

# WEEK THIRTEEN

## The Gospel Hour, Inc

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Jesus returned to the temple and again met with His accusers, the chief priests and the elders. He had confounded and silenced them when He purged the temple, but they had reassembled their forces, mustered up their lost courage, and now wanted to know by what AUTHORITY He had taken such drastic action. They saw nothing wrong with having money changers in the temple. They thought themselves the source of ecclesiastical authority. Jesus had exposed and removed what they sanctioned and they now challenged His right to step in and change things.

They did not deny that He had done marvelous things, but they wanted to know the official capacity in which He did them and who put Him in office.

These men, though no doubt well educated were religious fools. They were not worthy of an answer, but the answer Jesus gave them is a beautiful model of the meekness of wisdom - and indeed, "the foolishness of

God is wiser than men" (I Cor. 1:25). Jesus did not harshly declare His divine authority, nor did He appeal to the miracles He had performed in the presence of the chief priests and elders. In His divine wisdom He left them to condemn themselves, which was far better.

The Lord's question provided a deep dilemma for His enemies. They had been seeking to entrap Him with calculated, carefully planned questions of a dangerous nature. Now He had enclosed them in their own trap! No matter which way they answered, the chief priests and elders were sure to be wrong. If they acknowledged John's baptism to be from heaven, Jesus would then ask them, "Why did you not believe him?" Furthermore, if they said John's baptism was from heaven they would be answering their own question regarding Christ's authority, for John bore testimony that Christ was "the Lamb of God" (John 1:29)

On the other hand, if they ac-

knowledged John's baptism as being of men, they would have to suffer the consequences from the multitudes, because the people revered John the Baptist as a true prophet of God. Luke 20:6 tells us that they feared the people would stone them if they said aught against the authority of John.

Of course, if these religious leaders had done their duty and been faithful to the charge given them as keepers of the law of God they would have had no cause to fear the crowds; and if they had performed their duties and filled their offices as they should have, they would never have questioned the authority of Jesus. They would have known from whence came His authority. But there were definitely in a corner from which they could see no way of escape except to plead ignorance - and this they did.

# THE LIFE OF CHRIST: THE FINAL WEEK

# SATURDAY: WISDOM IN WORSHIP

This begins the chronology of the final week. Today's reading takes place on the Saturday before the crucifixion. There are some important things to remember as we look at the chronology. While certain days are clearly identified others are more ambiguous and difficult to ascertain. Good Bible scholars don't all agree on every part of the chronology. No major doctrine hangs upon the dating of those events whose chronology is less clear. Throughout the next couple weeks we will endeavor to do our best in outlining the most probable dating of events.

The dating of today's event is based on the reading of John 12:1 as well as the next days reading which begins with on the next day. The next days events are

commonly understood to be on Sunday and classically referred to as Palm Sunday. More important than the day is the event itself.

As you read each of the accounts you will find that each gospel adds information not contained in the others. Together they give us the big picture.

Here we find more truths and principles than we can elaborate on in detail. Notice that Jesus was in the home of a leper! Others were with Him. Yet leprosy was a deadly and contagious disease. What a testimony to the healing power of Jesus.

Furthermore, we find the most famous sisters of Scripture. Luke 10:38-42 reveals

their character which is consistent with today's reading. Martha was a worker while Mary was a worshiper. How refreshing it is to find that Mary's worship was based on wisdom rather than personal emotion. Her heart was stirred, no doubt, but she knew what she was doing and why. She knew where Jesus was going and why He was going there.

Judas, on the other hand, was concerned with that which was temporal. Even his pretense of concern for the poor revealed a lack of perspective. True worship revolves around Christ and no one else: rich or poor. Yet Judas not only failed to understand that, he was also a crook. His care was not for the poor but for himself. That is a sure sign of one who does not know Christ.

**DAILY READING:** Mark 14:3-9, Matthew 26:6-13, John 12:1-11

DAY

1

Cities/Places

1. In whose house did Jesus dine and what was his condition?
2. Where did the woman pour the ointment?
3. How valuable was this ointment? Using your own study resources, translate that into its modern value.
4. In which city does this event take place?
5. What was the significance of this anointing?
6. What did Jesus prophecy of this woman and how is that being fulfilled today?
7. What event had already taken place in this town?
8. What three people attended this supper and what did each do?
9. Who was Simon's son?

## APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?

# SUNDAY: DUMBER THAN A ROCK

Jesus enters Jerusalem, the City of Peace, in unique fashion. His entrance alone fulfills Scriptures. The people rejoice greatly as they behold the King of Kings entering Jerusalem. They understand that Scriptures are being fulfilled. They have seen the miracles performed by His hands. They have listened to the wisdom of His words. They were ready for a revolution. How different their cries would be before the week was out. The cheers of Hosanna will give way to "Crucify Him."

Certainly, it may not have been all the same people but undoubtedly some were in both places following the crowd.

The Pharisees were faithful to their

ignorance. Time and time again, they attempted to trap Jesus. They tried to debate Him and make Him look foolish. However, the tables were always turned. But they were persistent if nothing else. Now they call on Jesus to forbid the disciples from worshipping Him.

How like the modern religious crowd the Pharisees were. Religion today proclaims morality, love, kindness and humanism. They will talk nicely about Jesus but dare not lift His name above all names. The true worship of Christ has given was to worship of the creature more than the Creator. Personal pleasure and entertainment coupled with good works have become the religion of the day.

Like the Pharisees this crowd feels that focusing upon Jesus is radical.

Jesus, however, says that this is the right focus. He is deserving of worship. John proclaims in Revelation "Worthy is the Lamb."

Why would we want to allow the rocks to do our job? Why would we give way to the stones in the ground? Why would we allow our silence to give privilege the the rocks of the ground which have no souls, no hearts, no salvation, and no mouths!

Don't surrender the privilege of praise. Give God the glory today!

**DAILY READING:** Mark 11:1-11, Matthew 21:1-11, Luke 19:28-44, John 12:12-19

1. Which gospel indicates that this was a new day?
2. Which gospel tells us what time of day this event ends?
3. What type of colt was to be found?
4. What actions and sayings of the people acknowledged Jesus as Lord?
5. Which Gospel quotes Zechariah 9:9?
6. How was the city of Jerusalem affected?
7. What did the Pharisees want Jesus to do and how did Jesus respond?
8. Why did Jesus say Jerusalem would be judged?

## APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?

DAY  
2

Cities/Places

# MONDAY: FIG TREES AND TEMPLES

The fig tree is a preview of the Temple. Fig trees are unique in that the fruit appears before the leaves. When the tree bears its fruit it advertises with foliage. It had all the signs of fruit but there was none. The curse, that no man would eat fruit from that tree ever again.

The fig tree is simply a preview of the Temple. This was the domain of the religious leaders who held the truth of God in unrighteousness. The law had been entrusted to them. This law prophesied of and clearly identified Christ. Outwardly, the scribes, Pharisees and Chief Priests presented the leaves of fruit bearing.

Hungry worshippers came from everywhere to taste the fruit from heaven. In search of a spiritual feast in Jerusalem

their souls are famished. The money changers are cheating the worshipers. Pitiful animals are being sold for holy sacrifices at absorbent prices.

When Jesus sees the leaves of the Temple, He finds no fruit. He topples the tables and removes the merchants.

As we look back to His pronouncement of Luke 20:42-44, we can practically hear Jesus say "No man eat fruit of thee hereafter." Neither the Temple nor the city would yield the fruit of Heaven.

Jesus begins and ends His earthly ministry with a passion for the house of God! John 2:13-25 records His first clearing of the temple. Apparently, the people didn't get the message.

Today, no temple stands in Jerusalem or anywhere else. Jerusalem is no longer the center of truth. Their failure to bear fruit has cost them the privilege.

In a few chapters, Jesus will teach His followers that He is the vine and we are the branches. We cannot bear fruit unless we abide in Him. What is it that brings Him glory? What is the purpose and the result of being attached to the vine? We are called to bear fruit.

Like Jerusalem and like the temple, we too can find that there are consequences for failing to yield fruit. Don't lose this valuable privilege.

**DAILY READING:** Mark 11:12-19, Matthew 21:12-17, Luke 19:45-48

DAY  
3

Cities/Places

1. Which verses indicate that it is the next day?
2. Where had they come from?
3. What was Jesus' first disappointment?
4. What was His second disappointment?
5. What would He not allow any man to do?
6. What did the chief priests want to do?
7. When did Jesus leave the city?
8. Which gospels quote Isaiah 56:7 and Psalm 8:2?
9. How often did He teach in the temple and how did people respond?

## APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?

# IF I BE LIFTED UP

This double entendre captures the heart and imagination of every preacher of the gospel and Bible believing Christian.

The first and most obvious meaning refers to the crucifixion of Christ. To be "lifted up" was a common expression that described the crucifixion. The victim was lifted up on the cross.

Jesus said that if He was lifted up, He would draw all men to Him. This tells us several things that are worth remembering.

The crucifixion was necessary. Jesus could not be stoned or beaten to death. Contrary to the lax doctrine of some liberals, it did make a difference how Jesus died. He had to be crucified. He had to shed His blood. He had to be offered in this fashion to fulfilled the Scriptures.

"They pierced my hands and my feet." Psalm 22:16

"And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son." Zechariah 12:10

We learn further that God is the one that draws men to Christ. Whether it be the Son as we read here or the Father as we read in John 6:44 or the Holy Ghost as we read in John 16, we know that it is God that seeks man rather than man that seeks God.

"There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God." Romans 3:11

We are inclined to notice the inclusion of this statement. He will draw "all" to Himself. It wasn't just the Jews. There were absolutely no boundaries as to whom He would draw to Himself. He does the drawing our response is only to receive. John 1:12.

The second meaning has practical application for each of us today. Christ must be lifted up! As John the Baptist said, "He must increase, but I must decrease." John 3:30

Churches lose Holy Ghost power when Jesus is not the focal point of that ministry. He must be the topic of every sermon and the thrust of every lesson. Powerless churches have lost sight of Jesus. They talk about problems and social concerns. They are more focused on being relevant in society than being relevant in Heaven!

The devil doesn't care what distracts the church so long as it is distracted from the name above all names: the name of Jesus. Our job, our responsibility, our calling is to lift up the name of Jesus and He will do the rest. Lift Him up today!

## DAILY READING: John 12:20-50

1. What did Philip and Andrew do that we should all be doing?
2. What must a grain of wheat do to bring forth fruit? What does this teach us about dying to self?
3. Who will the Father honor?
4. Who is about to be cast out?
5. What must happen for all men to be drawn to Jesus?
6. Which Old Testament prophet does John quote? Using your own resources find the references for these quotes.
7. What does Jesus say about Judgement?

## APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?

DAY  
4

Cities/Places

# TUESDAY MORNING WAKE UP CALL

Jesus would never pillow His head again. The events of this day will consume more pages of Scripture than any other. Before Tuesday ends, Jesus will introduce the Lord's Supper to the disciples and carry them away to Gethsemane. By morning light, He will be in the custody of Jewish officials intent upon His destruction and by that sunset Jesus will lay in the borrowed tomb of a man called Joseph.

Jesus enters the temple in Jerusalem early with His disciples. The chief priests, scribes and elders were determined that Jesus would not have the preeminence during Passover. These next few days were not going to be about Him. They would not permit Him to distract from the true meaning of this celebration! Did they ever miss the mark on this one.

After failing to sufficiently challenge His authority, Jesus delivers a stunning rebuke in the form of a parable. The point was so clear that even they could not miss it.

Every prophet from Abel to Zacharias had been rejected and rebuffed (Matthew 23:35). Some were stoned or shamefully handled while others were slain and slaughtered. For some reason, rebels feel that if they silence the messenger, they can silence God. But God always has another man to deliver His message. In this case: His Son.

Thinking they would reverence him, the lord of the vineyard sends his only begotten son. But alas, they wrongfully conclude that if they destroy the son, the lord will have no one else to send.

They could not have made a greater miscalculation. No mistake could have been deadlier. Their rejection of the son sealed their own destruction. That which had been trusted to them would then be given to others.

So too, their rejection of the only begotten Son of God, sealed their fate. Their lease on the gospel vineyard would be revoked and given to the Gentiles.

Jesus knew the effect this parable would have and it was intentional. Any trace of patience the Jewish leaders may have had was gone. They were determined to fulfill their role of the husbandmen who would slay the Son. The rest of this day would be spent working towards that end to their own destruction.

## DAILY READING:

Mark 11:20-12:12, Matthew 21:18-22:14,  
Luke 20:1-19

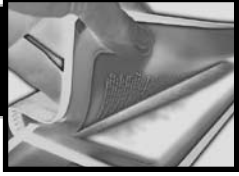
DAY  
5

Cities/Places

1. What indication do you find that the day has changed?
2. Who noticed what prophecy fulfilled?
3. Where did Jesus go upon arriving in Jerusalem?
4. What did the Jewish leaders question about Jesus?
5. Which son actually pleased the father?
6. Why were they unable to take Jesus at that moment?
7. What happened to those who made light of the King's invitation?
8. What two words of indignation provoked Jesus to quote Psalm 188:22?
9. Considering your study of the Scriptures, what do you think could happen when we fail to fulfill God's mission for us?

## APPLICATION

What is the greatest truth you you have learned from God's Word today and how can you apply it to your life?



# TABLE TALK



# PASTOR'S MESSAGE