



# Part 21: The Master's Works

Word ALIVE



The Healer



## Background Notes

**PURPOSE:** To present Jesus as the miracle worker, the gentle healer whose works were never for their own sake, but to validate his authority for the forgiveness of sins and to demonstrate that he was from the Father.

**AUTHOR:** Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John the Evangelists.

**DATE:** This part continues the ministry of Jesus, at about age 30. In their final forms, Mark was written first. Matthew and Luke use about 60% of the material in Mark, adding their own source of eyewitness accounts, and John draws on yet another source, using little of the synoptic material, perhaps intentionally, supposing the reader to already be familiar with them.

**STYLE:** Matthew's gospel holds a more catechetical tone, with Christ explaining the parables to his disciples. Mark again stresses the personality and authority of Jesus.



## Opening Quotes

“Lord, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. But say the word and let my servant be healed.” Lk 7:6

“I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much.” Lk 7:47

“I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven.” Mt 12:31

“Whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and sister, and mother.” Mt 12:50

“To him who has more will be given; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away.” Mt 13:12

“Many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.” Mt 13:17

“The Son of man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers and throw them into the fire.” Mt 13:41

“He could do no mighty work there... and he marveled because of their unbelief.” Mk 6:7

“Do not be anxious how you are to speak or what you are to say; it will be given to you in that hour; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of the Father speaking through you.” Mt 10:19

“He who loves father or mother or son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for my sake will find it.” Mt 10:37

the BIG PICTURE		← : LAW, History, Writings, Prophets		← : key covenants in our Father's plan	
12 Periods		Plot	Other books related to period		stories in each period
BC	☉ THE BEGINNINGS	GN 1-11	Ps 8, 104		Creation, Adam & Eve, Cain & Abel, Noah's ark, Tower of Babel
1850	♠ THE PATRIARCHS	GN 12-50			Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Israel), Joseph, Melchizedek
1250	⚠ EXODUS FROM EGYPT	EX			Moses, the burning bush, the plagues, passover, exodus
1200	♣ JOURNEY TO CANAAN	NM, Jos	LV, DT		Sinai desert, 10 commandments, Levites, Law, Joshua
1100	☠ THE JUDGE CYCLE	Jg	Ruth		12 tribes, Gideon, Samson, Ruth, Samuel
1030	☆ KINGS & PROPHETS	1 & 2 S	1 Ch, Ps, Prov		Saul, David, Solomon, Jerusalem, the Temple
1000	■ THE DIVIDED KINGDOM	1 Kg	2 Ch, Prov,		Israel (N), Judah (S), Elijah & Elisha, Isaiah, Assyrian exile
721 587	⊖ BABYLONIAN EXILE	2 Kg	2 Ch, Tob, Hos, Am, Hab, Is, Jer, Lam, Jl, Mic, Zp, Jon, Nah, Ob, Ez, Dan, Bar		Babylonians, "major" prophets, Isaiah (to Israel), Jeremiah (to Jerusalem), Ezekiel (to the Exiles)
538	⚙ THE RESTORATION	Ezr, Neh	Est, Judith, Hag, Zech, Mal, Job, Ecc, Songs		Cyrus, 2nd temple, 2nd Law, "minor" prophets, new writings
163 63	🕯 THE REPURIFICATION	1 Mac	Dn, 2Mac, Sirach, Wisdom		Greeks, Maccabean revolt, Hasmonean Dynasty, Romans, Jewish sects (Pharisees, Saducees, Zealots, Essenes)
AD	♣ JESUS CHRIST	LK	MT, MK, JN		Incarnation, Good News, New Law, Cross & Resurrection
33 70	🕯 APOSTOLIC CHURCH	Acts	Rm, 1&2Co, Ga, Ep, Phil, Col, 1&2Th, 1&2 Tm, Ti, Phm, Hb, Ja, 1P, 2P, 1,2&3J, Jd, Rv		Pentecost, council, journeys, epistles, Body/Bride of Christ



## The Story of Part 21: The Master's Works



One day a Roman centurion had a sick slave whom he loved like a son. He sent word to Jesus to have him healed, but asked that he not visit his house, for he was not worthy. In fact, the Centurion said, just as he had authority over the soldiers, he knew Jesus had authority over the sickness! “Not even in Israel,” said Jesus, “have I found such faith,” and cured the boy from a distance.

When he then restored a widow’s son who had died, people began saying he was a great prophet like Elijah or Elisha. His cousin John then asked his own disciples to ask Jesus if he was, in fact, “the one who was to come.” Jesus responded, “Tell him the deaf hear, the blind see, the lame walk, the sick are healed, and the dead are raised!” Those who saw God in John’s austerity would also see God in Jesus’ power and kindness.

Jesus again raised suspicion among the Pharisees when he ate at one of their houses and a woman of ill repute poured expensive perfume on his feet and dried it with her hair. To the Pharisees’ chagrin he declared her many sins forgiven because of her great love. “How can he claim to do this?” they repeated, but he continued curing people of all sorts of illnesses, forgiving their sins. Their suspicion in many cases turned to outright derision, and they accused him of being in concert with Beelzebul, the prince of demons. “How can I be from Satan when it is the evil spirits I am driving out? A house divided against itself cannot stand. You realize, of course,” Jesus pointed out, “that if it is by the Holy Spirit that I do these things, then the Kingdom of God is upon you!” He then made clear that there was only one unforgivable sin: to blaspheme against the Holy Spirit, which means that intentionally shutting your eyes to truth so as to not believe, is to effectively exclude oneself from the possibility of repentance and therefore forgiveness. Jesus left no room for casual acceptance when he asserted, “Behold, you have something greater than Jonah here and something greater than Solomon.”

Jesus then taught his followers using parables, real life images used to describe profound truths about heaven. Heaven is like a great pearl that someone finds and sells everything to have it; or the kingdom starts like a field of wheat infiltrated by someone who plants weeds, and instead of rooting out the weeds (so as to not harm the wheat), the wheat and the weeds are allowed to grow together until harvest, at which time the weeds will be sorted out and burned. This last parable symbolizes not only a final judgment, but the fact that the Kingdom gets established on earth first, with a mix of righteous and wicked people.

His apostles asked him why the parables? He responded, so that the simple can grasp the truth, and the self-righteous, thinking themselves wise, will have the same truth go right over their heads. Get it? he would ask. When they said yes, he compared them to a wise storekeeper who new how to draw from the storehouse

good things old and new, for the people of the old covenant were about to be given a new covenant.

With this, Jesus performed what can only be described as very public miracles – calming a storm, driving evil spirits that possessed a man into a herd of pigs which then stampeded into a lake drowning themselves, and raising a young girl from the dead. These works left no room for doubting his authority over evil on any front – nature, demons, sickness, even death. Nevertheless, back home in Nazareth, he was shocked at their unbelief. “Is this not the carpenter’s son?” they would ask. “Do we not know his mother and his brothers and sisters?” (These are known not to be siblings, but close relatives, commonly referred to as brothers and sisters.) So lacking in faith were they, the evangelist confides, that he did not perform the mighty miracles he could have there!

He then made a loud call to the “lost sheep of Israel,” sending forth his apostles with his own power to heal people of all illnesses. If the people of a town would not accept them, they were to write them off, for they would meet a fate worse than Sodom and Gomorrah. “If they associate me, the Master, with Beelzebul,” he warned, “how much more will they call those of my household?” He put aside his “don’t tell anybody about this miracle” preference and told his apostles to boldly declare from the rooftops the things they had learned from him in whispers. “I came not to bring peace,” he said, “but a sword,” acknowledging that following him would inevitably lead to persecution and rejection even by family members. But whoever loved family even above him would not be fit for the kingdom of heaven. This is understandable only in light of his being the Word through whom all things were made, including families. Jesus was not putting down the family (anything but!), but putting it in its proper place. If it came down to a choice between God and family, the one fit for heaven would love the One who made the other.

Warning them of future persecution which would become commonplace amongst early Christians, he assured them “Do not be afraid of anyone who can kill your body. Be afraid, rather, of the one who can kill both body and soul in hell.” The real enemy behind all persecution against him and his followers was disclosed. On the other hand, “He who receives you receives me,” he told his apostles, “and he who receives me receives the One who sent me.”

Jesus was unveiling just who he was. He was not the military hero the people expected. The “sword” he came to bring was not to overthrow enemies, but to divide the true lovers of God from the false. He would next move on to the region of Galilee, where he would begin to lose disciples.



## Defending the Faith: Confession

*"Why should I confess to a priest? He's just a man. I can go straight to God. Only he can forgive sins."*

People often quote 1 Tim 2:5 to show that there is one mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ, but then overlook that the one mediator conferred on his apostles the authority to forgive sins (Jn 20:22). Just as Paul forgave and remitted the penance of a man in Corinth (2 Cor 2:5) in Jesus' name, the priest has the Christ-given authority to do so. "Bible-believers" are filled with derision at the thought of men forgiving sins, yet in the Bible God is glorified for it (Mt 9:8)!

And since when does going to Confession mean that we do not go straight to God? Of course we do, and often in private (Mt 6:6). But he also established a sacramental means of obtaining forgiveness, and we should avail ourselves of it if he is our Lord and Master. The real reasons that people are turned off by Confession are not biblical, but psychological: fear that the sin will be made public, embarrassment at verbalizing personal sins, or just not *feeling* forgiven after Confession. Let's address these impediments.

As for sins being made public, the priest has taken a vow of secrecy that, if broken, endangers not only his office, but also his soul. Before succumbing to tabloid-like paranoia, when is the last time *you* heard a priest tell you who confessed what sin? As for feeling embarrassed at vocalizing our sins, the worst thing we could do is hide them. How do we know we are not

attempting to forgive ourselves instead of receiving his forgiveness *on his terms*? Anyone who has deceived themselves knows just how deceptive feelings can be. Feelings, in fact, have made people not only avoid Confession, but abandon it after not "feeling" forgiveness. But one of the assurances of the sacrament is precisely that it does not depend on our feelings but on our will. It *can* feel good, just as psychiatry can expose repressed guilt feelings. But only confession can *remove* the actual guilt.

This also leads to why confession is necessary even when the sin is habitual (see "Sinning Again and Again"). To assume that a sin cannot be conquered alone is one thing. But to assume that not even Christ can help you conquer a sin is quite another. It may take years, it may take the rest of your life, or it may take an instant. But it requires our will in concert with God's grace. The instant we worry that we will sin again tomorrow, we forget that Christ told us to worry for today. For a good Confession we must be resolved at the very least not to repeat the sin *at the present*, instead of despairing that we will sin again tomorrow. But without Confession, sin thrives like a cancer, eating our souls and our conscience until we no longer feel the need for the physician (Mt 9:12) or his prescription.



## Expressing the Faith: Since I Met You

DC Talk wasn't "feeling okay" until they met the Physician.

*'Was at the end of my rope, I had nowhere to go  
'Was at the end of my rope, I had nothing to show  
Until the day that I turned to you, was at the end...*

*You call me crazy, man you make my day  
My state of residence was disarray  
At every party and as far as anybody knew  
Everything was cool, but  
The truth was bottled up inside of me  
I was as lonely as a man could be  
And my 200 friends couldn't fill the void in my soul  
It was a giant hole  
Nothing made any sense,  
I thought there would never be an end  
Then Love came knocking at my door*

*Since I met you I've been alright  
You turn all my darkness into light  
And since I met you I've been okay, I've been alright!  
Since I met you I've been okay  
You're rolling my winter into May*

*Since I met you I've been alright, I've been okay!*

*You got me feeling like a million bucks  
Some people write it off as Irish luck  
But I know better 'cuz my rabbit's foot  
Never did me a bit of good  
The truth hit me like a sock in the eye  
A revelation that I can't deny  
Your love has overtaken every little part of me  
You were what I needed  
Now I'm carried away  
Never seen the sunshine like today  
You made something of my life  
(chorus)  
(repeat Intro)*

*I'm sick and tired of the same old fluff  
You took me in and you shook me up  
You got me trippin' on a vision of eternity  
I can see it clearly  
(chorus)*

➡ **Next time: "The Bread and the Rock"** ↩