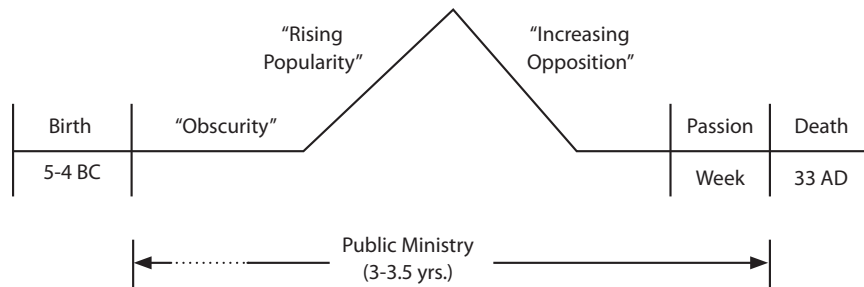


SESSION 3

Rising Popularity

I. PRAYER/REVIEW

II. ABBREVIATED TIMELINE: LIFE OF CHRIST



III. RISING POPULARITY

How do you account for the emerging popularity of Jesus? He was a simple craftsman, plying His trade in a small village. Then, somewhere around thirty or so, He is baptized by John and begins to preach. And the Biblical record notes that multitudes upon multitudes began to gather to see and hear Him. How did that happen? What was the secret to His apparent “success”?

A. Key Passages

1. Matthew 4:23-25

Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.²⁴ News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed; and he healed them.²⁵ Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him.

- a. Teaching (“synagogues”)
- b. Preaching (“good news of the kingdom”)
- c. Healing (“disease and sickness”)

2. Matthew 9:35-38

Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and sickness. ³⁶When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. ³⁸Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

- a. Teaching (“synagogues”)
- b. Preaching (“good news of the kingdom”)
- c. Healing (“disease and sickness”)

B. Key Understanding

How did Jesus become so popular so soon? The answer seems to be in the major ministry activities that He engaged in... speaking (teaching and preaching) and healing. Or to put it differently, His **words** and **works**.

One religious leader of the day met with Jesus at night. His introductory words to Jesus are insightful.

John 3:1-2

Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. ² He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the signs you are doing if God were not with him.”

Note how Nicodemus linked the signs (miracles, healings) as evidence that Jesus was a man from God. This insight was not new or novel. God had in the past worked through His messengers by authenticating signs that demanded that the observers also listen to the expected message from God.



“Rising Popularity” Topics

(Session 3)

1. Miracles of Jesus
2. Teachings of Jesus
3. Authority of Jesus
4. Titles of Jesus

IV. BIBLICAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Miracles of Jesus

1. Broad Concerns

The “Rising Popularity” phase of the Life of Christ is largely attributed to the miracles that He performed (cf. Matt 4:23-25; 9:35-38 et al.). For example, after Jesus healed Peter’s mother-in-law (Matt 8:14-15), the Biblical text continues:

Matthew 8:16-18

When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick. ¹⁷This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: “He took up our infirmities and bore our diseases.” ¹⁸When Jesus saw the crowd around him, he gave orders to cross to the other side of the lake.

But Jesus was not a random, compassionate healer. Nor did He perform miracles simply to build a following. There was divine purpose behind his “works” (as well as his “words”).

- a. Definition

“In brief, a miracle is a divine intervention into, or an interruption of, the regular course of the world that produces a purposeful but unusual event that would not (or could not) have occurred otherwise...a miracle by definition cannot be predicted by natural means” (Geisler, 13).

b. Descriptions (characteristics)

- (1) Miracles were performed with **purpose** (not simply random displays of compassion).
- (2) Miracles were performed in display of **authority** over multiple spheres of life: over nature, over disease/afflictions, over supernatural world, and over death.
- (3) Miracles were performed on public display before witnesses who could testify to their occurrence.
- (4) Miracles were done in response to faith and at times with no reference to faith.

c. Purpose (theological)

- (1) To attest to the true identity of Jesus

Mark 2:1-7

A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. ² They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. ³ Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. ⁴ Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. ⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." ⁶ Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, ⁷ "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

- (2) To lead people to faith (belief) in Jesus

John 20:30-31

Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. ³¹ But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

(3) To reveal to Israel the Messianic identity of Jesus

(a) John the Baptist: early confidence

John 3:25-30

An argument developed between some of John's disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing. ²⁶ They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—look, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him." ²⁷ To this John replied, "A person can receive only what is given them from heaven. ²⁸ You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him.' ²⁹ The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. ³⁰ He must become greater; I must become less."

(b) John the Baptist: later doubts

Luke 7:20-23

When the men came to Jesus, they said, "John the Baptist sent us to you to ask, 'Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?'" ²¹ At that very time Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. ²² So he replied to the messengers, "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. ²³ Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me."

Note that Jesus answered by pointing to the expected Messianic signs (see Isa 35:3-6; 61:1-2).

(4) To illustrate deeper truths

John 6:1-15 (Feeding of the Five Thousand)

John 6:30-33

So they asked him, "What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do?"³¹ Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' "³² Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven.³³ For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

2. Structure and analysis

- a. The Gospels collectively record thirty-five (35) specific miracles.

- (1) Twenty (20) in Matthew
- (2) Eighteen (18) in Mark
- (3) Twenty (20) in Luke
- (4) Eight (8) in John

John records seven evidential signs before the death of Christ plus one post-resurrection miracle (Jn 21).

- b. The Gospels often have two or more accounts of the same miracle (one event; different perspectives). About fifteen miracles have only one Gospel account.
- c. The Gospels' account of the miracles display the authority of Jesus over disease, paralysis, fever, blindness, deafness; also it records authority over creation and nature, plus authority over demonic possession and the supernatural world. Thus, Jesus' miracles invade the fallen world of sin and sickness and provide a "breaking in" of the King and His coming Kingdom.

d. The Gospels record wide geographical locations for the thirty-five (35) specific miracles.

- (1) Galilee.....21
- (2) East of Sea of Galilee..... 4
- (3) Phoenicia..... 1
- (4) Samaria..... 1
- (5) Perea..... 2
- (6) Judea..... 6

3. Representative Miracles

a. Over nature

Matthew 14:22-33

Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd.²³ After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone,²⁴ and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it.²⁵ Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake.²⁶ When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear.²⁷ But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid."²⁸ "Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."²⁹ "Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus.³⁰ But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!"³¹ Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith," he said, "why did you doubt?"³² And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down.³³ Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Ideological Progression

- (1) FAITH: Directed to the Person of Christ (22-28)
- (2) FAITH: Demonstrated by Obedience to Christ (29-31)
- (3) FAITH: Drawn to Worship of Christ (32-33)

b. Over disease

John 4:46-54

Once more he visited Cana in Galilee, where he had turned the water into wine. And there was a certain royal official whose son lay sick at Capernaum. ⁴⁷ When this man heard that Jesus had arrived in Galilee from Judea, he went to him and begged him to come and heal his son, who was close to death. ⁴⁸ "Unless you people see signs and wonders," Jesus told him, "you will never believe."⁴⁹ The royal official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies."⁵⁰ "Go," Jesus replied, "your son will live." The man took Jesus at his word and departed. ⁵¹ While he was still on the way, his servants met him with the news that his boy was living. ⁵² When he inquired as to the time when his son got better, they said to him, "Yesterday, at one in the afternoon, the fever left him."⁵³ Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, "Your son will live." So he and his whole household believed. ⁵⁴ This was the second sign Jesus performed after coming from Judea to Galilee.

Biographical Progression

- (1) The official and Jesus (46-50)
- (2) The official and his servants (51-54)

c. Over demonic possession

Mark 5:1-20

They went across the lake to the region of the Gerasenes. ² When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an impure spirit came from the tombs to meet him. ³ This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him anymore, not even with a chain. ⁴ For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. ⁵ Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones. ⁶ When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. ⁷ He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? In God's name don't torture me!"⁸ For Jesus had said to him, "Come out of this man, you impure spirit!"⁹ Then Jesus asked him, "What is

your name?" "My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many."¹⁰ And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area.¹¹ A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside.¹² The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them."¹³ He gave them permission, and the impure spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.¹⁴ Those tending the pigs ran off and reported this in the town and countryside, and the people went out to see what had happened.¹⁵ When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid.¹⁶ Those who had seen it told the people what had happened to the demon-possessed man—and told about the pigs as well.¹⁷ Then the people began to plead with Jesus to leave their region.¹⁸ As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon-possessed begged to go with him.¹⁹ Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you."²⁰ So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed.

Biographical Progression

- (1) Christ and the Man (1-5)
- (2) Christ and the Demons (6-10)
- (3) Christ and the Swine (11-13)
- (4) Christ and the Town (14-17)
- (5) Christ and the Man (18-20)

d. Over death

Luke 7:11-17

Soon afterward, Jesus went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a large crowd went along with him.¹² As he approached the town gate, a dead person was being carried out—the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her.

¹³When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he

said, "Don't cry." ¹⁴Then he went up and touched the bier they were carrying him on, and the bearers stood still. He said, "Young man, I say to you, get up!" ¹⁵The dead man sat up and began to talk, and Jesus gave him back to his mother. ¹⁶They were all filled with awe and praised God. "A great prophet has appeared among us," they said. "God has come to help his people." ¹⁷This news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and the surrounding country.

Logical Progression

- (1) Setting (11-12)
- (2) Sign (13-15)
- (3) Sequel (16-17)

Insight:

Miracle accounts tend to follow a common pattern: an issue (problem) is set before Jesus; a miracle is performed, often with some commentary; a response of amazement is noted by onlookers (or anger/resentment by religious leaders). Further, as illustrated in the representative miracles, there are observable progressions: logical, biographical, geographical, ideological, chronological.

B. Teachings of Christ

To suggest that the miracles performed by Jesus explain His popularity would be inadequate. The miracles dramatically authenticated the person of Jesus as a messenger from God (cf. Jn 3:1-2), but that truth was wedded to the powerful teaching of Jesus.

1. The Teacher

Jesus exhibited unusual, powerful teaching and presence.

a. Before the receptive

Mark 1:21-22

They went to Capernaum, and when the Sabbath came, Jesus went into the synagogue and began to teach.

²²*The people were amazed at his teaching, because he taught them as one who had authority, not as the teachers of the law.*

Note also that following His authoritative teaching (realm of truth), Jesus cast out an evil spirit demonstrating further authority (realm of spiritual world). Again, see the blend of “words” and “works” in Jesus’ ministry.

At a different time and place Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount. At the conclusion, the response of the people to His teaching was noted.

Matthew 7:28-29

When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching,²⁹ because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.

b. Before the unreceptive

John 7:30-32, 40-49

At this they tried to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come.³¹ Still, many in the crowd believed in him. They said, “When the Messiah comes, will he perform more signs than this man?”³² The Pharisees heard the crowd whispering such things about him. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees sent temple guards to arrest him.

⁴⁰*On hearing his words, some of the people said, “Surely this man is the Prophet.”⁴¹ Others said, “He is the Messiah.” Still others asked, “How can the Messiah come from Galilee?*

⁴²*Does not Scripture say that the Messiah will come from David’s descendants and from Bethlehem, the town where David lived?”⁴³ Thus the people were divided because of Jesus.⁴⁴ Some wanted to seize him, but no one laid a hand on him.⁴⁵ Finally the temple guards went back to the chief priests and the Pharisees, who asked them, “Why didn’t you bring him in?”⁴⁶ “No one ever spoke the way this man does,” the guards replied.⁴⁷ “You mean he has deceived you also?” the Pharisees retorted.⁴⁸ “Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed in him?”⁴⁹ “No! But this mob that knows nothing of the law—there is a curse on them.”*

Insight: Jesus' Teaching Style

Rabbis of Jesus' day taught by referencing legal precedents established by famous, well-respected teachers. Yet, Jesus would teach, "You have heard that it was said...but I say to you" (cf. Matt 5:21-48). He spoke clearly, openly and colorfully. He employed proverbs, similes, metaphors, puns, irony, and so forth. His stories were earthy and real, easily relatable. At times His imagery used humorous hyperbole... "a camel through the eye of a needle" or "one with a beam in his eye helping another with a speck in their eye." He often began by saying, "truly, truly" (or "amen, amen" or "truly I say to you") to introduce a memorable, authoritative teaching.

Jesus' authority to teach employed:

- Character (personal authority)
- Conduct (ethical authority)
- Content (truth authority)
- Context (miracle-working authority)

2. The Theme

Mark 1:14-15

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God.¹⁵ "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Consider the following:

- a. Jesus was the Messiah-King, a fact that was unknown at the outset.
- b. John the Baptist was the forerunner who announced the coming of the Lord (1:2-3), i.e. the Messiah-King. Further, he declared that the nation needed to be spiritually prepared (repentance and baptism) for this Coming One.
- c. Jesus began His ministry by continuing and expanding John's call, "repent and believe the good news."
- d. Jesus indicated (early on) that "the Kingdom" is near.

Insight: The Kingdom of God (Heaven)

Refer to the previous discussion, "King and Kingdom" from Session 2, pp. 42-43. MacArthur suggests that Kingdom of God or Heaven both "refer to the sphere of God's dominion over those who belong to Him. The Kingdom is now manifest in heaven's spiritual rule over the hearts of believers (Lk 17:21); and one day it will be established in a literal, earthly kingdom (Rev 20:4-6)." This is one scholar's way of saying that the Kingdom is "now" (and) "not yet."

3. Teaching examples

a. From Matthew

The Gospel of Matthew is structured around five (5) major teaching sections. To see the structure of this gospel, consult Appendix D.

(1) Number 1: "Sermon on the Mount" (Matt. 5-7)

Sermon on the Mount: Matthew 5:7			
Kingdom Qualities (5)		Kingdom Lifestyle (6-7)	
3	Beatitudes ("Blessed are...") 12	6:1	Lifestyle Worship (giving, praying, fasting) 6:18
13	Kingdom Influence ("salt") ("light") 16	6:19	Kingdom Relationships (wealth, worry, others, God our Father) 7:12
17	Kingdom and the Law ("you have heard that it was said...") 48	7:13	Kingdom Applications Make Good Choices! (narrow gate, false prophets, foundation-building) 7:27

(2) Number 2: "Mission Discourse" (Matt 9:35-10:42)

(a) Prequel (9:35-38)

Matthew 9:37

Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few."

(b) People (10:1-4)

The twelve are given authority to perform signs (miracles) and given instructions.

(c) Basic message

Matthew 10:6-8

"Go rather to the lost sheep of Israel. ⁷As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.'⁸ Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give."

(3) Number 3: "Parables of the Kingdom" (Matt 13)

Insight: Parables

A parable is a true-to-life, simple story intended to teach a spiritual truth (unknown by the hearers). It usually compares something to another, most often something familiar to the hearers. It generally has one main point (or idea) and invites the hearer to make some kind of response.

(a) Parable #1: Parable of the sower (or the soils)
(13:3-23)

The seed of Kingdom truth will be sown among different people (soils) with varying results.

(b) Parable #2: Parable of wheat and weeds
(13:24-30)

Those who respond positively to the Kingdom message ("wheat") are almost indistinguishable from those who reject it (weeds); the end times judgment will separate the two.

- (c) Parable #3: Parable of the mustard seed (13:31-32)
The Kingdom will begin small and grow larger.
 - (d) Parable #4: Parable of yeast (leaven) (13:33)
The Kingdom will be pervasive in ever-increasing influence.
 - (e) Parable #5: Parable of the hidden treasure (13:44)
The Kingdom is of inestimable value.
 - (f) Parable #6: Parable of the fine pearl (13:45-46)
Same as above.
 - (g) Parable #7: Parable of the net (13:47-50)
- (4) Number 4: "Messiah's Community" (Matt 18)
- (a) Setting: a question (18:1)
Matthew 18:1
At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who, then, is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"
 - (b) Living in Community (18:2-35)
 - (1) Humility like a child (2-9)
 - (2) Seeking and restoring lost sheep (10-14)
 - (3) Community discipline (15-20)
 - (4) Community forgiveness (21-35)
- (5) Number 5: "Olivet Discourse" (Matthew 24-25)
- (a) The setting (24:1-3)
Matthew 24:1-3
*Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings. ² "Do you see all these things?" he asked. "Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down."
³ As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?"*

- (b) Birth pains: events common to all ages (4-14)
- (c) "Abomination that causes desolation" (15-20)
 - (1) Could be 70 AD destruction of Jerusalem (compare to Lk 21:20-21).
 - (2) Could also foreshadow a Tribulation-age series of events.
- (d) Period of Great Tribulation (21-28)
- (e) The Second Coming (29-31)
- (f) The application: be prepared (32-51)
- (g) Two parables (25:1-30)
 - (1) Parable of ten virgins (1-13)
 - "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour" (13).
 - (2) Parable of the Talents (14-30)
 - Don't waste your opportunities and resources in view of Christ's return.
- (h) Sheep and goats (25:31-46)

b. From Mark

Mark's Gospel is characterized primarily by actions ("immediately") and movement ("The Gospel of Jesus in a Hurry"). However, there are three (3) extended teaching sections:

(1) Mark 4:1-34 (Parables)

Three "parables" are given: parable of the sower and the soils (3-20) plus an addendum to the parable (illumination of truth); the parable, unique to Mark, of the growing seed (26-29); parable of the mustard seed (30-34).

(2) Mark 7:1-23 (clean and unclean)

The Pharisees questioned Jesus on His disciples' lack of washing ceremonially before they eat (as was the tradition of the elders).

After rebuking the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and teachers of the law, Jesus made this startling pronouncement:

Mark 7:14-16

Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, "Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. ¹⁵ Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them."

- (3) Mark 13:3-37 (Signs of the End of the Age)
This teaching parallels the Olivet Discourse (Matt 24-25) and Luke's record of the same (Lk 21).

c. From Luke (selected)

- (1) Sermon on the Plain (Lk 6): parallel (identical?) to Sermon on the Mount
- (2) Parable of Sower and Seed (Lk 8): parallel to Matthew 13
- (3) Mission Sermon (Lk 10): sending of the seventy-two (72)
- (4) Parable of Good Samaritan (Lk 10): "who is my neighbor?"
- (5) Teaching on Prayer: parallel to Matthew 6
Luke 11:2-4
He said to them, "When you pray, say: "Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. ³Give us each day our daily bread. ⁴Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation."
- (6) Six "Woes" (Lk 11)
- (7) Watchfulness (return of Christ in future: Lk 12)
- (8) Parables of "Lostness": sheep, coin, son (Lk 15)
- (9) Rich Man and Lazarus (Lk 16)
- (10) Parable of the Ten Minas (Lk 19): parallel to Matthew 25

d. From John

John's gospel contains the most unique material of all the Gospel accounts. There are seven signs, seven "I ams" and seven sayings on the Cross. Important teachings of Jesus occur throughout the Gospel: new birth (Jn 3), living water (Jn 4), bread of life (Jn 6), light of the world (Jn 8, 9), good Shepherd (Jn 10).

However, the extended night of teaching in the Upper Room (and the High Priestly Prayer) is perhaps the most impressive.

(1) Charted: John 13-16

Upper Room Discourse (and Prayer)		
Chapter 13	Chapters 13-16	Chapter 17
Last Supper 13:1 13:30	Last Words 13:31 16:33	Last Prayer 17:1 17:26
"The Washing" 1 9	"Dialogue" (Q/A) 13:31 14:31	"Prayer for Himself" 1 5
"The Explanation" 10 17		"Prayer for Disciples" 6 19
"The Lament" 18 30	"Monologue" 15:1 16:33	"Prayer for Believers"

(2) Noteworthy Passages

(a) Badge of Christian Discipleship

John 13:34-35 (cf. 15:12-17)

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

(b) Way of salvation

John 14:6

Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

(c) Principle of abiding

John 15:1-4

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me."

(d) Hatred of the world/response to world

John 15:18-19 (Hatred)

"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. ¹⁹ If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you."

John 15:26-27 (Response)

"When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me. ²⁷ And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning."

(e) Coming of the Counselor
(Helper, Comforter, Holy Spirit)

John 16:7-11

But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸ When he comes, he will prove the world to be in the wrong about sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹ about sin, because people do not

believe in me; ¹⁰ about righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; ¹¹ and about judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned.

(f) Eternal life

John 17:3

Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.

V. TITLES OF CHRIST

The various titles ascribed to Christ demonstrate pronouncements of His true identity, His offices, His missional purpose.

A. Messiah (Christ)

The term in both Hebrew (“mashiach”) and Greek (“christos”) refers to “anointed one.” Kings in the OT were anointed with oil as were ritual objects used in worship, thus the term had the idea of being separated apart to service/special purpose.

Matthew 16:13-20

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” ¹⁴ They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” ¹⁵ “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” ¹⁷ Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” ²⁰ Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

B. Son of Man

1. An Old Testament passage

Daniel 7:13-14

"In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.¹⁴ He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed."

In the Hebrew Scriptures this usage (above), "Son of Man", was used to identify the messianic figure.

2. New Testament passages

Mark 2:10

"But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins..."

Mark 14:61^b-62

Again the high priest asked him, "Are you the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One?"⁶² "I am," said Jesus. "And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven."

C. Son of God

1. Jesus is the prophesied descendant of David, referred to as God's son (2 Sam 7).

Matthew 11:25-30 (esp. v. 27)

At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.²⁶ Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do.²⁷ "All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.²⁸ "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

2. Jesus is declared by Peter to be "the Christ, the son of the living God" (Matt 16:16).

D. Lord

Romans 10:9

If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Philippians 2:5-11 (esp. vv. 10-11)

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: ⁶ Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷ rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! ⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Insight: Messianic Roles

Not only did Jesus deserve the titles ascribed to Him, He also can be seen in the three primary roles He performed:

1. Prophet: represents God before the people.
2. Priest: represents the people before God.
3. King (Messiah-King): rules over the realm of the Kingdom and the subjects of the Kingdom.

VI. TAKEAWAYS

A. Miracles

Through performing miracles Jesus' kingdom authority was brought to bear upon a fallen world. Miracles display the power and majesty of God to effect change, make things different for those who are "touched" by His power.

Take a moment to review your life. Do you see Jesus "breaking in" to perform modern-day "life-change" in your personal story? Think through the significant encounters with Jesus that have marked you (e.g. conversion experience, stepping out to serve others for the cause of Christ, momentous decisions regarding His Lordship in your life, how He has used you...and so forth). Take a moment to thank Him for His involvement in your life-journey.

B. Teachings

Jesus was a Master Teacher. Those who would be His disciples have a mandate to know His teachings (and obey them). Recall the Great Commission:

Matthew 28:18-20

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

A large part of being an authentic follower of Jesus Christ is a life-long pursuit of studying His life and teachings. The wise disciple includes a program of reading and studying of the Word of God.

