

Week Five: March 25, 2020 – March 31, 2020



HIS TEACHINGS I am learning the teachings of Jesus.

Jesus did not leave any writings for posterity, but his teaching was captured by his early followers and has been faithfully transmitted down to our day in the Bible. The gospels serve as the primary source for the teachings that Jesus delivered during the period of his earthly ministry. In the letters we have apostolic writings that apply His teaching to various situations.

Jesus' teachings are typically categorized by where they were delivered, the style of teaching, or the subject matter. The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) and the Olivet Discourse (Matthew 23-25) are familiar examples of the first type. Jesus' parables are an example of the second type. The third type includes Jesus teaching regarding His own identity and His approaching death.

Needless to say, we will not be exhausting all there is to say about Jesus' teachings throughout this week. But we will reflect on whether we can truly say, "I am learning the teachings of Jesus," and how we can develop more as learners in this regard.



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The ENTIRE Bible contains the teachings of Jesus. During the days of Jesus' earthly sojourn he put his seal of approval on Scripture as the very Word of God. Jesus, the eternal Son of God, is just as much the Author of Scripture as is the Father or the Spirit.

The teaching of Jesus is not only to be found in the words that he said. We are clearly told in John 1:14-18 that Jesus revealed the Father. What that means is that Jesus' actions and attitudes demonstrated throughout his life also taught us about the Father.

The Old Testament reading for today holds out the promise of future blessing. The chapter before this, Isaiah 59, speaks of the saviour who is our hope and the source of that future blessing.

Read and reflect on the following passages. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Isaiah 60:17-22

Matthew 9:27-34

Let's Get Personal:

Are you under stress because of the present fears in the face of a global pandemic? While it may be misunderstood to say that this illness is a result of sin, it is the truth. The world that God created was not meant for this. We have sinned and experienced many consequences. Sinners need a Saviour. While it might be the sin of humanity and not your personal sin that has resulted in this disaster, have you called out to the Saviour?

My Reflections

LISTEN – What did God say to me?

TRUST – What do I have to believe in order to act on this?

OBEY – What are some ways that I should act on this?

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Jesus' teachings were good news to the repentant and bad news to the spiritually rebellious. That is the case in the twenty-first century as much as it was the case in the first century. Jesus' parables were not folksy stories from which people could draw some moral lesson. For those who had ears to hear, they were the message of life.

In Matthew 21: 33-42 we see the record of Jesus' parable of the tenants. This tasted bitter to the religious leaders. As we read, "When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus' parables, they knew he was talking about them" (Matthew 21:45). How sweet it would have been for them if they would have responded and repented.

"The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes"

Read and reflect on the following passages. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Ezekiel 1:1-3; 2:8-3:3

Revelation 10:1-11

Let's Get Personal:

Do you find yourself to be somewhat Pharisaical in your estimation of how the law should be applied to other people? What do you think has contributed to that? What do you think that means for you personally as you say of yourself that you are learning the teachings of Jesus?

My Reflections

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Jesus' teaching pointed to himself. This set Jesus apart from all the prophets of God who came before him. One of the prime illustrations of this is the series of "I Am" statements that John recorded. With one exception these are taken from the Gospel of John.

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| I Am He | John 4:1-26 |
| I Am the Bread of Life | John 6:25-51 |
| I Am the Light | John 8:12-30 |
| I Am the Good Shepherd | John 10:1-21 |
| I Am the Resurrection | John 11:1-27 |
| I Am the Way Peace | John 14:1-14 |
| I Am the True Vine | John 15:1-8 |
| I Am the Alpha and Omega | Revelation 1:8; 22:12-16 |

Let us never lose sight of who He is.

Read and reflect on the following passages. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Ezekiel 33:10-16

Revelation 11:15-19

Let's Get Personal:

There is a considerable difference between knowing about Jesus and knowing Jesus. Think about how you came to know about Jesus. Take time this week to write out a brief testimony of how the teachings of Jesus impacted your life. Tell someone else about it.

My Reflections

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TRUST – What do I have to believe in order to act on this?

OBEY – What are some ways that I should act on this?



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Jesus was a master teacher, but people didn't always comprehend what He was saying. This could be attributed to the fact that they had their own agenda and His teachings did not always line up with what they wanted to hear from Him. That might be true for us at this time as we search for Jesus' teachings that speak to this immediate situation and miss the bigger story that speaks to our larger circumstance.

A case in point is the teachings of Jesus regarding his death. Look at passages like Luke 13:33; Mathew 16:21; Mathew 17:22; Mark 8:31 and then reflect on the fact that His disciples were surprised by His death. Do we too miss important parts of Jesus' teachings if we just look at our immediate situation?

Read and reflect on the following passage. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Luke 24:44-53

Psalm 130

Let's Get Personal:

What are some ways that you have found that the teaching of Jesus has had a profound impact on how you live your life? Have you found something that has been particularly comforting? What have you found to be challenging? Do you address the teachings of Jesus as a private message for you or as it relates to His mission?

My Reflections

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Jesus' teachings were not always in words but also in action. In John 11 we find a powerful example of that. This passage reports the death of Jesus' friend Lazarus and follows Jesus' response. We find Jesus' actions and His words coming together powerfully. The first part of this account is a little puzzling to us as Jesus did not hurry off immediately but, as we see, He did go even though it was dangerous for Him to do so. On His arrival He comforted Martha and Mary. His main means of comfort was to clarify His identity. As we read, "Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die; and whoever lives by believing in me will never die' (John 11:25,26). His personal question to Martha after teaching this could well be His question to us as well. That question is, "Do you believe this?"

Read and reflect on the following passage. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Psalm 143

1 Kings 17:17-24

Acts 20:7-12

Let's Get Personal:

How does Jesus' teaching about the resurrection impact you in such a time as we are presently experiencing? What do you think the focus of Lazarus' life would have been after Jesus raised Him from the dead? What should the focus be for those of us who have been raised spiritually in the new life of Jesus who know the promise of a resurrection body?

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In like a Lamb out like a Lion In like Lion a out like a Lamb

While we could conceivably be talking about that common expression that references the month of March, it better sums up a reflection on the teachings of Jesus. Jesus' teaching frequently spoke of the kingdom and He is the King. He is the Lion of the tribe of Judah. Jesus' teachings also point toward His death and He is the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world.

Different theological teachers tend to focus on one or the other of these aspects of Jesus' teaching. We should in fact take them both to heart and join with the heavenly voices that call out:

“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be praise and honor and glory and power,
for ever and ever!”

Read and reflect on the following passage. You can record your reflections on the next page.

Ephesians 2:1-10; Revelation 5:1-14

Let's Get Personal:

Have you been experiencing some spiritual struggle through this time of global pandemic? How does Jesus' teaching calm your fears?

Do you find that you have some teachings of Jesus you prefer because they speak more to your personal situation? What might you need to change to be able to say, “I am learning the teachings of Jesus?”

My Reflections

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