

Someone visited a rural Sunday School Class. They said, "They were studying the Book of Revelation – right out of the Bible". Without the benefit of any quarterlies or lesson helps, the teacher read a verse and invited their observations. After everyone had his say, the old gentleman said, "Boys, I believe every word of it. I believe she means what she says." This was the way each verse concluded.

We certainly believe the book was given for correction, reproof, and comfort. But, what is the message of Revelation? What does it mean to us today? What is Revelation?

Greek Word – Apokalupsis (Uh-pock-uh-loop-sis) uncovering, unveiling as something covered with a cloth then removed. Truth about Christ, the church, all people.

What are some reasons people give for not reading it? (No one understands it anyway, fear, unChristian visions, history, judgement.)

How do some interpret the book? 1. Past, fulfilled years ago. 2. Historical, continuous fulfillment. 3. Spiritualizing, idealists actual things and events in great struggle of good and evil. 4. Futurist, things have yet to be fulfilled, from Chapter 4 on is a description of coming of our Lord and establishment of his Kingdom in the earth and resurrection of the dead. 5. Symbolic, no set time of fulfillment.

1:9 – Where was the writer and why? Patmos (Pat-muss) Island – 10 miles long, 6 miles wide – 37 miles from Miletus in the Aegean Sea. John arrested by Emperor Domitian and sent to work in mine. Worship of Emperor on a large scale and demanded "Caesar is Lord" as a confession.

Structure of the book – Chapter 1 – Introduction. 2–3 – Letters to churches. 4–5 – Vision of Heaven. 6–18 Messianic Judgement. 19–22 – Coming of the Lord and the Kingdom of God.

I. PROJECTION – Rev. 1:1

1. Receiver – V. 1

How did John get the information contained in this book? When will the events to be described happen?
How did the Revelation get to John.

2. Recorder – V. 2

What is John's function?

3. Reader – V. 3

Who will be blessed and what are three conditions? James 1:22.

Time is at hand – Parking Meter, you are happy time has not run out! Days are numbered – a new electronic device has been developed and can tell when car pulls out, meter resets itself to zero.

V. 4–8 – Address and greetings to church.

II. PATMOS – V. 9

1. Banishment – V. 9.

Why was John banished to Patmos?

(God revealed himself to men in Exile, Jacob – Bethel, Moses – Midian, Elijah – Horeb, Ezekiel and Daniel – Babylon.)

2. Book – V. 10–11

What was John's first vision? When did he receive this Revelation? What was John to do with this message?

What would John write to my church if he wrote one like the seven? (Some believe these seven churches were in centers for postal delivery, some suggest they correspond to seven stages of development in church history.)

V. 12–16 – Vision of son of man. V. 17–20 – Commission to write.

III. POWER – Rev. 13:1

1. Antichrist – V. 1–2

How did he describe his vision of the enemy of God? Background of this image – Daniel 7:2–7.

Beast, fierce untamed animal, Roman Emperor in league with Satan – war against the church. Seven heads, universal power. Some say pagan Rome built on seven hills. Ten horns, worldly or human power like dragon. Rev. 12. Name of blasphemy upon its head. Details intended to convey certain ideas – not just to describe a beast. Nature of leopard, bear, lion. Power of the beast.

2. Authority – V. 2B

Where did the beast get its power?

(Dragon – Satan gives Anti-Christ power to war against the church. 12:9)

3. Amazement – V. 3–4

Head wounded – men worship Satan! Why? The death of Christ gave signal – defeat to world power.

However world power continues. For example, Nero killed himself but another Anti-Christ rises. Story of conflict – war against seed of woman, always have Abel and Cain – Jerusalem and Babylon John The Baptist and Herod, Paul and Nero, Christ and Nitler.

CONCLUSION:

Who does the future belong to? Is history by pure chance? Is history moving toward a goal? What can people do to receive more blessing from the written word? 1:3; 10:9; 14:13; 16:15; 20:6; 22:7, 14.

POWER OVER MATTER AND MIND

Mark 5

Express your feeling about those who suffer mental affliction? What is being done to help them, what can we do in giving aid to them?

Jim Henry writes: "A man kills his wife and children, and tells Police that the Devil had ordered him to do it. A well-known Evangelist was threatened three times by men who report Satan sent them on their mission. A house is vacated by a family who attributes strange sounds and sights to Demonic activity.

Do we need to learn anything about Demon possession? What can Christians do to overcome Satan's efforts in his life? Read these verses and suggest ways of combating evil forces:

Psalm 27:1	Hebrews 4:12
Ephesians 6:18	I John 4:4
James 4:7	I John 4:1
2 Cor. 2:14	

Study of Mark continues, we discussed the miracle of the man brought to Jesus by his four friends.

Mark 2:6-12	Mark 2:13-17 - Criticized for contacts with Publicans.
Mark 2:18-22 - Criticized for refusing to fast.	Mark 2:23-3:6 - Criticized for breaking the Sabbath.
Mark 3:7-35 - Response to Jesus' ministry.	Mark 4:1-34 - Teaching in Parables
Mark 4:35-41 - Further Miracles. First, stilling the storm on Sea of Galilee. Read. Psa. 89:9; 93:4; 65:4.	
Mark 5:1-20 - The Gadarene Demonic.	

I. WILD MAN - 5:1

1. Decapolis - V. 1

Satan tried to destroy Jesus, a fearful storm, He rebuked the storm, stilled the wind. Nature was out of control and next he enters the territory of Decapolis - 10 cities under Roman rule. Why did Jesus go to Gadara?

2. Demonic - V. 2-5

Why was the man Jesus met a wild person men could not tame? Why did he come to meet Jesus?

How did the man become possessed and Demon controlled?

V. 3-4 - How would you describe this man? Was his problem of Demons physical or spiritual?

Description is horrifying - dirty, hair matted, covered with scars, no clothes - Luke 8:27, broken chains hanging on his body. Dangerous - Matt. 8:28. Demons made him a mad man.

V. 5 - Take note of his living conditions. What does alcohol do to control men? William Seabrook - "I had begged, pleaded to be locked up, shut up, chained up, anything, I needed to be where I could not get my hands on a bottle."

II. WILLING MASTER

1. Request

V. 6 - What happened to the man when Jesus arrived?

V. 7-8 - Did the Demons recognize Jesus?

The word torment - are not some of greatest pains in life when we have disobeyed or left undone what we should have done. Missing the mark of being what God wants us to be.

2. Revealing - V. 9

Why did the many Demons use only one as a spokesman at first?

Legion - 6,826 men a full Legion Roman Army. What does this say about the unfortunate man's life?

V. 10 - Consider the nature of this request.

V. 11-12 - What request did the Demons make? Why permission to enter the swine?

3. Request of Demons Granted

V. 13 - Why did the Demons destroy the swine?

III. WORRIED MEN

1. Flight - V. 14

What did they talk about?

2. Fear - V. 15

How did the city view the results.

CONCLUSION:

V. 16-17 - What was the reaction of the local people? How much is a man worth? A choice of pigs or people.

V. 19 - A truth you can put into action.

FEEDING BOTH BODY AND SOUL

Mark 6

Discuss some pleasant memories of a Sunday School Picnic. What differences are there between the feeding of the 5,000 and a Sunday School Picnic?

Why is the modern crisis of world hunger hard to deal with? (Famine, corrupt officials.)

Note some facts: (1) Almost a third of the world's babies die of malnutrition before they reach the age of five.

(2) India, some two hundred million people exist on incomes that average less than \$40.00 per year. (3) Average American consumes one ton of grain a year — 5 times what the average person consumes in developing countries.

(4) U. S. annually uses enough grain — 5.2 million tons in production of beer and liquor — could feed 26 million people. (5) Estimates suggest — 10 million people will die of starvation this year. (6) If the world were a global village of 100 residents, only six of them would be Americans. (7) These six would have half the village's entire income and the other 94 would exist on the other half. How can we solve the wastefulness in our country?

Mark 5:1–20 — Power over the mind. "Depart our coast." Mark 5:25–34 — Power over twelve year old disease.

Mark 5:35–42 — Power over death — 12 year old girl. Mark 6:7 — Sent out Disciples with power on preaching mission.

I. PLAN — Mark 6:30

1. Report — V. 30

On what were the Disciples anxious to report to Jesus at Capernaum? What would happen if members of the church began reporting all things they had done in response to the command of Christ?

2. Rest — V. 31

What are some of the considerations that will determine the need of taking a rest or vacation in a day such as ours when we have much leisure time each day? Why weren't Jesus and his Disciples able to have time together in Capernaum?

V. 32 — What does a desert place suggest? V. 33 — How did the multitude follow Jesus to the eastern side of the sea? (Boat readily seen, may have told some of their friends about the retreat.)

I I. PROBLEM — V. 34

1. Compassion — V. 34

What made Jesus give up his plan to be undisturbed with His Disciples? Did he see them as opportunities?

2. Concern — V. 35–36

What did the Disciples urge Jesus to do for the hungry multitude? (Time of day — middle of afternoon.)

3. Challenge — V. 37

Why did Jesus suggest the Disciples buy bread for the multitudes? (Penny — a day's wage.)

I I I. PROVISION

1. Amount — V. 38

Why did Jesus wait until the boys lunch was offered before performing the miracle which would meet the need? (How much did they have? Five biscuits and two sardines.)

2. Arrangement — V. 39–40

Why did Jesus arrange the people in numbered groups? To avoid disorderly crowding we sometimes number tables.

3. Abundance — V. 41–44

V. 41 — Where did the miracle occur — some verbs. He took — He looked — He blessed — He broke — He distributed. When did the miracle happen?

V. 42 — One was willing to share with great results.

Dr. Frederick Banting — 60 years ago due to lack of patients, the young Canadian Doctor found time to read and study, found a statement in old medical journal about incurable disease. His first month of practicing medicine brought in \$4.00. He went into a laboratory and eventually led to the discovery of insulin, thousands of diabetics have been given new release.

What if the church, feeling it does not have much, but uses the resources she has in Jesus, would attempt to carry out the commission. Why did Jesus suggest the Disciples feed the hungry people?

V. 43 — Why are we told how many baskets of food were collected? Most picnic situations have scraps left. Are we wasteful — cafeterias, restaurants, etc.

V. 44 — What can we do to meet the needs of the hungry.

CONCLUSION:

How can we practice economy? (Waste not, want not.) I will trust Jesus more than ever, because —

CHRIST THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGE

Revelation 19 and 20

What is righteousness? How influential are Judges in our society? In your observation of some Court cases are Judges too lenient or too powerful? What happens when law breakers are confronted with evidence? What values can be learned from this story: The Principal of a West Virginia High School keeps an eye on students in a unique manner – a camera's unerring eye. She strolls among the students at social events, athletic events, and class breaks, photographing them smoking, gambling, petting in off-limits places. Later when the film has been processed, she calls the guilty parties to her office and confronts them with the evidence. Students have begged to purchase their pictures, but the Principal won't sell. (List some of the things in contrast that God keeps exact records, we are called into his presence, and time passed for mercy.)

History: We live in a rebellious world, corrupt, crimes, underhanded political activities. Wrong seems to triumph, people say what's the use? There's nothing we can do about it! Everybody is doing it. Let's get ours while we can and so we join the corrupt crowd. What other option do we have?

I. WHITE HORSE – 19:1

The coming of Christ with the armies of Heaven first, for the deliverance of his people. Second, put an end to destructive work of earth's destroyers. The first thing John mentions is a white horse.

1. Hallelujah – Rejoicing Saints – 19:1–10

V. 1 – Picture redeemed Saints in chorus.

V. 2 – Reason for praise – over throw of the City of Babylon.

V. 3 – Complete destruction of false religion.

V. 4–6 – Universal praise.

V. 7–9 – Symbol of the marriage. Bridegroom is Christ and Bride the church. Hallelujah chorus announcing it.

2. Title Shown – V. 11

How did John describe Christ as He will be when He comes down to earth? Pictured as lamb now as victorious warrior.

3. Title Unknown – V. 12

Can any man fully understand God?

4. Title Known – V. 13

Whose blood was on Christ's robe? What does the "Word of God" mean? John 1:1, Col. 1:15, Heb. 4:12.

5. Triumph Won – V. 14–15

What is going to be unusual about the armies of Heaven following Christ?

Spiritual Weapons: Sword – Gospel, He speaks and it is done. Heb. 4:12. Rod of Iron – Judgement. Ps. 2:9. Strength – Winepress – Divine Justice.

6. Title Shown – V. 16

What ideas are suggested by the fact Jesus bears the title King of Kings and Lord of Lords?

II. WHITE THRONE – 20:11

1. Blazing Radiance – V. 11

Final Judgement – Pageant of redemption pictures God's Judgement and final destiny of man. White Throne: Symbol of sovereign and holy justice.

(V. 1–10 – Satan's defeat and punishment in Hell. From V. 4–6 – Rival interpretations center around the "Millennium", a word which does not appear in the New Testament but derived from the term "a thousand years". First, Amillennialists hold it as figurative not literal. Second, Premillennialists believe it is a specific period, Christ will appear and reign. Third, Postmillennialists hold that during 1000 years Satan is bound – the world will improve and Christ will appear at the end.)

2. Books Opened – V. 12

Diaries record events – ships, logs, air liners, electric program boxes. Business, computer banks.

Some day, some time, he raises us up from the dead. Who is going to be there?

Book of life – Exod. 32:32–33, Ps. 69:28. Book will show why certain names are inscribed in the Book of Life.

V. 13–15 – Who escapes?

CONCLUSIONS:

Does the knowledge of Judgement instruct us? Does pay day some day cause us to take heed? Why do we need to be careful about judging others? Matt. 7:1.

Describe two words: Oppressor — Oppressed —

Chorus: "Zacchaeus was a wee little man
A wee little man was he.
He climbed up in the sycamore tree,
For the Lord he wanted to see."

Explain why a tax collector would not be highly regarded among Jesus' contemporaries. Explain how the Internal Revenue Service works. Why did Zacchaeus decide to be a tax collector? What guidelines can we use to determine whether we are allowing our careers to come under the Lordship of Jesus? (Discuss: Is the job inherently right? Inquire about the product which is the fruit of our labor? Does it challenge me to do my best? Does it support my family? Is my work "fulfilling" — really a joy?)

War was sweeping Virginia countryside 1860's. It had not reached the farm where Billy Joe lived with his mother. So the lad had ranged freely through the woods and pasture lands. One day he rushed in, "Hey, Ma, there's a whole bunch of men in blue britches camping in the pasture, over the hill!" His mother turned pale — "Don't go past the barn again" she ordered. "Those are Yankees". "No, Ma", Billy Joe objected, "that can't be Yankees. They looked just like people to me."

They were not monsters — monster images are Gentiles — Samaritians — Romans — Tax Collectors — Yet they were real people.

Locate Jericho and note some history — 800 feet below sea level, tropical climate. Date palms, balsam used in medicine, tourists.

I. STATURE — Luke 19:1

1. Passing

V. 1 — Why was Jericho able to make Zacchaeus a rich tax collector? Herod's winter capital, 8 miles from Dead Sea, warm climate, attractive for vacations and retirement.

2. Publican

V. 2 — What kind of reputation did Zacchaeus have in Jericho? How was he able to make so much profit? (A Commissioner, several individuals working for him.)

3. Problem

V. 3 — How did he respond to the presence of Jesus in Jericho? Was there something more than curiosity? Have you ever been in a pressing crowd? Dangerous 1979 — 11 rock music fans died at Cincinnati, Ohio — 9 fans of the Pope died in Zaire. Rich, not buy one inch in height. Matt. 6:27.

4. Persistence

V. 4 — What motivated him to persist in seeing Jesus that day? (Sycamore tree — fig tree type. Natural solution.)

II. SINNER

1. Order — V. 5

What evidence do we have that Jesus intended to meet Zacchaeus that day? Why did Jesus single out Zacchaeus from the crowd? What should Jesus be so urgent "make haste"? (Same word — 2 Peter 3:12.)

2. Obedience — V. 6

Why did he welcome Jesus warmly and take him home? Acts 2:41. Do you remember when Jesus came your way? What was your reaction?

3. Objection — V. 7

How did the other Jews react to Jesus inviting himself to Zacchaeus' home?

III. SALVATION

1. Restitution — V. 8

Why did he decide to give away most of his goods? When and where did he make this declaration? What is your idea of restitution? Lev. 6:1-5; Num. 5:7; Exo. 22:1-4. How is Zacchaeus' experience an example of conversion for every person?

2. Recognition — V. 9

In what way did salvation come to his house? What did Jesus mean?

3. Reason — V. 10

Is Jesus still seeking and saving the lost?

CONCLUSION:

How did Jesus view sinners? What alternatives does a Christian have when the demands of his job begin to conflict with the Christian ethic? Why are some people so quick to condemn the rich and powerful?

THE JOY OF JESUS' PRESENCE

John 20

What do we know about the miracle of Easter? Does faith in Christ's resurrection and your own resurrection after death give meaning to life?

Book and movie "Joni" (Johnny) paralyzed from waist down by a diving accident. What do you think of her confidence "I had rather be in this wheel chair and know Him, than out of it and not know Him."

John 18:28-38 - Pilate judged Jesus - V. 28 - Hall of Judgement. V. 29 - Who was this man, appointed AD 26 rule Judea. V. 30-31 - What was Pilate's reaction? V. 32 - Jews stoned - Romans crucified. V. 33 - Private meeting. V. 36 - Kind of Kingdom. V. 37-38 - The question. V. 40 - The answer.

Autumn Season - Signs of dying, death. Greek's view of death - body disintegrates, goes to material world. Spirit continues to live on. Where did death come from? Gen. 2:17; Rom. 6:23.

Define: Physical death --

(The state of having ceased to live. Friend is walking about today, tomorrow lying in casket, we say he's dead. Same body, something is missing.)

What is the average expectation of life? Paul's day - 23. 1900 - 48. 1960 - 64.

Heb. 9:27 - Certainty of death - A permanent thing.

Define: Resurrection --

(Rise, raised up, Greek Word - to stand, cause to stand again. Raising of the body. Idea to live again. John 11:24 Martha "I know he will rise at the last day." What "if" there is no resurrection? I Cor. 15:13-19.

I. DISTRESS - John 20:1-2

1. Awareness - V. 1

The Passover, Gethsemane, trials, crucifixion.

How could Mary Magdalene and other women visit the sepulchre at a time when the Disciples were afraid to be out? Why did the women come to the tomb? Mark 16:1-2. How could they move the stone?

2. Assumption - V. 2

Why did Mary assume that the body was stolen? Why were they so totally unprepared for the resurrection? Why did she run to find Disciples?

II. DISCOVERY - John 20:3

1. Race - V. 3-4

Discuss the difference indicated by the actions of Peter and John.

2. Restraint - V. 5

What went through John's mind at this time?

3. Realization - V. 6-9

V. 6-7 - How did the grave clothes give evidence of Jesus' resurrection? John 19:40.

V. 8-9 - What did it mean that John went in, saw, and believed?

4. Return - V. 10

What did these Disciples not know about the Scriptures?

III. DISPLAY - John 20:19-20

1. Arrival - V. 19

Why were Jesus' Disciples afraid when he appeared Easter Sunday evening? Locked doors! How did Jesus dispel their fear? What are some of the fears today? (Crime, war, shortages.)

Linda, housewife, Atlanta, Ga., has lived 2 years with cancer. Doctor told her, not long to live. She dismisses this awesome news and goes right on with her busy life, singing in Church Choir, Sunday School Teacher, driving her children to meetings. She told the church "Peace is one of the greatest gifts of God. Whatever may come, God wants us to know his peace, Jesus is our Lord."

2. Acknowledgement - V. 20

What did the presence of Jesus mean? How did this help them prepare for death? What is the only way to prepare for death? What changes would you make if you knew you were to die soon?

R. W. Dale preparing a sermon for Easter Day, thought "Christ is alive". He said to himself, "alive", then repeated it "alive". After that experience Dale chose a resurrection hymn for every Sunday morning during the rest of his ministry.

CONCLUSION:

What is the message of Easter? What makes the resurrection the central feature of Christian faith? What can be done to cause the church to exhibit more joy? What do you see in the empty tomb?

A. H. Ackley's hymn "He walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way. . . He lives within my heart."

The founder of every other religion - no information beyond his death!

JESUS AFFIRMS HIS MINISTRY

Luke 3; 7

A songwriter described what he would do if he ran the world.

List some of the needs in the world you would try to meet if you ran the world.

A Doctor said the number one problem in America: "Failing to care about each other." What is your feeling of this problem?

Solve this illustration of Donna: She has head knowledge of salvation. She feels guilty because she never measured up to her parents expectations. Her room is never clean enough, her grades never high enough! To make matters worse this 13 year old has experimented with drugs and left home. Now she is ashamed. Would it help for her to talk to her parents? How can the church hold up high ideals? How can we help Donna?

New unit – The Teachings Of Jesus – Six Lessons.

A New Beginning – 2 Corinthians 5:17.

Importance of making the right decision. An elder in a church lived next door to a young man by the name of Emerson. Both were interested in chemistry. Mr. Emerson told his neighbor he had a formula that could cure headaches; and if he would put \$5,000 together with Mr. Emerson's \$5,000 – they would go into business. The elder was timid and finally said "no". Out of this formula came Emerson's Bromoseltzer and a fortune of millions. A wrong decision was made and much money lost. How much more critical a wrong decision concerning Christ is.

I. CLARIFICATION – Luke 3:2–20

1. The Puzzle – V. 15

Why did the Jews think John the Baptist might be Christ?

V. 2–3 – Preaching Repentance.

V. 4–6 – Campaign manager for Christ. Not organize a \$100-a-plate dinner, made no political promises.

V. 7–14 – What candidate could survive a front man like that? (There was no fighting in their campaign headquarters for Jesus and John agreed. Prophets had been silent 400 years. Malachi's final word 4:5 confirmed by Jesus – Matt. 11:14. The King traveled by chariot along roads that needed work, the forerunner filled the holes, removed obstacles. Second he made sure the people in the villages knew the King was coming.

V. 15 – Is it easy for people to follow the wrong leader? Why do people follow Reverend Moon and the Jim Jones?

2. The Proclamation

V. 16 – How did John clarify the thinking of the nation?

V. 17 – Why did John emphasize the purging action?

3. The Preaching – V. 18

On what subject did John preach? In what way should the preaching of God's Word change us?

4. The Prisoner – V. 19–20

Why did Herod imprison John? (John was not timid, not a soft-soaper, and not an ear-tickler. He saw the issues, regardless of who was in his audience. He exposed Herod's marrying his brother's wife. Sin was at work in the nation.

II. PRESENTATION

1. Expressions

V. 21 – What might Jesus have prayed about following His baptism by John? (A little girl finished praying. Mother said get up and go to bed. The child said, "I was just waiting so if God had anything He wanted to say to me.")

V. 22 – What divine approval did Jesus get? Psalms 2:7.

III. AFFIRMATION – Luke 7:19–23

1. Delegation – V. 19–20

Did John change his earlier convictions about Jesus? Why would John have any doubts about Jesus? (John not resting in a hotel room but a desolate dungeon.)

2. Validation – V. 21–23

Why did Jesus give a direct answer to John's question?

V. 23 – Did Jesus rebuke John?

V. 22 – Six types of activities performed by Jesus.

CONCLUSION

2 Cor. 5:17 – A supermarket recently displayed a ham 150 years old, preserved by smoke and salt. For nearly 2,000 years Christianity has been a preservative force in the world. Jesus makes all things new if we let Him. Anna 75 lived in Belgium. She was led to Christ. Her daughter said after baptism, Anna put clean new sheets on her bed, a new night gown on, and explained "I am starting all over again. I want everything to be clean and new." We need to do the same thing!

MEETING THE RISEN LORD

Luke 24

Spiritual heartburn not an ailment by necessary ingredient. John Wesley's experience "He felt his heart strangely warmed." Define the meaning of "religious experience." What are some great religious experiences recorded in the Bible _____ .
"The most significant religious experience I have had was _____ ."
What are some purposes served by religious experiences? How can a person have a religious experience? Are there dangers connected with religious experiences? If so, what are they?

Easter, 1943, difficult time for Russia, Hitler had entered their country. Communist had suppressed religion but on Easter allowed Christians to worship in public. One large city, only one church remained open, filled beyond capacity. Some Communist leaders tried to disrupt by shooting firecrackers also, playing loud music outside the building. The next day leaders summoned the Christians to city square and subjected them to three hours of arguments by atheists. At the end of the meeting they gave opportunity for questions. One voice in the crowd --- "I'd like to say three words." They led a poorly clad man to the microphone, he said, "Christ is risen!" Officials were embarrassed and learned the hearts of the people were aflame.

Lesson today about two traveling to Emmaus - leaving an empty tomb.

I. CONTACT - Luke 24:13-14

1. Serious Talk

V. 13 - Why did they make this trip? How far was the village?

V. 14 - Why were these two men depressed? What were they talking about? (Attended the Passover, witnessed a crucifixion, heard about a sealed tomb.)

2. Strange Companion

V. 15 - How did Jesus make contact with the men on the road. How would you describe "reasoned." Matt. 18:20. How is the best way to deal with fear? (A child feared walking past an empty house, said to be haunted, some one gave the boy a good luck charm to ward off ghosts, another had a street light put on the corner, yet another told him "it was sinful to be afraid". An elder said "I'll walk with you past the house." And the walk removed the fear.

V. 16 - Why didn't the men recognize Jesus? Example John 20:14-16 - Mary Magdalene at Tomb. John 21:4-7 Disciples on the sea. Are there any present day situations in which our eyes are "holden"? (Racism, political groups, social classes.)

II. CONVERSATION

1. Christ's Question - V. 17

Why did he ask the men what they were discussing?

2. Cleopas' Question - V. 18

Why did Cleopas (Klee-uh-pass) call Jesus an apparent stranger in the Jerusalem area?

3. Christ's Response and Their Report

V. 19-21 - How did Cleopas and his companions view Jesus after he died?

V. 21 - "We trusted" - A Messiah, throw off Roman yoke. How could one still trust? In what areas are we like the two on the road disappointed? Some have their ideas of how the church should function, what the Bible - Sunday School Class should do, how certain things should work out - we become like the two on the road with our own notions substituted for what Jesus really wants. We as they must be willing to change our thinking to match the revealed truth.

V. 22 - They did not believe the women.

V. 25 - What did Jesus say.

V. 27 - Jesus went back to the Scripture - what would happen if we all went back to the Scripture as a daily guide? Do you know of any other substitute?

III. CONSTRAINT

1. Requested Presence - V. 28, 29

Why did they invite the stranger in?

2. Recognized Master - V. 30-31

How was their inadequacy corrected? What thoughts do you have about the meal?

3. Remembered Teaching - V. 32

What did the two men do after they had recognized Jesus in Emmaus? "Hearts burn within" - explain that experience. How does a person feel when they are saved?

CONCLUSION

What are the hinderances to a burning heart, what is keeping my heart from burning? (If opening the Scriptures caused hearts to burn, will it work today?) Do you agree every Christian should possess a warm heart? Why do people rarely read the Bible. New week we begin the Book of Revelation.

MARY: A WOMAN FAVORED BY GOD

Luke 1 and John 19

New Series: Persons close to Jesus – contact – eye-witness. Four Lessons: Did They Understand Jesus? What Fruit Came From This Contact? Did Their Opportunities Become Responsibilities?

He re-directed lives: Helen Keller, age 19 months, strange fever left her blind, deaf, and speechless. Her teacher re-directed her life with her heart. 1945 Course of world changed with power of the Atom released – 2000 years before God released spiritual power in Salvation. Apple tree produces some new wood each year so that there can be blossom and fruit, we cannot stop the flight of time and all that aging and change bring, but we can keep on “growing new wood”.

What is the purpose of a road map? How does a map influence our decisions? What is the worth of having just a part of a road map?

Mary was unique and was given a map by the angel. Big question: What will people think? Can you remember a time when you did not do something because you considered this question, what will people think?

When do people usually think about Mary? Do you remember Christmas pageant and characters?

Two Annunciations:

Luke 1:1–4 – Prologue began story of birth of John and Jesus.

V. 5 – Righteous people Zachariah (Priest) family of Aaron. His turn to preside over the incense altar, shocked by news.

V. 13 – Prayer – both were old.

V. 14–17 – John's ministry.

V. 18–23 – Zachariah difficulty believing the angel's message.

I. ANNOUNCEMENT – Luke 1:26

1. Mission – V. 26–27

Was Mary a random choice made by God to become the mother of Jesus?

V. 24 – Zacharias and Elizabeth were waiting birth of John.

Gabriel came to Nazareth in Galilee.

V. 27 – A Virgin – Engagement legally binding, did not live together as man and wife until marriage ceremony. If man died during betrothal period to woman considered a widow.

Joseph – John 1:45; 6:12 – Line of David.

2. Message – V. 28

Was Mary sinless or spiritually superior to all other women?

What did this announcement of divine favor mean? Why should it come to her? What does it mean to be favored by God?

V. 29 – Why was Mary afraid of Gabriel?

V. 30–33 – Why was the name Jesus significant? Why did Jesus disappoint most Jews during his time on earth? Favor of God – V. 30 – Vern Hodgson, on a bluff 15 miles Northeast of Mt. St. Helens. Amateur photographer, 35 mm camera, began to shoot, bulge on side of mountain started to slide, smoke boiled across, changed to large wide angle lens, took series 16 pictures in 4 minutes. Suddenly an awesome roar. He jumped in his van and drove down winding road, escaped as volcano exploded. Said, “He was fortunate and recorded a most dramatic moment in history.” Receiving God's favor is not based on one's good fortune.

II. ANSWER

1. Exclamation – V. 34

Mary not see how promise was possible.

Gen. 4:1 – Adam – report from Joseph – Matt. 1:18–25.

2. Explanation – V. 35–37.

How did Gabriel say that Mary was to become pregnant? Why did Gabriel tell Mary about Elizabeth's pregnancy?

Roman Catholic Church – 1854 Pronounced the dogma of the immaculate conception (Mary not cursed by original sin – also teach she was taken up to Heaven without death.)

3. Expression – V. 38

Why was Mary's quick readiness to do God's will remarkable and commendable?

A “company man” moves as required. Which of Mary's characteristics are worthy of imitation?

III. ARRANGEMENT – John 19:25

1. Concern – V. 25–26

Why did Jesus place Mary under John's care?

2. Conclusion – V. 27

What happened to Mary afterward?

Noblest Woman – Luke 2:38 – Pure heart – Pondering heart – Luke 2:19. Pierced Heart – Luke 2:35.

When will God's plan be fulfilled in our lives? Will you commit yourself to: (1) Read the Word everyday for five minutes. (2) Question all of my activities as to God's plan for one month. (3) Share how God's plan has influenced my life once each week.

THE MIRACLES FOR A PARALYTIC

Mark 2

Greatest problem facing our nation: Inflation, pollution, unemployment, poverty, ignorance, sin, physical illness, energy crisis, family disintegration, drugs, crime, others — Vote for one or two.

If you were sick, how would you go about healing? Who makes a good friend? (Valuable — not buy.)
Think of your best friend. How far would you go for this friend? What would you not do for this friend?

Farmer taken sick, his friends worked his crop and saved his harvest for the family. Today we study four men who helped another man. They did what was necessary, surmounting all obstacles. Handicaps: What is being done for this group today?

Jesus is back in Galilee: Two reasons — First, they were religious, not dominated by political leaders of Jerusalem and Judea. Second, this was the scene of his childhood.

Jesus healing ministry begins:

Mark 1:21–28 — Man with unclean Spirit. Released this tormented man.

Mark 1:29–34 — Peter's mother in law.

Mark 1:33–34 — Healed many of diseases.

Mark 1:35–45 — The cure of a Leper.

Old Legend — Gordius, a King ruled in ancient minor, left behind a strangely twisted knot that tied the yoke to the cart. Left also, a prophetic word, whoever succeeded in untying the knot should be conqueror of Asia. Many powerful men tried, all failed. Alexander the Great came, viewed the situation, drew his sword, and with one stroke severed the knot, thus revealed himself as conqueror.

Jewish nation looked for a Messiah, divine leader. Many claims were made. Then Jesus came and with one stroke of power revealed his deity. Mark relates the story of Jesus' life, exciting events.

I. PREACHING — Mark 2:1–2

1. Presence — V. 1

Return to Capernaum. A crowd soon gathered filling the house. I Cor. 1:21.

2. Pressure — V. 2

Fame spread — popularity — multitudes flocked to him. Overflowing out the door and stood by the windows.

II. PERSISTENCE — 2:3

1. Access — V. 3–4

V. 3 — Was the healing of the Paralytic deliberate or accidental on Jesus' part?

Whose idea was it to go to see Jesus? Who were these four men?

V. 4 — What prompted these men to go through the roof? Describe the process of going through the roof?

How do you feel about interrupting Jesus? If Jesus knew that a crowd would gather, why didn't he move outside that day? Could it be inferred from this account that Jesus approved of the willful destruction of private property?

Friends went to extreme lengths to put him in touch with the Master healer. Love for the man, faith in the power of Christ enabled them to expend extra effort. Christ needs friends of sinners, who are willing to surmount obstacles. Do we love the lost enough to remove any such barrier that might keep them from being touched by the Master?

V. 5 — Whose faith did Jesus honor — that of the paralytic or of the four helpers? What was greater — man's need for forgiveness or healing? Jesus deals first with his soul. Do you think sin was the real source of the man's problem?

III. PERCEPTION — Mark 2:6–12

1. Perplexity

V. 6–7. What did the religious leaders say about the situation? (Scribes — only God forgives sin, Jesus is not God was their logic.)

2. Preference — V. 8–9

Why did Jesus rebuke the religious leaders? Why did he ask which is easier — forgiving sins or healing the paralytic? "He knew their hearts, what they were thinking". Does he know this today?

3. Proof — V. 10–12

V. 10–11 — Why were these crucial words. What is the best place for healings to be done? (Public or private) Acts 2:22;

V. 12 — Talk about how good the paralyzed man must have felt when he realized that he was forgiven. How did the people react?

CONCLUSION:

What did the paralytic man write in his diary that day? What does this lesson say about Jesus' willingness to minister to my needs? What do these verses say about my willingness to help others? What is my greatest need now?

What is a martyr? Who was the first Christian martyr? Stephen – name means “crowned”.

1979 Archaeologists in Virginia reported they accidentally unearthed the remains of an Indian Massacre in 1622. It is believed 58 Settlers were killed at a site 10 miles Northwest of Jamestown. Skeletons and other artifacts were found. This reminds us that countless other people have lived and died without special recognition. However, God knows about all of them. We get our word “witness” from martyrs. To be a witness, often meant giving up life. What are some types of current persecution? What did God do to help Stephen when he was being stoned?

I. DEACONS – Acts 6:1-6

1. Complaint – V. 1

What caused this problem? What would have happened if the dispute had been allowed to continue? Think about each group’s point of view: Grecians widows neglected.

2. Conclusion – V. 2

What practical steps were taken to solve the problem? All ministry involves risks, often bold ministries will be falsely criticized.

One lesson here: First, the Word of God must come first, no Preacher should be side-tracked at this point by anything or anyone. Second, those who serve tables need the filling of the Holy Spirit.

Solution: Needed in the modern church – they were not interested in placing the blame on anyone for failure at this point. They were concerned with a remedy. Good pattern for today!

V. 3 – What procedure did they use to find seven Deacons to serve? What qualities were important as the church made the selection? Think on these – (1) Honest Report. Good reputation. Money involved, etc. (2) Full of the Holy Ghost – life filled with fruits of Spirit, special gifts, good terms with God, etc. (3) Wisdom – practical good sense, ready to carry out their work, etc. It is no less important for the church today! Is it important that Christians give their lives in the cause of Christ today?

V. 4 – What special ministry did the Apostles feel was their responsibility? Life of the church from Pentecost marked by prayer and preaching. We must not neglect these.

3. Choices – V. 5

Why were Stephen and Philip listed among the seven chosen? Proselyte – Convert instead of one born a Jew.

4. Consecration – V. 6

What significance was there in laying hands on the Deacons? Numbers 27:18.

5. Conversions – V. 7

What were the results? This reason for us to have confidence in the power of the Gospel. We need to overcome roadblocks. Wade Morrison, young druggist, Waco, Texas, 1885 invented a drink with 21 ingredients, fruit extracts, etc. A Doctor refused to allow the druggist to date his daughter. The young man thought he might change the Doctor’s mind if he put his name on the label of the new product. The Doctor refused but the name stuck – Dr. Pepper has become a leading soft drink.

Stephen, willing to do menial task, prepared for greater service, became worth much – far beyond knowledge.

II. DISPUTE – 6:8

1. Faithfulness – V. 8

Full of -----
Not invalid in faith.

2. Frustration – V. 9-10

Why did certain Jews take him to the Sanhedrin? The world cannot overcome a Spirit-filled life. How can Christians cope with ridicule and rejection?

3. Arrest and Trial – V. 11-15.

III. DEATH – Acts 7:1

1. Speech – V. 1-53

Longest speech in Acts. 2-8 Story, Abraham 9-22, Joseph - Egypt 23-41, Moses 44-53, spoke about the charge – reaction – violent.

2. Stoning – V. 58

Was the stoning illegal? Why did Luke mention Saul? Executed outside of the city. Lev. 24:14. Why is vengeance so satisfying?

3. Stephen – V. 59-60

How did Stephen accept his death?

CONCLUSION:

If you fail to enter doors of service, will you lose ability to serve? We can help solve church problems with common sense and prayer, failure to do so hurts the Gospel. What makes the difference between Christians? (Some are cold, indifferent, inactive – others diligent, dedicated, serving with joy.) Don’t discount the Spirit. Gal. 5:22-23.

PROCLAIM LIBERTY

Leviticus 25

V. 10 – Read The Golden Text. Do you agree or disagree – why?

1. Is it true that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.
2. God is pleased with and blesses the acquisition of wealth.
3. A person is responsible to God for the use of his tithes only.
4. God expects his people to rest.
5. We are tenants and stewards of property, not owners.
6. The tithe is only the beginning of the use of our wealth for God.

Why is it that in many countries wealth is concentrated in the hands of a few people. Would you buy it? The owner is willing to sell, the contract reads– 1. The present owner has the right to buy back the property at any time he has sufficient money to do so. 2. The amount necessary to buy back this property will be reduced each year. 3. The land will automatically revert to the original owner in _____ years. What would you do? Would you agree to buy the property? What do you think of the terms?

Then Israel entered the Promised Land, a deed similar to this existed. God's control – a built in one to prevent extreme wealth or poverty. Every 50 years land returned to original owners. A spend thrift might sell his farm, waste the money, however, his children and grandchildren were not doomed to be slaves forever – get the farm back – law of the Jubilee.

Isaiah 5:8 – “They join house to house, field to field.” This is attitude of the man – “I don't want to own all the land in the world, but just all that joins mine.”

A basic stabilizing factor is widely dispersed private ownership of the land. In 1980 a group called for government action – help reverse decline of small and moderate size farms.

Are we accountable for our use of the resources of the land?

I. REST – Lev. 25:1

1. Sabbath Year – V. 1

Ex. 20:8–11 – Observe each seventh day – we can vote “NO” – on the November Sunday Blue Law. Moses did not invent the laws.

V. 2 – What was a Sabbath year unto the Lord in ancient Israel? V. 3–7 – Explain how Sabbath year was observed. No plowing, planting, harvesting systematically. Greed and grief – “Dust Bowl” years in West. Buffalo slaughtered, no grass, plowed the range, dry years 1916 – wind, loosened top soil filled the air. Seventh year – lie follows – faith, their need would be met.

2. Seven Times Seven – V. 8–9

How often was the Jubilee year to be celebrated in ancient Israel? Tension and pressure – Provision for vacation keep track, count 49 years – next year time of Jubilee.

Atonement – self-humiliation and confession. Trumpet sound in every town and village – People came out of Egypt.

3. Special Instruction – V. 10–12

How were people in Israel able to survive through two years of no harvests?

V. 10 – Describe the joy. V. 11 – Why a joyful time? V. 12 – How could they make it without one years income?

II. REMINDER

1. Retaining Ownership – V. 23

What basic concept underlaid the restoration of ancestral lands? The land belonged to _____ . They were managing for _____ .

Kansas, narrow dirt road, a sign: “God's land – I am just farming it until his return.” Young farmer said this is my way of testifying to my faith. He had harum-scarum life, came face to face with Jesus in a fox-hole in South Pacific. Resolved to give whole life to Jesus and reading The Bible – Lev. 25:23. “The land is mine; for ye are strangers.” Decided to paint his motto. What would happen if each of us placed such a sign in our homes, or office, or business, or land.

2. Redemption – V. 24

Great symbol of Christ.

V. 25–28 – Man who sold get property back, but also right and redeem it, buy it back before that time.

III. RELEASE

V. 35–38 – Jubilee helped the poor.

1. Status Defined – V. 39–40

V. 39 – Name kinds of slavery people sell themselves. Hebrew slave be free after 6 years. Ex. 21:2. If he had sold himself over and over. Jubilee he get back ancestral farm and start over.

V. 40–41 – What practical effects did the Jubilee year have in Israel?

2. Servants Claimed

V. 42–43

The land belonged to _____ . The people belonged to _____ .

Sin of Ahab – I Kings 21:1–3.

CONCLUSION:

What safe-guards do we have to avoid a wrong view of possessions? Would a Jubilee year work today? What effect does material things have on us if we recognize God's ownership? His lesson on ownership helped you with personal responsibilities.

THE NATURE OF LUKE'S GOSPEL

Luke 1, 5, 8, 9

List some pieces of equipment used by medical doctors _____

What do these items have to do with our new lesson series? Col. 4:14.

Years ago Bill Wallace wrote a letter — "I must confess, I am not a good speaker, nor apt as a teacher, but I do feel God can use my training as a physician. As humbly as I know how, I want to volunteer to serve as a medical missionary under our Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board." 31 years ago he died in a Communist prison cell.

What can a Doctor do to share the Gospel on foreign lands? Where did Luke get his materials for writing of his Gospel? What was his purpose in writing?

Gospel of Luke and book of Acts comprise about one fourth of the New Testament. Author of both.

Factors that cannot be ignored — 1. Well-educated. 2. Knew how to research — investigating — getting information straight.

3. Testimony unselfish — not write for personal gain.

400 years ago Sir Francis Bacon wrote some books are to be tasted, some swallowed, some to be chewed and digested. Luke undertook to tell the story of the life of Christ.

Some people born with gift of salesmanship. Charles Tandy built the chain Radio Shack Stores. His father was in leather business. Charles finished college, enlisted in the Navy. He began selling leather supplies — hospitals, prisons, schools. 1961 bought small Boston Company — Radio Shack — expanded number of stores — reduced size of the store — run by manager and 2 or 3 salespeople. When he bought the company hundreds of thousands of dollars was past due by customers — he hired 900 lawyers — began collecting those debts — eliminated low profit items. Changes, company built factories in U. S., Japan, Korea to produce on brand, even signs and fixtures for Radio Shack Stores. Young managers given bonuses. Sometime ago he estimated that more than 50 have become millionaires. Charles never tired of his work. Luke never tired of telling the story. He worked with Paul.

I. INTRODUCTION — Luke 1

1. Past Efforts — V. 1—2

Why is Luke sometimes called The First Church Historian? Many have attempted to record — unconnected material.

V. 2 — How had he gained some information?

2. Personal Goal — V. 3—4

Who was Theophilus, the man to whom Luke addressed both of his books? (Might been a Gentile magistrate. Most excellent, etc. Acts 1:1. Name means "Lover of God".)

V. 4 — Foundation with faith.

Data that does something. 1975 Hsiacherg, China, catastrophe of earth quake prevented when indication imminent.

Evacuation of city, gas mains turned off. A quake — 7.3 Ricktar scale collapsed buildings, bridges, trees broken like matchsticks. Do you read with your heart as well as your head?

II. INTENTION — 5:29—32

1. Complaint — V. 29—30

Are there any modern counterparts of Scribes and Pharisees around today?

2. Comparison — V. 31—32

How did Jesus compare himself to a physician as He ministered to others? Who sets the standard of righteousness?

III. INCLUSION — 8:19—21

1. Frustration — V. 19—20

What people make up the family of God?

2. Family — V. 21

Those who hear must obey.

IV. INSPIRATION — 9:18—22

1. People's View — V. 18—19

How did most people in Jesus' day view Him? Who does the public say I am? Note answer.

2. Peter's View — V. 20—22

Precaution — V. 21. Why not proclaim him Messiah now?

V. 22 — What is the nature of Luke's Gospel? Midway Island — Albatross do much damage to planes. Wild life experts tried transplanting birds and Japan Philippines, Hawaii 3,000 miles away — Birds returned in one month!

Luke gets us back to divine mission of Jesus.

CONCLUSION:

What would be benefits of reading Luke? The church must reach out to outcasts of society. Jesus came to earth to bring us to God.

GOD GIVES JACOB A NEW NAME

Genesis 32

Why should Christians know and memorize the promises of God? List some.

Abram, promised descendants as numerous as the stars of the sky 17:5. Slow coming – 100 years when child born. Isaac, the child, a bachelor till age 40. He was childless 20 more years. At 60 became father of twins. Jacob was the man who really started the family on its way – 12 sons, 1 daughter. Before he died there were 70 in the family not counting in-laws.

Jacob, at birth was grasping his brother's heel. Heel grabber – supplanter. Managed to buy his reckless brother's birthright and steal the blessing of his Father from Esau. He left home, went to Haram, after 20 years, he had large family and wealth. But Jacob had a problem: Esau still angry enough to kill him. Esau had 400 men armed, that was a crisis. Did Jacob know how to handle this problem?

When a crisis arises what do we do? Share some crises that you have known about in the news this week. What are crises people face? Describe ways people react to life crises?

25:23 – Rebekah knew Jacob had pre-eminence.

27:20 – Isaac pronounced the blessing on Jacob.

27:33; 36; 41–46.

28:1–5 – Bethel 13–15.

31:18, 38, 41 – Home of Laban 20 years. V. 19–22 – Jacob left Laban away shearing sheep. V. 45–46 – A Covenant at Galeed – “The heap of witness”, added name – Mizpah, watchpost. V. 54–55 – Peaceful note.

32:1–8 – Shortest way home – would have postponed indefinitely the time of meeting Esau and his problem. He went out of his way to settle the account.

I. REQUEST – 32:9

1. Promise – V. 9

What does the Bible's first recorded prayer teach about prayer?
What two things are in his thought about God?

2. Praise – V. 10

Where had Jacob been and to what place was he returning? How had the Lord prospered Jacob?
Give the implication of “I am not worthy”.

3. Petition – V. 11

Concern for family.

4. Prediction – V. 12

Why is the claiming of God's promises essential to the art of praying?
28:10–15 – How would this promise be kept unless God rescues Jacob and his family?

II. RETENTION – 32:22

1. Separation

V. 7–8 – He prayed and acted.
V. 13–21 – How did he initiate reconciliation?
V. 22–23 – Family crossing.

2. Struggle – V. 24–26

Why is it good to meet with God in solitude when facing grave problems?
Hosea 12:4 – God wants to give a man his blessing. How did the prayer meeting turn out?

III. RENAMING

1. Change – V. 27–28

What does it mean to prevail in prayer?
What blessing did Jacob receive?

2. Conversation – V. 29

Who was the man he wrestled with? Great words – “And he blessed him there.”
For (5) days, elderly woman pinned in wrecked car in a ravine, few feet from highway, first 2 days not conscious, 3rd day realized she was in deep ditch short distance from her home. 4th day convinced would die of dehydration. Family searched. Played bingo Saturday night – now its Wednesday. Thursday a man pulled his car off the road to check his tires, started to leave and saw the overturned car with someones feet hanging out. Call on C. B. radio and police came. Taken to hospital: she thought she would die, but God delivered. Deliverance is a common theme in the Bible.

3. Commemoration – V. 30

Why was the place called Peniel? Pen – Face and el – God. God's new leader was on his way. 33:3 – Greets Esau – Reunion.

CONCLUSION:

How much of our own and Jacob's growth and change is due to our own effort? To God's guidance? What part did struggles and temptations play in Jacob's eventual transformation? Why does God sometimes delay answering our prayer requests? What vital personal lesson should every Christian learn from Jacob's wrestling with God?

INTO THE PROMISED LAND

Joshua 3-4

What is your first memory of God? When you were a child, where did you think God lived? How have you been aware of God's presence in your life?

List some ways the Israelites were assured of God's presence --

The Statue of Liberty was a gift of France -- October 26, 1886, to Commemorate 100 Years. Symbol of Freedom.

Can you name some other monuments which relate to American history --

If someone asked you to describe your church, what would you say? Have there been any great events in the life of your church?

Today Israel completes 40 years of wilderness life. Read the hymn -- "On Jordan's Stormy Banks".

New Leader -- Transition from Moses to Joshua. 1. Assistant for many years. 2. He recognized Israel belonged to God.

Red Sea -- Ex. 14:21-22. Mt. Sinai -- Ex. 20. Kadesh Barnea -- Num. 13:26-28. Mt. Nebo -- Deut. 32:49.

Moses looked into Promised Land. East Bank Jordan -- Num. 21-22. King Sihon of Amorites refused passage through his country. They took the land. King Og ruled Bashan captured. Balak of Moab brought Balaam. Preparation for crossing into Canaan -- Josh. 3:1-13.

2:1 -- Two Scouts. V. 9-11 -- Fear of events. V. 24 -- Report of scouts.

3:1 -- Urgent Preparation. V. 4 -- New Year's Sermon. V. 5 -- Spiritual Preparation. V. 7 -- Divine Presence

V. 9-13 -- Divine Instruction.

I. CROSSING -- 3:14

1. Miracle -- V. 14-15

Two men spy, given shelter by Rahab. Flood time -- unexpected barrier. Remove from their tents. What part did the dipping of the Priest's feet in the Jordan River play?

Why did God choose a time of flood to work a miracle at the Jordan River? Why not use boats, ferry, etc.

Describe The Ark. (Christ with Ten Commandments -- Ex. 25:10-22. Less than 4' long, wood, covered with gold, 2 golden cherubim, on the lid. Carried by long poles thrust through rings.) Usually in the middle of the people -- Num. 2:17.

V. 16 -- Was the stoppage of the Jordan River definitely a miracle? Unbelievers say a landslide at Adam -- 20 miles up stream. 1927 -- a 150 foot cliff collapsed blocked water for 21 hours. This was not the answer.

2. March -- V. 17

What was the significance of the Priests standing in midstream?

Symbol of crossing Red Sea -- Sinners leaving bondage.

Symbol of wilderness -- Believers learning and discipline.

Symbol of crossing Jordan -- Believers moving into deeper spiritual life.

II. COMMAND -- 4:1

1. Selection -- V. 1-2

How can we get God to help in the midst of our difficulties? Why was a man from each Tribe assigned?

Sometimes a little group or clique undertakes the business of the congregation and then wonders why many people are not interested. God wanted the whole nation to move -- 12 -- representative of each Tribe.

2. Stones -- V. 3

From Pyramids to granite markers in a graveyard.

1. Need to remember. 2. Apt to forget. 3. Stone a long lasting reminder.

III. COMPLIANCE -- 4:4

1. Summons -- V. 4

Deut. 27:2-3.

2. Shoulder

V. 5 -- Each man -- his stone.

3. Signs

V. 6 -- How were the stones to be visual aids? Parents retell -- recall.

V. 7 -- How do we commemorate events?

Great Arch -- St. Louis -- "Gateway To West" -- Washington Monument -- honor of first President, Cornerstone laid July 4, 1848, using same trowel Washington used to lay cornerstone of Capitol, 1793.

Gilgal -- new campsite -- V. 19-20.

CONCLUSION:

What is best way to remind people of God's blessings upon us? V. 23-24. Why was the crossing of Jordan such an act of faith? Go ahead get your feet wet -- God makes a way for us, but we must do the walking. One step is enough, don't you know what you ought to do right now? Times of crisis in Chinese are tragedy and opportunity, may be gripped by disaster or seize the new possibilities ahead. "Lo, I am with you already -- even unto the end of the world."

GOD REAFFIRMS HIS PROMISE

Exodus 5-6

Promises may be described by certain words – fill in a word for each letter.

P

R

O

M

I

S

E

How can we be assured that God will keep his promises to people today? How are we today to claim God's promises to us?

A King who forgot – The King of France – Louis XVI at the time of the revolution. He never expected to be King, spent his time hunting. He had two older brothers. His father and two brothers died unexpectedly, so Louis inherited the Throne. Not his nature to be good King – occupied his time with hunting and social life – appointed officials governed.

Times were changing. American Colonies defeated the British. Louis chose to defend rights of nobility, the upper class. Thousands of common people were out of work, taxes and food prices were increasing. People wanted relief, he and his family were made prisoners. He refused to co-operate with a popular assembly in giving the people a greater participation in government. August, 1792, He moved to a fortress in Paris, the King was tried and condemned to death on January 21, 1793, on a scaffold in center of Paris he was executed. During those years, Louis had many opportunities to change the direction of French history – tragedy he forgot his duty.

Passage today, King of Egypt forgot what the Hebrew Joseph had done to save his nation. **Christians are not to forget** – I Cor. 6:20; 7:23.

Memory of Joseph faded with coming of new King. He was alarmed at growth of Israelites and afraid they might side with enemies in war. Ex. 1:7-14.

Great drama filled with opposition – people in bondage – Pharaoh with power.

Moses: "He's got the whole world in his hand!" Abram left Ur. Jacob was brought to Canaan. Joseph was sold to Egypt. 70 members of Jacob's family move to Egypt. Multiplying at alarming rate, new ruler had plans to control this population explosion. (Slaves – ordered baby boys drowned.) Birth of Moses, Pharaoh's daughter found him, adopted him. He defended a fellow Hebrew by slaying an Egyptian – fled to Midian – joined the family of a Priest.

Blazing Bush – Ex. 3:1-9 (What was God's plan?)

Moses Mission – Ex. 3:10-22.

V. 11 – Assessed inadequate nobody.

V. 12 – Solid proof.

V. 13-14 – Ask God's name.

V. 18 – Request a three days journey from Pharaoh. God equips his servant. Ex. 4:1-17. (God's provisions.)

V. 1-9 – Three miraculous signs.

V. 11-12 – Question not ability but availability.

V. 13-17 – Armed with faith and shepherd's staff.

Return to Egypt – 4:18-31

Heavy handed reaction – 5:1-21. Pharaoh's reaction.

V. 7 – Added responsibility.

V. 9 – Added work keep under control.

I. COMPLAINT – 5:22

1. Inquiries – V. 22

Was Moses justified in blaming God for not delivering the Israelites from bondage immediately?

Question: Why had Lord treated them so badly? Why send me?

2. Injustices – V. 23

Why was Moses discouraged about his part in aiding the Israelites? Why does God let the wicked go on in evil deeds?

Why must Moses suffer reproach, he is trying to help them?

II. COVENANT – 6:1–9

1. Reassurance – V. 1

How did God reassure Moses regarding his mission to Egypt?

2. Remembrance – V. 2–5

By what name was God to be known to His people? Name indicates God is always living, always present, no beginning and no end. God Almighty, faithful God, redemptive God.

V. 4 – Strangers in the land, promise as permanent home.

V. 5 – In what way had God established a Covenant with Israel? Had God neglected the Covenant, persecution had begun before birth of Moses, who is now eighty. 7:7 – What about us – troubles never seem to end.

3. Redemption – 6–8

What provision of the Covenant was yet to be fulfilled? What bearing does the Covenant have on Israel today?

4. Report – V. 9

Why wouldn't they listen to Moses when he gave them God's message? People listened at first now he is misunderstood. When I am misunderstood, I usually ---- some of the things that hurt me are --- God showed he loved and cared for me by ----.

III. CHARGE – V. 10–13

1. First Charge – V. 13A

2. Second Charge – V. 13B

Why was Moses to charge Israel and Pharaoh when neither accepted what he said?

What would you have done, God had called you to a job, and everybody was against you?

CONCLUSION:

Is it hard to keep the loyalty of people? Why do they forget when richly blessed? How can we keep our faith growing? Moses was patient even when people complained about inconvenience.

HOPE FOR SINNERS

Exodus 32-34

How are people today like the Israelites at Sinai? If all have sinned, as Romans 3:23 says, why is God willing to forgive sin? How is a Christian, who already has accepted Christ, to find forgiveness of sin?

Comment on three words: Faithfulness — Wrath — Mercy

The Greeks of Athens, 400 years before birth of Christ developed a code or system of laws. The assembly met each year. And all the laws were reviewed, section by section. Ordinary citizens could propose substitutes. Each citizen was expected to be his own expert in legal matters. New judges were chosen each year from among the citizens. Women and children could not be witnesses except in cases of murder. Juries were very large numbering from 200 to possibly 6,000 in important cases. After the trial, the jury voted immediately, for the members were not allowed to discuss the case among themselves. The ancient Greek legal system — like ours — was imperfect, it was developed and practiced by human beings.

Heart of the Jewish law:

Our Relation to God

- Worship no other Gods
- Don't make idols
- Don't take God's name in vain
- Keep the Sabbath Holy

Relation to Others

- Honor your parents
- Don't kill
- Don't commit adultery
- Don't steal
- Don't bear false witness
- Don't covet.

Jesus gave a summary — Mark 12:30-31.

Grumbling people — God led Abraham from us. All people could see God at work in the plagues. Three days after freedom began to grumble — Water 15:22-27.

Did God's people thereafter trust him fully? They grumble about food — 12:32. Manna, quail — 16.

Grumble in the desert — Water — 17:1-7.

Three months after leaving Egypt, camp at Sinai, Law of Ten Commandments — 19-20.

Moses on the Mount. Get plans for Tabernacle. Gone 40 days. 19:8; 24:7. Don't know what has become of him.

Golden Calf — 32:1-8. Why did they make the idol — how was it made, what kind of celebration was going on? V. 6, 19, 25. Why was the assembly unlawful? V. 1 — The demand unlawful.

Broken Covenant — 32:15-24 — What happened to the tablets — V. 19? How was the image dealt with.

I. INTENTION — 32:9

1. Anger — V. 9-10

Why was God angry enough to threaten the existence of Israel?

What alternative did God offer Moses which he did not accept?

How would you describe a stiff-necked people? (Pioneer farmer had a large ox that he used for snaking logs out of the woods. He was hard to work, when he placed the yoke upon him, he stiffened his front feet, braced his neck, and resisted as long as possible. He named the ox Israel, because it made no difference how good he was to him, Israel was always stubborn and refused to co-operate with his owner.)

Some people are like that, never pull as part of team. Incredible to us, all God has done for his people, in 30 days they make a golden calf.

II. INTERCESSION

1. Questioning — V. 11-12

What can we learn about persuasive praying from Moses in this instance?

2. Mercy Granted — V. 13-14

Importance of recalling promises. If God is perfect and makes no mistakes, why should He repent of anything?

V. 25-35 — Chaos in the camp. V. 28 — Ring-leaders guilty.

33:1-3 — Redemptive plan.

V. 14 — Presence given. 34:4 — Renews the Covenant.

III. INHERITANCE

1. Proclamation — V. 5-7

How did God inspire Moses to continue leading rebellious Israel? What great words are in this proclamation?

2. Prayer — V. 8-9

How did Moses include himself in his prayer on behalf of Israel? V. 10 — What did God say in answer to prayer?

CONCLUSION:

How might God punish us today for idolatry? Why is murmuring and grumbling in the church a dangerous practice? Tell why God was willing to forgive Israel? How does God forgive sin today. In what way do I need to respond to God's forgiveness?