

Self-portraits of God

Studies in the Life of Jesus

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Self-portraits of God

Studies in the Life and Work of Jesus

Lesson 4 Historical Portraits- Jesus the Person in the New Testament

General Introduction

Tidings of the work of Jesus spread rapidly throughout Capernaum. Because they were afraid of the rabbis, the people did not come to be healed upon the Sabbath, but when the sun set there was a great commotion! From their homes, from their shops, from the market places, the inhabitants of the city hurried toward the house where Jesus was staying. Friends brought sick friends upon couches. Sickly people came leaning upon any type of support they could find. Some, of course, were helped by their friends, as we saw happening in the story of the paralytic in the study on Self-portraits in Miracles. They often entered the house in a very feeble condition, only to walk out in the strength of perfect health. The blind were given sight; the deaf were made to hear, and the troubled were made free.

On this evening the people continued to come and go hour after hour because no one knew whether or not Jesus would still be there in the morning. He went from city to city. Never before had the city of Capernaum had a day like this one. The throngs of people represented the followers of many gods, but none of their gods had done for their followers what Jesus was doing for the people of this city. Throughout the hours following the setting of the sun, on that Sabbath, the air was filled with the sounds made by those people who had been restored to wholeness.

Jesus was joyful in the joy He had awakened. He rejoices over us with singing (Zephaniah 3: 17). As He saw the suffering of those who came for help, He sympathized with them, and rejoiced in His power to help. He did not stop healing the people until they were all well. There was not a person left in the city, who came for help, who was not healed! Finally silence settle down upon the home of Simon Peter, where Jesus was staying. The long exciting day was over. (For the record of this story see, for example, Luke 4: 38-43.)

Sooo! How did this great life get started? What events introduced this life to the world?

The angel Gabriel was sent to Mary by God to tell her she was going to have a Son, and that they should name Him Jesus, because He would save His people from their sins. See Luke, chapter 1.

Wise men came from the East to see Him. They got there by following a star. See Matthew, chapters 1 and 2.

Out in the fields shepherds were doing the work of shepherds when an angel appeared in the sky and spoke to them, telling them that today, there is born to you a Savior; then other angels appeared, singing and lighting-up the plain. See Luke, chapter 2.

And little Jesus grew up and increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with both the people who met Him, and with God (see Luke 2: 52), until one day when He met the people leading a study session in the temple; and they discovered that He had a different picture of God than they had, that He knew God as a friend rather than some one to talk about. Jesus' God was His familiar and very likeable friend; Someone He had known from all eternity; as One brought up with Him. See Proverbs, chapter 8.

Jesus was subject to His parents, working with them in their daily lives, and working in Joseph's carpenter shop, until He was baptized.

Then everything changed.

When Jesus came up out of the water at His baptism He went up on the river bank to pray, and there was a voice from heaven, which sounded like thunder to many, heard by the crowds gathered for John's meeting, which said, "this is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," and life was never the same again! (For the story of Jesus baptism see Matthew, chapter 3.) We also learn from this record that God is not only Jesus' familiar and very likable friend, but He is also Jesus' Father.

The most ordinary things of life were altered by His presence. In the Old Testament David, the Psalmist, said that even the hills skip like little lambs at the presence of the Lord! In Jesus life, the times of the New Testament, something as ordinary as a wedding feast was made to be never-forgotten, because the host had miscalculated the number of friends that would be interested in the marriage of his children, and ran out of fresh wine for the guests to enjoy- only to have Jesus mother, who was a helper at the wedding feast, tell Jesus what had happened. He said, **FILL THE WINE JARS WITH WATER!** Some one actually did it! Then Jesus said to serve it to the host. Some one actually did it! The host spoke to the bridegroom, expressing his surprise at the fact that the bridegroom had kept the best wine until the last. (See John, chapter 2.)

From this event until the end of His life no one could ever guess what He might do next. Most of His time was spent repairing people and their lives, but He also talked

and talked to assure people that their lives could be very happy if they took the God of heaven to be their daily companion. If one surveys the material recorded and preserved for us to study, it is easy to say that Jesus favorite topic to talk about was the paternal character of the One known to the people of His nation as their God; the One they all knew about, but saw in a very different light from the one in which Jesus presented Him. Jesus concept of the God of Heaven, we saw in an earlier study, was that He is the Father we all wish we had. What made Jesus concept so different from the concept that the people already had was His personal acquaintance of the Father who was the pattern for all the great things that Jesus did- things which the people enjoyed and were blessed by every day of their lives. With Jesus' God, life was worth more than just living- it had the promise of a life that lasted as long as Jesus' God lived- with no bad, and all the desires of the renewed heart realized more and more as the times of the life eternal moved on. Jesus' God's future was a future in motion- people grew in it.

The life of the future which Jesus lived and presented in words was not only what everyone wanted, for their future, but it was breaking into many people's lives as they listened to Jesus teach, and saw the works He did.

And they murdered Him. How does that happen?! He raised up the sick, healed the injured, stopped storms by speaking to the wind and the water, raised people from the dead, sent devils into a herd of swine, who subsequently raced down a steep bank and over a cliff, and drowned in the sea! And yet they murdered Him; or is it more accurate to say, yes they murdered Him, but He died for another reason?

Back to [The Story](#)

The Person of Jesus

Philippians, chapter 2, verses 5-8.

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus,
who, being in the form (morphe) of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,

but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form (morphe) of a bondservant (doulos), and coming in the likeness (homoioma) of men.

And being found in appearance (schama) as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

The person described in these verses is fascinating! Yes, you will have to learn four Greek words. But notice the story they tell!

Word 1. Morphe. This word, translated “form”, speaks of the essential nature of a thing.(See Romans 12:2, and 2 Corinthians 3: 18, for examples.) A formal dining room table and a card table may be very different in their appearances; that which makes them both “table” is their essential nature. Their essential nature is their “morphe”.

Word 2. Doulos. This word, bondservant or slave or servant, in English, is used in contrast to the word master. It also appears as the contrasting term to the concept “freeman”. It describes a house servant in contrast to the son. When the Apostles are designated douloi, or servants, the significance is that they are unconditionally obligated to serve.

Word 3. Homoioma. This word is of things compared; things that are alike, or similar. He looks like him; similar in appearance to jasper. It can also mean that something is equally great, important, as powerful as, or, equal.

Word 4. Schama. This word is used regarding the outward appearance, form or shape. It is often translated by the word change. It refers to an appearance change, as compared to a change in the essential nature. In 2 Corinthians 11:14 Paul talks of Satan transforming himself into an angel of light.

With this information what a description of the person of Jesus we find in Philippians chapter 2.

The second person of the Godhead (Jesus), while being in the essential nature of God, equal with God (morphe), took on the essential nature (morphe) of a servant (doulos) -unconditionally obligating Himself to serve- while becoming similar to other men in nature (homoioma), though not exactly like them, in outward appearance form or shape (schama), as a man, and not retaining the appearance of God that He had had.

Jesus, while walking this earth, in general looked like the people of His nationality. However some of the reactions to Him, that we read about in the Bible in connection to some of the events in His life, seem to indicate that the fact He was not only Man but God, showed. Probably no one ever saw Him and mistook Him for someone else. He was God and that element of His life, at special times and in connection with certain special events, showed very dramatically.

But He was also a man, and His necessities were those of a man. He got hungry, and tired; He became thirsty, and He had to pray. When He was at Jacob’s well and the well was deep He had to wait for some one to come to the well to draw water for Him, for Him to be able to get a drink. But He could also stop the approach of the very wild

and violent demon- possessed men by simply raising His hand. By a word He could banish disease, and still a storm.

Great opposites are seen in Jesus life!

The Self-portrait here is of a human being emitting the Glory of the Divine.

Back to our story.

Jesus daily life- the Acts, #1

Because it was the time for the Passover, Jesus went to Jerusalem. The central object of attention in the city was the Temple. Not only was it located on a high point, but the walls were gleaming white marble, which contrasted with gold-capped pillars. It has been called one of the greatest of the architectural works of skilful workmanship. Tourists from all that part of the Middle East and Western Europe came to Jerusalem at the time for Passover; some from as far away as Spain. Some came to follow the prescribed forms of worship, but many others came because of the great crowds. To be in Jerusalem at the time of year for the Passover was to be at the great gathering of the year for that part of the world, it now seems.

The Romans, after having conquered the city of Jerusalem, had taken a great interest in this building and had contributed much toward bringing it to the state it was in when Jesus went to the Passover being held there after He first started His public work of ministering to the spiritual needs of the people who were seeking for more help with there lives than they were getting from the contemporary church they usually attended.

Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the moneychangers doing business.

When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers money and overturned the tables.

And He said to those who sold doves, Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise! (See John 2: 13-22).

If Jesus had done this any place else in the world it would have gotten a reaction- but to do this in Jerusalem at the time of the Passover with the world watching was to guarantee there would be a reaction from those who ran the temple; they would be concerned that someone might start to wonder if the temple was being used for what it was designed to be.

But there was not only a reaction from those who ran the temple, there was a great reaction from the people in town. Prior to Jesus act of chasing the cows out of church, many people acquainted with the details of the temple worship, including some of those

people not in town, had already been questioning whether or not the true purpose of the temple had been being progressively covered over until it was no longer visible.

No sooner had the cattle in the temple been chased out, along with those who took their cows to church, than there was a crush of people who came into the temple to see Jesus. The sick came, the lame came, the blind came, the deaf came; everyone wanted to see Jesus and request help with their problem- and He healed them all.

There were sounds of happiness through all the corridors of the temple.

Then He did it again. He started His work by revealing the purpose of the temple and the appropriate habitants of it, and near the end of His life He again repeated the message (For a record of the second cleansing of the temple, see texts such as Matthew 21: 12-16).

The activities of Jesus were always illustrations of the messages which He taught, but in the reorganization of the temple He gave a revelation of the purpose for which He had come, and by implication He set forth the meaning of the temple.

This writer does not need to tell you that Jesus was the talk of the town- of the world! It would seem obvious that He could not do anything that would cause more reaction- but He did. All the works of Jesus were of such a nature as to cause people to wonder if their own life could be more meaningful.

Then Jesus went out from there and departed to the region of Tyre and Sidon, to seek rest (see Mark 7: 24). One can not read this account without immediately wondering who Jesus considered His friends to be. Tyre and Sidon were cities where the people worshipped and lived as do those who have no personal interaction with the God of Heaven. Yet when a woman of Canaan came from that region to the house where Jesus was staying and asked Him to heal her young daughter who had an unclean spirit, Jesus said to her, great is your faith; let it be to you as you desire. And her daughter was healed. When the mother arrived at home she found her daughter, without the unclean spirit, lying on the bed.

However this is only part of the story! When the lady asked Jesus to heal her daughter, He said nothing! When she asked several times He said to her, in English translation, it is not appropriate to give the children's food to the dogs! She said, yes Lord, but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the table! Jesus said, I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel! She heard Him say, I am not sent but to the sheep lost by the house of Israel (making the word of a genitive). The woman said, Lord help me! Jesus said to her, Great is your faith- let it be to you as you desire (see Matthew 15, and Mark 7, for this story.).

The Self-portrait

in this dialogue, is of the One who has as His friends every one who will accept His help; everyone desiring a better life for themselves or for some one they know or love. To seek Jesus is to be His friend.

Jesus' daily life- the Acts, cont.

Simon Peter said to them, I am going fishing. They said to him, we are going with you. They went out and got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing. (See John 21: 1-14, for this story.)

But when the morning had come Jesus stood on the shore, but they did not know that it was Jesus.

Then Jesus said to them, children do you have any food? They answered Him, no.

And He said to them, cast your net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some. So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish; one hundred and fifty-three.

One day I found myself needing to prepare a field for planting. I am not a farmer and have never been- but I plowed the field and harrowed it. It looked like I had plowed and harrowed it! It was the worst looking field I had ever seen. I grew up in a valley where there was lots of farming, and none of those fields had ever looked like the field I had prepared.

I called a farmer friend of mine and told him of my problem. After hearing my story of the awful looking field, he said to me on the phone, do you like the appearance of the field? I said, no. He said, do it over. I said to him, I have already done it over. He said to me, do you like the appearance of the field? I said, no. He said, do it over. I said to him, I have already done it over. He said, do you like the appearance of the field? I said, no. He said, do it over.

I kept expecting him to say that I should get another piece of equipment, or that there was something wrong with the soil, but all he said was, do it over. I think of that experience every time that I hear the story of the disciples going fishing and catching nothing- all night. Then Jesus came, and said to them, try again! - on the right side; the side where He was.

Jesus' daily life- the Acts, # 4

With the storm over, they came to the other side of the sea, to the country of the Gadarenes- safe at last!

And when He had come out of the boat, immediately there met Him two demon-possessed men, coming out of the tombs, exceedingly fierce, so that no one could pass that way. These men had their dwellings among the tombs, and no one could bind them, not even with chains,

Because they had often been bound with shackles and chains, and the chains had been pulled apart, and the shackles broken in pieces; neither could anyone tame them.

And always, night and day, they were in the mountains and in the tombs, crying out and cutting themselves with stones.

These men wore no clothes, and were driven by the demons into the wilderness. When they saw Jesus from afar they ran and worshipped Him.

When Jesus saw these men He commanded the unclean spirits to come out of them. (For the unclean spirits often seized them.)

And suddenly they cried out, saying, what have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?

Then He asked them, what is your name? And they answered, saying, my name is legion, for we are many.

And they begged Him earnestly that He would not send them out of the country. (Now a good way off from them there was a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain; there were about two thousand of them.)

So all the demons begged Him, saying, If You cast us out, permit us to go into the herd of swine. And He said to them Go! Then the demons went out of the men and entered the swine.

And suddenly the whole herd of swine ran violently down the steep place into the sea and drowned in the sea.

When those who fed them saw what had happened they fled, and told in the city and in the country everything, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men.

And behold, the whole city came out to see what it was that had happened, and came to Jesus, and found the men from whom the demons had departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in their right mind.

And they were afraid.

And those who saw it told them how it happened to them who had been demon-possessed, and about the swine.

Then the whole multitude of the surrounding region of the Gadarenes asked Him to depart from them for they were seized with a great fear.

And when He got into the boat, the men who had been demon-possessed begged Him that they might be with Him. But Jesus sent them away saying, Go home to your friends, and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you, and how He has had compassion on you.

And they went their way and proclaimed throughout the whole city, and in Decapolis, all that Jesus had done for them; and all marveled.

So it was, when Jesus returned, that the multitude welcomed Him, for they were all waiting for Him. (See Matthew 8: 28-34; Mark 5: 1-20; and Luke 8: 26-40, for this story.)

The Portrait in this story is a time exposure: Demon-possessed men doing a fade, coalescing into the likeness of God; dark spots on a black film becoming points of light. A displayed potential - anyone can be a helper for Jesus.

Then they also brought infants to Him that He might touch them, but when the disciples saw it, they rebuked them.

But Jesus called them to Him and said,

Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Luke 18:15, 16.

Everyone was welcome in the presence of Jesus. He was available to all.

One more account of daily activity from the life of Jesus;

(the One of whom John the apostle wrote, the whole world could not hold all the books that would be written if all the life and works of Jesus were to be recorded! See John 21:25.)

Jesus' daily life- the Acts, cont.

Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, Sir, we wish to see Jesus.

Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

But Jesus answered them, saying,

The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.

Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.

He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, Him My Father will honor....

(See John 12:20-36).

The immediately noticeable part of this account, which we have reviewed only in part, is the fact that the requested interview with Jesus, made by the Greeks to the apostles, is not said to have occurred. Verse 36 of this passage says Jesus was hidden from them.

The work of Jesus is left incomplete; the request to see Jesus, made to the followers of Jesus, is to be fulfilled by the followers of Jesus. The revealing of the Father, plus the added dimension of the telling of the love of Jesus, was being turned over to others. Jesus' life and work on earth were closing.

The Teachings of Jesus

In the accounts of the life of Jesus that we have, His work is barely getting started when surrounded by large crowds of people He invites them to sit down on the grass on the plain on the mountain near the sea, and presents to the crowd the principles of His Kingdom- a presentation known as the Sermon on the Mount. In this presentation Jesus repeatedly uses the word blessed, makarios, health to the soul, the language of heaven. He seems to have forgotten that He is here.

The work that He came to earth to do is revealed by the often repeating of this word in this primary presentation of the principles of the kingdom He had come to establish and was announcing. The kingdom of heaven is at hand was His first message. And the second was like it; the kingdom is within you.

But His favorite theme was the paternal love of the Father, as we have seen; a love manifested by the word blessed being repeated so many times in the Sermon on the Mount. The repetition of this phrase by Jesus showed the hearers that both the kingdom of heaven in heaven, and the kingdom of heaven to be established here on earth had the same objective- the health of the soul, the eternal life of its subjects.

The kingdom of heaven is here seen to have as its central focus the welfare of all connected with it; the Father, the Son sent to the earth doing the presenting of the kingdom to men, and of the Holy Spirit, yet to be announced, and of the people created by God to be the inhabitants of the earth He had created.

The centrality of the blessed, in the message and acts of Jesus and the Father who asks all to hear His Son, means that the intent of the work of the kingdom was to have one glad pulse of harmony pulsing through all the creation of God- eternally.

Teachings- #1

As all good stories start- Once upon a time, there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews who had heard of Jesus and was intrigued by what he heard. By nature he must have been a researcher, because he just had to hear what Jesus would say in answer to some of his questions.

However--! So he went at night.

When the two of them met he said to Jesus,

Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.

Jesus immediately changes the topic of discussion from Himself to His hearer!

Most assuredly, Jesus said, one cannot see the kingdom of heaven, unless one is born from above (Greek), again (English).

Nicodemus perhaps feels a little uncomfortable- he was a ruler in Israel, and very religious. Therefore we are not surprised to find him saying back to Jesus, Can a man re-enter his mother's womb, and be born?

Jesus responds to the question by saying, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, you must be born again.

The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.

Nicodemus asks Jesus what we all want him to ask- how can these things be?

Jesus' reply to this question is to point out that the new birth, salvation, is only possible through His death, and our being re-made by God into His image. No alteration or improvement of us is adequate. There must be a new principle implanted. One must be born from above- by the powers of heaven.

As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

The reason that Jesus came was because the Father let Him come; they were in total agreement on the need for a Redeemer to buy back the forfeited dominion that Adam had lost to Satan; what they were not in agreement on was the part each was to play in the redemption operation. If the Father had come instead of the Son, the story of the Redeemer would not be changed. This account would read the same.

For God so loved that He gave. It was a struggle with the Father to let Someone die- the unguilty for the guilty- His love is the love of a father, and the love of a mother. Remember, can a mother forget her infant child? Yes, they may forget, but I will not forget you.

But He also rejoices over us, His children, the needing to be re-made ones, with singing. Therefore we are not surprised that someone came to help. (For this story see the book of John, chapter 3, verses 1- 21.)

Teachings- #2

As Jesus was traveling through the villages teaching and healing,

a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house.

And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.

But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said,

Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me.

And Jesus answered and said to her,

Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her. (See Luke 10: 38-42.)

In this story one immediately notices the change of teaching style- the instructions of Jesus were often given in parables. Here He answers directly the implied question as to what is the important element in the activities of daily life, when sin is not one of the issues.

One also notes the setting- a private home with people who from other passages we learn are Jesus' comfortable friends.

This is one of only a few records preserved for us of Jesus interacting with His friends in the home of His friends.

Because in response to the request from Martha Jesus answers directly, we conclude that when Jesus was comfortably with friends He did not speak in parables; in this setting, we see Him speaking with simplicity and perfect freedom. He knows that His words will be understood.

By implication we see Jesus at rest from the conflicts of public life. The leaders of the people never let His life become boring!

The Portrait here is of Mary sitting at Jesus' feet listening to words of life, while Martha is in the kitchen, preparing for the welfare and comfort of their Guest.

The one needful thing that Jesus referred to was the quiet desire of Mary to be in Jesus' presence, learning of the food for the soul- acquiring the graces necessary for spiritual advancement; gaining the qualifications for the future immortal life.

It was these things Jesus said should not be taken from her, for the preparation of those things that were necessary for His comfort.

But there is also another dimension to this story.

The work of God on this earth needs energetic workers. There is obviously a wide arena of service for the energetic Marthas. But in this record we find Jesus

saying that all need first to sit with Mary at the feet of Jesus, being sanctified by grace.

The Self-portrait

we have here was taken in the kitchen- Jesus among the dishes, food, and workers- who all bear a family resemblance to Him.

Teachings- #3

One day Jesus was doing what He usually did- teaching the people and healing their illnesses- when a lawyer stood up and said he had a question.

The lawyer's question was, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

With this question begins the account of one of the most famous of the stories told by Jesus in His teachings; a story which was a part of Jesus' reply to the question which the lawyer asked, politely, twice.

The exciting part of this exchange between Jesus and the lawyer is found in the double formulation of the one question. The first formula being the one we have seen, what shall I do to inherit eternal life, and the second formulation of that question being, who is my neighbor?

Because the word neighbor means by dictionary definition, one who is near by, or close by, the repetition of the question with the change in the formulation shows a politely hidden dispute over the issue, who is my neighbor, or, who is the one who is 'near by'? The answer seems to be so obvious one is surprised by the question. (See Luke 10:25-37 for the record of this very interesting dialogue.)

Jesus, in answer to the first formulation of the lawyer's question, the what shall I do to inherit eternal life formula, had the lawyer answer his own question; something it turned out the lawyer was able to do. Then Jesus commended the lawyer for giving the correct answer, adding only, this do and you will live.

The hidden dispute attached to the lawyer's question comes to light when, having been commended by Jesus for giving the correct answer to the question what shall I do to inherit eternal life (The lawyer had said, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as your self), the lawyer, instead of sitting down, asks his question again, politely, with the second formulation- Who is my neighbor?

To reply to this formula of the question Jesus tells His very famous story about the leaders of the church living useless lives. This story has come to be known as the story of the Good Samaritan.

Probably there are several reasons for the great fame which has attached to this story; not the least of which being the fact that this story was of a contemporary event that all Jesus' hearers in the crowd of listeners knew about.

In this story a badly wounded traveler is found by a series of church leaders who do nothing for the wounded man; then a Samaritan finds the wounded man and provides for all his needs. It is also likely that all those who knew of this event approved of the actions of the church leaders- though they probably did not all approve for the same reason- except for the questioning lawyer!

At the first of the encounter the lawyer appears to be trying to stir up the crowd against Jesus, but at this point in the exchange it becomes apparent that the lawyer is seeking a greater good than the one being set in front of the nation by its contemporary leadership.

We can expect Jesus to gently answer the lawyer's question, who is my neighbor, in such a way as to answer the lawyer's real question- what does one live in front of those who surround him, if one wants his life to lead to entering heaven? What shall I do to inherit eternal life? What is it that makes me a child of God's? I want to inherit what He has promised to His children.

The story of course ends with Jesus assuring the lawyer that to do what is written in the law of God is the requirement- "And He said to him, You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." And the assurance is, the effect of righteousness (right doing) is quietness and assurance forever (See Isaiah 32:17).

The judgment of God is, by this story, set on the shoulders of the good deed.

The Self-portrait

here is of God in His home, dressing for the storm his neighbor is in.

Teachings- #4

Jesus had been traveling throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, making the headlines of the daily news, and was "being glorified by all", when He decided it was time for a visit to His home town.

So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up.

And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read.

And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me,

because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind,

To set at liberty those who are oppressed. (For this story see Luke 4:16-31).

Then He closed the book and gave it back to the attendant- and all eyes were on Him!

The reports of His work had been sensational! They had heard stories they could hardly believe!

After reading, and then sitting down, Jesus began to talk to the people about the passage He had just read from Isaiah- the Old Testament prophet, and the writer of the book from which He had just read.

The people liked the sermon very much until He said that the work they had heard He was doing, He was actually doing; that the scripture He had just read described the works He was doing; that His mission was for Him to fulfill the passage in Isaiah He had just read- that the Isaiah passage was a prophecy of Him.

They knew that the reports which they had heard prior to His return to their town matched the Isaiah passage- but they had already decided that the reports were false, or greatly exaggerated, for they knew His family- He was from their town. Besides, works that good would have been done in their district, the Jewish one, and not in the district where the half-Jews and non-Jews lived.

The people in the synagogue interrupted Jesus' sermon to question Him as to the appropriateness of the works they had heard He was doing for non-Jews.

Jesus responded by showing them from scripture that the works He was doing were in harmony with the works done in the past by the prophets of God. He reminded them that in some time periods the Jews, God's specially-called people had become a people, by their choices, who God could not work for- but that that fact did not stop God from working for those who let Him work for them.

AND THEY GOT MAD! They pulled Him out of the pulpit and across town to a high cliff to throw Him over- but He disappeared from their sight, and left town- to go and do more of the work described in the Bible passage He had read- the passage which described His mission.

Jesus taught that He was the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament. And His works, and His way of relating to all the people who were around Him, added the testimony of correct representation to His words and revealed the purpose for which He came.

Conclusion

It was Jesus' human necessities that enabled Him to be one with the people in their daily lives, and it was His divinity expressed in acts that humanity could not accomplish which made Him their Savior, and enabled Him to reveal the Father as He met humanities needs.

In the mirror of the historical Jesus we see reflected the life we all desire; available as we piggy-back with Him, as He did with the Father.

For in the daily life of Jesus we see that for others He worked miracles- but He worked none for Himself. From the way in which He addressed the issues that He solved, it is apparent that the authority with which He worked for others was His own. But for the necessities of His own life He was dependent on the Father, while His prayer life reveals the fact that He had no interest in a life apart from the will of His Father. I and My Father are one was not only what He said, it was the way that He lived.

In these accounts that we have reviewed from His daily life, it is apparent that His reason for living was to reveal that the testimony should always bear with it the incense of correct representation.

The Self-portrait

of Jesus in His daily life is of a powerfully gentle person leaving an endless trail of fragrance everywhere He goes.

Historical Life as a Mirror

In the mirror which is the historical Jesus we see reflected One like us doing faultlessly the acts of God.

