STUDY PACK 4

THE BEGINNING OF CHRIST'S MINISTRY

One Solitary Life

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"Here is a Man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another obscure village. He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty, and then for three years He was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put his foot inside a big city. He never traveled two hundred miles from the place where He was born. He never did one of the things that contemporary society would consider a sign of greatness. He had no credentials _____. He had nothing of this world, only the power of His divine manhood. While still a young man, the tide of popular opinion turned against Him. His friends ran away. One of them denied Him, another betrayed Him. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While He was dying, His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had on Earth – His coat. When He was dead He was taken down and lain in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend. Nineteen centuries have come and gone, and today He is _____, the greatest source of guidance and divine inspiration. I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched, and all the navies that ever were built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as that one solitary life! – Jesus!"

I. THE BAPTISM OF CHRIST - LUKE 3:21-23; MATTHEW 3:13-17; MARK 1:9-11

A. John was preaching in the wilderness of Judea and baptizing in _____, (probably just north of Jericho) when Jesus came to be baptized.

B. In Matthew's account, John apparently recognized the superior _____of Jesus and objected to baptizing Him. Jesus said that John should baptize Him to fulfill all righteousness. This means that if the disciples should be baptized as a testimony to their faith in the coming Messiah and their identification with Him, then so should the Master. Throughout the Old Testament it had been said that when Messiah came to provide salvation for sinners, it would be necessary for Him to identify Himself with those whom He had come to save. John's baptism of Jesus was not performed as a confession of Jesus' sin, but Jesus (our substitute) identifying Himself with those who would acknowledge their guilt and look for the Savior.

C. God used the baptism of Jesus as the means of _____to John that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, John 1:29-34.

D. Jesus' baptism gives proof of the _____: all three members of the Godhead are present at the same time yet _____. The Son was in the water; The Spirit

descended in the form of a dove; and the Father spoke from Heaven, identifying Jesus as God's Son.

II. THE TEMPTATION OF CHRIST - LUKE 4:1-15; MATTHEW 4:1-11; MARK 1:12-13

A. After His baptism, the Holy Spirit led Christ into the wilderness. According to Matthew's account it was "to" be tempted by the Devil.

The Sinless One had to show Himself sinless and qualified to be the Redeemer of those He came to save. These forty days would not only prepare Him for ministry (Hebrews 2:10-18) but also show that He _____.

B. During this time, Christ fasted and was at His weakest physically. He depended on God's strength.

C. The Devil tempted Christ with:

1. The lust of the _____: "Command this stone that it be made bread."

2. The lust of the _____: "He showed him all the kingdoms of the world."

3. The pride of _____: "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down."

D. Jesus steadfastly refused to obey or submit to the Devil and in each case met the temptation with _____. We need to know the Bible well, so that when confronted with temptation, we will know and be strengthened by God's viewpoint on it.

Tradition says this took place on a barren, desert mountain south of Jericho. (Quite the contrast to the Sermon on the Mount on the green hills next to the Sea of Galilee.)

E. Matthew 4:11 adds that when the Devil had left Christ, the angels came and ministered to him. (Note: Matthew's account is like Luke's, but the temptations are in a different order.)

III. JESUS IN JUDEA, GALILEE, AND SAMARIA AS RECORDED IN THE GOSPEL OF JOHN, - JOHN 1:19-4:54

A. John's testimony to Christ, John 1:19-36. John said that he was not the Messiah, but that he had been sent to make the Messiah manifest to Israel. When he saw Jesus among the crowd he cried out, "Behold, _____, which taketh away the sins of the world." He went on to say that Jesus was the _____ of God, John 1:29-34.

B. Jesus gets His first followers, John1:37-51. This took place at Bethabara on the east bank of the Jordan. Andrew and Philip heard John call Jesus the Lamb of

God, and they followed Him. Andrew brought his brother Peter to meet Jesus and Philip brought _____. By this time they were on the way to Galilee.

Nathanael and Bartholomew are the same person. John calls him Nathanael, but the synoptic Gospels call him Bartholomew. Many disciples were given a different name (or had a second name).

Jesus now leaves the Jordan area where He chose His first disciples and leads them to Cana in Galilee, 6 km north of Nazareth.

C. Jesus at the wedding in Cana of Galilee, John 2:1-12.
(This was probably a wedding feast for a relative since Mary felt some responsibility for making sure the guests had enough to drink.)

1. The wine Jesus created was not fermented (alcoholic). Jesus made between 108 and 162 gallons. See Proverbs 20:1 and 23:29-35 for a sample of what the Bible says about alcohol.

2. This was Jesus' _____.

3. From Cana, Jesus went to _____with His disciples and stayed there a short time.

Christ now bursts onto the scene with one sign after another and begins to establish Himself as the long-awaited Messiah, beginning with a trip to Jerusalem for Passover.

D. Jesus in Jerusalem for the first _____of His ministry, John 2:13-25 (29 A.D.).

1. While in the temple area, Jesus purged the _____for the first time.

2. The rulers of the Jews had turned the temple grounds into a place where people they favored could make a large _____selling approved sacrifices and converting Gentle coins into temple coins.

3. When Jesus drove out these corrupt sellers, the Jews demanded _____ to verify His authority to do this. In response He predicted His death and resurrection. (John often uses the term 'Jews' to refer to those Israelites who dominated synagogue and temple worship in Judea.) See
John 9:22.

4. Jesus performed various unnamed miracles in Jerusalem at this time. Though multitudes seemed to believe Him because of the miracles, Jesus did not depend on their approval, John 2:24-25.

These miracles probably created great interest and caused Jesus' reputation to spread. The ruling body of the Jews, the Sanhedrin needed to

make a comment about this young Galilean prophet. It is possible that they had sent Nicodemus to investigate.

E. Jesus and Nicodemus, John 3:1-21.

1. One of those who witnessed the miracles Jesus did was Nicodemus, a member of the ruling Sanhedrin. He came to Christ by night so he could have a private conversation with Him. He recognized Jesus was "a teacher come from God," and humbly saw himself as a _____.

2. Nicodemus wanted to know how a man could become righteous and thus get into the kingdom of God. Jesus told him that he must be _____. He thought Jesus was saying that a man must have a second natural birth – which is impossible! But Jesus was speaking about a new, spiritual birth.

3. Since Nicodemus was confused, Jesus took him back to the story of when the children of Israel were to look at the brass serpent in faith to be healed. Now everyone was to look to Jesus for spiritual healing and new life. We learn later on that Nicodemus experienced this new birth.

F. Jesus then left Jerusalem and went into Judea to preach. His disciples baptized many. John the Baptist gave his last recorded testimony about Christ before he was put in prison, John 3:22-36.

1. John knew and accepted that the ministry of Christ would go beyond his own, John 3:25-30.

2. He understood that Christ had come to earth from Heaven, was the _____, and was the only way men could escape the wrath of God, John 3:31-36.

Jesus now was going to travel to Galilee, but instead of taking the long way, he took the direct route through Samaria. The Samaritans were "religiously unclean," so most Jews avoided contact with them.

G. Christ passed through Samaria on the way to Galilee and led a great revival, John 4:1-42.

On the way down, they would have gone around Samaria. Instead of taking the long way, He took the direct route through Samaria. The Samaritans were 'religiously unclean," so most Jews avoided contact with them. But Jesus needed to go through Samaria (John 4:4). He went there because the Samaritans were ripe for a spiritual harvest.

1. The Jews avoided contact with Samaritans because they were "religiously unclean" and only half-Jews.

2. Jesus intentionally went through Samaria because He knew that the Samaritans were ripe for a _____, John 4:34-35.

3. He came to Sychar, where Jacob's well was located, and gave the woman at the well _____.

4. She went and told her people that Jesus was the Messiah.

5. Many came out and heard Christ and believed on Him. Jesus stayed there
2 days before continuing north to Galilee.

H. Christ returned (from visiting Jerusalem for Passover) to Cana of Galilee and healed a nobleman's son that was sick in Capernaum, John 4:43-54.

1. Jesus healed the boy at a distance of about _____.

2. The father believed Christ's words and his whole family got saved.

3. This nobleman was probably from the court of Herod Antipas in Tiberius. Later when Jesus was being tried by Pilate, Herod Antipas would ask to see Jesus because he wanted to witness a miracle.