

Jesus of Nazareth

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Study Guide for Hour Four

Episode Four continues to depict Jesus' ministry. By now you have gleaned its component parts - Jesus is going about Galilee in the company of his disciples. In the gospels, his enemies accost him at every turn, but in the film, they are largely at bay. They make their appearance in spades in the next episode. He is teaching. He is performing miracles. His ministry is an itinerate one.

Hour 3, minutes :02-:06 Jesus creates a huge sensation, both as the result of his teaching and his miracles. Joseph of Arimathea is introduced. He appears only near the end of the four gospels. (Read, e.g., Matthew 27:57-61.) He is a well-respected member of the religious authorities who is intrigued by Jesus. This indicates that not all of the religious authorities are his enemies. Nicodemus is another example of this. Joseph will give his own tomb for Jesus' burial.

Hour 3, minutes :06-:08 compile some of Jesus' teaching about money. (Read, e.g. Mark 10:17-22) Jesus lives a simple and humble life, but he is by no means an ascetic. His teaching to the rich young man is not a call to asceticism. The rich young man simply cannot renounce his life and lifestyle to follow Jesus. It is too great a demand for him. He misses his chance. Jesus' teaching that one cannot serve both money and God is a demand for the primacy of God over money, which very few pursue.

Hour 3, minutes :08-:11 This material features Judas and is not biblical. There is no evidence that Judas was a scholar or linguist, nor did Jesus call him.

Hour 3, minutes :15-:21 focus on Jesus' miracles. The overwhelming majority of Jesus' miracles are healings - the paralyzed, the deaf, the dumb, the blind, the sick, the demon possessed, the dead. These miracles proclaim Jesus' divine authority as well as describe his divine nature. There are but two nature miracles across the gospels in which Jesus walks on water and calms the sea. These two proclaim his divinity. He embodies the creator God. Finally, there are a handful of miscellaneous miracles that serve miscellaneous ends. The miraculous multiplication of loaves and fishes is an enactment of Isaiah 25 that describes a divine banquet that will be featured in God's paradisiacal end time.

Hour 3, minutes :22-:25 depict the Zealots and their misperception of Jesus. They want to appropriate Jesus for their cause. They want to see him proclaimed King so he will expel the Romans. The word Sadducee is introduced here. The Sadducees were one party of the religious authorities. They were a priestly caste who presided over the sacrifice at the temple of Jerusalem. When the temple was destroyed in the Jewish revolt of 70 CE, they disappeared.

Hour 3, minutes :25- :31 depict Jesus at the home of Joseph of Arimathea. This is not biblical, nor is the scene with Mary Magdalene. Only Luke records Mary Magdalene during Jesus' ministry and indicates that Jesus exorcised her demons, and she thereafter followed him. Jesus' conversation with Joseph underscores his teaching on the law. For Jesus, the law is superseded by a right heart. A right heart is

the new law. He makes this clear in the Sermon on the Mount. He seeks to internalize the law to the point of its abolition. Joseph and his company support an externalized law that upholds God's order. They fear that Jesus' holding on to the law are too lax and vague.

Hour 3, minutes :31-:33 Jesus trains his disciples to evangelize and predicts the effects of evangelization. Jesus is preparing his unwitting disciples to found the church. When they receive the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, they are sent out to evangelize.

Hour 3, minutes :33-:34 This short depiction of Mary, now aging, is not in the Bible.

Hour 3, minutes :35-:38 This attack upon Herod by the Zealots is not biblical, but it serves to underscore that the Zealots, outnumbered by the Romans, resorted to terror tactics, and they suffered brutal reprisal by Rome. Some scholars believe that the crucifix was designed as a deterrent to the Zealots.

Hour 3, minutes :38-:44 This is a crucial scene and a crucial passage of the Matthew, Mark, and Luke Gospels. It is considered to be their fulcrum or turning point. In it, Jesus seeks to ascertain if the disciples have yet gleaned who He is. Peter declares him to be the messiah who is the Son of God. Read Matthew 16:13-20. Jesus praises Peter's answer as having come from God. He changes Peter's name from Simon to Peter. In the Bible a name reflected a person's essential identity. Peter means rock. His essential identity is now as a foundation. This passage serves as the basis for the papacy. See, vs. 18. This passage is considered to be the fulcrum, because, after it, Jesus sets his face to Jerusalem to die. This, parenthetically, is the only mention of the word church in the gospels.

Hour 3, minutes :44-:47 record a few excerpts from the Sermon on the Mount. Read Matthew 5-7. In the Beatitudes, Jesus summons a coterie of the types of people who will be receptive to the Kingdom of God he has come to inaugurate. He also delivers the Lord's Prayer. In Matthew's gospel it is a corrective to the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, about whom more later.

Hour 3, minutes :47-:50 This material actually belongs in 3:38-3:44 above. When Peter declares that he knows who Jesus is, Jesus then tells them that it is the destiny of the Messiah and Son of God to bear his cross. Peter repudiates Jesus, and Jesus likens him to Satan. For Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all attempts to dissuade Jesus from his sacrifice are Satanic.

Hour 3, minutes :51-:54 The Jews are converging on Jerusalem for the Passover. The Passover celebrates the deliverance of the Jews from foreign oppression in Egypt, so given their foreign oppression by Rome, the Passover is laced with tension and unrest. A million Jews converged on Jerusalem for the Passover. Jesus will soon enter Jerusalem on the back of a donkey and be hailed as a coming king.

Hour 3, minutes :54-:59 depict the raising of Lazarus. It is unique to John, and John's fulcrum. Read John 11:1-44. In it, Jesus performs his greatest miracle and utters his greatest teaching. See, vs. 25-26. It creates such a commotion that the religious authorities, fearing Roman reprisal, decide to execute him. Read John 11:45-53 as well.