

WEEK FORTY INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the fresh vista of the New Testament! Here in week 40 we cross the threshold from the Old Testament to the New Testament. It must be understood that the Old bridges into the New and the New builds upon the Old. Too many times the distinction between the Old and New Testaments is exaggerated to the point of the separation. Yet, the very first words of the first book of the New Testament do not allow us to drift too far from God's being and doing revealed in the Old Testament. Matthew 1:1 begins, *The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.* The word translated *genealogy* is where we get the title of the first book of the Bible, *Genesis*. We cannot leave the Old Testament behind unused because Jesus does not leave the Old Testament. God's story continues and expands with the arrival of God's only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

KEY SCRIPTURE

No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.
—John 1:18 NASB95

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

How would you describe *who* Jesus is from John 1:1-18? What does this passage say about His identity and work?

Why does Matthew begin with the genealogy of Jesus? What significance does it hold? According to Matthew 1:21, why is Mary's son named *Jesus*?

According to Luke 2:22-24, what steers the steps of Mary and Joseph? Why is that important to Jesus' person and work?

Luke 2:41-51 is the only window we have of Jesus' adolescence. Retell the story. How do you sympathize with Mary and Joseph? Why does Jesus reply as He does in verse 49?

Describe the ministry of John the Baptist in Mark 1:2-11. What role does he fulfill? Analyze the message he preaches. What relationship is there between his message and the message of the Jesus in Mark 1:14-15?

How is the Trinity demonstrated in the baptism of Jesus? Where do you see the three Persons of the One God at work in Luke 3:21-22?

What is John the Baptist's declaration about Jesus in John 1 verses 29 and 36? How does this testimony change the people who hear it?

Describe Jesus' reception in his hometown of Nazareth in Matthew 13:53-58 (also in Mark 6:1-6). How does unbelief show up among those most familiar with Jesus? What warning should be heeded in this passage?

What is the vocation of Jesus' first disciples in Luke 5:1-11? Retell the story of these verses in your own words. Why do you think Simon responds the way he does in verse 8? How does this remarkable event lead into Jesus' call of His disciples to a new vocation?

BE A DOER OF THE WORD

“But at your word I will let down the nets.”

-Luke 5:5 ESV

In what area of your life do you need to submit total surrender in the Lord Jesus? Where does His command seem contrary to your “common sense”? How will you say “Yes” in obedience this week?