

319.1 Jesus' Ministry Begins (New Testament Week 5; February 3)

1. Housekeeping
 - a. YouTube
 - b. http/https
 - c. Scripture literacy and relationship with God (criticism and relationship/art)
2. Come, Follow Me Lesson
 - a. Prayer (light in darkness, power of example, mentor)
 - b. Reading Review
 - c. Nugget: Genres
 - d. Devotional (Light in darkness, strengths in trials, use of candles)
 - e. Lesson
 - i. Questions and comments
 - ii. Testify, "Come and see"
 - iii. Baptism, becoming children of God (our natures can change, we become new versions of ourselves constantly)
 - iv. The beginning of our ministry. What is our vocation? What is our calling?
 - v. Conclusion: The kingdom of God has come near
 - vi. Preview (Matthew 4; Luke 4-5) Temptation, "Spirit of the Lord is upon Me"
 - vii. Resource recommendations
3. Conclusion

See if you can find Tom Wayment's New Testament translation at Deseret Book--even my hospice patients are enjoying it!

Comment on "Scriptural literacy"

I still hold that we can have a productive personal relationship with God and scripture even if we understand almost nothing! But of course I also believe that the more we know, the better experience we have. Only to a degree however... I think depending on a number of factors, we have a sweet spot of knowledge and constructive faith. I need to address that more.

Jan 27	John 1
Feb 3	Matthew 3; Mark 1; Luke 3
Feb 10	Matthew 4; Luke 4-5
Feb 17	John 2-4
Feb 24	Matthew 5; Luke 6

Linked Lessons:

<http://engaginggospeldoctrine.org/130-repentance-baptism-temptation-nt-lesson-4/>

(Matthew 3-4; John 1:35-51)

Come, Follow Me

Prayer (light in darkness, power of example, mentor)

Reading Review

Reading Review:

Who was Mark and who is Mark's Jesus? Mark was the first gospel written. As best as we can tell, Mark invented the gospel genre! (Close reading indicates that Mark used a story of Jesus' death (Passion Narrative), miracle stories, debate stories, apocalypse, sayings, etc, but he is the first to have put them all together. Mark's Jesus is very human, quick moving, abrupt even. The disciples are also human... they frequently fall short and never understand Jesus' nature. Mark's main messages seems to be that Jesus is not the Messiah that will overthrow the forces of evil and transform the world, but rather the Messiah that will submit to evil and transform humanity.

Tool: Synopsis (Open to the Baptism narrative) Note the similarities and differences between the gospels, their individual focus and character.

Mark 1:

Jesus is immediately called the Messiah and Son of God by the narrator (watch for who does and doesn't realize Jesus is these things). A Jewish apocalyptic verse is then quoted, which introduces John the Baptist, who fulfills the role of this Messenger preparing the way for the Day of the Lord (Intertextuality). John's dress and behavior echo Elijah, understood as a forerunner to the Messianic era of peace and abundance (what we think of as the Millennium)

John says that the one who comes after him is greater than him, that John baptizes with water, and the one who comes after will baptize with the Holy Spirit.

John baptizes Jesus. Note that the heavens are "torn" open, and God speaks directly to Jesus, *you* are my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased (Echoing Psalm). The splitting of the sky and other signs prefigure the new age (Note that Mark does not start with Jesus' birth, but rather the beginning of his ministry, with his spiritual birth) God's words combine Psalm 2:7 and Isaiah 42:1, as the Harper Collins Study Bible points out.

Then we have the temptation. Jesus is directed by the spirit, tempted by Satan, surrounded by animals, and ministered to by angels. Again, we have turning of the age symbolism, as well as allusions to Jesus' spiritual testing and growth. (longer versions of the temptation are in Matthew and Mark)

Jesus does not speak until verse 15, and his central message is that listeners must repent, change their way of thinking and being, because “the kingdom of heaven has come near” (or dominion of God). Jesus lived as if the kingdom had already come. Jesus’ ministry is a symbolic prefiguration of the way life and the world should be. We can follow that example.

Jesus uses object lessons and speaks with authority: Peter and Andrew, James and John are fishers, and Jesus says he will make them fish for people, gathering them in for the eschatological harvest.

Note that demons are the first to recognize Jesus, other than God (who speaks directly to Jesus, not to the audience)

Jesus’ authority is a focus for Mark

Jesus heals the sick and forbids the demons to speak (Messianic secret, no one recognizes Jesus’ nature until after his death, which likely reflects a historical reality)

Jesus cares for himself... solitude and prayer early in the morning

Angry Jesus! (“If you will, you can make me clean”) Jesus has compassion for crowds, but gets indignant when people question his ability or desire.

Jesus quickly becomes popular and the crowds crowd him (note the urgency and speed in Mark)

Matthew 3:

Note that Matthew is more clearly laid out than Mark (Matthew is basically “Mark 2.0”, as he took over more than 90% of Mark, this is what my dissertation was on). Matthew cleans up the scriptural reference and makes it explicit.

From the beginning John condemns the hypocrisy of the Jewish leaders (Pharisees and Sadducees, the priests). Both John and Jesus emphasize that the way we live is more important than our lineage. We need to choose well our actions rather than simply belonging to the “chosen people”.

Matthew makes the eschatological end-of-days imagery even more explicit, Jesus’ judgment will cleanse the world with fire and separate the righteous from the wicked.

In Matthew John strongly resists the idea of baptizing Jesus (which suggested John was superior to Jesus)

Note that in Matthew God’s voice speaks to the whole crowd, not directly to Jesus.

Luke 3:

Luke begins Jesus’ ministry with a classical historical introduction, the only one to give us a clear date. Luke is highly educated and writes expertly. Like Matthew, Luke’s John emphasizes eschatological urgency. Luke emphasizes the need to care for the poor and live with honor and uprightness.

Note we have in Luke this question of whether John himself might be the Messiah (I wonder whether Jesus believed John was the Messiah, until John was imprisoned and executed)

Luke passes over Jesus’ baptism (when he had been baptized). There is a fascinating variant here that Wayment brings up, a closer quotation of Psalm 2:7, “You are my son; today I have fathered you”

Luke is the only one to mention Jesus' age, but note it is approximate, "about 30"
Luke's genealogy is more universal than Matthew's, ending with "son of God" instead of focusing on David and Abraham, Jewish heroes.

Who is John and who is John's Jesus? John tells the story of Super Jesus! John is the only gospel where Jesus is explicitly called God. Jesus is God manifest, from beginning to end. Jesus knows everything, and is always in control and in charge. For example, in John 18, those arresting Jesus are looking for the human "Jesus of Nazareth", and in response Jesus declares that they have found the God of the universe (with an "I am" saying). There are a few similarities, including the miraculous feeding of thousands and the end of Jesus' life, but in general, John is strikingly different from the other gospels (the "Synoptics").

John 1: (Note the theme and pattern of testifying and example)

John 1 begins with a striking poem or hymn to Jesus as the Word (Logos, a word rich with meaning, "Word" doesn't capture it). This poetic hymn invites meditation on the nature of Christ and Christ's relationship to God. When I read this, the wording comes to mind in English, Greek, and Latin :) I would translate verse 5 "The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness does not grasp it", playing on the double meaning of understand/overcome. Note how verses 6-8, about John the Baptist, interrupt the flow of the hymn, suggesting they were added in as the editor of the gospel put together the hymn and story of John (which focuses on the idea of witness/one who testifies of the Word). Close reading also implies that there *were* those who believed John was the Messiah (based on the idea that we don't argue with beliefs that no one holds). Isn't close reading interesting?! I love the evocative symbolism of "light shining in darkness"

V. 14, "dwelt" literally means "pitched his tent among us", was tabernacled. Again, this chapter, and John in general, invites so much meditation.

Note the attention and focus given to John. The powers that be among the Jews, priests, levites, and Pharisees, all seek John out to understand his role. John deflects, and points toward Jesus. The Jewish authorities ask about John's authority, and he again points toward Jesus.

"Lamb of God" is a favorite title of Jesus for John. Note that for as much as John talks about Jesus, Jesus' actual baptism is not narrated. These are rich verses: John teaches that he baptizes with water, and Jesus baptizes with the Spirit. John witnesses/testifies that Jesus is the Lamb of God, the Son of God.

John is with his disciples, John testifies of Jesus, John's disciples ask about Jesus, and he responds "Come and you will see" (power of example)

Andrew in turn testifies to Peter that he has "found the Christ/Messiah", and Jesus nicknames Simon Peter/Cephas/Rock (Which is what the word Peter means, petros)

Philip testifies to Nathaniel, and Nathaniel doubts "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" Jesus shares that he saw Nathaniel "under the fig tree", and Nathaniel in turn testifies that Jesus is the Son of God and King of Israel. Jesus then predicts that Nathaniel will see angels

descending and ascending on the Son of Man (another title for Jesus, and a reference to Jacob's vision in Gen. 28 (Remember intertextuality?))

1 Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ Λόγος καὶ ὁ Λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν Θεόν καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ Λόγος 2 Οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν Θεόν 3 πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο καὶ χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἓν ὃ γέγονεν 4 ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν καὶ ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων 5 καὶ τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει καὶ ἡ σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν

1 in principio erat Verbum et Verbum erat apud Deum et Deus erat Verbum

2 hoc erat in principio apud Deum

3 omnia per ipsum facta sunt et sine ipso factum est nihil quod factum est

4 in ipso vita erat et vita erat lux hominum

5 et lux in tenebris lucet et tenebrae eam non comprehenderunt

Nugget: Genres

Genres. It will deeply enrich your reading of the Bible if you understand what you are reading! As we move through the New Testament I will be commenting on the genres of what we are reading.

Devotional (Light in darkness, strengths in trials, use of candles)

Lesson

Questions and comments

Testify, "Come and See" President Uchtdorf "Waiting on the Road to Damascus" (Our *behavior* has to be the missionary tool) One of the greatest sermons ever pronounced on missionary work is this simple thought attributed to Saint Francis of Assisi: "Preach the gospel at all times and if necessary, use words."

Baptism, becoming children of God (our natures can change, we become new versions of ourselves constantly, tell story about wanting to be baptized at the end of my life, didn't understand sacrament)

The beginning of our ministry. What is our vocation? What is our calling? (Share that God wants me to help young americans understand the importance of religion and spirituality) It is never too late, each chapter of our lives can be new, can have its own work

Conclusion: The kingdom of God has come near

Preview (Matthew 4; Luke 4-5) Temptation, "Spirit of the Lord is upon Me"

Resource recommendations (Synopsis, Study Bible, Wayment)

Conclusion

<https://www.lds.org/general-conference/2011/04/waiting-on-the-road-to-damascus?lang=eng>

Come Follow Me (Sunday School) We can invite others to “Come and See”; we can point others to Christ. We ourselves need to repent, be baptized, be worthy, and bring forth *fruits*. Action, not just intentions and words.

Come, Follow Me (Individuals/Families) We become “children of God” (John 1) when we are spiritually born/baptized (Think of King Benjamin’s speech) Suggests using object lessons of light in darkness Repentance, “metanoia”, to think in a new way, have a shift in orientation, our desires and focus can shift. Tell stories of baptism (sacrament as renewal of baptism)

Nugget:

1. 1: 1 The author models the beginning of the Gospel on Genesis 1: 1. The Word existed before the creation, and therefore he was not created. This verse may prefigure John 10: 30, I and the Father are one (the King James Version follows an inferior manuscript tradition I and my Father are one). Mosiah 15: 2 contains what is the closest Restoration scriptural parallel to the opening verses of the Gospel of John (but compare also Genesis 1). In Mosiah 15, Abinadi presents aspects of Christ’s identity as both the Father and Son. John describes the relationship between the two, and therefore he presents a statement of purpose. Alluded to in Doctrine and Covenants 93: 7– 8. The Joseph Smith Translation titles this The Testimony of St. John and begins In the beginning was the gospel preached through the Son. And the gospel was the Word, and the Word was with the Son, and the Son was with God, and the Son was of God. 1: 1– 5 The opening verses are written in poetic style, and they are interrupted by the introduction of verse 6. Scholarship on these verses has suggested that they were originally a Christian hymn to Christ that have been adapted by the author of the Fourth Gospel. John 1: 1– 18

This is the first real New Testament podcast of the year!

Thank you for your patience everyone! We are working on a major migration that will resolve all problems for the foreseeable future. Dealing with years of backstage clutter.

In the meantime, you should be able to find the podcast on Stitcher.

Lesson

Discipleship

Come and see

What is your call to ministry? (thoughts on heart, discipline, developing unexpected opportunities)

Talk about stages of life, allowing ourselves to be new, update

Wherever you are in life, whatever your circumstance, you can ask yourself what the next step in your ministry is. It is never too late.

Be the change you wish to see in the world. We bring Zion, enact Zion, live relationships as they should be. Live a better world, and that better world shines in the present as light shines in darkness.

Mentors

baptism symbolic prefigurement ritual renewal

Temptation (will talk about this next lesson)