

## Story 1

### Public Ministry and Miracles

## **Walking with Jesus - Water to Wine**

John 1:35-51; John 2:1-11

### ***JESUS ALONE CAN TAKE THE ORDINARY AND TRANSFORM IT INTO THE EXTRAORDINARY.***

#### **Story Outline:**

- I. First Disciples Chosen
- II. First Miracle Performed

#### **Life Application Principles:**

1. To be transformed by the power of Jesus, we must be willing to leave all behind and follow.
2. In order to lead others to Christ we must know Christ personally and follow Him in obedience.
3. A faithful follower is unconditionally devoted to Jesus.
4. We must be cautious not to allow our expectations to limit us from what God intends to give us.
5. Saying no to God will cost us everything.
6. One cannot out give God.
7. Jesus desires that we bring our every need to Him.
8. Jesus pays our debts before we even know they are due.
9. Obedience to God's authority must always take priority over obedience to earthly authority.
10. Jesus' power and dominion is limitless over all nature.

## CHRIST, ANOINTED ONE

Throughout the Bible we encounter many names for Jesus that help us grow in knowledge of WHO He is and WHY He came to earth over 2000 years ago. “**CHRIST**” is one such name. Used over 500 times in the New Testament, it is probably one of the most familiar of all His names and yet, the most misunderstood. Often coupled together with “*Jesus*”— “**JESUS CHRIST**”—many people erroneously believe it is His last name or simply a secondary name of little value. But it’s not. It is so much more. Hidden within the name “**CHRIST,**” are layers of truth that we must uncover in order to more fully understand its profound meaning, significance and application to our lives.

The best place to start to uncover the meaning of this powerful name is the Old Testament or “*Hebrew Scriptures.*” Beginning with the Seed of the Woman, all the way through the last of the Old Testament prophets, God promised His people that He would send someone to save them from their sin and rebellion that began in the Garden. The name used to describe this person is “*Mashiach,*” the Hebrew word for “*Messiah.*” The name “*Mashiach*” literally translated “**ANOINTED ONE**” comes from the Hebrew verb “*mashach*” which means “*to anoint.*” When the New Testament was written, the writers used the Greek language instead of the Hebrew. The Greek word with the same meaning for “*Mashiach*” is “*Christos*” which is translated “**CHRIST**” in English. In Matthew 1:21 we learn that the name Jesus means “*He will save His people from their sins,*” therefore, the name **JESUS CHRIST** literally means “*ANOINTED ONE who saves His people from their sins.*”

By definition, “*to anoint*” means to set apart for service to God that includes applying sacred oil to an object or person’s head in a ceremonial fashion. In Exodus 30:23-25, the Lord commanded His servant Moses:

*“Take the finest spices: of liquid myrrh 500 shekels, and of sweet-smelling cinnamon half as much, that is 250, and 250 of aromatic cane, and 500 of cassia, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil. And you shall make of these a sacred anointing oil blended as by the perfumer; it shall be a ‘holy anointing oil.’”*

Moses was then commanded by God to take some of the holy oil and anoint the Tabernacle, all its furnishings and utensils, the altar and the priests thereby consecrating them (declaring sacred, holy and set apart) for service to the Lord. In the years that followed, God also commanded that Jewish kings, and occasionally even prophets, be anointed to signify to His people that they were His chosen men, set apart to do His will.

So, how does all this apply to **CHRIST**? Although not anointed with oil, but rather with the Holy Spirit, as seen in His virgin birth and reiterated at the River Jordan at the beginning of His ministry, Jesus Christ the “*Christos*,” **ANOINTED ONE**, came into the world according to God’s will. Declared holy and set apart by His Father, the Son of God came to accomplish what mere men could not. The long-awaited prophesied “*Mashiach*,” God’s promised “*Seed*,” His Messiah had come! “*Christos*,” the final **ANOINTED** Prophet, Priest and King came into this dark, sinful, rebellious world to rescue us from sin and death and to lead us back to God who gives eternal life. As Prophet the **ANOINTED ONE** came to perfectly reveal God’s word to us. As Priest, the **ANOINTED ONE** came to perfectly deal with our sin and alienation from God, once for all, and to serve as the mediator and peace maker between us and God. Finally, as King, the **ANOINTED ONE** came first to perfectly reign over us, the children of God, and to protect us from the evil one. And secondly, to set up His perfect eternal Kingdom where He will rule and reign forever as “*King of kings and Lord of lords*” when He comes again (Revelation 19:16).

Amazingly, when Jesus began His public ministry, few recognized Him for who He was, despite overwhelming evidence that He possessed an anointing from God that far surpassed that which had rested on any other man. As people who had been searching the scriptures for hundreds of years looking for and awaiting the promised Messiah, there was great confusion about Him when He came to earth as a poor and helpless baby. And even after He had been ministering for some time teaching with astounding wisdom and performing great miracles most, even those who had followed Him closely, were still unsure of His true identity. So, one day Jesus asked His disciples,

*“‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter replied, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.’”* (Matthew 16:13-16)

RC Sproul states, “. . . with these words, Peter boldly answered with what is called today, ‘the great confession.’ That is, Jesus is the ‘Christos,’ the long awaited promised **ANOINTED ONE** of God. And this profound confession is the heart and soul of every Christian believer’s faith.”

Sadly today, there is still much confusion surrounding the identity of Jesus Christ. Many people, even professing Christians who, much like the disciples, spend a great deal of time in His presence, misunderstand WHO He truly is. Described as a great teacher, a kind and loving man and a model of morality and goodness, few truly know Him. And even fewer boldly and unapologetically profess Him as **CHRIST, THE ANOINTED ONE**, the Son of the Living God who alone has the power to save and give eternal life now and forever. Sadder still, most people are content with their inadequate level of understanding and powerless profession. Preferring their own ideas and busy lives, many people have become complacent and stopped earnestly seeking to know Jesus Christ. Content with church membership, attendance and occasionally

*“working for the Lord,”* most fail to take time to consider and ponder *“the depth of the riches and wisdom and of the knowledge of God”* (Romans 11:33) and of His Son, Jesus Christ, the **ANOINTED ONE**. **Are You Such a Person?** Are you satisfied with your depth of understanding of Jesus Christ? Are you content with your relationship with Him? Or, are you hungering to know Him more? Are you desiring a more personal relationship with Him?

You cannot know someone unless you spend time with that person. You cannot find that which you do not seek. As Jesus asked the early followers in John 1:38, so He asks you right today:

### **WHAT ARE YOU SEEKING?**

You cannot understand that which you do not study and meditate on. You cannot profess that which you do not know. As Jesus asked His disciples in Matthew 16:15, so He also asks of you today:

### **WHO DO YOU SAY I AM?**

Whether you are one who is seeking or one who claims to be a Christian, these are two questions you must answer honestly for yourself. The outcome of your life hangs on the answers.

Friends, Jesus Christ, the **ANOINTED ONE** is alive today and still perfectly fulfilling the roles of Prophet, Priest and King for your benefit. He is still speaking. He is still saving. He is still mediating. He is still ruling and reigning over the hearts of men and the affairs of the world. And He is still coming back, perhaps soon, to set up His Eternal Kingdom. **DO YOU KNOW HIM? DO YOU WANT TO KNOW HIM MORE?** If so, simply ask Him to uncover the layers of truth about Himself to you as found in His Word. It’s the ultimate desire of His heart. That’s why He came. His promise is never failing: *“You will seek Me and find Me, when you seek Me with all your heart”* (Jeremiah 29:13).

### **WHAT IS YOUR CONFESSION? WHO IS CHRIST TO YOU?**

Is He simply a *“good, kind and moral man”* or is He **CHRIST, the ANOINTED ONE**, the Son of the Living God who has saved you from your sins? Only as you spend time with Him and deeply ponder the fullness and the richness of WHO He is can you truly know Him and believe in Him. And only then, can you boldly and unapologetically profess that He is Christ, your Savior. And only upon that faith filled confession can you receive the fullness of what He offers. Be intentional every day to take time alone with God. Open His Holy Word and meditate deeply on **CHRIST, the ANOINTED ONE**. Ask Him to give you ears to hear His voice, and a heart to believe all He has to say. And finally, ask Him to make you willing to leave everything behind and follow Him as the early disciples did so you, too, can be transformed by His power and love.

**“Today, if you hear His voice do not harden your hearts” (Hebrews 4:7), for “whoever believes in Him will not be put to shame” (Romans 9:33).**

# THE DOCTRINE

## DISCIPLESHIP

### I. Background

As we read the New Testament we find words foreign to our every-day vocabulary that we assume were invented by the early Christians in their exuberance to describe what Jesus had accomplished on the Cross and the resultant new life that they were experiencing. We think that words like “salvation,” “redemption,” “justification,” “sanctification,” “glorification,” “atonement” and so on, even the word “church,” were created by the writers of the New Testament. But such was not the case. In the first century the Greek words behind these terms were common every-day words of the marketplace, the government, the courtroom, the home, and so forth. People in the first century who read Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, and the other writers did not need a theological dictionary to understand what they were reading. The words and the ideas associated with them were clear to all.

Another example of a word thought to be “invented” is that of “disciple,” a designation for those who were Jesus’s close friends and committed followers. Again, such was not true. The Greek word used in the New Testament that is translated as “disciple” is the word *mathetes*. That word already had a history going back hundreds of years outside of the first century Jewish context to the country of Greece in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.

In the era of the great Greek philosophers, groups of young men, and occasionally some women, gathered around those philosophers to learn from them. These learners were called *mathetes*. The *mathetes* would not just learn from the teacher but would imitate the teacher, the philosopher, in every way possible: his ideas, his commitments, his approach to life and to death. The imitation would go so far as to copy exactly how the teacher dressed, the color and style of the teacher’s toga (the original school uniform!). So if you visited any of the great cultural centers of Greece in 300 B.C., you would be able to identify who was the student’s teacher by simply looking at the student’s clothing.

This imitation was of such importance in that culture that the term *mathetes* came to mean not only a learner or student but also someone who through a lifetime was committed to learning by imitating another person.

### II. In the Gospels

And thus Jesus gathered around Him *mathetes*!

It was understood by those who followed Jesus that the commitment was more than just listening to Him and passing an examination at the end of the course. You can see that in the conversation that Jesus had with two of John the Baptizer's *mathetes* in John 1:35-38:

The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!" When the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. Turning around, Jesus saw them following and asked, "What do you want?" They said, "Rabbi" (which means "Teacher"), "where are you staying?" "Come," he replied, "and you will see." So they went and saw where he was staying, and they spent that day with him. It was about four in the afternoon.

The word "follow" used in this text means more than simply walking after Jesus. It is a word used throughout the Gospel of John to indicate DISCIPLESHIP (see 8:12; 10:4, 27; 12:26; 13:36; 21:19, 22). They are leaving John as his *mathetes* and becoming the *mathetes* of Jesus! With understanding that, Jesus's question, "What do you want?" can be understood to be like a teacher's questions at the beginning of a course, "What do you expect to get out of this course?" and "Are you ready to make the sacrifices necessary to accomplish that together?"

Their response to the latter question was in the affirmative, at least as far as they understood it: "Rabbi, where are you staying?" Yes, they wanted to know where Jesus was staying because it was getting late in the day and they needed a place to stay overnight. But also the word used for "stay" is one that the Gospel of John uses to signify a permanent place of residence (see 12:46; 14:17; 15:9). These two men are asking Jesus if they may be accepted into His school, to become His students, His imitators.

### III. Qualifications

Through the three plus years of Jesus's public ministry, He gradually but clearly made His *mathetes* aware of what it meant to be His disciple. As Jesus moved toward His final ministry in Jerusalem, toward His trial, death, burial, and resurrection, He spent several months in a region across the Jordan River from Judea called Perea. It was in the same area where three years earlier John had baptized Him: "This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan..." (John 1:28). He had returned to where His ministry of disciple training had begun. To the twelve that He now had chosen as *mathetes*, He said:

*"If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple. And whoever does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples."* (Luke 14:25-33)

To be a *mathetes* of Jesus has three radical qualifications impacting mind, soul, and spirit, or, as stated previously, completely affecting a person's ideas, a person's commitments, and a person's approach to life and death.

- **“If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple.”**

The Bible consistently speaks of the need to love, honor, and obey all members of our families: parents, siblings, spouses, and children. Yet in this text He commands His *mathetes* to hate those same family members. It would appear to be a contradiction. But perhaps not. Jesus is speaking not of hate in an absolute sense but rather in a comparative sense. It can be understood this way: Your love for Jesus should be so great that any other love in comparison will seem like hate. A *mathetes* of Jesus should love father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters in obedience to the Scriptures, but the *mathetes* should love Jesus more! So for example, in a marriage relationship, one's spouse is not to be the first love, rather Jesus. And the amazing thing is that if this is put into practice, the love for one's spouse (and father, mother, children, brothers, and sisters) is even greater!

- **“And whoever does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple.”**

To carry one's cross has been cheapened in our world to mean a passive submission to the difficult experiences of life, to disappointments, pain, sickness, and grief. But when Jesus spoke of His *mathetes* carrying a cross, He meant much more. The cross was in reference to the most hideous of deaths, a death penalty with maximum horror, shame, agony, and pain. He was not speaking of life's difficulties but of life's end. Therefore, for a *mathetes* to carry the cross meant that he was willing to die. As the first qualification for **DISCIPLESHIP** speaks comparatively (Love for Jesus is to be *greater than* the love for any family member.), so does this one: Love for Jesus is to be *greater than* the love the *mathetes* has for his own life. He is willing to die for Jesus!

- **“In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.”**

Through the centuries since Jesus spoke these words, many have interpreted them to mean a command for a life of absolute poverty, rejecting all physical possessions and living one's life with as little as possible. While God has called some to live this way and promises to bless those whose lives are in reality like this, the intent of Jesus' command for His *mathetes* is quite different. The key is the phrase “give up everything.” What is missing is “To whom?” The answer is to God! The *mathetes* is willing to forsake all to Jesus, to give Him absolute authority

and control over everything in one's life: money and possessions, home, business, all that one has, even all of one's time! And once again, the qualification is comparative: Love for Jesus is to be *greater than* the love the *mathetes* has for any possession.

#### **IV. The Cost of DISCIPLESHIP**

During the period of the rise of the Nazis in Germany, groups of Christians throughout the country who were faithful to the Bible and committed to its truths formed a church network that came to be called the Confessing Church. These believers were opposed to the Nazi regime and to those who compromised and capitulated in the face of opposition. Among the leaders of the Confessing Church was a young pastor and teacher Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Although he had the opportunity to leave Germany in the late 1930s, he chose to remain to serve his congregation and his students. Increasingly he experienced persecution, eventually forbidden to write, to teach, or to preach. And in April 1943 he was imprisoned in a concentration camp. Two years later he was hanged for his faith by the Nazis, just two weeks before the American army liberated the camp where he was being held.

In 1936 prior to the limitations being placed on his writing and teaching, Bonhoeffer completed writing *The Cost of DISCIPLESHIP*, his study of what Jesus meant for a person to be His *mathetes*. Not knowing what his end would be in nine years but knowing what it meant to be a true disciple of Jesus and the cost of that **DISCIPLESHIP**, he wrote prophetically:

The cross is laid on every Christian. The first Christ-suffering which every man must experience is the call to abandon the attachments of this world. It is that dying of the old man which is the result of his encounter with Christ. As we embark upon **DISCIPLESHIP** we surrender ourselves to Christ in union with his death—we give over our lives to death. Thus it begins; the cross is not the terrible end to an otherwise god-fearing and happy life, but it meets us at the beginning of our communion with Christ. When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die.

May we like the two disciples of John the Baptizer and like Dietrich Bonhoeffer be willing to follow Jesus and be his *mathetes*.

**To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. (1 Peter 2:21)**

## Questions for Reflection

*Read John 1:35-51*

1. Who are the 4 men that became followers of Jesus in this passage? List the different ways Jesus used to call them.
2. What impresses you most about John the Baptist in v. 35-36? What about the 4 men called? (see vs. 41, 45-49)
3. What lessons do you find about evangelism and DISCIPLESHIP in this passage from these men that you can apply to your own life and ministry? What do you believe was the secret to their power in calling others to Christ?
4. What encourages you about the type of people Jesus called to follow Him? What about their response? (see also Matthew 4:18-22, Mark 1:16-20, Luke 5:2-11)
5. How did Jesus call you? What was your initial response?
6. What worldly pursuits are hindering you from obediently following Jesus today?

*Read John 2:1-11*

7. What problem occurred at the Wedding at Cana? Why do you think Mary brought the problem to Jesus?

8. What do you think Jesus meant by His response to her in v. 4?
  
9. What instructions did Mary give to the servants in v. 5? What does this teach you about Mary? How can you apply this to your own life?
  
10. List several things this miracle reveals to you about Jesus's character.
  
11. What do you think is the main lesson Jesus wanted to teach His disciples through this miracle? How can you this apply to your life and ministry?
  
12. How has Jesus taken the ordinary in your life and transformed it into something extraordinary?

### ***JESUS, the ANOINTED ONE***

13. What stood out to you or was most convicting in your study of **JESUS CHRIST, the ANOINTED ONE**? How will you apply what you have learned?

### **SALVATION CHALLENGE**

Have you, like the first disciples, come to understand that Jesus is no ordinary man, but actually the Messiah, the Son of the Living God come to take away your sins and save you? If so, are you willing to leave all behind and obediently follow Him?