

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ's Galilean Ministry Starts

Last time...trouble is stirred up in the hearts of the disciples of John the Baptist, resulting in the high point of John's faithful witness of the Messiah

This time...the Galilean ministry of Jesus Christ starts
We are 6 months-ish into the ministry of Jesus Christ

Jesus' Galilean ministry is recorded in

- 14 chapters in Matthew (Ch 4-18)...half
- 8 chapters of Mark (Ch 1-9)...half
- 6 chapters in Luke (Ch 4-9)
- only in Chapter 4 of John...where its start is recorded

Q: Are these "nice stories" or is the Word of God eternal and relevant for us today?

John 4:1-2

v1-2 Pharisees heard that Jesus made and baptized more:

The Pharisees have opposed John the Baptist and now they also oppose Jesus... especially after what He did to their lucrative business in His cleansing of the Temple

They consider both John the Baptist and Jesus a threat to life as they know it... privileged position under the suspicious eye of Rome

The Pharisees, the religious leaders whom we will see nearly always bird-dogging Jesus and "keeping book" on what He did and said, are in the multitude at Aenon near Salim.

They were either a small part or a significant part of the contention that John the Baptist quashed in Ch 3:22-36... the very high point of his faithful witness of the Messiah

While John was preaching and baptizing with his disciples,
Jesus was teaching while His disciples did all the baptizing
The people coming were seeking the Kingdom of God;
those who went to Jesus were taught by the King

Yet there is more going on than is recorded in the Gospel of John

Mark 1:14-15

v14-15 Now after that John was put in prison:

After what?

After the parallel ministries of John and Jesus in Aenon near Salim

v13 is about the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness by Satan

Therefore, between v13 and v14 is John 1:19 – 4:2

And what did a faithful witness of Jesus Christ get for John the Baptist?

A prison sentence

His ministry is now restricted in a prison cell and to
other inmates and guards

Jesus came into Galilee:

Henceforth, it's all Jesus

Jesus picks up right where John the Baptist left off...a seamless transition in the
work of His Father

God's Servant, the Messiah, now starts preaching to all who have ears to hear that
of which He spoke to Nicodemus –
the gospel/Good News of the Kingdom of God

His kingdom message was straightforward:

- Now is the time
- The Kingdom of God is near
- Repent
 - trust in God and not yourselves or priests or your religion to make you acceptable in God's sight
 - lean on the Messiah for your salvation instead of your own understanding
 - turn and follow the Lord instead of doing what is right in your own eyes
 - agree with God on the issues of eternal importance – sin and salvation, life and death
- Believe the (singular and distinct) Gospel – the “work” of salvation is to believe God
 - John 3:14-15
 - John 3:16-18

Is Jesus Christ's message “relevant”...applicable for today?

NO OTHER message is relevant...other messages are false gospels

The simple Gospel is timely...for every generation, every sinner (Rom 3:10, 23)

2 Cor 6:2 For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored thee: behold, now *is* the accepted time; behold, now *is* the day of salvation

Matt 4:12

v12 when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison:

So, when the Lord heard that

1. the Pharisees were stirring up trouble (John 4:1)
2. His forerunner, John the Baptist, was thrown in prison

Jesus left Judea and returned into Galilee

Between v11 and v12 is John 1:19 – 4:2

Who threw John the Baptist in prison?

Luke 3:19-20

v19-20 Herod the tetrarch:

Herod the tetrarch (Herod Antipas) threw John the Baptist in prison

Ch 3:1-2

Herod Antipas' jurisdiction in the Roman Empire was Galilee

Mark 6:17-19

John the Baptist's offense against the Government?

Standing for God...holiness and order

Standing against sin...sexual immorality (adultery) and disorder (Mal 2:16)

What was John the Baptist's Final Authority?

The Word of God

According to Josephus, Herod cast John into a prison at Machaerus, on the east side of the Dead Sea

John the Baptist is a political prisoner due to Herod Antipas' suspicions and fear of political revolution...

for which Rome had a Zero tolerance policy, making John the Baptist a threat to both his career and life

And snapping all the pieces together (John 4:1)...we see a collaboration by hostile political leaders and hostile religious leaders against God's faithful servant and witness of the Messiah

John the Baptist was imprisoned when "Government and Religion" worked as one against him as he stood for God and against sin

John 4:3-4

v3 left Judea...into Galilee:

Putting all the pieces together, when Jesus learned of

- the contention stirred up by the Pharisees (John 4:1)
- John the Baptist's imprisonment by Herod (Matt 4:12, Luke 3:19-20)

He left...took His leave and moved His ministry back to Galilee (Mark 1:14-15)

v4 must needs go through Samaria:

When Jesus learns that "Government and Religion" are in collaboration against God, He leaves Judea and returns to Galilee...by way of Samaria

[map]

Why did Jesus "must needs" go thru Samaria to get to Galilee?

For certain: He had an appointment there from before the foundation of the earth (next week's study)

Perhaps: He would be "off limits" to "Government and Religion"

- Samaria was not Herod Antipas' jurisdiction
- Samaria was unholy in the hearts and minds of the self-righteous Pharisees

Jesus is NOT ducking from trouble
He would not shy away from His conflicts with
Government and Religion...
but now was not His hour

All things in God's timing

Does any of this mean anything to us today, nearly 2000 Gregorian calendar years later?
Boy howdy!

As we stand

- with God...holiness and order
- against sin...sexual immorality and disorder

God's faithful servants will be delivered into the hands of a hostile Government/State working in collaboration with a hostile Religion/Church

The lightning rod sin: homosexuality and homosexual marriage (attack on the image of God)

Scripture gives us a glimpse into potentialities in my/our future

1. Standing for God and against sin (1 Cor 6:9-11) could
 - a. land you in prison...prophets, Apostles...it has always been true
 - b. "give" you enormous Government fines
 - c. cost you your job and damage/ruin your employability
 - i. 6 weeks ago, a United States Marine was convicted at a court-martial of putting a Bible verse declaring "no weapon formed against me shall prosper" on her computer because it was "contrary to good order and discipline"
 - ii. A friend of mine was told by his employer that they would be closely monitoring his FB page and he may in the near future have to choose between his faith and his job
2. CCA could perhaps be stripped of its IRS Tax Exemption status (501c3)
 - a. Our giving to God to do His work will not have a tax advantage (Charitable Contributions)
 - b. Will we still give to the work of God...or not?
 - c. We don't do things for money/profit but we need money to do things/profit
3. Other cities may follow the lead of Cour d'Alene, Idaho – jail time and fines for NOT conducting homosexual marriages
 - a. CCA By-Laws updated 4 years ago, stating doing so is against our charter

Come what may...the Word of God is our Final Authority

Don't tell the hostiles what you think, tell them what God says

But...Fear not, little flock!

Acts 9:15-16	witness to “Government and Religion”...and suffer great things
Acts 12:1-11, 17	persecution by the State, applauded by “corrupt Religion” the battle against “Government and Religion” belongs to the Lord faithful Christian goes underground
Phil 1:12-30	a Divine reason: furtherance of the Gospel, magnification of Jesus stand fast in one spirit and in one mind (spirit and mind of Christ) fear not the hostiles lined up against you gift of God: to believe and to suffer
Phil 3:7-15	
Phil 3:20-21	are your citizenship papers in order?
2 Tim 1:7-14	know Whom you have believed, be persuaded He can keep safe your eternal soul
2 Tim 2:3	we are at war, be a good soldier!
2 Tim 2:8-12	God’s faithful servants will be called evil, but God gets the last Word
2 Tim 2:24-26	they who call us evil haters need us!
2 Tim 3:1-5	they are inside and outside Christianity
2 Tim 4:1-8	Be faithful to the very end
2 Tim 4:16-18	even if you are alone...because you never are Ps 34:19

Be aware...understand the times

Sept 15: start of the 70th (!!!) session of the UN

- Recognition of a Palestinian State? (Joel 3:2)
- Sustainable Development agenda
 - Environment
 - Economics
 - Education
 - Agriculture
 - Gender Equality
 - Kick-off Speaker: the Pope
 - Day after he addresses Congress (1st time ever by a Pope)

Therefore...John 9:4

I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh,
when no man can work.

Even if that day is spent in prison or underground, a result of political/Government and
religious leaders “bird-dogging what we say and do...until it is time to “pounce”

Being a genuine follower/disciple of Jesus Christ

- means the Word of God is your Final Authority...eternal, relevant truth
- is not convenient
- may be harmful to your earthly health – physical, emotional, financial
- is the only way to have heavenly health

Rom 8:18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us

We need today what the 1st Century Church needed –

- the baptism of Jesus Christ
- the baptism (upon) of the Holy Spirit

Because as things were when Jesus Christ came the 1st time,
the stage is set for the same things to be before Jesus Christ comes the 2nd time