

This will be *Part 4* of the series entitled *Jesus Christ's Real Life Story*.

In *Part 3* we covered the final phase of the Israelites gathering together at Rameses, and they'd already "spoiled" the Egyptians. That was during the daytime portion of Passover. Then they gathered together in an area called Rameses there in Egypt and began their journey then from that particular region. And it's really quite incredible, because we're talking about well over a million people (no one knows exactly how many), but well over a million people that gathered together to do this and it was very organized. It makes the comment in different places, speaking of this, that it was a very organized process.

And so we read through stories and we don't think about them. We don't think about everything that people have to go through. We get snippets here and there. Just like as we proceed here today, we're going to go into some of the things that Christ was teaching his disciples and so forth, but, again, they're just little snippets of information here and there. And the broader part of the story, of what really happened throughout the day or the week, and so forth, we really don't think about those things as a whole. We just read things more as a story flow and oftentimes we miss a lot by doing that because we don't tend to think about what they were living and what they were going through. And so that's what we're striving to do as a part of this particular series here, to tell a little bit more of that story.

And just like the Israelites gathering together, you don't get a million plus people together in an area without a lot of organization and thought that took place well ahead of time. They didn't just decide on the night of the Passover what they were going to do and how they were going to do it. This had to be something that they had gone through and discussed in an organized fashion. And they tended to be that way anyway by tribes, by the different groups that were scattered throughout that particular body. And so, again here, they had a way of communicating amongst themselves and they continued with that process then as Moses and Aaron and different ones, the elders would get together, and then that information would be disseminated throughout the rest of the area. And so it wasn't a small undertaking. Again, I marvel at what they were able to do in such a quick time. And so should we, really.

Then we saw the story how they went through "the way of the Red Sea." They didn't go in the northern part up into the promised land, a way that's travelled a great deal because of trade and the like, they went down to an area a little farther down toward the Red Sea where God was going to take them out of Egypt. And so they were travelling, as it talks about, as we read in *Part 3*. They went through different areas and they stayed and proceeded every day going a little bit closer until they got down to that area where they were camping, until God would lead them across the Red Sea. They didn't know where they were going. They didn't know what God had in

store for them. And here they had some mountain ranges on the side of them and the Red Sea on one side. And we know the story of how Pharaoh and all of his army, all the army of Egypt that he gathered together to go after them, to go get them and bring them back. And again here, God took them in a way that isn't a way. Only God can lead and guide and direct people in a way that we don't understand and know until God shows us. So incredible lessons through all this that we're to follow wherever God leads us and however God leads us in life. And that is a task. It's a task for people to follow, to have that kind of faith, to exercise that kind of faith. And so here is an incredible story where they all followed Him out of Egypt.

And so it was during that seven days then, and then finally on that last day, God led them out of Egypt completely and entirely. And we understand that period of time being the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Awesome! A period of time that as new people come along and they listen to something like this they've never heard terms like this, a Feast of Unleavened Bread. "What on earth are you talking about?" Passover, they possibly heard of, especially because of the Jewish religion, but even there they don't even use that term. They use it very rarely.

And so again, it's an incredible thing here that God gives to us to understand, a story here of those who left Egypt, the Israelites leaving Egypt and then the Egyptians going after them and God destroying every one of them. God said He was going to receive glory through what He was going to do to Pharaoh and His army. And that's an incredible thing to understand as well. So He closed up the Red Sea. All of them died. Every last one of them died in the Red Sea. And God received glory. Because it talks about how the Israelites at that moment then believed God. They believed He was God. And so God received a glory. Because if you really think about, there are very few occasions throughout 6,000 years that people have really glorified God for something that He has done. They talk about God but they don't understand and they don't really recognize Him as He is. And so that's why we're going through the real life story of Jesus Christ; because people haven't heard it for a long, long, long time on this earth.

And then we moved forward in the story in *Part 3* beginning with Jesus Christ's life and the very beginning of it, being born of Mary, a virgin, those things that were prophesied, and how that they were visited by shepherds. And so we know that story as well, shepherds that came, they came to the manger where he was lying. And again, some of these stories that people get confused with and they keep Christmas, they keep a period of time at the end of the year. And they don't understand shepherds aren't out herding sheep during the wintertime, during the period of December. And so they don't think about those things. They just accept what they've been taught and live it like most people do, and most of us in this room have in times past.

And even most people today, as far as those who are "scholars" (quote/unquote), they acknowledge, as a whole, that Jesus Christ was either born in the period of this time of year, actually, Spring, or Fall, around September. And most zero in on Fall because of some of the things that are spoken of. Yet when I first began to learn some of these things there were a lot of scholars who still wouldn't acknowledge that. And as time went along they began to acknowledge

that. And even in churches, churches of Traditional Christianity, when people would go and ask about Christmas and if that was really the time of Christ's birth, in my day when I was younger, most would acknowledge or say, anyway, "Yes, that was the time of his birth." But as time went along, a couple of decades longer, that began to change because people began to be more educated as far as things that have been written, especially when you get to a point where you access things on the computer and Google and you can do searches. And finally we came into an age where there is more information out there and people began to change in that area—preachers and teachers began to change in that area—and if they were really put into a corner they would say, "No, he wasn't born at that time," but they didn't really know. But we still keep the mass of Christ, called Christmas, obviously.

But people don't even think about the name. Where did the name come from? How many of you who are Protestant out there, how many of you understand where that came from? Think about the word: Christ's mass. The mass of Christ. And yet how many of you keep any kind of a mass? No one does as a whole. It's the Catholic Church. I'm not sure about Episcopalians. Some of them, they may have what is called a mass because they're very closely in relationship of the functioning of the Catholic Church. They still function very much that way. So maybe they call some of their gatherings a mass. But the Protestant world doesn't as a whole.

And so they don't understand Christmas came from, came through the Catholic Church. And so they reject many things of the Catholic Church. They reject the Pope as being the one who leads and guides and directs them, but they accept the vast majority of all their doctrines, including Christmas, the mass of Christ, when he wasn't even born at that time of year. No place in the Bible does it say we should keep the birthday of Jesus Christ. And there's nothing wrong with birthdays and remembering memorials and things of that nature, but to make something a religious observance (when God says in essence what we are to observe), to make that a religious observance isn't something that man is allowed to do. It's not in his proclivity. That's not even the right word. It's not something that God makes allowance for, if you will. On the contrary, it's wrong to do, to make services other than what God specifically says. When it comes to worshiping Him He tells us how to worship Him.

And finally we jumped ahead through the story of the magi who came to Jerusalem looking for the King of the Jews and their meeting with Herod. And the story makes it very clear here that they didn't come at the time he was being born, as Christmas portrays. They didn't come at that point in time but they came much, much later; perhaps a year, a year and a half later. It doesn't really say. But there's a two year window in there that Herod wanted to be sure that he killed that individual, that baby, that young child. And so he made sure as he killed, had killed (I should say) all the children; those who were newly born all the way up to two years old. Because it took the magi a long time to get to that point, to get to there, and then to go on to Bethlehem.

Then finally we jumped ahead to the beginning of the story of the final few weeks of Jesus Christ's life. And this is an incredible story to me because there is so much that takes place at the

very end of his life. It wasn't during the first 30 years; there's nothing recorded, as a whole. Very little here and there that's recorded about his life, because he didn't start his ministry until the final 3½ years of his life. And then he began to teach and various miracles and so forth were performed, but not that much. Most of what took place actually took place in the final few weeks of his life. And much of what is recorded took place in the final few weeks of his life. And so you have primarily three [four?] individuals, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, referred to as the gospels, individuals that from their perspective recorded things from what they witnessed, from what they saw, from their recollection, their memory, their mind, what they witnessed. And so they wrote. And they were inspired by God, the things that they gave and the things that they remembered and the things that they brought forth. And so we're going through some of that story piecing much of that together.

And so we're at the final few weeks then of Jesus Christ's life and he's beginning his journey back down toward Jerusalem. Because he knows what he has to fulfill. He has to fulfill what is pictured in this spring season of the year: Passover. He is the fulfillment of Passover. That's why we began this series quoting what Paul had to say, "that even Jesus Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us." And yet the world doesn't fully understand it all, what that means or what that story entails or where the first Passover came into being. That's why we've gone through that and spent time, then, about the Israelites coming out of Egypt, that God began to introduce mankind to the Passover in a very physical manner, of freeing Israelites from captivity in Egypt and all the lessons. I could give several sermons just about that alone, of all the lessons and things that God gives in scripture about what we're to learn from that. And so we've just had a bit of an overview bringing us up to this point in time where Jesus Christ is actually now going back down to Jerusalem to fulfill the Passover.

And so we're going to back up just a little bit from where we were in *Part 3*, back over here in John 11. And so we're coming into a particular story here that is one of the most incredible and most powerful stories that lead up to the final day, Passover. It's this story here. It's about Lazarus. And yet it's not one that's seen as fully for what it really is, for what it truly means. And yet Jesus Christ uses it in a profound way to teach in a very great way things about who he is, that he is the Son of God, that he was born of God Almighty, the only to ever be born of God, of a woman, that which was prophesied to Adam and Eve and to the serpent, to Satan at the very beginning. And those prophecies built upon then through time, about one who would be born of a woman, one who would become the King of Jews. Not just the King of the Jews but the King of Israel. And people focus on things that are physical. They don't understand what God uses the name for—Israel—to picture something that's to happen in the future. Not about a physical people. Not about a race of people. But something far, far, far beyond that.

And so we're picking up the story here in **John 11:1—Now a certain man named Lazarus was sick.** So we already talked about a little bit of this (and we're going to pick up some more of that) because this is such a powerful story. It has so much meaning contained in it. And so we're going

to back up a little bit here bringing us to the point of that which takes place when Jesus Christ performs the greatest of all of his miracles, greatest of miracles, if you will, to show indeed who he was to everyone.

Now a certain man named Lazarus was sick. He was in Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. (And it was *that* Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) So even in reading something like this, here is John writing this, and others tell some of the story in a different way, in a different order so we jump around and people become very confused about the timeline and the order of events. And he's just thinking back a little bit and letting people know as he tells the story here this is who he was. This is that one. And speaking of this, then, Mary, his sister is the one that wiped his feet with the precious ointment. Because it was Judas then who became... I don't know some of the words you could use there. But his thinking wasn't right. He became critical. He became critical of Christ. He became critical of what the woman did and he didn't grasp what was taking place here. What was important to him was the money. What was important to him, because he had the purse, per se, as it records it here, that he was the treasurer, in essence, took in the money and kept record of everything. And that can be a difficult thing for human beings, has proven to be in God's Church through time. And I think of Mr. Armstrong and why he brought in a particular man at a particular point in time to be over the treasury of the Church. Because he was a faithful individual and had proven himself to be so. Others, well, didn't do as well.

Verse 3—Therefore, his sisters sent for him, sent for Jesus, saying, Lord, behold, he whom you love is sick. Now, again, reading through a story like this it's not what we know later on, it's what took place right here. They would not have sent someone out to get Christ and bring him down there right away unless he was deathly sick. This wasn't just a little bit of a flu or something. This wasn't something where... This was something that they knew was serious and they were concerned for Lazarus' life! So something like this wasn't just a spur of a moment thing, "He's sick. He can't get up. He can't work. Please get down here and anoint him, heal him," whatever. This is something far beyond that. They understood he is deathly sick. That's why they sent the individuals there. So we read a story like this and if we're not careful we don't grasp the full impact of what is being stated.

So again, **Therefore, his sisters sent for him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom you love is sick. When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death.** Now, again, people read through something like this and say, "Well, Lazarus died. Surely it's a sickness to death." And they don't understand what Christ is saying. Yeah, he's going to die, but it's not going to be unto death where he's going to remain dead. It's a simple thing. But some people this bothers. So when he heard that he said, **This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God.** Just like what it talked about when God said He was going to receive glory upon the Egyptians and upon Pharaoh for what He was going to do to them in the Red Sea. And this, too, is to the glory of God because of what was going to happen. ...**that the Son of God, in this case, the Son of God might be**

glorified. Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. And when he had heard, therefore, that he was sick, he continued two days longer. Here he is deathly sick and Christ, Jesus Christ stays two days longer in this area around the region of Jericho. It's like, "Why aren't you going down to see Lazarus?" His disciples wondered about things he did all the time. "Why is he doing 'this'?" "Why did he say 'that'?" "What does he mean by that?" And so he continued two days longer. Not that he wasn't concerned, but he knew exactly what was taking place.

You know, there are things we can't grasp fully. We don't even come close to it sometimes. The mind that Jesus Christ had, the knowing that he had from God the Father that was in his mind. No other human being has ever experienced anything remotely close. He knew things that had to be fulfilled. He knew the timing of things that had to be fulfilled. He knew what was taking place here with Lazarus. He wasn't even there. He'd been clear up around Samaria and Galilee and then he starts his journey back down and finally crosses over to Jericho, the area of Jericho on his way back down to Jerusalem. And so we have this incredible story of a journey. And yet they didn't have telephone. They didn't have someone on horseback like in the old west—pony express—to get a message somewhere. Maybe they rode camels fast. I don't know. But anyway, it took time to get messages around.

And so here is a story, he knew exactly what was going on before the individuals ever came to him. He knew Lazarus was sick. I'm in awe of that. I'm in awe of that kind of a relationship. We only experience it in part when God begins to work with human beings, begins to work with the spirit that's in the mind, and with His spirit, the holy spirit begins to communicate things to the mind and then we're able to know things. One's ability to come to understand something as basic as this about Passover, if people really come to "see" it and to understand what it is and what it means it's something that God has to give. It's not by sheer knowledge. When individuals come to understand God's annual Holy Days and what they mean and what they picture - no one does that on their own ability! Now, people can have certain knowledge of things and read something that states about those days and hold on to them for a period of time, but to grasp them, to be able to communicate about them, the understanding, the meaning of those things, they can't. God has to give it. That's an incredible thing to understand. God has to communicate that to the human mind otherwise people can't see it. That's why no one can come to understand what is really true unless God gives it in their mind.

Now, Christ had far, far, far more than that. He was far beyond that. There was that oneness of mind because of who he was, the Son of God from birth, from inception (conception). Again, things that in our human minds we don't really grasp the entire story. But just to be in awe of what God was doing with Jesus Christ and that knowing that he had. He didn't have to be down there where Lazarus was. He already knew that he was sick unto death. And he stayed two days longer for a purpose... for a purpose. To magnify what he was getting ready to do. Because it was God's purpose. And Jesus Christ—at-one with God, at one with the same mind of God Almighty in knowing and understanding—knew that Lazarus was to die and knew what was to follow. And so

that time was given to glorify, in this case it talks about not just God but the Son of God.
Awesome!

And so he stayed two days longer. Then (verse 7), **Then after that he said to his disciples, Let's go into Judaea again. And his disciples said unto him, Master, Lately the Jews have been seeking to stone you.** Now, if anyone knows what a stoning is, it's not a good thing. They want to kill you. That's what they're in essence striving to do. ...**and are you going there again?** "We know that they're out to kill you. We know that they're out to stone you and you want to go down there again? Why would you do that?" They didn't understand. "You go into a dangerous place like that knowing what their motive and their intent is and you're wanting to go back down there?" And in the story you pick it up, they weren't real keen on going. They, themselves, because they had a value on their life that was different than what Christ was doing and fulfilling.

Let's turn over to Matthews account; Matthew 19. So all along the way many parables, a lot of teaching was being given. All the way from Galilee all the way down to Jericho in this area, and then all the way up to the point of Passover teaching after teaching, parable after parable, instruction, and guidance. And all along the way miracles were increasing.

Matthew 19:1—Then it came to pass when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee. So here is backing up in Matthews story, all the way back to Galilee, **and he came into the coasts of Judaea beyond (on the other side of) Jordan.** So he had to cross over and was coming into the area of Jericho. **And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there. And the Pharisees also came unto him, testing him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?** So we read a portion of that last week, or last *Part 3* there. Anyway, again here, Pharisees, different ones coming out from the Scribes and Pharisees were always out there trying to find some fault, trying to find something they could go back and report about what he was saying and what he was doing, to find greater fault, to find something they could twist and distort, to find greater cause for what? To stone him. They wanted to have greater grounds to get rid of him. They wanted to get rid of Christ. They wanted to for a long, long time because he was a threat to them. He was a threat to their power. He was a threat to them in every way and they wanted to get rid of him, and so they had to find fault with things that he had to say.

Then dropping on down to verse 17, **[Matthew 20:17]—And as Jesus was going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart along the way, and said to them, Behold, we're going up to Jerusalem.** And then he tells a story and they didn't get a bit of it. They didn't understand a thing that he was saying! And it explains a part of the reason why, even more so, but this is what their life, so much of their life was like. And so it says, **Behold, we're going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests.** Now, that seems simple enough. We're reading it. **The Son of man is going to be betrayed by the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death.** So what is he talking about and why no questions? Because they didn't understand what he was saying; they didn't know. They didn't have a clue! And

in many ways a lot of the times when they were with him there were so many things they never grasped nor understood, but they continued to follow. God had given to them enough to believe that he was the Messiah, and so they followed him and held on to certain teachings. But so many of them, they never grasped nor understood until Pentecost of 31 A.D.. Then they could put it all together.

Verse 19—And shall deliver him to the gentiles to mock, and to whip, and to kill him on a stake, on a pole. That's what it says. It's not a Greek word for "cross." There are words for a cross. This is not one of them. This is a single pole. That's what it says. And even Aramaic that this is translated out of, because they wrote in Aramaic, they didn't write in Greek. The first four books, when you go through some of those things (a lot of people don't even understand that), that it was originally written in Aramaic and then translated into the Greek language; and unlike Paul, who wrote in the Greek language and things that he gave were in Greek. But these things here as a whole were written in Aramaic. And the words that they used and the words they actually translated, which they did translate properly, it's not a word in the Greek language that means any kind of a cross or cross section of wood. It's a single pole. And yet the world of Traditional Christianity insists on the fact that it has to be a cross. What an incredible thing to learn! What an incredible thing this world is going to learn in the next few years, to come to understand that a picture they've had for nearly 2,000 years (actually much longer), but this picture of supposedly Jesus Christ with his arms stretched out like this upon a cross didn't happen. It didn't happen that way at all! Awesome!

And I love (and I might as well do it in this video), to explain a part of the process here ahead of time. No, I won't. We'll wait until we get there, why it couldn't have been a cross by the very fact of the things that took place then on Passover, why it had to be a pole, why it was a stake, why the Romans did what they did, why they actually killed him in the way that they did. Incredible story! And yet people are totally ignorant of it. Their minds are closed to it. They can't "see" it until it's time for them to "see" it. That's an awesome thing to understand, that God has the power in human life to give truth when it's His time to give it. And until that time people can't "see" it. The disciples couldn't "see" what we know as a story that was like, "Well, why don't you see this?" "You're going to be betrayed. You're talking about the Son of man is going down to Jerusalem to be betrayed by the chief priests and unto the scribes and that they'll condemn him to death and they're going to deliver him up to the gentiles and they're going to mock him and whip him and kill him on a pole. Should be pretty clear, right? They had no idea! They had no idea that he was talking about what was going to happen to him. Not one iota!

...and the third day shall rise again. That one for sure they didn't get! And the world, as a whole, has never gotten, obviously.

Mark's account. **Mark 10:33.** Again, all these we're breaking into part of a story flow here, but talking about what Jesus Christ said. He said, **Behold, we're going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn**

him to death, and shall deliver him up to the gentiles. And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, whip him, in other words, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again. Now, again, repeating it over and over here so that people grasp what was taking place. The disciples didn't get it. We know because we know the story flow of what he's talking about. He's talking about himself. But here they have been following him for all this time, for nearly 3½ years, and they still didn't get what he was talking about!

Luke's account. **Luke 18:31**—Then he called to the twelve, and said to them, **Behold, we're going up to Jerusalem.** So this is a period of time when he's first telling them this is what we're doing, and he tells them the same story. They're all recording the same thing. ...and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. So you'd think by that phrase there that they would know what he was talking about. They didn't. They didn't understand. "Everything that the prophets have written about the Son of man: It's about you!" They couldn't put it together. **For he shall be delivered unto the gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully mistreated, and spit upon. And they shall scourge him and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.** You'd think by just human reasoning and human thought, physically looking at this, hearing this story, that a person would understand some portion of it. Someone is going to die, the third day they're going to rise again. Nothing. Nothing! Nothing.

Verse 34—And they didn't understand any of these things. And this saying was hidden from them. Hidden from them. They couldn't. They couldn't see it unless God allowed them to "see" it. And God wasn't going to allow them to see it because God has to give help for human beings to understand things about Him that are hidden. And God's truth and God's way of life has been hidden from this world since Adam and Eve; from the time that they were cut off from the tree of life so was all mankind from that time forward. Because it's only by that power, the power of the holy spirit that people can truly "see" things that God gives. Now, for us sitting in this room we have heard things for so long these things are so clear to us. And it's almost to the point where it's hard for us to imagine this truth: No one can "see" it unless God gives it to "see". That's why the Church has never tried to proselyte. God's Church has never tried to proselyte. It doesn't function that way.

Now, it's gone into various parts of the world where God has inspired it to go because of where God was going to work, and work with certain individuals through life and in the Church, but that's the only reason. Because there's a deep understanding that all should have: No one is going to understand a thing unless God gives it. And when it's time God will make a way. He'll make a way for someone to be able to "hear" it. That's why I'm excited about what's going to take place over a short period of time when it begins to happen, when God begins to give people the ability to listen, the ability to "hear" things they've never heard. And then it's their choice. What are you going to do? Are you truly going to listen to God?

So, **They didn't understand any of these things. And this saying was hidden from them; neither did they know of the things which were spoken.** Nothing. They remembered it and they wrote about it. And some of the things that they experienced didn't even come back into memory until Pentecost after that period of time, 31 A.D.

Let's go over here to Mark 10. So before we pick up the story about Lazarus again we need to notice a couple more of the events that occurred along the way. And we came to the portion of the journey where they had followed the Jordan River down from Galilee. They were on the other side of it and then it talked about crossing over then into the area of Judea and toward Jericho, because they crossed the river. And we have a couple more matters of importance that happened in that particular region that would be good to touch upon at this time.

Mark 10:46—And they came to Jericho. So they'd come all the way down the river, all the way down the side and then crossed over then. **And as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the side of the highway begging.** And then Jesus spoke to him in this particular example here and healed him of his blindness. So different things that happen all along the way over and over again here, increasingly so. Because this is the final few weeks. This is a couple weeks now before his death.

Luke 19. It was in this same area we read of Zacchaeus, who was a tax collector, and a very rich man at that, who wanted to have a good view of Jesus Christ when he was coming by, and short in stature climbed up into a sycamore tree. You got to respect the zeal, the desire there. Here he is not well liked - matter of fact, not liked at all, as a whole, by a lot of people. And so he had heard of different things about him and he wanted to see him. He just wanted to set eyes upon him as he walked, as he came by, and he wanted to have a good view, so here he is, he climbs up this sycamore tree. And picks it up here... Let's pick it up in **Luke 19:5—And when Jesus came to the place, where Zacchaeus was up in the tree, says, he looked up and saw him, and said to him, Zacchaeus, quickly come down; for today I must abide in your house.** Can you imagine? Here he is, he just wants to get a glimpse of him, see him, and he's a rich man, and Christ says, "Come on down quickly! Today I'm staying in your house." "Okay." Anyway, it's hard for us to put our self there. **And he came down quickly and received him happily. And when they saw it...** You have to marvel. I marvel at his, at Christ, his mind, to know all these things, to know who Zacchaeus was because of God Almighty and what God shared in oneness with Christ. Awesome! Incredible! Beyond our understanding. We can only strive to appreciate it.

And when they saw it they all murmured, so the crowd around and so forth, they started murmuring, **saying, That he was going to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.** Isn't that crazy about human nature? So quick to judge people. So quick to condemn people because they're not quite up to our standard. They're not quite up to who we are, who we see ourselves as being. We're better than so many others. And that's the way society in the world is. People constantly judge each other and condemn each other because of the way they think and how they think and how they've grown up thinking about different people, and on and on it goes. And the world is full

of that today! So sick, this world is, truly is, how mankind has become. No peace, just constant finding of fault and condemning and criticizing and tearing apart. With the age of technology we live in that's all you see on TV as a whole, on news. That's what your news consists of; people who hate each other, people who want to kill each other, people who hate others for hating. Anyway, there's no end to it. Well, there will be an end to it but man can't bring it about. We can't govern ourselves. Incredible story!

And so here he is. He's a man. He's a sinner. Why? Primarily because he's a tax collector and he's rich. See? Don't know what's in his heart. Don't know what kind of a person he is. "But we know who he is. He's a tax collector. He's a sinner. He's not like us." Especially some of the Scribes and Pharisees that were around there, they always had a haughtiness about them. They were religious. We live in a region of the country, of the United States, that a lot of people consider themselves to be religious. And you move a little farther south into a particular southern region of the United States and there are a lot of people who consider themselves to be very religious and they judge others who aren't the same as them, who think the way they do; ready to condemn and look down upon others because they're not quite of the same standard as they are. Amazing how the human mind is! Ready to judge others before you ever know what's inside the mind. We call it the heart, but the emotions, the feeling of how people think and what makes them think the way they do. Sick! Sad, how human beings are.

So they murmured, found fault, found fault with Christ. They were always trying to find fault with him anyway. So here is another reason. "Here he is; look at what he's doing. Look who he's going to eat with." Incredible!

And so it was in this occasion that Jesus gave what's known as the parable of the pounds and speaking about the Kingdom of God that was to come. And people read that, world of Traditional Christianity reads about the parable of the pounds and think that they know some of what it might mean, and have really no idea whatsoever. Really, no idea whatsoever. No idea what the Kingdom of God is. There are religious groups who think, "The Kingdom of God is in your heart. It's in your heart." That just makes me want to barf. "Kingdom of God is in your heart." It's these fuzzy feelings, religious feelings, and it generally goes along with phrases like, "You've accepted Christ." "I've accepted Christ." And they don't even know the real life story of Jesus Christ. They have no idea what he was fulfilling at this time and what he was getting ready to fulfill. They have no idea of a very specific time that Jesus Christ gave that would prove, that would be the only sign that he was who he said he was, he was the Messiah. Incredible! And that story is totally ignored by every bit of traditional Christianity. Totally ignored and rejected because something else is accepted, because they learned it from their parents and their parents before them and their parents before them going back generation to generation to generation, the same old stories that aren't true, that aren't about Christ at all.

People have made a story. Isn't that an amazing thing? People have made a story, hundreds of thousands, millions upon millions and millions of people who consider themselves believers of

Jesus Christ, followers of Jesus Christ, to whatever that means for different people in different religions, and they don't know these things. Incredible! But neither can they because they're just as blind as the disciples were when Jesus Christ was telling them what was going to happen to the Son of man when he went down to Jerusalem, how he was going to be betrayed, placed on a pole, killed, and would rise from the dead three days later.

So continuing on with some of this story of Zacchaeus....

You know, I'm going to interrupt it here, because talking about this Kingdom of God and how people talk about what it is, different groups have different ideas of what the Kingdom of God is, and yet it's spoken of over and over again in scripture. And especially those who talk about it just being something that's a nice fuzzy feeling because you've accepted Christ and it's in your heart, it's how you feel. So once you've accepted Christ and you're no longer resisting and living your own ways (whatever that means), now it's in your heart. Where does that go? How does that fit into scripture?

I thought it'd be good to read part of Revelation here, Revelation 20. Things that people never hear, they're never taught, they don't think about because they haven't been taught, because it's not stressed, it's not a matter of importance. People don't go to church and hear in a 15 minute sermon or 10 minute or maybe a half an hour, or whatever it might be when they're being spoken to. And they can't read about it because people don't like to talk about it, those in Traditional Christianity; the preachers, the ministers who are out there don't like to talk about these verses.

Revelation 20. Even in my King James Bible there are certain headings here. Chapter 19, there's a huge heading here, "King of kings and Lord of lords." What's that all about? Who is that? What's the timing? And they don't know because they don't read the story. You feel sorry for people who go through a Bible. I remember about age 14 I had been given a Bible for graduation; a few years before that we had graduation from eighth grade, and then you had graduation from high school later on. I don't know how it's done over here, but they had formal periods of time when you'd go on a stage and you'd have a diploma and everything. But here I'd received a gift of a Bible from an aunt and I just put it aside because I really didn't care. But she wanted to give it to me. Little did she know where that was going in time! But, anyway.

Finally, a teenager, I guess it was... had to be about 14 (I think it was), somewhere in that period of time there. Because a certain thing that was going through my life one night I remember opening it up and started reading certain parts. Especially if you get in a section someone begot someone else, someone begot someone else, all this begettall stuff, and a certain kind of language here, the Old King James, it was like, "Who can understand this?" And I got into a bit of a story flow in a couple of places, and like, "What is this?" It didn't make any sense. Course I hadn't gone to church too much my life, but it wouldn't have meant anything anyways. So I just closed up the book. I couldn't understand it. Wasn't until several years later that finally began to receive understanding of it.

But that's the way it is with the world. They can open it up and there are people who read the Bible from, you know, all the way through, beginning to end, and they go through all those begettals and they keep going and they keep reading and they read certain stories in the Old Testament then. But they don't know what it means. They don't understand where it's going. They get to the life of Christ and they don't even understand his life, what he actually lived through and why. Why? Because of what they have been taught. And they try to piece it together with what they've been taught and it's a confusing picture. Sad. So thankful that God's getting ready to open the minds of people so they can "see" it.

And so **Revelation 20:1—Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit.** People read that and they have all kinds of things come into their mind, "What's this bottomless pit?" And they don't understand what the word means. It just means in the Greek language "a place of restraint." It's like going to jail; you get locked up. It's a spiritual type of jail, if you will, a place of restraint separated from people, wherever that is. **And he laid hold of the dragon, that spirit of old who is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.** Well, what does that mean? Why is Satan being bound for a... What is this thousand years? We've almost had 6,000 years of mankind; what does this 1,000 years have to do with anything? They don't know because they've never been told. You know. It's easy for you, but not for them. So they read through the story. Put yourself in their shoes. Devil. Satan. And people in the world don't even believe in that being. Some do. Some have different thoughts about him. But as an active being who tries to hurt mankind? It's not real to them. God's not too real either, but this being surely isn't real.

And it goes on to say, **And he cast him into the bottomless pit,** into this place of restraint, **and shut him up,** see, it's like shutting a door, **and set a seal upon him,** like locking it, can't open, can't be opened, **so that he should deceive the nations no more,** the nations. So right here people ought to pick up on a little bit, that he deceives nations. He deceives people in the world. That's what this is talking about - an active being who tries to hurt mankind, who tries to hurt what God has created and placed on this earth. ...**so that he should deceive the nations no more until a thousand years are finished. But after these things he must be released a little while.**

And I saw thrones, and they who sat on them; rulership, kings. Little bit easier to see what it's talking about here. ...**and judgment was committed to them.** So those who judge, as so often we see in maybe a movie and whatever and someone comes before a king and he judges their situation and what... It's talking about judgment of people and situations in life. **Then I saw the souls (lives) of those who had been beheaded...** And so people think about, well, all these... I haven't read about too many who have been beheaded. John the Baptist. Went through a museum the other day and saw pictures of supposedly John the Baptist with his head on a platter. You know, you go through some of these places... That part of a museum I've never liked. You go through and you see how the world thinks about religion and things that they consider to be religious, and it isn't at all what the Bible depicts and gives. And this word here simply means,

talks about being "cut off." Doesn't have to do with the head, its being cut off from the world, cut off for a purpose of life that they live from that point forward. They weren't a part of the world anymore. They came out of the world, basically, is all that it's talking about.

So, **saw those who were cut off from the world for their witness of Jesus**, and the witness of him. In other words, what they lived in their lives, by how they were going to live their lives. When people begin to live their life differently they're cut off from others. They're not the same anymore. Relationships aren't the same anymore. When you tell someone that you're not going to keep this period of time called "the mass of Christ," that you're not Catholic anyway and you're not going to accept something that came out of the Catholic Church like this because you realize he wasn't even born at that time of year, and you tell someone you're not going to keep that any longer but you're going to keep Passover instead of Easter, you're cut off from the world around you, oftentimes from very family members. And that's what it's talking about here. You don't have the same relationship with them anymore, with society and those around you, because you're accepting something totally different than what they believe and what they have. And so they reject you. And this is what it's talking about, for those who understood the real life story of Jesus Christ and began to live by the things he actually taught and what he said we should live by and what we should do. Once a person starts doing that then they are indeed cut off from the rest of the world around them.

And so here are some individuals it's talking about that did that very thing through a period of time that were cut off from the world, **and for the word of God**, because of what it says in here. People who would dare to go back to Leviticus 23 and read about a commanded assembly, appointments we're to have with God, as we spoke about earlier in this particular series. Individuals who would dare to believe what God says when He says that every seventh day is a commanded assembly, that you're to come before Him on the seventh day of the week, that other places in the Old Testament make very clear it's the same seventh day that God rested after He did the things He did with putting life on the earth and Adam and Eve and so forth and then He rested on the seventh day. That seventh day that never changes through time, because it's always the seventh day. You start a cycle; it's always going to be the seventh day. Amazing!

I think of the first time that I ever started receiving, seeing some calendars out of Europe back in the seventies. Worked for a particular company that sold instrumentation products to the oil industry, petrochemical industry and some of those instruments came out of Germany. They're very good at some of the things they make. I don't want to get into that. Anyway, they had a calendar that they would send over at the end of the year, and sure enough you go across the calendar and the day [week?] begins with Monday. I've never seen a calendar like that. And it ended on Sunday. All of a sudden Sunday is the seventh day of the week. Certain things begin to be planted into people's minds. All of South America, as a whole - I didn't even know that until of recent time, not too long back, but South America, as a whole, that's how they tell time. They accepted the same thing that kind of was swayed by and, in a manner of speaking, came through

the Catholic Church, of something prophesied a long time ago that would take place at the end of time.

And so people don't even know what day to keep. But if you start keeping it you may be labelled a Jew or something else. "Oh, you're Jewish?" No. Believe in Christ. "Oh, you're Seventh-Day Adventist?" No. And they try to put you in a pigeon hole somewhere; and people have difficulty doing that.

And so it tells about here those individuals who are cut off for the word of God, because of what they believe. They believe what God said back in Leviticus, that you should keep every seventh day, set it aside and observe it the way God says to observe it. And then annual Holy Days, like the Passover we're talking about, which is not a High Day but it is a commanded assembly of time, for time for God's people to observe.

...who had not worshipped the beast or his image... And so people don't know, "What's this beast? And what's his image? Never heard it." They have no idea what it is. They have no idea what they've been (mankind and those who call themselves Christian), what they've been observing for nearly 2,000 years. They don't understand the picture of a beast and something that has led them astray from what is true and what is right. And so they have worshipped his image, which we come to understand in time is the very thing that we're talking about here today: Sunday, that I just mentioned. Instead of the seventh day, it's the first day of the week that's observed and called, aptly so, the day of the sun. Because it doesn't come from God, it comes from another period of time long before Jesus Christ was ever born, of a worship that people did in worshipping of the sun. And so in time it was misconstrued and twisted around and distorted a little bit to be brought into a belief of Jesus Christ who supposedly was resurrected on a Sunday morning, which he wasn't, and of a Jesus Christ - because people don't know the real life story of Jesus Christ, that he was not resurrected in the daytime period at all but at the end of a day, the beginning of a period that was being thrust into darkness but it was the end of a day and it was during a day time, but not Sunday. Incredible! And I hope all of us understand when he was resurrected. It wasn't at night time at all and it wasn't Sunday morning at all. And yet that's what's portrayed to people. And so you have churches that face to the east, you have people that think toward the east, or their graves are situated in certain way that they're not lined up north and south, they're east and west. Things that people, a lot of people don't know, even about people who are buried. And why? Well, it goes back to a belief about a resurrection. But if you're already in heaven I'm not sure why you need that. But anyway. Different ideas that have slipped in through time that people have and people have accepted as true and they're not true at all. They're lies. I don't want to say fake news, but anyway, I did.

And it says, **and who did not worship the beast or its image, and had not received its mark on their foreheads, or in their hands.** Which people get all crazy about this. It's like you have to have certain numbers in your hand or in your forehead or whatever. And it's nothing about that at all. It's about terms that are used about how you think, what you think in your mind, who you are.

Your forehead, this is the intellect. And then your hands, always depicting and picturing how people work and being able to work, and so forth. And it just shows when you're talking about something that God commands, on the Sabbath you're not to work. You're not to go about your normal weekly routine. And because you believe that it's in your forehead, it's in what you do and don't do as far as work is concerned. It pictures who you are. The picture of a beast, this beast that it's talking about, is a different belief. It's a belief in the day of the sun, Sunday as being a day of worship. It's a belief in a work that people choose to do the other six days of the week. And even that has changed now through time. They can basically work all seven days of the week.

...and they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. When oh when oh when is this thousand years? Who has ever heard in Traditional Christianity about a thousand years? Who is going to rule for a thousand years? If people are up in heaven don't they have something that goes on for everlasting life? Why something limited to a thousand years? And so why not ask the questions? "What's this thousand years?" "Who are these people that are given power to reign, to rule, to judge?" "Why is Satan put away so that he can't deceive the nations anymore?" A period of time when individuals are going to rule on the earth and Satan has to be put away so he can't deceive the nations any longer and so that people can be governed by God's Government, the Kingdom of God on the earth. So simple. Prophecies over and over again that talk about the King of kings, that talk about a King indeed that will rule all this world, this earth that through time people, the Jews anyway, and Israelites looked for a coming of the Messiah. Same word, "Christ." The coming of the Christ.

And then it goes on to say in **verse 5—For the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.** So you see some here that are resurrected. That's what it's talking about, to rule and reign with Christ for a thousand years. And it says the rest of the dead weren't resurrected for another... until the end of a thousand years. Well, what on earth? That's just like the disciples with Christ: "You're going down to...? Son of man is going to be betrayed in Jerusalem and he's going to be put on a pole and die and three days later rise again from the dead?" There was nothing there. They didn't get any of it. And people read something like this about a thousand years and they can't help it; there's nothing there. But they're going to begin to be able to understand it and see it. **The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.**

And then it goes on the next verse. I love this because no one talks about this. **Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power.** How do you die twice? Who can die twice? Wouldn't you think by a little bit of logic and a little bit of thinking people would ask the question, "How can you die twice? How does this happen? How does this take place?" And they don't know. It's an awesome picture we'll talk more about in the series as we go forward.

So let's go back here again, this particular story of where Christ was, working his way toward Jerusalem. We'll go to John next. But finishing there in Luke, again, he gave the parable of the

pounds, as I mentioned, and then he spoke of the Kingdom of God that was to come, spoke of a Kingdom of God. It's about a government. It's about a Kingdom that's to be on this earth. And it's to be here for a thousand years when Jesus Christ will rule and will reign.

Sad. People don't know that he came the first time to simply die. To die as a human being. And to come back a second time to rule, to be the Messiah. He wasn't the Messiah before. He said he was the Messiah, in essence, He didn't deny it when he was asked. He acknowledged it to the disciples. He is the Christ. He is the Messiah. He was the one spoken of throughout the Bible, throughout the Old Testament that was to come. And he was there, the Son of God; Son of man, as it's referred to in different places. And yet he's to come again, but this time to fulfill the role of the Messiah; to fulfill the role of the King of kings, and the Messiah is something that comes later in time.

So again here, picking it up in **John 11:11**. Again, breaking in. **He said these things. And after that he said to them, Our friend Lazarus sleeps.** So now, again, he's talking about Lazarus, bringing up the subject of Lazarus again here. And again, being reminded here that when he first heard that Lazarus was sick he remained behind, it said, two days longer. Then he revealed to them that Lazarus was indeed dead. He says, **but I go, that I may wake him out of sleep.** So again here, they just see him as being sick. He told them that Lazarus sleeps. **Then the disciples said, Lord, if he can sleep, then that'll be good for him.** He's sick; sleep is good when you're sick. If you're able to sleep and be rested up then your body can get stronger, so this is good. **However, Jesus was speaking of his death,** a state of being. God has the power when someone is dead, likens it to sleep, and He can awaken people out of that. And so it says here, speaking of his death, **but they thought that he was speaking about his being rested in sleep. Then Jesus said unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.** They were thinking physically. They took what he said to mean of being asleep not a matter of death, but a matter of rest. And then Jesus Christ to take away any doubt whatsoever let them know very clearly, **Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes, he said, that I was not there.** When? What's he talking about? He's talking about when he... If he'd heard... at the point of time that he heard that he was sick, if he'd gone down immediately before he had died. So this is part of the story here. Basically he's referring back to here, "If I was there when he was sick and healed him," he's saying, "I'm glad that didn't happen." That's what he's telling them.

He says, **I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent you may believe; nevertheless, let us go unto him.** So he's telling them there, "For your sakes, I am glad that we weren't down there and that you didn't see him healed." Why is he saying this? Because of the mind and how people tend to think. And people tend to think very physically, even within the Church sometimes. And I've generally noted that as people are newer within the Church, especially at the end-time here, that God has given more intervention in people's lives when they're first new, when they're anointed for sickness, because that's what God instructs in the Church, that when you're sick call upon the elders of the Church, to look to God's government and

how God works, that it comes from God. It doesn't come from the elders. It doesn't come from the ministers. It doesn't matter who the minister is. I've known of times past where people the higher up they are, that surely they're closer to God and I'm going to have more chances of being healed. It has nothing to do with that whatsoever. Nothing! Nothing! It doesn't matter who does the prayer as long as they're a part of the Body, as long as they're one of God's elders, one of God's ministers, and they put the oil on and lay hands upon them. It comes from God. God does the healing. And so I've seen that so often when people are newer that God intervenes more often. I think of different families specifically, they learned those lessons; that as time went along that it was less and they went through different things and they began to learn other things in their life as a result of that. Awesome how God works with human beings.

But here is an example then of something that's taking place where he's saying, "I'm glad it didn't happen. I'm glad I didn't do it there. Because if I'd just healed him how would you think? How would people think?" "Ah, he rested. They gave him chicken soup, and he started eating; he got better." Now, if Christ had been there and healed him, oh, just, people can think, the Pharisees, Sadducees, even those in the Church can think this way, "It's just kind of the timing of it and they just got better." Was it really the healing (the anointing) or was it they just got better all of a sudden? Hmmm. And so for that very reason Jesus Christ is saying, "I'm glad you weren't there. I'm glad we weren't there. I'm glad for your sakes, for what you're able to see and believe that he wasn't just anointed, in essence, or had hands layed upon him or told... Jesus Christ just told them, "You're healed." He didn't have to do all that other part that was given, as time went on, to the Church. But for him he just said it. Like the blind man we read about earlier. He said, "Your faith has made you whole. Go your way." Or he'd tell them other things they needed to do, or whatever. Because they looked to him and he said, "You're healed," and it was just done by what he stated.

And so he's telling the disciples here, "I'm glad it didn't happen that way." Because they'd seen all kinds of things. They'd just seen the blind man receive his sight. They'd seen the things with the lepers already. They'd seen different things that happened along the ways, and so many other things that have taken place through time here in that 3½ years. But this, this was not the same. This is not the same where human reasoning can ever, ever get in the way. This is going to be something. And that's why this one is so important and what is taught here in this particular example about Lazarus. Far more important than any kind of sickness or ailment or blindness or being lame, crippled, whatever it might be, of being healed. This goes far above and beyond human reasoning. And so he went on here, he says, "I'm glad that this didn't happen. That we weren't there." So he said, "Let's go on down."

So they were drawing closer. They were still up in the regions of Jericho. They were moving down toward Jerusalem. Bethany is just about 2 miles outside of Jerusalem. And so this is where Lazarus, Mary, and Martha were. That's where their home was. And this is where they're going to go first.

And then **verse 16**, we continue with the story. **Then Thomas said, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Lets also go, that we may die with him.** Now, not referring to, in this respect here, for whatever purpose and why he stated it this way, but their mind was that if Jesus Christ is going to go down to Jerusalem... So it's about something they were discussing among themselves and Jesus Christ was telling them in these stores with Lazarus, related to Lazarus, "We're now going down to Jerusalem," and they were saying, "Well, don't you know the Jews are out there to stone you?" And so this is a comment in that context, in essence. It wasn't a matter of relating something to Lazarus, that, "Let's go and die and be like Lazarus." It had nothing to do with that. It was about "This is two miles outside of Jerusalem, and if you're that close they're going to find you. And they're going to be able to take you if you're that close to Jerusalem because they want to lay hands upon you and they want to stone you. So let's also go with him. So if we're going to die, let's all die together." Didn't totally work out that way, but at least he spoke up and said that at this moment in time. And they didn't all have the same feelings about this. They weren't all that anxious. Who is, in human life, ready to die? It's just not a way of thinking as a whole.

So **verse 17** goes on to say, **And then when Jesus had arrived;** so here now they are in Bethany. They had arrived in Bethany. **...and found that he already had been dead in the grave four days.** So he hadn't been just dead. They don't just throw you in the grave. There's preparations and things that go on, and generally within a 24 hour period there. So he could have been dead 4½, 5 days, as a whole. So here he's been in the grave already for 4 days. And it says, goes on to say here, it says, **Now Bethany was near to Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs,** which, again, is about 3¼ km, or two miles. **And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.** So they'd gathered there because of what people do generally, especially in that society, to comfort others who've experienced a death in the family.

Verse 20—Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him. But Mary sat still in the house. So Christ was still very close now at this point in time, but stopping at various points along the way and talking and teaching and so forth. This continued on all the way down in their journey. And so it was close enough that some had gone ahead and told them that he is back here wherever, and so that's what she's doing. She's going back now because they know exactly where he is and she's going back to discuss this with him.

Let's pick up here now in **verse 21—Then Martha said to Jesus, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.** They had already experienced so many things when Jesus Christ had intervened and healed people. And they believed indeed that "If you had been here you could have healed him." **But I know, that even now, whatever you ask of God, God will give it to you. And Jesus said unto her, Your brother shall rise again. And Martha said to him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.** Now, that's an amazing response. She already had enough understanding of something that he'd already taught, and they understood things about death, life and death that others didn't. And even the Jews didn't fully grasp and

comprehend by any measure at this point in time. They were totally messed up. When Christ talked to them, things that they believed, Pharisees, Sadducees, even they opposed each other because of the differences in beliefs that existed 2,000 years ago. And so she said, "I believe this, in a resurrection," another time period.

And people in the world read right through this and they don't think about it, because what an amazing thing that in their mind when someone dies they're either going up or down. They're either going up to heaven or they're going down to this hot place for the rest of time. And they don't understand. Nobody goes up. Nobody goes... Well, they go down in a grave and they return to the dust of the earth like God says, "Dust you are and to dust you return." You don't have immortal life in you. You don't have eternal life in you like the world tries to teach.

The world tries to teach that you have an immortal soul; you have a measure of immortal life living in you. That's what the world of Traditional Christianity teaches. So that when you die you either go up or down because you're going to live on. It's just an automatic thing. It's like a little switch; no longer you're physical, but you're in some kind of a spirit world, a spirit form of some sort and you're going to go someplace because you have this thing that's called an immortal soul. No one has an immortal soul. They just die. Just like a cow when it gets old and dies out here in the pasture, whatever animal it is that dies, a bird falls and dies, it's dead and it just goes back to dust in time. And so do human beings. Nothing immortal living in anyone. But people choose to believe something that's not in the Bible. It's not there. Some things are translated in different Bibles to lead people to think that way, but it's just not there. Speaks of (same words are used), of animals, that they have this "nephesh," things that people misconstrue as being an immortal soul. No, they don't.

Verse 25. Anyone that dies God has to give them life again at some time. And she was simply saying, "I know that my brother is going to be resurrected at the last day." She understood about a great resurrection that was going to take place in time and that he would be resurrected back to life a second time, physical human life a second time. We take so much for granted, those who know these things. We know these things and how does it move us? How are we moved by the things we see and the things we know that come from the mind of God Almighty because He shared His mind, His life with us, His word with us, His purpose and His intent of life with us so that we can see things that others are yet blinded to. They can't yet see because it's not time for them. And if you can see them, sometimes we just fail to grasp how incredibly blessed we really are, how much we really have been given by the Great God of this universe. Because none of this you can know - not only that, you can't even hold on to it. Anyone who leaves the Body of Christ, in time their mind, they see all kind, they can mix and misconstrue anything of Traditional Christianity with things that they've learned, but they can't "see" it anymore. And that's why they mixed all kinds of things up. Becomes a hodge podge of ideas and beliefs.

And I think of what happened after the Apostasy and what took place. And people wanted to build these bridges between each other, of different ideas and beliefs of a scattered body, of a

scattered Church. And one person believing in a 14th/15th Passover and someone else believing something else about Pentecost, and so if they kind of come and share these things with each other that maybe they can have some kind of a, well, friendship and a fellowship and be in services together and still have different beliefs. And it gets down to the point where people believe that, well, out of some of the groups, God's just working with people in all the different groups and in time He'll bring us all back together again, but He's working with all of us in our little way. That's what the world of Traditional Christianity basically teaches. Doesn't matter whether you're a Presbyterian or a Lutheran or a Church of Christ or a Southern Baptist or a Northern Baptist or whatever belief you might have, but God just kind of working with us in our own ways and in time we'll all be in the same place. No, you won't. Doesn't work that way.

Verse 25—And Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection. That sends chills up and down my spine. He said, "I am the resurrection." Powerful! And yet people can read something like that and not understand at all what he's saying. The power of life is in him. He is the life that came from God Almighty, that was given in, starting in a little baby when it was born, growing up into a man and then having 3½ years of a ministry. That life that God put in him was the life to be given to all mankind in time if they'll listen, if they'll receive it when that time comes for them. It is a life. It is talking about a life, the resurrection to life. "I am the resurrection," meaning the power of life is in and through him. He was telling them things about himself that they couldn't grasp nor understand. He tells the world this in this book and the world doesn't grasp nor comprehend what that really means. For why do you need a resurrection if you're already alive as soon as you die? Why do you need a resurrection if all of a sudden people are having your funeral and a body out here, but you're already gone looking down upon them? Because, "I know he's up there looking down on us right now." Then why do you worry about the body. Close that casket. He's not there anymore. Let it be a dead body. It's just a body. It's just a physical body; nobody's there. And that is true, nobody's there at death. People have strange ideas about death and life.

And so why is Christ needed at all? He is the resurrection. He says, "I am the resurrection," in essence. That's what he's telling them. ...**and the life.** You want life? You're talking about a resurrection? Comes through him. That's what he's saying, "Comes through me." That's what he was telling them. There is no other way to have life again except through Jesus Christ. He said, "I am the resurrection, and the life." Awesome! Awesome words that sometimes we don't even grasp fully what it means, the power that's contained in what he had to say, the means and the way of what he was speaking to them.

And he who believes me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. And so that's why some kind of go to a point and, "Have you accepted Jesus Christ?" Different ideas that people have. You just have to say it. "Yes, I accept him. I believe." Well, what do you believe? Well, the Protestant churches, the Lutherans don't believe what the Presbyterians believe, and they don't believe what the Church of Christ believes, and they don't believe what the Baptists believe, and they don't

believe what the Seventh-Day Adventists believe, and they sure don't believe what the Catholics believe and on and on and on you go. So what are you talking about? Sad. Truly is.

And so if you know what to believe, if you know the real life story of Jesus Christ, if you know what he taught and you know how he instructed mankind to live, then that says it all. It truly does. And that's what he's talking about.

And whoever lives and believes me shall never die. Everybody is going to die. They don't understand what he's talking about here. "Shall never die?" The disciples all died. Every one of them. Every one of them, to our knowledge, was killed and put to death by the Romans, except for one, which is possibly John. All the rest were killed, put to death hideous, horrible ways in some cases. And so he's just telling them, "He who believes, he who lives..." Or, "Whoever lives and believes me shall never die." He's talking about the second death, what we read about back there in Revelation 20. But the world isn't taught this. They don't understand what he's saying when he says these things. And yet it's so clear to us because it is so simple. We understand that mankind can live twice. As a matter of fact, the overwhelming majority of mankind was intended to have two lives in a physical body. Who has ever heard such things?

And he said, **Do you believe this? And she said to him, Yes, Lord. I believe that you are the Messiah.** That's what she said to him. She didn't use the word "Christ," although it's the same thing in the Greek language, "the Anointed One." "I believe that you are the Messiah, the King, the King that God said would come." The King of His Kingdom, **the Son of God;** believe that. Awesome, what she said! "I believe that you are the Son of God." She believed the story of what had happened, that Mary conceived from God Almighty a child and gave birth to a child. So **I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God who should come into the world.**

And when she had stated this she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, in private, in other words, away from the others that were gathering there to comfort them, **saying, The Master has come and calls for you. And as soon as she had said that she rose up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the town,** he was still outside, because it talks about how that they'd gone out to meet him there. And so Martha had done that.

So it says, **Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him. The Jews then who were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, She's going to the grave to mourn there;** "to weep there," but it's about mourning. "She's gone out to the grave to mourn there." So they're going to give her some privacy. But that's not what she was doing. She was going out to see Christ. **Then when Mary had come to where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.** Both of them believing just as strongly in every way, having seen and heard all the things they had heard from him, Close friends. Close relationship. Christ has shared a lot with them, things that

aren't even written in this book. And so here is her response, the same as her sister Martha, "If you had been here..." She believed firmly Christ would have healed him.

Then Christ, goes on here talking about the response. **Verse 33—Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping and crying, and the Jews who came with her, so there were some who did follow, who were also weeping and crying, he groaned in the spirit and was troubled.** Bothered him.

Because there is that desire to give to them something that couldn't yet be given to them. The holy spirit hadn't yet been poured out. Pentecost had not yet come. Their ability to grasp fully what he was doing and why he was doing it and what he was coming into Jerusalem to do... This thing about coming into Jerusalem weighed heavily on his mind in ways you cannot grasp nor comprehend. He knew exactly why he was going down to Jerusalem. He knew exactly what he was getting ready to go through. And when he saw in essence here it was kind of an overwhelming thing. It's hard for us to grasp that, but it's good to try, to grasp what he felt inside, that he yearned, he desired, he wished he could give what he had to her and to others there so they could see clearly what was going on and what was taking place right here now at this time, so they could see more of the picture of what God was doing.

But you can't. You can't give this to others, even though sometimes we kind of groan inside and we long for a period of time when others will have more or others will come to "see" more, or others who are in the Church who are struggling so much with different things in their lives and God gives time for growth and you sometimes groan inside. But you can't give it to anyone and so you must exercise patience and time and love, God's love toward one another. And that shows our measurement then of how we love and care for each other within the Body and to the degree that God truly works inside each and every one of us or to what degree He does. And that is up to us, how we yield ourselves to God.

But this is very much what we're talking about. It's that genuine desire that's led by God's spirit for others. Because it comes from God. If it comes from us, it isn't right. It'll always be selfish in how we think about or judge others. But if it comes from God it'll be something unique and meaningful and beautiful.

So he groaned in the spirit and was troubled. **And said, Where have you laid him? And they said unto him, Lord, come and see.** Says, **Jesus wept.** He cried. Amazing. Because of all this emotion, emotion that you really don't grasp but you should strive to especially as you lead up to the Passover period here, of what he was living in his life. Because we need to know that he knew he was about ready to be beaten beyond recognition as a human being. He knew he was going to be scourged, if you will, beaten with whips and flesh ripped off of his body, so as it says in Isaiah, that no one could recognize him because his countenance, his appearance was so taken from him because of the flesh and the beating, flesh ripped off of his skin and the beating that he went through. Incredible. And he felt this. He knew this ahead of time in ways we cannot comprehend. Because we can know things of God, we can be inspired and moved by things of God, by His word and so forth, but the mind that was in him was more powerful, more knowing, more

understanding, and he knew in ways we can't comprehend, what he was about to go through. And this weighed heavily upon him more than we can comprehend. Not an easy thing when you know it to the degree he knew it. It wasn't like the disciples who said, "Well, let's just go down there with him and we'll die together." Because when it actually comes up to it it didn't work out too good. They fled. They didn't want to be associated with him. Even Peter, who was standing away from him at that point in time, remember what... him? "I didn't know him." Then finally the cock having crowed three times and it came to him and he realized exactly what Christ had told him, "You're going to deny me." So did all the others. Peter was a lot hardier in many respects than the others. He was one who was ready to go to battle more readily than others. He was ready to jump out in front more readily than others. He was and became the chief apostle to the Jewish people because of something unique that was within him that God used in a very powerful way as time went on.

Then in **verse 36** it goes on to say, **Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!** See, they had no idea why, what was inside of him, and what he was feeling and what he knew. They just thought he was mourning for Lazarus. He was getting ready to resurrect him. He wasn't mourning for Lazarus one iota. That was the last of anything that was on his mind. **And some of them said, Couldn't this man, who opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?** Couldn't he have done this too? It's like lamenting this. "If he'd just come sooner like Mary and Martha said, he wouldn't have died." And so if you can heal people of being lame and you can heal people of being blind and all kinds of sickness, and just bemoaning the fact that he wasn't there.

Jesus, therefore, again groaning in himself came to the grave. Because he knew and heard all these things that were going on around him. He knew things that were in the minds of people without even hearing it. Awesome! So it says, **groaning in himself came to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone was lying upon it.**

Going on in **verse 39** it says, **Jesus simply told them, Take away the stone. And Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to him, Lord, by this time he's stinking. He stinks, for he has been dead four days. And Jesus said to her, Did I not tell you that if you believed you would see the glory of God?** So he's just building upon the story, reminding them of certain things, knowing they can't see but one day they will. So repeating these things for them and for us. And I think of what he'd told them earlier when he said, "I am the resurrection, and the life. Any who believes on me, though you are dead yet shall he live." Incredible! That's what he's reminding her of.

Verse 41—Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes... And he did this all for us, and for them at that time so it could be recorded, so that everyone could read this. He didn't have to do it this way at all, but there's a reason why it all went this way. **He lifted up his eyes and said, Father, I thank You that You have heard me. And I know that you have heard me always. But because of the people which stand by I said,**

that they may believe that You have sent me. So again here, it's for them. It's for us. And he's just making it very clear here, "I know that You have always heard me." But he's doing this for us, for them.

John 11:43—And when he had spoken this, in essence, to the Father, **he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth!** That's just awesome! "Lazarus, come forth!" Can you imagine the people standing around there and him having been dead for over four days now? **And he who was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave cloth.** Now, we can't even picture this because of our traditions and how we do things, but at that particular time the closest we can come to that almost is like some of these crazy mummy shows that have been in the past. Because they wrapped the body and here you see a body wrapped for death, that's been dead, and all this cloth is wrapped around so meticulously so, walking. Incredible! I can't imagine the emotions of what people had to feel. Afraid? Fear? You think fear was a part of it? Happiness? Well, they don't know yet. Because he's been dead! He's stinking, as she said. Incredible. And so **he who was dead, speaking of Lazarus, came forth, bound hand and foot with grave cloth. And his face was bound about with a napkin.** So all this stuff wrapped around him, and yet all of a sudden he... You know, how's he know? He didn't even know what had happened to him. We don't even understand that! When you get as sick as he was sick and all of a sudden you drift off and you're dead, you don't know it. All you know at this moment in time is you can't move very well and you're walking, trying to walk. You can't even see where you're going. Incredible!

And Jesus told them, Loosen him, unwrap these things from him, and let him go. Then many of the Jews who came to Mary, who had seen these things which Jesus did, believed on him. To the point that they could. They saw something that was beyond physical healing. They saw something that no human being could use any kind of human reasoning about now. Because before they could. Everything could be palmed off on something, whatever. Because there were those who tried to disbelieve and find reasons, as even science tries to today.

I've seen people who are supposed to be scientists who tell about why certain things were aligned the way they were when Jesus was born and this light that came down into Bethlehem. Intellectual people who have degrees and doctorates to their name and they write the story about how the certain... They've come to this conclusion about where the planets were aligned and all the things that were taking place at this time and how this could have happened, that this light was shining down on Bethlehem when Jesus was born. Crazy! Different ideas that people get about how things can happen.

But worse than that are those who try to totally take away from what is true by other things that they say and do. Again, scientists who try to say that we climbed out of a swamp or whatever it might be, and how we evolved through time. Because they don't want to believe God. They don't want to believe there is a God. And yet here is something that Jesus did in front of so many witnesses and said, "Lazarus, come forth!" And they all witnessed it. People, all kinds of people that were there at that moment in time, mostly friends and so forth. But there were always the

Pharisees and the Sadducees who were hanging around trying to find some kind of fault, trying to find reasons to go back to give grounds to have him killed.

As it goes on to say here, **But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them about the things Jesus had done. Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council,** so they still had those like scouts that were out there, they were to bring back stories, **and said, What can we do? For this man does many miracles.** And the last one there, raising someone from the dead, how can you attribute that to anything but God that has to do it? But they didn't want to. They resisted that. Incredible! **If we leave him alone in this manner, all will believe on him. And the Romans shall come and take away both our place and our nation.** That's what they were concerned about, their place, their power, their place as far as those who had notoriety or whatever, or recognized by the Roman government and so they still had certain power with the people. And so that's all they were concerned about. They weren't concerned that here there is a man that some are saying was the Son of God, that some were saying is that Christ, the Messiah. He is the Messiah. They weren't concerned about those things. On the contrary, they wanted to find fault with him, wanted to find a reason they could put him to death, get rid of him. "Because everyone is going to follow him. Everyone is going to believe on him and we're going to lose our place."

John 11:49. So they began to determine how they were going to deal with Christ. **And one of them, called Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said to them, You know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, than that the whole nation should not perish. And this he spoke not of himself, but being high priest that year, he prophesied.** That's an incredible thing to realize that even in this moment there are things that happened, even though there were those who didn't want him, who wanted to see him dead, that there were certain things that when someone is in a certain place of responsibility and if God intends that a message go through them or that something be done through them it's going to get done. And so the account is here of something that was being done. So it talks about him being high priest and God is going to see to it that something was accomplished, something was done.

I think of an individual who became the man of sin, the son of perdition. And yet he did some things early on in his ministry that God saw to it a message went out to all the ministry. I've often spoken of this, of this matter of what is referred to as sheriffing and understanding that God does not work that way in God's Church. And God's ministry is not to work that way. But it was one of the most powerful things that needed to go out before the end actually took place, before the Apostasy actually took place, the last and most powerful thing that had to come out, and the only real meaningful thing that came through him, and yet was rejected by the ministry.

And so it goes on to say in **verse 52—And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad. Then from that day**

forward they took counsel together determining to put him to death. Incredible some of the things that are stated and why they're stated the way they are.

With that we'll stop there today and continue with *Part 5* next time.