

Week 46 Chronological

November 9: Matthew 26 and Mark 14

After He finishes the parables, Jesus tells the disciples that He will be handed over and be crucified after the Passover. The chief priests and elders conspired to arrest Him and kill Him but decide to do it after the Passover so that there won't be rioting.

Jesus heads to Bethany. While at Simon's house, a woman approached Him with a jar of very expensive perfume. She poured it on Christ's head while He was reclining at the table. Some of the disciples were indignant with this act. They saw it as a waste. The perfume could have been sold and the proceeds could have been given to the poor. Jesus rebukes them, asking why they are bothering the woman. He explains that she has done a good thing for Him and that her act will be remembered and proclaimed through the whole world. Here we are, almost 2000 years later, and we are still talking about this simple act!

The men assemble with Jesus for the Passover celebration. While they are dining, Jesus proclaims that one of them will betray Him. The disciples are deeply concerned, worried that he might be the one. Jesus takes the bread, breaks it, and passes it to His disciples, telling them to eat it because it is His body that is broken for them. He then takes the cup and passes it, telling them to drink it because it is His blood that is shed for them.

Jesus knows of the anguish coming. He tells them that they will all run away because of Him that very night. Peter is indignant, stating that he would never run away. Jesus warns him that before the rooster crows, Peter will deny Him three times. Peter remains indignant, claiming loyalty to the point of death.

Jesus goes to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. He takes Peter, James, and John with Him to keep watch while he prays. Sadly, the three men keep falling asleep as Jesus prays. After the third time of rebuking them for sleeping, Judas approaches with a large mob, carrying swords and clubs. Judas walks up to Jesus, says, "Greetings, Rabbi" and kisses Jesus on the cheek. With that, Jesus is taken into custody. Jesus is then taken to the Sanhedrin where they charge Him with blasphemy. They spit in His face and beat Him.

Meanwhile, Peter is outside the courthouse where people recognize him as being one of Jesus's friends. He denies knowing Jesus three times, then he hears the rooster crow.

November 10: Luke 22 and John 13

The Passover was getting close. The chief priests and the scribes continued to seek a way to have Jesus killed. Luke identifies that Satan enters Judas Iscariot. He leaves the disciples and approaches the chief priests and temple police how he could deliver Jesus over to them. This group is happy with Judas's decision to betray Christ and they agree to give him silver for his betrayal.

The day of the feast is upon them. Jesus sends Peter to find a place for them to eat the Passover. The time came for the meal. Jesus and the 12 disciples celebrated the Passover in the Upper Room. While they are there, Jesus takes the bread, breaks it and passes it to the disciples, telling them to take it and eat it because it is His body that is broken for them. He also takes the cup and passes it to the disciples telling them to drink it. It is His blood that is shed for them. He commands them to celebrate the Lord's Supper in remembrance of Him.

While the disciples are gathered around the table, an argument breaks out over which one of them will be the greatest. Even in this group of disciples, there was a belief that one would have authority over the others. Jesus explains that His kingdom does not work like that. Instead, the one that leads must be like the one serving. He reminds them that He is the greatest at the table and He is serving them. The Christian life is a call to service!

After the dinner, Jesus goes to the Mount of Olives to pray. He tells the disciples to keep watch while He prays. Jesus fervently prays that the anguish He is about to experience can be taken away. However, He also prays that the Father's will is done. An angel appears to give Him strength and He prays with even more fervency. Jesus returns to find the disciples asleep. Luke credits their grief as to what made them sleep. Jesus tells them to get up and pray so that they won't enter into temptation. Physical weakness can lead to spiritual weakness.

Jesus is betrayed by Judas and taken away to be questioned by the Sanhedrin. Peter stays close by, but when he is questioned about his affiliation with Jesus, he denies knowing Christ three times.

November 11: John 14-17

The LORD tells them that their hearts should not be troubled. They believe in God, they believe in Him. He is going away to prepare a room for them in His Father's house. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through Him. Jesus knows He is about to leave the earth, but He promises the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, to be with them forever.

Jesus teaches that He is the vine and the disciples are the branches. If they are truly rooted in Him, then they will produce good fruit. An apple tree will not produce oranges, a pear tree will not produce bananas. Christians should be identified by the fruit they bear. Do we bear the fruits of the Spirit or the works of the flesh? I hope and pray that the fruit in our lives reflects us as being rooted in Christ.

However, they can expect that they will be persecuted. Since He has been persecuted, they will also suffer because of their faith in Him. The world hated Jesus first, so it will also hate His followers.

The disciples are filled with anxiety and sorrow about Christ's upcoming departure. Jesus explains to them that if He does not go away, then the Spirit cannot come to them. This does not mean that the Spirit is an after product of the resurrection. The Holy Spirit was also there at the beginning of it all. Their sorrow will turn to joy.

Jesus leads the disciples in prayer. He prays for Himself first. He asks that He be glorified by the Father. He also prays for the disciples, that they would be faithful to Him while in the world. Jesus does not ask that they be removed from the world, but that they would be in the world, not of the world. He prays that they will be protected from the wily ways of the devil. Jesus closes His prayer by praying for all believers. As mind boggling as it may seem, Jesus was praying for us at that prayer those thousands of years ago.

November 12: Matthew 27 and Mark 15

Since the Sanhedrin could not enforce the death penalty, they hand Jesus over to Pilate, the governor. Judas, after seeing what is happening with Jesus is hit with remorse and tries to return the silver he was given for handing Jesus over to them. They refuse to take it back. He throws the silver into the sanctuary. He promptly goes and hangs himself. The chief priests take the money and say they cannot put it in the temple treasury because it is blood money. Odd that they are being so moral with the blood money while they are trying an innocent man and plotting to have Him tortured and murdered in a grizzly way.

Jesus stands trial before the governor. The governor is amazed at how Jesus handles Himself. It was customary for the governor to release one prisoner at the festival. Pilate asks them who they would rather he free, Jesus or Barabbas? The chief priests and elders persuade the crowd to ask for Barabbas. Pilate then asks what should be done with Jesus. At that, the crowd cries out for Him to be crucified. Pilate washes his hands of the situation and says that Christ's blood will not be on his hands. All the people in the crowd proclaim that they and their children will be responsible. Of course, Jesus had come to free everyone from their sin, so His blood is on all of our hands.

November 13: Luke 23, John 18 and 19

The Sanhedrin sends Jesus to face Pilate since he is the one that can issue the death penalty. Pilate finds no grounds to charge Jesus. However, the Sanhedrin kept complaining that Jesus was stirring up the people traveling through Judea from "Galilee where He started". When Pilate hears that Jesus started in Galilee, he asks if that is where Jesus is from. Since Jesus was a Galilean, Pilate sends Jesus to Herod since Galilee was under his jurisdiction. Herod was there in Jerusalem in those days. Herod is more than happy to see Jesus. He had heard about what Christ could do and was hoping to see Him do a miracle for him. Jesus refuses, which makes Herod mad. Jesus is sent back to Pilate.

Pilate got the chief priests, leaders, and the people together and explains that he still has found nothing that Jesus is guilty of. Herod had not either. Pilate has Jesus whipped thinking that maybe this will assuage their bloodlust against Jesus. However, the crowd cried out for Jesus to be taken away and have Barabbas released. Pilate wants to release Jesus, but the crowd keeps crying for His crucifixion. Pilate gives in and hands Jesus over to them to their will.

Jesus is hung on a cross between two criminals. While they are there, one criminal says that He should save Himself and them if He is really the Messiah. The second criminal rebukes him, saying that they deserve their punishment because they are guilty. He then asks that Jesus

remember him when He goes into His kingdom. Jesus assures this criminal that he will be with Him in paradise that night. Jesus saves the man at the last minute because he has faith in Christ. I do not recommend deathbed confessions of Jesus as LORD, but based on this passage we see that they are effective.

November 14: Matthew 28 and Mark 16

Jesus is taken and crucified between two criminals. People passed by, hurling insults at Him. They mocked Him, saying that He could save others, but not Himself. Jesus could have freed Himself, but if He had, then His mission would not be complete. He endured the pain to do the Father's will and for our freedom.

After just a few hours, Jesus dies on the cross. He is taken down and placed in a tomb purchased by Joseph of Arimathea. The chief priests and Pharisees petition the governor for protection around the tomb. They are worried that the disciples will go in and take the body and say that He had risen. They were given a guard of soldiers.

After the Sabbath, so Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary go to the tomb. There is a violent earthquake and the stone in front of the grave was rolled back. An angel of the Lord appears to them and proclaims that Jesus is not there anymore. He has been resurrected. They leave and the resurrected Christ meets them on their way. He tells them to go and let the disciples know He has risen.

Meanwhile, the chief priests are upset at what has happened. They are reduced to bribing the guards to lie for them. If anyone asks, the disciples came and took the body. However, that would mean that they were not doing their job and the governor could punish them with the death penalty. So, the chief priests promise them protection if Pilate finds out about it.

Jesus appears to His 11 disciples and gives them the Great Commission. With that, the Gospel of Matthew is complete.

November 15: Luke 24, John 20, and John 21

On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and found it empty. She runs to tell the disciples. Peter and John run out to the tomb. We know that John beat Peter to the tomb because he records that "the other disciple outran Peter and got to the tomb first" (John 19: 4). While Mary Magdalene is standing outside of the tomb, she sees the resurrected Christ. At first, she thinks that He is the gardener, but when He says her name, she realizes who He is. Later, all the disciples with the exception of Thomas are gathered when Jesus appears to them. When Thomas shows up, they tell him about the resurrected Christ. Thomas does not believe them, explaining that he won't believe until he sees for himself.

While the disciples are gathered at the sea of Tiberias, Jesus appears to them once again. While the disciples are fishing, they are having no luck. Jesus tells them to cast their net on the other side of the boat. When they do, their nets are full, and they need help dragging them onboard their boat. After they bring the haul in, they sit down and have breakfast. We should not miss

the fact that Jesus ate with them, which means that He was not some kind of apparition, but He was physically with them.

Jesus gives some final instruction to the disciples. John closes with the note that there were many things not recorded. If they were to record His works one by one, there would not be enough books in the world to contain them.

November 16: Acts 1-3

Acts was written by Luke to give insight into the development of the early church. The discipleship and evangelism practices that laid the foundation for the spreading of the Gospel are detailed in this work and these methods are still effective. I have taken several evangelism classes in my time and if I were to sum all of them up, I would just go back to Acts and look at what it has to say about it.

Jesus was with the disciples and told them to stay in Jerusalem until they get the gift that the Father had promised. The disciples are faithful and remain until the day of Pentecost. On Pentecost, the believers are gathered when suddenly flames that looked like tongues rested on the believers. They all began speaking in tongues, meaning that each person spoke in his native language, but everyone could understand one another. So, the folks speaking Hebrew were understood by the folks speaking Greek. The folks speaking Latin understood the people speaking Hebrew. Others observe what is going on and accuse this gathering of believers as being drunk. Peter simply responds that they cannot be drunk, it is way too early in the morning. He then explains that they have all received the Holy Spirit.

Now that they have the Holy Spirit, now they can go and make disciples. If they had left Jerusalem before receiving the Spirit, they would have failed. We cannot expect to do the things of God without Him. We can try, but we will fail. The disciples could have tried, but they would have failed. When Peter concludes his sermon, 3,000 people came to belief in Jesus. The church begins to grow exponentially.

Peter and John go to the temple complex. While they are there, they meet a man that had been lame since birth. They tell him to get up and walk. The man jumps up and begins to walk. Everyone sees this and begins praising God. Peter asks the crowd why they are amazed. He explains that the God of Abraham has glorified His servant Jesus. Peter reminds them that the prophets proclaimed that the Messiah would suffer, which Jesus did. He also explains that Jesus was sent to the Jews first to bless them by turning them from their evil ways.