

Scripture Standard

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Pleading for a total return to New Testament principles.

The "Passion Week"
Another downloadable chart has been added to this web page:
[www.eusebos.eu/printable_charts_\[pdf\]/](http://www.eusebos.eu/printable_charts_[pdf]/)
It sequences daily events beginning with the 'triumphal entry.'

Portraits In The Storm

[Mark 6:45-53]
Colin Hilton - Hindley

It had been a busy day for Jesus and His disciples. They had ministered to the crowds all day long. Jesus had taught them the Word of God, and when late afternoon came, Jesus demonstrated His power and glory by feeding the five thousand strong gathering with five loaves and two small fishes.

Now, evening is fast approaching and Jesus sends His disciples away by boat to the other side of the lake.

There are possibly a couple of reasons why Jesus sent the disciples away at this time. The first being in relation to the crowds whom He had just fed. John 6:15 tells us that the people were so excited by the miracle of the bread and fish that they tried to take Jesus and make Him their king. Jesus knew the time had not come for that, so maybe He sent the disciples away to turn them away from that kind of thinking. He did not want them to get caught up in the wild excitement over the miracles.

By the way, the people only wanted to make Jesus a king because He gave them bread (John 6:26). The same is true today! People go to vote and vote for the person who promises them most of what they hope for.

Another reason might be that Jesus sent the disciples away so He could spend some time alone with His Father. Jesus sensed a change in the direction of His ministry.

He knew that the miracles and His popularity with the people would bring Him into direct conflict with the religious leaders. He knew that intense grief, sorrow, persecution and eventually death were not far away. He needed to seek His Father in prayer. What a lesson for us! We should be people of prayer, seeking the Lord's help at every turn in the road of life, because we are never less alone than when we are alone with God.

Another reason for the disciples being sent away had to do with the disciples themselves. After all they had seen Jesus do, they were still filled with doubts and unbelief. Jesus uses this storm to reveal His deity and power to His disciples one more time.

I want to try and show you a couple of different applications that can be found here. I want to speak about the **portraits in the storm**. There's a word here for the brokenhearted:

The First Portrait Is Of The Burdened.

There is a great word of comfort here for those going through one of the storms of life. There is a saying that you are in one of three places in your life today. You are either in a storm, coming out of a storm, or heading into a storm.

There are physical storms, mental storms, emotional storms and spiritual storms. There are storms in homes, marriages, at work, publicly and storms that manifest themselves in the secret places of the heart.

Storms are part of our human existence; the writer, in **Ecclesiastes 2-23** wrote:

For all his days are sorrows, and his travail grief; yea,
his heart takes no rest in the night. This is also vanity.

Storms touch every part of our lives. We all find ourselves in stormy situations from time to time. These verses offer some help and hope for those passing through a stormy time of life.

See how Jesus sent these disciples away. In **v.45**, He "**constrained**" His men to get into the ship and cross the sea.

The word "constrained" means to drive or to force. They did not want to go and Jesus literally pushed them into the boat and made them leave!

Did Jesus know a storm was coming? Of course he did! He might have planned it just for this occasion. What we need to remember today, as we face our own stormy times, is the truth that God stands behind all the storms of our lives. If only one area of our lives is outside His control today, then we are in serious trouble. If the devil, the world, or this flesh is able to disrupt our life, apart from the permission of God, then no area of life is safe.

However, if God is in control, and I believe He is, then whatever He brings into your life or mine will always work out for our good and His glory.

How He Saw Them - vv.46-48a - They were on the sea in the middle of a dark stormy night. Jesus was a long way away, on a mountain, praying to His Father. Yet, the Bible tells us that He saw them. This verse displays two great truths that need to be mentioned about the Lord's care for His people.

His interest - even though He was occupied with the matters of eternity, still He was interested in His men and their problems. He saw them toiling. They were in unbelievable stress as they fought against the sea. Even the wind was contrary. They were fighting for their very lives on the sea and Jesus saw it all. Jesus knew their condition. He knew what they faced. And He cared for them and for their safety.

We have the same assurance when we go through the storms of our lives. We have a Saviour who is interested in what we face in life.

In fact, our Lord is moved by the storms we are called on to face (Hebrews 4:15). Bring your impossible situations to Him and watch Him handle them in His power!

His Intercession - Jesus was in that mountain, but He was not wasting His time. He was in prayer.

Surely He was praying about the direction of His ministry, but I think He was also praying for the disciples struggling in the storm on the sea below.

Sometimes when we are feeling as if we are alone in our troubles and worries we should remember that we haven't been abandoned in the storm; the Lord Himself is praying for us at the throne of God (Romans 8:34). I can't speak for you, but it really does comfort me to know that the Lord is praying for me in Heaven.

How He saved Them - vv.48b-51 - Jesus did not just send these men out there to die in that storm. And He did not just watch from a safe distance while they struggled. Jesus took an active part in their rescue. Notice how Jesus ministered to His men on that stormy sea. They were not left to struggle alone. He came to them using the same waves they feared as His transport. He has promised us that we can count on His presence as well. He will be with us to strengthen us and sustain us through all the storms of life. We will never weather a storm alone!

His Peace - vv.49-50 - When the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water, they thought they were seeing a spirit. They were terrified and cried out because they thought they were seeing a spirit walking on the water.

The phrase “**would have passed them by**” means that Jesus walked out to where they were and began to walk side by side to their boat. These disciples thought they were dead men! Jesus senses their distress and immediately seeks to comfort them. He identifies Himself by saying “**It is I**”. It's the same thing He said when He said “**I am the Bread of Life**”, “**I am the Door**”, “**I am the Way the Truth and the Life**”.

Then He commands them to stop being afraid and never fear again. If they could have grasped Who it was that was with them, they would have known that there was no reason to be afraid!

Is it not true that the storms of life terrify us? Is it not true that the Lord will come to us, walking on the very waves we fear, and we don't even recognize Him? Is it not true that when we do acknowledge His presence, He is able to speak peace to our souls? If we can just learn to recognize His presence, even while we are in a storm, we can have peace that passes all understanding.

His Power - v.51 - Jesus just walks up to the boat and gets in. As soon as He does the waves cease. John's gospel tells us that when Jesus got into the boat, it immediately arrived at the other side of the lake (John 6:21). What a miracle! One moment they're in the middle of a raging sea; the next moment they are on a calm sea at their destination! That is the power of our Lord!

The Second Portrait Is: What This Miracle Is Really All About.

Jesus sent His disciples into this storm to give them a lesson in faith. He sent them out there so that they might come to understand who He really was. In a lot of ways, the disciples were blind to the power and person of Jesus.

There they are, out on the sea, terrified and fearing for their lives. All of a sudden, Jesus just shows up and demonstrates His great power over nature.

He was not going up and down on the waves like a cork bobbing on the ocean; He was not being tossed about by the raging winds, He was walking out to that boat just as calmly and as surely as if He had been walking on a footpath.

Then, when He set foot in their boat, the waves instantly ceased their raging!

These men had all the evidence they needed to believe that Jesus was Who He claimed to be, yet eleven of them did not fully realize who He was until He had died on the cross and rose again from the dead.

One of their number, Judas, never did get it and he died lost in his sins.

From what these disciples had already seen Jesus do, even without this miracle, they ought to have known Who He was.

They had seen Him cast out demons, heal all manner of diseases, raise a young girl from the dead, and now they had just seen Him feed thousands with an extremely small amount of food.

Jesus had given them an extensive, intensive lesson in His power and ability, but they never quite got it. In spite of all they had seen Him do, still they doubted His ability to handle the next situation.

v.53.- As soon as they reach the shore, Jesus once again tries to remove all doubts from the minds of these disciples. As they watch, the local people bring out their sick ones. These people have more faith than the disciples! They believe that if they can just touch the hem of His garments they will be healed. Many touch Him and they are instantly healed! The Lord had used the disciples to heal before this (Mark 6:12,13). **Here, He does it Himself.**

They are suffering from hard hearts and a lack of faith.

The Lord will accomplish His work either with us or without us. Jesus did not need His disciples. He chose to work through them. It seems to me that it would have been easier if He had just done it Himself. He chooses to work through us too; isn't that a blessing?

When we are walking with Him by faith, as we should be, He is able to use us in a great way (Mark 6:12,13).

When we are not walking in faith, He is not able to use us as He would like to. If He can't use us, then He will find others He can use!

**Let's determine that we will be a people
He can use for His glory!**

The Mirror That Cannot Lie

James Neil – Skelmersdale

What do you see when you look in a mirror? ... Do you like what you see? ... Do you turn a blind eye to what you see?

Do you go to another mirror for a second opinion?... or do you turn the mirror to the wall ... with the comment ... "They don't make mirrors like they used to in my younger days" ?

Would I be correct to say that most of us look into a mirror every day? Maybe to adjust a tie or scarf or perhaps just out of habit? But when was the last time you looked hard and long into a mirror and really saw what and who you were looking at? It is so easy to look in a mirror and deceive ourselves. ... What we think we see becomes in our mind reality.

Very often what we persuade ourselves to see is very much influenced by our mood or frame of mind. If we are in a positive mood then the grey hair makes us look more distinguished ... the lines around the eyes are because we smile a lot and so on.

Of course if we are feeling a bit sorry for ourselves the grey hair looks about to fall out and the wrinkles around our eyes are a sign of the many burdens we carry. ... It can be very difficult to really look at oneself in a mirror ... and what makes it difficult may just be because we know that the mirror does not lie.

For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Hebrews 4:12-13

Often the Bible is referred to as the “Mirror of the soul” and when we read these words from Hebrews ch.4 we can understand why.

Here in the word of God we have a mirror which when we look into it shows to us our true standing with our God. It tells us that our God knows and sees us far more clearly than we see ourselves, that He knows our innermost thoughts, that He misses nothing, that no person can escape his gaze.

This is not a mirror which we can look into and see what we want to see. When we look into this mirror we see ourselves as we really are ... and how close in our life we are really walking with Jesus.

The Bible is a book which means different things to different people. For some it may be boring. To others it is a book of great interest or yet to others it is a fairy story.

Perhaps for some people ... one of the reasons that they reject the Bible is that they find it too hard to bear what they see in this particular mirror.

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? 2 Corinthians 13:5

How closely do we dare examine what we see when we look into this “Mirror of the soul”?

Who is this person we see ? Is it the person we want to see? If not ... then don't turn the mirror to the wall ... but rather ... look deeper and it will tell you how to become that person.

My Father's house

James Lim - Lavender, Singapore

Walk prudently when you go to the house of God.

[Ecclesiastes. 5:1]

The word “*oikos*” for house appears quite a few times in the New Testament in various interesting forms.

Doulos means bond-servant or slave. Although Jesus is the son of God, he came as a servant. The apostles were chosen as God's ambassadors but they presented themselves as bondservants (not superstars) for Jesus' sake.

But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a bond-servant (*doulos*), and was made in the likeness of men. Philippians. 2:7

For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants (*doulos*) for Jesus' sake. 2. Corinthians 4:5

A *doulos* who belongs to a certain household is called *oiketes* (just like Dobby, the house elf in Harry Potter!). If you are an *oiketes* of this master, should you be serving another?

No servant (*oiketes*) can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon. Luke 16:13

Oikodome is a compound word from *oikos* (house) + *doma* (build from *demo*).

“Building a house” is what Edifying is! Do you know that a huge building is also called an Edifice?

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying (*oikodome*) of the body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:12-13

For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building (*oikodome*). According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1. Corinthians 3:9-11

Lastly *oikonomos*, is a combination of *oikos* (house) + *nomos* (manage). It means Steward. A steward manages or establishes orderliness in a house BUT he is not the owner. Since he is a mere servant, he is accountable to the owner. The apostles saw themselves as bond-servants submitting to Christ and stewards held accountable to God.

There are examples and descriptions of leading or leadership in the scriptures but the word 'leader' is not used. I do not like the word 'leader' in the church as it is a foothold for many secular practices to infiltrate the church organization as the carnal mind glorifies such a title. The word 'steward' is more appropriate. It reminds us of our place. A responsible steward, a mere servant naturally has to take the lead in his assigned role but he should be acutely aware he has to answer to the Master.

Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards (*oikonomos*) of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards (*oikonomos*) that one be found faithful. 1. Corinthians 4:1-2

As each one has received a gift, minister it to one

another, as good stewards (*oikonomos*) of the manifold grace of God. 1.Peter 4:10

How should we then behave in God's household?

Will He find us faithful?

The Apostle Philip - "come and see"

Jonathan Ashurst, Byron, GA

Have you ever wished you could see God? Is it possible to see God? The gospel of John explains:

No man has seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him. John 1:18

The apostle Philip longed to know the nature of God. He wanted to see God and to show Him to others. Through the gospels, we see several accounts of how Jesus revealed the Father to Philip.

I. (Please read John 1:43-46)

It is obvious from this passage that Philip had been anticipating the Messiah's arrival. He had studied the scriptures and knew the prophecies about the coming Anointed One. When Jesus came, Philip was ready and knew that He was the Messiah. Immediately after Jesus called him, Philip went to tell Nathanael. He wanted his friend to meet Jesus as well. Although Nathanael expressed initial doubt, Philip persisted that he should at least "Come and see." Because of Philip's encouragement, Nathanael became a follower of Jesus.

II. (Please read John 6:5-7)

Like all of us, Philip was sometimes short-sighted, focusing on physical circumstances rather than on the power of God. Before Jesus' miraculous feeding of the five thousand, He

asked Philip where they could buy bread for feeding the crowds. Philip knew that the disciples' two hundred pennies could not buy enough food for all the people. However, Jesus showed Philip that He is able to use small gifts to meet great needs.

III. (Please read John 12:20-23)

During the Passover feast, several Greek proselytes asked Philip if he would introduce them to Jesus. Perhaps they came to Philip because of his Greek name. Philip and Andrew brought them to Jesus, who spoke to them about his imminent death, burial, and resurrection. Dye to Philip's help, these Greeks were able to see Jesus, listen to him teach, and hear a voice from heaven respond to Him.

IV. (Please read John 14:6-9)

Later that week, on the night of the Passover, Philip asked Jesus to show them the Father. Philip said he would be content once he had seen God. Jesus told Philip that anyone who has seen Jesus has seen the Father. Jesus is the revelation of God's character. If we want to know how God thinks, feels, or acts, we should examine Jesus' life. In the life of Jesus, Philip had already seen God. As John wrote:

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us,
(and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only
begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

John 1:14

Like Philip, let us seek to be pure in heart so that we can see God (Matthew 5:8). Let us remember to focus not on our limited resources but on God's power. And let us continue to tell others about Jesus, encouraging them to come and see (John 1:46).

The following article is copied, with permission, from "International Gospel Teacher" (issue number M3002).

We do not usually copy articles from other magazines but I was so impressed by it I thought you might be too. Editor.

Jesus and Thomas - Too Good to be True?

Susie Frederick - West Freeway church of Christ, Fort Worth, USA
Matthew. 28, Mark.16, Luke. 24, John. 20 & 21

Has something wonderful ever happened to you - something so *good* that you had trouble believing it was true? Let us consider the apostles of Jesus around the time of His rising from the dead.

The Jews had been waiting for centuries for fulfillment of the prophecies of a Messiah - a saviour - to rescue their nation. They were looking for a political king, though, not a spiritual one who would rescue their souls. Jesus had come to earth, claiming to be the promised deliverer. They were sceptical, but He had backed up His claims with miracles, teachings, and fulfilled prophecies. Finally, many of the Jews believed. Then, before He could be made king, He was condemned as a criminal and executed! What a devastating event in the minds of His followers! Even the eleven remaining apostles, who had been with Him daily for about three years, did not understand that His kingdom was not of this world. They were gathered together mourning His death when the resurrection occurred.

On the day of Jesus' resurrection, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene. She went to the brethren as Jesus instructed, told them she had seen Him, and what He had said to her. But when they had heard that He was alive, what was their response? They did not believe it.

Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women who went to the tomb with them also saw and spoke with Jesus. Jesus told them to go tell His disciples to go into Galilee, and there they would also see Him. When the women did as He said, how did the disciples respond? They thought it was foolish talk, and they did not believe. Did they bother to go into Galilee to see for themselves? *No*.

The same day, two of the followers of Jesus were walking to Emmaus, about 7 miles (or 11 kilometres) from Jerusalem.

They were discussing the recent events of the crucifixion and the women's accounts of seeing Jesus alive, when Jesus came near and walked with them. They were kept from realizing who He was. He asked them to tell Him what they were conversing about, and thinking He had not heard the news, they explained. Jesus reminded them of the prophecies, and He reasoned with them about their fulfillment as they continued toward the town. It was almost evening when they reached Emmaus, so the men invited Jesus to stay with them. When they sat down to eat their meal, Jesus was revealed to them, then He vanished out of sight. They were so excited that they went right back to Jerusalem (7 miles, remember) to tell the disciples what had happened. But did the disciples believe these two men? *No.*

So *why* do we only label *Thomas* as "doubting"? Did the other ten apostles believe Jesus had risen before they saw Him with their own eyes? *No.*

On the evening of resurrection day Thomas was not with the other ten apostles. I have often wondered where he was. Scripture says the ten were shut inside for fear of the Jews. Was Thomas not afraid? Was he sent out on an errand? We do not know, of course, but it makes me wonder.

While the ten (not including Thomas) were eating, and disbelieving the claims of the men and women who had seen Jesus, He suddenly appeared in the room with them and scolded them for their unwillingness to believe. Even after inviting them to touch His hands and feet to prove He was risen bodily, and not just a spirit, "they still did not believe for joy, and marvelled". He actually had to let them watch Him eat, and explain the scripture prophecies - AGAIN - before they finally believed!

When Thomas, the twin (I wonder about his twin, too) came back, the others told him about Jesus' visit. But he would no more accept their word for Jesus' resurrection than the ten would

accept the word of the other witnesses. He said he would not believe until he saw Jesus and touched the wounds himself.

About a week later, he had his opportunity to do that. The disciples - including Thomas - were in a room when Jesus again appeared suddenly. Again He said, *“Peace to you.”* Then He immediately addressed Thomas, answering his need. He told him to touch the wounds in His hands and side, then said, *“Do not be unbelieving, but believing.”* Finally, Thomas acknowledged the risen saviour, saying, *“My Lord and my God!”*

Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” That’s me, that’s me! Jesus just gave me a blessing! I want to congratulate myself!

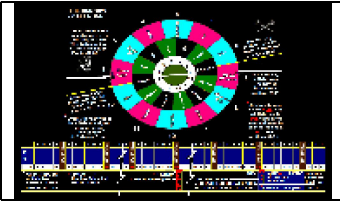
But why should I be proud? After all, it was my sins that caused Jesus’ extreme suffering and death. Should I not rather be humbled, that in spite of my unworthiness, He chose to take my punishment? Rather than being proud of myself - proud that I believe without seeing Jesus - I feel ashamed. Then I feel so grateful that because of Jesus’ death, God has given me mercy. I thank God He has not given me what I deserve. Instead, He has given me life eternal!

When I remember Jesus’ death and resurrection, I go through many emotions. Shame that my behaviour caused the sacrifice of God’s only begotten Son. Sadness that Jesus suffered punishment for things I have done. Joy for God’s grace and mercy. A sense of how much God values my soul.

Thankfulness for the future I expect to receive in heaven. Determination to do a better job of showing my love for God and man. Hope that my influence will only be for good, and will help others to look to Jesus for salvation and eternal life.

May God help us all to teach and lead souls to forgiveness and eternal life.

NEWS AND INFORMATION



Reference: Issue 78-4 December 2011.
CORRECTION to the A4 sheet insert.
Paragraph: "In the Law of Moses:
"6th. Month." should read "7th. month."
Please correct your copies.
I apologise for the error. Allan Ashurst

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Saturdays

6.00 pm Refreshments

7.00 pm Message

August 10

Jon Galloway

November 9

Ian Davidson

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September 21st.

October 19th.

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Map:

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BIBLE QUESTIONS

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Brother Frank Worgan is happy to receive Bible questions requiring urgent answers by telephone, letter or e-mail.

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