

# Transformed Into The Same Image

## Small Group Bible Study

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# THE STRENGTH OF JESUS

STRENGTH: Power of any faculty, strength of mind, body, personality, emotion, reason, memory, judgement, etc.

## I. What was the first impression which Jesus made upon His contemporaries?

A. What has been His first impression on you?

1. **Has He impressed you as subdued and meek, calm and effeminate?**
2. Have you seen Him always as many a painter has painted Him: pale and ghastly, sickly, emaciated?

## B. Open the gospel according to Mark. In the very first chapter He tells you in four different places what impression Jesus made upon men.

1. He first tells you of the impression Jesus made on John the Baptist. Mark 1:7
  - a. **John was a mighty man, none mightier had ever appeared in Judea.**
  - b. This John said there is coming one mightier than I.
  - c. **When Jesus presents himself to be baptized, a remarkable thing happens.**
    - 1) John had called men to repentance; he had faced to greatest man of His day without flinching.
    - 2) **He had baptized the great and small, the high and low, the rich and poor, the learned and ignorant.**
    - 3) But when this man from Nazareth appears, John falters and falls back and says: "I cannot baptized you. I have need to be baptized by you."
2. **The impression that He made on strong fishermen. Mark 1:16-20**
  - a. He sees two men fishing; He says, "follow Me," and straight way they left their net's and followed Him.
  - b. **A few steps further on He sees two other men and says to them, "follow Me," and they left all and followed Him.**
3. He goes into the synagogue and begins to teach, and their amazed, not at what He says, but the manner in which He says it. Mark 1:21-22

**a. He teaches them as one having authority and not as the scribes.**

b. There is something in His voice that pierces and cuts and thrills, a tone that they have never heard before.

**c. It is the note of authority, the note of strength.**

4. There is a sick man in the synagogue, and Jesus heals Him, and again the people are surprised because God has given such power to a man. Mark 1:23-27

**C. In these four instances the first impression of Jesus is the impression of authority, mastery, power, leadership; He is a man of strength.**

1. He drew men to Him. Wherever He went He was surrounded by crowd.

**a. He goes down to the sea shore, and the crowd is so great they push Him into the water, so He gets into a boat. Mark 4:1**

b. He goes to the hilltop, and immediately the hillside is alive with people. Matthew 15:29-30

**c. He goes to the desert, and immediately a great crowd surrounds Him. Matthew 14:13**

d. Sometimes He dares not to go into the city because of the tumult which His entrance will certainly stir up. Mark 1:45

**2. Every city through which He passes is turned upside down by His presence.**

3. Only a man of strength draws to Him great masses of men.

## **II. Schooled and Unschooled**

A. It is noteworthy that widely differing classes of men are drawn to Jesus.

**1. The publicans and sinners, the great unwashed crowd.**

2. But Nicodemus, a member of the Supreme Court of Palestine, also is attracted.

**3. And the Roman centurion also is drawn, saying to Jesus, "I know what it is to command and so do you. There is an enemy in my house which I cannot order out; you speak the word and he will depart."**

B. One day when Jesus propounded the question, "who do men say that I am?" The disciples told Him that men had differing opinions in regard to Him.

1. **Some said He was John the Baptist; some said He was Elijah; others said He was Jeremiah; while others, unable to give His exact name, felt convinced He was one of the old prophets.**
2. This is remarkable. They went to the grave in order to find a man to whom they could liken Him.
  - a. **The name of no man living was great enough to convey their idea of the strength which they felt resided in Jesus.**
  - b. He was one of the Giants of bygone ages who had come back to the earth.
  - c. **This tells us clearly that to them He was a man of tremendous power.**
3. **If the Jews felt this in regard to Him, what was the impression which He made upon the Roman officials?**
  - a. Pilate is afraid of Him.
  - b. **He draws back from him, wrings His hand in uncertainty, washes His hands and tries to get rid of this man.**
  - c. He feels that there is a power in Him unlike any power He has ever come in contact with before.

### **C. No Middle Ground**

1. But if you would have the finest proof of His power, you can find it in the intensity of the hatred and in the intensity of the love which He excited.
2. **How many hated Him.**
  - a. They could not hear Him talk without sizzling, hissing and boiling like a pot under which the fire roars.
  - b. **He stirred tempest in the heart; He awoke serpents in men.**
  - c. He drove them to madness until they cried out in frenzy, "crucify Him" only a great man can do that.
  - d. **You cannot hate a weakling.**
3. If Jesus drove some men to hate Him, He drove other men to love Him.

- a. He kindled a devotion that is superior to anything that has ever been known in the world.
  - b. He kindled a fire which ran all over Palestine, and then all over the world.**
4. He was so mighty that when men thought of Him, they thought of God.

**Think of these “But God’s”**

Mark 2:7 - “who can forgive sins but God alone?” NAS

**Acts 13:30 - “But God raised Him from the dead.” NAS**

1 Cor 1:27-29 - “But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base things of the world and the despised, God has chosen, the things that are not, that He might nullify the things that are.” NAS

**1 Cor 3:6-7 - “I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth.”**

2 Cor 7:6 - “But God, who comforts the depressed.” NAS

**Eph 2:4 - “But God, being rich in mercy.” NAS**

Phil 2:27 - “He was sick to the point of death, but God had mercy on him.” NAS

**Acts 7:9 - “And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him.” KJV**

Rom 5:8 - “But God commendeth his love toward us.” KJV

**1 Cor 7:15 - “But God hath called us to peace.” KJV**

1 Cor 10:13 - “But God is faithful.” KJV

**1 Thess 4:8 - “But God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.” KJV**

## The Sincerity of Jesus

SINCERITY: Freedom from hypocrisy, disguise or false pretense. Pure and unmixed.

**Matthew 6:5** - *"And now about prayer. When you pray, don't be like the hypocrites who love to pray publicly on street corners and in the synagogues where everyone can see them. I assure you, that is all the reward they will ever get."* NLT

I. Sincerity is the virtue which the human heart instinctively craves and looks for.

### **A. Matthew 16:6, & 11-12 - Mark 8:15 - Luke 12:1**

1. Leaven is used in the Bible to symbolize insincerity and Hypocrisy.

#### **2. Insincere = Deceitfulness - Hollowness - Simulated.**

a. Simulated = to counterfeit to assume the mere appearance of something without the reality.

**b. Hypocrisy = To represent falsely.**

3. Galatians 5:9 - Its easier to produce an image than it is to walk in reality

### **B. Insincerity is common.**

1. This world is full of trickery and dishonesty and deceit of every kind.

**2. Business is honeycombed with dishonesty; the political world abounds in duplicity and there is sham and pretense everywhere.**

3. Life would not be worth the living if there were no one on the earth sincere.

### **C. If you would see sincerity in its purest form, then come to Jesus.**

1. Here is a man incapable of a lie. Nothing was more abhorrent to him than falsehood.

**2. No other people so stirred his wrath as men who pretends to be what they were not.**

a. The most odious word upon his lips was the word "hypocrites."

**b. Have you ever wonder why it is impossible to speak that word without it falling from the lips like a serpent?**

c. It is because his cursed is resting on it.

- d. It was not a harsh word before he spoke it, but he breathed a hot breath of his sworn into it, and it has been ever since a word degraded and lost.**
3. A hypocrite is an actor. It is a word taken originally from the stage.
- a. In the theater we expect men and women to be other than they seemed to be.**
- b. But on the great stage of the world, God expects every man to be what he claims to be.
- c. If we say things we do not believe, and profess things we do not feel, and lay claim to things which we do not possess, we are tricksters and deceivers.**
- d. It was the sincerity of Jesus which drove him into conflict with the hypocrites.
- e. A hypocrite and Jesus cannot live together.**
- D. Nothing but the Truth - It was his constant exhortation that men should speak the truth.
- 1. The religious leaders of his day had divided oath into two classes: one class binding, the other not.**
- a. If an oath contained the name of God, it was binding on the conscience.
- b. If for God's name some other name was substituted, then the conscience might go free.**
2. Jesus was disgusted by this reasoning. Matthew 5:34 states "*Don't swear at all*" and verse 37 states "*let your yes be yes and your no be no.*"
- a. It was the belief of Jesus that a man's word got to be as good as his oath, or as we say, "as good as his bond."**
- b. If the world were the kind of world God wants it to be, then all the evidence that would be needed to prove a certain thing true would be that a man had asserted it.
- 3. Jesus would not use words of velvet when words of velvet flattered and deceived.**
- a. It was his work to help men see themselves as they were.
- b. He characterized them by words which accurately describes her character.**  
**John 8:44**
- D. Jesus was incorrigibly sincere, and it was sincerity which drove him to tell man the plain truth. John 8:55

1. **There was a strong inducement for him to conceal his extraordinary knowledge.**
2. But Jesus was a man off truth. He cannot disguise the fact that his knowledge was unique and that his power was unparalleled.
3. **Because he was true, he cannot hold back the fact that he was the good Shepherd and the door, the bread of life and the light of the world.**

## II. The Frightful Truth

### **A. The warnings of Jesus have often aroused criticism and condemnation because of their severity and the frightening words in which they are expressed.**

#### **Matthew 23:13-29.**

1. To speak soft words to men whose feet are hastening down the road to ruin, would be insincere on His part.
2. **He called the leaders in Jerusalem liars, blind man, fools, serpents, Vipers.**
  - a. If they were not all this, then Jesus stands condemned for making use of such cutting words.
  - b. But suppose these men were precisely what such words described.**
3. The Lord of truth must, of necessity, use words which accurately characterize the persons who are to be instructed and warned.

### **B. The Drawing Power of Truth**

1. In the centuries which have passed since Jesus died, many uncomplimentary things have been said about him, but no one dares to call Him a liar.
  - a. They have been willing to say he was mistaken.**
  - b. They have called him a fanatic, an enthusiast, and dreamer; but no man of sane mind or heart has ever ventured to assert that Jesus was liar.
2. **When we listen to the words of other men, we must make subtractions and allowances.**
3. Not so with Jesus. He holds back nothing.
  - a. What he thinks he says; what he feels he declares.**
  - b. His character is revealed in his speech.

**4. This, then, is the man we want.**

a. A man like this can be a refuge in the time of storm.

**1) To him we can flee when sick at heart.**

2) When men disappoint us and friends are few, we can come to one who says, "I am the truth."

**3) When we're weary and heavy laden, we can rest our souls upon one who is as certain as the morning and as faithful as the stars.**

b. The world is filled with voices, and it is hard to know which voice to trust.

**c. But his voice has in it something which inspires assurance and quenches uncertainty and doubt.**

1) When he teaches about God we can receive.

**2) What he says of the soul we can believe.**

3) What he declares of sin and the penalty of sin we can accept.

**4) What he asserts concerning the principles of a victorious life we can act upon.**

5) When he tells us to do a thing, we do it, assured that it is the best thing to do.

**6) When he warns us against a course of action we can shun it.**

C. What's Your Name? Genesis 32:27

**1. Before God can change you into who He wants you to be, you must first admit who you are.**

2. I Samuel 16:7 - a key phrase-For God see's not as man see's.

**a. Where is God's focus. Is it on how people are or how they could be.**

b. 2 Corinthians 5:16 - "This means that our knowledge of men can no longer be based on their outward lives." (J.B. Phillips)

**c. God knows that if we can tap into who we really are - it will deal with who we think we are. (Lion Carver)**

## THE POISE OF JESUS

I. By the poise of Jesus I mean the fine balance of His character, the equilibrium of His nature.

**Poise = balance; equilibrium; the state in which things are balanced by equal weight or power. The regulating power; that which balances.**

A. Jesus poise is best seen in the way He balanced His godly nature with His human nature.  
John 19:5 - Mark 15:39

**1. This equilibrium is due first of all to a certain balance of character. How rarely do we find well balanced men.**

a. The average man is one-sided, on symmetrical, unevenly developed. We are over developed on one side of our nature and underdeveloped on the other.

b. Eccl 7:16-18 - *Do not be overrighteous, neither be overwise-- why destroy yourself? Do not be overwicked, and do not be a fool-- why die before your*

*time?*  
*God*

*It is good to grasp the one and not let go of the other. The man who fears will avoid all [extremes]. (NIV)*

c. If we are strong in certain characteristics, we're practically certain to be weak in the opposite characteristics.

**2. But when we come to Jesus, we find ourselves in the presence of a man without a flaw.**

a. He was enthusiastic, but He never became fanatical.

**b. He was emotional, but He never became hysterical.**

c. He was imaginative, but He was never flighty.

**d. He was practical, but He was never dull.**

e. He was courageous, but never reckless.

**f. He was prudent, but never a coward.**

g. He was unique, but not eccentric.

**h. He was sympathetic, but never sentimental.**

I. He was pious, but not sanctimonious.

**j. Great streams of sympathy flowed from His tender heart toward those who needed sympathy.**

k. At the same time streams of lava flowed from the same heart to scorch and overwhelm the workers of iniquity.

**3. He had in Him all the virtues, and not one of them was over-grown.**

a. He exhibited all the graces, and everyone of them was in perfect bloom.

**b. He stands in history as the one-man beautiful, symmetrical, absolutely perfect.**

4. It also is noteworthy that not one of the enemies of Jesus was able, by unfairness or falsehood or hatred, to push Jesus into a hasty word or unrighteous mood.

**a. Most men are so poorly balanced that you can push them with very little pressure into sinful speech or an un-Christian disposition.**

b. There is a grace about Him which does not fade.

**c. There is a sanity about Him which compels respect.**

d. There is a charm about Him which woos and wins the heart.

**B. Out of this balance of His powers comes His unrivaled poise in conduct.**

1. He lived always in a whirlwind.

**a. While men bent like reed's around Him, He never so much has wavered.**

b. Men laid their traps and tried to catch Him, but He walked a bravely in the midst of them and never was entrapped.

**c. The intellectual athletes of His time trying to trip Him, but they never did.**

d. His enemies did their best to upset Him, but they never could.

2. **Wherever He went He was surrounded by enemies waiting to catch Him in His talk, but they never caught Him.**

a. They asked Him all sorts of questions, expecting that by His answers He would incriminate Himself, but He never did.

**b. They brought out to Him one dilemma after another, saying "we will catch Him on one word or the other," but He escaped them every time.**

3. At the beginning of His public career He heard the seductive voices sounding in His ears.

**a. Time and again the evil one came by Him with a new allurements, but every time He hurled the tempter back by quoting just the passage of scripture which that temptation needed.**

b. Men tried to convict Him of breaking the law in regard to the Sabbath day, but

instantly He proved from scripture and from reason that what He did was right.

**c. Men interrupted Him in the midst of His preaching, but He was never disconcerted.**

- 1) "Make my brother," cried a man, "divide the inheritance with me." And quick as a flash the answer came: "who made me ruler over you?"
- 2) **When Peter at Phillipi began to protest against his going to Jerusalem where He would be killed, Jesus said, "get behind me Satan" Matthew 16:23. He had heard that voice before. He recognized it even on the lips of his friend.**
- 3) It is one of the Devils last resources to speak through the mouth of a friend, but such trick cannot deceive Jesus.

**C. Silencing His Accusers**

1. On the last Tuesday of His life, they determine to undo Him.
  - a. **The Pharisees go to Him with this question: "is it lawful to pay tribute to Caesar?"**
  - b. It was an insidious question.
    - 1) **If He said yes, then that would make Him hateful to every patriotic Jew, for no Jew who had a patriotic heart believed it was right to pay Jewish money into a Gentile treasury.**
    - 2) If, on the other hand, He said no, then He proved Himself to be a traitor to Rome, and the Roman officials could immediately pounce down on Him.
  - c. **What will He do? Mark 12:17 - "And Jesus said to them, 'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.' And they were amazed at Him."**
2. Then a scribe thought he would try his hand.
  - a. **"What is the great commandment of the law?" To which Jesus replied, "love the Lord your God with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself."**
  - b. **"But who is my neighbor?"** And then Jesus told him about the priest and Levi and the Samaritan who saw the man by the wayside.
  - c. **After that the scribes asked Him no more questions.**

3. The time comes when Jesus is seized and carried before the high priest, and the marvelous poise of the Master disconcerts and dumbfounds the high priest.
4. **Unable to do anything with Him, he sends Him to Pilate.**
  - a. Pilate questions Him and becomes afraid of Him.
  - b. **What a picture. The man of Galilee calm, immovable, saying, "*to this purpose I was born, and for this came I into the world, to bear witness to the truth.*"**
  - c. See Pilate cringing, cowering, shuffling, washing his hands and saying he does not propose to have anything to do with such a man.
  - d. **Jesus has poise, and Pilate, representative of the eternal city, servant of the empire of blood and iron, has no poise at all.**
5. It is an interesting fact that even though Jesus was speaking constantly in public for three years, not one of His enemies was able to catch Him in His speech, and when at last they convicted Him, they had to do it on a trumped up lie.

**D. Because He is so well-balanced and so finely poised, each succeeding generation comes back to Him for inspiration.**

1. Is it not remarkable that the men of the first century thought they saw in Him the ideal figure of what a man should be.
  - a. **And that men in the fourth century looking at Him felt the same.**
  - b. And that men in the 16th century looking at Him agreed with all the centuries that went before.
  - c. **And that men in the 21st century looking at Him feel that in Him they find a perfect pattern.**
2. Men of intellect who live the intellectual life looked a Him for guidance and instruction.
3. **Men of emotion who desire to replenish the springs of feeling looked to Him for inspiration.**

## **The Originality of Jesus**

- I. The word "*originality*" does not occur in the New Testament, for no one in Jesus day ever raised the question of whether He was original or not.

**Originality = The power of producing new thoughts or uncommon combinations of thoughts.**

A. Wherever Jesus went, the eyes of man open wide.

1. **Palestine had become a drowsy place, the Jesus, by His teaching, shook it out of its lethargy and sleep. Matthew 7:28 - Mark 10:24 - Luke 2:47**

2. His teaching itself struck Jesus contemporaries as novel.

- a. **"*Its a new teaching!*" Was the exclamation which followed many of His discourses. Mark 1:27**

- b. It was the opinion of His severest critics that no man had ever spoken as He was speaking. John 7:46

- c. **There was something in the manner, as well as in the matter, which arrested attention and threw a fresh light upon God and men. Psalm 119:130, "*Break open Your words, let the light shine out, let ordinary people see the meaning*" (The Message)**

B. It was because Jesus was different from all other men of His day and generation that He created such a sensation where ever He went. Mark 4:41, "*What manner of man is this?*"

1. **If He had repeated the old teachings in the old-fashioned, He would not have infuriated the scribes and Pharisees and brought about the tragedy of Golgotha.**

- a. He was too original to be endurable.

- b. **He advanced to many strange and revolutionary ideas to make it safe for the land to hold Him.**

2. Was Jesus really original? No man has ever claimed to be original whose claim has not been disputed.

- a. **It depends on what you mean by originality. If to be original one must coin words never heard before and speaking phrases which no other tongue has ever used, then Jesus was not original.**

- b. He coined no new words, and many of His phrases have the flavor of earlier times.

- c. **All His main ideas of God and the soul, of duty and of destiny had been, if not expanded in the writings of the Hebrew poets and prophets, at least suggested there.**
  - d. The principles of conduct which Jesus taught were, for the most part, the very principles which had been proclaimed by men of God before His day.
  - e. **From the beginning He has been giving men right ideas and right feelings and helping them to reach right conclusions and decisions.**
  - f. All His ideas had existed in germ form in the writings of holy men who at various times had been moved to by the holy spirit.
  - g. **He did not come to destroy the old ideas or the old truths. He came to fulfill them.**
3. The originality of Jesus is not found in His phrases, or even in His conceptions, but rather in His emphasis.
- a. **He began by reading and old chapter in Isaiah, but He gave it a new emphasis which it had never known before, thereby opening the word with the force of a fresh revelation.**
  - b. Jesus through the Spirit knew which words to emphasize.
    - 1) **Jesus knew by emphasizing mercy instead of sacrifice, He made religion new.**
    - 2) Psalm 103:7 - 1 Corinthians 14:30 - Ephesians 3:20 - 2 Peter 1:4

### **C. Jesus spoke with absolute confidence.**

1. It is not the words which a man speaks, but the way in which he speaks them which determines their effect upon the life of the world.
  - a. **He never hesitated, speculated or made use of intonation's which would indicate a wavering mind.**
  - b. He was always positive, certain, and infallible.
2. **The new accent and the new emphasis were the product of a new personality.**
  - a. No personality like that of Jesus had ever been encased in flesh before.
  - b. **What a fullness of life was in Him! What a power He had!**

D. Jesus made unique or original claims about Himself. He claimed to be:

- **the light of the world,**
- the bread of life,
- **the water of life,**
- the only good Shepherd,
- **the way, the truth, and the life,**
- the only mediator between God and man,
- **the only one who can save the world from its sins.**

1. Here we strike something which is unique and in every sense original.

**a. It is when Jesus speaks of Himself that we catch an original note.**

b. John, who knew Him best, heard Him saying, *"I make all things new."*  
Revelation 21:5.

**c. Jesus could save this because He was new Himself.**

1) Not having our infirmities and fears, our frailties and sins, His eyes saw things in ways that ours do not.

**2) His heart feels things which we but dimly understand.**

2. He says, *"come to me, and I will make all things new."*

**a. He does that by giving us a changed attitude to life.**

b. By teaching us how to shift the emphasis from words unimportant to words important.

**c. By showing us the insignificance of show and form compared with the qualities of a loving heart.**

d. It is an original work, and only He can do it. He did it for Paul.

**1) Paul was a scholar and was familiar with the "word of God. But for some reason the word, even when taught by the greatest of rabbis, did not reach the core of Paul's need.**

2) As a result he kept on crying, *"what a wretched man I am, who will rescue me from this body of death."* Romans 7:24

**3) And then one day he met Jesus, and behold, all things became new.**

4) From that day to the day of his death, Paul urged men to put off the old man and to put on the new man, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true

holiness.

**E. We too, need a life changing perspective.**

1. It may be that for some of you life has grown irksome and the world drab and commonplace.

**a. Has life lost its sparkle and its zest?**

b. Are the days threadbare and everything has lost its bloom?

**2. What will you do?**

a. This is the wise thing to do: go to Jesus and give yourself afresh to Him.

**b. Sink your life deeper into His life and catch His ways of seeing things and serving God.**

c. Take His standpoint; assume His attitude; catch His emphasis; drink in the accent of His voice.

**3. And undoubtedly, He will do for you what He did for Saul of tarsus and what He has done and is doing still for many, He will make all things new.**

a. He unifies human life and simplifies it and elevates it and transforms it and transfigures it, all because He is the master and the savior of the heart.

**b. *"If any man be in Christ, he is any new creature: old things are passed away; and behold, all things are becoming new."* 2 Corinthians 5:17**

## **THE NARROWNESS OF JESUS**

I. Matthew 7:13-14 - What does it mean to be narrow:

Noah Webster's 1828 defines "narrow" this way: of little breadth; not wide or broad, very limited. The Greek word is "stenos," which means "to groan," because it runs counter to natural inclinations.

A. In our day it has become a negative word, one that few people want to be associated with.

**1. We often hear of it in a condemning sense.**

2. When we say someone is narrow we most often mean that:

**a. He is one-sided**

b. He is not open minded

**c. His heart is not full grown**

d. He is not enlightened

**e. He is dwarfed and defective in some way**

B. Let us think about narrowness of Jesus. In no way was He narrow in the sense we just described. But He was narrow.

**1. He set definite boundaries for Himself; He shut himself up within certain limitations, and in this sense He was narrow.**

*Philippians 2:6-7 - "Let your attitude to life be that of Christ Jesus Himself. For He, who had always been God by nature, did not cling to his privileges as God's equal, but stripped himself of every advantage and became human."*

**a. God becoming a baby**

b. God as a Fetus

**c. Holiness sleeping in the womb**

d. The Creator being created

**e. He that was larger than the universe became an embryo**

f. The unbreakable becoming breakable

**g. He who could sustain the world with a word chose to be dependent upon the nourishment of a young girl**

2. How narrow was the circle inside of which He did all His work.

**3. He lived His life in Palestine, a little country no larger than Connecticut.**

**4. He might have travel across the world as many teachers had done before His day.**

a. He might have taught in Athens and lifted up His voice in the streets of Rome.

**b. He might have given His message to a wider circle of men.**

- c. But He chose to stay at home, to give His time to the cities of Gallilee.
- d. For 30 years He remained in the dingy obscurity of a carpenter shop.**

C. If His field was limited, so also was the character of His work. He only tried to do one thing.

**1. There were 1000 good things which a good man and Palestine might have done, but He left 999 of them unattempted and confined Himself to the one thing which He believed His heavenly father had giving Him to do. Luke 19:10**

2. Men do not understand such narrowness.

**a. They were always urging Him to swing into a wider orbit into the something which would create a greater stir.**

b. A man one-day interrupted Him while He was speaking, saying, "*make my brother divide the inheritance with me*" but His reply was, "*that lies outside my province, come in and listened to Me and I would do for you the service which God has appointed Me to do.*" Luke 14:12

**c. It was a righteous piece of work which the man wanted to have done, but it was not Christ 's work, and therefore He would not do it.**

d. No one man can do everything. There are a thousand things which need to be done, yet which no man, however industrious and noble, can perform.

**3. Jesus set limits to His activity, and beyond those limits no man persuaded Him to go.**

a. One day His brothers wanted Him to go to Jerusalem and make an impression on the big men there. John 7:1-6

**1) But He refused to listen to there exhortation, telling them that they might go anytime they choose, but that it was different with Him.**

2) He could not go until it was time for Him to go.

**b. He could not go until His hour had come.**

1) When the hour arrived, He set His face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem.

**2) All along the way, men tried to divert Him, but He could not be diverted.**

4. It was for Him to walk along the narrow path.

**a. For this alone led to His glorious life, which was to seek and save the world.**

b. When He talks to men about the two ways, one of them narrow and the other one broad, He's speaking out of His own experience.

**c. When He urges men to choose the narrow one in preference to the one which is broad, He is only saying "*follow Me.*"**

II. It is only when a man picks out some particular Little sphere and says, "*inside of this I purpose to work,*" that real-life begins and his heart learns the art of singing.

**A. It is when a man picks up in his hand a definite, tiny task and says, "*this is the thing to which I shall devote my life,*" that the shadows vanish and life becomes worth living.**

1. It is that narrow path that leads to life.

**2. Prison Ministry has been the goose that has laid the golden egg for me.**

B. Right here is where we are prone to blunder.

**1. It is at this point that we should look for the root cause of much of the disquiet in our souls.**

2. We start out to do a certain work and immediately people begin to say: "*why don't you do this?*" "*Come and do this.*"

**3. And before we are aware of our folly, we have dissipated our energy in trying to do things which God never intended us to attempt.**

4. If you want to see a man who sings at his work, look for him inside a narrow circle.

**C. Focused light has tremendous power. Diffused light has no power at all.**

1. For instance, by focusing the power of the sun through a magnifying glass, you can set a leaf on fire.

**a. But you can't set a leaf on fire if the same sunlight is unfocused.**

b. When light is concentrated at an even higher level, like a laser beam, it can even cut through a block of steel.

**2. The principal of concentration works in other areas too.**

a. The focused life and a focused church will have a far greater impact than unfocused ones.

**b. Like a laser beam, the more focused your church becomes, the more impact it will have on society.**

c. Paul said, *"I am bringing all my energies to bear on this one thing, forgetting what is behind and looking for to what lies ahead."* Philippians 3:13. (TLB)

**d. If the energy of the church is diffused and dissipated, then the power is lost.**

D. Jesus made an impression because He stayed in one place, and hit the same nail on the head until it was driven completely in.

**1. Had He wandered over the earth speaking His parables, they would have fallen into more ears but would have molded fewer hearts.**

2. By staying in Palestine and keeping His heart close to a few chosen hearts.

**a. He became increasingly influential so that the authorities were frightened.**

b. The men who were the nearest to Him became so passionately in love with Him that they were ready to die for Him.

**c. He made Himself mighty by limiting Himself.**

3. What is it to succeed?

**a. It is to do the thing for which we were created. Ephesians 2:10**

b. The most galling of all experiences is the failure to do that which is most worthwhile. Colossians 1:28

**4. Jesus attempted to do one thing only.**

a. That was to perform the work which His Father had given Him to do.

**b. At the end of His life He could look into His Father's face and say, *"I have finished the work which you gave Me to do." "I finished the course"***

## THE WIDTH OF JESUS

I. Jesus had apparently no desire to see the world and intended to spend His life in little Palestine.

**A. There was a purpose in this narrowness and a reason for it. His narrowness was a product of His width.**

1. He walked the narrow path because He carried in His heart the dream of an empire which was vast.
  - a. **By standing in one place and striking repeatedly the strings of the same set of hearts, He started vibrations which have filled the world with music.**
  - b. By carefully tending the fire which He had kindled, He made it hot enough to change the spiritual climate of many lands.
  - c. **By saturating a little circle of chosen followers with His Spirit, He made them capable of carrying on their shoulders a lost race to God.**
  - d. By persistently treading a single path, He made that path so luminous that every eye can see it.
  - e. **By being faithful in a few things, He won the place of Lordship over many cities.**
  - f. By making Himself of no reputation, He founded a kingdom broad as humanity and of which there should be no end.
2. **If you study the New Testament, you'll see that this man, from the beginning, carried the world in His eye and the race on His heart.**
3. What strange paradoxes one finds in the realm of the soul.
  - a. **If you would be wide, then be narrow.**
  - b. Jesus was narrow because His width was immeasurable.

**B. Width Brings Conflict. It was the width of Jesus ideas and sympathies which first brought Him into conflict with His countrymen.**

1. The Jews, as a people, were proverbially narrow and bigoted. They divided the world into two parts and placed an almost impassable gulf between themselves and all other races.
2. **Inside a Palestine people were divided into classes by lines which were unchangeable.**
  - a. The Samaria was counted a cursed, and men of Galilee on their way to Jerusalem crossed over the Jordan in order that their feet might not be contaminated by treading the Samaritan soil.
  - b. **The Jews were an exclusive and haughty and aristocratic race, constantly thanking God that they were superior to all other nations.**
3. But this spirit of Jesus was different.
  - a. **In His very first sermon in Nazareth He called attention to the fact that in the days of the Elijah, God had picked a widow outside of the promised land for**

**special consideration and honor.**

- b. In the days only Elisha, although there were many lepers in Israel, God had passed by them all and healed a Gentile leper, Naaman the Syrian.
- c. It was all written down in their scriptures, but the good people in Nazareth, like many other good people since their day, did not pay attention to many things written down in their own scripture.**
- d. When Jesus began to eulogize the widow of Sidon and the Syrian king, their hearts became so hot within them that they broke up to meeting in trying to mob to the preacher.

### C. Wide Enough for All Ages.

1. Many ideas shrivel and dry up with the lapse of time.

**a. Political ideas have a strange fashion of passing away, and so do scientific ideas.**

b. One century has no interest in the political teachings of the century which preceded it, and no generation is willing to accept the science of the generation that went before it.

**2. But the ideas of Jesus had such width that they can cover the world and the ages.**

a. Although 20 centuries have swept away almost everything which was believed and taught in the day of Jesus, His ideas are still alive and the very words in which they are expressed are destined to outlive the stars.

**b. This is indeed strange, that we people of the 21st century should be listening to the very ideas which interested Jews nearly 2000 years ago.**

c. So wide are these ideas and so universally applicable to the needs of the heart that each succeeding generation will take its place in the congregation of Jesus

**d. Wide, indeed, must be the ideas which can cover all peoples and kindreds and tongues throughout all the eras of their existence.**

3. And His heart was as far-reaching as His brain. The social sympathies of Jesus were, to his countrymen, a surprise and a scandal.

**a. He felt with everybody. He seemed to be ignorant of the proprieties and the etiquette of well bred people.**

b. His heart went out to all sorts and conditions of men in a way which was reckless and shocking.

**4. There were men in Palestine who were under the ban of public opinion. Every right thinking man despise them. These men were known as publicans (tax collectors).**

a. The heart of Jesus went out to these men. He talked with them, ate with them.

**b. Not content with this, He took one of them into the inner circle of his intimate friends and allowed him to go out and teach and work in His name.**

c. Not content with this showing of the width of His sympathies by His deeds, He

painted a picture recorded in scriptures whose colors will never fade, and no faith can ever destroy it. It is to picture entitled "the Pharisee and a publican."

**5. There was only one set of men lower than the publicans, and they were the Samaritan's. Every man's hand was against them.**

- a. Jesus befriended them. He felt for them. He gave religious instruction even to a Samaritan woman and healed even a Samaritan leper.
- b. And, as if determined that all the world down to the end of time should know the width of His sympathies, He painted a picture which men would look at as long as they have eyes to see and hearts to feel, and the name of the picture is "the good Samaritan."**

6. His great, loving heart burst asunder all the regulations and restrictions. There was room in His soul for everybody.

**D. Loving to Forgive.**

- 1. It is the width of His love that men have found most astonishing. His love was unbounded. It was a ocean without a shore.
- 2. He was not willing that his followers should set boundaries to their love, because all such barriers were contrary to his habit and foreign to his spirit.**
  - a. When Peter asked them how often a man ought to forgive another who has trespassed against him, and suggested seven as a number almost grotesquely large, being more than twice the number suggested by the most liberal of the rabbis, Jesus, in essence, said, "do not set any limits at all.
  - b. There are no boundaries in the realm of love. You cannot calculate in the empire of the heart. Mathematics is foreign to affection.**
- 3. Whenever He spoke about love, He always said something which amazed His hearers.
  - a. One day He said, "love your enemies; bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them and that despite fully use you and persecute you," Matthew 5:44.**
  - b. This was not simply His exhortation, it was not only His preaching, but His practice.
- 4. Jesus taught forgiveness because He knew the blessedness of a forgiving heart.**
  - a. He himself was forgiving always. He had no grudges, no retaliations, no revenges.
  - b. His heart was so sensitive that it blazed against evil, but while He hated the sin, He could love the sinner.**
  - c. When His executioners nailed his hands and feet to the Cross, the only word

which

escaped His lips was the word, forgive.

**5. He was the most hopeful of all teachers.**

- a. No matter how dull the pupil, He still believe that he could learn.
- b. He did not reject the refuge of society. He saw promise even in the scum.**
- c. There is a chance for the man who is supposed to have no chance, there is hope for the man whom men have doomed to destruction.

**E. Marked the method of Jesus for choosing men who will carry on His ideas after He dies.**

- 1. He chooses men of all grades and from all classes. No man in the group is like any of his comrades, and no one on them is like Jesus.

- a. There is a emotional man, Peter.**
- b. There is a doubting man, Thomas.
- c. There is an extreme man, Simon the zealot.**
- d. There is a slow going man, Philip.
- e. There is a man of good reputation, John.**
- f. There is a man with a tarnished reputation, Matthew.

- 2. **At an early stage He told his apostles not to go outside the limits of their own people in their work, but this limitation of field was only educational and, with their increasing strength, was the pass forever away.**

- a. Men should stay in Jerusalem long enough to secure strength sufficient to grapple with problems of Judea.
- b. They should tarry in Judea until they are capable of grappling with the more difficult conditions of Samaria.**
- c. They should work in Samaria until they had acquired the endurance which would enable them to travel to the utter most parts of earth.

**Whoever you are, and wherever you are, and what ever you are, you are included in His plans of discipling the nations. When He laid down the lines of His vast scheme for humanity, you are not overlooked or forgotten. When He framed His church, a place inside of it was assigned to you. That place will remain vacant until you fill it. You cannot escape Him. His arms are all embracing. The width of His heart is infinite.**

## **The Trust of Jesus**

Matthews 27:43 - *“He trusts in God.”*

**I. Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary defines "trust" as "a confidence in or a reliance on."**

- All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I have not seen.
- **I would rather walk with God in the dark than go alone in the light.**
- Trust involves letting go and knowing God will catch you.

**A. How does it happen that this Man was so masterful in every situation.**

1. Matthew 22:15-22 - The temple tax.
- 2 **John 8:3-11 - The woman caught in adultery.**

**B. How did it come to past that He was joyful in the mist of so many shadows?**

1. **John 11 - The Story of Lazarus.**
2. Matthew 26:50 - Judas' betrayal.

**C. Jesus' strength and gladness came from His steadfast trust in God.**

**1. His trust in God was the Alpha and omega of His life.**

- a. It was the heaven above His head, the Earth beneath His feet.
- b. The atmosphere He daily breathed.**
- c. The spirit in which He was saturated, the inspiration of His life.

**2. When He was dying on the cross, many people laughed at Him, saying derisive and spiteful things.**

- a. Among these people were members of the Sanhedrin, chief priest, scribes and leaders.
- b. They all ridiculed and scorned Him, ultimately they challenged His trust in God.**

1) *"He trusted on God," Matthew 27:43.*

2) **The reason they did, is because of His claim of always trusting His Father.**

**3. Though the word "trust" is only used a few times in the New Testament, examples of His trust are numerous.**

- a. From the beginning, Luke 2:49 - "And He said to them, "Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's**

*house?"*

- b. To the end, Luke 23:46 - *"And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, "Father, into Thy hands I commit My spirit."*

## **II. He showed His trust by His prayers.**

A. Jesus is everywhere and always a man of prayer.

- 1. At the crisis of His life we find Him praying. Luke 6:12**
2. At His baptism. Luke 3:21
- 3. In the choosing of the twelve disciples. Luke 6:12-13**
4. At the Transfiguration. Luke 9:29
- 5. In the garden. Mark 14:32**
6. On the cross. Matthew 27:45

**B. Before every important action, in the mist of every difficult situation, at the completion of every stage of work, we find Him praying.**

1. It was a common thing in Palestine for men to pray, but no man had ever prayed like this Man, with such simplicity, with such earnestness, with such boundless trust.
- 2. Men gathered around Him awe-struck and said, "*Master, teach us to pray.*" Luke 11:1**
  - a. Prayer was an indispensable feature in Hebrew life, but when men heard this Man pray, it was like they had never prayed at all.
  - b. The word which He applied to God was "*Father.*"**
  - c. To trust in the goodness and mercy of a good father was His greatest delight; to induce others to trust in Him also was His constant ambition and endeavor.

**C. There is trouble in trusting.**

1. One would believe that it is easy to trust in God.
  - a. The fact is nothing is more difficult to do at certain times and certain circumstances.**
  - b. It is easy to say that you're trusting God when everything is going right. But

when justice seems dead and love seems to have vanished, this is when it gets difficult.

**2. Who can study nature without finding it hard to believe in the goodness of God.**

a. Does not nature seem to be cruel and without heart.

**b. Read the newspaper any day and you'll find tragedy after tragedy that has nothing to do with the depravity of man but with the elements of nature.**

1) Who can look upon the sufferings of the innocent, or hear the cries of the oppressed, or witnessed the slaughter of the pure and the good without asking himself: Does God know? Does God care?

virtue  
and that

**2) It would seem to the man who reads history, that vice triumphs over dishonesty tramples upon honesty, injustice lords it over justice, hate defies and defeats love.**

3) This happens not just once but thousands of times. As a result some men give up their faith in God.

**3. Jesus looks upon the same scene and gives to it a different interpretation.**

a. He sees good men who come and offer their services to the world only to be rejected and repulsed.

**1) One of them is stoned, another is beaten, and another is killed.**

2) Their dead bodies are piled up in sickening heaps

**b. But to Jesus this is not evidence of the indifference of God, it is to proof of His long-suffering patience.**

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c. It is because He is not willing that any should be lost that He keeps on century after century, sending into the world prophets and apostles, heroes and saints, shall proclaim the message of heaven to bewildered and sinful men.

**D. Trusting through tribulation.**

1. If the processes of nature and the courses of history make war upon one's trust in God, how much more terrible is the conflict that arises out of one's own personal experience.

**a. Our trusting God is fine until misfortune comes into our life.**

1) When this happens a lot of men aren't strong enough to withstand the shock.

**2) The very best and strongest of men, when overtaken by misfortune, have to re-adjust their faith.**

- b. Many things conspired to blot out one's trust in God.
  - 1) **Disappointment may do it. One disappointment after another may come upon a man until he sinks down, vanquished and hopeless, his torch extinguished.**
  - 2) Persecution may break a man's faith in God; the inhumanity of man; the misunderstandings and the misrepresentations of men, their hostility and faithlessness, their contempt and their scorn, many render it well-nigh impossible to believe that God rules the world.
  - 3) **Other men are overcome by failure.**

2. Like Jesus we need impeccable trust.

a. **Jesus had all the dark experiences which it is possible for a soul to have.**

b. He had a work to do. He had a dream which filled Him with enthusiasm. He had a message to communicate which He was certain would drive away the gloom and the woe of the world.

c. **He went to Jerusalem to announce it, the door there was slammed in His face. He announced it and the synagogues of Galilee, but the people there would not receive it. He then preached it on the street corners of a great city, but crowds went away.**

the

d. There were, in the end, only 12 men who stood by Him, and the hearts of these were so fluctuating that He said, "*you do not want to leave too, do you?*" John 6:67.

e. **To these 12 men he gave himself with passionate devotion, pouring into their souls His own very life.**

1) But the boldest of them turned out to be a coward, another was a traitor, and another was a doubter.

2) **And when a crisis in His life came, they all forsook and fled.**

f. But despite His disappointment His trust in God was unbroken.

1) **We need to dwell upon the things which have happened since His death.**

2) Where failure was swallowed up by enduring success.

3) **Where ultimately justice triumphed over injustice, love became stronger than hate, and righteousness was mightier than unrighteousness.**

**The Brotherliness of Jesus**

*"First Be Reconciled to Your Brother."*

**Matthew 5:24**

I Brotherliness carries in it not only a sense of kinship, but likewise a disposition to render

helped.

**A. There is a relationship, and likewise a helpfulness, and both of these blended into one, constitute the quality of brotherliness or today's word friendship.**

1. It was the practice of Jesus, all the way through His life to help men.
2. **This trait is characterized in a famous phrase written by what Luke the physician, which he says:**

*Acts 10:38 - "You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for God was with Him."*

**B. He had been a friend and a brother to the lowest and basest members of society.**

*Matthew 11:19 - "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Behold, a gluttonous man and a drunkard, a friend of tax-gatherers and sinners!' Yet wisdom is vindicated by her deeds."*

1. **This was a characteristic which had created a great scandal and made Him hateful to many of the respectable people of his day.**
2. "Publicans" were Jewish tax-gatherers for the Roman government.
  - a. **They had to turn over a certain sum of money each year to Rome.**
  - b. But by extortion and any other dishonest measures, they could make just as much money for themselves.

C. To every pious Hebrew these men were traitors to their country.

1. **Wherever they went, they were the object of hatred and scorn.**
  - a. Their money was tainted money; it would not be accepted in the synagogue.
  - b. **Their oath was absolutely worthless.**
  - c. They could not be a witness in any court of law.
  - d. **If a man promised to do a thing for a Publican under oath, he was not bound to keep his oath.**
  - e. No decent man would have anything to do with them; no religious teacher took any interest in them.

- f. **They were simply the dregs of society.**
- 2. But even with these, Jesus made friends.
  - a. **He not only spoke to them, but He ate with them and went to their homes.**
  - b. By doing this He lost His reputation.

**Philippians 2:5-9 - “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bond servant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name.”**

- II. Is not life all about relationships? A man’s life can be measured by the quality and numbers of his friends.

**Proverbs 17:17 - “A friend loves at all times, And a brother is born for adversity.”**

- A. Men need deep friendships, because God make us that way

**Proverbs 18:24 - “A man of too many friends comes to ruin, But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.”**

- 1. Many men want only shallow relationships.
- 2. **True Friendship means that someone knows us.**
  - a. They know what we think.
  - b. **They know what we feel.**
  - c. They know who we really are.

- B. **Why do we need friends?**

- 1. We need friends to strengthen us.

**1 Samuel 23:16 - “And Saul's son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him find strength in God.”**

- 2. We need friends to comfort us.

**2 Corinthians 1:3-4** - *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort; who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God”*

3. We need friends to advise us.

**Proverbs 27:9** - *“a man's counsel is sweet to his friend”*

**Proverbs 11:14** - *“Where there is no guidance the people fall, But in abundance of counselors there is victory.”*

4. We need friends to correct and rebuke us.

**Proverbs 27:6** - *“Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.”*

**Psalms 141:5** - *“Let the righteous smite me in kindness and reprove me; It is oil upon the head; Do not let my head refuse it, For still my prayer is against their wicked deeds.”*

**Proverbs 27:17** - *“Iron sharpens iron, So one man sharpens another.”*

- a. Your best friends must tell you the truth, even when it is hard for you to take it.
- b. It takes a mighty man to tell his friend, he is in sin or that he is in the wrong, even at the risk of losing the friendship, it must be done.

**Proverbs 28:23** - *“He who rebukes a man will afterward find more favor.”*

### C. The marks of Friendship

1. True Friendship requires honesty.

**1 John 1:7** - *“but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.”*

2. True friendship requires devotion.

**a. Devotion means that we stick with someone for the long haul, that we are faithful friends for a lifetime.**

- b. To have devoted friends, you must be a devoted friend.

**c. Even the best of friendships are not perfect.**

- 1) Devotion is the quality of hanging with a friend when you learn the worst about them and when you see them sin, fail or make mistakes.
- 2) **It is the quality that continues to love and to desire closeness even when the other man has hurt you, let you down, or disappointed you.**
- 3) If you withdraw from your friends whenever they hurt you, then you will never have them as friends. You must work through such conflicts with honesty, love, and patience, knowing that the reward of a deeper and truer friendship awaits you.

**d. Friendship is a gift another person gives you, treat it accordingly.**

3. True friendship requires expression.

- a. **You need to express your feelings of admiration, respect, and love for your friend.**
- b. As men we are often leery of telling another man how much we care for him.

***Romans 12:10 - "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor."***

4. True Friendship requires Generosity.

- a. **If you want friends, give. First and foremost, give of yourself, then give gifts.**
- b. Friends cannot be purchased by gifts or money, but there is no friendship without generosity.
- c. **Stingy, thoughtless men do not have friends.**

## **The Optimism Of Jesus**

- I. Optimism = The opinion or doctrine that everything in nature is ordered (by God) to produce the most good. Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary.

**A. Jesus was a man who in these confused and distracting times, can give us confidence and hope.**

B. He was not a man who could shut his eyes to the sorrow or the heartbreak of the world.

**1. He saw both sides, the bright side and the dark side, and having seen both sides, His face had light on it.**

2. Jesus was optimistic in two primary ways.

**a. The way that He saw circumstances.**

b. The way that He saw people. *"be a good cheer."* Johns 16:33

## **II. Jesus was optimistic about the circumstances of Life.**

A. "It was the worse of times and it was the best of times." This quote from the book "The Tale Of Two Cities," in my opinion best sums up the Christian experience.

**1. Over the years I have discovered the worse of times and the best of times are eternally linked. God uses the worse of times to break you, mold you and shape you in order to bring you into the best of times.**

a. Isaiah 45:3 states, *"And I will give you treasures hidden in the darkness,"* meaning that the Lord will use the dark times of your lives to bring you some of His greatest treasure.

b. Jeremiah 15:19 states, *"Before Me you will stand; And if you extract the precious from the worthless, You will become My spokesman,"* again you see **that in the midst of something that is seemingly worthless, God will help you find something precious.**

c. John 16:33 states, *"here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows; but cheer up, for I have overcome the world."* Trials and sorrows will help you discover His overcoming power which will then bring cheer into your lives.

**2. The point I am trying to make is that in midst of the worse of times God will help you find the best of times.**

B. Hebrews 13:5 - Our lives should be characterized by contentment. Definition:

**1. Rest or quietness of the mind in the present condition.**

2. Satisfaction which holds the mind in peace, restraining complaint, opposition, or future desire

C. To be content with what you have, you need to fully grasp what is it that you have.

1. **We have Jesus, and Jesus is, and has, everything we need. “Jesus Is Enough”**
2. “Content” = “arkeo” - to be possessed of unfailing strength, to have enough, to be satisfied.
3. **Amplified translations says, “be satisfied with your present circumstances.”**
4. We can satisfied in our present circumstances because the presence of God will never leave us nor forsake us.

**a. Leave = (an-ee'-ay-mee), means He won't relax His grip or loosen His hold.**

- 1) It doesn't mean He is going to take you out of your circumstances, it means he won't leave you while you are in the midst of them.
- 2) **He's got a hold of you in your circumstances.**
- 3) He will hold you while the circumstances mold you.

**b. Forsake = (eng-kat-al-I'-po) means He won't leave you behind in some place.**

- 1) Once the circumstances have done their work, God won't abandon you to them.
- 2) **Once they put something in, God will take you out.**
- 3) Once the circumstances have changed you, then God changes your circumstance

**c. 1 Timothy 6:6 - “*Godliness with contentment is great gain*” or “*contentment with the things that produce godliness will yield great gain.*” Berean**

C. Phil 4:11-13 - This statement is powerful because of where he is at when he is writing this. (Paul understood that the Lord would never leave or forsake him)

**1. Contentment is a learned attribute. (2 treasures - writing and winning)**

- a. The KJV says “everywhere and in all things I am instructed”
- b. The Greek word for instructed or learned is “muelo” which means:**

- 1) to initiate into the mysteries
- 2) **to give one an intimate acquaintance with a thing**

2. Until instruction takes place, provision or deliverance won't take place.

- a. Mark 4:38-39 - The stilling of the storm was the result of no faith**
- b. Matthew 14:22-32 - This time one of the disciples (Peter was instructed by the storm) instead of being delivered from it he decided to learn how to walk on it.**

**1) Once he passed the test, the storm was stilled automatically.**

2) The best way to still a storm is to learn to walk on it (be instructed by it)

### III Jesus was optimistic where people are concerned.

A. Along with unswerving trust in God, there went an unshakable confidence that men could change.

**1. He saw the possibilities and capacities of the human heart.**

a. He saw men's littleness, frailties, vices and sins, but underneath all these He saw a soul created in God's image.

**b. He had hope for publicans and sinners. He knew that Zaccheus could repent and that Matthew could become a preacher.**

B. John 4:35-43, "*Lift up your eyes and look*" *theaomai* {*theh-ah'-om-ahee*} "which means to view attentively, to learn by looking, to see with the eyes, to perceive.

**1. It means to see the sag in the shoulders, to see the pain in the eyes, or the desperation in their actions.**

2. Jesus is admonishing His disciples to see the harvest differently. He saw it as bring ripe for the picking.

**a. What Jesus saw drew Him, what the pharisees saw repulsed them.**

b. What others saw as closed hearts, Jesus saw as opened hearts.

**3. This statement comes after He successfully harvests a soul that everyone else would have missed.**

4. She was an outcast of outcasts and the most insignificant person in that region.

C. **Not only was it amazing that someone like her was open to the gospel. But that Jesus was able to detect it.**

1. Others would have seen a promiscuous samaritan woman - Jesus saw the first fruits of a great harvest.

**a. Others would have only gave her criticism - Jesus gave her a chance.**

b. Others saw her as she was - Jesus saw how she was intended to be.

**c. Others saw only her promiscuity - Jesus saw her promise.**

d. Others saw only her problems - Jesus saw her potential.

2. He took a life that was drifting and gave it direction.

**a. He took a life that no one could use and used it like no one can.**

b. The Lord always brought the message to the worthless and then He always used

the worthless to bring the message.

D. After converting her, He released her to go back and do the same for others.

**1. He got her involved in mission**

- a. No one was surprised when she told people she had met a man.
- b. She was the most strategic person in that city.**
- c. The Lord didn't take her out of her network of relationships.

**2. God has always used the common for the spectacular.**

He took an ordinary rod stretched it and parted a sea, He took a common pebble flung it and slayed a giant, He took a peasant boy's lunch blessed it and fed a multitude, He took some dirt spit on it and healed a blind man, and He took a rejected promiscuous woman spoke kindly to her and brought revival to a whole city.

**D. I Samuel 16:7 - a key phrase-For God see's not as man see's.**

1. Where is God's focus. Is it on how people are or how they could be.

**2. 2 Corinthians 5:16 - *"This means that our knowledge of men can no longer be based on their outward lives."* (J.B. Phillips)**

- a. Judge a man by his clothes - ET
- b. Book by it's cover. - Wino**
- c. Contents by it's package. - Wolfman

**3. We need to look past how people are and see what they could be.**

- a. A lion carver
- b. My grandmother

**4. It's not that the Lord doesn't care about their form or flesh.**

- a. He just knows that if we can tap into who they really are - it will deal with who they think we are.
- b. Another way of saying it is "the only way to deal with what I see, is to help them become what God see's.**

## **The Firmness Of Jesus**

- I. Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary defines "firmness" as "someone or something that is fixed; steady; constant; stable; unshaken; not easily moved; or steadfast.
- **Mark 4:16-17** - "*And in a similar way these are the ones on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy; and they have no firm root in themselves, but are only temporary; then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they fall away.*"
  - **1 Corinthians 15:58** - "*So then, my dear brothers, stand firm and steady. Keep busy always in your work for the Lord, since you know that nothing you do in the Lord's service is ever useless.*" TEV
  - **1 Corinthians 16:13** - "*Be on the alert, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.*"
  - **Ephesians 6:11** - "*Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.*"
  - **Philippians 1:27-28** - "*Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; in no way alarmed by your opponents-- which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you.*"

A. In light of this scriptures, I want to look at the "*firmness of Jesus.*"

1. **When you think of Jesus you usually think of His gentleness and graciousness, in dwelling upon these we have a tendency to overlook other traits that are just as praiseworthy.**
  - a. Gentleness of nature is not a virtue unless it is accompanied by a tenacity of will.
  - b. **Sweetness of disposition is not enough to make a man useful and noble.**
    - 1) Strength must always accompany a sweet disposition.
    - 2) **Underneath soft moods must lie a resoluteness that is as hard as steel.**
2. The inability of men to stand firm in the midst of social and spiritual forces is one of the outstanding tragedies of history.
  - a. **All men are more or less molded by the society of which they form a part.**
  - b. Impressionability is not a trait peculiar to childhood, but is carried with you through every stage of life.
    - 1) **1 Corinthians 15:33** - "*Do not be fooled. Bad companions ruin good character.*" "*Do not be deceived. Good character is marred by evil*"

*company.”*

- 2) Proverbs 13:20 - *“Keep company with the wise and you will become wise. If you make friends with stupid people, you will be ruined.”*

**c. Businessmen are as susceptible as college students to peer pressure.**

Last week, Alan Greenspan came up with a new term, *“infectious greed.”* He said, *“An infectious greed has gripped much of our business community. Incentives created by poorly designed stock options have overcome the good judgment of too many corporate managers. It is not that humans have become any more greedy than in generations past. It is just the avenues to express that greed have grown so enormously.”*

**d. Humanity goes with the crowd in droves and no bondage is too absurd or galling to be submitted to.**

- 1) The majority of people are not strong enough to be themselves.
- 2) **They become echoes of their neighbors and walk paths marked out by others.**

B. In Jesus we are in the presence of a man whom nobody pressured or dominated.

**1. Immersed in an ocean of mighty forces which beat upon Him furiously through every hour of His life, He resisted them all successfully by His indomitable will.**

2. His countrymen had formed definite ideas of what the Messiah would sound and look like.

**a. He was to be a wonder worker with manifestations of power.**

- b. But He was also to be a conqueror by trampling the opposing forces of Rome and making Jerusalem the center of the world.

**c. This was the dream, this was the expectation of both the best of men and the worst of men.**

3. It is a dangerous thing to baffle and go against popular expectations.

**a. Everywhere He went, He heard the people clamoring for a king.**

- b. The nation was ripe for revolution. A word from Him would, like a spark, would have kindled and started this revolution.

**4. To fall in with their ideals was a great temptation.**

- a. But He chose the road that led to Golgotha and not the one that would have led to Rome.
  - b. By doing so He renounced the ideals of His countrymen and disappointed their dearest expectations.**
  - c. The nation then turned on Him with a murderous force, but He did not budge, He stood firm.
- 5. Not only did He go against their ideas of what the Messiah should be like, He also went against their ideas of what a prophet of God should be like.**
- a. He loved the nation of Israel and He loved the Israelites, but He could not and would not allowed them to dictate to Him what a man of God should be like.
    - 1) The religious teachers taught doctrines of the Sabbath which He could not accept.**
    - 2) They presented forms of worship which He could not submit to.
    - 3) They laid down lines of separation which it was impossible for Him to observe.**
  - b. There were many reasons why He should have conformed to the ideas and customs of the church, but He firmly resisted all the voices which urged Him toward conformity.
    - 1) He stood out alone in defiance of what the best men were doing and saying.**
    - 2) His nonconformity seemed to the majority to be blasphemous.
    - 3) For a godly man to be classed among blasphemers is one of the bitterest experiences which the heart can know.**
    - 4) But Jesus paid the price and continued firm.

**C. Jesus was firm with influential and powerful people.**

- 1. The influential and powerful people of Jesus day, recognized in Him a man of force, and were wanting to manipulate and make use of Him.
- 2. No man with a noble cause to promote will lightly antagonize the most influential and powerful men of his day.**

- a. Jesus is a man of strength and will not compromise His principles in order to gain some temporary success.
- b. He will never jeopardize the victory of His cause by playing into the hands of men whose faces are toward a different goal.**

D. Jesus was firm with His friends.

- 1. There are men who are too strong to be manipulated by their foes, but are very susceptible to influence of their friends.**
2. Jesus had many friends, but He never gave up His principles to please them.
  - a. His disciples had their prejudices and superstitions, but He never surrendered to them.**
  - b. He knew of their bigotry and narrowness but never humored them.  
Mark 8:32-33 - Luke 9:52-56
  - c. To defy the threats of powerful enemies is hard, but to turn a deaf ear to the dissuasions of loving friends is harder still.**

E. Jesus was firm with His family.

- 1. His siblings did not understand Him.**
  - a. From their standpoint He often did the injudicious thing and refused to do the thing which would have forward His cause and reputation.
  - b. They were always ready with advice He could not take - John 7:3-8.**
2. This test of willpower reached its climax when He stood firm against His own mother.  
Luke 2:48-50 - Luke 8:19-21
  - a. His ties to His mother were not so deep as His ties with the Fathers will.**
  - b. When His mothers wish conflicted with the Fathers will, the wish of the woman was put aside to make room for the will of God.

**Men are to resist exterior forces and form their life from within. They are not to be swayed by current opinion, but by the Spirit of the Eternal in their heart. They are not to listen to the voices of time, but to live and work for eternity.**

### **The Generosity Of Jesus**

- I. Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines "Generosity" this way: The quality of being generous; liberality in principle; a disposition to give liberally or go bestow favors; a quality of the heart or mind opposed to meanness or parsimony.

**Generosity = "Haplos" which means: singleness, simplicity, sincerity, mental honesty openness of heart manifesting itself by benefactions, liberality, or generosity.**

"Liberally, with singleness of heart," is used in James 1:5 of God as the gracious and "liberal" Giver. The word may be taken either (a) in a logical sense, signifying unconditionally, simply, or (b) in a moral sense, generously; for the double meaning.

***"If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him."***

- A. Acts 20:35 - *"It is more blessed to give than to receive."* These words express with rare fulness one of the finest traits of Jesus: His generosity.

**"That is, the giver is more happy than the receiver. Where, or on what occasion, our Lord spake these words we know not, as they do not exist in any of the four evangelists. But that our Lord did speak them, Paul's evidence is quite sufficient to prove. The sentiment is worthy of Christ. A truly generous mind, in affluence, rejoices in opportunities to do good, and feels happy in having such opportunities." (from Adam Clarke's Commentary)**

1. When a group of Christians were asked to make a list of the top six key-words of Christian duty, the word "give" consistently made it into the top three.
2. **This simple word "give, giving or gave" appears 462 times in the New Testament.**
3. It has been often claimed that Jesus was wild and reckless in His theory of giving.
  - a. Matthew 5:42 states, ***"Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you."***
  - b. Luke 6:35 states, *"But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High; for He Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men."*
  - c. **The above verses have been to many a mystery and an offence. But we need to remember we are commanded to give as God gives.**
    - 1) God gives but He doesn't always give the precise thing that a person asks for.
    - 2) **Love can never give when giving would work hurt.**

- B. Jesus threw out the great word "give," unqualified and naked allowing it to speak

unhindered to the human heart, as a word which holds in it a “revelation” of the mind and heart of God.

***Luke 6:38*** - “Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

1. A man who does not skimp or dole out with a stingy hand is, says Jesus, a man whom the universe likes and blesses.
  - a. **You will lose nothing by your generosity, for the world is constructed on a generous principle.**
  - b. By surrendering yourself to the divine Spirit of giving, you will be in tune with the infinite, and shall by no means lose your reward.

***Psalm 112:5-9*** states, “All goes well for the generous man who conducts his business fairly. Such a man will not be overthrown by evil circumstances. God's constant care of him will make a deep impression on all who see it. He does not fear bad news, nor live in dread of what may happen. For he is settled in his mind that Jehovah will take care of him. That is why he is not afraid but can calmly face his foes. He gives generously to those in need. His deeds will never be forgotten. He shall have influence and honor.” (TLB)

***Isaiah 32:8*** - “But a generous man devises generous things, and by generosity he shall stand.” (NKJ)

***Proverbs 19:17*** states, “When you help the poor you are lending to the Lord and he pays wonderful interest on your loan!” (TLB)

***Psalm 41:1-3*** states, “How blessed is he who considers the helpless; the LORD will deliver him in a day of trouble. The LORD will protect him, and keep him alive, and he shall be called blessed upon the earth; and do not give him over to the desire of his enemies. The LORD will sustain him upon his sickbed; in his illness, Thou dost restore him to health.”

2. **You need not be anxious about the precise time when such generosity will bring its reward.**
  - a. It is enough to go forward, giving and asking nothing in return, assured that somewhere and somehow your reward will be forthcoming.
  - b. **The reward may not come in all its fullness in the world that now is, but there will be a complete recompense at the resurrection of the just.**

**C. The Ultimate Giver - When Jesus said that “*it was more blessed to give than to receive,*” He was speaking from personal experience.**

1. When He urged men to give freely, (Matthew 10:8) lavishly, gladly, continually, He was only preaching what He Himself practiced.
  - a. **He didn’t have much money to give, but He gave what He had.**
  - b. He had time and He gave it. So recklessly did He give His time that, in order to find time to pray, it was necessary to use hours when other men were sleeping.
  - c. **He had strength and He gave it. He poured out His strength to the last ounce.**
    - 1) John 4:6 - we see Him seated, exhausted, at a well.
    - 2) **Mark 4:38 - we see Him falling asleep in a little boat.**
  - d. He had thoughts, and He gave them. He had ideas, and He scattered them. He had truth, and He shared it with all men.

**2. Love Gives**

- a. Jesus was a man with a loving heart. He loved both his friends and his enemies. Luke 6:27-34.
  - b. **This is best seen in His prayer for forgiveness for those who crucified Him. Luke 23:34.**
  - c. Having given everything else, He gave His life.
    - 1) **It was not snatched from Him by accident or fate, but freely surrendered by a heart willing to pay the great price. John 10:15-18 & John 15:13.**
    - 2) It was only by the giving of His life that He could soften men’s hearts and bring a lost world back to the Father.
  - d. **We are required to do the same - 1 John 3:16 states, “*We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*”**
3. Love never counts - 2 Corinthians 5:19.
- a. **When did a mother ever count the number of times she kissed her baby.**
  - b. It is the nature of love to give, and to keep on giving, and then to devise new ways of larger giving.

## D. Ungrudging Giving.

1. Jesus lived not to be ministered unto, but to minister; not to receive, but to give; not to save His life, but to pour it out to others.

***Mark 10:45*** states, *“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”*

*1 Timothy 2:5-6* states, *“For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony borne at the proper time.”*

2. **If generosity so great has appeared in “time,” it must be because there is a generous heart in “eternity.”**
3. If Grace so beautiful has blossomed on earth, then we can expect the same grace in heaven.
4. **Insights on generosity:**
  - A man there was, and they called him mad; The more he gave, the more he had.
  - **All we can hold in our cold dead hands is what we have given away.**
  - As the purse is emptied, the heart is filled.
  - **Give and spend, and God will send.**
  - God does not need our money. But you and I need the experience of giving it.
  - **He that gives should never remember, he that receives should never forget.**
  - We make a living by what we get; we make a life by what we give.
  - **What I kept, I lost; what I spent, I had; what I gave, I have.**
  - When the hand ceases to scatter, the heart ceases to pray. Some pray high but give low.
  - **Train your heart up to give sympathy and your hand to give help.**
  - A Christian shows what he is by what he does with what he has.
  - **A Christian shows what he is by what he does with what he has.**

## THE ENTHUSIASM OF JESUS

- I. The word “*enthusiasm*” does not occur in the New Testament, nor is it found in the Greek Testament.
- **Yet, the New Testament is the most enthusiastic of all books, and Jesus is the most enthusiastic of all men.**
  - The reason the word “*enthusiasm*” is avoided is because the connotations of this word in the first century were unsavory.
  - **Enthusiasm in the Pagan world was “*an ecstasy, or demon possession.*” An enthusiast was “*one who was inspired or possessed by spirit.*” Most fanatics or madmen were considered enthusiast’s.**
  - The Apostles and Evangelists did not like the word, so they kept it out of their writings.
  - **In today’s vocabulary, “*enthusiasm*” is a noble word. Noah Webster’s 1828 Dictionary defines “*enthusiasm*” this way: “*Heat of imagination; violent passion or excitement of the mind, in pursuit of some object, inspiring extravagant hope and confidence of success.*”**
  - Though this word is absent in the New Testament the evidence of it is seen the life of Jesus. Luke 12:49-50 states, “*I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled!*”

### A. Jesus was a man driven by enthusiasm for the will of God.

1. Luke 2:46-47 - As a boy He was so enthusiastic for the knowledge of God that it caused Him stay behind as His parents left for home.
2. **Mark 1:12 tells us that after being baptized by John and receiving the Holy Spirit that “*Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness.*” NKJV**
  - a. The word “*driven*” is the Greek word “*ekballoo;*” which means, “*to cast out; to drive out; to send out, with the included notion of more or less violence.*”
    - **Matthew 11:12 states, “*And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force.*”**
  - b. Jesus is so full of passion for God, that He cannot linger near the homes of men. He is driven to get alone with God.
  - c. **We see this dynamic also is the life of Paul, another man who was driven by His Zeal for God. Galatians 1:11-17.**

3. Jesus was driven by the urgency of God's will. He never ceased to use the word "must." The Greek word is "dei" which means, "necessity established by the counsel and decree of God."
  - **Matthew 16:21** - *"From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day."* KJV
  - **Luke 2:49** - *"And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"* KJV
  - **Luke 4:43** - *"And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent."* KJV
  - **Luke 19:5** - *"Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house."* KJV
  - **John 4:4** - *"And he must needs go through Samaria."* KJV
  - **John 9:4** - *"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."* KJV

## **B. Prayer was the source of His enthusiasm.**

1. Jesus was always praying.
  - a. **He arose early in the morning in order to find more time to pray.**

Mark 1:35 - *"And in the early morning, while it was still dark, He arose and went out and departed to a lonely place, and was praying there."*
  - b. **He stayed up late at night in order to increase the hours in which he might pray.**

Matthew 14:23-26 - *"And after He had sent the multitudes away, He went up to the mountain by Himself to pray; and when it was evening, He was there alone. But the boat was already many stadia away from the land, battered by the waves; for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea."*
  - c. **Sometimes He did not go to bed at all.**

Luke 6:12-13 - *"And it was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God."*

**2. Because He was enthusiastic in prayer, He was zealous in His work.**

- a. Men were astounded by the magnitude of His labors.

**Matthew 15:30-31** - *“And great multitudes came to Him, bringing with them those who were lame, crippled, blind, dumb, and many others, and they laid them down at His feet; and He healed them, so that the multitude marveled as they saw the dumb speaking, the crippled restored, and the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they glorified the God of Israel.”* KJV

- b. Sometimes He did not take time to eat - John 4:31 - *“In the meanwhile the disciples were requesting Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.”*”

- c. Even when He went away for a season of relaxation, He gave Himself to the crowds that pursued Him.**

Matthew 14:13-15 - *“Now when Jesus heard it, He withdrew from there in a boat, to a lonely place by Himself; and when the multitudes heard of this, they followed Him on foot from the cities. And when He went ashore, He saw a great multitude, and felt compassion for them, and healed their sick.”*

- d. This zealousness was mistaken for demon-possession.**

Mark 3:20-22 - *“When Jesus returned to the house where he was staying, the crowds began to gather again, and soon he and his disciples couldn't even find time to eat. When his family heard what was happening, they tried to take him home with them. “He's out of his mind,” they said. But the teachers of religious law who had arrived from Jerusalem said, “He's possessed by Satan, the prince of demons. That's where he gets the power to cast out demons.”* NLT

**3. The crowds also bear witness to the fire which this man had in Him.**

Luke 12:1 - *“In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another.”* KJV

**Mark 3:9** - *“He told His disciples that a boat should stand ready for Him because of the multitude, in order that they might not crowd Him.”*

- a. Near the end of His life the crowds went wild in their enthusiasm of His presence.

**Matthew 21:10** - *“The entire city of Jerusalem was stirred as he entered.”* NLT

- b. No man can set a crowd blazing unless his own soul is ablaze.

- c. **Because of His prayer life, Jesus was a man whose heart glowed like a furnace and whose soul radiated heat wherever He went.**

C. Enthusiasm is what attracts strong men.

1. **Jesus attracted to Him strong men who became His intimate friends.**
  - a. Do not believe the pictures that paint the Apostles as limp and pallid men.
  - b. **There were full-blooded, virile, mighty men, full of fire and passion.**
2. They were drawn to Jesus because in Him they saw a man who fulfilled them.
  - a. **Peter had a seething soul; which caused him to step out and take chances.**
  - b. James and John were called "*sons of thunder.*"
3. **They loved Jesus with such an intensity of devotion, they were ready and willing to lay down their lives for Him.**
  - Matthew suffered martyrdom by being slain with a sword at a distant city of Ethiopia.
  - **Mark expired at Alexandria, after being cruelly dragged through the streets of that city.**
  - Luke was hanged upon an olive tree in the classic land of Greece.
  - **John was put in a caldron of boiling oil, but escaped death in a miraculous manner, and was afterward branded at Patmos.**
  - Peter was crucified at Rome with his head downward.
  - **James, the Greater, was beheaded at Jerusalem.**
  - James, the Less, was thrown from a lofty pinnacle of the temple, and then beaten to death with a fuller's club.
  - **Bartholomew was flayed alive.**
  - Andrew was bound to a cross, whence he preached to his persecutors until he died.
  - **Thomas was run through the body with a lance at Coromandel in the East Indies.**
  - Jude was shot to death with arrows.
  - **Matthias was first stoned and then beheaded.**
  - Barnabas of the Gentiles was stoned to death at Salonica.
  - **Paul, after various tortures and persecutions, was at length beheaded at Rome.**
4. Jesus from the first to the last was surrounded by enthusiasts because He Himself was enthusiastic.

## The Gladness Of Jesus

### I. Matthew 5:12 - *“Rejoice, and be exceeding glad.”*

**A. Noah Webster’s 1828 defines “Glad” this way: “cheerful, joyous, wearing the appearance of joy as in a glad countenance.”**

1. Proverbs 15:13 - *“A joyful heart makes a cheerful face.”*
2. Proverbs 15:15 - *“A cheerful heart has a continual feast.”*
3. Proverbs 17:22 - *“A joyful heart is good medicine.”*

**B. Noah Webster’s 1828 defines “rejoice” this way: “to animate with lively pleasurable sensations; to be exhilarated; the primary sense is to shout; and to be visibly excited.**

### II. Did Jesus of Nazareth impress men as glad or sad?

**A. There is no doubt about the answer which the painters give.**

1. They nearly always paint Him sad.

**a. They love to paint Him in the garden of Gethesemene travailing in prayer.**

b. They love to paint Him on the way to the cross with a crown of thorns on His head.

**c. They love to paint Him on the cross dying.**

d. The Jesus of Christian history is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.

**2. Not only do the painters paint Him sad but so does our imagination.**

a. We see him with the shadow of the cross upon Him.

**b. We primarily think of the false accusations, the rigged trial, the heavy cross He carried, the crown of thorns, the whips, the jeers from the crowd, the nails in His hands and legs, and the sword in His side.**

c. This is the damage the painters have done to our conception of Jesus.

**d. They paint Him with a dove and a halo, no one in Palestine saw the dove or halo.**

3. Most of our thoughts are influenced by the last couple days of His life.

**a. We need to see Him as He really was.**

b. We should let all of the days that led up to His last days paint us a picture.

## **B. Enemies Evidence**

1. In order to find out what kind an impression a Jesus made upon the people of His day, the best evidence comes from what His enemies said about Him.

**a. Of course His enemies don't speak the truth, they tell falsehoods.**

b. All falsehoods a built around an element of truth in order to make it believable.

**c. They twist legitimate evidence to foster an illegitimate truth.**

2. Jesus was criticized for being too joyful.

**a. He was accused of being a glutton and a drunkard.**

Luke 7:34, *"The Son of Man has come eating and drinking; and you say, Behold, a gluttonous man, and a drunkard."*

**1) He was not, but one thing we know.**

2) He found the joy of life that gluttons and drunkards seek in misguided ways.

**c. He was accused of being the friend of Publicans and sinners inferring that He became like them.**

Luke 7:35, *"A friend of tax-gatherers and sinners! Yet wisdom is vindicated by all her children."*

**1) He was.**

2) For it was to such that He was called in order to influence them.

Matthew 9:12-13, *"But when He heard this, He said, It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick. But go and learn what this means, I desire compassion, and not sacrifice, for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."*

C. Jesus as a key witness.

**1. Jesus scandalized many of the religious leaders of His day because He never fasted, nor did He teach His disciples to fast.**

Matthew 9:14-15, *"Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast? And Jesus said to them, The attendants of the bridegroom cannot mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them, can they?"*

**2. Jesus purposely uses the word "Bridegroom" for it is a word that is the symbol of joy.**

- a. If ever a man is happy in this world, it is on his wedding day.
  - b. Jesus says that He lives in an atmosphere of wedding joy and also does His followers.**
3. He wants us to become like children.

**Matthew 18:2-4**, *“And He called a child to Himself and set him before them, 3 and said, Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.”*

- a. The main characteristic of children is their joy and lightheartedness.
- b. Children laugh on the average of 300 times a day, adults 17 times a day.**

John 15:11-12, *“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.”*

### **III Christianity ought to be a celebration.**

Ecc1 8:15 - *“So I commend the enjoyment of life, because nothing is better for a man under the sun than to eat and drink and be glad. Then joy will accompany him in his work all the days of the life God has given him under the sun.”*

**A. Joy is the second fruit of the spirit, the overwhelming sentiment of heaven, the watchword of the early church, and the heart and soul of the gospel.**

Luke 2:10 - *“But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.”*

**1. When God touches a human life, it should blossom with song and happiness.**

- a. After the Israelites crossed the red sea, they broke out the tambourines and sang a song of thundering, joyful praise.
- b. When David brought the ark into Jerusalem, he danced with all his might.**
- c. When Ezra and Nehemiah restored the temple, they banned sadness and crying, saying *“do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”* (**Nehemiah 8:10**)

**2. We too have reason to celebrate.**

- a. Our sins are forgiven.
- b. We have the Holy Spirit within us to insure our place in heaven and to comfort and empower us until we get there.**

c. We have the church, the glorious bride of Christ, the city set on a hill, as our family and dwelling place while we remain on this earth.

**d. We have the Bible to guide us and prayer to sustain us.**

e. We, above all people, should be overflowing with joy.

**B. We need to have this Joy despite the circumstances.**

1. The hurts and injustices of life are real joy-stealers.

**a. They come at you as young men and intensify as you get older.**

b. If life has not yet weighed heavily upon you, it will.

**c. Somewhere along the way, you will experience the sting of rejection, injustice, and disappointment.**

2. These kinds of defeats and frustrations hit Christians especially hard, and if we are not careful, they can weigh us down with hurt and bitterness.

**3. We need to maintain our Joy in the midst of the Storm.**

a. Matthew 5:12 & Luke 6:23

**b. Acts 5:41 - Acts 16:25 - Romans 5:3 - 2 Corinthians 4:17 - Philippians 2:17  
Colossians 1:24 - James 1:2 - 1 Peter 4:13**

4. Solomon tells us to look these events squarely in the face and rejoice and be glad anyway.

**a. He teaches us that manhood is not about having life as we wish it, but about being strong and joyful in the face of life as it is.**

b. We are not promised that life will be just, but that God will be just.

**c. Solomon reminds us that we too, are sinners and have inflicted pain on others.**

d. He tells us that God is working out a good plan in the midst of bad circumstances,

**e. Let us have the kind of example that will cause others as they observe us dealing with life's every day problems to have a spirit that sings.**

f. Let those around us be inspired by our gladness.

## **The Humility Of Jesus**

I. Matthew 11:29 - *“Learn of Me for I am gentle and humble in heart.”*

**A. This sentence is unique in the Gospel.**

1. Here for the first time, Jesus calls attention to one of His own characteristics.

**2. There are a lot of words He could have used to describe himself:**

a. Courageous, caring, all-knowing, all-powerful, etc.

**b. But He chose the words *“Gentle and Humble.”***

B. Matthew 12:18-20 - This is a description of whom Jesus would minister to and how He would minister to them.

**1. Jesus brings good news to those who are feeble and failing.**

a. He comes as a physician to the sick dealing gently with them.

**b. Throughout the gospels there is scene after scene of serenity eclipsing sorrow, purpose defeating pain, and hope outshining hurt.**

2. Is there anything more frail than a bruised reed? A once slender and tall stalk of sturdy river grass, it is now bowed and bent.

**3. Is there anything closer to death than a smoldering wick? Still warm from yesterday’s passion, but no fire. Not yet cold but far from hot**

4. Ps 103:13-14 - *“Just as a father has compassion on {his} children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him. For He himself knows our frame; He is mindful that we are {but} dust.”*

**C. Noah Webster’s 1828 defines “humility” this way: “Freedom from pride and arrogance and to have a modest estimation of one’s own worth.”**

1. The first part of this definition fits the biblical definition of humility, but the second part does not.

**2. For Jesus never took a low estimate of Himself, in fact no man had ever estimated Himself so highly, listen to some of the things He said about himself:**

- Luke 11:31- *“One greater than Solomon is here.”* - John 10:14 - *“I am the Good shepherd.”* - John 14:6 - *“I am the way, the truth, and the life.”*

**II. Jesus does give His disciples two great lessons on the subject of humility.**

A. The first one is found in Matthew 18:1-4. “*Whoever humbles himself like this child.*”  
What are the main characteristics of a child?

**1. It is teachableness, a willingness to learn.**

a. A Child is eager for knowledge; he is everlastingly asking questions.

**b. He or she is bent on investigation and pries into everything.**

c. He or she always wants you to tell them one more story

**2. A little child is not vain either for possessions or in regards to people.**

a. A child is just excited about the package as he is the contents.

**b. A child is not aware of the race, creed or class of people.**

3. A child is not ambitious. He or she will choose love over power and position every time.

**4. The religious leaders of that day did not have this kind of humility.**

a. They were not teachable; they knew everything; and nobody could tell them anything.

**b. They were vain; they blew trumpets and called attention to themselves and their actions. They would not stoop to minister to people who they consider less than them.**

c. They were ambitious; they always pushing themselves forward, taking the chief places at the feasts.

**5. Jesus however was humble in this way.**

a. He is constantly talking to God, asking Him questions, praying for new light.

**b. He was not vain, He constantly understated what He was doing and told people not to tell others what He did. And He constantly went to the least, the last and the lost.**

c. He was not ambitious, He would not let the people make Him King.

**B. The second is found in Matthew 20:25-28 - Humility is found in a willingness to**

serve.

1. A humble man is a man who is ready and willing to make himself useful - Acts 10:38.

- **Luke 22:27-28** - *“But I am among you as the one who serves.”*

- **Philippians 2:4-5** - *“Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus.”*

**2. Jesus came down to where people were in order to do them good. This is Christian humility.**

III The humility which Jesus wants, and which he exemplified in His life, is a form of strength. Only a strong man can be humble.

**A. Humility can be defined as having a sense of need.**

1. Not only do we need God, but we need other people as well.

**a. God, in His wisdom, has placed us in His church, the body of Christ.**

b. As members of a body, we are dependent upon the other members of the body.

**2. Most men fail miserably because they don't let other people know their deepest needs.**

a. We have the foolish, mistaken idea that to be strong we must pretend that we have no problems.

**b. A humble man not only admits his need, he admits his sins.**

3. Humility also admits its weaknesses. It is only then, he can draw upon the great power of God. **1 Corinthians 5:6-8**

**a. Here Paul warned that they were boasting beyond their actual Spiritual condition.**

b. Leaven causes something to look bigger than it actually is.

**c. The Corinthian Church had leaven in it.**

d. God will accept a small offering but never an inflated one.

**e. Its easier to produce an image than it is to walk in reality**

f. "Get rid of the old leaven - Purge out"

B. God can't give you something that you are pretending to have already, He can't change you into somebody that your pretending to be already.

1. **2 Timothy 3:13 - If your in a bad place and you pretend to be in a good place you then keep yourself from the help that you need.**

2. You can't put something behind you until you face it.

### C. Characteristics of humility.

1. A humble man is approachable.

a. **He does not leave the impression that he is too proud o be questioned or challenged.**

b. This means that the wife and children of a humble man feel that they can talk with him about delicate or difficult matters, even those that involve discussing a mistake that he may have made, without fear of an angry response.

2. **A humble man will apologize when he is wrong.**

a. The humble man does not have to be driven into a corner with irrefutable logic to admit his mistakes.

b. **He is eager to see them and to see them quickly.**

3. The humble man is confident.

a. His confidence is in God and in God's power and not in himself.

b. **He is confident about himself but not in himself.**

- It was pride that changed angels into devils; it is humility that makes men as angels. -St. Augustine

- **True humility is not an abject, groveling, self-despising spirit; it is but a right estimate of ourselves as God sees us. -Edwards**

- Don't let us think that we need to be "stars" in order to shine. It was by the ministry of a candle that the woman recovered her lost piece of silver. -Jowett

- **Humility is strong-not bold; quiet-not speechless; sure-not arrogant. -Smith**

## The Patience of Jesus

*“But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.”*  
James 1:4

**I. Noah Webster’s 1828 Dictionary defines “patience” this way: “A calm temper which bears evils without murmuring or expecting good without discontent.”**

A man's car stalled in the heavy traffic as the light turned green. All his efforts to start the engine failed, and a chorus of honking behind him made matters worse. He finally got out of his car and walked back to the first driver and said, "I'm sorry, but I can't seem to get my car started. If you'll go up there and give it a try, I'll stay here and blow your horn for you.

**A. Words are sometimes like stars.**

1. You see a star shining in the sky, and to your eye it is a single star.
  - a. **The astronomer then brings his telescope and to your amazement it is not a single star but a double star.**
  - b. Just so there are words which shine like stars in the firmament of speech, single stars they seem until we subject them to scrutiny. Then we discover that two meanings burn within the confines of the letters.
  - c. **The word “patience is not a single, but a double star.**
2. First of all it means: “calmly waiting for something hoped for.”
  - a. **In this sense even the animals are endowed with the virtue of patience. See the cat watching hour after hour, waiting for the appearance of a mouse.**
  - b. It is this virtue of patience that mankind has in greater or lesser degrees. Patience a lot of times is mistaken as genius.
  - c. **We can see this in the movie “Brave Heart.”**
3. Secondly, it is the uncomplaining endurance of tribulation.
  - a. **You can see this when a person suffers with some physical infirmity and yet doesn’t complain or even rebel against their fate.**
  - b. God does not offer us a way out of the testings of life. He offers us a way through, and that makes all the difference.
  - c. **Cripple him, and you have a Sir Walter Scott. Lock him in a prison cell, and you have a John Bunyan. Bury him in the snows of Valley Forge, and you have a George Washington. Raise him in abject poverty, and you have an Abraham**

**Lincoln. Strike him down in infantile paralysis, and he becomes Franklin Roosevelt. Deafen him, and you have a Ludwig van Beethoven. Have him or her born black in a society filled with racial discrimination, and you have a Booker T. Washington, a Marian Anderson, a George Washington Carver. . . . Call him a slow learner; "retarded," and write him off an uneducable, and you have an Albert Einstein.**

- B. If you want to see patience in both its forms raised to its highest power without a defect and without a flaw, you will find it in Jesus of Nazareth.
- 1. If patience means the calm waiting for something hoped for then Jesus perfectly demonstrates it.**
    - a. He waited in a little country town in Galilee for thirty years before He entered into the work He felt God had given Him to do.
    - b. At the age of twelve He realized that He had to be about His Father's business. But then there is an 18 year period between then and when He actually going about His father's business.**
    - c. He waited on God's timing. Ecclesiastes 3:1-11 & 8:6
  - 2. Even when He finally started His ministry, He didn't get ahead of God, He was patient.**
    - a. He said, I will not do what others have done; I will choose the slow and toilsome way.
    - b. I will not cut the knot, It will untie it.**
    - c. I will not push the world; I will draw it.
    - d. I will not conquer the world by military methods; I will win it by serving it.**
  3. He seemed slow to those who were around Him. It seemed like He purposely slowed things down when people around became impatient.
    - a. In Matthew 14, He sends the crowd away that had been building to make Him King.**
    - b. In John 7:3-6, He resists His own families attempt to do things faster.
    - c. Matthew 8:4 - Matthew 16:20 - Mark 9:9 - Luke 8:56.**
  4. The Father also had to slow things down when men tried to get ahead of His plan.

- a. In Luke 4:29-30 - They tried throwing Jesus off a cliff but God prevented it.
- b. In John 7:30 - The Pharisees seek to seize Him.

**C. Jesus was patient with His enemies.**

1. How could God even make a world like this?
2. **How can He allow the things that are happening to continue?**
3. We need to understand that He is patient, infinitely patient, and is willing to wait until human hearts surrender.
  - a. **Not only does He wait, but he also suffers indignity at the hands of His creation without blazing up in anger and consuming us.**
  - b. We may be ungrateful, insolent, irreverent, rebellious, but He is patient.
  - c. **We may refuse to do the things He asks us to do and persist in doing the things that are contrary to His will, but He is patient.**
  - d. We may injure ourselves and hurt others. Nevertheless He will not strike us down.
  - f. **He will give us another day, and still another, and still another.**
  - g. His hope is that perhaps tomorrow the win will be repented of and the prodigal will come home.

**D. Jesus was patient with His friends which can harder than with your enemies. Because you expect your enemies act the way they do.**

1. His friends did not understand Him.
2. **His own mother and brothers were not in sympathy with Him.**
3. The disciples to whom He gave Himself were constantly failing to catch the importance of the things that He told them.
  - a. Matthew 18:21-22 - *"Then Peter came and said to Him, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?"*
  - b. John 3:12-13 - *"If I told you earthly things and you do not believe, how shall you believe if I tell you heavenly things?"*
4. **They were slow and stupid. Matthew 16:5-12.**

5. They were petty and selfish
  - a. **Matthew 18:21-22** - *“Then Peter came and said to Him, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?”*
  - b. **Luke 22:24-25** - *“And there arose also a dispute among them as to which one of them was regarded to be greatest.”*
6. **He demanded much of His disciples, but He did not demand it all at once.**
7. He said even if a man has a little faith, even as small as a mustard seed, he has enough to start with.
8. **Great men have oftentimes been notoriously impatient with their weaker and more incompetent brothers. Strong themselves they could not sympathize with weaker people. Smart themselves they cannot endure the stupidity of others**
9. To every follower of Jesus, the Almighty is a longsuffering God. He has vast plans running through the ages, and He is willing to wait for their fulfillment.

**Have patience! All things are difficult before they become easy.**

How poor are they that have not patience! What wound did ever heal but by degrees?

**One moment of patience may prevent disaster; one moment of impatience may ruin a life.**

Patience: accepting a difficult situation without giving God a deadline to remove it

**A pearl is a garment of patience that enclosed an annoyance.**

The difficult things take a long time--the impossible take a little longer.

**God often puts us in situations that are too much for us so that we will learn that no situation is too much for him.**

God promises a safe landing but not a calm passage.

## **The Courage of Jesus**

Luke 5:10, *“Fear Not.”*

**I. Noah Webster’s 1828 Dictionary defines “courage” this way: *“that quality of mind that***

*enables men to encounter danger and difficulties with boldness and firmness but without fear or depression.”*

**A. In Jesus you will find bravery at its best, courage at its loftiest, heroism at its pinnacle.**

1. A lot of men will demonstrate courage when they are cornered or trapped.
  - a. This courage is born out of the fear of some personal loss.**
  - b. The goal of this courage is to preserve your life.
- 2. This was not the courage that Jesus demonstrated.**
  - a. His was the courage of the mind, the heroism of the heart.
  - b. The goal of this courage is to sow your life**
3. A lot of men will demonstrate courage when they are in the midst of great numbers.
  - a. This courage is born out of the confidence that odds are with you.**
  - b. The goal of this courage is to gain the approval of others.
- 4. Jesus manifested His courage in isolation.**
  - a. There was nobody to march with Him, He marched alone.
  - b. The goal of this courage is to gain the approval of God.**

**B. Jesus demonstrated the courage to speak the truth.**

- 1. It was necessary for Him to say things which would offend**
  - a. The religious leaders were great sticklers for forms of fasting. Jesus minimized the value of them. Matthew 9:14-15
  - b. They were scrupulous in regard to sabbatical laws. Jesus could not keep them.**  
Matthew 12:1-8
  - c. They were fanatical in regard to the number of times they washed their hands. Jesus had no time for such foolishness. Matthew 15:2-9
- 2. Jesus spoke the truth even when it cost Him both His reputation and His following. John 6:52-68 & Luke 14:25-27**

II. Is there any virtue more associated with manhood than courage? Courage is universally admired, praised and sought after. There are many kinds of courage - Lets look at Six

**1 Corinthians 16:13** - *"Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong."* (NIV)

**A. Courage to Do.**

1. Had we been there and asked David where he got the courage to fight Goliath. David would probably have look at us with surprise. "But this man was insulting God," he would've answered, "what else was there to do?" 1 Samuel 17:17-58
2. **That is what courage is all about: forgetting ourselves and becoming consumed with the glory of God.**
  - a. The issue of strength for the task is not our concern. God will supply whatever we need, because it is His battle to fight and win.
  - b. **We are courageous because we know that God is with us, that God is for us.**
  - c. This kind of courage see's the world and the battles with the eyes of God. 2 Kings 6:14-17

**B. Courage to Endure.**

1. This is the courage of staying on a righteous course when it seems there is no end to your difficulties, when there is no immediate reward, but only long days of loneliness and hardship.
2. **It means keeping up your spirits when there is no end in sight.**
3. It is the bravery required when your name is dragged down, when your gossiped about and when your motives are questioned.

**C. Courage to Come Back.**

1. This third type of courage is that of a man who has failed and who must face his failures and try to find his way back to God.
2. **Once again the story is familiar, David has committed adultery with Bathsheba and has lied and murdered to cover it up.**
  - a. Does he have the courage to face God, his family, the nation and himself.
  - b. **Will he still be a man after the heart of God, or will he throw it all away.**

3. We see his response, as he recorded in **Psalm 51**.
  - a. **He humbled himself, made no excuses, begged God for forgiveness and for a new heart and strove to rebuild his life.**
  - b. None of us is perfect, we will all sin. Will we have the courage to cast ourselves on the mercy of God or will we simply run away.

#### **D. Emotional courage.**

1. This is the courage required when everything around the seems to be going against us.
2. **It is the courage called for when we are under pressure at work, when we've had financial setbacks, or when we are going through spiritual and emotional upheaval.**
3. Too many of us men are not manly in the way we face adversity.
  - a. **We give into depression, discouragement and despair.**
  - b. It shows on our faces and in our posture.
  - c. **We are unable to encourage our wives, children and friends.**
  - d. We become a burden rather than the burden bearer.

#### **E. Social courage.**

1. This is the courage to do what is right even when the crowd and popular opinion are against us.
2. **It is the courage to stand-alone with deep conviction and clear vision when all others around us are saying we should compromise.**
3. Social courage is required when we must work with difficult issues and relationships.
  - a. **Many of us have conflicts in our marriage and in other important relationships that we will not solve because we are cowards.**
  - b. We are unwilling to speak the truth in love - Ephesians 4:15.
  - c. **So we remain unreconciled and distant from those to whom we should be closest.**
  - d. We should have the courage to have the uncomfortable talks that will free us from the prison of estranged relationships.

## **F. Personal Courage.**

1. This is the courage that is required when we challenge ourselves to go where we have never gone before and to do what we have never done before.
  2. **This is the bravery demanded of us, when we must make a change in our character or in our personality.**
  3. This is the boldness that will cause us to take a risk rather than to remain comfortable.
    - a. **Many of us are stagnant, dead and bored because we are unwilling to push ourselves beyond our fears.**
    - b. I would urge you to face your fears specifically and take steps to conquer each one of them.
- **A man without courage is a knife without an edge.**
  - Courage is fear that has said its prayers.
  - **Courage is resistance to fear, mastery of fear, not absence of fear.**
  - Fear can keep a man out of danger; but courage can support him in it.
  - **The test of courage comes when we are in the minority; the test of tolerance when we are in the majority.**
  - To laugh is to risk appearing the fool. To weep is to risk appearing sentimental. To reach out for another is to risk involvement. To expose feelings is to risk exposing our true self. To place your ideas, your dreams, before the crowd is to risk loss. To love is to risk not being loved in return. To live is to risk dying. To hope is to risk despair. To try at all is to risk failure. But risk we must, because the greatest hazard in life is to risk nothing. The man, the woman, who risks nothing does nothing, has nothing, is nothing.

## **The Indignation of Jesus**

*- "After looking around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart."*

Mark 3:5

### **I. In this lesson I want to look at the "Indignation of Jesus."**

If we are to be conformed to His image then we need to learn how He was able to be angry

and yet not sin.

**A. The best way to accomplish this is see how our Lord handled and channeled the anger He felt at different times.**

1. There are certain moods and feelings which we are reluctant to ascribe to Jesus, anger seems so human.
2. **Anger is associated in our mind with infirmity. Much of our own anger has been worldly.**
  - a. Our anger is frequently a manifestation of our selfishness. We become indignant over trifles.

**What makes you mad?**

- Driving in the middle of the road - Campers, yielders and mergers.
- **People don't return phone calls.** - **People ignore us.**
- People misunderstand us. - We are overlooked in some function.
- **A person drives too slow.** - **Somebody keeps us waiting.**

How do we respond when:

- **Our comfort has been blasted** - **Our rights have been entrenched upon**
- Our dignity is being affronted - And we are downright mad.

**b. But in the presence of gigantic outrages perpetrated on the helpless and the weak, some of us are as calm as a summer morning.**

- c. Evil men do not make us angry unless they interfere with our own personal affairs.

**B. Our indignation, then, is quite different from that of Jesus. His anger never had its roots in selfishness.**

- **When men abused him, he was unruffled. (Matthew 13 & 14)**
- When they lied about him, his pulse was not quickened.
- **When they nailed his hands to the cross, no trace of anger darkened his face.**

- When the Samaritans didn't receive Him
- **Disciples arguing over who is the greatest**
- Judas betraying with a kiss
- **Beaten and made fun of.**

C. But the new Testament writers did not hesitate to inform us that Jesus sometimes blazed with anger.

1. The blast of his scorn was so hot that it frightened and scorched those on whom it fell. **Matthew 23 & the fig tree.**
- 2 **Romans 11:22** - *“Behold then the kindness (gentleness) and severity (roughness) of God.” (NAS)*
3. Here, then, we have in Jesus what seems to some, a contradiction.
  - **He is a lamb, and at the same time He is the lion of the tribe of Judah.**
  - He caresses like the mother, and He also strikes like a thunder bolt.
  - **He is tender, but He is also terrible.**
  - He is loving, but He also smites with a blow that crushes.
  - **Jesus wears a sovereign crown but bears a Father's heart.**

D. What made Jesus Mad? Inhumanity, insincerity, and unforgiveness,

**1. Inhumanity, when He saw men, ordained religious leaders of the people, more interested in their petty regulations than in the welfare of their fellow man.**

- more concerned about the standard than people
  - **more concerned about preserving their lives than in sowing their lives**
  - using their religion to insulate themselves from the world instead of impacting it.
- a. **It was when He saw His creation abused that His great soul rose in wrath.**
  - b. The more helpless the person who was mistreated, the hotter was the fire of His indignation.
    - Against rich people who imposed upon the poor.

- **Against clever people who took advantage of the ignorant.**
  - Against strong people who mistreated the weak.
  - **Against crafty people who laid traps for the innocent.**
- c. God wants us to get the message He has a peculiar passion for the forgotten.
- God is more concerned with the right heart than He is with the right ritual.
  - **The right heart with a wrong ritual is better than the wrong heart with the right ritual**
2. Insincerity, He was angered by the desecration of the Temple.
- a. **The people who cared nothing for prayers and everything for money.**
- b. It is disappointing when you think someone is interested in you, only to find they are interested in your money.
- **When salespeople do it, it's irritating.**
  - But when people of faith do it, it can be devastating.
  - **It's a sad but true fact of the faith, religion is used for profit and prestige.**
  - When it is, there are two results, people are exploited and God is infuriated.

**3. Unforgiveness, in the face of forgiveness, made Jesus angry. Matthew 18**

D. In Jesus, then, we see what a normal man is and feels.

1. **He will not admit that in the garden of the heart there are any plants which the heavenly Father has planted which ought to be rooted up.**
- a. All the impulses, desires and passions with which the All-Mighty has endowed us With, have a mission to perform.
- b. And life's task is not to strangle them, but to train them for their work.
2. **Jesus was angry, but He did not sin. Ephesians 4:26-27, Satan can use your anger or God can.**
- a. Anger, because of its heat, readily passes beyond its appointed limits.
- b. **Like all kinds of fire, it is dangerous and difficult to control.**

- c. But Jesus controlled it, He said, "thus far, and no further." His wrath was the hottest ever known upon our earth, but the heart in which it burned was sinless.
  - d. **By His spirit He will also help us to control it, if we are angry at the right things.**
3. Indifference to wrongdoing is always a sign of moral deterioration.
- a. **If we do not flame against villainy, it is because there is still much of the villain in ourselves.**
  - b. The healthy soul resents and resists every form of wrong.
4. **Nothing is more needed in our day than an enlarged capacity for moral indignation.**
- a. Nothing so clears the atmosphere as the heat of hearts heated by holy anger.
  - b. **Evil will flourish as long as good men do nothing.**
  - c. Society would be cleansed of much of its pollution if we had more men and women capable of becoming genuinely angry.
- **Let us pray, then, everyday that a new indignation may sweep through the world.**
  - It is the devils trick to keep good men from becoming angry.
  - **Not only are we permitted as Christians to be angry, but it is our duty.**
  - And it is the only way that we will truly be conformed to His image.

## **The Reverence Of Jesus**

- I. No analysis of the character of Jesus would be complete which failed to recognize His reverence.
  - A. **To write a definition of reverence is not easy. There are some things which the heart can sense, but which the intellect cannot easily define.**
    - 1. We know what reverence is, and yet we stumble in trying to define it.

2. **Noah Webster's 1828 dictionary defines it this way: "Fear mingled with respect and esteem."**
3. The fact is, reverence is a complex emotion, made up of mingled feelings of the soul. There is in it, respect, affection, fear, along with an abiding consciousness of dependence.
4. **There is probably no expression which defines what we mean by reverence so well as the Old Testament phrase, "The fear of the Lord."**

## B. The Fear Of The Lord!

1. **Holy fear is the key to God's sure foundation, unlocking the treasuries of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge.**

Isaiah 33:5-6 - *"The LORD is exalted, for he dwells on high; he will fill Zion with justice and righteousness. He will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the LORD is the key to this treasure."* NIV

Psalm 34:9 - *"Fear the LORD, you his saints, for those who fear him lack nothing."* NIV

Psalm 34:9 - *"Let the LORD's people show him reverence, for those who honor him will have all they need."* NLT

2. **You need to learn that you cannot truly love God until you fear Him; nor can you properly fear Him until you love Him.**
  - a. Do you think the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords is going to come into a place where He is not given due honor and reverence?
  - b. Do you think the Master of all creation is going to speak when His word is not respected enough to be listened to attentively?**
  - c. You're deceived if you do.

## C. Conduct Yourselves in the Fear of God

1 Peter 1:15-18 - *"He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear."* NKJV

1. **Is your conduct an indication that you have lost the vision of the "majesty of God."**

- a. There is too much shallowness and levity among God's people.
  - 1) **In public worship do you is your posture of slouching and sitting an indication of your callousness where the fear of God is concerned?**
  - 2) Is kneeling and prostrating yourselves before the Lord in humility common in your prayer time?
  - 3) **Is it more characteristic of you to clap your hands with joy, then to bow your head with shame and tears?**
- b. When you saunter up to God to claim His friendship, does it occur to you that He might send you away.
  - 1) **Do you think He reveal His will to those who take Him lightly? Would you?**
  - 2) He keeps His will secret from those who do not fear Him.

**Psalm 25:14 - "The secret of the LORD is for those who fear Him, And He will make them know His covenant." NAS**

*"Friendship with the LORD is reserved for those who fear him. With them he shares the secrets of his covenant." NLT*

***"Friendship with God is reserved for those who reverence him. With them alone he shares the secrets of his promises." TLB***

2. We fear God because of His wrath and we love God because of His mercy.
  - a. **Only he who knows the greatness of God's wrath will be mastered by the greatness of His mercy.**
  - b. We can cry "*Hallelujah*" with authenticity only after we have first cried "*Woe is me*"

#### **D. The Blessings of fearing God.**

1. It positions our hearts to receive answers.

Hebrews 5:7 - "*Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear.*" NKJV

2. **It assures that God's great goodness abounds.**

Psalm 31:19 - "*Oh, how great is Your goodness, Which You have laid up for those who*

*fear You, Which You have prepared for those who trust in You In the presence of the sons of men!” NKJV*

**3. It promises angelic protection.**

*Psalm 34:7 - “The angel of the LORD encamps all around those who fear Him, And delivers them.” NKJV*

**4. It secures God’s continual attention.**

*Psalm 33:18 - “Behold, the eye of the LORD is on those who fear Him, On those who hope in His mercy.” NKJV*

**5. It supplies His provision.**

*Psalm 34:9 - “Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints! There is no want to those who fear Him.” NKJV*

**6. It contains great mercy.**

*Psalm 103:11 - “For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him.” NKJV*

**7. It provides assurance of food.**

*Psalm 111:5 - “He has given food to those who fear Him; He will ever be mindful of His covenant.” NKJV*

**8. It promises protection.**

*Psalm 115:11 - “You who fear the LORD, trust in the LORD; He is their help and their shield.” NKJV*

**9. It fulfills our desire and delivers us from harm.**

*Psalm 145:19 - “He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cries for help and rescues them.” NLT*

**10. It provides wisdom, understanding, and time management.**

*Proverbs 9:10-11 - “To be wise you must first have reverence for the LORD. If you know the Holy One, you have understanding. Wisdom will add years to your life.” TEV*

**11. It is our confidence and protection in the face of death.**

Proverbs 14:26-27 - *“In the fear of the LORD there is strong confidence, And His children will have a place of refuge. The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life, To turn one away from the snares of death.”* NKJV

**12. It provides peace of mind.**

Proverbs 15:16 - *“It is better to the peace of mind that goes with the fear for the LORD than to have great treasure with turmoil.”* NLT

**13. It results in complete satisfaction.**

Proverbs 19:23 - *“The fear of the LORD leads to life, And he who has it will abide in satisfaction; He will not be visited with evil.”* NKJV

**14. It leads to riches, honor and life.**

Proverbs 22:4 - *“By humility and the fear of the LORD Are riches and honor and life.”* NKJV

**15. It will keep us on the path.**

Jeremiah 32:40 - *“And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good; but I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me.”* NKJV

**16. It results in enjoyment of our labor, and full rewarding lives.**

Psalms 128:1-4 - *“How happy are those who fear the LORD— all who follow his ways! You will enjoy the fruit of your labor. How happy you will be! How rich your life! Your wife will be like a fruitful vine, flourishing within your home. And look at all those children! There they sit around your table as vigorous and healthy as young olive trees. That is the LORD's reward for those who fear him.”* NLT

## **The Holiness Of Jesus**

I. 1 Peter 1:15-16 - *“But like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; 16 because it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”* NAS

**A. What do we mean by “Holiness.”**

1. Noah Webster’s 1828 Dictionary gives two definitions of “Holiness.”

a. **Whole, pure, perfect, without flaw or blemish.**

b. Hallowed; consecrated, that which is separated to a particular service or purpose.

**2. In the New Testament there are two Greek words translated Holiness.**

- a. *“Hagios”* - fundamentally signifies "separated" and consecrated to God.
- b. *“Hagiosune”* denotes the manifestation of the quality of "holiness" in personal conduct.

3. Therefore, “holiness” can be seen in how one behaves and in what one does.

- a. **Holiness is demonstrated not only by not doing the things we shouldn’t, but also by doing the things that we should.**
- b. Holiness is seen in both sinlessness and in service.

**B. We can see the Holiness of Jesus in His discipline where sin was concerned and His duty where the service of God was concerned.**

"For we have no super-human High Priest to whom our weaknesses are unintelligible for He himself has shared fully in all our experience, except that he never sinned." Heb 4:15

**1. He Himself - not an angel, not an ambassador, or emissary.**

**2. Shared fully - not nearly, not to a large degree, fully.**

**3. In all of your experience - every hurt, every failure, every disappointment, every ache, all the stresses and all the strains.**

**4. Except He never sinned - He never missed the mark**

**a. Sin has more to do with not doing the things that you should than it does with doing the things that you shouldn’t.**

- James 4:17 - *“anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.”*
- **You can focus in on the things that cause you to miss the mark, that you never actually shoot at the mark.**

**b. Repentance is not only turning away from one thing but it is also a turning towards another.**

**He didn’t use what He felt: - as an excuse to miss the mark.**

- as a reason to retreat.

- **as a license to laziness.**

- as a invitation to idleness

**c. It didn’t drive Him to do something wrong but neither did it keep Him from doing the things that were right.**

**B. Did Jesus ever have a day that he wanted to escape from? And if He did was He able to kick into God mode or was the Father selective on what he allowed his son to go through.**

- Philippians 2:7 - *"He stripped himself of His Glory and became a human with a heart to serve."*

**1. He knows what it is like to have His whole world turn upside down in one day. Jesus knows what it is to go from calm to chaos from peace to perplexity**

2. Matthew 13 & 14 tells of one such day in the life of our Lord. One that was full of ups and downs.

a. **13:54-58 - He experienced internal rejection and ignorant unbelief.**

b. 14:1-12 - He experienced intense sorrow and an immediate threat.

c. **14:13 - He experienced immense crowds and insensitive interruptions.**

d. As a result he wanted to get away, retreat, miss the mark.

## **II. What Jesus seeks and what Jesus gets are not always the same.**

He understood that sometimes His agenda would be in direct conflict with God's agenda. How was Jesus able to let go of His agenda and embrace Gods?

**Matthew 14:14 - tells us three things that He had to change in order for God's will to be carried out.**

A. He Had A Change Of Perspective - *"He saw a great multitude"* From His welfare to God's Glory.

**1. Jesus had experienced rejection, threats, and intense grief. Nobody would blame Him for wanting to get away with some friends.**

a. This is a time for both God and the people to be understanding and not demanding.

**b. There is no indication that any of the multitude asked Jesus how He was doing or are they concerned with how He is feeling.**

c. No one has come to give - all have come to take.

**d. But with hands extending and voices demanding - Jesus responds with love.**

**B. He Had A Change Of Priorities - "He felt compassion for them" From His Needs to**

**their Needs.**

1. Jesus was experiencing some personal problems, the last thing He wanted was to get involved in other people's problems.

**2. And yet that was the very thing that He needed.**

a. He didn't need to focus on His problems, He didn't need to view life from what He felt.

**b. The best medicine for our problems is to get involved in someone else's.**

c. He was able to over come what He felt by focusing in on what they felt.

- **He felt the limp of the crippled**

- He felt the hurt of the diseased

- **He felt the loneliness of the leper**

- He felt the embarrassment of the sinful

**3. Once He felt their hurts, He couldn't help but heal their hurts.**

4. Once He was touched by their needs He forgot His own.

**C. He Had A Change Of Perception - "He healed their sick"**

From demanding to needy, from selfish to sickly, from hurtful to hurting.

**Being needy will make you demanding, being sickly will make you selfish, experiencing pain will cause you to want to inflict pain.**

1. Matthew says that Jesus healed their sick, not some of their sick, or the righteous of the sick, or the deserving of the sick, but all of them.

- **would Jesus heal someone that wasn't worthy of good health?**

- would some use their new-found health to hurt others?

- **would Jesus release tongues that would someday curse?**

- would Jesus give sight to eyes that would lust?

- **would Jesus heal hands that would someday kill?**

- would Jesus give gifts to people who may use them for evil?

**2. The answer to all of these questions is YES!**

3. The reason being is that His goodness is spurred by His nature and not our worthiness.

- a. Our evil cannot diminish His love nor can our goodness increase it.
- b. Each time Jesus healed or blessed He had to overlook both the past and the future.
- c. Something that He still does and requires us to do.

**D. Because Jesus was able to make a change of perspective, a change of priorities, and a change of perception a channel of power was opened to Him.**

1. This channel of power was able to accomplish three things.

- a. **Matthew 14:14 - All were healed.**
- b. **Mark 6:34 - All were taught.**
- c. **Matthew 14:15-21 - All were fed.**

2. We too can have a channel of power opened to us if when we are feeling bad allow God to change our perspective, our priorities, and our perceptions.

**E. The Lord's power stems from His Holiness.**

- **Psalm 98:1** - *"Sing to the LORD a new song, For He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him."*
- **Isaiah 52:10** - *"The LORD has bared His holy arm in the sight of all the nations."*
- **1 Chronicles 29:12** - *"Both riches and honor come from Thee, and Thou dost rule over all, and in Thy hand is power and might; and it lies in Thy hand to make great, and to strengthen everyone."*

## **The Greatness Of Jesus**

I. What is Greatness? Who is a great man? What is the distinctive Characteristic that makes one great?

**These are the three questions we will seek to answer in this study.**

A. What Is Greatness?

- 1. **Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines "Greatness" this way: "Expressing a large, extensive or unusual degree of anything."**
- 2. In the Old Testament the main word used is "*gadal*" which means *"to become strong, grow up, be great or wealthy, evidence oneself as great (magnified), be powerful, significant, or valuable."* This word is used in the following scriptures.

- **Psalm 145:3** - *“Great is the LORD, and highly to be praised; and His greatness is unsearchable.”*
  - **Exodus 15:7** - *“And in the greatness of Thine excellence Thou dost overthrow those who rise up against Thee.”*
  - **Deuteronomy 3:24** - *“O Lord GOD, Thou hast begun to show Thy servant Thy greatness and Thy strong hand; for what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do such works and mighty acts as Thine?”*
  - **Psalm 66:3** - *“Say to God, “How awesome are Thy works! Because of the greatness of Thy power Thine enemies will give feigned obedience to Thee.”*
  - **Psalm 69:13** - *“O God, in the greatness of Thy lovingkindness.”*
3. In the new Testament the main word used for “Greatness” is “Huperbole” literally means *“a throwing beyond, hence, a surpassing, an excellence, an exceeding greatness.”* This word is found in the following scriptures.
- **2 Corinthians 4:7** - *“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves.”*
  - **Luke 9:43** - *“And they were all amazed at the greatness of God.”*
  - **Ephesians 1:19** - *“And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.”*

B. What Is The Distinctive Characteristic That Makes One Great?

- 1. In history the quality which is common to all is an extraordinary capacity for achievement.**
2. It is when someone does something that is enduring, which lives on even when the person who did it died.
- 3. A short list of people like this would be: Alexander The Great, Leonardo Divinchi, Bach, Mozart, Winston Churchill, Abraham Lincoln, Betsy Ross, Florence Nightingale, etc.**
  - a. These people carved statues or painted pictures or led armies or ruled states or composed music or framed laws or wrote poems or made discoveries or inventions which enriched the lives of everyone.
  - b. They made a mark on the mind of the world. Their lives and achievements lived on after their deaths.**

### C. What Is The Greatness Of Jesus.

#### 1. **If the mark of greatness is achievement, was Jesus Great? What did He achieve?**

a. He never chiseled a statue or painted a picture or wrote a poem or composed a piece of music or led an army or published a book or framed a law.

**b. Yet everybody without hesitation would call Jesus great.**

c. No informed person in this world would deny Him this exalting adjective regardless of what religion they practiced.

**d. Not only is He counted great, but in a large part of the world He counted as the greatest.**

1) Charles Lamb gave expression to this feeling that many of us share when he said, *“If Shakespeare were to come into this room, we should all rise up to meet him; but if Christ was to come into it, we should all fall upon our knees.”*

#### 2. **His greatness is greater than that of all others, and it is also different.**

a. Other men are great artist or poets or generals or statesmen,

**b. Jesus’ greatness lies in the realm of personality, in the kingdom of character.**

1) His achievement was not wrought with paint or with chisel or with sword or with pen, but by the heavenly passion of a victorious will.

**2) There is nothing of Him but His manhood. We do not say, “behold the poet, or orator, the philosopher;” we say “*Bold the Man.*”**

c. It is one of the saddest of all surprises to discover on reading the biographies of the world’s great workers how many of them have been narrow and superstitious, selfish and envious, sordid in their ambitions and groveling in their aims.

#### 3. **Jesus was great in His soul.**

a. Insight is a trait of greatness, only great men see deep into things.

**1) He had eyes which saw to the core of every problem and to the center of every situation.**

2) He never missed the essential point or was misled by a subordinate issue.

- 3) **He stripped off the accidental from the soul of the essential.**
  - 4) It was His insight which made Him formidable to the men who tried to trip Him with their questioning.
- b. His greatness comes out in His fellowship with His disciples.**
- 1) The disciples were strong and able men. They later turned the world upside down.
  - 2) **But in His presence they freely and sincerely acknowledged Him as Master.**
  - 3) They were as old in years as Jesus; but in thought and aim, in hope and ideal, they were, as compared with Jesus, only a company of babies.
- c. His greatness can be seen in the lives that He changed. Greatness is measured by the effects which it produces.**
- 1) Upon the men of His time He exerted a power so marvelous that it seemed uncanny, and some people thought he must be in league with the devil.
  - 2) **When He spoke men went wild over Him, some in adoration and some in hatred. Wherever He went, He left men seething and bubbling.**
  - 3) Here is the pinnacle of greatness, Jesus changed men.
    - **He changed their habits**
    - He changed their opinions and ambitions
    - **He changed their tempers and dispositions**
    - He changed their natures and their hearts.
  - 4) **They were never the same after they gave themselves to Him.**
- d. He is the image of God.**
- 1) **His greatness is full-orbed. He had a charm about Him which wooed and fascinated. Children liked and sinners were drawn to Him.**
  - 2) He had the heart of a child, the tenderness of a woman and the strength of a man.
  - 3) **He pushed every good trait of human character to its utmost limit.**
    - His forgiveness was unbounded.
    - **His generosity was untiring.**

- His patience was inexhaustible.
  - **His mercy was immeasurable.**
  - His courage was illimitable.
  - **His wisdom was unfathomable.**
  - His kindness was interminable.
  - **His faith was unshakable.**
  - His hope indomitable.
  - **And His love was infinite.**
- e. It is impossible to go beyond Him.
- 1) **You can never outgrow Him.**
  - 2) He will always be ahead of You, you shall always hear Him saying, “Follow Me.”
  - 3) **He is the ideal of the heart.**
  - 4) He is the goal of humanity.
  - 5) **He is the Greatest.**

