

JESUS BEGINS HIS SECOND YEAR OF PUBLIC MINISTRY

Matthew 4:12-25; 8:1 - 12:14; Mark 1:15 - 2:12; Luke 4:14 - 5:32; John 5:1-18

STRUCTURE

Key-person: Jesus

Key-location: Capernaum

Key-repetitions:

- Sinner: Peter admitted he was a sinner (Lk 5:8), Jesus forgave the paralytic's sins (Lk 5:20-24), Jewish leaders criticized Jesus for eating with sinners. Jesus said he came to call sinners (Lk 5:32).
- Invitation to follow Jesus given to: the fishermen (Mt 4:18-20) and Matthew (Mt 9:9-13; Lk 5:27-32).
- Conflict between Jesus and religious Jews: they expelled Jesus from Nazareth (Lk 4:16-30), they accused Jesus of blasphemies (Lk 5:21), they criticized Jesus for associating with sinners (Lk 5:27-32), there were several conflicts regarding the Sabbath (Jn 5:1-18; Mt 12:1-8; 12:9-14).
- Crowd: Nazareth's residents (Lk 4:16-31), a crowd pressed Jesus at the edge of the Lake (Lk 5:1), many were outside of the house in Capernaum (Lk 5:19) many people of bad reputation were at Matthew's house (Lk 5:29).

Key-attitudes:

- The hatred of Herodias for John the Baptist. The hatred and fear of Herod for John.
- The prejudice of Nazareth's residents against non-Jewish people.
- The reluctance of the fishermen in casting the nets at Jesus' orders. Their astonishment after the great catch. Their readiness in following Jesus.
- The determination that the four friends had to take the

paralytic to Jesus.

- The shock of the teachers of the Law of Moses when they heard Jesus forgive the paralytic.
- The resolve of Matthew to follow Jesus.
- The religious leaders' indignation against Jesus for associating with outcast people.
- The hostility between Jesus and the Pharisees because of conflict about the Sabbath.

Initial-situation:

When Jesus began the first year of his ministry: "**The Year of Preparation**", he was unknown outside of the town of Nazareth. John the Baptist was famous, and crowds were going to hear him and to be baptized by him. John was the messenger preparing the people to receive the Messiah.

Jesus began his public ministry at the Jordan River when he was baptized by John. Then, in the desert, he resisted temptations from Satan. At the end of the year, he had at least four followers who had made some trips with him and his fame was increasing.

Initial-problem:

John the Baptist condemned King Herod for living with his brother's wife; then Herod gave orders for John to be imprisoned (Lk 3:18-20; Mk 6:16-20).

Final-situation:

After Jesus disrespected the tradition concerning the Sabbath, the religious leaders made plans to kill him; large crowds sought to follow him wherever he went.

BIBLE STORY

John the Baptist Imprisoned Mt 4:12; 14:3-4; Mk 1:14; 6:16-20; Lk 3:19-20

King Herod, the regional ruler, visited his brother Philip in another country. Herod became infatuated with Philip's wife, Herodias. She left her husband Philip and went to live with King Herod.

John the Baptist accused King Herod of living in adultery with Herodias.

King Herod had John arrested and sent him to prison. Herodias wanted to kill John. But King Herod was afraid because so many people revered John as a prophet of God (Mt 14:14:3-4). Herod was convinced that John was a holy man (Mk 6:16-20).

Jesus Expelled from Nazareth Lk 4:16-31

Jesus went to Nazareth, where he had grown up. As was his custom, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath. He stood up to read and was handed the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written, "The Lord's Spirit is on me; he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He sent me to proclaim freedom to prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind. He sent me to release the oppressed, to proclaim this is the Lord's year to act."

Jesus rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. Everyone in the synagogue was watching him. He began to speak, "The scripture you heard became true in your hearing."

All praised him and were surprised at how well he spoke. They asked, "Isn't this Joseph's son?"

Jesus said, "I know you will say, 'Do here in your hometown what we heard you did in Capernaum.' I tell you the truth, no prophet is accepted in his hometown. There were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when it did not rain during three and a half years. Yet Elijah was sent only to one lone widow in the country of Sidon. There were many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, yet the only one cleansed was Naaman from the country of Syria."

The people in the synagogue became enraged. They took Jesus to a cliff on a hilltop, in order to throw him to his doom. But he walked through the crowd and went on his way.

Then Jesus went down to Capernaum, a city in Galilee (Lk 4:14-30).

Jesus began to preach, "Repent; God's kingdom is here" (Mt 4:17; Mk 1:14-15).

Four Fishermen Invited to Follow Jesus Mt 4:18-22; Mk 1:16-20; Lk 5:1-11

As Jesus was walking beside Lake Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen (Mt 4:18).

Jesus was standing beside Lake Galilee; people crowded around him listening to the word of God. Jesus noticed two boats at the shore of the lake. Jesus got into the boat belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat.

When he had finished speaking, he told Simon, "Push out into deep water, and let your nets out for a catch."

Simon answered, "Master, we worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let out the nets."

As soon as the fishermen let out the nets, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. They signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They filled both boats so full that they were almost sinking.

Simon Peter fell to his knees before Jesus and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" He and all his coworkers were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken.

Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men" (Lk 5:1-11).

Jesus called Peter and his brother Andrew, "Come follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." At once they dropped their nets and followed him.

Then Jesus went to where James and his brother John were sitting in a boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat. They left their father in the boat with the hired servants and followed Jesus (Mt 4:18-22; Mk 1:20).

First Tour of Galilee Mt 4:23-25; Mk 1:35-39; Lk 4:42-44

Jesus went all over Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the God's kingdom. He also healed every disease and sickness among the people. News about him spread, and people brought to him all the sick who were suffering from different kinds of diseases, pain, demon possession and physical handicaps. Jesus healed them all. Large crowds came from all over Galilee and from distant places (Mt 4:23-25).

A Leper Healed Mt 8:2-4; Mk 1:40-45; Lk 5:12-16

A man with leprosy came to Jesus, fell to his knees and begged, "If you want to, you can cleanse me."

Jesus was filled with compassion, reached out his hand, touched the man and said, "I want to; be clean!" Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cured.

Jesus sent him away with a warning, "Don't tell anyone about what I did for you. But go, show yourself to the priest and offer the sacrifices that Moses commanded for your cleansing." But the man told everyone what had happened. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter a town openly but stayed outside in lonely places. Yet people from everywhere found him (Mk 1:40-45).

Paralytic Lowered Through the Roof and Healed Mt 9:1-8; Mk 2:1-12; Lk 5:17-26

A few days later Jesus returned to Capernaum. People filled the house and many stood outside the door. No one could get in or out (Mk 2:1-2).

Pharisees and teachers of the Law of Moses from many locations were also there. The power of the Lord was present for Jesus to heal the sick. Some men came carrying a paralytic on a stretcher. When they could not get past the crowd, they went up on the roof, removed some tiles and lowered him on his stretcher into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

Jesus saw their faith and said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law of Moses thought to themselves, "That is blasphemous talk! God and God alone can forgive sins!"

Jesus knew their thoughts and asked, "Why are you thinking these thoughts? Which is easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to tell him, 'Get up and walk'? I will prove to you that I am the Son of Man and I have authority on earth to forgive sins." Jesus told the paralyzed man, "Get up, take your bedroll and go home." Immediately the man stood up, took up his bedroll and went home praising God. Everyone was amazed and praised God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today" (Lk 5:17-26).

The Call of Matthew (Levi) Mt 9:9-13; Mk 2:13-17; Lk 5:27-32

Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. Jesus invited him, "Follow me." Levi got up, left everything and followed him.

Then Levi gave a large banquet for Jesus at his house. A large crowd of tax collectors and others with bad reputations were his guests. The Pharisees and the teachers of the Law of Moses complained to Jesus' disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

Jesus answered them, "Healthy people don't need a doctor. Sick people need a doctor. I did not come to invite the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Lk 5:27-32). (*Levi was also called Matthew.*)

Sabbath Controversy: Jesus Healed a Lame Man Jn 5:1-47

Jesus went up to Jerusalem for a religious feast. In Jerusalem, near the Sheep Gate is a pool with five covered porches called Bethesda. Many sick and disabled people were lying on the porches beside the pool. One man lying there had been an invalid for 38 years. Jesus asked him,

"Do you want to get well? Stand up! Pick up your bedroll and walk." At once the man was cured; he picked up his bedroll and walked.

This happened on a Sabbath day. Jews stopped the man telling him, "It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your bedroll on the Sabbath day."

The man replied, "The man who cured me told me, 'Pick up your bedroll and walk'" (Jn 5:1-15).

The Jews persecuted Jesus because he healed on the Sabbath. Jesus said, "My Father is always at his work, so I, too, am working." Then the Jews tried to kill Jesus; not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God (Jn 5:16-18).

Sabbath Controversy: Disciples Plucked Ears of Grain Mt 12:1-8; Mk 2:23-28; Lk 6:1-5

One Sabbath, Jesus and his disciples walked through a field of ripe grain. His disciples were hungry and pulled off the heads of grain and munched on them. The Pharisees told Jesus, "Look! Your disciples are doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath."

Jesus answered, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath" (Mt 12:1-8).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

1. What catches your attention in the story?
2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand?
3. Who are the main characters in the story?
4. What problems did the characters face?
5. How did the characters face their problems?
6. How have you faced similar problems?
7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you?
8. What does the story tell about God?

SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What conflicts did Jesus experience at the beginning of his second year of ministry?
2. Why was Jesus expelled from his home town of Nazareth?
3. What was happening when Jesus invited the first people to follow him?
4. Who were some of the people healed by Jesus?
5. How does Jesus cause conflict today?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. Spiritual privileges may be despised. In his sermon at Nazareth (Lk 4:23-27), Jesus reveals two examples of when the Jews in Israel despised privileges that were theirs, while the heathens took advantage of them. Jesus' neighbors in Nazareth sinned by despising the privilege of having been acquainted with Jesus for almost thirty years.
2. Jesus has divine power to forgive sins. He forgave the paralyzed man's sins (Mk 2:5-7). Only God has the power to forgive sins. Jesus exercised that power during his ministry. The Greek meaning of Jesus is, "The Lord saves" (Mt 1:21-22). He came to give his life as a ransom for many (Mt 20:28) and his blood was poured out for the forgiveness of sins (Mt 26:28). The apostles attributed the divine work of forgiving sins to the Christ who died and was resurrected (Ac 2:38; 10:37-43; 13:38-39; Rm 3:21-26; 5:6-9; Eph 1:7; Heb 9:26).
3. To follow Jesus requires renouncement. The fishermen who followed Jesus left their professions and families (Mt 4:18-22). Matthew abandoned his work as a tax collector (Lk 5:28).
4. Only when the person recognizes that he is a sinner, unworthy of divine favors, does he become someone who is useful in the Kingdom of God. When Peter admitted that he was a sinner, Jesus invited him to become his disciple (Lk 5:8-10).

5. Jesus came to call sinners. Just as a sick person needs a doctor, the sinner needs Jesus. Jesus didn't come to help people who think they are without sin (Mt 9:10-12; Lk 5:32).
6. Religion sometimes swaps what is right for evil and vice-versa. The religious people called Jesus' action on the Sabbath to benefit the sick a transgression. They conspired to kill Jesus and considered their plans a lawful action (Lk 6:6-11; Mk 3:6 Jn 5:18).