

(Through the Bible) Matthew 1-4

by Chuck Smith

Chuck Smith discusses the importance of the majority text and the genealogy of Jesus, emphasizing God's grace and the significance of accurate Bible translations.

Duration: 1:43:57

Scripture: Matthew 1:1, Matthew 4:23, Matthew 11:28-30, Matthew 18:21-22, Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:17-18

Topics: "Biblical Genealogy", "Discipleship"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the sensory experiences that our brains process while listening to a sermon. He emphasizes the importance of having a solid and reliable translation of the Bible. The sermon then transitions to the Gospel according to Matthew, where the genealogy of Jesus Christ is presented. The speaker highlights how Jesus came to fulfill the promise made to Abraham, that through his seed all nations would be blessed. The sermon concludes with the calling of Simon Peter and Andrew to follow Jesus, as they leave their fishing nets behind to become fishers of men.

Transcript

I have had a very difficult time with Bible translations because I love the King James so very much. Not so much for the old style of English, but for the fact that it was translated from the majority text. Now there are over 5,000 manuscripts, portions and parts of the scriptures that have been discovered and codified.

Of these 5,000 manuscripts, there are about 95% of them that are in complete agreement or, you know, basic agreement all the way through. There is a set of manuscripts that have some fundamental disagreements with the majority of the manuscripts. It does happen that these manuscripts that have a fundamental disagreement with the majority of the manuscripts are traced to two of the oldest manuscripts that we have copies of, and that is the Sinaiticus and the Alexandrius.

But it is obvious that the Sinaiticus and Alexandrius come from the same body of original manuscripts and that the majority of the manuscripts come from a different body of original manuscripts. So you have a Greek text by Westcott and Hort that is based 98% upon the Sinaiticus and Alexandrian manuscripts. You have what was called the Textus Receptus, also known as the majority text, a text that was developed by Rasmus actually from the majority of the manuscripts, over 90%.

And it is a text where the agreement is found in more than 90% of the manuscripts, so it is called the majority text. But somehow Westcott and Hort, who were in their own theology very liberal, were able to

convince the scholars that their text was more scholarly and that the Sinaiticus and Alexandrian were more true to the original writings than the majority text. And though there was quite a great debate by many scholars at that time, it seemed that the pendulum of scholarship went with Westcott and Hort, so that it has been considered by what I consider to be men who call themselves higher critics and boast of their own scholarship, Westcott and Hort has become the accepted of the intelligentsia of the biblical world.

So that if I wanted to be noted by these eggheads as a scholar, I would quote from the Westcott and Hort in order that they might say, oh that Chuck Smith is a real biblical scholar. If I had the need of acceptance by those people, I would use the Westcott and Hort text. But because I do not need their approval, but I can look at the text with an honest heart, not needing the perks of men, I am convinced that the majority text is the text that is closest to the originals.

And I disavow the fundamental disagreements that are created by the Sinaiticus and Alexandrian text. Now in doing that, I stand up against those men who are noted biblical scholars and who pat each other on the back and tell each other how smart they are. But the problem, I do feel that the King James is difficult for people to read who are not familiar with the style and the language of the King James.

I am not really married to the King James Bible. I personally grew up with it, so I have no problem with its style. But I recognize that the style does create tremendous difficulty for many people who are totally unfamiliar with it and thus they find difficulty reading the King James Bible.

But in the same token, I have had great difficulty in recommending the modern translations to the people because all of the modern translators want to be patted on the back as great scholars, and so they go to Westcott and Hort. If I was to make a translation of the New Testament, I wanted the scholars to say, oh, great scholarly work and so forth, then I would go to Westcott and Hort text. If I would translate from the majority text, they'd say, well, it's from the majority text, you know, and it, you know, nobody who is anybody in the realm of the academia would, you know, go to the majority text.

Yet I am in love with the majority text. I'm not at all in love with Westcott and Hort. I'm not at all in love with their theology.

I cannot respect their theology or their positions. So it's been my prayer and my desire that a modern English Bible would be published that would go back to the majority text and use the same text, Greek text, that the King James translators used so that we could have the majority text in a modern translation that would be easy for the new believers to get hold of and read and would not be introduced to some of the fundamental errors, especially those that regard the deity of Jesus Christ that have been introduced in the Westcott and Hort text. Our liberal theology really was given birth to by Westcott and Hort and their text.

I thank the Lord that a hundred scholars have gotten together and have translated a new translation called the New King James Version. They spent seven years in going back to the original majority text, taking some of the latest discoveries and adding to it, and have come up with what is known as the New King James Version of the Bible. It is a translation in modern English from the majority text, the thing I've been praying for for so long, and I thank the Lord that it is now been published and will be available in about 30 days for the general public.

And it's just a thrill that we have a modern translation from the majority text, one that I can highly recommend. I'm just so excited. I feel that this can give birth to a real spiritual revival, even as did the publishing of the Scriptures from the majority text by Luther.

He used the majority text when he published his Bible, and it gave birth to the Reformation. And out of it came the King James Version that gave a birth to the Reformation in Scotland and England and all. And I thank God that we have now one that is easy to read, very scholarly translation of the majority text, and I encourage you to pick one up as soon as they are available, which should be about in 30 days or so.

And I think that you will really appreciate it, especially if you have problems with King James and you're looking for a modern translation, but you want one that will still be fundamental. This will be it. And I just thank God for it.

I am so upset with the other new versions that have a tendency to play down the Scriptures with the deity of Christ and water down the Scriptures, and it's good to have something that is solid and reliable. So I just thank God for this new translation. Let's get into the gospel according to Matthew.

Matthew was a tax collector in Capernaum before he was called by Jesus Christ to be a disciple. He was also called Levi. And he opens his gospel by giving to us the genealogy of Jesus Christ back to Abraham.

As he said in chapter 1 verse 1, the book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Now the Lord had promised to Abraham, through thy seed shall all of the nations of the earth be blessed. By that was understood that from Abraham's seed the Messiah would come, the one who would be a blessing to all of the nations of the earth.

So anyone who would seek to lay claim as the Messiah would first of all have to be able to prove that he was a descendant of Abraham, because God had made that special promise to Abraham. Later on God promised to David that he would build David's house and that his seed would sit upon the throne forever. And from that promise David understood that God was promising that the Messiah should come through his line, through his genealogy.

And after David there were many prophecies that referred to the Messiah as the branch out of the root of Jesse. And of course he is referred to as sitting upon the throne of David. So it would be necessary for one who would seek to lay claim to being the Messiah to be able to prove that he is a descendant both of Abraham and also of David.

Now it is interesting to me that no longer do the Jews have any accurate genealogical records so that there is not a Jew in the world today who can actually prove by the genealogical records that he is a descendant of David. They have lost all of their books of generations. But no problem, because the Messiah has already come.

And Matthew points out here that he does fulfill both of the requirements being a son of Abraham and a son of David. And so he seeks to trace Jesus back to David and to Abraham. You say, but wait a minute, is not this the genealogy of Joseph? And if Jesus was virgin born, then why would it be necessary to trace Joseph's genealogy? And it is true when we get to verse 17 or in verse 16, and Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called the Christ.

Notice that it does not say that Joseph was the father of Jesus, but he was the husband of Mary of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ. Now you are familiar with the fact that in the New Testament we

have another line of genealogy that traces the genealogy of Christ back to Adam. And as you read the genealogies in Matthew and in Luke, you'll find that there are differences in the genealogies.

In Matthew's genealogy, we are tracing the line of Jesus back to David through Solomon. But as you read Luke's genealogy, you'll find that it traces the genealogy actually not of Joseph, but of Mary. She also goes back to David and to Abraham, but she comes through the son Nathan of David.

So that Mary also was of the tribe of Judah and a descendant of David, but not through Solomon and his line, but through David's other son Nathan and his line. But in Matthew's gospel, Joseph is actually a descendant of David through the kingly line. And as you read the kings of Judah, you find that they are listed in the descendants of Joseph.

And actually he was of the royal seed of David and as such an heir to the throne in Israel. However, there is a real problem to Joseph being king in Israel because his line goes back through the kings of Israel, which includes Jokaniah, of whom the Lord cursed through Jeremiah the prophet, saying that none of his seed would sit upon the throne of Israel forever. So that kingly line that came through Solomon was disallowed from sitting on the throne because of Jokaniah's sin.

There in Jeremiah 22:30. So that Jesus, being the son of Mary, still has a claim to the throne of David, but not through Jokaniah, who was cursed as not being able to rule or any of his descendants to rule upon the throne. So if Jesus were the son of Joseph, he could not reign upon the throne of David because of that curse in Jeremiah 22.

But being the son of David through Nathan and through a different line, he has the right to the throne coming from Mary. And yet, as far as the Jewish nation would be concerned, they would recognize Joseph as the kingly line and thus the eldest son of Joseph, considered to be the eldest son of Joseph, though he was born of the Holy Spirit, would then have a right to the throne. So the Lord put the two things together, and it's quite fascinating the way it happened.

Now there are some interesting things, and I told you you can skip the first seventeen verses because reading these names can become laborious to a person who is not familiar with the names, and you spend your whole time just trying to pronounce them, and they become rather meaningless. But rarely were women named in the genealogical lines. But in tracing Joseph back, there are four women that are mentioned.

And it is interesting to me the four women that are mentioned because they were not, with the exception of one, really virtuous kind of women. The first woman that is mentioned is Tamar. And in verse three, Judah begat Phares and Zerah of Tamar.

Now Judah had a son who married Tamar, but he died before he had any children. So his brother did what was the accepted thing in that culture. He took her as his wife, but he also died before he had any children.

Now Judah had another son, and it was the obligation of the other son to marry her and to raise up a seed, a descendant. But Judah, having had two sons die as a result, I don't know the result of her cooking, but I mean he was suspicious anyhow, was not willing to let the third son marry her, and he kept stalling her. He says, oh he's too young, you know, he's too immature, and you know, and he kept stalling her off until it became quite obvious to her that Judah had no intention of allowing his third son to marry her.

So she put on the attire of a prostitute and sat in the path. And when Judah came by, he propositioned her, which she accepted. And she said, what will you give me? He said, I'll give you a goat out of my flock.

She said, well you don't have it with you. He said, well I'll give you my ring as a guarantee, and I'll send the goat back. And so he went in unto her.

She had a veil on, he didn't recognize her. And she became pregnant by Judah. Now when word came out to Judah, Tamar, your daughter-in-law, is pregnant.

He said, put her to death. So she sent his ring. He came, the next day the servant came back with a goat, and the gal was gone.

And so he said to the people around there, where's the prostitute that was sitting here? He said, there's no prostitute here. So the fellow came back to Judah and said, hey I couldn't find her, you know, I still got the goat. Judah said, oh well, let it go.

Well, when he found out Tamar was pregnant and ordered her to be put to death, then Tamar sent the ring. And she said, the man who owns this ring is the one responsible for me being pregnant. And so Judah was trapped.

But isn't it interesting that Tamar appears in the lineage of the royal seed of David. That God has chosen Tamar with these untoward circumstances. The second is Rahab.

Now when the children of Israel were ready to come into the land that God had promised them, the first city that they came to was Jericho. And they sent spies into Jericho to take a look at the defenses and all. And when the people of Jericho realized that there were spies within their city from the Israelites, they sought to find them to put them to death.

But Rahab, who was a prostitute, hid them under some sheaves on her roof. And then she let them down over the wall, saying, please, when you take the city, spare my family and myself. And so they said, you let this scarlet cord hang down, and when we take the city, everyone that's in your house will be saved.

So the city of Jericho was taken, but they respected Rahab, who had sheltered the spies, and those that were within her house were not killed. They were spared. Rahab then married Boaz, or what we know as Boaz, who was, of course, the one who married Ruth, the Moabites.

And Ruth is the third one that is mentioned. Now Rahab does not come from the line of Israel, but she was of Jericho, a Canaanite, a prostitute that the Lord also put in the line. The next one mentioned is that of Ruth, who was a Moabite, who were under an eternal curse of God.

A Moabite could not come into the temple of the Lord to the tenth generation or forever, as God had placed the curse on Moab. And yet, by the grace of God, Ruth became the wife of Boaz, whose son was Obed, whose son was Jesse, whose son was King David. And so God brought Ruth, the Moabites, into the line.

And then the fourth woman that is mentioned is that one, and it doesn't name her, but we know who she is, who was the wife of Uriah. So Bathsheba is the fourth woman that is brought into the record, and she is the one who had the illegitimate relationship with David, whose husband was subsequently put to death by a conspiracy of David and then became David's wife. And from her was born Solomon, who became the

king over Israel.

And the line comes through Solomon. So the Lord has put into the genealogy of the line of Joseph these four women in order to display the grace of God, in order that any of us, through our failures, can still identify with God's plan of grace and love for man. None of us are excluded.

God has already included in his program people who had made a mess out of their lives, people who had had great personal failures in their lives, people who had immoral stains in their lives, and still God used them in his total plan, and thus it encourages us, who also have stains, who also have failures, that God can still use us in his plan. And so to me it's exciting to see the inclusion that God makes in this line coming to Christ. Now Matthew divides the generations, 14 from Abraham to David, 14 from David to the carrying away into Babylonian captivity, and 14 from the Babylonian captivity unto the time of Christ.

However, it is quite obvious that Matthew has left out some of the names, so that it is in order that he might set them in couplets of seven, three couplets of seven, but deliberately leaving out some of the names. And some of the names that are left out, which are quite obvious in verse 8, Ahaziah, if you go back in the record in Chronicles, you'll find that Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah are left out. Who were Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah? They were the sons of Athaliah, who was the daughter of Jezebel and Ahab, that wicked king and queen of the northern kingdom, whose sin actually sealed the fate of the northern kingdom.

And Athaliah had sought to kill all of the royal seed of David, but one of the children escaped and of course later became king. But the descendants of Athaliah are left out of this record, and I'm certain deliberately so by Matthew. There are other omissions, but the purpose of Matthew was to set it up in 14 generations, and surely it was deliberate.

I cannot believe that Matthew just made a mistake, but it was a deliberate omission on Matthew's part in writing the genealogy, because he has the same records that we have of the Old Testament, and he knows good and well these other names fit in there, but he deliberately omitted them. And if you want to make a study of the omissions and those persons omitted, I'm sure that you can find the reasons why Matthew chose to omit those names. Now we get in verse 16, and Jacob begat Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

So this is the little transition verse. It's a necessary transition verse, because he is giving the genealogy to Abraham to show that he comes from Abraham and from David, but yet Jesus Christ was not born of Joseph, and he is going to explain that in just a moment. Verse 18, Now the birth of Jesus Christ happened like this.

When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, that is before they had had physical intercourse, she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit. Now Luke's gospel gives to us a little further enlightenment of how that the angel Gabriel came to Mary and informed her of the process when she said, how can these things be seeing? I have not had relations with a man. The angel told her the process by which the child would be born, and we'll study that when we get to the gospel of Luke.

It is necessary that we understand that in that culture, there were three relationships that a couple had. First of all, the engagement. Secondly, the betrothal, and third, or secondly, the espousal, and thirdly, the betrothal.

Now, the engagement could take place at any time in that child's life, because marriage was by arrangement. And if your parents had friends, and they had a little daughter born about the same time that their son was born, and they were close friends, they could say, well, let's have your daughter marry our son. And they would strike an arrangement whereby your daughter would marry my son.

Now, your daughter may be two years old, and my son is three years old. And because we made this arrangement, that would constitute engagement. And so the little girl two and the little boy three would be engaged to be married.

So you go to kindergarten, and you say, who's your girlfriend? Oh, I'm engaged to her. So the engagement could come very early in life, because marriage was by the arrangement of the parents. But when they had come to that point of maturity where they could then get married, and usually it was in the early teens, 15, 16, when a girl was married, they would go through a year of espousal when they were really separated to each other as far as relationship is concerned.

And it is more like what we call engagement today, where they accept the arrangement of the parents, they accept each other, and they set themselves apart for each other for a year of preparation and planning for the marriage. After the year of espousal, now during the time of espousal, you were considered, in a sense, as being married. That is, to break an espousal actually took a writ of divorcement.

You were considered to be married, but it was a year in which you were dedicated to each other without physical relationship, the espousal period. And that could not be broken except by divorce. After the year's espousal, then there would be the betrothal, the marriage itself.

And on the wedding night, the father would take the signs of his daughter's virginity and keep them in case there was ever any question of her being a virgin. You see, if later on the fellow said, well, she wasn't a virgin when I married her and sought to divorce her, then the father could bring the tokens of her virginity and this louse of a husband could be prosecuted for falsely accusing his wife. So it was something that the father kept for the protection of his daughter, the tokens of her virginity, on the wedding night after the betrothal and the whole wedding ceremony and all.

He would keep these tokens of her virginity. So there was, first of all, the engagement. Secondly, the espousal.

Thirdly, the betrothal. And so it was during this period that Joseph and Mary were espoused. They were committed to each other without the physical relationship that suddenly this very difficult problem developed when Mary became pregnant.

Now, under the Jewish law, this constituted infidelity, adultery, because they were in the period of the espousal. And under Jewish law, she could be stoned to death for her betrayal of Joseph. And so this is the problem that Joseph faced when Mary, who no doubt was an extremely beautiful person, not necessarily physically, but spiritually, a young girl who was so pure, so righteous, that God chose her above all others to be the vessel through which His Son should be brought forth into the earth.

Gave her such a high honor that from that time on, all people would call her blessed. And so we refer to the blessed mother of Jesus. And the depth of her spirituality is reflected in the gospel of Luke when she met her cousin Elizabeth.

And as they shared their experiences with the Lord and their two sons, John, who was in Elizabeth's womb, and Jesus, who was in Mary's womb, as they began to share their experiences of their pregnancies and all, and those miracles surrounding them, that Mary burst forth in the glorious, magnificent, recorded in Luke's gospel, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit doth rejoice, for he hath regarded the lowest state of his maiden. And she goes on in this glorious outburst of praise unto God, which expresses really a depth of relationship that Mary had had with the Lord. Beautiful in spirit, chosen by God for this high honor.

But Joseph was in a turmoil. He loved her. He didn't know what to do about it.

He really could not in his mind stand the thought of publicly disgracing her by declaring that he was not responsible for the child and to see her stoned by the angry mobs. He could not bring himself to do that. And so he was thinking, well, maybe I can just ship her off someplace, put her away privately, and she at least can be spared.

And Joseph, while he was going over these things in his heart and in his mind, and notice it says Joseph being a just man. Many times Joseph is pictured as sort of an oaf, but he was a man in contact with God also. And the Lord spoke to him.

Evidently, Joseph died rather early in the life of Jesus. Because after their return from Egypt, the only references is this, not Jesus, the son of Joseph, the carpenter. And no doubt he was there in Nazareth for a time.

But by the time Jesus began his public ministry, Joseph is already departed the scene. But Joseph being a just man, not willing to make a public example out of her, seeing her stoned, had in mind to put her away privately. And while he was thinking about these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream saying, Joseph, thou son of David, because we've already seen that he is a descendant of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife, because of their espousal she was considered his wife, though they had not yet been betrothed.

For that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost, and she shall bring forth a son, and thou shall call his name Yahshua, for he shall save his people from their sins. That is the interpretation of Yahshua. It means Yahweh is salvation.

It is the Hebrew word, what we call Joshua, which is Yahshua, and it is Jehovah or Yahweh is salvation. And thus call his name Yahshua, because he will save his people from their sins. So his name implies his mission, that of Savior.

Now all of this was done in order that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken of the Lord by the prophets, saying, and notice that Matthew accepts that the words of the prophets were actually inspired by God. One thing the New Testament recognizes all the way through, and that is the divine inspiration of Scriptures. As we read, all Scripture is given by inspiration of God.

Peter, in referring to the writings of David, said, and David by the mouth of the Holy Spirit spake, saying, the New Testament teaches and recognizes that God was behind the writing of the Scriptures, that God is actually the divine author of the word. And so here again, another confirmation that it might be fulfilled that which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet. As Paul the Apostle said, that which I have received from the Lord, I also delivered unto you.

The prophet declared Isaiah, of course, seven, behold, a virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us. Now, as we were talking about modern translations and all, and my difficulty with the modern translations, which seek to do away with the deity of Jesus Christ, this is one of those areas where I distrust and despise the revised version of the Bible. For when you go back to this prophecy in Isaiah, where Isaiah prophesies, the Lord said to the King Josaphat, ask a sign and I will give it to you.

And Josaphat said, I will not ask a sign. And the prophet said, therefore, the Lord will give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son and call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is God with us.

And there the Lord was promising that the Messiah would be born of a virgin. However, there is a scholar recognized by those biblical authorities, those men, at least to establish themselves as such who are much like the Pharisees who established themselves as the biblical authorities and no one could understand or interpret scriptures except the scribes and the Pharisees. And Jesus had much to say about them.

And we have our modern day scribes and Pharisees who sit in their little intellectual circles looking down upon all of us poor ignorant folk. One of their scholars, Genesis, who has written this dictionary and so forth translated that Hebrew word Alma as a young maiden. And so these translators, of course, wanting to water things down, pick up Genesis young maiden and they translate this.

Behold, the Lord will give you a sign. A young maiden will conceive and bear a son and call his name Emmanuel. Now, first of all, tell me what kind of a sign is it when a young girl gets pregnant? That's no sign that happens all the time.

There's nothing unusual or unique about that. It was obvious that the Holy Spirit intended the translation to be virgin and every other use of Alma in the Old Testament is referring to a virgin. But, you know, this scholar's reason for translating it young maiden instead of virgin.

Now, this is scholarship. He declared, I do not believe in miracles. And for a young virgin to have a child would be a miracle.

Thus, I reject it. And thus he translated it young virgin. I mean, young maiden instead of a virgin.

Now, that's the kind of scholarship that I have absolutely no respect for, because it already has taken a presupposition that God doesn't really exist, that God isn't able to transcend the natural laws that he has established in the universe. And I thoroughly, totally reject such stupidity. And I don't have to accept it, thank God.

Now, some 200 years before Jesus was born, there were 70 scholars who felt that the people should have scriptures in a language they could understand because the Hebrew language was pretty much lost during the Babylonian captivity. And after they had returned from Babylon, the majority of the people did not speak Hebrew. It was a language then that was only for the scholars, the biblical scholars in those days.

And the people had to depend upon the scholars to teach them the scriptures because they did not have them in their own language any longer. And because of Alexander the Great's influence and the Grecian influence through that territory, when Alexander the Great conquered, these men decided to translate the Hebrew Bible, Old Testament into Greek in order that the people might be able to read their own

scriptures. And because there were 70 scholars who gave themselves to this task of translation, they called the translation the Septuagint for the 70 scholars.

And thus, when you read of the Septuagint, it is a Greek translation made approximately 200 years before the birth of Christ in order that the people might have their scriptures again in a language that they could read and understand for themselves. And so it is interesting that when these Greek scholars, 200 years before Mary, had this experience of bearing the child Jesus as a virgin, that these Greek and Hebrew scholars, understanding the prophecy of Isaiah when translating that Hebrew word Alma into Greek, used then a Greek word that is only used of a virgin. And of course, Matthew copies here in his Greek their translation from the Septuagint.

And inasmuch as the New Testament is recognizing that the Old Testament is inspired of the Lord and Isaiah, when he said this was inspired of the Lord and it translated virgin, it's really tampering with the scripture and blasphemous for man to take upon himself to translate that passage in Isaiah a young maiden will conceive. And that's one of my cases of which I have hundreds against the modern translations. And that's why I am so glad that the Lord has finally provided for us a new translation which sticks to the majority text and to the fundamental truth that God has declared.

So that's just a little aside, but it's something that I'm rejoicing in. Then Joseph, when he awoke from his sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had in him and he took Mary as his wife and he did not know her until she had brought forth her first born son and called his name Yeshua. Now, the dogma that was developed in the Catholic Church of the perpetual virginity of Mary is sheer poppycock.

It's the invention of man who have sought to elevate Mary to the status of deity. The obvious is here. He did not know her until, but obviously afterward he did have the normal husband wife relationships with Mary or else the other sons that were born of Mary and the daughters were also virgin born.

And that throws the whole story in disarray for Mark's gospel names, the brothers of Jesus, James, Judas, Simeon, Joseph, and his sisters. And so, uh, to declare perpetual virginity of Mary is not a scriptural truth. It is a dogma developed by the church without scriptural foundation as is so much dogma.

Beware of dogma. And Jesus said, beware of the dogs. Now, when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, this is Herod the great, that little short monster.

He was a little over four feet tall and as really short little guys, probably suffered a tremendous ego problem. And thus significantly, everything he did was big. I mean, he built great fortresses out of great rocks.

I stood next to a rock that is along the Western wall in Jerusalem that Herod had built as a retaining wall to build up the temple Mount to, to place the temple on top back underneath where tourists can't go. I stood by a rock that was 47 feet long, 10 feet high and 10 feet wide. It is estimated to weigh 170 tons.

This little Herod had that rock put there. He was a genius at building. He built, of course, the Herodian.

He built Masada. He built another fortress similar to the Herodian that has not yet really been excavated, the Alexandrian. He built, of course, the great temple in Jerusalem.

He built the temple Mount area. He built Caesarea and tremendous building projects by this little genius built the pools over near or near Bethlehem and a whole water system for Jerusalem. And just a today,

you still look at those building projects of Herod and you just stand in absolute amazement at the building genius of this little fellow.

But he also was horribly cruel and paranoid. He thought that his sons were and his wife, Miriam, were plotting against him. And so he had them all put to death.

And then he began to miss Miriam. And so he built a big monument to Miriam because he missed her after he had killed her. They used to say it's safer to be Herod's pig than to be his son, because he was always paranoid that his sons were trying to take over his throne.

And so he's having him killed all the time and wiped out most of his sons because of his paranoia. So he was a very insecure little fellow. And that's why these big fortresses that he built and would seek refuge within the fortresses.

Now, in time, he realized that as the result of his own cruelty and meanness, that no one would weep when he died. And he couldn't stand the thought of no one weeping when he died. So he gave orders that when he died, all of his top officials were to be killed, executed, because he wanted people to mourn when he was dead.

And they knew they wouldn't mourn for him. So in order that there be mourning when he died, he ordered all of these popular officials to be put to death when he died. Fortunately, when he died, they had enough sense to realize, well, why should we obey his order? He's dead.

And the other officials were not executed. And thus he went unmourned. Now, in those days when Herod was king, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.

And they said, where is he that is born the king of the Jews? Now, can't you imagine what that would do to this little insecure Herod? These guys are asking, you know, I'm king of the Jews. What do you mean? Where is he born? King of the Jews. And he was so threatened by his position, in his position, that when these men came from the east to inquire of the birth of the king of the Jews, he really got shook.

They said, for we have seen his star in the east, and we are come to worship him. Now there is an awful lot that has been written about the star of Bethlehem. And I really, you know, they have said, well, it was a conjunction of planets and it was, and they have come up with many different speculations as to what astronomically constituted the star of Bethlehem.

And in the Griffith Observatory in December, they oftentimes have as that monthly lecture, the star of Bethlehem. And of course, you know, with that in the planetarium, they can adjust the lights in the ceiling to represent the skies at any period in history. And so they can take you back through the years to the time of the birth of Christ and show you the constellations, planetary alignments and so forth.

And they have a very interesting lecture on the star of Bethlehem. But just exactly what did take place that constituted this special sign in the sky is a matter of many men's speculations, but that as the present time is as valid as it is, it's the speculation of man. And we do not know for sure.

And God did not call me to speculate. So we'll just let that go. We have seen his star in the east and we have come to worship him.

Now, if they were in the east and saw the star, then it evidently led them westward. So it was some kind of perhaps special and supernatural sign, as I'll point out in a moment. Now, when Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled and all of Jerusalem with him, because when Herod is troubled, everybody's troubled.

And when he had gathered all the chief priests and the scribes of the people together, he demanded, not he inquired, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, now, look, these fellows know their scriptures. They said unto him in Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet, by the prophet Micah.

And thou Bethlehem in the land of Judah are not the least among the princes of Judah for out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel. Now they did not finish that prophecy, but you go back to Micah and you read whose goings forth is from everlasting. And he speaks upon his sitting upon the throne and reigning.

So Bethlehem pinpointed as the birthplace. So when Herod had privately called the wise men, he inquired them of them diligently when they first saw the star. And so they told him when they first saw the star and began their journey.

And so he sent them to Bethlehem and he said, go and search diligently for the young child. And when you have found him, bring me word again that I may come and worship him also. Herod had a very perverted sense of worship.

So when they heard that the king, when they had heard the king, that is King Herod, they departed and lo the star which they saw in the east went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was. So it is hard to really explain then this star by some kind of a natural phenomena in that they saw it in the east. It led them west, but now it is leading them back east because Bethlehem is actually south and east of Jerusalem.

And it stood notice over where the young child was. Notice it didn't stand over the manger. It didn't stand over where the baby was, but it stood over where the young child was.

Now here is where our Christmas cards and our Christmas pageants throw us off because it makes such a glorious climax to the Christmas pageantry to have the wise men coming to the manger on their camels and laying down their gifts before the child in the manger while the shepherds are peering on wild eyed. And it is something that is typical of the Christmas card or the Christmas pageantry. But the wise men were late comers.

By the time that they had arrived, Joseph and Mary had moved out of the manger and had moved into a house in Bethlehem. And the wise men, I'm sorry Virginia, did not come to the manger, but actually arrived later on, perhaps a year or as much as two years later when the wise men finally arrived and they found the young child. By this time Jesus was probably walking around and saying a few words.

And so when they were come into the house, not into the manger, but into the house, they saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and they fell down and worshipped him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts, gold, befitting the king, frankincense, and myrrh. Myrrh was a spice for burial, quite significant that it would be given to the young child.

Now being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. They didn't bother to go back to Jerusalem because God warned them not to. And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph.

Now again, Joseph is really in contact with the Lord and the Spirit. And the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream saying, arise and take the young child and his mother and flee to Egypt and stay there until I bring you word for Herod is going to seek the young child to destroy him. And when he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night and they departed into Egypt.

And there he was until the death of Herod in order that it might be fulfilled. Now notice how Matthew over and over is showing that these aspects of the life of Christ were in reality fulfillment of prophecy, that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken of by the Lord, by the prophet saying out of Egypt have I called my son. Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked by the wise men, was exceedingly angry.

He sent forth and killed all of the children that were in Bethlehem and in all of the area around from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. They remember they said, when did you first see the star? And so they told him in the first of the start. And that's why he killed the children two years old and under because they had first seen the star some two years earlier, which again shows that Christ was not a baby in a manger when the wise men arrived.

Then Herod, when he saw these marks and killed all the children, then was fulfilled that which let me get my page turn was spoken by Jeremiah, the prophet saying in Rama, was there a voice heard of lamentation and weeping and great mourning as Rachel was weeping for her children. Now, of course, it's significant that Rachel actually died there just on the outskirts of Bethlehem and her tomb is there at Bethlehem. She died in childbirth at the birth of Benjamin.

And you remember, she called his name Benoni because of the grief. And so the prophecy then of Rachel, who had died there in Bethlehem and the people, of course, around Bethlehem revered the place of her burial, the tomb there, Rachel weeping for her children and would not be comforted because they are not because they've been killed. But when Herod was dead and he died shortly thereafter, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt saying, arise and take the young child and his mother and go into the land of Israel, for they are dead, which sought the young child's life.

And he arose and took the young child and his mother and they came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Achilles did reign in Judea in place of his father, Herod, he was afraid to go there. And notwithstanding, he was warned by God in a dream and he turned aside into the area of Galilee.

He went back up into the area where he originated from, actually in Galilee, where Mary had first received the word from Gabriel that she was to become the mother of the Christ child. And so they came and they dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the prophets, he shall be called a Nazarene. All the way through, Matthew is showing you that Christ is a fulfillment of prophecy.

Matthew is a prophecy buff. In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea. Now we have the silent years of Christ.

We're jumping now from the return to Nazareth to the beginning of his public ministry. There are some 28 years, 29 years that nothing is recorded. Now in the Apographa, there are books in the Apographa that purport to have the stories of the early life and the boyhood of Jesus and the healing of little birds with

broken wings and fanciful stories.

But the Lord has seen fit to just leave that portion of his life in silence. And where the scriptures are silent, it's best that we remain silent. So we jump those years.

Now one gospel gives us one little insight when he was 12 years old, but that's the only glimpse that we have of the boyhood of Jesus. And at 12 years, he seemed to be a very unusual young man, as we will find in another of the gospels. So we're jumping now to the ministry of John the Baptist, who was preaching in the wilderness of Judea.

And he was saying, repent ye for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, that is John the Baptist is the one that Isaiah spoke of saying, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair and a leather girdle about his loins.

And his meat was locusts and wild honey, whether the locusts be that insect of the grasshopper family or the carob tree fruit is really not sure. Some say it's that carob long being kind of a fruit that grows there on the carob trees, and they call it Joshua's bread. And some say that's what the locusts were.

Others say that it was actually that insect of the grasshopper family, which some people do consider a delicacy like they do escargot and other things. And to every man, his own taste, I guess, but they tell me they're good, but I can't I just can't bear to eat them. I just didn't get my calories some other way.

Then there went out to John the Baptist people from Jerusalem and all Judea and from the region there around about Jordan. And they were baptized by him in Jordan confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and the Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers.

Now this is John's opinion of the religious scholars. O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruit, meat for repentance. Bring forth fruit in your life that really shows repentance.

There are a lot of people who claim, oh I repent, but there's no fruit of repentance in their life. You don't see any really signs of repentance. Now repentance means really to change.

And if a person doesn't really make real changes in his life, then there is reason to doubt the sincerity of that person's repentance. And so John is laying into these Pharisees and scribes, calling them generation of vipers. And he said, let's see you bring forth some fruit that show that you really repent.

You see the other people were repenting and being baptized, turning away from their sins. These fellows came along too. And he says, oh no, I'm not going to let's see some fruit of your repentance.

I've had people tell me they're very sorry for what they've done, but they didn't change. I had a man rip me off of several thousands of dollars and he came and said, oh, forgive me. I'm so sorry, but he didn't return a cent.

And I felt like John the Baptist. Well, let's see some fruit of your repentance. If you're really sorry, let's see fruit of it.

You want me to really forgive. Let's see some fruit of your repentance. Bring forth fruit that is in agreement, that is meat or in agreement with your repentance, confirmation.

And don't think to say within yourself, well, we're the sons of Abraham. And that was their great boast. Well, we're the sons of Abraham.

And they thought that that naturally constituted salvation. Just like so many people in the United States think that to be an American is to be a Christian. That it naturally constitutes, well, are you saying, of course, I'm an American.

You know, I pledge allegiance to the flag. And in that, don't we say under God, you think I'm a pagan or something? And so the Jew had that same attitude. Well, I'm a son of Abraham.

He said, don't think that that's any big deal. God can turn these stones in the sons of Abraham. And now also the axe is laid to the root of the trees.

Therefore, every tree that does not bring forth good fruit is going to be cut down and cast into the fire. Now, Jesus in the 15th chapter of John talks about the vine and the branches and every branch in me that does not bring forth fruit shall be cut off and men gather them and throw them into the fire in the air burn. The time has come.

Jesus said by their fruit, you shall know them. John says, bring forth fruit. Now, Jesus, you remember when he was with his disciples was hungry, saw a fig tree.

They came to it. There was no fruit and he cursed the fig tree. And the next day, as they were coming back on the Mount of Olives along the path there, the disciples looked at that tree that Jesus had cursed the day before and the thing had withered and died overnight.

Said, Lord, look at that tree that you cursed yesterday. Man, the thing's withered and dead already. Now the fig tree was a symbol of the nation of Israel.

And the Lord was looking that the nation Israel bring forth fruit. Here, John the Baptist is saying, Hey, the, you know, the time they ask is going to be laid to the root that is to Israel itself. And the tree that doesn't bring forth good fruit is going to be cut down.

Paul, the apostle tells us in Romans, the 11th chapter, that God cut off the natural branch, that he might graft in the branch, contrary to nature, the Gentile believers that they might partake of the, of the fatness and all of the tree. So the nation of Israel rejected because of their rejection. God gave them their Messiah.

He gave them their opportunity. They rejected it. And so the gospel brought to the Gentiles and to the Jew alike.

So that no matter who you are, Gentile or Jew, there's only one way. And that's through Jesus Christ. And so John said, I indeed do baptize you with water unto repentance.

But he that comes after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I'm not worthy to untie. And he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. So the forerunner, not bearing witness of himself, but bearing witness of the one who was to follow him, even Jesus Christ, the voice in the wilderness saying, prepare ye the way of the Lord, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

And he was preparing the hearts of the people for the coming of Jesus Christ. And that was his ministry. John's gospel amplifies the ministry of John the Baptist.

And so when we get into John's gospel, we will get a further insight into this interesting person, John the Baptist. Now, speaking of Jesus, he declares whose fan is in his hand and he will thoroughly purge his floor, cleanse it and gather his wheat into the garner. Now you come into the threshing floor with a fan and you fan the threshing floor to blow out all the chaff in order that just the wheat might remain there on the floor.

And so they would come in with these fans and just whip the fans across the threshing floors to blow out the chaff. And so the picture is his fan is in his hand and he will thoroughly cleanse his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the garner, but he will burn the chaff with unquenchable fire. Then came Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized by him.

But John forbid him. And he said, I have need to be baptized by you and you're coming to me. And Jesus answered and said unto him, allow it to be now for it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness.

And so he allowed him and he baptized him. So John objected, but Jesus set aside his objections, declaring that it was necessary that he set an example. Now, Peter said, for Christ has set an example for us that we should follow in his steps.

And so because he had nothing to repent, John hesitated, but Jesus was doing it actually as an example to set before us that example. And it declares, what does baptism declare? Remember I told you a couple of weeks ago, baptism declares the superiority of the spiritual over the material, the life of the spirit over the life of the flesh. That's the proclamation that Jesus had to make.

And that's why the world got angry with him because they were living after the flesh and after the desires of the flesh. But Jesus was declaring that the spiritual life is superior to the fleshly life. That's the message of the word of God all the way through the superiority of the spiritual life over the fleshly life.

And that's what baptism does represent the death of the fleshly life, the old life, the old nature, the old ambitions, the old desires, dead, buried, and the new life coming up out of the water, the life of the spirit, and it is superior to the life of the flesh. So when Jesus was baptized as he came up out of the water, the heavens were open unto him and he saw the spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting upon him. So as he came up out of the waters, that Holy Spirit coming upon and anointing his life.

And a voice from heaven declared, this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. The proud father couldn't hold back his delight in his son and spoke saying, this is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. Jesus said, I do always those things that please the father.

Thus he lived the perfect life, a life of total fulfillment in revelation chapter four, verse 11, as the elders are ascribing glory to God there before the throne of God, as the cherubim are declaring, holy, holy, holy Lord God almighty, which are, which is, which was, and which is to come. And the 24 elders take their little golden vials full of odors, cast them before the crystal sea and fall on their faces and declared, thou art worthy to receive glory and honor for thou has created all things. And for thy good pleasure they are and were created.

There is the explanation why God created you for his good pleasure. You say, I don't like that. That's tough.

You can't change it. That's the way it is. And if you fight it, you're just going to live a life of frustration.

If you become obedient and in harmony to it, you're going to live a life of glorious fulfillment. When a person can say is Jesus, I do always those things that please the father. I'll tell you, you've got the perfect life.

And so God is testifying. This is my beloved son in whom I am well-placed. Notice Jesus is being baptized.

The Holy Spirit descends upon him and the voice of the father speaks from heaven saying, this is my beloved son. And there you have the Trinity, the father, the son, and the Holy Spirit. Then was Jesus led of the spirit into the wilderness.

Immediately he is now being led by the spirit, walking after the spirit. And the New Testament has so much to say to us concerning the life of the spirit and walking in the spirit. There are so many people that put the emphasis upon the baptism of the Holy Spirit, where in reality, the emphasis should be upon the walk of the spirit, not the gifts, not the phenomena, not the excitement, not the manifestations, but the real Christian emphasis should be the walk in the spirit and being led by the spirit.

Because Paul tells us in Romans 8, and as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God. I don't care how excited you get and how high you jump under the anointing of the spirit. What I am interested in is how straight you walk when you land.

I've known too many people jumping that aren't walking straight. And to me, it's invalid. The excitement that you may have in the manifestation of spiritual gifts is not as important as your walking after the spirit, your walk in the spirit.

That's what is vital and what is important. And that is what God is looking for, for you to walk in the spirit, not just to have spiritual excitement because of spiritual phenomena, but to be walking in the spirit. Now, I am not opposed to the spiritual excitement and spiritual phenomena, but I am opposed to walking a crooked line in the flesh.

And I think that that's where our emphasis needs to be laid. And when we lay the emphasis just upon the spiritual phenomena, but not upon the walk in the spirit, then we can get into all kinds of difficulty. So Jesus was led of the spirit into the wilderness for what purpose? To be tempted of the devil, to be tested.

And when he had fasted for 40 days and 40 nights, he was afterward hunger. Now, it is interesting. Dr. Wilder Smith, who was with us, was talking about sensual deprivation.

And I found that extremely interesting. You see, our minds are so busy interpreting to us all of the stimuli around us, the sight, the hearing, the tasting, the feeling. And these sensory receptors that we have are constantly sending their little messages to the brain, the olfactory and the smelling and all.

And so we are constantly interpreting all of this sensual data. And the brain is processing it. And it's saying, man, this seed is getting hard.

I wonder how much longer he's going to go. And it's saying, why don't you move your position just a little bit? Distribute the weight in a little different place. Get a little more comfortable.

And at the same time, your eyes are sending these little photographs at 18 frames per second into your brain that is interpreting these vibrations into the color and the forms and so forth. And at the same time,

your ears are picking up the sound vibrations and the little bones in there, the incus and the states and so forth are tuning onto these vibrations and sending the vibrations in your brain. And it's unscrambling these vibrations into words.

And at the same time, you may be perspiring. And maybe you've put a piece of mint into your mouth or something. And so all of these sensory things are coming into your brain and your brain is scrambling and interpreting for you all of this stimuli.

And as a result, our brains are glutted with information. Now, it was interesting when Dr. Wildersmith said that as they began to put the astronauts into the what they call sensual deprivation by putting them into the dark rooms, into a weightless situation in the water, floating in the water. So you get the sense of weightlessness in warm water.

So you're not, you know, body temperature water. So you're not interpreting hot or cold. And by taking away so many of the the darkness of the room, the quietness that is in the room, the sterility of the room without any smells or anything within it, that as they were in this position of sensual deprivation, that is, the brain was not having to deal with all of the messages that were being sent by the various sensory perceptive parts of the body, that the astronauts began to have visions and spiritual experiences as God began to communicate through the sixth sense, the sixth sense that we usually do not pick up upon because the brain is glutted with all of the information from the five senses.

And I found that extremely fascinating. Now, in fasting, your brain is being deprived of one of the normal senses that is the taste sense. And so you're going through a period of time where the brain is not having to interpret the taste, sweet, bitter, flat, salty or whatever.

And the brain is freed from the interpreting of the senses from the taste buds. And so you're giving an empty circuit in the brain, opening a line, so to speak, that that sixth sense might begin to get some messages through. They say that after five days, you lose the sense of hunger.

When you go on a prolonged fast and that you do not experience hunger again until you actually start to starve to death. And that usually comes between the 35th and the 40th day that you start getting hungry. And they say that when you start getting hungry again, it's vitally important that you eat because now you are starving to death.

And if you don't get some nutrition, you will soon die. Now, it is significant that Jesus fasted for 40 days and 40 nights. And after that, he was hungry.

It would indicate that he was not hungry during the period of the 40 days and 40 nights, but after that he was hungry. And so Satan, taking advantage of that hunger and that starving condition, came to him and said, if you are the son of God. Now, this is not if in the indicative, but if in the subjective, which is translated more properly, since you are the son of God, there is no doubt in Satan's mind who he was.

The demon said, we know who thou are, the holy one of God. Jesus said, be quiet, not time yet. But Satan is not saying if indicative, if you are the son of God, he is saying, since you are the son of God, why don't you use your divine powers to satisfy your own fleshly needs? That is something that Satan is often tempting people with who have received gifts of the spirit.

Why don't you use your divine powers in order to satisfy your own sensual needs, your own hunger, your own appetite, your own desires? Why don't you turn these stones into bread? You've got the power to do

it. You're God. You, you know, you're hungry.

Why don't you perform a miracle to satisfy your own desire? And Jesus answered and said, it is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. So he answered the temptation of Satan with the word of God. Thy word, the scripture said, have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee.

The word of God is our strength and our power against temptation. If you want to be strong against the temptations of the enemy, then you must get into the word and you must study the word of God and hide it away in your heart. John wrote in his first epistle, I have written unto you young men because you are strong and have overcome the evil one.

And then he said, I have written unto you young men because you have overcome because the word of God abides in you. That's how they overcame by the word of God. That's how Jesus overcame the temptations by the word of God.

So important that we hide the word of God in our hearts. Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him there on the pinnacle of the temple. Now, uh, they say that this tradition says it's the corner of the temple Mount, which at that time was some 200 feet down from the corner.

And he said to him, since you're the son of God jump for it is written. He shall give his angels charge over the concerning thee, and they shall bear thee up in their hands. Lest at any time you dash your foot against the stone.

Now, Jesus said, it's written answered Satan with the word. So what does Satan do? He comes around, right back to him, perverting the word. He says, Hey, why don't you jump? Because it's written.

He'll give his angels charge of thee if they keep thee, in all thy ways. They'll bear thee up. Lest thou dash thy foot against the stone.

You won't, you won't hurt down there. You know, the angels will bear you up. Jesus said, and so important to compare scripture with scripture.

It is written again. Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Now there are a couple of interesting scriptures in Mark concerning the signs, following those that believe it says they shall take up serpents.

And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not harm them. Now there was a pastor back in the hills of Kentucky who took cyanide around to his members and made them drink to prove their faith. Two of them died and he was charged with manslaughter.

They had doubts. And there are those snake handlers, they get out the rattlesnakes and pass them around in the circle. And every once in a while we're reading as someone who is bitten by the snake and who dies.

And, uh, but they're doing it on the basis of basis of Mark's gospel chapter 16. But again, if they would only compare scripture with scripture, basically this is exactly what is Satan is suggesting to Jesus that he put himself in personal jeopardy to prove the scriptures. Jump, prove it.

He'll give his angels. That's what it says. But Jesus was wise enough to compare scripture with scripture.

He said it is written again. Thou shalt not tempt. You're not just put yourself deliberately purposefully into jeopardy to prove the scriptures.

And thus these people down in Kentucky are absolutely wrong. In fact, there's a sect of them over in Long Beach. They're not all of them back there in the hills of Kentucky.

They've been doing that over in Long Beach, but it's wrong to put yourself deliberately purposefully in jeopardy just to prove the scriptures. Again, the devil took him into an exceeding high mountain and showed him all of the kingdoms of the world in the glory of them. And we'll deal with this more completely when we get to Luke's gospel.

And he said unto him, all of these things will I give you if you will bow down and worship me. And Jesus said unto him, get thee away Satan, for it is written, thou shalt worship the Lord, thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. So the three temptations, each one answered by Jesus with the word of God and the devil left him and behold, the angels came and ministered unto him.

Now, when Jesus heard that John was cast into prison, he departed to Galilee and leaving Nazareth, he came and he lived in Capernaum. Capernaum is one of my favorite places there in the holy land because the majority of the ministry of Jesus was accomplished there in Capernaum. And I just love that beautiful spot next to the sea of Galilee.

It always is so peaceful and so restful and there's just good vibes all over the place. And except for the priest that keeps the thing and he's sort of a bore, but he got after us for filming because we didn't write in advance and get permission and all that kind of stuff. It was just ridiculous, absolutely stupid, but you know, he had to show his authority.

And so leaving Nazareth, they came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast and the borders, in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali. That is the area where the two tribes were apportioned, Zebulun and Naphtali. Naphtali had the area just north of that.

And so you're on the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali. By the way of the sea beyond Jordan, the Galilee of the Gentiles. And so your Decapolis cities up there in the north.

The people which sat in darkness saw a great light and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up. And from that time, Jesus began to preach and to say, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. The same message that John the Baptist was declaring is now echoed by Jesus.

The kingdom of heaven is at hand. The Messiah will soon be revealed. The kingdom has the potential of being set up, but of course they rejected the Messiah and Jesus walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and Andrew, his brother, and they were casting the net into the sea where they were fishermen.

And he said unto them, follow me and I will make you fishers of men. And immediately they left their nets and followed him. Now this was not their first encounter with Jesus, as we will find from the other gospels.

But this is when Jesus came and called them to discipleship. And going from there, he saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee and John, his brother in a ship with Zebedee, their father, and they were mending their nets and he called them and they immediately left their ship and their father and they followed him. No man has left father, mother, brother, sisters, home, families, for my sake in the gospels,

but what they will not receive in this world, a hundredfold and in the world to come life eternal.

And Jesus went about all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the gospel of the kingdom. And he was healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all of Syria, clear on up north, beyond the Golan, into Damascus.

And they brought unto him all of the sick people that were taken with many types of diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those which had the palsy, and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee and from Decapolis, wherever you go, people from the area of Galilee, Decapolis, those ten cities in the northern Galilee region, and from Jerusalem and Judea and from beyond Jordan. A vast multitude of people were being drawn by the miracles that Jesus was performing.

And at this point we're going to close the lesson and next week we'll take the Sermon on the Mount. So we'll just take chapters five, six, and seven for next week, and it will be a quick review of the Sermon on the Mount, probably the greatest document in the history of the world, this magnificent message of Jesus to his disciples, the Sermon on the Mount, next Sunday night. Shall we stand? May the Lord be with you.

May he keep his hand upon your life. May you have a beautiful week. May you be showered with the blessings of God's love.

And may your life just be filled with that fullness of his Spirit, that you might be led by the Spirit and walk in the Spirit and bring forth the fruits of the Spirit to glorify our Father in heaven.

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