Life of Jesus April 10

Boyhood

 Not much is said about Jesus as a boy – The child grew and became strong; he was full of wisdom, and God’s blessings were up upon him. Luke 2:40.

 An incident is recorded by Luke, when Jesus was twelve; he went with his parents to Jerusalem for Passover as they did every year. This year was different, for on their way home they discover that Jesus was not in the group and they had to return to Jerusalem after a day’s journey and try to find the boy. They finally found him, after looking for three days, in the Temple surrounded by Jewish teachers, amazed at the intelligent answers the boy was giving! You can imagine how relieved yet upset Mary and Joseph must have been – and his mother said to him, “My son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been terribly worried trying to find you.”

 He answered them, “Why did you have to look for me? Didn't you know that I had to be in my Father's house?”Luke 2:48b-49. Mary and Joseph didn’t understand all of this, but Jesus returned home with them as an obedient son.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Jesus grew both in body and in wisdom, gaining favour with God and men. Luke 2:52.

PRAYER THOUGHT: May I, Lord, when you look upon me, may I be about your business too.

Life of Jesus April 11

The Baptism of Jesus

 Jesus started his ministry, by coming to John the Baptist, who was preaching in the wilderness by the River Jordon, to be baptized. John baptized people in the Jordon to show they had repented of their sins. John knew there was another coming after him – “The man who will come after me is much greater than I am, I am not good enough even to bend down and untie his sandals. I baptize with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” Mark 1:7, 8.

 When Jesus arrived at the Jordan to be baptized, John didn’t want to baptize Jesus – “I ought to be baptized by you,” John said, “and yet you have come to me!”

 But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so for now. For in this way we shall do all that God requires.” So John agreed. Matthew 3:14b-15.

 After Jesus was baptized, the bodily form of the Holy Spirit, a dove, descended and sat upon Jesus and a voice came from heaven that said, -“This is my own dear son, with whom I am pleased.” Matthew 3:17b. Through the dove John the Baptist knew that Jesus was the Messiah, the one to follow him.

VERSE FOR TODAY: “I have seen it,” said John, “and I tell you that he is the Son of God.” John 1:34.

PRAYER THOUGHT: May I, like John, know the true love of God when I see it.

Life of Jesus April 12

The Temptation of Jesus

 After the baptism of Jesus, he was sent by the Holy Spirit immediately into the wilderness to be tempted. After forty days of fasting, Jesus was hungry and the Devil came to him and tried to tempt him into sinning by getting Jesus to change the stones into bread – But Jesus answered, ”The scripture says, ‘Human beings cannot live on bread alone but needs every word that God speaks.’ ” Matthew 4:4. The same is for us we cannot live on just food, but we need the Word of God to sustain us through eternity.

 The Devil did not give up, he tried to get Jesus to throw himself from the top of the Temple and get the angels to save him, again – Jesus answered, “But the scripture also says, ‘Do not put the Lord your God to the test.’” Matthew 4:7. A good point for us too, we must not try to get ourselves into trouble that would take a miracle to save us.

 Once more the Devil tried to tempt Jesus, he showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and told Jesus to kneel down and worship him, and then Jesus could be ruler of all – Then Jesus answered, “Go away, Satan! The scripture says, ‘Worship the Lord your God and serve only him!’” Matthew 4:10. We must also serve only the Lord.

 We see here that Jesus knew the scriptures, he quoted them for Satan on each temptation, we too need to be equipped with the scriptures, to strengthen us against temptation.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Then the Devil left Jesus; and the angels came and helped him. Matthew 4:11.

PRAYER THOUGHT: May I always resist temptation and remain faithful to you, O Lord.

Life of Jesus April 13

John’s Successor

 After the time of temptation, Jesus heard that John the Baptist was in prison, so He more or less took over where John left off – Jesus went to Galilee and preached the Good News from God. “The right time has come,” he said, “and the kingdom of God is near! Turn away from your sins and believe the Good News!” Mark 1:14b, 15.

 The fact that Jesus went to Capernaum, in the territory of Zebulun and Naptali fulfilled a prophesy made by Isaiah – “land of Zebulun and land of Naptali, on the road to the sea on the other side of the Jordan, Galilee, land of the Gentiles! The people who live in darkness will see a great light. The people who live in the dark land of death the light will shine.” Matthew 4:15, 16. (Isaiah 9:1-2) Jesus was and is that Great Light. The way for us to live in the Light!

 Jesus had arrived on the scene and picked up the path of John the Baptist, but in a much different way, Jesus went about preaching, teaching and healing, leaving an example of love and service to others in His path, as we will see in the days to come.

VERSE FOR TODAY: Then Jesus returned to Galilee, and the power of the Holy Spirit was with him. The news about him spread throughout all that territory. Luke 4:14.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to always live in the Light and to let your light shine through me.

Life of Jesus April 14

Rejection in Nazareth

 Jesus stood and read the scriptures in his own native Nazareth synagogue. Jesus read:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

because He has chosen me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives recovery of sight to blind; to set free the oppressed and announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people.” Luke 4:18, 19. (Isaiah 61:1, 2)

 Jesus returned the scroll – as he said to them, “This passage of scripture has come true today, as you heard it being read.” Luke 4:21. They were all surprised at what they heard! They thought how could this man, son of Joseph, a carpenter, be so well spoken?

 Jesus was now in good company, Elijah and Elisha were both prophets that could not help their own people.

 The people did not like what they heard, they took out to throw him off a hill but in the confusion he left through the crowd.

 We are guilty of rejecting those we know that return after training because we don’t understand how they can be an authority on something because we know them and their families.

 Jesus did not give up after one rejection, he just went somewhere else to preach the Word.

VERSE FOR TODAY: “I tell you this,” Jesus added, “a prophet is never welcomed in his home town.” Luke 4:24.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Please help me to never give up after a rejection, but always to keep trying to find those who want to hear the Word.

Life of Jesus April 15

Calling the Disciples

 As Jesus preached, taught and healed in the area around Galilee, his fame spread through that area.

 One day as he was walking around the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon Peter and Andrew, doing their job catching fish – Jesus said to them, “Come with me, and I will teach you to catch people” Matthew 4:19.

 Just a little way down the lake shore, Jesus saw two more brothers, James and John, sons of Zebedee. They like Peter and Andrew, left their nets without question followed Jesus. They became disciples or pupils of Jesus, their Master.

 We must also drop our worldly ways and follow Jesus. If we follow His teachings, He will also teach us to become “fishers of people.” We cannot see Jesus as the original disciples did but we can hear the teachings of Jesus through the Bible.

VERSE FOR TODAY: “Don’t be afraid from now on you will be catching people.” Luke 5:10b.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Help me, O Lord, to be an effective fisher of men, in this world filled with souls in need of being caught.

Life of Jesus April 16

Calling Matthew

 Matthew was a tax collector. In those days, tax collectors were not very well liked, because the Roman government gave tax collectors a free hand to collect above and beyond the amount required for personal gain.

 Jesus saw Matthew and called him to be a disciple, Matthew followed Jesus.

 Jesus went to Matthew’s house for dinner, while Jesus was eating with Matthew and other tax collectors and outcasts; the Pharisees saw Jesus eating with these people and asked the disciples – “Why does your teacher eat with such people? Matthew 9:11b.

 Jesus heard them and answered, “People who are well do not need a doctor, but only those who are sick. I have come to call respectable people, but outcasts.” Mark 2:17. Well people don’t need a doctor, neither do righteous people need a Saviour, Jesus came to save us sinners.

 We can take a lesson from this too, we need to be careful for the company we keep, but if we never talk or associate with non-Christians, how can we witness to them?

VERSE FOR TODAY: This is a true saying, to be completely accepted and believed: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. I Timothy 1:15a, b.

PRAYER THOUGHT: Thank-you, O Lord, for your Son, my Saviour! May His love always be in my heart and spill out of those around me.

Life of Jesus April 17

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 Jesus gave the Apostles was: “Do not go to any Gentile territory or any Samaritan towns. Instead, you are to go to those lost sheep, the people of Israel. Go and preach, ‘The kingdom of heaven is near!’ Heal the sick, bring the dead back to life, heal those who suffer from dreaded skin-diseases, and drive out demons. You have received without paying, so give without being paid.” Matthew 10:5b-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: “Listen! I am sending you out like sheep to a pack of wolves. You must be as cautious as snakes and gentle as doves. Watch out, for there will be those who will arrest you and take you to court, and they will whip you in the synagogues.” 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: Everyone will hate you because of me. But whoever holds out to the end will be saved. Matthew 10:22.

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