

‘Inspired to Follow: Art and the Bible Story’

Session 8: The Birth of Jesus

Luke 2: 1-20

¹In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered.⁴ Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

⁸In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, **‘Do not be afraid; for see, I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’**

¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ¹⁴**‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!’**

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, **‘Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’** ¹⁶So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

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Session 9: The Baptism of Jesus

Mark 1: 1-12

¹The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. ²As it is written in the prophet Isaiah, **‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you who will prepare your way; ³the voice of one crying out in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight”’,**

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

⁷He proclaimed, **‘The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.’**

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, **‘You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.’**

¹²And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.

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Session 10: The Parables / Martha and Mary

Luke 10:25-42

²⁵ Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. ‘Teacher,’ he said, ‘what must I do to inherit eternal life?’ ²⁶ He said to him, ‘What is written in the law? What do you read there?’ ²⁷ He answered, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself.’ ²⁸ And he said to him, ‘You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.’

²⁹ But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbour?’ ³⁰ Jesus replied, ‘A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan while travelling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, “Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.” ³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?’ ³⁷ He said, ‘The one who showed him mercy.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Go and do likewise.’

³⁸ Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. ³⁹ She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to what he was saying. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, ‘Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.’ ⁴¹ But the Lord answered her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; ⁴² there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.’

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Session 11: Jesus Cleanses the Temple

Mark 11: 4-12 & 15-19

⁴ They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street. As they were untying it, ⁵ some of the bystanders said to them, **‘What are you doing, untying the colt?’** ⁶ They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it. ⁷ Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it; and he sat on it. ⁸ Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields.

⁹ Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting, **‘Hosanna! Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord! ¹⁰ Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David! Hosanna in the highest heaven!’**

¹¹ Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple; and when he had looked around at everything, as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.

¹² On the following day, ... ¹⁵ they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were selling and those who were buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold doves; ¹⁶ and he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple.

¹⁷ He was teaching and saying, **‘Is it not written, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations”? But you have made it a den of robbers.’**

¹⁸ And when the chief priests and the scribes heard it, they kept looking for a way to kill him; for they were afraid of him, because the whole crowd was spellbound by his teaching. ¹⁹ And when evening came, Jesus and his disciples went out of the city.

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Session 12: The Last Supper

John 13: 1-17

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ² The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, ⁴ got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him.

⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, **‘Lord, are you going to wash my feet?’** ⁷ Jesus answered, **‘You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.’** ⁸ Peter said to him, **‘You will never wash my feet.’** Jesus answered, **‘Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.’** ⁹ Simon Peter said to him, **‘Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!’** ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, **‘One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.’** ¹¹ For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, ‘Not all of you are clean.’

¹² After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, **‘Do you know what I have done to you?’** ¹³ **You call me Teacher and Lord – and you are right, for that is what I am.** ¹⁴ **So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.** ¹⁵ **For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.** ¹⁶ **Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them.** ¹⁷ **If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.’**

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Session 13: Gethsemane

Matthew 26: 36-54

³⁶ Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane; and he said to his disciples, **‘Sit here while I go over there and pray.’** ³⁷ He took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and agitated. ³⁸ Then he said to them, **‘I am deeply grieved, even to death; remain here, and stay awake with me.’** ³⁹ And going a little farther, he threw himself on the ground and prayed, **‘My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want.’** ⁴⁰ Then he came to the disciples and found them sleeping; and he said to Peter, **‘So, could you not stay awake with me one hour? ⁴¹ Stay awake and pray that you may not come into the time of trial; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.’**

⁴² Again he went away for the second time and prayed, **‘My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done.’** ⁴³ Again he came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. ⁴⁴ So leaving them again, he went away and prayed for the third time, saying the same words. ⁴⁵ Then he came to the disciples and said to them, **‘Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? See, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ⁴⁶ Get up, let us be going. See, my betrayer is at hand.’**

⁴⁷ While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, arrived; with him was a large crowd with swords and clubs, from the chief priests and the elders of the people. ⁴⁸ Now the betrayer had given them a sign, saying, **‘The one I will kiss is the man; arrest him.’** ⁴⁹ At once he came up to Jesus and said, **‘Greetings, Rabbi!’** and kissed him. ⁵⁰ Jesus said to him, **‘Friend, do what you are here to do.’** Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and arrested him.

⁵¹ Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. ⁵² Then Jesus said to him, **‘Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. ⁵³ Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? ⁵⁴ But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?’**

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Session 14: The Trial of Jesus

Matthew 26:57-68

Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, in whose house the scribes and the elders had gathered. But Peter was following him at a distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest; and going inside, he sat with the guards in order to see how this would end.

Now the chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward.

At last two came forward and said, **‘This fellow said, “I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.”**’ The high priest stood up and said, **‘Have you no answer? What is it that they testify against you?’** But Jesus was silent.

Then the high priest said to him, **‘I put you under oath before the living God, tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.’** Jesus said to him, **‘You have said so. But I tell you, “From now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven”.**’

Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, **‘He has blasphemed! Why do we still need witnesses? You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your verdict?’** They answered, **‘He deserves death.’** Then they spat in his face and struck him; and some slapped him, ⁶⁸ saying, **‘Prophecy to us, you Messiah! Who is it that struck you?’**

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Session 15: The Cross

Luke 23:26-38

As they led him away, they seized a man, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming from the country, and they laid the cross on him, and made him carry it behind Jesus. A great number of the people followed him, and among them were women who were beating their breasts and wailing for him.

But Jesus turned to them and said, **‘Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. For the days are surely coming when they will say, “Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bore, and the breasts that never nursed.” Then they will begin to say to the mountains, “Fall on us”; and to the hills, “Cover us.” For if they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?’**

Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left. Then Jesus said, **‘Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.’** And they cast lots to divide his clothing.

And the people stood by, watching; but the leaders scoffed at him, saying, **‘He saved others; let him save himself if he is the Messiah of God, his chosen one!’** The soldiers also mocked him, coming up and offering him sour wine, and saying, **‘If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!’** There was also an inscription over him, ‘This is the King of the Jews.’

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