April 17

Life of Jesus

The Twelve Disciples

Jesus chose his disciples the completed list was: Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas. James (son of Alphaeus), Thaddaeus, Simon the Patriot, and Judas Iscariot.

The mission of the Apostles was: Read: Matthew 10:5-8.

We also receive the love and grace of our Lord without paying, we should not expect payment for showing love and giving to one another.

Jesus warned them that their lives would not be easy: Read: Matthew 10:16, 17.

Our lives in Christ will not be easy either but if we last out we will be saved.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Matthew 10:22.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to work with renewed energy on the mission you have for me in this life.

April 18

Life of Jesus

Sending the Seventy-two

After Jesus chose his twelve disciples, he chose and sent seventy-two more workers, two by two ahead of himself – Read: Luke 10:2

This is our sending as well, the world is still ready for harvest; we must work to make the harvest larger for Jesus than for Satan.

We too can have the rejoicing, like the seventy-two – Read: Luke 10:17. All we need is the love of Jesus in our hearts and the faith to trust Jesus to all that we ask in his name.

We also must remember that if we refuse to listen to a servant of God, we are refusing to listen to God. On the other hand if someone rejects us when we are witnessing, they are not only rejecting us but most all they are rejecting God.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Luke 10:16.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to listen to a true servant of yours and to reject those who are false prophets.

April 19

Life of Jesus

Sermon on the Mount

Jesus went up on the hillside with his disciples and taught them:

* Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
* Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
* Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
* Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness they shall be filled.
* Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
* Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be call children of God.
* Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness’ sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Matthew 5:3-10. KJV. For different wording and perhaps better understanding read these verses in different versions of the Bible.

The Sermon on the Mount or the teachings are called the Beatitudes are so profound because it shows the meek, the poor, the mournful and the merciful being blessed. In contrast to the world that counts its blessings in cars, money and power.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Psalm 51:17.

PRAYER THOUGHT: May I use these teachings of yours, O Lord, to make my life suitable for your service.

April 20

Life of Jesus

The First Miracle

In Cana of Galilee, there was a wedding, Jesus, his Mother and the disciples were all there. The wine ran out, Mary mentioned this fact to Jesus, it seemed that she knew Jesus could do something about it. Read: John 2:4.

Jesus did go ahead and tell the servants to fill the jars with water, and he changed it into wine, the best wine of the party. The man in charge of the party told the bridegroom – Read: John 2:10. God did the same, he sent kings and prophets to his people to bring them back to him, but he saved his Son, Jesus, the best, for the last attempt to bring them to him.

This is the “official” beginning of the miracles and wonders Jesus would go on to perform.

VERSE FOR TODAY: John 2:11.

PRAYER THOUGHT: O Lord, your Son came as a last resort to save your people from their sins, but help me to always put Him first in my life.

April 21

Life of Jesus

Cleansing the Temple

Jesus goes to Jerusalem for the first Passover of his ministry. He enters the Temple and finds people selling animals for sacrifices and money-changers’ tables. Money-changers were needed because people came from other countries to Jerusalem during the Passover and would have to change their money for that used in Jerusalem so they could buy animals. Jesus drove out the animals and turned over the money-changers’ tables, scattering coins – Read: John 2:16. We must also be careful not to make our church buildings a market-place. Perhaps a yearly fund raising dinner for a worthy cause but to games of chance for personal gain tend to give the wrong idea of what should go on in church buildings.

The Jewish authorities wanted a miracle to prove that Jesus had the right to clear the Temple – Read: John 2:18, 19. Jesus was not speaking of the Temple building, which took forty-six years to build; he was speaking of his body referring to his death and resurrection.

VERSE FOR TODAY: John 2:23.

PRAYER THOUGHT: May I clear my heart, O Lord, of all its evil and use my Temple only for the use you intended for me.

April 22

Life of Jesus

Nicodemus

Nicodemus was a Jewish leader and teacher, a member of the Pharisee party. He came to talk to Jesus at night, because Jesus was not too popular with the Pharisees. Nicodemus did not want to get in trouble with the other members of the party. Nicodemus was curious about Jesus and the miracles – Read: John 3:2b.

Jesus tells Nicodemus how he can see the kingdom of God, by being born again. Nicodemus could not understand how a grown man could be born again, it would be impossible to enter his mother’s womb and be born again! Jesus tells Nicodemus that he must be born twice, physically and spiritually – Read: John 3:5-8.

We too must be born again, baptism for some is the rebirth, because of the cleansing and receiving of the Holy Spirit. Others find rebirth – Read: I Peter 1:22, 23. We become Children of God for salvation by becoming new creatures in our heart and soul.

VERSE FOR TODAY: John 3:17.

PRAYER THOUGHT: May my believing in You, O Lord, whether gradual or miraculous, lead me to a complete rebirth as your child, so I may see your heavenly kingdom.

April 23

Life of Jesus

The Woman at the Well

Jesus passed through Samaria on his way from Judea to Galilee. Samaria is a very hot and dry country. Jesus was by Jacob’s well about noon, he sat down to rest. Read John 4:7-42.

Some points to discuss:

* What are some reasons Jews and Samaritans did not associate?
* Why noon was an unusual time to come out to the well?
* What convinced the woman Jesus was the Messiah?
* Why did many more believe?
* Why is our witness important?

We can have this life giving water, no matter what we have done. Our testimony can bring others to Jesus.

This event was the beginning of the giving of salvation to the Gentiles.

VERSE FOR TODAY: John 4:24.

PRAYER THOUGHT: May I know you and witness to the living water that you only can give.

April 24

Life of Jesus

Healing an Official’s Son

Jesus was back in Cana of Galilee, when an official of the Roman government approached Jesus and told him that his son was sick, at the point of death and needed Jesus.

-Read: John 4:46-48. Some of us are like that too!

Again the official asked Jesus to come and see his son – Read: John 4:49-50.

The man went home and the servants came out to meet him saying that his son was going to live. The official wanted to know when his son started to get better, they said yesterday about one o’clock. The very hour that Jesus said that the son would live and the hour the official believed.

God’s grace and mercy will help us too, right from the very hour that we first believe. We must put our faith and trust in the Lord.

VERSE FOR TODAY: John 4:54.

PRAYER THOUGHT: O Lord, let me put my trust in you and believe everything through you is possible, because it will be if I believe.