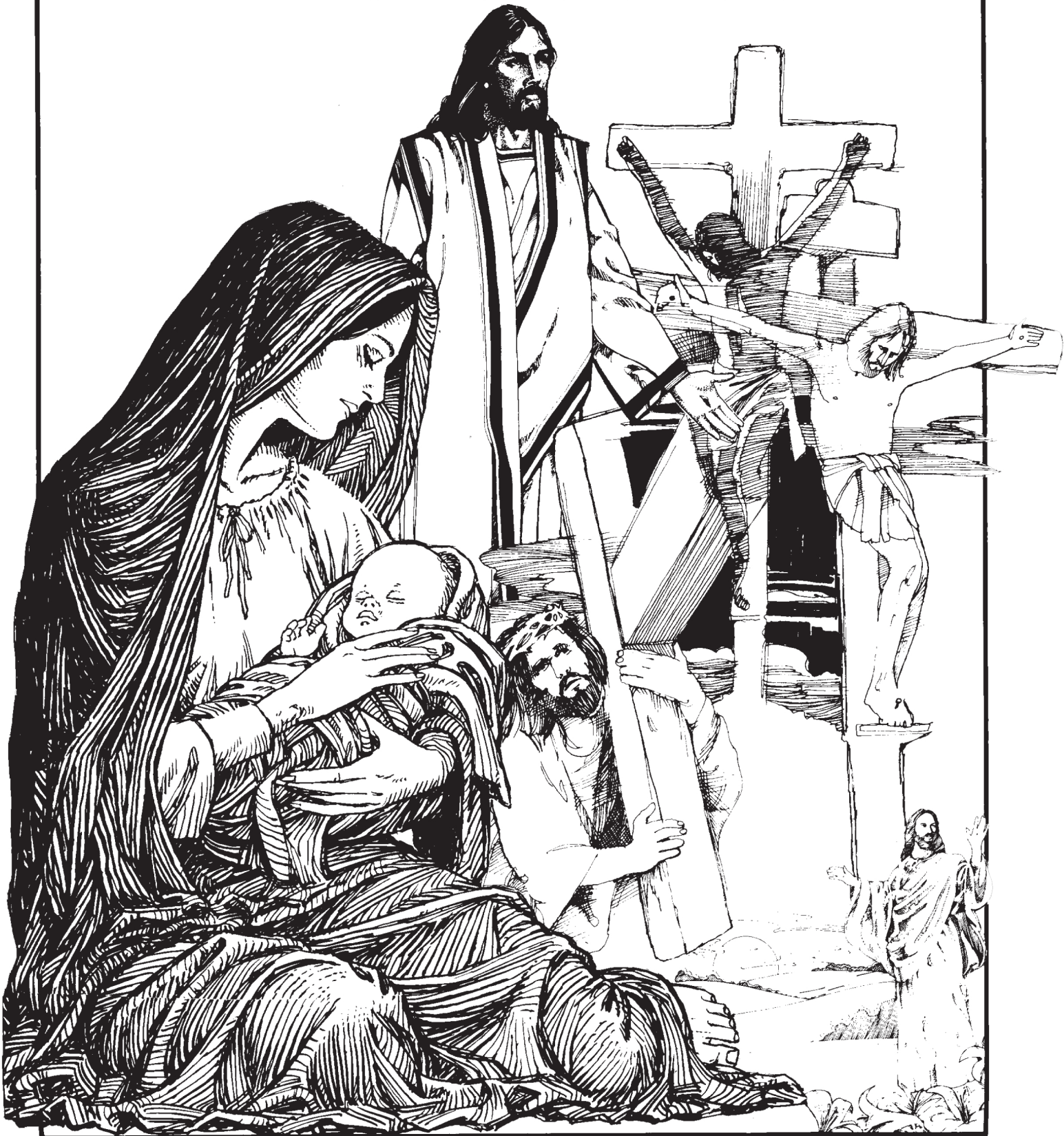
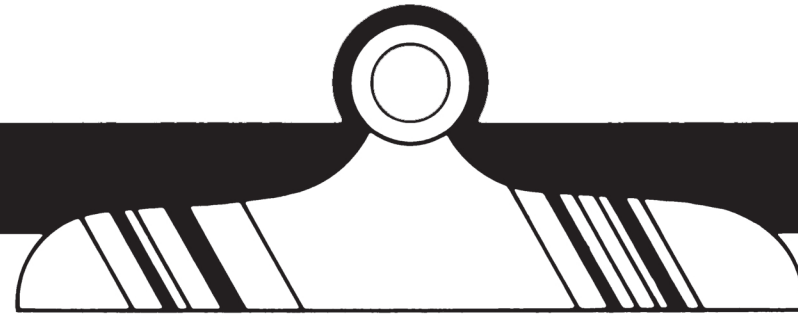


Who Is Jesus?





Theme Thoughts

Old Testament history paints a colorful picture of God's dealing with man, but the New Testament brings us to the climax of God's redemptive work—the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

"Who is Jesus?" is the thought-provoking question which establishes our theme for this quarter. Looking into the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, we trace the story of Jesus' time on earth, including His birth and some of the major events of His life.

We find, as we delve into this story, that the incidents and occurrences recorded in a biographical sketch of Jesus hold many important lessons relevant to our lives today.

Some of the highlights of Jesus' ministry and His personal example to us are brought out in such lessons as His calling of the twelve disciples, His example in resisting temptation, and His formula for happiness as found in the Beatitudes. The quarter concludes with one of Jesus' parables which emphasizes the importance of being firmly grounded so that we might be able to grow as Christians.

The purpose of this quarter is to learn about Jesus Christ, not just as a personage of Biblical history, but as a living Savior who wants to be directly and personally involved in our lives.

History in Advance

| TEXT: | Prophecy — Fulfillment | Prophecy Yet to be Fulfilled |
|-------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | Isaiah 9:6,7 — Matthew 1:16 | Acts 1:10,11 |
| | Isaiah 7:14 — Matthew 1:18-25 | 1 Corinthians 15:51,52 |
| | Micah 5:2 — Matthew 2:1 | 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17 |

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Numbers 24:17; Isaiah 53:1-12

KEY VERSE: And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger. — Luke 2:7

Throughout the 4000 years of history before the coming of Christ, we can see how God masterminded His plan of salvation which would be fulfilled in Christ. In the Old Testament we find many authors of different ages and places supplying the bits, pieces, types, shadows, and detailed predictions which describe Christ's purpose in coming to this earth, His manner of life, the reason for His death, and His triumph over death through the Resurrection.

The same prophets who gave us advance details of Christ's first coming speak expressly of a coming day when righteousness will triumph over evil. As surely as the details predicted were fulfilled in Christ's first coming, just so surely shall this earth experience the Rapture of the saints, and then the coming of Christ with His saints for 1000 years of peace, good will toward men!

1. What is prophecy? (Consult Webster or a Bible dictionary.)

2. What is the mark of a true prophet? See Jeremiah 28:9.

3. Who received this promise, ". . . and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed"? See Genesis 12:3. Explain in your own words what this promise might mean.

4. Isaiah wrote over 700 years before Christ was born. Compare Isaiah 7:14 with Matthew 1:18-25 and comment on how we benefit by studying prophecy and its fulfillment. See also 2 Peter 1:21.

5. Why is the virgin birth of Christ important? See Luke 1:26,27,35.

6. Who is the prophet referred to in Matthew 2:5,6? And how do we know that the Jewish scribes of King Herod's time knew about this prophecy and understood it?

7. Memorize the five beautifully descriptive terms used in Isaiah 9:6 to denote Christ's names. Place the name which you think best applies opposite the New Testament Scriptures given below:

Matthew 21:15; Acts 2:11

Matthew 28:20

John 14:27

John 3:1,2

John 10:29,30

8. Describe in your own words the future event pictured in 1 Corinthians 15:51,52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

9. Summarize the event prophesied by the angels in Acts 1:11 which has not yet happened. See Zechariah 13:1,2,6,9; 14:3-11 and Revelation 20:4. How are we certain that this event will take place?

10. In Matthew 24, Jesus gave us signs which were to immediately precede His return to earth. These included the appearance of false Christs, wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, persecution of Christians, apostasy of previous believers, worldwide preaching of the Gospel, and the re-emergence of Israel as a nation. Seeing these signs around us, we cannot help but conclude that we are living in the time of the soon coming of our Lord. Among the living, who will be caught up to join the Lord in the air when the Trumpet of the Lord sounds for the Rapture of the saints? See John 8:31; 1 John 1:7 and Revelation 2:3.

Gabriel Speaks Out

TEXT: Luke 1:26-38; Matthew 12:50; Romans 6:13

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Judges 13:2-21; Daniel 10:5-12; Matthew 7:21

KEY VERSE: Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness. — Psalm 143:10

Our lesson is part of the Christmas story which undoubtedly has been told and retold more than any other story ever written. So without dwelling long on the historical fact of Jesus' birth, let us consider why God singled out Mary for the highest honor ever bestowed on a woman. Her willingness to submit to God's plan was, no doubt, one of the reasons He chose her over all the young virgins of the house of David to be the mother of His Son, Jesus.

1. In Bible times, God often used angels to carry messages to people. Since this was so, why do you think Mary was troubled at the angel's greeting?

2. What did the angel say when he noticed Mary was troubled?

3. Do you think that Mary showed a lack of faith when she questioned the angel about how this could be? Explain.

4. What was Mary's response to the message that her child would be called the Son of God? What characteristics did she demonstrate by that reply?

5. In what ways did Mary exhibit these character traits?

6. Why are the attributes which Mary exemplified necessary for one serving the Lord today?

7. In reference to our key verse, the first phrase implies that doing the will of God may need to be learned. What are some of the ways the Lord teaches us? What can we do in order to be apt learners?

8. What are some of the benefits that are promised us if we are submissive to God? In addition to our text, see John 7:17, Romans 8:14-17, and Romans 12:2.

An Angelic Proclamation

TEXT: Luke 2:1-20

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Romans 5:7,8; Ephesians 2:4-8

KEY VERSE: For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. — John 3:17

The angelic proclamation, “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11), announced God’s greatest gift to mankind. This message was given to the shepherds on the Judean hills. They did not doubt the wondrous declaration, for they saw the attendant glory, and they would soon spread the news to others. God’s angels must have realized the importance of the announcement, for as soon as the good tidings were made known, a multitude of the heavenly host joined in the exultation, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men” (Luke 2:14).

1. Where was Mary living previous to the birth of Jesus? Where was it prophesied that Jesus should be born? See Micah 5:2.

2. What circumstance did God use to make sure Mary would be in Bethlehem at the birth of Jesus?

3. Why do you feel God chose to proclaim the good news to shepherds rather than to some authoritative figures?

4. What did the shepherds do with the great news that was told to them?

5. Write what you feel is meant by the word *pondered* as used in verse 19.

6. Read Philippians 2:5-8. In your own words, explain why you feel it was necessary for Jesus to be born "in the likeness of men."

7. The celebration of Christmas can be used to spread the story of Jesus. Write down some ways the Christmas season can provide opportunities for evangelistic outreach.

What “Star” Are You Following?

TEXT: Matthew 2:1-12

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Isaiah 55:6; Matthew 6:33

KEY VERSE: I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star. — Revelation 22:16

The sighting of the star in the east was the beginning of the diligent search by the Wise Men. Their mission served to answer the question, “Who is Jesus?” We have the opportunity to follow their example as we seek for things of spiritual value so that we might know Christ better.

1. How do you think the Wise Men knew that they were searching for the One who was “King of the Jews”? See Matthew 2:2.

2. Why do you think Herod, and all Jerusalem with him, was so troubled upon hearing of the newborn King?

3. How did the chief priest and the scribes know where Christ should be born? See Micah 5:2.

4. Why were the Wise Men so happy to see the star again after they departed from the king?

5. What did the Wise Men do before they presented their gifts to the newborn King?

6. What gifts can we offer the Lord today? See Romans 12:1 and Hebrews 13:15,16.

7. The Wise Men followed the star which led them to Christ. God still gives man a light to follow. What do you think directs us to Christ today?

8. Are many seeking to follow the Savior today? Why or why not?

9. The Wise Men followed the star even though the journey was difficult. They persevered until they reached their goal. Using the Wise Men as an example, what should our attitude be as we strive for the heavenly goal?

God's Promise Fulfilled

TEXT: Luke 2:21-40

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Numbers 23:19,20; Psalm 119:89,90; James 1:17

KEY VERSE: Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised). — Hebrews 10:23

Jesus made a permanent impression on everyone He came into contact with. Even Herod and the others who rejected Him were never the same again. Today, all who will receive Him, as Simeon and Anna did, will obtain the benefit of the promises recorded in the Word of God. Jesus is our salvation and through Him we have a new outlook on life and a beautiful hope for the future.

1. What are two moral attributes mentioned in Luke 2:25, which adorned Simeon's life?

2. Who revealed to Simeon that he would not see death before he had seen the "Lord's Christ"? What role does that Person have in our lives today?

3. Why did Simeon bless God and know, with confidence, that he could now "depart in peace"?

4. What was the significance of Mary's giving her firstborn Son the name Jesus? See verse 21.

5. What attitude is manifested in the lives of each of those who recognized the fulfillment of promise and were privileged to see the Baby Jesus?

The Shepherds — Luke 2:15-17,20

The Wise Men — Matthew 2:9-11

Simeon — Luke 2:27,28

Anna — Luke 2:38

6. Look back over the past four lessons. Briefly summarize what promises were given, and state how these were fulfilled in the text of today's lesson.

7. What parallel can we draw between the days in which we are now living and the promises of God, and the prophecies of His Word which were fulfilled by Jesus' first advent?

8. Noting the key verse, what connection can be found in holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering, and God being faithful to His promise?

God's Providential Care

TEXT: Matthew 2:13-23; Psalm 91

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Psalms 37:3,25; 103:3-5; Isaiah 40:29-31; 43:2; Revelation 3:10

KEY VERSE: Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling. — Psalm 91:9,10

RESOURCE MATERIAL: Tract No. 22 — Weighed in the Balance, Tract No. 66 — Rescued by God from a Watery Grave

We walk through a world that is fraught with dangers, and the only source of true protection is God. In our text, God's providential care is beautifully shown by the angel's directing Joseph to take the young child Jesus and His mother to Egypt. However, God's care is not limited to the preservation of His Son. It is fulfilled in the life of each one who follows His Word.

1. Give a definition of divine *providence*. Who enjoys this blessing?

2. By whom and for what reason was Joseph instructed to take Jesus and Mary into Egypt? Why was Egypt chosen? See Hosea 11:1 and Matthew 2:15.

3. Why did Herod order the killing of children who were two years of age and under? See Matthew 2:16-18.

4. In Matthew 1 and 2, how many times did an angel appear to Joseph with instructions from God? List several ways that God shows His providence today.

5. In Psalm 91, a key is given by which divine providence may be obtained. What is that key?

6. In applying the Scripture to our day, make a list of at least six blessings promised to us in Psalm 91.

7. When the devil tempted Jesus (Matthew 4:6), he quoted Psalm 91:11,12. What part of that quote did the devil leave out? Why did Jesus resist the temptation?

8. Psalm 91:14-16 seems to be a direct quote from God. What might be meant by “set his love upon me,” and “shew him my salvation”? See John 3:16.

9. Give an example of divine providence in your life, or in the life of someone you know.

The Holy Trinity

TEXT: Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; John 1:15-34

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Luke 3:22; John 14:26; 16:13-15; 1 John 5:7

KEY VERSE: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. — 2 Corinthians 13:14

RESOURCE MATERIAL: Tract No. 25 — The Trinity

The New Testament states that one of God's purposes in sending Christ to this world was to reveal Himself more fully to man (John 1:17,18). The study of the Holy Trinity is a glimpse into God's divine nature as revealed to us more clearly in the New Testament, for without this fundamental precept there can be no deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, or of the Holy Spirit. Through the Trinity we see real unity in God the Father's love, Jesus' grace and intercession, and the Holy Spirit's comfort and presence in us.

1. Genesis 1:1 states, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." The Hebrew word for God here is the plural form, "Elohim." Used together with the singular form of the word, "created," we see the unity of the divine Godhead in the work of creation. Verse 2 of this chapter refers to "the Spirit of God," completing the reference to the Trinity. What words in each of the following verses demonstrate the Trinity? See Genesis 1:26; 3:22; 11:7 and 1 John 5:7.

2. What does the last part of 1 John 5:7 tell us about the Trinity?

3. In the Matthew account of John's baptism of Jesus, describe how each person of the Trinity was revealed.

4. Why do you think the account of John's water baptism of Jesus occurs in all of the four Gospels?

5. John the Baptist spoke of Christ's ministry as fulfilling and exceeding his own. What promise was given to those who believed in Christ regarding the third Person of the Trinity—the Holy Spirit? See Matthew 3:11 and Mark 1:8. What promise is given to people today in this respect? See Acts 2:38,39.

6. What is the contribution of each person of the Godhead toward the salvation of mankind? See Romans 5:5,6. For a clearer understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit, see John 16:8,13,14.

7. In what attitude of prayer and worship should we come into the presence of the Triune God who extends to us His infinite authority and power? See Isaiah 55:6,7; 57:15 and Hebrews 13:15.

Overcoming Temptation

TEXT: Luke 4:1-15

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: 1 Corinthians 10:13; Ephesians 6:11-17; 1 Peter 5:8-10

KEY VERSE: Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. — Ephesians 6:13

What better way could Jesus understand our problems and temptations and show us how to overcome them than to face them Himself? Hebrews 4:15 tells us that He “was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.” Since He has been through suffering and temptation He knows what it is like when we suffer and are tempted, and He is wonderfully able to help us. See Hebrews 2:18.

1. What did Jesus possess that helps in overcoming temptation? See verse 1. Can we have the same help?

2. Would it have been wrong for Jesus to have turned that stone into bread? Give a reason for your answer.

3. What did Satan use in trying to cause the Lord to accept his offer of the kingdoms of the world? Were these kingdoms his to give?

4. When Satan tempted Jesus to worship him, how did the Lord answer him? Can we defeat Satan in the same manner?

5. As a last resort, Satan also tried using Scripture to make his final temptation acceptable to the Lord. What was that Scripture, and how does Satan use Scripture when trying to deceive people today?

6. What is temptation, and will it come to a well-established Christian? Is it sin?

7. Write several ways by which we can overcome temptation.

8. While God has made it possible for everyone to be overcomers, what should a person do if he has yielded to the temptation to sin? See Revelation 2:5.

God's Call

TEXT: John 1:35-51

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Isaiah 6:8; Mark 3:14,15; Acts 9:15,16; 22:21; Ephesians 4:11,12

KEY VERSE: Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. — Matthew 16:24

In calling men and women to follow Him, Jesus always spoke in words that could be comprehended by the hearers. The message of the Gospel is not veiled to the understanding. Throughout the centuries God has called countless men and women who answered and left all to follow Him. How vital it is to be alert to the calling of God in our own lives, and then to answer that call!

1. What circumstances brought about the disciples' first contact with Jesus?

2. What was the first simple step taken by the disciples?

3. What was Andrew's reaction when introduced to Jesus?

4. State some of the reasons people might give for not following Christ, or for not answering His call.

5. How did God's call to salvation come to you?

6. After a person has answered God's call to salvation, he will undoubtedly be called to do some particular service for God. How does God's call for service come to individuals?

7. What might be some of the common reactions or feelings of a person when God calls him to do a particular task?

8. God does not ask everyone to do the same task, but there is one thing that every Christian is called to do. Using Psalm 107:2, identify a calling that every Christian shares, and explain how it can be answered.

Jesus' First Miracle

TEXT: John 2:1-11

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Matthew 8:5-10,13; Mark 5:25-34; Luke 5:18-20,24,25; John 9:11

KEY VERSE: This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him. — John 2:11

What joy there is for the person who has faith in God and will obey His Word. Obedience brings blessing, for we find that the Lord works miracles often as the result of faith and obedience on the part of the recipients. In our lesson today, we see how these two ingredients combined to set the stage for Jesus' first recorded miracle, and the start of His public ministry.

1. What was the name of the village where Jesus performed His first miracle? What was the occasion that had brought Him there?

2. Why do you think Mary said to Jesus, "They have no wine"?

3. Why didn't Jesus encourage Mary to believe that He would do something about the need?

4. Why do you suppose Mary told the servants, "Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it"?

5. Jesus told the servants to fill the six waterpots with water—no small task when we consider that in all likelihood it was drawn from a well. Since these servants weren't employed by Jesus, why do you think they obeyed Him when presumably they should have been trying to obtain more wine?

6. Jesus' first miracle actually came about without His having any physical contact with the water, or in "telling" the water what it should become before it was served. Since it was performed with such simplicity, how do you suppose the servant felt when he drew wine from one of the pots and gave it to the governor of the feast?

7. What was the response of the governor of the feast when he tasted from the cup given to him by a servant?

8. Can we expect to see miracles if we do as Jesus commands us? Explain. See 1 John 5:14,15.

9. In our text, who believed on Jesus because of the miracle?

Ingredients for Happiness

TEXT: Matthew 5:1-12; Psalm 119:1-6

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Psalms 84:11,12; 128:1,2

KEY VERSE: But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed. — James 1:25

Jesus' teachings to His disciples and the multitudes as found in Matthew 5, 6 and 7 are known as the "Sermon on the Mount." The blessings He pronounced at the beginning of that message are called *The Beatitudes*, which means "perfect blessedness or happiness."

1. What is the meaning of the word *blessed*, as found in the Beatitudes?

2. In reference to our key verse, there are four requirements in order to receive the promise that we shall be blessed in our doings. List these four requirements and briefly explain each.

3. How many of the basic ingredients for happiness listed in Matthew 5:3-12 are necessary if we wish to follow Jesus and truly be His disciples?

4. Listed below are eight basic ingredients Jesus gave for happiness. After each of these give a short definition of what you think is meant. In the next column, list Jesus' promise to those who exhibit that quality.

| Quality | Meaning | Jesus' Promise |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|
|----------------|----------------|-----------------------|

| | | |
|--------------------|--|--|
| The poor in spirit | | |
|--------------------|--|--|

| | | |
|-----------------|--|--|
| They that mourn | | |
|-----------------|--|--|

| | | |
|----------|--|--|
| The meek | | |
|----------|--|--|

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| They which hunger and thirst after righteousness | | |
|---|--|--|

| | | |
|--------------|--|--|
| The merciful | | |
|--------------|--|--|

| | | |
|-------------------|--|--|
| The pure in heart | | |
|-------------------|--|--|

| | | |
|-----------------|--|--|
| The peacemakers | | |
|-----------------|--|--|

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| The persecuted for righteousness' sake | | |
|--|--|--|

Roots That Go Deep

TEXT: Mark 4:1-20

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Matthew 13:1-9; Luke 8:4-15; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15

KEY VERSE: Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

— John 15:8

The parable of the “Sower and the Seed” is one that applies anytime God’s Word goes forth. The sower sows the seed, the seed is God’s Word, and the ground is the soul in whom the seed is sown. Within the four classes of ground discussed in this lesson, each person can be found.

1. What is a parable?

2. Why do you think Jesus sometimes used parables when teaching?

3. Jesus often said, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” What do you think that means?

4. What happened to the seed that fell by the wayside? How does that describe the spiritual awareness of some people?

5. What happened to the seed that fell upon stony ground? What spiritual characteristics does the stony ground describe?

6. What happened to the seed that fell among the thorns? How does thorny ground parallel with the spiritual life of some?

7. How can we prepare ourselves to be good ground? Make a list of suggestions.

8. Do you think it is better to produce thirty, sixty, or a hundredfold?

9. Look up the references for the following Bible characters and write down what type of ground you think they represented. Be prepared to explain your answers.

A. Saul — 1 Samuel 28:15

B. Solomon — 1 Kings 11:4

C. Belshazzar — Daniel 5:22,23

D. Zacchaeus — Luke 19:6,8

E. Judas — John 6:70,71

F. Felix — Acts 24:25

G. Paul — 2 Timothy 4:7,8

H. Demas — Colossians 4:14; 2 Timothy 4:10

Quarter Review

TEXT: Review Quarter Texts

KEY VERSE: This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. — 1 Timothy 1:15

1. In rehearsing the lesson on prophecy and fulfillment, how can we be assured that prophecies yet to be fulfilled will come to pass? See Luke 21:33 and 2 Timothy 3:16.

2. Using Psalm 143:10 and Philippians 2:13 as references, is it difficult for a Christian to do God's will? Support your answer.

3. The good news of Jesus' birth was made known to the shepherds by a heavenly host of angels. How is mankind today made knowledgeable of God's love and plan of redemption?

4. What qualities stand out in the example of the Wise Men in their search for Jesus? Describe why these same traits are valuable in a Christian's life today.

5. Simeon was rewarded for his faithfulness when he saw the promise of God fulfilled in the Christ Child. Noting Hebrews 10:23, what correlation can be found between holding "fast the profession of our faith without wavering," and God being faithful to His promised return to earth?

6. The heavenly Father spared His Son from the anger of Herod. In what ways is providential care extended to God's children today? See Psalm 91.

7. In 2 Corinthians 13:14, each member of the Godhead has an attribute expressed. What are these attributes and how did the Apostle learn this truth?

8. We learned in the study of overcoming temptation that everyone is tempted, and that temptations come from Satan. How can we be assured of victory over temptation? See James 4:7.

9. Explain the difference between being alert to God's call and answering His call. Give two reasons why answering God's call is so important.

10. Has God performed a miracle in your own life or on your behalf? If so, list briefly the steps that were taken by you or those involved to move the hand of God.

11. In studying the Beatitudes we find the thought of happiness in each of them. How does a person obtain this happiness in his own life?

12. After studying the parable of the sower and the seed, describe the kind of "soil" you yourself strive to be, and why.