



Part 25: The Way, the Truth, the Life



I am the doorway...



Background Notes -

PURPOSE: To present the controversy revolving around Jesus just prior to his triumphant entry into Jerusalem.

AUTHOR: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John the Evangelists. This part of the story comes exclusively from John.

DATE: Possibly towards the Passover of the year 29 or 30. John places this part during the Feast of Tabernacles.

STYLE: While the synoptic Gospels will treat Jesus' entry into Jerusalem as triumphant, with the Jewish leaders definitively rejecting him afterwards, John exposes the plans to arrest and kill him already in place, spurred by Jesus' response to their questions about just who he was. John records the style of Jesus' response as not mincing words, but mixing symbolic parables with direct, in-your-face responses, calling them to judge him and his works at face value.



Opening Quotes -

“There was much muttering about him... ‘He is a good man,’... ‘He has a demon, and he is mad. Why listen to him?’” Jn 7:12, 10:20

“Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Christ?” Jn 7:26

“When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?” Jn 7:31

“Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw the stone at her.” Jn 8:7

“If you continue in my word, you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” Jn 8:31

“Before Abraham was, I AM.” Jn 8:58

“I have told you already. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you too want to become his disciples?” Jn 9:27

“If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.” Jn 9:41

“I have power to lay my life down, and I have power to take it again; this charge I have received from my Father.” Jn 10:18

“I and the Father are one?” Jn 10:30

“We stone you for blasphemy; because you, being a man, make yourself God.” Jn 10:33

“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live.” Jn 10:30

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, 2 nd temple, 2 nd 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 Pt 25: The Way, the Truth, the Life



Just before Jesus would enter Jerusalem on Passover, the talk began. Who was this guy? Just a good man? No, some contended, He misleads people. Some, like the religious leaders, were threatened by him, and sought to kill him, especially when he would utter sayings indicating his divinity. “Why do you seek to kill me?” He would ask. Some answered bluntly, “You have a demon in you!” And they wondered why the authorities didn’t just kill him already. This made them speculate if perhaps the authorities acknowledged him as the Christ! After all, would any other “Christ” do more than this man had already done?

He warned his listeners time and again that his “hour” was coming, a time when they would seek him but not find him. Some speculated that perhaps he was planning to leave Palestine and teach the Diaspora (the Jews dispersed throughout the different lands). He promised them that they would receive the Holy Spirit, but not before he left them, before he would become “glorified.”

The Pharisees again would ask why he hadn’t been arrested by now. “Have you heard him speak?” the authorities would respond. “Not you, too!” the Pharisees would respond back. Jesus had a way of making it impossible for anyone to dismiss him casually.

One day a prostitute was caught in the act of adultery. A crowd was about to stone her, as was the Mosaic law. But it was also a political no-no under Roman rule. “What do you think we should do?” the Pharisees asked Jesus, testing him. “Let whoever is among you without sin cast the first stone,” he responded. Not having the audacity to publicly declare themselves guiltless, everyone dropped their stones one by one and left. Jesus had evaded their trap. “Is there no one left to condemn you?” he asked the prostitute. “No one,” she replied. “Nor do I condemn you,” he told her, and added, “go and sin no more.” And so, the only one who was truly guiltless and worthy of casting the stone forgave her. She was free of her guilt and had only to stop sinning.

“I am the light of the world!” He told the crowds. The Pharisees then responded, “You’re just bearing witness to your own self.” Yet they would not arrest him, for “his hour had not yet come.” “I will go away and you will seek me and not find me,” he repeated, “and you will die in your sin unless you believe in me.” “Who are you?!” they asked outright. “I am he whom the Father has sent. Follow me, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free!” “But we are children of Abraham,” the Pharisees responded, pointing to the fact that they were descended from the man whom God himself called, the man whom God identified himself with. At this Jesus turned the tables on them and called them children of the devil, for they did not have the faith of Abraham. “Are you greater than Abraham?” they asked incredulously. Then Jesus revealed his divinity in no uncertain terms: “Before Abraham was – I AM!” At

this they picked up stones to kill him then and there, but he hid and escaped.

Jesus then gave sight to a man who had been born blind. Before the cure, his disciples had asked him if his deformity was due to his sins or the sins of his parents, a common belief still held today. Jesus told them this was not the case. God had allowed this man to be born blind to manifest his glory through the healing he was about to perform. The man did not suffer from losing vision he never had, but would now see for the first time and glorify God. Of course, when Jesus healed him, it was on a Sabbath! The Jews began excommunicating anyone who followed him. They were offended when the man born blind asked them how they could not see that this was the Messiah sent from God. It was the Pharisees who were truly blind.

“I am the doorway,” Jesus said, comparing himself to a good shepherd. “My sheep know my voice amongst all the strange voices (the Pharisees who were not leading the people towards life).” He continued, “A good shepherd lays his life down for his flock,” and he claimed authority from his Father to lay down his life and pick it up again! “So are you from the Father or not?” the Pharisees asked, as if it wasn’t obvious by now. “The Father and I are one and the same!” Again, not wanting to believe what they heard, they picked up stones to kill him. “For what sin do you mean to stone me?” Their response was at least honest – “Blasphemy!” They knew full well what Jesus meant in calling himself God’s Son.

Jesus then performed a miracle that was the nail in the coffin – or rather, a removing of the nail. His cousin Lazarus had died before Jesus had time to arrive there. Thanking God the Father for allowing him to perform the miracle he was about to perform, he asked Martha, Lazarus’ sister, if she believed in him. When she told him she believed in the resurrection on the last day, Jesus declared, “I AM the resurrection. He who believes in me, even though he dies, will live forever.” With that, he called the dead Lazarus from the tomb, and out he came, though he had been dead for four days, stinking up the tomb!

When the Jewish leaders, like the high priest Caiaphas, heard of this miracle, they wondered what they could do now. When the Romans heard of this, surely it would cause trouble for the Jews. Caiaphas then ironically prophesied what would become of Jesus when he said that it was better for one man to die (Jesus) than for the whole nation (Israel) to perish. The plot to kill Jesus was official. The miracle that should have sealed belief in him became the very incentive to have him killed.

Passover was now approaching, and it would no longer be said that “his hour had not yet come.” Into Jerusalem he came, riding on a donkey. 📖



Defending the Faith: Was Jesus God?

"I believe Jesus was a good man, but not God. That's irrational, wishful thinking."

Here is a key passage from C.S. Lewis' book, *Mere Christianity*, that puts the claim in plain British: "I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: 'I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept His claim to be God.' That is one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of thing Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic – on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg – or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman, or something worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon, or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to."

Josh McDowell coined the three possible options as a "Trilemma: Lord, Liar, or Lunatic" in his small but powerful book, *More Than a Carpenter*. Since then, two more options have been suggested to answer who Jesus was – a fabricated myth, or a misunderstood guru.

The problem with calling him a myth is that it relies on a double standard by accepting just about every other historical classic figure as historical. There are far

fewer records witnessing to the historicity of the Caesars, the Pharaohs, the Greek philosophers, and the rest, yet their historicity is not questioned. And the myths which Christ is often compared to (from Krishna to Mithras to Santa Claus to the Easter Bunny) are expected to be accepted as just that: myths. They are never presented as history. The Gospels, on the other hand, when taken at face value, are acknowledged even by atheist historians as valid historical data (though to remain atheist they must evade the question of the trilemma!).

The problem with calling him a guru (and therefore interpreting phrases like "The Father and I are one and the same" in an eastern, Supreme Consciousness sort of way) is, as Peter Kreeft points out, that it ignores Jesus' Jewishness! Jesus was claiming equality to the God of Abraham, the transcendent Other Who created the universe. And while the guru will teach you that enlightenment comes from the god within, Jesus made clear that he himself (and no one else) was the truth, the light, and the way.

Jesus Christ's invitation to each of us is like a marriage proposal to our soul. We may evade the proposal for a time, but death makes evasion impossible, and our lives will be judged by the One who was anything but "just a good man."



Expressing the Faith: Jesus Freak

DC Talk tells it like it is. Christianity is not about a new ethic. It's about one, everlasting *man*.

*Separated, I cut myself clean
From a past that comes back in my darkest of dreams
Been apprehended by a spiritual force
And a grace that replaced all the me I've divorced*

*I saw a man with a tat on his big fat belly
It wiggled around like marmalade jelly
It took me a while to catch what it said
Cause I had to match the rhythm of his belly with my head
'Jesus Saves' is what it raved in a typical tattoo green
He stood on a box in the middle of the city
And claimed he had a dream*

*What will people think
When they hear that I'm a Jesus freak
What will people do when they find that it's true
I don't really care if they label me a Jesus freak
There ain't no disguising the truth*

*Kamikaze, my death is gain
I've been marked by my Maker, a peculiar display*

*The high and lofty, they see me as weak
Cause I won't live and die for the power they seek*

*There was a man from the desert with naps in his head
The sand that he walked was also his bed
The words that he spoke made the people assume
There wasn't too much left in the upper room
With skins on his back and hair on his face
They thought he was strange by the locusts he ate
The Pharisees tripped when they heard him speak
Until the king took the head of this Jesus freak
(chorus 2x)*

*People say I'm strange, does it make me a stranger
That my best friend was born in a manger
(chorus 2x)*

*What will people think
What will people do
I don't really care (What else can I say)
There ain't no disguising the truth (Jesus is the way)*

↗ **Next time: "Palm Sunday"** ↖