

UNIT 9

JESUS' RELATIONS WITH THINGS AND PEOPLE

Hymn Part 4

CHRIST'S HUMANITY

*Jesus "was made in the likeness of men:
and ... found in fashion as a man."*

PHILIPPIANS 2:7-8



DAY 1

Jesus and Materialism

DAY 2

Trusting God's Provision

DAY 3

Jesus' Sense of Timing

DAY 4

Jesus' Friendship

DAY 5

Jesus' Speech

Why You Will Find This Unit Helpful

Jesus had a perspective of material things that greatly differs from the common view in our world. Freedom from the bondage of possessions is vital to abundant living. You will find that you can trust God to provide for the needs of His children, so you do not have to worry about the needs of tomorrow. By examining the example of Jesus, you will also develop appropriate relationships to God's agenda, friendships, and speech.

Lifelong Goal

You will become like Christ in your relationship to material things, God's agenda for your life, friendships, and control of your speech.

Summary of God's Work in You

Christ's life in you springs from the mental quality of sincerity, which deals only with reality. God's goal for you is found in His original intention for a perfect humanity. Your spiritual growth can be measured only by Christ's relations with His Father and with other people. Christ enables your growth as God intended it in His role as Son of Man.

Unit Learning Goals

- You will understand Jesus' teaching on materialism and the way Jesus related to friends.
- You will demonstrate your determination and commitment to lay up for yourself treasures in heaven.
- You will understand that God provides for the needs of His servants and children.
- You will demonstrate your confidence in God's provision for His children.
- You will understand that Jesus based His actions on the schedule of events planned by His Father.
- You will demonstrate your desire to know and follow God's agenda for your life.
- You will demonstrate your gratitude for Your friend Jesus.
- You will understand the way Jesus controlled His talk for divine purposes.
- You will demonstrate your commitment to developing temperance in your speech.

What You Will Do to Develop Appropriate Relationships to People and Things

- You will evaluate your relationship to things according to the teachings of Christ and you will seek freedom from possessions.
- You will study God's provision for His children and work to develop a deeper trust in His provision for your needs.
- You will evaluate your single-mindedness and determine to follow God's agenda.
- You will review the Christlike virtue of temperance and seek God's help in the discipline of your tongue.

Scripture Memory Verses

"Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

Lifelong Helps Related to This Unit

Bondage to Freedom Lists—Possessions (p. 226)

Christlike Virtues—Temperance (p. 239)

The Mind of Christ Card Related to This Unit

5A. Unit 9: Scripture Memory—Matthew 6:20-21



Today's Bible Meditations

“Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Luke 12:15).

“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matt. 6:19-21).

Name of Christ for Today

Heir of All Things
(Heb. 1:2)

Prayer to Begin the Lesson

Lord Jesus, You are the Heir of All Things; and I am a joint heir with You. I confess that I live like a poor person rather than like an heir of the kingdom. I have not learned to understand and appreciate the riches and treasures You make available to me. I confess that I have far too much attachment to the things of the world. Teach me to deny myself and give up my ownership of my things. I want to be completely free from attachment to things so that I can follow You and Your example. Amen.

DAY 1 JESUS AND MATERIALISM

1. Begin today's lesson by reading the Bible verses and the name of Christ for today. Work on your memory verse. Then use the suggested prayer on the left to begin your study.

Jesus' Example

Both by example and by teaching, Jesus left no doubt that He placed little value on this world's goods. The divine choice for His birth was a stable. For most of His life, Jesus was a working man, a carpenter. During His ministry Jesus said, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head” (Luke 9:58). At His death Jesus' only material possession was the garment for which the soldiers cast lots.

2. Which of the following best describes Jesus' example regarding things? Check one.

- Jesus was deeply attached to the things of the world and used His power to accumulate many things for His personal comfort and pleasure.
- Jesus was detached and free from the love of the world's things. He chose a lowly life and saw no value in accumulating things.

Jesus' Teaching

In His teaching, Jesus contrasted true riches with unrighteous mammon (see Luke 16:11). Jesus warned against storing up worldly wealth and advised His followers to store up “treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal” (Matt. 6:20, NASB). In connection with this warning, He delivered an important principle: “Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also” (Matt. 6:21).

3. If you were completely honest with yourself, where would you say most of your treasures are? Check one.

- In heaven On earth I don't think I have any treasures.


Jesus' principle is evident in the parable of the rich fool (see Luke 12:16-21). The foolish farmer kept storing his crops in bigger barns—accumulating his wealth. Then the farmer said to himself, “Take your ease, eat, drink and be merry” (Luke 12:19, NASB). That same night the Lord required his life, and his accumulated wealth was valueless. How foolish!

Jesus said, “No one of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions” (Luke 14:33, NASB). When Matthew was called to be a disciple, he “left everything behind, and rose and began to follow Him” (Luke 5:28, NASB). In the next verse, however, Matthew had a house in which to entertain Jesus and fellow tax collectors (see Luke 5:29). His “leaving everything” indicates that he left his profitable job rather than merely his possessions. The Gospels, however, do not record that

Matthew ever returned to that house. He is always pictured following Jesus in the various trips around Galilee, Perea, and Judea.

Jesus required the rich young ruler to “go and sell all you possess, and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me” (Mark 10:21, NASB). The young man was promised treasure in heaven immediately on divesting himself of earthly treasure. Following Jesus came after the heavenly treasure. Jesus realized this young man had made wealth his god. He loved it more than he loved God. Essentially, Jesus was telling him to put away his false god.

The story of the rich young ruler is the only case when the Bible explicitly says Jesus loved a would-be follower (see Mark 10:21). The man’s refusal must have been painful to the Lord. Jesus exclaimed, “How hard it will be for those who are wealthy to enter the kingdom of God!” (Mark 10:23, NASB). When questioned about this, Jesus said, “All things are possible with God” (Mark 10:27, NASB).

-  4. Turn to the Lifelong Helps (p. 226) and review the Bondage to Freedom list related to possessions. Pray as you read through that list. Is there anything God is asking you to get rid of because it has become a false god to you? Respond in whatever way God may direct you. Below briefly describe your freedom (or lack of freedom) that you sense regarding possessions.

Jesus drew a hard-and-fast line in connection to materialism. He said, “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon [money]” (Matt. 6:24). One of the greatest rivals God has is worldly monetary success. We can have possessions and use them wisely, like the women who supported Jesus and His disciples in ministry. But the grave danger is that the possessor of wealth will worship it. Jesus sternly warned, “That which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God” (Luke 16:15, NASB).


*One of the greatest rivals
God has is worldly
monetary success.*

The mind of Christ places God above everything in the world.


A Remedy to Materialism

Greed will cause us to hold on to things for self-use. Greed is described in Ephesians 5:5 as idolatry—worshipping a false god. Jesus instructed the rich young ruler to give away his wealth because it had become a false god. The best remedy for materialism is cheerful giving.

Repeatedly, Jesus urged joyful giving. In the Sermon on the Mount He commanded, “Give to him who asks of you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you” (Matt. 5:42). Jesus also warned that giving should be secret. We are not to announce it publicly (see Matt. 6:2-4). God is interested only in the motivation of our heart.

 5. What is one way to avoid or get rid of a materialistic spirit?

Money can become a powerful god that demands allegiance in a subtle but effective way. The mind of Christ allows involvement with money but warns us that it can be dangerous. Money itself is neither good nor evil and can be used for worldly purposes or for God. We must be wise and heavenly minded in its use. We must be ready to give as faithful stewards of God's resources.


 6. Ask God if there is anything He wants you to give away as a way to keep materialism in check. If God reveals something, ask Him where or to whom you are to give it. You may need to set your mind and heart to give and then watch for the opportunity God brings your way. If God guides you to give in a special way, describe below what and to whom.

DAY 2
TRUSTING GOD'S PROVISION





Today's Bible Meditation

"If God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:30-33).

 1. Begin today's lesson by reading the Bible verses and the name of Christ for today. Work on your memory verse. Then use the suggested prayer on the following page to begin your study.

Jesus taught that God provides for the needs of His children. In two similar passages (see Matt. 6:25-34; Luke 12:22-32), Jesus said God provides for the birds and the lilies. Because God provides for them, certainly He will provide for His children who are far more valuable. In the Luke passage Jesus promised more than things like food and clothing: "Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32, NASB).

 2. Why should God's children not worry about food, drink, or clothing?

 3. Read again the Bible Meditation for today and look for the condition of God's provision. What should you seek first, after which God will provide?

During the latter part of His adolescence and young manhood, Jesus worked as a carpenter. He showed that a working profession is valid and useful. After Jesus began His ministry, God supplied His material needs through the ministry of some women

followers, who “were contributing to their support out of their private means” (Luke 8:3). Jesus did not require them to give away their wealth as He did the rich young ruler. Their wealth was not their god. Their love and devotion were given to Jesus. Through this provision God freed Jesus and His disciples to devote their entire time to ministry. Jesus, therefore, was not worried about meeting His daily needs. God did that. Jesus said God will do that for us as well.

Learning to Trust


When I was first invited to teach *The Mind of Christ* publicly, I developed a booklet with charts to make the concepts memorable. I received a shock when I checked printing costs. The printer estimated the initial printing would be about \$1,000. We checked our bank book and found that we had \$37. Public ministry was new to me, and I could see no way to pursue what seemed to be a calling from God.

My studies of Jesus’ life had convinced me that God will supply where there is genuine ministry need. This was the way Jesus functioned. My wife and I knew that the printing of the booklet would require a miracle. Somehow we had the faith and courage to ask God to print the booklet. We based our request on Jesus’ example.

The treasurer of my church called with an unusual message. He told me, “T. W., we have a businessman in our church who just finished a major transaction. He came by this morning to tell us that he had an unexpected surplus. He says God told him to give you the surplus.” The check he had for me turned out to be \$1,000!

With joy I took the booklet to the printer. Although I have never been excited about getting a bill, this time I could hardly wait for the bill to come. God was showing me that He supplies the needs of His children. Three weeks later the bill was the top envelope in my mail! Joyfully I tore open the bill—but the bill was for \$1,097. My heart sank. We had the thousand but not the \$97. With a heavy heart I opened the rest of the mail. The third envelope was from a fellow who told me he had been praying for my ministry. He said that God had impressed on him that I had a need and that he was to meet it. He had enclosed a check for \$100. That money arrived in the same mail as the bill! I knew that God had provided!

Over the years God has repeatedly supplied the money I have needed for ministry. The supply is usually exact, and it comes at the time of the need, seldom early. We are able to please God only when we walk with Him by faith (see Heb. 11:6). Jesus lived a life of faith, and He wants us to do the same.

-  4. Can you remember a specific time when God provided for you in such a way that you knew it was God? If so, briefly describe that time and prepare to share a summary with your group.

Name of Christ for Today

Leader and Commander
of the People (Isa. 55:4)

Prayer to Begin the Lesson

Lord Jesus, not only are You the Head of our church; but You are also the Leader and Commander of Your People. Our church is an army intended to follow You into battle against the Enemy. I pray that You will enable us to follow Your leadership so that even the gates of hell will not prevail against Your church. I pledge my allegiance to You as my Commander in Chief. Give me such confidence in Your provision that I will not worry about tomorrow. Give me the faith to trust You to provide. Amen.

HEBREWS 11:6


“WITHOUT FAITH IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PLEASE HIM: FOR HE THAT COMETH TO GOD MUST BELIEVE THAT HE IS, AND THAT HE IS A REWARDER OF THEM THAT DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM.”

Don't Worry About Things


Worry is pointless in view of God's care and provision for His children. Jesus expressly forbade worry about daily needs, and He even called anxiety pagan (see Matt. 6:25-32). Jesus pictured the heathen world as eagerly seeking their needs (see Luke 12:30), but He told His followers to "make yourselves purses which do not wear out" (Luke 12:33, NASB). Treasure in heaven cannot be corrupted or lost.

*Treasure in heaven cannot
be corrupted or lost.*

**Worry accomplishes nothing, wastes mental effort,
and does not characterize the mind of Christ.**

 5. Which of the following best describes you? Check one or write your own.

- I have learned the lesson about God's provision, and I seldom worry about my need for things. I trust God to provide for my needs.
- I have such desperate needs that I worry about things all the time. After all, my family has needs, and I have a responsibility to provide for them.
- I am like a boat on the sea. When my needs are met, my confidence is high. But when things get tight, I shift my worry into high gear.
- Other: _____

 6. Confess to God exactly what you are thinking and feeling about His provision. Confess to Him that you are His child. Ask God to give you the faith and confidence to trust His provision even when things are difficult. Ask God to develop your trust in Him so that you will not worry as pagans do. Pray for God's honor and glory through your life.




Today's Bible Meditations


"He said ... 'My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples'"
(Matt. 26:18).

"Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners"
(Matt. 26:45).

DAY 3 JESUS' SENSE OF TIMING

 1. Begin today's lesson by reading the Bible verses and the name of Christ for today. Work on your memory verse. Then use the suggested prayer on the following page to begin your study.

Jesus never appeared rushed. He never exhibited signs of worry or concern about schedule. Even on the way to heal Jairus's daughter, Jesus interrupted His trip to deal with the woman with the issue of blood (see Luke 8:43-48) in full knowledge that the little girl would die if He delayed. Neither imminent sickness nor death threatened Jesus' schedule. When He received notice that Lazarus was sick, "He stayed then two days longer in the place where He was" (John 11:6, NASB). Jesus knew what He would do, and He had more concern for the ultimate work of God than for the momentary illness of Lazarus. The resurrection of Lazarus was the decisive factor in the Sanhedrin's decision to kill Jesus (see John 11:53).

-  2. Check all the words below that normally describe your feelings and thoughts about your schedule. Check those that apply most of the time.


- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Angry | <input type="checkbox"/> Calm | <input type="checkbox"/> Can't wait to get started |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confident | <input type="checkbox"/> Cool | <input type="checkbox"/> Excited |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frustrated | <input type="checkbox"/> Hurried | <input type="checkbox"/> Overloaded |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relaxed | <input type="checkbox"/> Rushed | <input type="checkbox"/> Stressed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Worried | <input type="checkbox"/> Want to quit | <input type="checkbox"/> Too much time |

Do you feel and think like Jesus about your schedule? Because Jesus set His mind on the Kingdom, He focused attention on His purpose for ministry. Every miracle, teaching, and parable fit into a purposeful progression. Jesus was living His life according to His Father's agenda.


Jesus referred to "His time" as one of great sacrifice. After Jesus' brothers tried to get Him to go to the Feast of Tabernacles and get the attention of the crowds, He told them, "My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready" (John 7:6). Jesus timed every phase of His ministry in relation to that event. Later, during the same Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus met some challenges from the religious leaders and declared that to know Him was to know His Father. Though this enraged the leaders, "no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come" (John 8:20) after claiming, "Before Abraham was, I am ... Jesus hid Himself" (John 8:58-59). Still later, after saying He was the Son of God, Jesus slipped out of their hands to avoid being captured (see John 10:34-39). After He raised Lazarus from the dead, "Jesus therefore no longer continued to walk publicly among the Jews, but went away from there" (John 11:54, NASB).


Toward the end, "when the days were approaching for His ascension, ... He resolutely set His face to go to Jerusalem" (Luke 9:51, NASB). Probably on Monday of Holy Week, Jesus said, "The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified" (John 12:23).

When Jesus sent the disciples to prepare the room for that final Passover, He instructed them to say to the host, "My time is at hand" (Matt. 26:18). Jesus began the greatest of all recorded prayers, "Father, the hour is come" (John 17:1). In Gethsemane Jesus awakened the sleeping disciples by telling them, "The hour has come" (Mark 14:41, NASB). Jesus' entire life concentrated on the precise timing of His great sacrifice.

-  3. Would you describe Jesus as single-minded or double-minded? Circle one.

This knowledge and determination seem to be beyond our imitation. Yet God is present and able to guide you just as clearly. Spiritual concentration and time with Him are necessary.

-  4. Turn to unit 1 (p. 15) and read again the description of *single-minded*. Would you describe yourself as single-minded or double-minded? Circle one.

-  5. Conclude today's lesson by spending time with your Heavenly Father. Tell Him about your desire to work only on His agenda for your life. Agree to follow God one day at a time, using His timetable and not your own.

Name of Christ for Today
King Eternal, Immortal,
Invisible (1 Tim. 1:17)

**Prayer to Begin
the Lesson**

King Jesus, I exalt You. You are Eternal, Immortal, and Invisible, but You are also personal. I worship You and thank You that You care about me. I pray that You will help me understand and discern the signs of the times and follow You wisely. Help me be watchful, active, and ready for Your soon return. Amen.

DAY 4
JESUS' FRIENDSHIP



Today's Bible Meditation

13^cGreater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. 14^eYe are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15^eHenceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you” (John 15:13-15).

Name of Christ for Today

Friend of Publicans and Sinners (Matt. 11:19).

Prayer to Begin the Lesson

Jesus, I'm so glad You choose to be a friend of sinners. Otherwise, I'd miss out on Your friendship. I want to be Your friend, so I pledge to do the things You command me. As I study Your Word, help me identify the things You desire of me so that I can obey. I yearn for fellowship with You. I open my life and invite You to come in and fellowship with me. Amen.

1. Begin today's lesson by reading the Bible verses and the name of Christ for today. Work on your memory verse. Then use the suggested prayer on the left to begin your study.

Jesus was a person who made many friends, and He made them easily. He was invited to the wedding of family friends and blessed the wedding (see John 2:1-11). Jesus often accepted dinner invitations. He celebrated friendship. His friendships were profound. Jesus often visited the family of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus in Bethany. John tells us that Jesus loved them (see John 11:5). Mary and Martha felt free to send for Jesus when Lazarus became ill (see John 11:3). We have already discussed the virtue of being entreatable. Jesus displayed this virtue in relation to His friends. Jesus was also faithful to His friends. He stood by them in times of need and ministered to their needs. When Jesus visited the house of Simon Peter, He healed Peter's mother.

2. Name at least two virtues Jesus displayed in relationship to His friends.

Jesus was _____ and _____.

Jesus loved His friends, and He was faithful and entreatable. Jesus' friends, in turn, were loyal to Him. Women remained at the cross through terrifying circumstances (see Matt. 27:55) and later went to the tomb (see Matt. 28:1; Luke 24:10). Joseph of Arimathea, facing the possible ridicule of his peers, bravely requested permission to bury Jesus (see Matt. 27:57-58). Nicodemus also participated in the burial (see John 19:39). Jesus inspired steadfastness in His friends.


Jesus' friends were His disciples. He appointed them "that they might be with Him" (Mark 3:14, NASB). Jesus indicated His supreme love in laying down His life for His friends (see John 15:13). Jesus told them, "No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you" (John 15:15, NASB).

3. Read John 15:13-15 again and answer these questions. Based on verse 13, what demonstrates the supreme love of a friend?

What does Jesus expect of His friends? (v. 14) _____

What is the difference between a servant and a friend? (v. 15)

Giving one's life for a friend is the ultimate expression of love. That is what Jesus did for His friends—and for us! Jesus expected obedience from His friends. When Jesus moved from a Master-slave relationship with His disciples to a Friend-friend relationship, He revealed to them the will and heart of His Father.


 4. Based on this passage, how would you rate your Friend-friend relationship with Christ? Check one or write in your own assessment.

- I don't think I meet the criteria to be a friend of Christ.
- Sometimes I sense intimacy with Christ, and He reveals the Father's will to me. But at other times I seem distanced from the relationship.
- Right now I feel a deep closeness to Christ. I could almost say I would be willing to die for Him if I need to.
- Other: _____

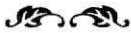
Within the intimate circle of the twelve disciples, Jesus developed an even closer bond with Simon Peter, James, and John. These men were sometimes allowed to witness private works (see Mark 5:37). Jesus took them to the Mount of Transfiguration (see Mark 9:2) and allowed them to gain a glimpse of divine glory. Jesus also took them with Him into the inner recesses of His Gethsemane prayers (see Mark 14:33). In view of the extraordinary labor of His prayers there, Jesus expected them to watch, that is, to enter His own work of prayer (see Mark 14:34).

John called himself the disciple whom Jesus loved. Jesus singled out Simon in His prayer when He announced that Satan had asked permission to sift the disciples like wheat (see Luke 22:31-32). Later the angel had special instructions to inform Peter about the resurrection (see Mark 16:7), probably because Peter had denied the Lord.

Jesus made special provisions for His friends. Jesus' friendships lasted; His friends felt tremendous loyalty to Him; and Jesus cared for the needs of His friends.

 5. Conclude today's lesson by spending some time with your holy Friend, Christ Jesus. Follow the example of the disciples who were with Him. Consider taking a walk outside with your Friend. Express to Him your gratitude for His friendship. Walk and talk with Him. Share with your Friend your joys and concerns. Respond to His love. Ask Jesus to guide you in cultivating friendships with those around you.

DAY 5
JESUS' SPEECH



Today's Bible Meditation
 "... who [Christ] did no sin,
 neither was guile found in
 his mouth: who, when he
 was reviled, reviled not
 again; when he suffered, he
 threatened not; but
 committed himself to him
 that judgeth righteously:
 who his own self bare our
 sins in his own body on
 the tree, that we, being
 dead to sins, should live
 unto righteousness:
 by whose stripes
 ye were healed"
 (1 Pet. 2:22-24).

Name of Christ for Today
 Faithful and True Witness
 (Rev. 3:14)

Prayer to Begin
 the Lesson
*Faithful and True Witness,
 You perfectly revealed the
 Father through Your life.
 Everything about You is
 genuine, faithful, and true.
 I confess to You that I have
 trouble controlling my speech.
 I ask You to continue Your
 work of developing my
 temperance and self-control
 regarding my tongue. Help
 me listen more than I talk
 and speak only what is true
 and wholesome. Enable
 me to reflect You in
 the way I speak. Amen.*

1. Begin today's lesson by reading the Bible verses and the name of Christ for today. Work on your memory verse. Then use the suggested prayer to begin your study.
2. Read again 1 Peter 2:22-24. Underline three things these verses tell you about Jesus' speech.

Peter tells us there was no "guile [or deceit] found in His mouth" (v. 22). "When he was reviled" (reproached, verbally abused), Jesus did not retaliate with words. "When he suffered," He did not lash back with threatening words. Jesus demonstrated perfect temperance and self-control in His speech.

Much of Jesus' speech was in teaching and preaching. He was the Master Teacher, and He went about "all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues" (Matt. 9:35). Some of His teaching was conceptual, as in the Sermon on the Mount. Frequently, Jesus also taught by parables (see Mark 4:2). The precepts were concerned with the spiritual nature of the kingdom of God and were so radically different from the legalism of the day that often the crowds were amazed (see Mark 6:2).

3. What is one way Jesus used His speech? He _____


Jesus' commission to ministry was to preach (see Luke 4:18). He went about "preaching the gospel of the kingdom" (Matt. 9:35). Teaching instructs; preaching is intended to convince. John the Baptist had been a proclaimer. Jesus regarded John the Baptist's work as a specific preparation for His own work, and He continued that work of proclamation. Jesus placed high value on preaching. Later Jesus said His gospel would be preached in the whole world (see Matt. 24:14).

4. What is a second way Jesus used His speech? He _____

Listed below are other ways Jesus used His speech.

- Jesus showed phenomenal skill in the use of questions as a teaching device.
- Sometimes Jesus warned people about coming difficulties or temptations.
- Jesus usually answered the questions that were asked Him. However, He did not answer the demand of the Pharisees for a sign.
- With great logic Jesus answered the accusation that He cast out demons by Beelzebub (Matt. 12:24-29).
- At times Jesus severely reproached unresponsive people and cities.
- Jesus even reproached His disciples for their lack of faith.
- Jesus denounced the hypocrisy of the Pharisees.
- On a few rare occasions Jesus paid compliments to people for faith or faithfulness.
- The Lord frequently gave reassurances not to be afraid.

Jesus' use of words was economical but not timid. They were always appropriate and perfectly timed. If encouragement was necessary, Jesus spoke as the occasion demanded. Jesus' words were sharp and to the point. He said, "I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment" (Matt. 12:36, NASB).


 5. How important is it for you to be careful about the way you speak?
Check one.


Not very important. I'm forgiven. What I do now doesn't really matter.

Very important. God is keeping track of my every careless word, and I will have to give Him an explanation on the day of judgment.

Having the mind of Christ, we are to be careful and appropriate in our use of words.

*Having the mind of Christ,
we are to be careful and
appropriate in our use
of words.*

 6. Turn to page 239 and review the Lifelong Help on Temperance.

 7. Close today's session by talking to the Lord. Confess any careless or inappropriate words you recently used that come to mind. Ask God to strengthen you with a Christ-controlled tongue that never dishonors Him.