



FAMILY LIFE BAPTIST CHURCH

“The Last Year of the Life of Christ, Part 69”

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Informed. Insightful. Intelligent.



The Last Year of the Life of Christ, Part 69

Matthew 27:51-56, Mark 15:38-41, Luke 23:45, 23:47-49, John 19:31-37

The centurion and those with him who were standing guard over Jesus were struck with fear when they saw the earthquake and the things that took place. They said, “Surely this Man was God’s Son!” The crowds who had come to see this spectacle [the crucifixion] also saw these things and returned home, beating their breasts.

We attend Church to obtain the mind of Christ, meaning, to have the Bible illuminated in our minds so that we can clearly understand the principles that Jesus taught and base our daily personal decisions on those principles.

We come to Church because we want to be obedient to the Bible, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ, in an informed, insightful and intelligent manner.

In our last lesson, we discussed the meaning of the most significant act that happened coincidentally with Jesus’ death, that being, the tearing of the veil in the Temple. The Temple Veil was a 60 foot long, 4 inch thick piece of woven and embroidered cloth that hung before the Most Holy Place from ceiling to floor. The distance between floors in an office building is roughly 15 feet, which would make the veil 4 stories high. The veil was woven so thickly that although it could be cut with a blade that was sharp and long enough, the veil was too thick to be torn by anyone, regardless of how strong that they might be, even from bottom to top, for its’ entire 60 foot length. The idea that someone climbed some type of ladder 60 feet into the air, tore the 4 inch thick veil at the top between the rings that held the veil to the pole running parallel to the ground that held it up, and then continued to tear the veil down for its’ entire 60 foot length is preposterous. Even if it were physically possible to tear the veil, the veil was acting as a barrier between the Holy Place, which could only be entered by the Jewish priests, and the Most Holy Place, which was a place into which only the High Priest could go, and then only once a year to bring God a sacrifice of blood to atone for the sins of the Israelites. As its’ title indicates, the Most Holy Place was the most holy place in Judaism, and the Scripture proscribed that anyone, saving the high priest, that entered it would be struck dead by God.

But, when Jesus’ died, the veil in the Temple that protected the Most Holy Place was torn in two from top to bottom, in spite of the fact that it was physically impossible for anyone to tear it. And, as I tried to make clear last week, the tearing of the temple veil that corresponded with the death of Jesus Christ represented the end of the Jewish sacrificial system.

Sin was no longer to be atoned for through the Jewish rituals performed at the Most Holy Place. The Jewish rituals were performed periodically, but sin was actually judged, once and for all, at the Cross of Calvary through the death of



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Jesus. Rather than providing a temporary animal sacrifice for sin, Jesus, on the Cross, provided a permanent sacrifice for sin in His Own blood, which made it unnecessary to sacrifice an animal ever again. **Romans 6:23** tells us:

23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

My research indicates that it took three hundred Jewish priests to repair the veil, but for them to do so was futile, because God never visited the Most Holy Place again. Jesus told His disciples, in **John 14:6**:

6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

In **John 3:3**:

3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

The only process that will atone for our sin is receiving the new, spiritual birth as a function of recognizing that which Jesus Christ has done for us.

There is no place; there is no ritual, there is no incantation, there is no good deed, there is no offering, there is nothing that will atone for our sins except the "new birth" that comes to us as a result of our recognizing the truth of that which the Bible tells us about Jesus Christ. There is no name under heaven by which men can be saved from the eternal penalty of sin other than the name of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life.

But, men can only be saved voluntarily.

To be saved, we have to choose to accept the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the Cross as the truth, and then, having done so, we have to decide to align our lives with His life as we grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

God navigated the circumstances of life to make this plain to us. The harmony of the Gospels which we are using as a text for this study tells us, in **Matthew 27:51-56, Mark 15:38-41, Luke 23:45, 47-49, and John 19:31-37**:

The earth shook, the rocks broke in pieces, and the tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had died rose again. They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection, entered the holy city and appeared to many people.

The centurion and those with him who were standing guard over Jesus were struck with fear when they saw the earthquake and the things that took place. They said, "Surely this Man was God's Son!" The crowds who had come to see this spectacle [the crucifixion] also saw these things and returned home, beating their breasts.

Since it was Preparation Day (for that Sabbath was a special day), the Jews, in order to keep the bodies from remaining on the cross on the Sabbath, asked Pilate to have their legs broken and then have them taken away. So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the two men who were crucified with Jesus.



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But when they came to Jesus and saw that He had already died, they did not break His legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.

The one who saw this has given this testimony (his testimony is true, and he knows he tells the truth) so you may believe. These things happened so the Scripture might be fulfilled: “Not one of His bones will be broken.” And another Scripture says, “They will look on the One they pierced.”

The Romans crucified Jesus because of the Jew’s anger over Jesus’ declaration that He is the Son of God. But after seeing the things that happened when Jesus died, the guards did not break Jesus’ legs on the Cross, declining to do any further violence to His body because of the reverence that they developed for Him. God navigated the circumstances following Jesus’ death in order to fulfill the Scripture. God continued manipulating, in **Matthew 27:57-61, Mark 15:42-47, Luke 23:50-56, John 19:38-42:**

After this, when it was already evening, a man named Joseph went to Pilate. He was a rich man from the Jewish city of Arimathea and a disciple of Jesus (though he kept it secret because he was afraid of the Jews). He was a reputable member of the Sanhedrin, a good and just man who had not agreed with its decision and actions. He was also looking for the kingdom of God.

Since it was the Preparation, the day before the Sabbath, he boldly went to Pilate and asked for permission to take away the body of Jesus.

Pilate was surprised to hear that [Jesus] was dead so soon, so he called for the centurion and asked whether Jesus had already died. On learning it was so, he granted the body to Joseph.

Near the place where [Jesus] was crucified was a garden, and in it was an unused tomb that Joseph had newly carved out of the rock. Since this was the Preparation Day and the Sabbath was imminent, they laid Jesus there because the tomb was so close. Then they rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb and left.

Matthew 27:62-66 continues:

The morning after the Preparation Day the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate and said, “Sir, we remember that while He was still alive the impostor said, ‘**After three days I will rise again.**’ So give the order to secure the grave until the third day, or else His disciples will come at night and steal His body and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead.’ Then the last deception will be worse than the first.”

Pilate told them, “You have a guard; go and make the tomb as secure as you can.” So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and stationing the guard.



So, the circumstances were that Jesus was dead and buried in a sealed tomb, guarded by sixteen Roman soldiers. Just as it was impossible for anyone to tear the veil in the temple, it was equally impossible for the disciples, or anyone else for that matter, to move the stone and steal the body while the tomb was guarded by the Romans. It is also preposterous to think that the disciples would do so; if they forsook Jesus in life, what would be their reason for obtaining His dead body? But all these things happened because of the design of God. God wants us to be saved through our belief in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Jesus chose hardheaded, skeptical men as His disciples; men who would not be convinced by emotionality, but only by the facts of the case. Jesus chose these men because He wanted them to convince other hardheaded, skeptical men, all of whom would believe in Jesus Christ so much so that they would give their lives for their faith, even as Jesus did. And nothing would make men more likely to give their lives for the cause of Christ than to convince them that the Christ came back to life after dying.

So Jesus was executed in the most brutal method available in their time by the most efficient and powerful fighting force of the day. He was then entombed in a tomb hewn from a solid boulder, meaning that the only opening for the tomb the part of the boulder that had been hewn out; there was no side door or back door. After discovering that Jesus was entombed, His enemies had the one entrance to the tomb guarded. There was probably, in the history of the world, never a dead man that had less of a chance to get out or to be taken out of His tomb. But, **Matthew 28:1-10, Mark 16:1-11, Luke 24:1-12, John 20:1-18** tells us:

When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (the mother of James) and Salome bought spices which they intended to use to anoint Jesus' body. They and several others with them came at early dawn on the first day of the week to see the tomb, bringing along the spices they had prepared.

Suddenly there was a powerful earthquake. An angel of the Lord descended from heaven, came and rolled the stone away from the door, and sat on it. He shone like lightning, and his clothes were as white as snow. The guards were terrified and became like dead men.

[Now after Jesus rose, early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons]. Mary came to the tomb while it was still dark and saw that the stone had been rolled away from the door.

Then she ran to Simon Peter and to the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said to them, "They took away the Lord from the tomb! And we don't know where they laid Him."

Then Peter and the other disciple went out and ran toward the tomb. They started out running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and



reached the tomb first. He stooped down and saw the linen cloths lying there but didn't go in.

Simon Peter arrived shortly afterward and went into the tomb. [Stooping down], he saw the linen cloths lying [by themselves]. The face cloth which had been around [Jesus'] head was lying not with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself.

Then the disciple who had reached the tomb first also went in, and he saw and believed. (They did not yet understand the Scripture, that Jesus had to rise from the dead.) So the disciples returned to their homes, [wondering what had happened].

Even as Peter and John were wondering what was going on, the women, who were crying and distraught over Jesus' absence from the tomb, were finding out what happened. First, Jesus Himself appeared to Mary Magdalene, while the angels appeared to the other women announcing Jesus' resurrection, and then Jesus Himself appeared to them. Both Jesus and the angels instructed the women to communicate the good news to the men, but when the women did so, the men did not believe them. Even Peter and John, who had been to the tomb, did not know what to make of the situation. Meanwhile, the Jews were still scheming, as **Matthew 28:11-15** tells us:

As the women were leaving [the tomb], some of the soldiers entered the city and reported to the chief priests everything that had happened. After they had gathered with the elders and discussed the situation, they gave the soldiers a large sum of money and told them, "You are to say, 'His disciples came during the night and stole His body while we were asleep.' If the governor should hear about it, we will satisfy him and get you out of trouble."

So they took the money and did as they were told. To this day this story is widely spread among the Jews.

The Jews refused to accept the evidence of the guards that they themselves posted. There is a psychological property in people known as cognitive dissonance, which specifies that the mind rejects anything with which it does not agree. When Michael Yeakey came by my house twenty-eight years ago to convince me to get involved with spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ, he could not convince me to believe in Jesus' reality. I knew, as a simple logical fact, based upon my own experience and all of the history of which I had ever heard, that it was impossible for a person to come back to life from the dead. A person who recently died could be resuscitated by modern medicine, but twenty centuries ago, someone that had been executed, certified dead by their executioners with no one trying to resuscitate them, and then buried for three days could not be raised from the dead, because it was impossible. And I am not the only person who knew this, as **Mark 16:12-13 and Luke 24:13-35** says:



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Jesus was later revealed in another way. That day two of them were walking into the country to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. They were discussing everything that had taken place. As they talked and reasoned, Jesus Himself approached and walked with them. But they were kept from recognizing Him.

[Jesus] asked them, **“What are you talking about with each other as you walk along with such sad faces?”**

One, named Cleopas, answered, “Are You the only One staying in Jerusalem who doesn’t know about the events that have happened there recently?”

“What things?” [Jesus] answered.

“The things about Jesus of Nazareth, a prophet who was powerful in both deed and word before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed Him over to be condemned to death by crucifixion. We were hoping it was He who would redeem Israel.

“What’s more, this is the third day since these things happened, and today some women from our group astonished us. They were at the tomb early this morning and didn’t find His body. They returned saying they had even seen a vision of angels who told them He was alive! Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they didn’t see Him.”

The women said that they saw angels that said that Jesus was alive. But we know that that can’t be true. Jesus is dead; the soldiers’ that executed Him certified that He was dead. Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea buried Jesus, and if there had been any sign of life in Jesus’ body, they would not have done so, therefore, Jesus was dead when they put Him in the tomb and sealed it. Nobody bothered the tomb, because the tomb was guarded by the Romans, so if somehow Jesus miraculously came back to life, He would have been sealed in the tomb. But He’s dead, so He couldn’t get out. It’s not possible.

I can’t explain the empty tomb, but I know for a fact that Jesus is dead, so He can’t be alive.

Cognitive dissonance.

If you are going to be a believer in Jesus Christ, you will have to get over your cognitive dissonance. I understand that you have cognitive dissonance; I understand that resurrection is completely outside of your experience, but to be saved, you will have to believe in Jesus Christ’s resurrection, meaning that you will have to overcome your cognitive dissonance.

I overcame my cognitive dissonance by research. Michael Yeakey told me that he had proof that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Proof. Now, the fact that he claimed to have proof did not convince me that he did, but it did convince me to look at his proof, if for no other reason than to punch holes in his argument.



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Michael's proof was the history of the church. Twenty eight years ago, when I was saved, there was an entire half-floor of books in the Michigan State University Library on the history of the Church. Now, history is a subject that requires faith. You and I believe that our ancestors came to this country in slave ships. We have never been on a slave ship, and we have never seen a slave ship. None of us have any living ancestors that were actually brought to this country on a slave ship, and I doubt that any of us have or have ever talked to any living relative that was a slave.

Everything that you and I know about slavery is a result of history. I was born in 1952, and my earliest memory is that of something that happened when I was three years old, in 1955. The only reason that I believe that the world was not created in 1955 is because of my study of history. Dad told me that he was born in 1921, and I believe it. I was not here to see it, and I have no memory of it, but Dad is an historical person in my life, and I have decided to believe his testimony. He could be lying, and I would have no way to know about it, but when I listen to the stories that he tells me about events that happened during his childhood and then read the history books written about the same period, I find that the stories match. That being true, I find Dad to be a trustworthy witness, and when he tells me about personal events that are not in the history books, I tend to believe him because of his trustworthiness.

Luke was an historian, and the archeologists that use Luke's references as guidelines for their work have determined that Luke's references to people, places and things are confirmed by archeology. As a matter of fact, secular archeologists that don't even believe in God still use the Bible as a reference book for their work in the Middle East, because they can dig in the places that the Bible specifies and find the things that the Bible says are there. Cleopas and the other disciple did not have to perform an archeological dig, because they had Jesus there with them, as the lection, **Mark 16:12-13, Luke 24:13-35**, continues:

Then [Jesus] said to them, "O foolish people who are slow of heart to believe everything the prophets spoke! Was it not necessary for the Messiah to suffer these things and then enter into His glory?" Beginning with Moses and all the prophets, [Jesus] explained to them in all the Scriptures the passages about Himself.

Can you imagine Jesus coming to the disciples that don't believe in Him to explain about Himself? But how else are they going to come to believe? They did not believe that which Jesus told them about His resurrection while He was alive before His crucifixion, and they certainly did not believe the report of the women. But the only experience that will overcome cognitive dissonance is a significant emotional event. The event has to be jarring enough to the psyche to break through the cognitive dissonance and change the person's internal perspective.

A significant emotional event causes a person's thinking processes to completely change. A significant emotional event changes one's thinking and is



analogous to having one's mind "born again", which is why, in **John 3:3:**
3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Jesus' explanation of how His life, death, burial and resurrection fulfilled the Scripture was sufficient to engage the mind of these two disciples, but it was not sufficient to be considered a significant emotional event. As the lection, **Mark 16:12-13, Luke 24:13-35**, continues:

As they approached the village where they were going, He acted as if He would go farther. But they pleaded with Him. "Stay with us," they said, "because evening is near and the day is almost gone." So Jesus went in to stay with them.

As He reclined at the table with them, [Jesus] took the bread and blessed and broke it and began giving it to them. Their eyes were opened, and they knew who He was. Then He vanished from their sight.

This is the significant emotional event.

As they watched Jesus disappear from their sight, their minds and hearts were changed, as they testified in the continuation of the lection, **Mark 16:12-13, Luke 24:13-35:**

They said to each other, "Didn't our hearts burn within us as He spoke with us on the road and kept explaining the Scriptures to us?"

The burning in their hearts signified that their minds were beginning to change. As they listened to Jesus teach, their mental faculties began to recognize the possibility that maybe the women were telling the truth. It dawned on them that maybe their opinion that Jesus was still dead was wrong. Maybe that which they thought was impossible had actually happened. For the first time, they seriously considered that Jesus actually could have risen from the dead.

Then Jesus blessed and broke the bread and gave it to them. They recognized that they had seen the man who was breaking the bread do so before. Once their minds captured the reality of that which was happening, Jesus completed the significant emotional event for them by disappearing from their sight.

Resurrection, in the minds of these two disciples, was no longer impossible, because they had broken bread with the resurrected Jesus Christ, who had been crucified, then He died and they buried Him. Now, Jesus is appearing to them, teaching them as He had before His crucifixion, breaking bread with them as He had before His crucifixion, and vanished from the room while they were looking at Him. This experience caused them to have a mental breakthrough. Their cognitive dissonance was changing as their minds began to realize the fact that Jesus was alive once again. They were beginning to experience a newfound joy, caused by the ministry of the Holy Spirit.



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Their minds were being “born again”. Jesus spent the rest of His day causing His other disciples to be “born again”. This lesson, and **Luke 24:36-43**, **John 20:19-23** continues:

That very hour [the two disciples] got up and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the eleven [actually, only ten of them] and those with them gathered together and saying to each other, “The Lord has really risen! He appeared to Simon!”

Then [the two disciples] told them what had happened to them on the road and how they had recognized Jesus when He broke the bread. But [the other disciples still] didn’t believe them.

It was evening on the first day of the week, and the disciples were assembled behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jews. As they were talking, Jesus Himself came and stood among them and said to them, “Peace to you!”

[The disciples] were shocked and terrified and thought they were seeing a ghost. But [Jesus] said to them, “Why are you alarmed? And why do doubts arise in your minds? Look at My hands and My feet—it is I Myself. Touch Me and see! A ghost doesn’t have flesh and bones, as you see I have.” When [Jesus] had said this, He showed them His hands and feet and side.

Only then did the disciples become joyful at seeing the Lord. While they were still overwhelmed with wonder and disbelief because of their joy, [Jesus] said to them, “Do you have anything here to eat?”

They gave Him a piece of broiled fish [and a honeycomb,] and [Jesus] ate in front of them.

During Jesus’ Passion, the nine disciples forsook Jesus and Peter denied Jesus because their minds were not born again; they believed in Jesus’ deity intellectually, that is to say that they believed in that which they had experienced about Jesus’ ability to successfully handle Messianic situations. Jesus could heal the sick and raise the dead. However, when Jesus submitted to the death of the Cross, the intellectual faith of the disciples changed. The disciples decided that Jesus was not the Messiah because, in their minds, Jesus’ death on the Cross was not fitting for the Messiah. They had their own thoughts about the Messiah, and their cognitive dissonance did not allow them to understand the information that Jesus taught them that His death on the Cross was part of God’s plan.

Now that Jesus Christ has once again proven His deity by rising from the dead and appearing to the disciples, the disciples are now becoming convinced that Jesus Christ is Lord. These post-resurrection interactions with Jesus are causing the disciples’ minds to be “born again”.

Some children are saved almost from the time that they are able to know anything. Their parents have been born again, and present Jesus Christ to their children as a fact when their minds are malleable. If parents are saved and train



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their children from their earliest days, it may be that the children will develop a belief in Jesus Christ in the same way that they believe that two plus two equals four. Nevertheless, to be born again, it is necessary for even these children to have an experience with Jesus Christ, as the devil will do his best to undermine the unverified belief of a child unless the child is securely sheltered from the devil's clutches, which is virtually impossible to do in our generation.

Being born again involves having a life-changing experience with Jesus Christ, as we see from our next Scriptural example, in **John 20:24-29**:

Now Thomas, also called Didymus, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. When the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" [Thomas] replied, "Unless I see the imprint of the nails in His hands and press my finger into the mark of the nails and my hand into His side, I refuse to believe."

Eight days later the disciples were again indoors, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors had been locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, **"Peace to you!"**

Then [Jesus] said to Thomas, **"Put your finger here and look at My hands, and take your hand and press it into My side, and stop doubting and believe."**

Thomas answered, **"My Lord and my God!"**

"You have believed Me," Jesus said to Thomas, "because you have seen Me. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Once again, cognitive dissonance is overcome, as Jesus tells us, in **Luke 19:10**:

10 for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Jesus has not come to punish the unbelievers among His disciples, but Jesus has come to do that which is necessary overcome cognitive dissonance, as the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. Once you accept your experience with Jesus, He will accept your repentance, just as He accepted Thomas' repentance. It doesn't matter what kind of sinner you were, or how great your disbelief was before your conversion. Jesus is willing to provide you with the experience that will convince you of His deity, and then He is also willing to forgive your disbelief, because the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. **John 3:16-17** tells us:

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Even with all of their failings, all of their cognitive dissonance, and all of their unbelief, Jesus still loved His disciples. Jesus did not reject Thomas because of His unbelief, and I am of the opinion that Jesus deliberately arranged



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Thomas' absence so that Jesus' love for Thomas, cognitive dissonance notwithstanding, could be recorded.

The episodes of Peter's denials of Jesus, the conversion of the thief on the Cross and of doubting Thomas are all important for us because we all have unbelief. Yes, we may believe in Jesus intellectually, but when our chance to put our lives on the line for Him comes up, our cognitive dissonance has a tendency to show up. But by these examples, we know that there is forgiveness for the sin of unbelief, which I have termed as cognitive dissonance. **Mark 16:14-18** begins: **14 Later [Jesus] appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.**

Jesus rebuked the disciples because He knows the heart of man. The disciples saw His miracles and heard His prophecy, but they not only denied Him in the shadow of the Cross, they also refused to believe those of their own number that saw Him after He rose from the dead. Their failings notwithstanding, Jesus has called them to be His witnesses, and He wants them to fulfill their ministry. So, after Jesus rebuked them, He forgave them, and tells them in **Mark 16:15-18**:

15 And [Jesus] said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues;

18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

Jesus Christ performed miracles to convince His disciples of His deity. Now, Jesus Christ is giving the power to perform miracles to His disciples to convince others of His deity. The purpose of Jesus' ministry is to overcome the cognitive dissonance of the world, and He is willing to empower His disciples to do that which is necessary to achieve His objective. In **John 19:21**:

Jesus then said to them, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, so I am sending you." Then He breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, they have been forgiven, and if you do not forgive anyone's sins, they have not been forgiven."

The Law of Moses is no longer the arbiter of righteousness. Now we have the example of the ministry of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit to give us the ability to think as we should think and to act as we should act. And what is our mandate as Christians? **Mark 16:15** and **John 13:34-35** tell us:

15 And [Jesus] said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have



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loved you, that you also love one another.

35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

The disciples have power. The disciples have preaching. The disciples have the commandment to love. That is the essence of Jesus' ministry to the world. Power, preaching and love are that which we are given to overcome the cognitive dissonance of the world. Power, preaching and love are that which we are given to overcome the devil. Power, preaching and love are that which we are given to win souls and increase the Kingdom of God. Power, preaching and love are that which we are given to make it clear to all, as our text tells us,

“Surely this Man was God's Son!”

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