

# The Word Unfolds

## Lesson Seventeen

Matthew 3-7; Mark 1;  
Luke 3; John 1, 2, 4

Before this lesson gets started, it is appropriate to take some time to talk about the writers of the four Gospels and the themes of these writings. The next six lessons deal with Jesus' teachings and miracles. The accounts of these events are recorded in the Gospels.

The first Gospel in the New Testament is Matthew. This book was written by Matthew, one of the twelve apostles. Matthew was the tax collector whom Jesus called to be an apostle. Matthew was writing to a Jewish audience and stressed Jesus' role as the Messiah. Matthew takes time to show how Jesus fulfills Old Testament prophecy.

The next Gospel is Mark, which was written by John Mark. Mark was not one of the twelve apostles. He was a close associate of Peter. Mark also traveled with Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey. Mark fell out of favor with Paul on this journey but later re-established a good relationship with him. Mark was writing to a Gentile audience. The emphasis of the book is on the events of Jesus' ministry especially as they relate to suffering and discipleship. The fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy would have little meaning for the Gentile readers. But who Jesus is and what he has done would have great meaning for the Gentiles.

The third Gospel is Luke. Luke was written by the physician Luke who also wrote the book of Acts. The book was written to an individual named Theophilus. It is possible that Theophilus served as the publisher of this writing and made sure it was copied and distributed. The intended audience for this book was Gentile, and the emphasis is on the Gentile inclusion in the kingdom of God. The book serves to clarify for the Gentiles what is true about Jesus.

The last Gospel is that of the apostle John. John's purpose is to set forth an account of Jesus' ministry so that people will believe. John states this purpose himself in chapter twenty verse thirty-one: "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name."

The four Gospels exhibit certain similarities and differences. All of the Gospels contain the good news of Jesus coming to save us from our sins. The first three Gospels contain many of the same episodes and parables.

The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke are Gospels of action in that they relate the miracles and parables of Jesus and His addresses to the crowds. They focus on Jesus' ministry in Galilee.

John's Gospel is different in that it does not concern itself so much with the miracles and parables as it does with the deep conversations of Jesus and with prayer. John focuses on Jesus' ministry in Judea.

From the background on the authors, it can be seen that each author had a specific purpose in mind for his writing and this purpose influenced his writing. By reading all of the Gospels, we can get a very in-depth look at our Lord and Savior.

Lesson seventeen will cover several episodes from early in Jesus' ministry. John the Baptist has done his work of preparing the way for Jesus. Jesus' ministry gets started with His baptism by John the Baptist. This is immediately followed by Jesus' wilderness

temptation. The next event covered in this lesson is the selection of the twelve disciples who will be a part of His life and ministry for the next three years. Next, the first miracle of Jesus will be considered. This lesson will cover the great Sermon on the Mount. Finally, this lesson will show Jesus dealing with a Samaritan woman.

## THE BAPTISM OF JESUS AND HIS TEMPTATION

Matthew 3, 4

Mark 1

Luke 3

*Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John to be baptized by him. But John forbade Him saying, "I have need to be baptized by You and You come to me?" Jesus said to him, "Let it be so now, **1***



*for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he let Him. And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and the heavens were opened to Him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove **2** and lighting upon Him. Lo, a voice from heaven said, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Jesus began His ministry when He was about thirty years old.*

Does John think he should baptize Jesus? no

Tell how each person of the Trinity is present at this event.

God the Father He speaks

God the Son Jesus

God the Holy Spirit the dove

Immediately after Jesus' baptism, He experiences the temptations of Satan. These occur at the very beginning of Jesus' ministry. **Read Matthew 4:1-11** to see what temptations Jesus faces and the way in which He deals with Satan. (Slide 3, 4, 5, 6)

What has Jesus been doing for the last forty days and nights? fasting

Does Satan approach Jesus when He is strong or when He is weak? weak

What is the first thing Satan wants Jesus to do? Turn rocks into bread

What is the second thing Satan wants Jesus to do? Throw himself off of the

temple

What is the third thing Satan wants Jesus to do? *Worship him and he will give Him the world*

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The first temptation is an appeal to the physical needs of Jesus. After forty days without food, He probably is hungry. The second temptation is an appeal to Jesus to test the faithfulness of God and to bring public attention to Him in a spectacular way. The final temptation is an appeal to Jesus to avoid the cross and all of the suffering He will have to endure.

What tool does Jesus use to counter each of Satan's attacks? *Scripture, God's Word, (Deuteronomy for each quote)*

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How can we be ready for the assaults of Satan if we do not know the Bible? The only way we can know the Bible is to spend time reading it and studying it. This devotion to the Scriptures needs to be a lifelong commitment.

## THE FIRST DISCIPLES

John 1:29-57

*And John saw Jesus coming to him and said, 7 "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me; for He was before Me.' This is the Son of God." The next day John stood with two of his disciples, and looking upon Jesus 8 as He walked he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. 9*



*Then Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi, (which means teacher) where do You dwell?" He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He dwelt and stayed with Him that day.*

*One of the two who heard John speak and followed Him was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first found his own brother Simon and said to him, "We have found the Messiah." And he brought him to Jesus. 10 When Jesus beheld him He said, "You are Simon, the son of John. You shall be called Cephas (Stone)."*

*The next day, Jesus found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me." Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him and said of him, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile!" Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God. You are the King of Israel." Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree, you*

*believe? You shall see greater things than these. Truly, truly, I say to you, you shall see heaven open and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."*

Four of the apostles are mentioned in this passage. Two more were mentioned in the introduction to this lesson. List these six.

1.) Andrew                      2.) Phillip                      3.) Matthew

4.) Peter                      5.) Nathanael                      6.) John

The other six are James (son of Zebedee brother of John), Thomas, James (son of Alphaeus), Thaddaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot.

## THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

Matthew 5-7

It is not known for certain on which mountain this talk took place. The sermon is loaded with explanations and instructions. Only the highlights will be studied in this lesson. **Read Matthew 5:1-12.** These verses contain the beatitudes. They should be familiar. (Slide 11)

Why can we be glad in spite of persecution? We have a reward in heaven

Sometimes the word "blessed" is said to mean "happy." This meaning is a bit limited. Happy is an emotion. Blessed is a condition of being that is not dependent on emotions. We may not be "happy" when we mourn, but we are "blessed" by the knowledge that we will receive comfort for our pain.

The message of the Sermon on the Mount continues far beyond the beatitudes.

**Read Matthew 5:21,22,27,28,33,34.**

What is being equated with murder? Hate, anger

What is equated with adultery? Looking lustfully

These instructions seem to be extensions of the Ten Commandments. The Jews of this time were worried about keeping the letter of the Law but they ignored the spirit of the Law. Jesus is saying the act of murder or adultery is wrong, but it is also wrong to dwell on the emotions that lead up to these actions.

The Sermon continues.

*"Love your enemies, bless those that curse you, do good to those that hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, that you may be the children of*

*your Father who is in heaven. For He makes the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. Therefore, be perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect. When you give, do not let your left hand know what the right hand is doing."*

How can we be perfect? *Our faith in Jesus*

How does this work to make us perfect? *We are perfect because Jesus took all of our sins on Himself. Without Jesus, we cannot come to the Father because we are not perfect*

What is the point of the last sentence in this passage? *Do not brag about what you give*

**Read Matthew 6:5-15** for more information given in this sermon.

What two things should we not do when we pray?

1.) *do not pray in public like the hypocrites*

2.) *do not babble*

What should we do when we pray? *Pray in private*

What happens if we fail to forgive others? *God will not forgive us*

*"Take no thought for your life, what you shall eat or what you shall drink; nor for your body, what you shall wear. Is not the life more than meat and the body more than clothing? Behold the fowls of the air; for they do not sow, neither do they reap nor gather into barns. Yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth more than they? Consider the lilies of the field **12** how they grow. They do not toil, neither do they spin. Yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Therefore, if God so clothes the grass of the field which today is and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Do not worry saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' (for after all these things do the Gentiles seek). For your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you."*



What is the most important thing for us to pursue? *The kingdom of God*

If we pursue this, will we have to spend time worrying about the necessities of life?

no

Does this mean we are not to consider where our next meal will come from? no

What does it mean? Do not worry, God will take care of you

## THE MARRIAGE IN CANA

John 2:1-11

The first miracle Jesus performed was at a wedding in Cana. **Read about it in John 2:1-11. (Slide 13, 14, 15, 16)**

What problem has arisen? They have run out of wine, a major social blunder

Who asks Jesus to do something about it? Mary

What does Jesus do? Changes water into wine

Who knows what Jesus has done? Servants, disciples, his mother

What is the result of this miracle? Disciples put their faith in Him

## JESUS AND THE SAMARITANS

John 4:1-43

The Jewish people and the Samaritans did not get along very well. Rarely did they have any friendly interactions. Jesus on several occasions dealt favorably with Samaritans, and a Samaritan is the hero of one of Jesus' parables. This was astounding to His disciples and those around Him. The episode that is about to be dealt with is that of an encounter of Jesus with a Samaritan woman.

*Jesus left Judea and departed again into Galilee. He had to go through Samaria, which is called Sychar. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat down at the well. There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink." (For His disciples had gone away to the city to buy meat.) Then said the woman of Samaria to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.)*



Why is the woman surprised at Jesus' request? She is a Samaritan

The conversation does not end with the request for a drink of water. **Read John 4:10-19** to see what happens next.

Who continues the conversation? Jesus

What kind of water does Jesus give? Water that leads to eternal life

Does the woman want this kind of water? yes

Does she answer honestly about her husband? yes

What does Jesus tell her about herself? She has had five husbands

What does the woman conclude from what Jesus tells her? Jesus is a prophet

Now the woman is ready to pursue this conversation further. **18**

*"Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father. You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship. For salvation is of the Jews. But the hour is coming and now is when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeks such to worship Him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." The woman said to Him, "I know that the Messiah is coming, who is called Christ. When He comes, He will tell us all things." Jesus said to her, "I that speak to you am He."*

Is the place of worship the important issue? no

What is the important issue? How we worship

How are we to worship? In spirit and in truth

What amazing truth does Jesus reveal to this Samaritan woman of bad reputation?

He is the Christ (the Messiah)

**Read John 4:28-30, 39-42** to find out the reaction of the woman to what she has just been told. (Slide 19, 20)

What does the woman do? Goes to town and tells others about Jesus

Is the woman the only one from the town who believes in Jesus? no

How do the others come to faith? By her testimony

How long does Jesus stay with them? two days

What does Jesus do during this time? Talks with them

What is the result of this? More people come to faith

## REVIEW

1. What are the names of the four Gospels? Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John

2. What was the profession of Luke? doctor

3. Were all of the writers of the Gospels among the twelve apostles? no

4. Who baptizes Jesus? John the Baptist

5. What happens just after Jesus' baptism? temptation

6. With how many things does Satan tempt Jesus? three

7. Do any of John the Baptist's disciples become followers of Jesus? yes

8. In which sermon do we find the beatitudes? Sermon on the Mount

9. Does the Sermon on the Mount expand or limit the meaning of the Ten Commandments?  
expand

10. What are we to do to our enemies? Love them

11. Which prayer is included in the Sermon on the Mount? Lord's Prayer

12. What does the Sermon on the Mount say about worry? Don't

13. What are we to seek first? God's kingdom

14. Where does Jesus' first miracle take place? Cana, wedding

15. Do the Jews and Samaritans get along? no

16. Is the message of Jesus for Jews only? no

17. How are we to worship God? In spirit and in truth

18. Does the woman keep her faith in Jesus to herself? no