



*Jesus
Teaches
With Questions*

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Forward

BIRTH AND PREPARATION OF JESUS, THE SON OF GOD (John 1:1-2:12) The story of Jesus from the Apostle John.

Mythological gods, whose supernatural characteristics were as important to Greeks as genealogies were to Jews. John shows that Jesus is not only different from but superior to these gods of mythology. In this Gospel, John provides clear evidence that Jesus is the Son of God and that by believing in him we may have eternal life. John also provides unique material about Jesus' birth. He did not come into being when he was born, because he is eternal.

What Jesus taught and what he did are tied inseparably to who he is. John shows Jesus as fully human and fully God. Although Jesus took upon himself full humanity and lived as a man, he never ceased to be the eternal God who has always existed, the Creator and Sustainer of all things, and the source of eternal life. This is the truth about Jesus, and the foundation of all truth. If we cannot or do not believe this basic truth, we will not have enough faith to trust our eternal destiny to him. That is why John wrote this Gospel—to build faith and confidence in Jesus Christ so that we may believe that he truly was and is the Son of God (John 20:30-31).

John wrote to believers everywhere, both Jews and non-Jews (Gentiles). As one of Jesus' 12 disciples, John was an eyewitness, so his story is accurate. His book is not a biography (like the book of Luke); it is a thematic presentation of Jesus' life. Many in John's original audience had a Greek background. Greek culture encouraged worship of many.

Why did Jesus use Questions to teach?

When Peter declared Jesus to be, "the Christ of God", Peter was changed by this declaration.

Jesus taught that we are changed as much by what we say as what we hear.

Mark 7:15 You are not defiled by what you eat; you are defiled by what you say and do!"

Nothing outside a man can make him 'unclean' by going into him. rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him 'unclean.'" "It is what comes out of a man that defiles him."

We are changed by the truth when we speak the truth. When Peter declared Jesus to be the Christ, he believed ever more firmly that Jesus was the Christ.

"If you confess with your mouth." (Romans 10.9) It is not that God needs to hear. It is not even that others need to hear. It is that you need to say.

When you confess the truth with your mouth, you are changed by that truth.

James said the tongue (what you say) is like the rudder of your life. Compared to the ship, the rudder is small, but it turns the whole ship. A bit in the mouth of a horse is small compared to the horse. But, it can turn the whole horse.

Jesus asked questions. The disciples and others answered. Confession of the truth shaped their destiny, even as it will shape your destiny..

Matthew 5:46 – Matthew 9:15

If you love only those that love you, what good is that?

Matthew 5:46 If you love only those who love you, what good is that? Even corrupt tax collectors do that much.

Confession: I confess my love for all for those that God loves.

We may not achieve Christ like character and holy living all at once, but we must grow toward maturity and wholeness) *In love*. We can seek to love others as completely as God loves us.

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If you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others?

Matthew 5:47

If you are kind only to your friends, how are you different from anyone else? Even pagans do that.

Confession: I will show kindness to all people.

How can we be perfect? (1) *In character*. In this life we cannot be flawless, but we can aspire to be as much like Christ as possible. (2) *In holiness*. Like the Pharisees, we are to separate ourselves from the world's sinful values. But unlike the Pharisees, we are to be devoted to God's desires rather than our own, and carry his love and mercy into the world. (3) *In maturity*. We can't achieve Christlike character and holy living all at once, but we must grow toward maturity and wholeness.

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Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

Matthew 6:27

Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

Confession: I will look to God to give me health and supply my needs.

Because of the ill effects of worry, Jesus tells us not to worry about those needs that God promises to supply.

Worry may (1) damage your health, (2) cause the object of your worry to consume your thoughts, (3) disrupt your productivity, (4) negatively affect the way you treat others, and (5) reduce your ability to trust in God.

Here is the difference between worry and genuine concern—worry immobilizes, but concern moves you to action.

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Why do you worry about clothes?

Matthew 6:28

And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

Confession: I will look to God to provide my clothing.

We must “seek first his kingdom and his righteousness” , turn to God first for help, to fill your thoughts with his desires, to take his character for your pattern, and to serve and obey him in everything. What is really important to you? People, objects, goals, and other desires all compete for priority. Any of these can quickly bump God out of first place if you don’t actively choose to give him first place in *every* area of your life.

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Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?

Matthew 7:3

And why worry about a speck in your friend's eye when you have a log in your own?

Confession: I will consider my own faults before I point out my brother's faults.

Jesus tells us to examine our own motives and conduct instead of judging others. The traits that bother us in others are often the habits we dislike in ourselves. Our untamed bad habits and behavior patterns are the very ones that we most want to change in others.

It may be easy to magnify others' faults while excusing your own? If you are ready to criticize someone, check to see if you deserve the same criticism. Judge yourself first, and then lovingly forgive and help your neighbor.

Jesus' statement, "Do not judge," is against the kind of hypocritical, judgmental attitude that tears others down in order to build oneself up. It is not a blanket statement against all critical thinking, but a call to be *discerning* rather than negative. Jesus said to expose false teachers.

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Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles?

Matthew 7:16

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

Confession: I will seek no fruit from those who seek fame or power.

False prophets were common in Old Testament times. They prophesied only what the king and the people wanted to hear, claiming it was God's message. False teachers are just as common today. Jesus says to beware of those whose words

sound religious but who are motivated by money, fame, or power. You can tell who they are because in their teaching they minimize Christ and glorify themselves.

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Why are you so afraid?

Matthew 8:26

And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.

Confession: Because Jesus is with me, I will not be afraid.

Although the disciples had witnessed many miracles, they panicked in this storm. As experienced sailors, they knew its danger; what they did not know was that Christ could control the forces of nature. There is often a stormy area of our human nature where we feel God can't or won't work. When we truly understand who God is, however, we will realize that he controls both the storms of nature and the storms of the troubled heart.

Jesus' power that calmed this storm can also help us deal with the problems we face. Jesus is willing to help if we only ask him. We should never discount his power even in terrible trials.

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Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your heart?

Matthew 9:4

And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?

Confession: I will think of God's blessings and his purpose and will not entertain evil thoughts.

Blaspheming is claiming to be God and applying his characteristics to yourself. The religious leaders rightly saw that Jesus was claiming to be God. What they did not understand was that he *is* God and thus has the authority to heal and to forgive sins.

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Which is easier to say, “Your sins are forgiven you” or to say, “Get up and walk”?

Matthew 9:5

For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?

Confession: I will demonstrate my Love for God by acting on his word.

Jesus backed up his words by healing the man’s legs. Jesus’ action showed that his words were true; he had the power to forgive as well as to heal. Talk is cheap, but our words lack meaning if our actions do not back them up. We can say we love God or others, but if we are not taking practical steps to demonstrate that love, our words are empty and meaningless

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How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them?

Matthew 9:15

And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.

Confession: I will rejoice with great joy while the bridegroom is present.

The arrival of the kingdom of heaven was like a wedding feast with Jesus as the bridegroom. His disciples, therefore, were filled with joy. It would not be right to mourn or fast when the bridegroom was present..

Talk is cheap, but our words lack meaning if our actions do not back them up. We can say we love God or others, but if we are not taking practical steps to demonstrate that love, our words are empty and meaningless. How well do your actions back up what you say?

Chapter 2

Matthew 9:28 – Matthew 15:34

Do you believe that I am able to do this?

Matthew 9:28

And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.

Confession: I believe the Lord can do all things.

These blind men were persistent. They went right into the house where Jesus was staying. They knew Jesus could heal them, and they would let nothing stop them from finding him. That's real faith in action. If you believe Jesus is the answer to your every need, don't let anything or anyone stop you from reaching him.

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What did you go out into the desert to see?

Matthew 11:7

And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

Confession: I will look in all places for the wonderful works of God.

If you sometimes doubt your salvation, the forgiveness of your sins, or God's work in your life, look at the evidence in Scripture and the changes in your life. When you doubt, don't turn away from Christ; turn *to* him.

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Two what can I compare this generation?

Matthew 11:16

But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,

Confession: I will look for the generation in which Christ shall return.

Jesus condemned the attitude of his generation. No matter what he said or did, they took the opposite view. They were cynical and skeptical because he challenged their comfortable, secure, and self-centered lives. Too often we justify our inconsistencies because listening to God may require us to change the way we live.

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If any of you has a sheep and it falls into a pit on the Sabbath day, will you not take hold of it and lift it out?

Matthew 12:11

And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?

Confession: I will look to the grace of God, rather than the laws of Moses.

The Pharisees placed their laws above human need. They were so concerned about Jesus' breaking one of their rules that they did not care about the man's shriveled hand. What is your attitude toward others? If your convictions don't allow you to help certain people, your convictions may not be in tune with God's Word. Don't allow dogma to blind you to human need.

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How can anyone in her strong man's house and carry off his possession unless she first ties up the strong man?

Matthew 12:29

Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

Confession: God's power cannot be bound by a strong man.

At Jesus' birth, Satan's power and control were disrupted. In the desert Jesus overcame the devil's temptations, and at the resurrection he defeated Satan's ultimate weapon, death. Eventually Satan will be constrained forever (Rev. 20:10), and evil will no longer pervade the earth. Jesus has complete power and authority over Satan and all his forces.

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You brood of Vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good?

Matthew 12:34

O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

Confession: My heart is pure, therefore I will speak only good things.

Jesus reminds us that what we say reveals what is in our hearts. What kinds of words come from your mouth? That is an indication of what your heart is really like. You can't solve your heart problem, however, just by cleaning up your speech. You must allow the Holy Spirit to fill you with new attitudes and motives; then your speech will be cleansed at its source.

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Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?

Matthew 12:48

But he answered and said unto him that told him. Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?

Confession: I am part of the family of God.

Jesus was not denying his responsibility to his earthly family. On the contrary, he criticized the religious leaders for not following the Old Testament command to honor their parents (Matthew 15:1-9). He provided for his mother's security as he hung on the cross (John 19:25-27). His mother and brothers were present in the upper room at Pentecost (Acts 1:14). Instead Jesus was pointing out that spiritual relationships are as binding as physical ones, and he was paving the way for a new community of believers (the universal church), our spiritual family.

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Why do you doubt?

Matthew 14:31

And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

Confession: I will maintain faith and will not doubt.

When Peter's faith faltered, he reached out to Christ, the only one who could help. He was afraid, but he still looked to Christ. When you are apprehensive about the troubles around you and doubt Christ's presence or ability to help, you must remember that he is the *only* one who can really help.

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Why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your nation?

Matthew 15:2

Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

Confession: I will not look at the traditions, but will look at the plan of salvation and redemption given to us by Jesus Christ.

The Pharisees and teachers of the law came from Jerusalem, the center of Jewish authority, to scrutinize Jesus' activities. Over the centuries since the Jews' return from Babylonian captivity, hundreds of religious traditions had been added to God's laws. The Pharisees and teachers of the law considered them all equally important. Many traditions are not bad in themselves.

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How many loaves do you have?

Matthew 15:34

And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.

Confession: No matter how small the portion, it will be enough when blessed by God.

Jesus had already fed more than 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish. Here, in a similar situation, the disciples were again perplexed. How easily we throw up our hands in despair when faced with difficult situations. Like the disciples, we often forget that if God has cared for us in the past, he will do the same now. When facing a difficult situation, remember how God cared for you and trust him to work faithfully again.

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Chapter 3

Matthew 16:9 – Matthew 20:22

Do you still not understand?

Matthew 16:9

Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?

Confession: I will understand and remember the blessings that God has given.

The religious leaders thought they held the keys of the kingdom, and they tried to shut some people out. We cannot decide to open or close the kingdom of heaven for others, but God uses us to help others find the way inside. To all who believe in Christ and obey his words, the kingdom doors are swung wide open.

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Who do people say the Son of Man is?

Matthew 16:13

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, whom do men say that I the Son of man am?

Confession: I confess that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the Living God.

Peter confessed Jesus as divine and as the promised and long-awaited Messiah. If Jesus were to ask you this question, how would you answer? Is he your Lord and Messiah?

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What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet fortifies his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?

Matthew 16:26

For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

Confession: I will never exchange my eternal life to gain the world.

This passage corresponds to Daniel's prophecies: the Messiah would be cut off (Daniel 9:26); there would be a period of trouble (Matthew 9:27); and the king would come in glory (Matthew 7:13-14). The disciples would endure the same suffering as their King and, like him, would be rewarded in the end.

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How long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you?

Matthew 17:17

Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.

Confession: I will allow faith to work for God's glory through me.

The disciples had been given the authority to do the healing, but they had not yet learned how to appropriate the power of God. Jesus' frustration is with the unbelieving and unresponsive generation. His disciples were merely a reflection of that attitude in this instance. Jesus' purpose was not to criticize the disciples, but to encourage them to greater faith.

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For whom do the kings of the earth collect duty and taxes – from their own son's are from others?

Matthew 17:25

He said, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What think thou, Simon? Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? Of their own children, or of strangers?

Confession: I will pay tribute to those to whom it is due.

. Jesus used this situation to emphasize his kingly role. Just as kings pay no taxes and collect none from their family, Jesus, the King, owed no taxes. But Jesus supplied the tax payment for both himself and Peter rather than offend those who didn't understand his kingship. Although Jesus supplied the tax money, Peter had to go and get it. Ultimately all that we have comes to us from God's supply, but he may want us to be active in the process.

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What do you think? If a man owns 100 sheep and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the 98 – nine on the heels and go to look for the one that wandered off?

Matthew 18:12

"If a shepherd has one hundred sheep, and one wanders away and is lost, what will he do? Won't he leave the ninety-nine others and go out into the hills to search for the lost one?"

Confession: My time, effort and means will be spent in searching for those who are lost.

Just as a shepherd is concerned enough about one lost sheep to go search the hills for it, so God is concerned about every human being he has created (he does not want anyone to perish," 2 Peter 3:9).

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Why do you ask me about what is good?

Matthew 19:17

"Why ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "Only God is good. But to answer your question, you can receive eternal life if you keep the commandments."

Confession: All goodness belongs to God.

When the young man replied that he had kept the commandments, Jesus told him that he must do something more—sell everything and give the money to the poor. Jesus’ statement exposed the man’s weakness. In reality, his wealth was his god, his idol, and he would not give it up. Thus he violated the first and greatest commandment (Exodus 20:3; Matthew 22:36-40).

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What is it you want?

Matthew 20:21

"What is your request?" he asked.

She replied, "In your Kingdom, will you let my two sons sit in places of honor next to you, one at your right and the other at your left?"

Confession: I will never request to be exalted?

. The “cup” was the suffering and crucifixion that Christ faced. Both James and John would also face great suffering. James would be put to death for his faith, and John would be exiled.

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Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?

Matthew 20:22

But Jesus told them, "You don't know what you are asking! Are you able to drink from the bitter cup of sorrow I am about to drink?"

"Oh yes," they replied, "we are able!"

Confession: I seek no position to exalt me beyond that which I able to bear.

James, John, and their mother failed to grasp Jesus' previous teachings on rewards (Matthew 19:16-30) and eternal life (Matthew 20:1-16). They failed to understand the suffering they must face before living in the glory of God's kingdom. The "cup" was the suffering and crucifixion that Christ faced. Both James and John would also face great suffering. James would be put to death for his faith, and John would be exiled.

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Chapter 4

Matthew 20:32 – Matthew 26:40

What do you want me to do for you?

Matthew 20:32

Jesus stopped in the road and called, "What do you want me to do for you?"

Confession: I desire that the Lord will be glorified through me.

John's baptism –Was it from heaven, or from men?

Matthew 21:25

"Did John's baptism come from heaven or was it merely human?"

They talked it over among themselves. "If we say it was from heaven, he will ask why we didn't believe him.

Confession: I believe that John the Baptist was the forerunner of Jesus Christ.

The Pharisees demanded to know where Jesus got his authority. If Jesus said his authority came from God, they would accuse him of blasphemy. If he said that he was acting on his own authority, the crowds would be convinced that the Pharisees had the greater authority. But Jesus answered them with a seemingly unrelated question that exposed their real motives. They didn't really want an answer to their question; they only wanted to trap him. Jesus showed that the Pharisees wanted the truth only if it supported their own views and causes.

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What do you think?

Matthew 21:28

"But what do you think about this? A man with two sons told the older boy, 'Son, go out and work in the vineyard today.'

Confession: I believe that all believers should work in God's vineyard.

The son who said he would obey and then didn't represented the nation of Israel in Jesus' day. They said they wanted to do God's will, but they constantly disobeyed. They were phony, just going through the motions. It is dangerous to pretend to obey God when our hearts are far from him because God knows our true intentions. Our actions must match our words.

Have you never read in the Scriptures?

Matthew 21:42

Then Jesus asked them, "Didn't you ever read this in the Scriptures?' The stone rejected by the builders has now become the cornerstone. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous to see.'

Confession: Jesus Christ is the cornerstone.

Jesus refers to himself as “the stone the builders rejected.” Although Jesus was rejected by many of his people, he will become the capstone, or cornerstone, of his new building, the church (see Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:7).

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Why are you trying to trap me?

Matthew 22:18

But Jesus knew their evil motives. "You hypocrites!" he said. "Whom are you trying to fool with your trick questions?"

Confession: I will not try to change God's plan

Jesus avoided this trap by showing that we have dual citizenship (1 Peter 2:17). Our citizenship in the nation requires that we pay money for the services and benefits we receive. Our citizenship in the kingdom of heaven requires that we pledge to God our primary obedience and commitment.

What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?

Matthew 22:42

"What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?"

They replied, "He is the son of David."

Confession: I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God.

The Pharisees knew that the Messiah would be a descendant of David, but they did not understand that he would be God himself. Jesus quoted from Psalm 110:1 to show that the Messiah would be greater than David.) The most important question we will ever answer is what we believe about Christ. Other theological questions are irrelevant until we believe that Jesus is who he said he is.

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Which is greater: the gold, or the Temple that makes the gold sacred? Which is greater the gift on the altar that makes a gift sacred?

Matthew 23:17-19

Blind fools! Which is greater, the gold, or the Temple that makes the gold sacred? [18] And you say that to take an oath 'by the altar' can be broken, but to swear 'by the gifts on the altar' is binding! [19] How blind! For which is greater, the gift on the altar, or the altar that makes the gift sacred?

Confession: The gift on the altar is a sacred gift.

y getting caught up in the details of their additional laws and regulations, they completely missed God, to whom the laws pointed. A religion of deeds puts pressure on people to surpass others in what they know and do. Thus, a hypocritical teacher was likely to have students who were even more hypocritical. We must make sure we are not creating Pharisees by emphasizing outward obedience at the expense of inner renewal.

How will you escape being damned to hell?

Matthew 23:33

Snakes! Sons of vipers! How will you escape the judgment of hell?

Confession: The judgments of Hell shall come upon those who seek to escape and do not believe.

The people of Jesus' generation said they would not act as their fathers did in killing the prophets whom God had sent to them (Matthew 23:30), but they were about to kill the Messiah himself and his faithful followers. Thus

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Why are you in bothering this woman?

Matthew 26:10

But Jesus replied, "Why berate her for doing such a good thing to me?"

Confession: I will not condemn those who do good things for the work of the Lord.

Matthew and Mark put this event just before the Last Supper, while John has it just before the Triumphal Entry. Of the three, John places this event in the most likely chronological order. We must remember that the main purpose of the Gospel writers was to give an accurate record of Jesus' message, not to present an exact chronological account of his life. Matthew and Mark may have chosen to place this event here to contrast the complete devotion of Mary with the betrayal of Judas, the next event they record in their Gospels.

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Could you not watch with me for one hour?

Matthew 26:40

Then he returned to the disciples and found them asleep. He said to Peter, "Couldn't you stay awake and watch with me even one hour?"

Confession: I will be watchful at all times.

Jesus used Peter's drowsiness to warn him about the kinds of temptation he would soon face. The way to overcome temptation is to keep watch and pray. Watching means being aware of the possibilities of temptation, sensitive to the subtleties, and spiritually equipped to fight it. Because temptation strikes where we are most vulnerable, we can't resist it alone. Prayer is essential because God's strength can shore up our defenses and defeat Satan's power.

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Do you think I cannot call on my father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than 12 legions of angels?

Matthew 26:53

Don't you realize that I could ask my Father for thousands of angels to protect us, and he would send them instantly?

Confession: I will honor the power of Christ to call forth Angels.

The man who cut off the servant's ear was Peter (John 18:10). Peter was trying to prevent what he saw as defeat. He didn't realize that Jesus had to die in order to gain victory.

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But how then would the Scripture be fulfilled says it must happen in this way?

Matthew 26:54

But if I did, how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that describe what must happen now?"

Confession: I accept the fulfillment of all Scriptures.

Jesus demonstrated perfect commitment to his Father's will. His kingdom would not be advanced with swords, but with faith and obedience.

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Am I leading a rebellion that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me?

Matthew 26:55

Then Jesus said to the crowd, "Am I some dangerous criminal, that you have come armed with swords and clubs to arrest me? Why didn't you arrest me in the Temple? I was there teaching every day.

Confession: I will not accuse or condemn Christ in any way.

Although the religious leaders could have arrested Jesus at any time, they came at night because they were afraid of the crowds that followed him each day (see Matthew 26:5).

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My God, my God, why have you forsaken me

Matthew 27:46

At about three o'clock, Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

Confession: I believe that Jesus was rejected by God so that my sins could be forgiven.

Jesus was not questioning God; he was quoting the first line of Psalm 22—a deep expression of the anguish he felt when he took on the sins of the world, which caused him to be separated from his Father. *This* was what Jesus dreaded as he prayed to God in the garden to take the cup from him (Matthew 26:39). The physical agony was horrible, but even worse was the period of spiritual separation from God. Jesus suffered this double death so that we would never have to experience eternal separation from God.

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Chapter 5

Mark 2:8 – Mar 7:18

Why are you thinking these things?

Mark 2:8

Jesus knew what they were discussing among themselves, so he said to them, "Why do you think this is blasphemy?"

Confession: I believe that God knows and understands that thoughts of man.

The religious leaders understood correctly that Jesus was claiming divine prerogatives, but their judgment of him was wrong. Jesus was not blaspheming because his claim was true. Jesus is God, and he proved his claim by healing the paralytic (Mark 2:9-12).

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Why do you bring in a lamp to put it under a bowl or bed? Instead, go to put it on the stand?

Mark 4:21

Then Jesus asked them, "Would anyone light a lamp and then put it under a basket or under a bed to shut out the light? Of course not! A lamp is placed on a stand, where its light will shine.

Confession: I will not hide my life but will let it shine for the glory of God.

If a lamp doesn't help people see, it is useless. Does your life show other people how to find God and how to live for him? If not, ask what "bowls" have extinguished your light. Complacency, resentment, stubbornness of heart, or disobedience could keep God's light from shining through you to others.

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What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it?

Mark 4:30

Jesus asked, "How can I describe the Kingdom of God? What story should I use to illustrate it?"

Confession: The kingdom of God is come unto man through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Jesus used this parable to explain that although Christianity had very small beginnings, it would grow into a worldwide community of believers. When you feel alone in your stand for Christ, realize that God is building a worldwide kingdom. He has faithful followers in every part of the world, and your faith, no matter how small, can join with that of others to accomplish great things.

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Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith? Mark 4:40

Mark 4:40

And he asked them, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still not have faith in me?"

Confession: I will not fear man, but will have faith to the glory of God.

The disciples panicked because the storm threatened to destroy them all, and Jesus seemed unaware and unconcerned. There was a physical storm, but storms come in other forms. Think about the storms in your life—the situations that cause you great anxiety. Whatever your difficulty, you have two options: You can worry and assume that Jesus no longer cares, or you can resist fear, putting your trust in him. When you feel like panicking, confess your need for God and then trust him to care for you.

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What is your name?

Mark 5:9

Then Jesus asked, "What is your name?"

And the spirit replied, "Legion, because there are many of us here inside this man."

Confession: Jesus can and will remove the powers of Satan over a man.

The evil spirit said its name was Legion. A legion was the largest unit of the Roman army, consisting of 3,000 to 6,000 soldiers. Obviously this man was possessed by many demons.

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Who touched my clothes?

Mark 5:30

Jesus realized at once that healing power had gone out from him, so he turned around in the crowd and asked, "Who touched my clothes?"

Confession: Those who touch the Lord will be healed.

The woman desperately wanted Jesus to heal her, but she knew that her bleeding would cause Jesus to be unclean under Jewish law if she touched him. Still, the woman reached out by faith and was healed. Sometimes we feel that our problems will keep us from God. But he is always ready to help. We should never allow our fear to keep us from approaching him.

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Why all this commotion and wailing?

Mark 5:39

He went inside and spoke to the people. "Why all this weeping and commotion?" he asked. "The child isn't dead; she is only asleep."

Confession: Jesus can bring life, even to those who have died.

Jesus tolerated the crowd's abuse in order to teach an important lesson about maintaining hope and trust in him. Today, most of the world laughs at Christ's claims, which seem ridiculous to them. When you are belittled for expressing faith in Jesus and hope for eternal life, remember that unbelievers don't see from God's perspective. For a clear statement about life after death, see 1 Thes. 4:13-14.

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Don't you see that nothing that he is a man from the outside can make him a clean?

Mark 7:18

"Don't you understand either?" he asked. "Can't you see that what you eat won't defile you?"

Confession: I will not be defiled by what I speak.

The Jews believed they could be clean before God because of what they refused to eat. But Jesus pointed out that sin actually begins in the attitudes and intentions of the inner person. Jesus did not degrade the law, but he paved the way for the change made clear in Acts 10:9-29 when God removed the cultural restrictions regarding food. We are not pure because of outward acts—we become pure on the inside as Christ renews our minds and transforms us into his image.

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Chapter 6

Mark at 8:12-Mark 9:12

Why does this generation has for miraculous sign? I tell you the truth, no sign will be given to it.

Mark 8:12 he heard this, he sighed deeply and said, "Why do you people keep demanding a miraculous sign? I assure you, I will not give this generation any such sign."

Confession: I will not seek after a sign for my generation.

The Jews believed they could be clean before God because of what they refused to eat. But Jesus pointed out that sin actually begins in the attitudes and intentions of the inner person. Jesus did not degrade the law, but he paved the way for the change made clear in Acts 10:9-29 when God removed the cultural restrictions regarding food. We are not pure because of outward acts—we become pure on the inside as Christ renews our minds and transforms us into his image.

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What are you talking about having no bread question are Do you still not see or understand? Are your hearts hard question mark The you have eyes but fail to see and years of failed to hear? And don't you remember?

Mark 8:17-18

Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he said, "Why are you so worried about having no food? Won't you ever learn or understand? Are your hearts too hard to

take it in? [18] 'You have eyes—can't you see? You have ears—can't you hear?' Don't you remember anything at all?

Confession: I believe that God also apply all my needs according to his riches in glory.

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When I broke the five loaves for the 5000, how many baskets full's of pieces did you pickup?

Mark 8:19

What about the five thousand men I fed with five loaves of bread? How many baskets of leftovers did you pick up afterward?" "Twelve," they said.

Confession: I believe that God is a God of more than enough.

How could the disciples experience so many of Jesus' miracles and yet be so slow to comprehend who he was? They had already seen Jesus feed over 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish (Mark 6:35-44), yet here they doubted whether he could feed another large group.

Sometimes we are also slow to catch on. Although Christ has brought us through trials and temptations in the past, we don't believe that he will do it in the future.

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When I wrote the seven loaves for the 4000, how many baskets full of the pieces deed you pickup?

Mark 8:20

"And when I fed the four thousand with seven loaves, how many large baskets of leftovers did you pick up?"

"Seven," they said.

Confession: There is no limit to God supply.

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Do you still not understand?

Mark 8:21

"Don't you understand even yet?" he asked them.

Confession: I will read the word and understand its meanings.

Although Christ has brought us through trials and temptations in the past, we don't believe that he will do it in the future. Is your heart too closed to take in all that God can do for you? Don't be like the disciples. Remember what Christ has done, and have faith that he will do it again.

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(To the blind man) Do you see anything? Mark 8:23

Mark 8:23

Jesus took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village. Then, spitting on the man's eyes, he laid his hands on him and asked, "Can you see anything now?"

Confession: The blind can see in the lame can walk according to the manifest power of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Why did Jesus touch the man a second time before he could see? This miracle was not too difficult for Jesus, but he chose to do it in stages, possibly to show the disciples that some healing would be gradual rather than instantaneous or to demonstrate that spiritual truth is not always perceived clearly at first. Before Jesus left, however, the man was healed completely.

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Why then is it written that the Son of Man must suffer much be rejected?

Mark 9:12

Jesus responded, "Elijah is indeed coming first to set everything in order. Why then is it written in the Scriptures that the Son of Man must suffer and be treated with utter contempt?"

Confession: I will honor the suffering of our Lord.

It was difficult for the disciples to grasp the idea that their Messiah would have to suffer. The Jews who studied the Old Testament prophecies expected the Messiah to be a great king like David, who would overthrow the enemy, Rome. Their vision was limited to their own time and experience.

They could not understand that the values of God's eternal kingdom were different from the values of the world. They wanted relief from their present problems. But deliverance from sin is far more important than deliverance from physical suffering or political oppression.

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Chapter 7

Mark 9:33 – Mark 14:37

What were you arguing about on the road?

Mark 9:33

After they arrived at Capernaum, Jesus and his disciples settled in the house where they would be staying. Jesus asked them, "What were you discussing out on the road?"

Confession: I will not argue with others concerning the things of God, but will accurately discern God's will for my life.

Why were the disciples afraid to ask Jesus about his prediction of his death? Perhaps it was because the last time they reacted to Jesus' sobering words they were scolded (Mark 8:32-33). In their minds, Jesus seemed morbidly preoccupied with death.

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Solve this good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can you make it salty again?

Mark 9:50

Salt is good for seasoning. But if it loses its flavor, how do you make it salty again? You must have the qualities of salt among yourselves and live in peace with each other."

Confession: I seek to be the salt that makes man thirsty to hear God's word.

Jesus used salt to illustrate three qualities that should be found in his people: (1) We should remember God's faithfulness, just as salt when used with a sacrifice recalled God's covenant with his people (Leviticus 2:13). (2) We should make a difference in the "flavor" of the world we live in, just as salt changes meat's flavor

(see Matthew 5:13). (3) We should counteract the moral decay in society, just as salt preserves food from decay.

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What did Moses command you? Mark 10:3

Mark 10:3

"What did Moses say about divorce?" Jesus asked them.

Confession: I will honor the law, and I will honor the teachings of Jesus Christ.

God allowed divorce as a concession to people's sinfulness. Divorce was not approved, but it was instituted to protect the injured party in a bad situation.

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Why do you call me good? Mark 10:18

Mark 10:18

"Why do you call me good?" Jesus asked. "Only God is truly good.

Confession: God is good and Jesus Christ is Lord of all.

When Jesus asked this question, he was saying, "Do you really know the One to whom you are talking?" Because only God is truly good, the man was calling Jesus "God," whether or not he realized it.

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What do you want me to do for you? Mark 10:51

Mark 10:51

"What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked. "Teacher," the blind man said, "I want to see!"

Confession: I will ask and receive God's healing.

“Son of David” was a popular way of addressing Jesus as the Messiah, because it was known that the Messiah would be a descendant of King David (Isaiah 9:7). The fact that Bartimaeus called Jesus the Son of David shows that he recognized Jesus as the Messiah. His faith in Jesus as the Messiah brought about his healing.

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Why are you trying to trap me?

Mark 12:15

Should we pay them, or should we not?"

Jesus saw through their hypocrisy and said, "Whom are you trying to fool with your trick questions? Show me a Roman coin, and I'll tell you."

Confession: I will give unto God the things that belong to God and I will give to man the things that belong to man.

The Pharisees were primarily a religious group concerned for ritual purity; the Herodians were a Jewish political group that approved of Herod's compromises with Rome. Normally the two groups had nothing to do with each other.

The Pharisees did not like Jesus because he exposed their hypocrisy.

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Do you see all these great buildings? Mark 13:2

Mark 13:2

Jesus replied, "These magnificent buildings will be so completely demolished that not one stone will be left on top of another."

Confession: I will look unto the future for God to fulfill his word in all things.

About 15 years before Jesus was born (20 B.C.), Herod the Great began to remodel and rebuild the temple, which had stood for nearly 500 years since the days of Ezra (Ezra 6:14-15). Herod made the temple one of the most beautiful buildings in Jerusalem—not to honor God, but to appease the Jews whom he ruled. The magnificent building project was not completely finished until A.D. 64. Jesus' prophecy that not one stone would be left on another was fulfilled in A.D. 70, when the Romans completely destroyed the temple and the entire city of Jerusalem

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Are you asleep?

Mark 14:37

Then he returned and found the disciples asleep. "Simon!" he said to Peter. "Are you asleep? Couldn't you stay awake and watch with me even one hour?"

Confession: I will awaken and watch for God to fulfill his plan for all things.

It's easy to think that Satan temporarily gained the upper hand in this drama about Jesus' death. But we see later that God was in control, even in the death of his Son. Satan gained no victory—everything occurred exactly as God had planned.

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Could you not keep watch for one-hour?

Mark 14:37

Then he returned and found the disciples asleep. "Simon!" he said to Peter. "Are you asleep? Couldn't you stay awake and watch with me even one hour?"

Confession: I will be among those who watch and wait.

Judas was given a contingent of police and soldiers (John 18:3) in order to seize Jesus and bring him before the religious court for trial. The religious leaders had issued the warrant for Jesus' arrest, and Judas was acting as Jesus' official accuser.

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Chapter 8

Luke 2:49 – Luke 10:36

Why were you searching for me?

Luke 2:49

"But why did you need to search?" he asked. "You should have known that I would be in my Father's house."

Confession: I will look for Christ where he may be found.

his is the first mention of Jesus' awareness that he was God's Son. But even though he knew his real Father, he did not reject his earthly parents. He went back to Nazareth with them and lived under their authority for another 18 years. God's people do not despise human relationships or family responsibilities. If the Son of God obeyed his human parents, how much more should we honor our family members! Don't use commitment to God's work to justify neglecting your family.

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Why are you thinking these things in your hearts?

Luke 5:22

Jesus knew what they were thinking, so he asked them, "Why do you think this is blasphemy?"

Confession: I will think no thoughts to blasphemed God , but will think thoughts of love toward God and man.

The religious leaders showed they did not understand that Jesus *is* God, and he has God's power to heal both the body and the soul. Forgiveness of sins was a sign that the Messianic age had come (Isaiah 40:2; Joel 2:32; Micah 7:18-19; Zech. 13:1).

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Which is easier to say, your sins are forgiven, or to say get up and walk?

Luke 5:23

Is it easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven' or 'Get up and walk'?

Confession: I will accept the forgiveness of God, and walked in his plan.

The Jewish leaders accused Jesus of blasphemy—claiming to be God or to do what only God can do. In Jewish law, blasphemy was punishable by death (Leviticus 24:16).

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Why do you call me, Lord, Lord, and do not do what I say?

Luke 6:46

"So why do you call me 'Lord,' when you won't obey me?"

Confession: When I call upon the Lord, I will obey him.

Obeying God is like building a house on a strong, solid foundation that stands firm when storms come. When life is calm, our foundations don't seem to matter. But when crises come, our foundations are tested. Be sure your life is built on the solid foundation of knowing and trusting Jesus Christ.

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Where is your faith?

Luke 8:25

Then he asked them, "Where is your faith?"

And they were filled with awe and amazement. They said to one another, "Who is this man, that even the winds and waves obey him?"

Confession: I stand amazed in the power of Jesus who is able to control all things.

When caught in the storms of life, it is easy to think that God has lost control and that we're at the mercy of the winds of fate. In reality, God is sovereign. He controls the history of the world as well as our personal destinies. Just as Jesus calmed the waves, he can calm whatever storms you may face.

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Who touched me? Luke 8:45

Luke 8:45

"Who touched me?" Jesus asked.

Everyone denied it, and Peter said, "Master, this whole crowd is pressing up against you."

Confession: I will reach out and touched Jesus when I have a need.

It isn't that Jesus didn't know who had touched him; it's that he wanted the woman to step forward and identify herself. Jesus wanted to teach her that his cloak did not contain magical properties, but that her faith in him had healed her. He may also have wanted to teach the crowds a lesson.

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Will you be lifted up to the skies? Luke 10:15

Luke 10:15

And you people of Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will be brought down to the place of the dead."

Confession: I will never exalt myself but will lift Jesus up.

Capernaum was Jesus' base for his Galilean ministry. The city was located at an important crossroads used by traders and the Roman army, so a message proclaimed in Capernaum was likely to go far. But many people of Capernaum did not understand Jesus' miracles or believe his teaching, and the city was included among those who would be judged for rejecting him.

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What is written in the law? How do you read it?

Luke 10:26

Jesus replied, "What does the law of Moses say? How do you read it?"

Confession: I will answer others according to the word of God.

This expert in the law was quoting Deut. 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18. He correctly understood that the law demanded total devotion to God and love for one's neighbor. Jesus talked more about these laws elsewhere (see Matthew 19:16-22 and Mark 10:17-22).

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Which of these three do you think was neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers? Luke 10:36

Luke 10:36

"Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?" Jesus asked.

Confession: I will be a neighbor to those who have assisted me.

From the parable we learn three principles about loving our neighbor: (1) lack of love is often easy to justify, even though it is never right; (2) our neighbor is anyone of any race, creed, or social background who is in need; and (3) love means acting to meet the person's need. Wherever you live, there are needy people close by. There is no good reason for refusing to help.

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Chapter 9

Luke 11:40 – Luke 17:17

Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also?

Luke 11:40

Fools! Didn't God make the inside as well as the outside?

Confession: I will exalt the Lord from within and without.

Persistence, or boldness, in prayer overcomes our insensitivity, not God's. To practice persistence does more to change our hearts and minds than his, and it helps us understand and express the intensity of our need. Persistence in prayer helps us recognize God's work.

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Who appointed me at judge or and arbitrator between you?

Luke 12:14-15

Jesus replied, "Friend, who made me a judge over you to decide such things as that?" [15] Then he said, "Beware! Don't be greedy for what you don't have. Real life is not measured by how much we own."

Confession: I will not measure success according to the amount of money I have.

Jesus says that the good life has nothing to do with being wealthy, so be on guard against greed (desire for what we don't have). This is the exact opposite of what society usually says. Advertisers spend millions of dollars to entice us to think that if we buy more and more of their products, we will be happier, more fulfilled, more comfortable. How do you respond to the constant pressure to buy? Learn to tune out expensive enticements and concentrate instead on the truly good life—living in a relationship with God and doing his work.

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Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?

Luke 12:25

Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? Of course not!

Confession: I will not have an over concern for the things that are to come.

seeking the kingdom of God means making Jesus the Lord and King of your life. He must control every area—your work, play, plans, relationships. Is the kingdom only one of your many concerns, or is it central to all you do?

As Lord and Creator, he wants to help provide what you need as well as guide how you use what he provides.

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Why don't you judge for yourselves what is right?

Luke 12:57

"Why can't you decide for yourselves what is right?"

Confession: I will look into the word and understand what is right.

For most of recorded history, the world's principal occupation was farming. The farmer depended directly on the weather for his livelihood. He needed just the right amounts of sun and rain—not too much, not too little—to make his living, and he grew skilled at interpreting natural signs. Jesus was announcing an earthshaking event that would be much more important than the year's crops—the coming of God's kingdom

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Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another key. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with 10,000 men to oppose the one coming against him with 20,000?

Luke 14:31

"Or what king would ever dream of going to war without first sitting down with his counselors and discussing whether his army of ten thousand is strong enough to defeat the twenty thousand soldiers who are marching against him?"

Confession: I will count the cost for I know that with God one man is a majority.

When a builder doesn't count the cost or estimates it inaccurately, his building may be left half completed. Will your Christian life be only half built and then abandoned because you did not count the cost of commitment to Jesus? What are those costs? Christians may face loss of social status or wealth. They may have to give up control over their money, their time, or their career. They may be hated, separated from their family, and even put to death. Following Christ does not mean a trouble-free life. We must carefully count the cost of becoming Christ's disciples so that we will know what we are getting into and won't be tempted later to turn back.

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Salt this good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again?

Luke 14:34

"Salt is good for seasoning. But if it loses its flavor, how do you make it salty again?"

Confession: My thirst for God will increase as I help others to become thirsty for God.

Just as salt flavors and preserves food, we are to preserve the good in the world, help keep it from spoiling, and bring new flavor to life. This requires careful planning, willing sacrifice, and unswerving commitment to Christ's kingdom. Being "salty" is not easy, but if a Christian fails in this function, he or she fails to represent Christ in the world.

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Suppose one of you has 100 sheep and loses one of them. As he not leave the 99 in the open country and go after the law sheep until he finds it?

Luke 15:4

"If you had one hundred sheep, and one of them strayed away and was lost in the wilderness, wouldn't you leave the ninety-nine others to go and search for the lost one until you found it?"

Confession: When one of God's children is hungry for God, I will seek to restore him.

We may be able to understand a God who would forgive sinners who come to him for mercy. But a God who tenderly searches for sinners and then joyfully forgives them must possess an extraordinary love! This is the kind of love that prompted Jesus to come to earth to search for lost people and save them. This is the kind of extraordinary love that God has for you. If you feel far from God, don't despair. He is searching for you.

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Or suppose a woman has 10 silver coins and loses one. Does she not light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it?

Luke 15:8

"Or suppose a woman has ten valuable silver coins and loses one. Won't she light a lamp and look in every corner of the house and sweep every nook and cranny until she finds it?"

Confession: When one is lost, I will seek to find and restore him.

Just as a woman would rejoice at finding her lost coin or ring, so the angels would rejoice over a repentant sinner. Each individual is precious to God. He grieves over every loss and rejoices whenever one of his children is found and brought into the kingdom.

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So if you have not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?

Luke 16:11

And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven?"

Confession: I will be trustworthy and possess God's riches.

Our integrity often meets its match in money matters. God calls us to be honest even in small details we could easily rationalize away. Heaven's riches are far more valuable than earthly wealth. But if we are not trustworthy with our money here (no matter how much or little we have), we will be unfit to handle the vast riches of God's kingdom. Don't let your integrity slip in small matters, and it will not fail you in crucial decisions either.

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Were not all can cleanest? Where are the other nine?

Luke 17:17

Jesus asked, "Didn't I heal ten men? Where are the other nine?"

Confession: When in need, I will be restored and speak thankfulness to God for this restoration.

John the Baptist's ministry was the dividing line between the Old and New Testaments (John 1:15-18). With the arrival of Jesus came the realization of all the prophets' hopes. Jesus emphasized that his kingdom fulfilled the law (the Old Testament); it did not cancel it (Matthew 5:17). His was not a new system but the culmination of the old. The same God who worked through Moses was working through Jesus.

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Chapter 10

Luke 18:7 – Luke 24:41

And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?

Luke 18:7

Even he rendered a just decision in the end, so don't you think God will surely give justice to his chosen people who plead with him day and night? Will he keep putting them off?

Confession: I believe that God shows justice to all people.

It was customary for a mother to bring her children to a rabbi for a blessing, and that is why these mothers gathered around Jesus. The disciples, however, thought the children were unworthy of the Master's time—less important than whatever else he was doing. But Jesus welcomed them, because little children have the kind of faith and trust needed to enter God's kingdom. It is important that we introduce our children to Jesus and that we ourselves approach him with childlike attitudes of acceptance, faith, and trust.

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However, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?

Luke 18:18

Once a religious leader asked Jesus this question: "Good teacher, what should I do to get eternal life?"

Confession: I will confess and receive eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

This ruler sought reassurance, some way of knowing for sure that he had eternal life. "No one can, by his or her own achievements," Jesus' answer implied. "What is impossible with men is possible with God." Salvation cannot be earned—it is God's gift (see Ephes. 2:8-10).

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For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves?

Normally the master sits at the table and is served by his servants. But not here! For I am your servant.

Luke 22:27

Normally the master sits at the table and is served by his servants. But not here!
For I am your servant.

Confession: Jesus Christ became a servant that he has become our Lord.

The world's system of leadership is very different from leadership in God's kingdom. Worldly leaders are often selfish and arrogant as they claw their way to the top. (Some kings in the ancient world gave themselves the title "Benefactor.") But among Christians, the leader is to be the one who *serves* best. There are different styles of leadership—some lead through public speaking, some through administering, some through relationships—but every Christian leader needs a servant's heart

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Why are you sleeping?

Luke 22:46

"Why are you sleeping?" he asked. "Get up and pray. Otherwise temptation will overpower you."

Confession: I will be faithful in prayer so that temptation will not overtake me.

These disciples were asleep. How tragic it is that many Christians act as if they are sound asleep when it comes to devotion to Christ and service for him. Don't be found insensitive to or unprepared for Christ's work.

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What are you discussing together as you walk along? Luke

Luke 24:17

"You seem to be in a deep discussion about something," he said. "What are you so concerned about?" They stopped short, sadness written across their faces.

Confession: When troubled, I will discuss with Jesus my need.

The news about Jesus' crucifixion had spread throughout Jerusalem. Because this was Passover week, Jewish pilgrims visiting the city from all over the Roman empire now knew about his death. This was not a small, insignificant event, affecting only the disciples—the whole nation was interested.

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What things?

Luke 24:19

"What things?" Jesus asked.

"The things that happened to Jesus, the man from Nazareth," they said. "He was a prophet who did wonderful miracles. He was a mighty teacher, highly regarded by both God and all the people.

Confession: I will consider the suffering and the price Jesus paid for me.

The disciples from Emmaus were counting on Jesus to redeem Israel—that is, to rescue the nation from its enemies. Most Jews believed that the Old Testament prophecies pointed to a military and political Messiah; they didn't realize that the Messiah had come to redeem people from slavery to sin. When Jesus died, therefore, they lost all hope. They didn't understand that Jesus' death offered the greatest hope possible.

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Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and enter his glory?

Luke 24:26

Wasn't it clearly predicted by the prophets that the Messiah would have to suffer all these things before entering his time of glory?"

Confession: I will honor the suffering of Jesus as he entered into his glory.

After the two disciples had explained their sadness and confusion, Jesus responded by going to Scripture and applying it to his ministry. When we are puzzled by

questions or problems, we too can go to Scripture and find authoritative help. If we, like these two disciples, do not understand what the Bible means, we can turn to other believers who know the Bible and have the wisdom to apply it to our situation.

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Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds?

Luke 24:38

"Why are you frightened?" he asked. "Why do you doubt who I am?"

Confession: I will not be afraid or doubt because I know who Jesus is.

Jesus' body wasn't just a figment of the imagination or the appearance of a ghost—the disciples touched him, and he ate food. On the other hand, his body wasn't merely a restored human body like Lazarus's (John 11)—he was able to appear and disappear. Jesus' resurrected body was immortal. This is the kind of body we will be given at the resurrection of the dead (see 1 Cor. 15:42-50).

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Do you have anything here to eat?

Luke 24:41

Still they stood there doubting, filled with joy and wonder. Then he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?"

Confession: Jesus, our Lord will always provide food for me to you.

The Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms is a way to describe the entire Old Testament. In other words, the entire Old Testament points to the Messiah. For example, his role as prophet was foretold in Deut. 18:15-20; his sufferings were prophesied in Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53; his resurrection was predicted in Psalm 16:9-11 and Isaiah 53:10-11.

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Chapter 11

John 1:38 – John 6:61

What do you want?

John 1:38

Jesus looked around and saw them following. "What do you want?" he asked them. They replied, "Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?"

Confession: I will follow Jesus, the greatest teacher of all.

When the two disciples began to follow Jesus, he asked them, "What do you want?" Following Christ is not enough; we must follow him for the right reasons. To follow Christ for our own purposes would be asking Christ to follow us—to align with us to support and advance our cause, not his. We must examine our motives for following him. Are we seeking his glory or ours?

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Why do you involve me?

John 2:4

"How does that concern you and me?" Jesus asked. "My time has not yet come."

Confession: I will not misunderstand the time and teaching of Jesus.

Mary was probably not asking Jesus to do a miracle; she was simply hoping that her son would help solve this major problem and find some wine. Tradition says that Joseph, Mary's husband, was dead, so she probably was used to asking for her son's help in certain situations. Jesus' answer to Mary is difficult to understand, but maybe that is the point. Although Mary did not understand what Jesus was going to do, she trusted him to do what was right. \

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You are Israel's teacher, and you did not understand these things?

John 3:10

Jesus replied, "You are a respected Jewish teacher, and yet you don't understand these things?"

Confession: The Lord will give me wisdom and knowledge to understand.

This Jewish teacher of the Bible knew the Old Testament thoroughly, but he didn't understand what it said about the Messiah. Knowledge is not salvation. You should know the Bible, but even more important, you should understand the God whom the Bible reveals and the salvation that God offers.

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I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe, how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things?

John 3:12

But if you don't even believe me when I tell you about things that happen here on earth, how can you possibly believe if I tell you what is going on in heaven?

Confession: I will understand the work of God on earth and seek to understand the work of God in heaven

When the Israelites were wandering in the desert, God sent a plague of snakes to punish the people for their rebellious attitudes. Those doomed to die from snakebite could be healed by obeying God's command to look up at the elevated bronze snake and by believing that God would heal them if they did (see Numbers 21:8-9). Similarly, our salvation happens when we look up to Jesus, believing he will save us. God has provided this way for us to be healed of sin's deadly bite.

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Will you give me a drink?

John 4:7

Soon a Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Please give me a drink."

Confession: I will drink of the living water that Jesus gives freely.

Jacob's well was on the property originally owned by Jacob (Genesis 33:18-19). It was not a spring-fed well, but a well into which water seeped from rain and dew, collecting at the bottom. Wells were almost always located outside the city along the main road. Twice each day, morning and evening, women came to draw water. This woman came at noon, however, probably to avoid meeting people who knew her reputation. Jesus gave this woman an extraordinary message about fresh and pure water that would quench her spiritual thirst forever.

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Do you want to get well? John 5:6

John 5:6

When Jesus saw him and knew how long he had been ill, he asked him, "Would you like to get well?"

Confession: I will ask and receiving healing for myself and for others.

After 38 years, this man's problem had become a way of life. No one had ever helped him. He had no hope of ever being healed and no desire to help himself. The man's situation looked hopeless. But no matter how trapped you feel in your infirmities, God can minister to your deepest needs. Don't let a problem or hardship cause you to lose hope. God may have special work for you to do in spite of your condition, or even because of it. Many have ministered effectively to hurting people because they have triumphed over their own hurts.

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How can you believe if you accept praise from one another, yet make no effort to obtain the praise that comes from only God?

John 5:44

No wonder you can't believe! For you gladly honor each other, but you don't care about the honor that comes from God alone.

Confession: I will seek honor from God and not for man.

The Pharisees prided themselves on being the true followers of their ancestor Moses. They were trying to follow every one of his laws to the letter, and they even added some of their own. Jesus' warning that Moses would accuse them stung them to fury. Moses wrote about Jesus (Genesis 3:15; Numbers 21:9; Numbers 24:17; Deut. 18:15), yet the religious leaders refused to believe Jesus when he came.

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If you do not believe Moses writings, how you believe me?

John 5:47

And since you don't believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?"

Confession: I will believe and honor the law of Moses, and I will believe and honor the teachings of Jesus Christ.

It was important for the people to believe the laws of Moses, but they also much believe the laws the Jesus taught.

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Where will we buy bread for these people to eat?

John 6:5

Jesus soon saw a great crowd of people climbing the hill, looking for him. Turning to Philip, he asked, "Philip, where can we buy bread to feed all these people?"

Confession: The same compassion Jesus had to feed the hungry in their time of need, will also feed me at this time.

If anyone knew where to get food, it would have been Philip because he was from Bethsaida, a town about nine miles away (John 1:44). Jesus was testing Philip to strengthen his faith. By asking for a human solution (knowing that there was none), Jesus highlighted the powerful and miraculous act that he was about to perform.

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Does this of offend you?

John 6:61

Jesus knew within himself that his disciples were complaining, so he said to them, "Does this offend you?"

Confession: I will understand the things of God, and will not complain.

The Holy Spirit gives spiritual life; without the work of the Holy Spirit we cannot even see our need for new life (John 14:17). All spiritual renewal begins and ends with God. He reveals truth to us, lives within us, and then enables us to respond to that truth.

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Chapter 12

John 6:62 - John 8: 46

What if you see this Son of Man ascend to where he was before?

John 6:62

Then what will you think if you see me, the Son of Man, return to heaven again?

Confession: I will watch and wait for the soon return of Jesus our Lord.

When Jesus shall descend from heaven, he will come in the same manner that he went into heaven. We that are alive and remain shall rise up together to meet Jesus in the air when he returns.

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You do not want to leave to, do you?

John 6:67

Then Jesus turned to the Twelve and asked, "Are you going to leave, too?"

Confession: I will never turn away from God.

There is no middle ground with Jesus. When he asked the disciples if they would also leave, he was showing that they could either accept or reject him. Jesus was not trying to repel people with his teachings. He was simply telling the truth. The more the people heard Jesus' real message, the more they divided into two camps—the honest seekers who wanted to understand more, and those who rejected Jesus because they didn't like what they had heard.

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Have I not chosen you?

John 6:70

Then Jesus said, "I chose the twelve of you, but one is a devil."

Confession: I will always be one of the faithful.

In response to Jesus' message, some people left; others stayed and truly believed; and some, like Judas, stayed but tried to use Jesus for personal gain. Many people today turn away from Christ. Others pretend to follow, going to church for status, approval of family and friends, or business contacts. But there are only two real responses to Jesus—you either accept him or reject him. How have you responded to Christ?

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Has not Moses given you the law?

John 7:19

None of you obeys the law of Moses! In fact, you are trying to kill me."

Confession: I will not be saved by keeping the law but will be saved by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Pharisees spent their days trying to achieve holiness by keeping the meticulous rules that they had added to God's laws. Jesus' accusation that they didn't keep Moses' laws stung them deeply. In spite of their pompous pride in themselves and their rules, they did not even fulfill a legalistic religion, for they were living far below what the law of Moses required. Murder was certainly against the law. Jesus' followers should do *more* than the moral law requires, not by adding to its requirements, but by going beyond and beneath the mere do's and don't's of the law to the spirit of the law.

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Why are you angry with me for healing the whole man on the Sabbath?

John 7:23

For if the correct time for circumcising your son falls on the Sabbath,

you go ahead and do it, so as not to break the law of Moses. So why should I be condemned for making a man completely well on the Sabbath?

Confession: I will accept God's timing and provision.

According to Moses' law, circumcision was to be performed eight days after a baby's birth (Genesis 17:9-14; Leviticus 12:3). This rite was carried out on all Jewish males to demonstrate their identity as part of God's covenant people. If the eighth day after birth was a Sabbath, the circumcision would still be performed (even though it was considered work). While the religious leaders allowed certain exceptions to Sabbath laws, they allowed none to Jesus, who was simply showing mercy to those who needed healing.

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Where are they? Has no one condemned you?

John 8:10

Then Jesus stood up again and said to her, "Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?"

Confession: I will not condemn those who have sinned, but will encourage and bless.

When Jesus said that only someone who had not sinned should throw the first stone, the leaders slipped quietly away, from oldest to youngest. Evidently the older men were more aware of their sins than the younger. Age and experience often temper youthful self-righteousness. But whatever your age, take an honest look at your life. Recognize your sinful nature, and look for ways to help others rather than hurt them.

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Why is my language not clear to you?

John 8:43

Why can't you understand what I am saying? It is because you are unable to do so!

Confession: I will clearly understand the spoken word of the Lord.

The religious leaders were unable to understand because they refused to listen. Satan used their stubbornness, pride, and prejudices to keep them from believing in Jesus.

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Can any of you prove me guilty of sin?

John 8:46

Which of you can truthfully accuse me of sin? And since I am telling you the truth, why don't you believe me?

Confession: I believe in the sinless life of Jesus Christ.

No one could accuse Jesus of a single sin. People who hated him and wanted him dead scrutinized his behavior but could find nothing wrong. Jesus proved he was God in the flesh by his sinless life. He is the only perfect example for us to follow.

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Chapter 13

John 8:46 – John 18:34

If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?

John 8:46

Which of you can truthfully accuse me of sin? And since I am telling you the truth, why don't you believe me?

Confession: I will believe all things that Jesus spoke.

In a number of places Jesus intentionally challenged his listeners to test him. He welcomed those who wanted to question his claims and character as long as they were willing to follow through on what they discovered. Jesus' challenge clarifies the two most frequent reasons that people miss when encountering him: (1) they never accept his challenge to test him, or (2) they test him but are not willing to believe what they discover. Have you made either of those mistakes?

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Why do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, I am God son?

John 10:36

Why do you call it blasphemy when the Holy One who was sent into the world by the Father says, 'I am the Son of God'?

Confession: I will speak no ill of the Holy Trinity.

When Jesus saw the weeping and wailing, he too wept openly. Perhaps he empathized with their grief, or perhaps he was troubled at their unbelief. In either case, Jesus showed that he cares enough for us to weep with us in our sorrow.

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Are there not 12 hours of daylight?

John 11:9

Jesus replied, "There are twelve hours of daylight every day. As long as it is light, people can walk safely. They can see because they have the light of this world.

Confession: I will work while it is yet day.

Day pictures the knowledge of God's will and *night* the absence of this knowledge. When we move ahead in darkness, we will be likely to stumble.

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Do you believe this?

John 11:26

They are given eternal life for believing in me and will never perish. Do you believe this, Martha?"

Confession: I will receive eternal life because I am a believer.

Jesus has power over life and death as well as power to forgive sins. This is because he is the Creator of life (see John 14:6). He who *is* life can surely restore life. Whoever believes in Christ has a spiritual life that death cannot conquer or diminish in any way. When we realize his power and how wonderful his offer to us really is, how can we help but commit our lives to him! To those of us who believe, what wonderful assurance and certainty we have: “Because I live, you also will live” (John 14:19).

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Where have you laid him?

John 11:33

When Jesus saw her weeping and saw the other people wailing with her, he was moved with indignation and was deeply troubled.

Confession: I will share in the compassion that Jesus showed to those in need.

John stresses that we have a God who cares. This portrait contrasts with the Greek concept of God that was popular in that day—a God with no emotions and no messy involvement with humans. Here we see many of Jesus’ emotions—compassion, indignation, sorrow, even frustration. He often expressed deep emotion, and we must never be afraid to reveal our true feelings to him. He understands them, for he experienced them.

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Do you understand what I have done for you?

John 13:12

After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, "Do you understand what I was doing?"

Confession: I will understand the things that God has done for me.

Jesus did not wash his disciples' feet just to get them to be nice to each other. His far greater goal was to extend his mission on earth after he was gone. These men were to move into the world serving God, serving each other, and serving all people to whom they took the message of salvation.

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Don't you know me, even after I have been among you such a long time?

John 14:9

Jesus replied, "Philip, don't you even yet know who I am, even after all the time I have been with you? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking to see him?"

Confession: I will pray to God in Jesus name.

Jesus is the visible, tangible image of the invisible God. He is the complete revelation of what God is like. Jesus explained to Philip, who wanted to see the Father, that to know Jesus is to know God. The search for God, for truth and reality, ends in Christ. (See also Col. 1:15; Hebrews 1:1-4.)

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Who is it you want? John

John 18:4

Jesus fully realized all that was going to happen to him. Stepping forward to meet them, he asked, "Whom are you looking for?"

Confession: Jesus willingly suffered for all believers.

John does not record Judas's kiss of greeting (Matthew 26:49; Mark 14:45; Luke 22:47-48), but Judas's kiss marked a turning point for the disciples. With Jesus' arrest, each one's life would be radically different. For the first time, Judas openly betrayed Jesus before the other disciples. For the first time, Jesus' loyal disciples ran away from him (Matthew 26:56). The band of disciples would undergo severe testing before they were transformed from hesitant followers to dynamic leaders.

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Shall I not drink the cup of the father has given me?

John 18:11

But Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword back into its sheath. Shall I not drink from the cup the Father has given me?"

Confession: Jesus was willing to follow the plan of the father for him.

Trying to protect Jesus, Peter pulled a sword and wounded the high priest's servant. But Jesus told Peter to put away his sword and allow God's plan to unfold. At times it is tempting to take matters into our own hands, to force the issue. Most often such moves lead to sin. Instead we must trust God to work out his plan. Think of it—if Peter had had his way, Jesus would not have gone to the cross, and God's plan of redemption would have been thwarted. The cup means the suffering, isolation, and death that Jesus would have to endure in order to atone for the sins of the world.

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Is that your own idea, or did others talk to you about me? John 18:34

John 18:34

Jesus replied, "Is this your own question, or did others tell you about me?"

Confession: I believe God's Word above all others.

If Pilate was asking this question in his role as the Roman governor, he would have been inquiring whether Jesus was setting up a rebel government. But the Jews were using the word *king* to mean their religious ruler, the Messiah. Israel was a captive nation, under the authority of the Roman empire. A rival king might have threatened Rome; a Messiah could have been a purely religious leader.

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Chapter 14

John 18:21 – John 21:22

Why question me?

John 18:21

Why are you asking me this question? Ask those who heard me. They know what I said."

Confession: I will believe and not question God's word.

While most of us are not like the religious leaders, we are all like the disciples, for all of us have been guilty of denying that Christ is Lord in vital areas of our lives or of keeping secret our identity as believers in times of pressure. Don't excuse yourself by pointing at others whose sins seem worse than yours. Instead, come to Jesus for forgiveness and healing.

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If I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?

John 18:23

Jesus replied, "If I said anything wrong, you must give evidence for it. Should you hit a man for telling the truth?"

Confession: I will believe without questioning God's word.

We can easily get angry at the Sanhedrin for their injustice in condemning Jesus, but we must remember that Peter and the rest of the disciples also contributed to Jesus' pain by deserting and disowning him (Matthew 26:56, 75).

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Why are you crying? Who is it you are looking for?

John 20:15

"Why are you crying?" Jesus asked her. "Who are you looking for?"

She thought he was the gardener. "Sir," she said, "if you have taken him away, tell me where you have put him, and I will go and get him."

Confession: Jesus is alive. A living Christ I will see.

Mary did not want to lose Jesus again. She had not yet understood the resurrection. Perhaps she thought this was his promised second coming (John 14:3). But Jesus did not want to be detained at the tomb. If he did not ascend to heaven, the Holy Spirit could not come. Both he and Mary had important work to do.

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Friends, haven't you any fish?

John 21:5

He called out, "Friends, have you caught any fish?"

"No," they replied.

Confession: Jesus is still offering bountiful provisions.

Only John (“the disciple whom Jesus loved”) recognized Jesus in the dim morning light, undoubtedly because Jesus had performed a similar miracle earlier (Luke 5:1-11).

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Do you love me? John

John 21:17

Once more he asked him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"

Peter was grieved that Jesus asked the question a third time. He said, "Lord, you know everything. You know I love you."

Jesus said, "Then feed my sheep."

Confession: Because I love Jesus, I will feed his lambs and feed his sheep.

In this beach scene, Jesus led Peter through an experience that would remove the cloud of his denial. Peter had disowned Jesus three times. Three times Jesus asked Peter if he loved him. When Peter answered yes, Jesus told him to feed his sheep. It is one thing to say you love Jesus, but the real test is willingness to serve him. Peter had repented, and here Jesus was asking him to commit his life. Peter’s life changed when he finally realized who Jesus was. His occupation changed from fisherman to evangelist; his identity changed from impetuous to “rock;” and his relationship to Jesus changed—he was forgiven, and he finally understood the significance of Jesus’ words about his death and resurrection.

Jesus asked Peter three times if he loved him. The first time Jesus said, “Do you truly love (Greek *agape*: volitional, self-sacrificial love) me more than these?” The second time, Jesus focused on Peter alone and still used the word translated into Greek, *agape*. The third time, Jesus used the word translated into Greek, *phileo* (signifying affection, affinity, or brotherly love) and asked, in effect, “Are you even my friend?” Each time Peter responded with the word translated into Greek as *phileo*. Jesus doesn’t settle for quick, superficial answers. He has a way of getting

to the heart of the matter. Peter had to face his true feelings and motives when Jesus confronted him. How would you respond if Jesus asked you, “Do you truly love me?” Do you really love Jesus? Are you even his friend?

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What is that to you?

John 21:22

Jesus replied, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You follow me."

Confession: I will not concern myself with the work of others, but will be concerned with the mission God has given unto me.

This was a prediction of Peter’s death by crucifixion. Tradition indicates that Peter was crucified for his faith—upside down because he did not feel worthy of dying as his Lord did. Despite what Peter’s future held, Jesus told him to follow him. We may be uncertain and fearful about our future. But if we know God is in control, we can confidently follow Christ.

Peter asked Jesus how John would die. Jesus replied that Peter should not concern himself with that. We tend to compare our lives to others, whether to rationalize our own level of devotion to Christ or to question God’s justice. Jesus responds to us as he did to Peter: “What is that to you? You must follow me.”

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