

# OpenTheo

## Year of Popularity



### **Survey of the Life of Christ** - Steve Gregg

In this talk by Steve Gregg, he continues with his historical and biblical analyses by delving into what he calls the "Year of Popularity." He begins by revisiting one of his past topics, the "Year of Obscurity," and contrasts it with the peak of Jesus' fame. Gregg then focuses on Jesus' ministry in Galilee, where he draws attention from the Pharisees and inspires many to follow him. Gregg also analyzes Jesus' interactions with women, his use of parables to teach, and the controversies that arose from his teachings. Additionally, the talk explores the moments leading up to the Sermon on the Mount and how it resulted in Jesus' popularity waning.

## **Transcript**

Last time we covered, for the most part, what is called the Year of Obscurity. Remember I said that the life of Jesus, or not his life, but his ministry, was probably a little bit in excess of three years long. And it's fairly easy to break it into three segments.

These segments would not be, of course, exactly a year each, but for the sake of convenience, we would speak of them as the Year of Obscurity, the Year of Popularity, and the Year of Opposition. And the Year of Obscurity is so-called because, one, Jesus was fairly obscure during that time. He certainly became much more visible and more of a public figure in the second year of his ministry.

But it's also a year of obscurity because it's obscure to us. We don't have very much information about it. We have his baptism and his temptation as the only information about this whole year given in the Synoptic Gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

The rest of the information that we have about that year is from the Gospel of John, chapters 1 through 3, and the early part of 4. Now, it's not always that we get a very good indicator of chronology in the Gospels. The Gospel writers do not always aim at giving a chronological account. Sometimes they group the material as they see fit, perhaps topically or some other way.

And yet we have a very good indicator of chronology when we come to this portion of Jesus' life. Because we read in Mark, chapter 1, and it might do well for you to look there,

this indicator of when the year of popularity began. In Mark, chapter 1, in verse 14, it says, Now, after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God.

And because he came to Galilee and did most of his ministry in the following year in Galilee, and that's where probably the largest number of miracles were done and major speeches were given and so forth by him. That is sometimes called the great Galilean ministry. But you can see from Mark 1, 14, it began after John was put into prison.

So, upon John's imprisonment, Jesus went to Galilee. Now, that's an interesting thing, because John's ministry at that time apparently was in Galilee. Because he was put in prison by Herod Antipas, who was the ruler of Galilee.

Antipas had no authority in Judea, where Jesus had been. And had John been in Judea, Herod would not have been able to arrest him and put him in jail, as he did. But what's interesting is that when Jesus heard that John was put in prison, which means it's dangerous up there in Galilee, Jesus decided to go there.

As if a vacuum had been left by the imprisonment of John, John was taken out of commission and Jesus saw a vacancy there to fill, and so he went up to begin his ministry up there in Galilee. If you look back at Matthew chapter 4, you'll find similarly, in Matthew chapter 4, Now, this is right after the record of the temptation in the wilderness. As I say, Matthew, Mark and Luke skip right over everything from Jesus' temptation to the beginning of his Galilean ministry.

But after the first 11 verses of Matthew foretell of that temptation in the wilderness, it says in verse 12, Now, when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he departed to Galilee. Now, we read in Mark, after John was put in prison, Jesus went to Galilee. Now, we read when Jesus heard that John was put in prison.

So it was upon Jesus hearing the news that John was put away that Jesus went up. Now, how this helps us in our chronology, especially in linking the events chronologically between the synoptics and the gospel of John. If you look at John chapter 3, as I've said, these chapters in John, these early three chapters are about this obscure year.

It says in John chapter 3, verse 24, Now, what that tells us, and it won't be any surprise to you because we've been treating it as if this were so, but if you were trying to figure this out yourself, you could see that the first three chapters of John all fill in a period of time before John was thrown in prison. After Jesus' baptism, however, because we know in John chapter 1, John the Baptist is testifying to the people about what he saw when he baptized Jesus. So obviously the baptism of Jesus had occurred prior to that speech that John gives.

So in John chapter 1, John the Baptist is recollecting the baptism of Jesus. So clearly it's

after the baptism of Jesus. And then we read in John chapter 3, John had not yet been put in prison.

And yet the Synoptic Gospels skip immediately from Jesus' baptism and temptation, which was immediately afterwards, to the time when John was put in prison, which means that John here is including things that fall into that space that is skipped over entirely by the Synoptics. And so, as we said, the wedding feast at Cana, where Jesus turned water into wine, the cleansing of the temple at the first recorded Passover of Jesus' ministry, also his interview with Nicodemus in chapter 3 of John, these things all happened between Jesus' baptism slash temptation and his beginning to go into Galilee. Now we read in John chapter 4 this, John chapter 4, verse 1. Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, though Jesus himself did not baptize but his disciples, he left Judea and departed again to Galilee.

Now, here we have Jesus going to Galilee, just as we read in the Synoptic Gospels. This must be according to the Synoptic Gospels when Jesus heard that John was put in prison. Now, in the material before that, in chapter 3, John was not yet put in prison, but apparently John chapter 4, verse 1, skips to the time where the news reaches Jesus.

Two items of news. In Matthew, we read that the item of news reached Jesus that John had been put in prison. But also, it tells us here in John chapter 4 that Jesus also heard at that time that the Pharisees were aware of Jesus' activities and that he was actually baptizing more than John had baptized, so that perhaps the heat was going to be on in Judea and that he would be maybe persecuted more, or at least there was that possibility, although John had not experienced any direct persecution from the Pharisees, and Jesus really probably didn't have any reason to expect immediate persecution just because he was baptizing people.

But John tells us that he was aware of what the Pharisees were learning, that he was becoming less obscure, that there were lots of people coming to Jesus now to be baptized, and the Pharisees were aware of it, and John now had been put in prison, and all of these things contributed to Jesus going to Galilee. Now, we're told in John chapter 4 that Jesus must need to go through Samaria, in verse 4. He needed to go through Samaria to get to Galilee. Now, it's not exactly true that you have to go through Samaria to get to Galilee.

This need to do so was not one of logistic necessity. A person, and most Jews did, avoid going through Samaria, even when they traveled between Judea and Galilee. They normally would cross the Jordan, which was the eastern boundary of the country of Israel, if they were leaving Galilee or leaving Judea to go to either one of those two places.

Actually, I guess I haven't really specified, although I assume you know something of the

geography of Israel. Maybe I should say something at this point, since it figures so prominently into the ministry of Jesus. You know that Israel is a tall, narrow strip of land along the west coast of the Mediterranean Sea, and very small.

You could drive from one end of it to the other probably in a couple or three hours. On a clear day, if you're standing on a tall mountain, you could probably see both the east and the western extremities of the country. Although they're not really very close.

It depends on how clear the day is. But we're talking about a very small country here. But it was divided into three parts.

And these parts were positioned on a map, maybe vertically, one above another. The lower or the southernmost part of the country is called Judea, and corresponded roughly to what had been the kingdom of Judah during the days of the divided kingdom in the Old Testament. And above that, there were two more provinces.

The one above Judea was Samaria, and above that was Galilee. Both Samaria and Galilee had been part of the northern kingdom in the days of the divided kingdom. So, in order to go directly from Galilee, which was the northernmost province, to Judea, which was the southernmost, or to go the other direction, from Judea to Galilee, the most direct route would be through Samaria, which occupied the whole region in between.

The eastern boundary, however, of Israel was the river Jordan. And Jews, having a tremendous prejudice against Samaritans, and not even wishing to get the dust of their land on their sandals, often would, if they had to travel between Galilee and Judea, they would take a circuitous route. And they would cross the Jordan out of the country, travel the north-south distance, whichever direction they were going, and then cross the Jordan again to go back into the country where they wanted to be, and avoid Samaria altogether.

And that was commonly done. That's what the Jews almost always did. And so, when it says that Jesus going to Galilee needed to go through Samaria, it does not mean that that was really the only logistical way to get there.

It is obviously the most direct route, but that didn't bother Jews most of the time. They didn't take the most direct route. And the reason he needed to go through Samaria is because everything Jesus did, he did by necessity.

He did because his father required it. He did nothing of his own initiative, he said. He did it all because his father told him what to do.

And so it was necessary to go through Samaria, not just because that's how you get to Galilee, but because there was something that his father wanted him to do there. Jesus may or may not have known immediately why he was guided to go through Samaria. He may have discovered that when he got to Sychar, or he may have known it from the

beginning.

But we find that he goes into Samaria with his disciples, and he comes to a well outside of a city called Sychar, which is associated with Shechem, an Old Testament city of great importance. Jacob had camped there. In fact, two of his sons had killed all the men there.

That's Shechem. And there was a well there that had been part of his property that Jacob had given to Joseph. And the Samaritans were partially descended from Joseph.

Of course, the northern kingdom of Israel in the Old Testament, the largest portion of it was Ephraim, which is half of the tribe of Joseph. And these now were intermixed with Gentile blood, but they were still had some of their Jewish heritage that they were proud of. And so Jesus and his disciples came to this well as they were traveling, and the disciples were sent into the town to get some food.

And while the disciples were in town, a woman came out to draw water at the well. And Jesus and she apparently were the only ones there at the well, and they began to converse. Jesus asked if she'd give him some water.

And she said, well, you know, ordinarily Jews don't use the same vessels as Samaritans. Why would you ask me to give you water? And he said, if you had known the gift of God and who it was that asked you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water. And so they conversed like this.

And eventually he told her some of the things about herself that she knew he could not have known by any natural means. In fact, she had five husbands and was now living with a man who was not her husband. And she said, sir, I see you're a prophet.

She began to ask him questions about worship. Some people think that the woman at the well was being evasive when she changed the subject. He said, bring your husband here.

And she said, I have no husband. He said, well, you have five husbands. And the man you have now is not your husband.

And she said, well, I see you're a prophet. You know, you Jews worship in Jerusalem. We worship here at Mount Gerizim.

And who's right? Now, it sounds like she changed the subject entirely. And some people think that she was doing that just to avoid, you know, the attention that Jesus was putting upon her sin, that she was living in an immoral relationship. I'm of the impression, though, that she was not doing that.

Jesus spent a lot of time talking to this woman very plainly. In fact, she's the only person on record that he ever told that he was the Messiah. He may have told the disciples that,

but he didn't say it clearly anywhere in the record.

But she said, I know when the Messiah comes, he'll tell us all this stuff. He'll explain all this stuff. He said, I who speak unto you am he.

That's the only case of Jesus telling somebody that he is the Messiah, with the exception that on his at his trial, when he was put under oath and asked if he was the Messiah, he said, I am. But this time he volunteered the information. And I think that since Jesus didn't cast his pearls before swine, and when you see the reaction of the woman that she became excited and believed he was the Messiah and went and converted or evangelized her whole city and they got they became followers of Jesus, too.

I think we'd have to give the woman the benefit of the doubt that she was not an evasive person. She was interested in spiritual things. Yes, she was living in sin.

But when she said, you Jews worship in Jerusalem and we Samaritans worship here. But where is the right place to worship? That was probably not just an academic question. Remember what worship means to the Jew.

Worship means offering sacrifices. Worship means bringing your offering for your sin to God at the temple. Now, Jesus had just pointed out that she was living in immorality with a man that wasn't her husband.

And she apparently you know, when you think about that, she'd been married five times. And she was now living with a man who is not her husband. The fact that she'd been married five times must suggest that she was either widowed or more probably divorced.

Five times. And a lot of people give up on marriage quicker than that. I mean, if you go through two failed marriages or three failed marriages, a lot of sinners would just say, well, I'm giving up on marriage.

They might shack up, but they wouldn't. I mean, getting married just doesn't seem to make sense. Elizabeth Taylor and Mickey Rooney are two notable exceptions.

But I think they've been married about a dozen times each. But I don't know how much that's because of having any respect for the institution of marriage. But this woman may well have been commendable.

If her husbands had divorced her without cause, which is a possibility, we're not told she was a sinful woman. Sometimes she's been made out that way traditionally in the way she's talking about. Nothing there says she was a sinful woman except for, I mean, previous in her earlier life.

And there's no reason to believe that her divorces or widowhoods were her fault necessarily. The fact that she would marry again five times before she ever gave up on

the institution and began to shack up is perhaps commendable. It's not commendable that she eventually gave up and shacked up.

But it suggests that she wasn't one just to go out and shack up just because she had a bad marriage the first time. She got married five times. And now she knew she was living in sin.

She probably was very disillusioned about marriage in general. And, you know, women in those days didn't have much way to support themselves. They could marry or they could go back to their father if they were alive to support them.

Or they could become prostitutes or something. This woman had found a way to survive with a man who she hadn't gotten married to. But when she knew she was a sinner and when she said, well, you Jews worship in Jerusalem.

We worship here. But which is the right place? She realized that because he had told her about herself that he was a prophet, that he could give an authoritative answer from God. Now, she could be saying, you know, I've you know, I've got sin in my life.

I know that. But I haven't ever done anything about it. I haven't I haven't known where to go.

I hear two reports. Does God want me to bring a sacrifice to Jerusalem or does he want me to bring it to Jerusalem? I don't really know. I need someone to tell me.

I mean, I don't want to bother with it if it's not going to be acceptable to God. So now I've got a prophet to talk to. I can ask him.

And she did ask him. I think she was sincere. And if she wasn't sincere, I don't think Jesus would have been as direct with her because many times he was evasive with people who were just testing him and just playing games with him.

You know, he didn't give an offer. He didn't give that which is holy to dogs. This woman, I think, was just ripe to be converted.

And she did get converted. She brought the whole town to hear Jesus and they became believers as well. And he stayed with him a couple more days and then he moved on because, as you know, he was on his way to Galilee.

And we don't know whatever became of that Samaritan village after that. We do know that in the book of Acts and Acts chapter eight, Philip went to some Samaritan village. We don't know if it was this one or another.

And there was a great revival there. And he ministered there and most people became Christians. It seems like it may have been this same village or one that had been impacted by the Jesus visit to this village previously.

In any case, by the end of John, chapter four, Jesus arrives in Galilee in chapter four, verse forty six, and he comes again to Cana. He'd only done one miracle in Galilee before, and that was the turning of water into wine at a wedding. And that was in Cana also.

And he comes back to the same place. And while there, he's approached by a nobleman. Now, a nobleman, usually most scholars believe, would be an attendant of Herod's household, a person who worked in the palace of Herod.

We don't know who this man was. No name is given of him. But he had a child who was sick.

His son was sick. And Jesus healed him from the distance. He just said, go your way.

Your son is well. And the man went. And it was true.

The son was healed supernaturally. And it's interesting that over in Luke, chapter eight. We read of some women who at a later date were following Jesus and supporting him with their money.

They were people with money. And they believed in Jesus and they didn't have much they could do for him, but they could support the apostles in him. Apparently they did.

And their names are given. And one of them is in Luke eight, three is a woman named Johanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward. Now, that would mean that she was the wife of a nobleman.

She was the wife of one of Herod's. Attendance. No one knows for sure, but it's possible that this nobleman whose son was cured by Jesus when he first came back to Galilee might have been chosen.

It might have been this man and it might explain why he allowed his wife to support Jesus ministry with their household money. All we know is that Chuza and this man both were probably attendants of Herod. This man who is unnamed received a notable miracle and blessing from Jesus.

The other man, Chuza, we don't know why he and his wife supported Jesus the way they did, but it may be because they were one in the same person. We don't know. We'll never know until we go to heaven.

Now, after this, after Jesus has come back into Galilee, he first goes to his own town, which is Nazareth. Now, it's interesting because Matthew chapter four mentions Jesus arrival in Galilee in this way. Remember, we read verse 12.

I want to read verse 12 and 13 together. It says, Now, when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he departed to Galilee and leaving Nazareth, he dwelt came and



dwelt at Capernaum. Now, it's interesting.

It says leaving Nazareth. Matthew doesn't even tell us that he's going to Nazareth, just his leaving of Nazareth. There is no detail given of what Jesus did in Nazareth.

Nazareth was in Galilee. It was his hometown. It's where he was raised after his parents came back from Egypt.

When he was an infant, they relocated back to their own home in Nazareth. And that's where he was brought up. But now he'd been away for a year.

He's back in Galilee and he goes first to his own town of Nazareth. Matthew tells us nothing about his going to Nazareth or what he did there. It just tells us that leaving Nazareth, he went to Capernaum.

Well, if you'll turn to Luke chapter four, you'll find there is a record of what he did in Nazareth. And then it mentions him going to Capernaum after that. And that record is in Luke chapter four, verses 16 through 30.

There Jesus went to Nazareth and he went to the synagogue and they invited him to give the scripture reading and the comments. And so they handed him the scroll of Isaiah and he read a couple of verses from Isaiah chapter one, 61, verses one and part of verse two. And then he sat down and he said, today, this prophecy is fulfilled in your hearing.

And the people marveled at him and he began to say to them, now you will probably someday say to me, physician, heal yourself. The things that we have heard that you did in Capernaum do here in your own town likewise. But I say that a prophet is not without honor except in his own hometown.

And then he gave the examples of both Elijah and Elisha who had been sent to minister to Gentiles who were in need, even though there are many Jews in need in their times. Elijah had helped a widow who was starving in the famine and Elisha had helped a leper be healed. And Jesus says there were many starving widows in Israel in those days and many lepers in Israel in those days.

But they, the prophets were not sent to them. They were sent to Gentiles. And this made the crowd very angry.

In fact, they, in a mob sort of action, came upon Jesus and carried him out to the edge of a cliff. We're going to throw him over. But in some way or another, undescribed, only mentioned this way in verse 30, then passing through the midst of them, he went his way.

Somehow he freed himself from their murderous clutches and got away. And it sounds as if he did so in a dignified manner rather than running through or breaking through or

crawling between their legs, whatever he had to do. He just is passing through their midst.

We're not sure whether he supernaturally gained control over the crowd by severe glance or what he did or whether he was rendered almost invisible to them or what. But somehow he got away from that situation and it says he went down to Capernaum next. Which agrees with Matthew, but Matthew leaves out all the information about Nazareth.

I might just say this. When he said to them in Nazareth. You will probably say physician, heal yourself.

Whatever you've heard done in Capernaum, do here in your own country. What it means is that they would hear of things he would do in Capernaum. Which he was going to after this.

He had not done anything in Capernaum yet. He had not been there yet. But they would someday hear and they would sometimes face him and say, listen, how come you did so many things in Capernaum? Because that was going to be his principal place of residence and activity in this year.

Not Nazareth. They say, well, why don't you do it here in Nazareth? Why do all the favors for Capernaum? Why not do all those? Why not do all those miracles here for us? That's what's meant by physician, heal yourself. It's like, you know, everybody, the physician heals everybody but his own children.

Or the shoemaker makes shoes for everybody but his own children. Well, why doesn't this physician do something for his own family, for those of his own? Why not do these miracles in his own town? Why do them for someone else in Capernaum? But he said the reason is because a prophet is without honor in his own town. Many times people simply can't accept the special calling of somebody in their hometown because they know him too well.

Perhaps because they grew up among them, they just take them too casually or too lightly. Anyway, Jesus was badly treated on that occasion. He later went again to Nazareth on record, but a different visit.

This time he relocated down to Capernaum and that became his new home. It's recorded in Matthew, it's recorded here in Luke and elsewhere. Capernaum is where he met the fishermen.

Capernaum is where he basically made most of his circuits through Galilee from a base in Capernaum, which is probably Peter's house. And so we read of his coming to Capernaum. And the first thing that he probably did while there was to call the four fishermen.

We read of this in all three Synoptic Gospels. It's in Luke chapter 5. We have the most complete story of it. And Jesus apparently was teaching all day near the Sea of Galilee.

And large crowds were there. And they were kind of pressing on him. It's kind of hard when you don't have a podium and seats, the people just get closer and closer.

And the people in the back want to hear, so they keep crowding up, kind of bumping the people in front of them. So the people keep bumping, bumping, bumping like dominoes. Until eventually they're all in his face.

When you're trying to speak loudly enough for people in the back to hear and there's people right in your face, you're spitting in their face. It's not an ideal teaching situation. Besides, the people up close kind of block the sound.

And so there were some fishermen there cleaning their nets. And they had a couple boats. And Jesus asked them, Simon being one of them, to let him go out on his boat a few yards out probably.

Where the people wouldn't come waiting out there. They'd stand on the shore and he could then have that distance between him and the crowd. Actually quite an intelligent way to solve the problem.

And also his voice passing over the water would very possibly be amplified or carried somewhat. I remember our school used to be on a lake in Bandon. And there'd be people some far distance, so far away across the lake that we could see there were people there.

But we could never recognize them or see any details of them. But they'd be talking to each other in natural voice and we'd hear them. Like they were right on our side of the lake.

Because apparently the sound carries over the water nicely. So Jesus managed to turn the boat into a podium and the lake into a public address system. And a very wise thing to do.

When he was done, he sent the people away. And he told the fishermen that they could have, I guess he was going to pay for the rent of the boat. And he was going to give them a catch of fish and said put your nets over.

And Peter said, well we've been fishing all night, haven't caught anything. But if you insist we'll do it. And they did.

And they caught a great catch of fish so that Peter knew it was a miracle. And he fell down before Jesus and said, Lord depart from me, I'm a sinful man. And Jesus said, do not fear, from this point on you'll catch men.

And he called Peter and his brother Andrew on that occasion. And the scripture says he walked a little further down the lake and called James and John, who were also brothers, fishing with their father Zebedee in their boat. And all four of these men, Peter, James and John and Andrew all left their fishing trade, apparently permanently, and went with Jesus.

Now, you might recall that Jesus had met some of these men, if not all of them, earlier, almost a year earlier at the beginning of the year of obscurity, when he first had been baptized and tempted. He came back from the temptation, back to where John was baptizing in John chapter 1. And John the Baptist had said, Behold the Lamb of God. And two of John's disciples, who were John and Andrew, followed Jesus.

And Andrew went and got his brother Simon, and Simon Jesus renamed Peter. So we know at least three of these four men, and maybe all four of them, we know, had met Jesus at this earlier time. But apparently he had not called them to follow him at that time.

Now, they became believers, because they spent the day with him and talked with him and so forth. But he apparently had not given them a call to follow him. So that when he met them again about a year later, up in Galilee at the other end of the country, he called them then.

Now, this explains why they left so readily. They're nuts. It's not as if some stranger walked up and said, Come follow me.

And they just said, OK, got nothing better to do. You know, I mean, they were people who knew who he was. They'd been acquainted with him and impressed by him before.

He had just never given them the call before to follow him. And now he did. And so now he has very probably Philip and Nathaniel with him, because in John chapter one, he did call Philip and Nathaniel to follow him, or at least Philip and Nathaniel seems to have come along, too.

And you've got Peter and Andrew and James and John. You've got at least six of the later apostles. Now, I should make clear.

These people were not yet called apostles and they were certainly not alone. There were other people following Jesus, too. But there were people who followed Jesus without him giving them a direct call, without saying, follow me.

I mean, there were there were lots of people who just were curious about him. They'd follow him around. He eventually had many, many disciples, 70 of them on one occasion that he could send out on a missionary short term outreach.

And yet there were some that he specifically singled out and called him. You follow me.

You follow me.

You follow me. And when he did, in every case that we know of, they became later apostles. Now, we don't have the record of all the people that Jesus called.

However, there may be some that he called that were not apostles. But the ones that we do have record of and the ones who accepted that call did become the apostles. So we have six of the people that we later know as apostles who have now been called at this point.

Now, the next thing that happened. Was it Jesus went into the synagogue in Capernaum on the Sabbath? And he preached there, and that was where the people of Galilee first began to marvel at him in large numbers. And I think he was, you know, remember, that's where it says he spoke as one having authority.

And then a demon in a man began to act up and began to disrupt the service. And Jesus commanded him to come out of the man and to be quiet. And the man fell on the floor and was in convulsions and the demon came out of him.

And then the people were really impressed. They said, wow, what kind of new teaching is this? With authority he commands even the demons and they obey him. And so that was like the first exorcism.

The first time of casting a demon out of someone that we have record of Jesus doing. They're in the synagogue of Capernaum. And right from there, later the same day, he went into Peter's home where Peter apparently was living with his mother in law.

And it's of course, if you have a mother in law, you have a wife also. So Peter was a married man. And apparently his maybe his we don't know if his father in law was living in with them or not.

But we can see that there were extended households in those days where more than one generation would live in the same house. And when Jesus was brought into Peter's house and found Peter's mother in law sick there with a fever, he touched her and healed her. And she got up and became instantly healed and served them.

And when the sun went down, the gospels record that all the people in town who had sick and demon possessed friends or relatives brought them to the house. Now, the reason they waited till the sun went down was because it was the Sabbath. This is the same day that Jesus had cast a demon out of men in the synagogue and then later healed Peter's mother in law.

Now, the people knew the Sabbath ends at sundown. And they also knew that under the Pharisee interpretation of things, healing on the Sabbath was not permitted. This became one of the major points of contention between Jesus and the Pharisees in his

ministry was that he did things on the Sabbath that they thought should not be done on the Sabbath.

And healing was one of them. The Sabbath rules of the rabbis said that a man, a physician, for example, could work a cure on the Sabbath only if the patient had a life-threatening condition which could not wait until the next day. If the person's condition could wait till the next day, it was wrong to heal him on the Sabbath.

Now, Jesus often healed people on the Sabbath who were not in life-threatening situations. A man with a withered hand, a woman bent over who couldn't stand up straight, been in that condition for 18 years, she could wait another day, you might think. You have a man at the pool of Bethsaida, or Bethesda, excuse me, in Jerusalem who is paralyzed.

Jesus healed people on the Sabbath who were not in life-threatening situations. In fact, even casting the demon out of a man in the synagogue might have been questionable by the Pharisees. Certainly when Jesus went into Peter's mother-in-law's house and healed her, that might have been borderline.

It depends on how severe the fever was. I guess one could have argued she might have died before the next day, depending on how severe it was. But everyone had sensitivity about violating the Sabbath.

Everyone except Jesus. And so they waited till sundown, so it was the end of the Sabbath, so they could bring all their sick and their demon-possessed Jesus. And he healed all of them and cast out their demons.

And he stayed up late that night doing that. And then the people went home, and Jesus rose up early the next morning, after probably an abbreviated night of sleep, long time before day, and he went out and prayed. And the people came back the next day to get more out of Jesus, and he wasn't there at the house.

No one knew where he was, and so the disciples were seeking him. Finally they found him out probably on the hillside praying. And they said, Master, everyone's seeking for you.

And he said, well, let's go to the other cities of Galilee, because I've been sent forth for that purpose. So instead of just riding the wave of his popularity there in Capernaum and capitalizing on the zeal of the people, he decided to defuse it. And instead of having a second day of great revival meetings, he disappeared from the people.

He left, and he left town. And so he and the disciples that were with him traveled around at sunrise. They left Capernaum and they traveled around, did a circuit of different Galilean cities.

We don't have a lot of specifics about which cities he went to, but he did make the rounds in Galilee. He was very popular. There are some summary statements of how popular he was in places like Matthew chapter four.

This is why we'll call it the year of popularity in Matthew chapter four. When Jesus was making this first circuit around Galilee before he returned to Capernaum versus twenty three through twenty five, it says, Now Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. Then his fame went throughout all Syria and they brought him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments and those who were demon possessed, epileptics and paralytics.

And he healed them all. And great multitudes followed him from Galilee, from Decapolis, which were Decapolis were ten cities. Decapolis means ten cities that were trans Jordan on the other side of the Jordan in Jewish territory.

But there are Gentile cities in Jerusalem and Judea and beyond the Jordan. So people from all over the country and outside the country were coming to Jesus, bringing their sick. And so you can see that he became an overnight phenomenon.

Now, one of the cases that is singled out to be told about in Mark and in Matthew is the case of a leper. A leper came to Jesus and said, sir, if you will. You could cleanse me.

And she said, I will be cleansed. And he was and touched him and he was healed of his leprosy. And I'll go show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded as a testimony to them.

It's an interesting thing because it's the first recorded instance of Jesus actually touching a person who, under the law, would be ceremonially unclean and therefore under the law. If you if you touch an unclean person, you become unclean. But Jesus touched this leper and Jesus did not become unclean.

The leper became clean. And so we have other instances of similar things. Jesus heals lepers on other occasions, too.

But he also heals a woman with an issue of blood, another condition that would render a woman unclean. And yet by her touching his clothes, she is made clean rather than him being made unclean. So we can see that there's a symbolic element here, as well as just the fact that he heals people, that he is actually operating in the dynamic of the new covenant so that the old covenant sources of defilement are made clean by contact with him.

And he I believe that defilement in the Old Testament is a type and a shadow of sin. So that Jesus, by having contact with these sinners, does not himself become a sinner, but sinners become clean as a result of him. Now, I'm not saying that lepers and women with

issues of blood are themselves sinners more than others.

I'm just saying that these conditions in the Old Testament, I believe, are representative of our types of sin. And Jesus' victory over them and his ability to touch the unclean without becoming defiled is a notable message in his activity and his healing. So he cleanses the leper.

And then we come to a place where in the chronology I've given you in the handouts, actually departs fairly significantly from that of some of the more popular chronologies. And that is, I give reasons at the footnotes. I don't want to go over them now.

They're very complex. But in my study of this, I had to disagree with the common harmonies of the Gospels, because the common harmonies of the Gospels typically put the healing of a paralyzed man, who is lowered through the roof, and then the call of Matthew next after the healing of the leper that we've just talked about. But there are very good reasons if you compare the various Gospels and their chronology statements.

I've given seven footnotes on this to explain the process of how I've worked this out. Not that it's all that important, the chronology, but I've given my reasons. I believe that the next thing that happened was the time when Jesus cast out a demon recorded in Matthew 12.

And because of the controversy, or let me just read it. This is Matthew chapter 12. It says in verse 22, Then one was brought to him who was demon possessed, blind and mute, and he healed him so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw.

So here we have demon possession causing a condition of blindness and dumbness. So that's not the only case in the Bible either, where a demon possessed person is known, the only symptoms he has are physical. And then the multitudes were amazed and said, could this be the son of David? Now, son of David is a term for the Messiah.

So when the Pharisees heard that, of course they were very upset. People would begin to toy with the idea that Jesus was the Messiah. So they said, no, this fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.

And Jesus heard that, knew they were thinking that, and he rebuked them. And that's the occasion where he told this very enigmatic statement in verses 31 through 32. Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men.

Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him. But whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come. That saying has occasioned a lot of controversy as to what it means and what it might apply to in our own day.



What is the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit? And there are various views. Some people think the blasphemy of the Holy Spirit is nothing else but just going through your life without ever accepting Jesus and dying in that condition. Others believe the blasphemy of the Spirit is when you attribute to the devil the work of the Holy Spirit, which is what the Pharisees had just done.

Others have felt that the blasphemy of the Spirit really is a reference to a state of hardness of heart. And there is yet another theory that Jesus is saying, right now, during my earthly lifetime, this is the ministry of the Son of Man. When I'm gone, it will be the time of the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Now, you can speak evil against me now. You can reject what I'm saying now. But after I'm gone, when the Holy Spirit comes, if you speak against his work, in other words, there won't be another chance after that.

The work of the Holy Spirit is the last episode. And if you reject what he says and speak evil of his work and so forth, then there won't be any forgiveness for you in this age or the age to come. The suggestion being not so much that it's less culpable to speak against Jesus than to speak against the Holy Spirit, but rather that it's talking about chronology.

That at this point in time, while the Son of Man is here, you can be rejecting it, speaking evil of it, if you will. But when the Holy Spirit has come and through the church is giving testimony, if you continue in this position of rejection and speaking evil of it, speaking evil now of the Holy Spirit as you did of the Son of Man previously, then there's no more chances after that. There won't be any other time for you to obtain forgiveness.

So there's all kinds of opinions about what Jesus meant by this. It's very hard to pin one down. It's a very enigmatic kind of a statement.

After that, we read in Mark and in Matthew that Jesus' mother and his brothers come to get him. Now they come to see him. Let me show you, if you turn with me to the third chapter of Mark.

Mark chapter 3, verse 31 and following says, Then his brothers and his mother came and standing outside, they sent to him, calling him, and a multitude was sitting around him. And they said to him, Look, your mother and your brothers are outside seeking you. And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother or my brothers? And he looked around in the circle at those who sat about him and said, Here are my mother and my brothers.

For whoever does the will of God is my brother and my sister, my mother. Now, why did Jesus not allow his brothers and his mother to see him? Seems like he's not showing quite the kind of respect for his mother that he should. It's interesting too, because the Roman Catholics who believe in praying to Mary have suggested that Mary would, Jesus

would never deny Mary an interview.

Jesus would never deny Mary her request. That's why we talk to Mary. I mean, the implication is Jesus might turn you down, but he would never turn his own mother down.

Well, Jesus, of course, taught the opposite of that about prayer. He taught that not only will he not turn you down, but his father won't turn you down. You can go to the father.

He loves you. So I do not say that I shall pray for you to the father. The father loves you.

This idea that we have to go to Mary is very sad because it means that it makes God one step more distant even. I mean, some people don't feel comfortable going to the father now, but they go to Jesus. But if you step back one further and say, well, we don't even feel comfortable going to Jesus.

We'll go to Mary and she'll talk to Jesus and he'll talk to the father. It's just another distancing of man from God, the very opposite of the direction Jesus intended for his teaching to bring us. But the reason that he didn't give his mother an interview on this occasion is because she was not there for any good purpose.

Now, you might say, well, how do you know what purpose she was there for? Well, if you look back in Mark chapter three to verse 20 and 21, you'll get an idea. In Mark 3 20, it says, And the multitude came together again so that they could not so much as to eat bread. But when his own people heard about it, they went out to lay hold of him, for they said he is out of his mind.

Now, who are his own people here? They find that he's teaching night and day. He's not even stopping to take meals. His own people, probably people from Nazareth, his relatives, apparently.

And apparently they even got Mary and the brothers in on this. Now, the brothers were not believers. We read that later on in John chapter seven.

It tells us the brothers were not believers at this point in time. But Mary certainly was a believer. But she must have been swept into this deal.

They probably said, Mary, your son, he's not even eating meals. Imagine how a Jewish mother would feel about that. He's not even stopping for dinner.

You've got to come. You can persuade him. He won't listen to us.

He'll listen to you. I mean, I'm sure that she was just kind of carried along by the influence of the relatives. But when she did arrive, they requested to see Jesus and he wouldn't see him.

Because he knew they were there not to do the will of the father. But to do something

that was against his ministry, really. To take him into custody.

To lay hold of him. And take him out of commission. So he didn't bother to let them get near him.

And on this occasion, Jesus made it clear that to the believer, one's real family is those who are subject to their father, God. There is an obligation to show respect to father and mother. Up to a point.

But there comes a time if your parents are anti-Christian, or anti-whatever God is doing or telling you to do, that you almost have to say, well, who's my mother and my father now? Those who do the will of the father are the ones that I have to consider my family, that I have obligation to. After that point, we have Matthew chapter 13, and the parallel is in Mark chapter 4 and in Luke chapter 8. These three passages in the Synoptic Gospels all tell the same discourse. It's usually called the parables discourse in Matthew.

Because in that place he has quite a lot of parables. In Mark and Luke, there are fewer. And that gives the impression that Matthew may have included some parables that Jesus spoke on other occasions in his listing.

Because both Mark and Luke also give some of these parables, but they don't give the impression that it was quite so many given on one occasion. It might just be that Matthew gives the fuller account. But there's also evidence in Matthew's Gospel that he sometimes collected topical sayings of Jesus and put them into single discourses.

And that may have been what he did in Matthew 13. But the first parable Jesus gave to the multitudes was about the sower. And all three of the Gospels mention that as the first parable.

They do not agree with one another as to what parables followed, or how many parables followed, which means that he probably told more than are recorded in any one of them. But the parable of the sower was about how a farmer went out to sow seeds, wheat, and he just scattered the seed at random as sowers do, and some of the seed fell on good ground and some not on so good ground. And there were three types of ground that weren't very good, and the good ground produced good crops.

The bad soil didn't produce very good crops. Some didn't produce any at all. And when the disciples asked him later, why are you talking to these people in parables? He said, well, it's because they're like Isaiah's people.

In Isaiah's time, they have ears to hear, but they don't hear. They have eyes to see, but they don't understand. And they're blinding themselves.

They close their eyes so that they won't hear or understand. And he said, it is given to you, the disciples, to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but it's not given to

them. And so what Jesus seems to be saying is that these parables are obscuring the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven from the crowds.

But he explained all things privately to his disciples, it says in Mark 4.34. After he'd come in from the crowds, and he'd given parables to the crowds, he'd explained them to his disciples privately. Now, there were other parables he told. And if you take Matthew's account, there were, I forget, eight, something like that, I think, in Matthew, somewhere like that number.

Mark doesn't give anywhere near that number. After Mark gives the parable to the sower, he gives the parable of the growing seed, which is not found in any of the other Gospels. And that is a parable about seed that was sown.

And then while the farmer slept, and even when he was awake or asleep, it didn't make any difference, the seed grew. And this is like the kingdom of God growing from simple beginnings. First the blade, then the head of grain on the stalk, and then the full or mature grain in the head.

And he said, when the grain is ripe, then he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come. That parable is found only in Mark. Mark also gives one other parable, and that's the parable of the mustard seed.

And that is found also in Matthew. Matthew has the most parables, Matthew 13. And these are parables, we could say, of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

After he tells the parable to the sower, Matthew records a parable that's found only in Matthew, and that is the parable of the wheat and the tares. A man sowed seed in his field, but his enemy sowed tares in his field, which is another kind of plant that resembles wheat somewhat in the early stages, but it's not really edible. And to have your wheat all mixed up with tares in the field is to create a very bad situation, because you can't just go through and harvest wholesale and just take it all into the granary.

You have to go out and pick individual plants one by one, pick the right ones from the wrong ones. And basically, most farmers wouldn't want to go to that much trouble, they'd just kind of call the whole crop a loss and write it off as a tax deduction. But the grain began to grow, and someone noticed, one of his servants noticed that there were some tares in there with the wheat and asked whether he should pluck them out.

And the farmer said, no, you might accidentally pluck out some of the wheat too, don't want to lose any of that. Wait until harvest has come, and then it'll be evident, because the wheat will produce the fruit, and the tares won't. And then we'll just get out the tares one by one and throw them into the fire.

And then we'll take the wheat and gather it into the barn. And Jesus said that's how it is at the end of the age. He said the wheat is the children of the kingdom, the tares are the

children of the devil, and the two grow together in this world.

The field is the world, he said. And at the end of the world, then he'll send his angels out and gather out the wicked, out the tares from among the wheat, and then shall the righteous shine in the kingdom of their father. Then there were some other parables he told in the same chapter, Matthew 13.

He told the parable of the mustard seed, which is also found in Mark. But he told one that seems related to it, and that's the parable of the leaven. The parable of the mustard seed is the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, tiny, but it grows into a large tree.

It's like leaven, too. You put a little bit of that into a large lump of dough and it causes the whole lump to rise. These parables were to exhibit the fact that the kingdom would grow from very small beginnings into a considerable influence.

He also gave the parable of the hidden treasure in Matthew 13 and 44, and the pearl of great price in verses 45 and 46. These parables are very similar to each other also. They both have to do with someone discovering the kingdom and selling all they have to obtain it.

And then you've got the parable of the dragnet in verses 47 through 50, and that's very much like the wheat and the tares. The good and the bad grow together until the end of the age when they're sorted out. And this dragnet draws in fish, good and bad, and once they bring it to shore, then they sort them out, the good from the bad.

And he said that's like the end of the age also. So these parables had to do with how the kingdom grows. It grows like a crop grows.

It sows seeds. He said the seed's the word of God. The kind of soil it lands on is the kind of heart that hears it and receives it or not.

And so he's giving these ideas about the kingdom of God that are kind of radical, because the Jews thought the kingdom of God was going to be like any other kingdom, a political phenomenon that would come in as a result of a military conquest. They actually thought the Messiah would lead such an enterprise. But Jesus was saying, no, the kingdom of God comes a very different way than that.

It comes through sowing the seed of the word of God. And as it finds a welcome soil of a good heart, it grows them and produces its fruit. The fruit of the kingdom will not come at the edge of the sword.

It will not come by destroying the Romans and setting up a kingdom of a political sort. It comes into every heart when the word of God is preached there. Though there will be children of the wicked one, too, alongside.

Sometimes they'll look a lot like the children of the kingdom. And God won't sort them all out until the end of the age, because if we, his servants, try to sort them out prematurely, we might accidentally sort out some of the weak, too. In other words, if we try to eliminate all the wicked from the world, we might accidentally take out a few Christians as well, not knowing that we're doing so.

Certainly seems to argue against the attempt to forcibly eliminate the wicked from this world. And perhaps it was addressing the fact that the Jews largely wanted the Messiah to do just that, to set up a kingdom where the people like the zealots would go through, slit the throats of all the Romans, and all the wicked, and set up a righteous kingdom under the Messiah. But Jesus is saying, well, you might accidentally slit the throats of some actual children of the kingdom in that.

He may be implying that if they would do such a thing, that some of the Romans and some of the others they might kill might actually be people that God intended to bring into the kingdom. That's the problem. You can't just go out and say, kill all the bad guys.

Because a lot of the bad guys later become good guys, like Saul of Tarsus. There's a lot of very bad guys who, if God authorized us to go eliminate all the bad guys, they'd be taken out early. Since we don't do that, they actually get saved and become brethren.

So the kingdom is not going to be spread by violence. The servants of the king might want to go and wipe out all the wicked, but no, they might accidentally take out some of the wheat that way. God will do that at the end, like gathering in fish.

The net is like preaching the gospel. All kinds of people respond, good and bad, but they're sorted out later on. The kingdom starts out real small, like a mustard seed, or like a bit of leaven in a lump of dough, but it has influence disproportionate to its size and grows to be quite large.

And the kingdom of God is worth so much like a treasure, or like a pearl of great price that a person would be well served if he would forsake everything else he had in order to obtain it. These are the parables that Jesus gives in Matthew 13. After this parables discourse, on the same day, Jesus got into a boat and decided to cross the lake.

The lake meaning the Sea of Galilee. As he was getting into the boat, there were some people who wanted to offer themselves as followers of his, but he apparently didn't take them very seriously. In Matthew 8, verses 18-22, it says, Now when Jesus saw great multitudes come about him, he gave a command to depart to the other side of the lake.

Then a certain scribe came and said to him, Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go. Jesus said to him, Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. Then another of his disciples said to him, Lord, let me first go and bury my father.

But Jesus said to him, Follow me, let the dead bury their own dead. And so Jesus got into the boat without these people, apparently, or maybe this man did follow him. It's hard to know which disciple that was.

But he crossed the lake. But before he got across, he fell asleep in the boat. And a tempestuous storm blew in suddenly.

Those who have been on the Sea of Galilee in modern times have pointed out in commenting on this story how rapidly and without warning these winds do whip up on the Sea of Galilee. Anyone here ever been there? You've been there on the Sea of Galilee? Yeah, have you ever seen a storm come in? Apparently, there's mountains around there. And just something about the topography encourages... I see.

So the sun down, the temperature changes cause the wind to shift and so forth. Yeah, North End Lake has this severe valley and just winds come blowing in really suddenly and can turn a calm sea into just really a dangerous place for boats to be. And that's what it was.

These men who were with Jesus, some of them had been fishermen all their lives, we presume, and knew the sea well. But they were terrified because they caught themselves in the middle of the sea at a storm time and Jesus was sleeping. And they woke him up and said, Master, don't you care that we're perishing? And he stood up and spoke to the wind and the waves, told them to be quiet and be still.

And they did, immediately. And this caused the disciples to be astonished and said, what manner of man is this that he commands even the wind and the waves and they obey him? Now, it's interesting that he... The Bible says he rebuked the storm. And this could be understood more than one way because it may be that the storm is being personified.

Usually you rebuke a person who can hear you and understand you and so forth. But we know that God in the book of Genesis commanded nature to do things and it did it. You know, let the dry land appear.

Let there be a firmament. Let this happen, let that happen. When God gives a command to nature, nature responds as if it can hear him and obeys him.

And maybe that's the way we would understand Jesus addressing the storm. Although it's interesting that when Jesus got to the other side of the lake, he met the man of the tombs. One of the most significant cases of demon possession.

One of the most severe that we read of anywhere in scripture. Or probably don't read of very many more severe than that in history. And we could say one of Satan's chief captives that Jesus was crossing over to deliver.

And it's possible that Satan himself sent that storm. Seeing that Jesus was about to have

an encounter with this demon possessed man and deliver him. That Satan may well have sent the storm to sink the boat.

So that Jesus would never have that encounter. And when Jesus rebuked the storm, there are at least some, I know Watchman Knee was among them, who thought that this is a demonically produced storm. That the storm was not a natural storm, but Satan himself brought it on.

And that Jesus was rebuking the spirit that had caused the storm. That is a possibility too, we don't know for sure. But we do know that when Jesus got to the other side, He landed in a place that is alternately called Jurassic or Gidara, depending on which gospel you read.

Apparently the place had more than one name. And there were two men who lived in the tombs there who were demon possessed. We usually think of it one man, because I think Mark and Luke both refer to one man.

Matthew's gospel tells us there were two men. And this is one of those several cases where the Bible is accused at times of having contradictions. Which is an accusation that doesn't make sense at all, in my opinion.

Because we simply have cases where one gospel tells us of two individuals, two blind men outside Jericho, two angels at the tomb. Two men of the tombs, demon possessed in this case. And other gospels recording the same story only mention the conversation between Jesus and one of these parties.

Don't mention the other party standing silently who didn't say anything. And so, you know, you read in one gospel as if you get the impression there's only one person there that Jesus is facing. But there were two.

Matthew simply gives us that additional information. But one of these two men in particular must have been more severely possessed and tormented than the other. The man had been driven from town.

He had been bound with chains. Apparently he was a man whose demon possession had resulted in criminal behavior. Or at least violent behavior.

He was fierce and people were afraid to come near him. Apparently the local authorities in his own town had bound him in chains, but he'd broken free. And ran out of the town and lived in the tombs.

And people basically avoided that area because he was there. And the man had a legion of demons. It's hard to know exactly how to interpret this, but when Jesus said to the demon, What is your name? The demon said, My name is Legion, for we are many.



Sort of mixing the singular and the plural there. And the demon was always spoken of as he, in the narrative when he's talking to Jesus. It's interesting that Jesus would ask the demon's name.

Modern demon chasers, people at deliverance ministries and stuff, often ask the demons their names. In fact, I've heard them teach that you need to find out the demon's name, or else you won't be able to cast it out. I've heard people teach this in modern times.

If you don't know the demon's name, you won't be able to cast it out, so you have to ask the demon its name. I don't know where they get that. It's not in the Bible.

The only time in the Bible that anyone asked a demon its name was this occasion. And Jesus asked the demon its name, but then he never used the name. He never said, Okay, now I know your name is Legion.

Okay, Legion, I command you to come out. He asked the demon its name, it told its name, and Jesus made no use of it, of the information. Furthermore, in all other cases, Jesus cast out demons without knowing the demon's name or referring to it, and so did the apostles.

So there's certainly no validity, biblically, in the suggestion that you have to know the demon's name in order to cast it out. Even on this occasion, I personally think that Jesus asked the demon its name, not because he was unaware of the name, since he had no use for the information, apparently. Once he asked the name, he didn't do anything with the information.

I think he asked the demon its name for the disciples' benefit, so they'd know what this man's condition was. I think there are times when Jesus wants his disciples to appreciate exactly what kind of situation they're facing. When you're dealing with a demon-possessed person, especially one that you haven't been acquainted with, and you haven't seen their behavior over a long period of time, you might not know the severity of their condition just by looking.

If Jesus had just cast out the demon and gone his way, it might not have impressed the disciples all that much. So he asked the demon, what's your name? He said, legion, there's many of us in here. I think that information was more for the disciples' benefit.

Jesus, I think, probably already knew it. Or at least if he didn't know it, he didn't have any need of knowing it in order to deliver the man. But the demons actually begged Jesus to send them into a herd of swine, rather than out of the country or into the abyss.

And so he allowed them, and the swine, of course, once they were thus inhabited, ran over a cliff into the water and died. We're told there were 2,000 swine. We don't know if each one of them got a demon in them.

If so, there were over 2,000 demons. Of course, a herd of swine could be made to probably stampede if only a few key leaders of the herd were acting up. But the word legion is a term that was used in the Roman ranks, the Roman army, of a group of 6,000 soldiers.

A Roman legion had 6,000 soldiers. And the demon said, my name is legion because there's many of us. He didn't say how many.

It's possible there were as many as 6,000 demons in this man. We know that at least 2,000 swine were affected by them when they went into them. In any case, the locals were not eager to have Jesus stay around, even though the man was healed, who had been demonized and who had terrorized people, who had kept people from going near there because of his fierceness.

Now he was in his right mind, clothed. And the people, however, had seen what happened to the pigs and what happened to the demon-possessed man. And for some reason, the locals didn't want Jesus to stay around.

They begged him to leave. So he did. They missed out on an opportunity to have Jesus come through and do what he did everywhere else, heal their sick, preach the kingdom.

But they didn't want to. Apparently the pigs were expensive and they didn't appreciate the fact that Jesus had done such damage to their business. You might wonder, why would Jesus do that to their business? Well, you might recall that Jews were not allowed to eat pig.

Whoever was raising pigs there, probably for Jewish customers, might even have been Jews themselves, maybe raising them for Gentile customers. In any case, they had no business raising swine. And for that reason, I think that Jesus had every right to get rid of their inventory like that.

Now, after that, Jesus left. Now, the man who had been delivered actually begged Jesus to take him along. But Jesus said, no, you go back to your own home and tell your friends and your neighbors all the great things God has done for you.

So this man was not allowed to follow Jesus, but he was made an evangelist. And he did. He went around and preached throughout the whole area and impressed people.

And that might be the very reason why the devil didn't want Jesus to get over there. Because he knew the potential this man had. If Jesus would deliver from demons, then he became a mighty witness to Jesus.

Okay, now what? Well, after that, Jesus crossed back over the lake again. Now, here he crossed over the lake to get to Gadara and almost drowned doing so. And he gets there, he does one act, he delivers this man.

Then the people ask him to leave, so he goes back across the sea the next day or maybe the same day across there. And so he gets back to Capernaum and he does quite a few well-known miracles following Capernaum. One, he was teaching in Peter's house again.

And there was a crowd, of course, as usual, watching and listening. And a man who was paralyzed and couldn't move was carried by four men up onto the roof. They broke up on the roof and lowered him down because they couldn't get to Jesus any other way.

And when Jesus saw their faith, he said, Son, your sins are forgiven you. And some of the Pharisees who were there watching, just looking for opportunities to criticize, they said, Oh, he's blaspheming. He's claiming to be able to forgive sins.

And Jesus said, Well, what is easier, to say your sins are forgiven you or to say arise, take up your bed and walk? But so that you might know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins, he said to the man who was crippled, arise, take up your bed and walk. And he did. And all the people marveled and glorified God who had given such power to man, it says in the scripture.

And then as Jesus left the house, he was walking apparently through the streets of Capernaum. And he passed one of the places where the Romans collected taxes from the subjects. And there was a Jewish tax collector there working there, Matthew.

And Jesus called him and the man left immediately his job and went with Jesus. Didn't even give two weeks notice. And I and you know, I don't even I don't know exactly what the situation was.

There might have been other tax collectors working the same booth, so he might not have left it unmanned. But he certainly would have left any opportunity to go back. I mean, you just leave your job in the middle of the day.

You just couldn't come back and say, OK, I'll take my job back. I'm sure that that would be the end of any opportunity to work for the government anymore. And he would be viewed by most of the Jews as a as a traitor anyway.

The Jews did not appreciate the Roman occupation and the tax collectors were collecting taxes from the Jews to give to the Romans. Very much resented activity. And whenever a Jew would work for the Romans to collect taxes from his fellow Jews, this made him a despised individual.

Matthew was one of those people. Another one later on who gets converted, his name Zacchaeus. Some tax collectors, they're called publicans, did get converted.

One of them was an apostle. And this is Matthew. And after he did follow Jesus, he threw a feast in his home for a bunch of old friends and tax collectors and sinners.

And Jesus was criticized for attending this feast. The Pharisees said, you know, they actually spoke to Jesus disciples. Why does your master eat with tax collectors and sinners? And Jesus, knowing that they'd said that, said, well, he that is well does not need a physician.

Only he that is sick. Likewise, I have not come to call the righteous sinners to repentance. And he was asked on that occasion why he didn't, why his disciples didn't fast.

And he said, well, you can't put new wine into old bottles and you don't patch an old garment with an unshrunk cloth. He said that when the bridegroom is here, his attendants don't fast at his wedding. But when he's taken away, then they will fast.

After that, Jesus was approached by a man who was a leader, what they call a ruler of the synagogue, probably in Capernaum. Jairus was his name. And a ruler of the synagogue was one of the elders.

Each of the synagogues was governed by a group of elders. And Jairus was one of the ones in Capernaum, apparently. And he had a daughter who was sick, in fact, on the point of death.

And he begged Jesus to come and heal her. And so Jesus agreed to do so. And as he was passing through town, through Capernaum, to this man's house, a woman who lived in town, who'd had an issue of blood for 12 years, snuck up behind Jesus in the crowd and touched the hem of his garment.

She was healed. And Jesus turned around and said, who touched me? And the disciples at first said, well, what do you mean who touched you? There's people thronging you on every side. Everyone's touching you.

He said, but I felt power go out of me. Someone touched me. And she came forward and acknowledged what she had done.

And he said, daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace. And so he then came to Jairus' house.

And by then, the daughter had already died. And a messenger said, don't bother Jesus anymore. They sent a messenger out from the house before Jesus even came in.

He said to Jairus, don't bother Jesus anymore. Your daughter's dead. And Jesus turned to the man and said, don't worry.

Just believe. And so Jesus went in and there were mourners there. Who were hired mourners.

They were not sincere. That's what the Jews did. If you were a person of significance, you

want to make sure there were a lot of people mourning when you died.

And there were people who'd hire themselves out to mourn at your funeral for you. Apparently, the daughter had been at the point of death so long that they'd already gotten the mourners there even before Jesus did. They were probably there before she died knowing that she was going to.

And so they were now mourning for her. And Jesus came and said, what are you mourning for? She's just asleep. And they laughed him to scorn.

And he went in with three of his disciples into the girl's bedroom and with the mother and father and commanded her to get up. And she did. Which is the first record of Jesus raising the dead.

There are two other records in the Gospels of him doing so. So he raised Jairus's daughter from the dead. And then there were two other blind men, apparently in Capernaum, that Jesus healed.

So there's quite a few miracles he did in that town. And then another demonized person appeared who was mute, according to Matthew chapter 9, was not able to speak. And Jesus healed him also of his demonized state.

Then Jesus left Capernaum and apparently did another circuit around Galilee. One of the places he went was his hometown of Nazareth, where he'd been once before and had been rejected. He was treated about the same way, only without so much violence.

He was rejected there again. The people were stumbled because they said, isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son? Didn't he grow up here? Don't we know his brothers and sisters? Where did he get these powers? Where does he claim these special authority and so forth? And because they knew him too well, they thought, they couldn't accept him as anything special. And so he again said, well, a prophet is not without honor except his own country.

And he left Nazareth again and did a circuit around Galilee. During that time he was making that circuit, there are two particular Sabbath controversies that occurred. One was on a Sabbath day, Jesus' disciples were walking through a grain field and they plucked the grain with their hands and rubbed it in their hands and ate it.

The reason they rubbed it was, of course, to separate the chaff from the wheat. And they could eat the wheat and let the chaff blow away. But that process of picking ears of grain and rubbing them in the hands was, according to the Pharisees, too much like harvesting and winnowing, which are usually large-scale agricultural activities.

And because they are, generally speaking, large-scale, they are labor. They're something you don't do on the Sabbath. Now, of course, the disciples were just doing this on a very

small scale, but technically they were still working on the Sabbath and they were criticized for it.

And Jesus said, well, you don't criticize David, he ate the showbread, he wasn't allowed to do that, not being a priest, yet he ate it when he was hungry. And he said, you should go and learn what this means. God said, I will have mercy, not sacrifice.

And if you'd learned that, he said, you would not have condemned the innocent. And another Sabbath, the next one apparently, Jesus was in a synagogue and there was a man with a withered hand there. And it was kind of a situation where his critics expected Jesus to heal on the Sabbath and they wanted to find occasion to fault him for it.

Because you're not supposed to heal on the Sabbath, especially in a situation like that. A withered hand is not life-threatening. So it says that they were watching him to see if he would heal on the Sabbath.

Well, he didn't disappoint them. He told the man with the withered hand to stand up, and he did. So everyone knew, the room got tense, because everyone knew Jesus was about to heal this man.

After he had the guy stand up, he said to the Pharisees who were sitting there, he said, what is it lawful to do on the Sabbath, to do good or do evil? And they were silent, they couldn't answer him. And so he said, well, which of you on the Sabbath day would not, if his lamb fell into a pit, would not lift him out? Now, technically, that's a breach of Sabbath, because bearing a burden on the Sabbath is forbidden. And to lift something as heavy as a lamb would be considered a burden by rabbinic decrees.

And yet the Pharisees themselves, rather than have a lamb die overnight in the pit, would lift him out. That would be a violation of Sabbath, but they'd do it anyway. And he said, how much more valuable is a man than a lamb? So at that point, he ignored them and told the man to stretch out his hand, and he did, and he was healed.

After that, we read that they went out, the Pharisees got together with some Herodians, and they decided to try to kill Jesus. They were looking for a way to do that. The next thing chronologically that happened in the ministry of Jesus didn't happen in Galilee at all.

There was a feast in Jerusalem, and so he and his disciples went down to Jerusalem. We don't know what feast it was. If it was a Passover, and many scholars think it was, then this is the feast that would make the ministry of Jesus three and a half rather than two and a half years.

Because we know of three Passovers in his ministry, but we don't know of four unless this is one. But it may have been one. And there he healed a man who was at a pool of Bethesda.

A man who was paralyzed. He told him to take up his bed and walk. It was on the Sabbath again.

And this time, of course, a different group of Pharisees from the other end of the country in Jerusalem saw the man carrying his bed and said, you're not supposed to carry that on the Sabbath. And he said, well, the guy who healed me told me to carry it, so I did. They said, who told you to do that? And he identified Jesus as the one.

So they criticized Jesus for that. And Jesus got into a dispute with them over his right to heal on the Sabbath. In that place, in particular, he mentioned that his father works on the Sabbath.

And he is his father's son, his father's apprentice. And has learned how to do the work from his father. And he does exactly the way his father does.

If his father's going to work on the Sabbath, he can't see any reason for him not to do it. Now, of course, it says they took up stones to stone him. They sought to kill him because he said that.

Because his comment implied that he had as much right to violate the Sabbath as God does. And he therefore made himself equal with God, it says in John 5, 17. And that's where that story is found, John 5. And so, yet another Sabbath controversy.

Now, after that feast was over, he went back to Capernaum, his typical home base. And outside Capernaum, a couple of important things happened. One is he went up onto a mountain to pray all night.

And in the morning, he called his disciples up to him. And he selected twelve. He selected the twelve, and their names are given in three of the Gospels.

And they had a special calling. They were to be the leaders. They were to be the ones who would be with him more than other people.

And he was going to give them special authority for healing and for preaching. And casting out demons. And upon the occasion of calling the twelve, he then sat down with them and gave what we call the Sermon on the Mount.

So the Sermon on the Mount occurred on that occasion. The morning after that Jesus had prayed all night and chosen the twelve that morning. After the Sermon on the Mount, chronologically, the next thing that happened was Jesus was approached about the servant of a centurion who was dying.

Matthew tells the story as if the centurion himself came to Jesus. Though Luke tells the story as if some elders of the Jews came to Jesus on the man's behalf. Which is probably the more literal case.

And Matthew condenses the story. And these people indicated that the centurion, though he was a Roman, had done good things for the Jews. Had even built a synagogue for them.

And that he ought to be honored in this. And Jesus just spoke the word. Actually, he offered to go to the man's house.

And the man sent a message saying, no, I'm not worthy to have you in my home. Just speak the word and it will be so. And Jesus marveled at that man's faith and did heal the servant from a distance.

Just said, your servant's well. And he was healed without Jesus even laying eyes on him. These things, like the nobleman's son and centurion's servant.

And later on, the daughter of a Syrophenician woman that Jesus healed from a distance. Proved that Jesus didn't rely on, you know, mental tricks to get a sick person to recover. There is such a thing as psychosomatic illness.

And sometimes people can be made to think they're healed simply because they thought they were sick. And they weren't. And now they think they're healed because they're told so and they get better.

And some people think that some of Jesus' cures were that way. And yet, when Jesus heals people who aren't even there. And they get healed without even knowing that he said anything about them.

It's clear that real supernatural power is being used here rather than psychosomatic tricks. Well, Jesus makes another trip outside Capernaum. Which brings us to the end of the year of popularity.

This trip outside of Capernaum included a visit to a town called Nain. Where a widow had lost her only son. And in fact, Jesus interrupts the funeral procession.

And actually touches the dead body or else the coffin. Either one would be something that would make you unclean under the Old Testament law. To touch the dead or anything pertaining to the dead.

But again, in this case, Jesus is not made unclean. Instead, the body rises. This is the second person that Jesus raised from the dead on record.

And delivered him back to his widow mother. At about that time, John the Baptist who was in prison sent messengers to Jesus. Asking if he was the one who was to come or not.

It's not clear whether John was having his own doubts. Which is entirely possible. Some people have trouble believing that.



But it could be true. Or whether John's disciples were having doubts. And John sent them to Jesus to alleviate their doubts.

In any case, they said, are you the one who is to come? John told us to ask. Or do we look for another? And Jesus said, will you tell John the things that you see here? You know, the lame are walking. The blind are seeing.

The deaf are hearing. The poor have the gospel preached to them. And you go tell John that.

And blessed is he who is not offended by me. And then after they left, Jesus gave a eulogy about John the Baptist to the people there. And told what a good guy he was.

After that, we have the case of Jesus in the home of a Pharisee. Sometimes the Pharisees would invite him into their homes in order to find fault with him. And on one occasion, he was in the house of a Pharisee in Capernaum.

Or somewhere, I don't know if it was in Capernaum or not. And the man's name was Simon. And a sinful woman came in and began to wash Jesus' feet with her hair and her tears.

And the Pharisee was critical of this. But Jesus pointed out that this woman loved Jesus more than the Pharisee did. Because she knew how much she had been forgiven.

And those who are forgiven much love much. After that, Jesus sent out the twelve. This is recorded in Matthew 9 and 10.

Actually, the end of Matthew 9, but mostly 10. It's also found in Luke chapter 9. The twelve were sent out to preach in cities and preach the kingdom of God. They were sent out two by two.

They were given power to heal diseases and to cast out demons. And we don't know how long this itinerary lasted. But they apparently needed to visit cities of Galilee that Jesus would either be coming to later.

Or might not get a chance to come to. So that his message could spread. So he sent the twelve out on that occasion.

And they came back. When they came back, they were kind of tired out. So Jesus decided to give them a break.

Give them sort of some R&R. So they took the boat across the lake to the other side to get away from the crowds. But the crowd saw them going and ran around the northern end of the lake.

And were waiting for them when they got across. And Jesus had compassion on them

and he fed them. Actually he did miracles for them and he taught them.

But when they got hungry, he fed them with five loaves and two fishes. Although there were five thousand men plus some women and children there. After that, Jesus sent the disciples away.

The reason is because the crowd got so excited after being fed that they decided to take him forcibly and make him king. It says that in John 6.15 that the people were going to do that. And Jesus was apparently afraid the disciples would get caught up in that idea.

And so he put them in the boat and said, go back to Capernaum. I'll join you later. And he sent them off alone and he stayed on the mountain to pray until the crowd was dispersed.

And in the middle of the night, he went walking across the water to join the disciples in the boat. Who were striving against a stiff headwind and had not made much progress. And they saw him coming.

They were in the middle of the lake and he was walking on top of the water. They were scared at first. They identified himself.

And then they were no longer afraid. He got in the boat and immediately they were on the other side. And when he got to the other side, he was in Capernaum.

And the people looked for him the next morning. And on the other side of the lake where he had fed them and not find him, they came across and found him in Capernaum. And said, Master, when did you come here? And he gave them a very scathing discourse, very offensive to them.

Told them they had to eat his flesh and drink his blood and stop following him for the wrong reasons. And as a result of his discourse found in John chapter 6, he alienated most of the people. In fact, the impression is given that no one followed him anymore after that point.

I mean, at least immediately afterwards, except the twelve. And so that brings us to the end of his year of popularity. He was made less popular by giving this discourse about the bread of life.

He alienated thousands of people who were his followers. And even the disciples probably would have bailed. But as Peter said, you know, you alone have the words of eternal life.

Where should we go? And so that basically is a turning point. It's sometimes called the Great Galilean Crisis. Because Jesus had these huge crowds following him during this year of popularity.

But at the end of that time, because of this, he was getting sick of people following him for the wrong reasons. And because he rebuked them and laid it on the line with them, most of them just ditched him. And then he got popular again in some other regions, in Piraeus and some other areas.

But it was kind of the breakdown of the Galilean ministry at this point. And that's the end of what we call the year of popularity. We come next time to the year of opposition.

And so we're moving rather rapidly. But that's what we have to do to get through all of this in the number of sessions we have.