

Gospels Study and Discussion Questions

Lesson Ten: The King's Triumph – Matthew 26-28, John 15-17

(Schedule enough time to complete the readings for the third through fifth sections of the lesson thoughtfully and deliberately.)

Read John 15-16.

- 1) Which three-word phrase, repeated in all but one of the following references, qualifies the promise given? John 14:13, 14; 15:7, 16; 16:23-24, 26 **The promise of answered prayer is qualified by the phrase “in my name” in each of the verses, except 15:7, where it is qualified by “remaining in Him.” In the context of Jesus’ teaching, the meaning is that His disciples would have the same direct access to God the Father as Christ, since they would soon assume the kingdom ministry Jesus began. Furthermore, anything the disciples asked of the Father that was consistent with His will would be accomplished. Because they were connected to the Vine (they “remained” in Him [chapter 15]), their thinking would be consistent with God’s will and they would ask accordingly.**
- 2) Jesus told His disciples, “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace” (John 16:33). To which “things” was He referring (consider the general subject matter of Jesus’ discourse in John 15-16)?
 - 1) Fruitfulness is shown by obedience. Jesus chose and appointed us (15:16) to be fruitful (15:2-5). His Father’s pruning ensures our fruitfulness (15:2).
 - 2) Jesus chose us out of love (15:9, 13-14). The Father also loves us (16:27).
 - 3) God will answer prayers we pray in Jesus’ name (15:7, 15:16, 16:23-24, 26).
 - 4) Persecution is to be expected; it identifies us with our Master (15:18-25).
 - 5) The Counselor will
 - a) help us testify (15:26-27)
 - b) convict the world of guilt (16:8)
 - c) guide us into all truth (16:13)
 - 6) The disciples’ (upcoming) abandonment of Christ at Gethsemane and the crucifixion was foreknown (16:32).
 - 7) We will experience trouble in the world but find peace in Jesus (16:33).
- 3) Which of these truths gives you peace in spite of trouble today? Explain. **Personal sharing**

Read John 17.

- 4) List phrases from John 17 that summarize:
 - a) how Jesus prayed for Himself (verses 1-5) **“glorify your Son” (verse 1), “glorify Me...with the glory I had” (verse 5)**
 - b) how Jesus prayed for His disciples (6-19) **“protect them by the power of Your name” (verse 11), “protect them from the evil one” (verse 15), “sanctify them” (verse 17)**
 - c) how Jesus prayed for all believers (20-26) **“that all of them may be one” (verse 21), “brought to complete unity” (verse 23), “be with Me where I am and to see My glory” (verse 24), “that the love you have for Me may be in them and I myself may be in them” (verse 26)**
 - d) Now summarize each phrase in one word. **Glory (for Himself), protection (for His disciples), and unity (for all believers)**
- 5) According to John 17:21 and 23, what does Jesus say will result from God’s answer to His prayer for all believers? **Jesus says that the unity of believers will cause the world to believe in Him. More specifically, the world will believe that Jesus’ message is true and that God loves them.**

- 6) Compare John 16:33 to John 15:11 and John 17:13.
- If there is nothing in the world to promote true joy in us, from where exactly will true joy come? Use any verses in John 15-17 (include references with your answers). See especially John 15:2b, 9, 10; 16:22, 24; 17:10b, 11-12, 23a, 23c, 24, 26b. Joy comes from knowing that His pruning in our lives will make us fruitful (15:2b), from knowing Jesus loves us (15:9), from obedience (15:10), and from “seeing Jesus” (16:22 [His disciples would see Him after His resurrection and would be full of joy that He was victorious over death and His message was indeed true]). Joy also comes from answered prayer (16:24), from knowing we have brought glory to God (17:10b), and from knowing that God will protect us (17:11-12). Ultimately, joy is found in intimacy with Jesus (an overarching theme of John 14-17).
 - Can you testify to the truth of this? Give a specific example. **Personal sharing**

Read Matthew 26:36-27:66, skimming Mark 14:32-15:47, Luke 22:39-23:56 and John 18:1-19:42 for additional information.

- 7) Give evidence from these passages (with verse numbers) that:
- all the circumstances surrounding Jesus’ death were under His control **Matthew 26:53: Jesus had more than twelve legions of angels at His disposal. Jesus told Pilate the only power he had over Him was given to him by God (John 19:10-11). Jesus committed His spirit into the Father’s hands and “gave up” His spirit (implying He chose the moment of His death [Luke 23:46; John 19:30]).**
 - Jesus experienced intense suffering **In the Garden of Gethsemane: Jesus prayed three times that the upcoming suffering would be removed from Him, if possible. He stated His soul was overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. His anguish was so great that His sweat was like drops of blood (Matthew 26:37-44 with Luke 22:44). At Caiaphas’ house: Jesus was insulted, spat upon, and struck by soldiers (Matthew 26:67-68, Luke 22:63-65). Jesus was flogged (Matthew 27:26, John 19:1). Jesus was ridiculed and mocked, including being dressed in a robe and crown of thorns (Matthew 27:27-31, Luke 23:11, John 19:2-3). Jesus carried His own cross (John 19:17a). Jesus was crucified (Matthew 27:35, Mark 15:24). Jesus refused the gall offered to sedate Him (Matthew 27:34, Mark 15:23). Insults hurled at Him on the Cross (Matthew 27:39-44).**
 - Jesus’ death was in fulfillment of prophecy **Jesus said that all that took place was in fulfillment of prophecy (Matthew 26:54, 56). Jesus’ disciples fled, just as He had predicted in John 16:32 (Matthew 26:56). He remained silent when accused (Matthew 26:63, Isaiah 53:7). Blood money used to buy a potter’s field, as Jeremiah foretold (Matthew 27:9-10). Jesus was handed over to the Romans, and as a result, died by crucifixion, just as He had predicted (John 18:32). Jesus’ clothing was divided as Psalm 22:18 foretold (Matthew 27:35, John 19:23-24). Jesus said, “I thirst,” in fulfillment of prophecy (John 19:28). His bones were not broken, but He was pierced, as prophesied (John 19:31-36). He was buried in a rich man’s grave, as Isaiah 53:9 predicted (Matthew 27:57-60).**
 - Jesus had concern for others during His own ordeal and suffering **He healed Malchus’ (John 18:10) ear (Luke 22:51). He spoke words of life to criminal on the Cross (Luke 23:43). He was concerned and made provision for the care of His mother (John 19:26-27).**
- 8) What impresses you most about Jesus while He awaited His arrest, during the actual arrest, and during His trial? **Personal sharing**

Refer to the same passages given for questions 7-8: Matthew 26:36-27:66, Mark 14:32-15:47, Luke 22:39-23:56 and John 18:1-19:42.

- 9) Specify the charge used by the Sanhedrin to condemn Jesus (cite verse from Matthew 26). **Matthew 26:65: Blasphemy (Jesus claimed to be God)**

- 10) How many different hearings (legal trials) did Jesus endure (consider all passages read)? **Six:** Annas (John 18:12-14), Caiaphas (Matthew 26:57-68), the Sanhedrin (Matthew 27:1-2), Pilate (John 18:28-38), Herod (Luke 23:6-12), and a second trial conducted by Pilate (John 18:39-19:6)
- 11) What words did Jesus speak from the Cross (include references)? “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing” (Luke 23:34); “Today you [the thief on the cross], will be with Me in paradise” (Luke 23:43); “Dear woman [His mother Mary], here is your son [John]” and “[John,] here is your mother” (John 19:26-27); “My God, my God, why have You forsaken Me?” (Matthew 27:46); “I am thirsty” (John 19:28); “It is finished” (John 19:30); “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit” (Luke 23:46)
- 12) What was the significance of the Temple curtain being torn in two from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51) at Jesus’ death? See Exodus 25:8, 22, 26:1, 31-33; 30:6; 40:3; Leviticus 16:2; Hebrews 9:1-15 and 10:19-22. The thick curtain that separated the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place in the Tabernacle (later, the Temple) was not to be transgressed, except by the high priest and only once a year. Behind that curtain, in the Most Holy Place, God’s presence symbolically dwelt over the Atonement Cover (Mercy Seat) and between the wings of the Cherubim, atop the Ark of the Covenant. Hebrews 9 teaches that Jesus’ own blood (not an animal sacrifice) allowed Him entrance into the Most Holy Place (the presence of God). His death was sacrificial, on our behalf. Hebrews 10 says that His entrance paved the way for *us* to have direct access to God. The rending of the curtain from top to bottom (an impossible or highly unlikely way for it to tear) symbolized God’s acceptance of Jesus’ atoning death, which removed the barrier sin had created between Him and us. Through Jesus, we now can “draw near to God” (Hebrews 10:22), something that is impossible for sinful man to do on his own.

Read Matthew 28, skimming Mark 16, Luke 24 and John 20-21 for additional information.

- 13) To whom did Jesus appear following His resurrection (see also 1 Corinthians 15:4-8) and what hints are given about Jesus’ resurrected form? He appeared to Mary, a group of women, two men on road to Emmaus, the disciples as a group, Peter, Thomas, Nathanael and the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples who were fishing. He also appeared to James, the apostles, and more than 500 believers at the same time. Finally, Jesus personally appeared to the apostle Paul.
- Concerning the form of His resurrected body:
- Mary didn’t recognize Jesus at first, but thought He was the gardener. Something about the way Jesus said her name caused her to recognize Him. He told her not to hold on to Him because He had not yet ascended to the Father (John 20:11-17).
 - Jesus told the women not to be afraid and they worshipped Him. They either recognized Him and were shocked by His appearance, or they worshipped Him without recognizing Him simply on the basis of His glorified form (Matthew 28:9-10).
 - Two disciples on the road to Emmaus were “kept from recognizing Him” (Luke 24:16) until “their eyes were opened,” but then Jesus “disappeared from sight” (Luke 24:31).
 - Jesus was able to pass through locked doors in order to appear to His disciples (John 20:19).
 - Jesus’ disciples thought they were seeing a ghost, however Jesus allowed them to examine His pierced hands and feet and invited them to touch His “flesh and bones” (Luke 24:37-39).
 - Jesus invited Thomas to touch His hands and side (John 20:27).
- 14) What information do Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 24:44-47, and John 21:15-17 give about the nature of the instructions that Jesus gave His disciples between the time of His resurrection and His ascension? Jesus prepared His disciples to train others by commissioning them to do so, by opening their minds so they could understand that He was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, and by offering specific encouragement (at least to Peter) about future leadership in the building of His kingdom.
- 15) What are you actively doing to fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20)? **Personal sharing**