask ourselves right here: are we some of those who have received Christ, and His Father, and all of His *little ones*? If not, we must cry out to Him for mercy. If we have received Him, let us seek to do good for one another.)

- (4) Why will the world hate the Christian messenger? _____
- (5) Whom is the Christian to fear, and whom is he not to fear? _____
- (6) What two kinds of men are said not to be worthy of Christ?
 - (a) _____
 - (b) _____
- (7) When a man wholeheartedly receives a Christian messenger, Whom else does he receive?
 - (a) _____
 - (b) _____

The Murder of John the Baptist

(Read Mark 6:14-29 before going on.) Herod Antipas--called *the tetrarch* in Luke 3:19--was the younger son of Herod the Great by his Samaritan wife, Malthace. Upon his father's death, he received Galilee as part of his kingdom. Herod the Great spelled out how he wanted his kingdom divided in his will, and the Emperor Augustus allowed the division to be made according to Herod's wishes. When Antipas heard of Jesus' fame, his uneasy conscience reminded him of John the Baptist. Antipas had killed John. He could not erase that fact from his mind. Now Antipas imagined that Jesus was John risen from the dead.

John died because of his faithful preaching. He boldly told Herod that he had committed adultery in marrying Herodias, who had been Herod's brother's wife. In addition, Herodias was too close a relative to Herod Antipas to be his wife. This combination of law-breaking was denounced by the prophet without hesitating over the consequences. It brought him to prison. Yet it was not



Antipas' hatred that sealed John's doom. Antipas was intrigued by John, and he recognized John as a godly man. Antipas even tried to profit from hearing John preach from time to time. Herodias, however, hated John. She lived and worked for the day when she might destroy him, and a "convenient day" (verse 21) was not long in coming.

That "convenient day" was Herod's birthday. He spread a magnificent feast and invited all the dignitaries of Galilee. In the midst of the banquet, Herodias' daughter danced for the guests, and they were pleased. To show his own pleasure, Antipas made a rash and untruthful promise. He swore to the girl, ". . . Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom." (verse 23) His oath was rash because he did not carefully think over its consequences; he gave no prior thought to what the girl might ask. Antipas' oath was untruthful, for the truth was that he had no kingdom to give. Herod Antipas, though popularly called a *king*, ruled by the will of the Roman emperor. His kingdom was not his own; he could divide it with no one.

The girl, however, did not ask for Antipas' kingdom or anything else. Instead, she left the room to consult her mother. The wicked mother, Herodias, recognized her chance and seized upon it. Her daughter was to ask for John the Baptist's head--not later on, when the guests would be gone and Antipas might go back on his promise, but immediately. (The words *by and by* in verse 25 meant *immediately* when the King James Version was translated.) The king was cornered. If it had cost him nothing, he would gladly have kept John alive; but he had sworn an evil oath. His guests had heard him, so Antipas' pride would not allow him to admit his sin in making the promise. In a matter of minutes, the girl held a platter in her hand with the head of John the Baptist on it. John's body, minus the head, was lovingly buried by his disciples, who then carried the news to, and sought comfort from, Jesus.

Two awful lessons stand out for us in this passage. First, if we have made a wicked promise, we *must not* carry it out. Two wrongs do not make a right. If we have sworn to do wrong, we must renounce our oath as sin. Second, we must not let our pride or fear for our acceptance with others move us to do what is wrong. We must not sin because our best friend, or all our friends, wants us to sin. We must obey God.

- (1) Give two other names for the Herod who had John the Baptist killed.
 - (a) _____
 - (b) _____
- (2) What two sins had Herod committed in taking Herodias for himself?
 - (a) _____
 - (b) _____
- (3) What was untruthful about Herod's oath? _____

Answer these questions to test your understanding of this section. If you score below 90%, restudy the section. If you score above 90%, you should restudy any areas you did not understand.