



Candlewood Church



Becoming like Jesus: Formed

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BIG IDEA – Practicing the Way means that we are either becoming **more** like him or becoming what we used to be.

Scripture Focus – For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. You **see yourself**, walk away, and **forget what you look like**. **James 1:23-24**.

Becoming like Jesus is about being formed, not **deformed**. It's about wrestling with the person in the mirror. It is so not-fun to reflect on our past only to focus on how far we have yet to go. And when I say, "yet to go," I mean until we reach perfection. Until we fully **become** like Christ, we must deal with the messy middle! We struggle with the grit and grind of progress which takes grace, mercy, humility and a lot of **faith!** Let's look at the disciples, the apprentices of Jesus and see how they dealt with the reality of sanctification – which is a process of **becoming** holy.

Be with Jesus, Become like him, Do as he did.



Most of us have experienced a “mountain-top-moment.”

You don't have to be a believer in Jesus to have these extraordinary experiences where clarity, an epiphany or break-through moments lift you out the ordinary and into a state of enlightenment. These experiences are considered to be transformative and life changing. At almost every retreat, especially those getaways when we are with others going through the same thing. When we get away from the daily weight of responsibility or everyday chaos in life or family. They are marvelous!



It is said that the idea of having a mountain top moment actually came from a group of guys who gathered on a real mountain: **Mount Tabor** or **Mount Hermon**. This is where Jesus took Peter, James and John up on a mountain, while Jesus spoke with Elijah and Moses.



Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up a high mountain to be alone. As the men watched, Jesus' appearance was transformed, and his clothes became dazzling white, far whiter than any earthly bleach could ever make them. Then Elijah and Moses appeared and began talking with Jesus. **Mark 9:2-4 NLT**

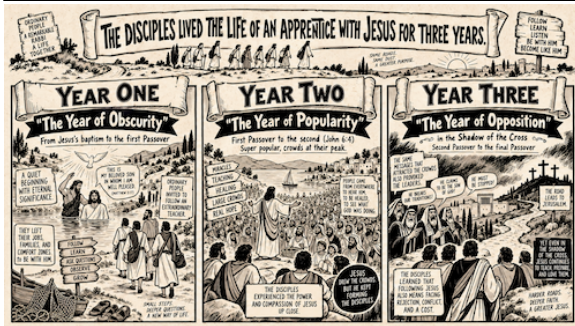
After all that Jesus told them something interesting...

“As they went back down the mountain, he told them not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept it to themselves, but they often asked each other what he meant by “rising from the dead.” Mark 9:9-10 NLT

Even though the experience was miraculously other-worldly, supernatural, the whole thing was quite a mystery that would not make sense for over a month. They, and the other disciples **had to go through the ordinary to experience the extraordinary.**

Yes, mountain top experiences are marvelous! But life and deep change takes place mainly in the mundane moments of life.

Think about it. The disciples were very real, very normal people. Some were married, all had normal families and friends back in those days. Yet – They experienced miracles among the mundane.



(if you'd like a coloring project you can download this graphic and print it, [HERE](#))

The disciples lived the life of an apprentice with Jesus for three years.

Year One — "The Year of Obscurity" *From Jesus's baptism to the first Passover*

Year Two — "The Year of Popularity" *First Passover to the second (John 6:4) Super popular, crowds at their peak.*

Year Three — "The Year of Opposition" - "in the Shadow of the Cross". *Second Passover to the final Passover.*

Yet most of the disciples' worst failures show up in year three. The closer they get to the cross, the more exposed their character becomes.

1. SCENE ONE: Formation happens in the ordinary, not the extraordinary.

The Twelve's real training wasn't dramatic; it was years of watching Jesus eat, pray, handle interruptions, respond to insult, and grieve. Presence, not a single event, is what shapes character. **Ordinary, everyday moments with the disciples.**

- **Meals together constantly;** eating grain in the fields on the Sabbath (**Mark 2:23**), the famous meal at Lazarus' home with Mary & Martha (**Luke 10:38-42**), reclining at Levi's house (**Mark 2:15-17**), the post-resurrection breakfast on the beach (**John 21:9-14**)
 - **SIXTEEN TIMES Jesus is at a table in the Gospels, and a pattern emerges: he did more of his teaching, correcting, and revealing over food than almost anywhere else.** If 'with him' is the point of being called, meals were where most of it happened." (See Dig Deeper Notes for full list)
 - You can obviously see that I like to eat. And **they say, that if you grill it men will come.** But something deeper takes place around the table – **"If you serve them, they will share words!"**

- **Long walks between towns, boat trips across the lake, the mundane logistics of an itinerant life – travel alone is all about conversation!**
 - **Walking was the way of life! "With him" in Mark 3:14 covers a lot of ordinary, unglamorous hours: dusty roads, small towns, a fishing boat crossing back and forth across the same lake.** None of it makes the highlight reel of most sermons, but it's most of what apprenticeship to a rabbi actually looked like day to day. It is estimated that the disciples walked with Jesus over a span of three years: **over 3000 miles to hundreds of villages.**
 - **Several boat trips across the Sea of Galilee! Each taking 2-3 hours of rowing – in storms it would take even longer** Jesus falling asleep, exhausted, in the boat during a storm **(Mark 4:38)**
- **Looking for and/or watching Jesus pray**, until they finally ask him to teach them how **(Luke 11:1)** - Mark 1:35-37, 3:31-32. Luke 6:12-13, 9:18, 11:1. John 6:24. Luke 2:44-46.
- **Staying in Peter's home** (with his mother-in-law) ☺ ; Jesus healing his mother-in-law, then she gets up and serves them a meal **(Mark 1:29-31)**
- Getting sent out two by two on their own, then reporting back **(Mark 6:7-13, 30)**

2. SCENE TWO: Failure isn't a delay in the process; it's part of the process.

Peter gets rebuked as "Satan" (Mark 8:31–33) within minutes of nailing the confession of Christ. If formation only happened when the disciples got it right, none of them would have qualified. **Setbacks and failures.**

- Peter's rebuke: moments after nailing the confession of Christ, he's told "Get behind me, Satan" **(Mark 8:31-33)**
- **Arguing over who's the greatest**; and doing it again at the Last Supper, of all moments **(Mark 9:33-35; Luke 22:24)**
- **James and John angling for thrones (Mark 9:33–35 & Mark 10:35-41).** Both of these happen while they're walking right beside their rabbi.
- **Unable to cast out a demon** because of unbelief **(Mark 9:14-29).** It's not like they had not done it before. They were sent out in Mark 6:13 and "drove out many demons."
- **Falling asleep in Gethsemane** while Jesus agonizes a few feet away **(Mark 14:32-42)**
- **Scattering when Jesus is arrested (Mark 14:50)**
- **Peter's three denials (Mark 14:66-72)**
- Thomas's doubt after the resurrection **(John 20:24-29)**

"Which is harder; failing...or getting back up afterward?"

3. SCENE THREE: Proximity to Jesus doesn't automatically kill our appetite for status, self or sin.

The guys were just normal guys! Last week we talked about the fact that Jesus called the disciples together purposely **building a cataclysmic collision.**

They were NOT sinless!

They were NOT without fault.

They were deeply flawed just like the rest of us.

One of the proof's about the Bible being true and trustworthy over 2000 years is the fact that it **does not hid the flaws or sins of humans.**

One of last week's quotes was "**proximity produces formation in each other.**"

**But proximity does not produce perfection.
Not towards each other nor towards God!**

Being near Jesus is not the same as being like Jesus. **Being like Jesus takes time. They still had an appetite for status, self, or sin.**

- **Judas skimming from the money bag** before he ever betrays anyone (**John 12:6**)
- **Judas speaking his rude-truth** about Mary's expensive perfume; framed as concern, but really about control and appearances (**Mark 14:4-5, John 12:4-6**)
- **Peter's arrogant boast** ("even if everyone else falls away, I won't," (**Mark 14:29**) followed within hours by denial; pride giving way to self-preservation
- **Peter brashly drawing a sword and cutting off a servant's ear** in the garden; a flash of self-assertion right before his collapse into self-protection (**John 18:10**)
- **James and John wanting to call down fire** on a Samaritan village that snubbed them (**Luke 9:54**); righteous anger doubling as wounded ego

These qualities do not reflect well on their rabbi!

I don't know about you but I am fascinated with the concept of sin! I am not saying I like sin, I am conflicted about sin's endurance.

I can't escape it within myself and I'm positive I can't escape from it in others.

I am so relieved that Paul wrote these words to the Romans.

"For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Romans 7:15 NLT

He continues.

SIN

Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. Romans 7:16-20 NLT.

Before I came to Christ I had very little regard for guilt or sin. I didn't want to get caught or deeds exposed, but rarely felt guilty. That surprises folks who have been raised with a good moral compass. When God spoke and the Holy Spirit shined his light of love on me, I immediately felt unworthy of it. As my past deeds flashed before my eyes in a second, I was crushed by guilt and heaving with tears. I felt so undone, so naked before a Holy God.

After complete and total repentance, I experienced God's abundant forgiveness. With my sin-slate wiped clean, I naively thought that I would no longer behave like I used to.

My spiritual knees were bloodied, not from prayer but from falling and failing time and time again. I begged God to take away the automatic urges that had become deeply engrained patterns in my life, but He did not do so immediately. I had to learn to stop lying, stealing and lusting.

Glenn Packiam, Pastor of Rock Harbor Church in Costa Mesa, recently wrote a Substack about our sins and shortcomings out of Paul's letter to the Romans:

"Their throat is a grave that has been opened." "They are deceitful with their tongues," "and the poison of vipers is under their lips." "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." "Their feet are quick to shed blood;" "destruction and misery are in their ways;" "and they don't know the way of peace." "There is no fear of God in their view of the world." Romans 3:13-18 CEB.

"In Romans, sin works on at least three levels:

Sin is a decision—a choice we make.

Sin is a dominion—a power we are under.

Sin is a contagion—an infection that spreads."

4. SCENE FOUR: Apprenticeship was about integrating a way of life; not a data download.

The rabbinic image; "covered in the dust of your rabbi"; reframes **discipleship as imitation through immediacy and availability, not just content transfer.**

We don't become like Jesus by just studying his life, or his words from a distance.

We become like Jesus in the same **hard, gritty, places Jesus brought his disciples into.**

- **Into a room with dead child and a grieving father.** Jairus and his little girl; **Peter, James, and John (Mark 5:35-43)**
- **Into a mob with a desperate woman with chronic bleeding** touching Jesus in a crowd of superfans **(Mark 5:25-34).**
- **Across Galilee through a horrible lake-storm to make a spontaneous visit for a mad naked man on Pig Island! The Gerasene demoniac.** A guy self-mutilating and living among tombs. Jesus took them there for one reason: to show them how important one human being is and worth crossing the lake, in a fierce lake storm with water filling the boat. As well as crossing the cultural barriers (the Gerasene area was predominantly Gentile population that raised pigs, which were considered unclean by Jewish law.) to watch Jesus free the man **(Mark 5:1-20).**
- **Accepting an invite to Levi's dinner party, eating with elite tax collectors and sinners - scandal by association (Mark 2:15-17).**
- **Showing up four days late to a friend's funeral!** And commanding them to help remove the stone. **(John 11:39),** and weeping before he does anything else.

- Jesus was still angry as he arrived at the tomb, a cave with a stone rolled across its entrance. **“Roll the stone aside,” Jesus told them.**
- **To get a foot washing from the guy who commanded the weather to be whisked away! (John 13:1-17).**
- **Convinced to go out late at night to a public part and asked to pray at the end of an exhausting day. They got a front row seat in Gethsemane right before Jesus’ mock trials;** where Jesus sweat like drops of blood, three of them brought in close to witness raw anguish (Luke 22:44)

Do you see how crazy this really is!

Do you see the wild, untamable side of Jesus that **wants to put us into the best position to learn from him and live the life he intends for us to live the Kingdom life?**

This is why preaching alone will not produce a discipleship culture in each of us!

Grant Hickman says “A sermon can show us what a disciple looks like, but it cannot create every environment needed to form one.”

Because It’s without application.

I can preach about faith, but until you exercise it it’s just a concept.

I can preach about love, but until I serve and sacrifice for you, it’s just theory.

I can preach out unity, but until I reconcile and repair. Carey Nieuwhof says, “Human relationships are all about rupture and repair.” Amens are cheap without action!



DIG DEEPER: [Why Preaching Alone Will Never Produce a Discipleship Culture](#)

Grant Hickman, ROOTED, out of Mariner’s Church writes,

“A sermon can show us what a disciple looks like, but it cannot create every environment needed to form one.”

“Jesus understood that formation required more than information. He taught his disciples about the kingdom of God, but he also invited them to follow Him. They watched Him, practiced what He taught, failed, asked questions, and received correction. Sometimes he answered them plainly; other times he let them wrestle. He sent them out, listened when they returned, and sent them again (Mark 6:7-13, 30; Luke 10:1-20). A sermon can begin the formation process, but a discipleship culture carries it into the rest of the week.”

Even though we can’t go back in time to physically be with Jesus, we can and should be getting up close and personal with Jesus through the Holy Spirit, just as Jesus said!

We are completely consumed by our life circumstances. And God is near in those moments.

But, as my wife (Robin) reminds me all the time; he is far more concerned about how our character is formed into the image of the Son.

We are to get on with it before we meet him at the intersection of completeness and eternity.

REFLECTION

- **Formation happens in the ordinary, not the extraordinary**
What's one truly ordinary moment in your week — a commute, a meal, folding laundry — that you could actually turn into time "with him," instead of waiting for your next mountaintop moment to feel close to God?
 - **Failure isn't a delay in the process; it's part of the process**
"Which is harder — failing, or getting back up afterward?"
"...and what's kept you from getting back up the last time you fell?
 - **Proximity to Jesus doesn't automatically kill our appetite for status, self, or sin**
Where has being "near" Jesus — church attendance, ministry involvement, Christian friendships — quietly convinced you that you're further along than you actually are?
 - **Apprenticeship was about integrating a way of life, not a data download**
What's one "hard, gritty place" in someone else's life this week you could actually show up to in person, instead of just praying about it from a distance?
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SCRIPTURES

Mark 9:2-4 NLT **ON SCREEN**

Six days later Jesus took Peter, James, and John, and led them up a high mountain to be alone. As the men watched, Jesus' appearance was transformed, and his clothes became dazzling white, far whiter than any earthly bleach could ever make them. Then Elijah and Moses appeared and began talking with Jesus.

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"As they went back down the mountain, he told them not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. So they kept it to themselves, but they often asked each other what he meant by "rising from the dead."

Romans 7:15 NLT **ON SCREEN**

For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.

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Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

Romans 3:13-18 CEB ON SCREEN

Their throat is a grave that has been opened." "They are deceitful with their tongues," "and the poison of vipers is under their lips." "Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." "Their feet are quick to shed blood;" "destruction and misery are in their ways;" "and they don't know the way of peace." "There is no fear of God in their view of the world."



DIG DEEPER NOTES



When they went looking for Jesus

Mark 1:35-37

"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed. Simon and his companions went to look for him, and when they found him, they exclaimed: 'Everyone is looking for you!'"

That's the one clear case where the text uses search-language ("went to look for him... when they found him") and prayer together.

Disciples present while Jesus prays (not searching for him)

- Luke 9:18 — "Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him..."
- Luke 11:1 — the disciples watch him finish praying, then ask him to teach them to pray
- Luke 6:12-13 — Jesus prays all night on a mountain, then in the morning calls the Twelve; the disciples aren't described as searching or watching, just receiving the result

Others searching for Jesus (not the Twelve specifically)

- Mark 3:31-32 — his mother and brothers, not disciples, are outside looking for him
- John 6:24 — the crowd, not the Twelve, gets in boats to hunt him down after the feeding of the 5,000
- Luke 2:44-46 — Mary and Joseph search for the 12-year-old Jesus in Jerusalem; pre-ministry, and again family, not disciples

The reverse situation; Jesus finding the disciples

- Gethsemane (Mark 14:32-42; Matthew 26:36-46; Luke 22:39-46) — Jesus prays and repeatedly returns to find *them* asleep. It's structurally the mirror image of Mark 1:35-37: instead of the disciples pursuing him into prayer, he's the one returning to check on them and finding them absent in spirit.



Sanctification

Sanctification is God's work that makes believers more like Jesus, helping them grow in holiness over time. It happens after trusting in Christ and is a process carried out by the Holy Spirit, resulting in good works and love.

Understanding Sanctification

Sanctification is a key concept in Christian theology that refers to the process by which God transforms believers to become more like Jesus Christ. It is not a one-time event but an ongoing journey of growth in holiness.

Definition of Sanctification

- **God's Work:** Sanctification is primarily God's work in a believer's life, initiated and sustained by the Holy Spirit.
- **Purpose:** It aims to make individuals fit for a holy purpose, enabling them to love God, others, and even their enemies.
- **Process:** This transformation occurs over time, as believers grow in their faith and character.

Key Aspects of Sanctification

Aspect	Description
Initiation	Begins after trusting in Christ for salvation.
Nature	A supernatural process that involves a change of heart and mind.
Outcome	Results in good works and a life that reflects Christ's love and character.
Ongoing Journey	Believers should expect to grow progressively in holiness throughout their lives.

The Role of the Holy Spirit

- The Holy Spirit empowers believers to live according to God's moral code.
- Sanctification involves both divine action and human participation, where believers are called to turn away from sin and obey God's commands.

Conclusion

Sanctification is a vital aspect of the Christian faith, representing the transformative work of God in believers' lives. It is a journey toward holiness that reflects the character of Christ, supported by the Holy Spirit.  seminary.grace.edu  cru.org

Explore More

What are the steps involved in the sanctification process for believers?

Sanctification for believers is described as a three-stage process: positional sanctification at conversion, progressive sanctification as ongoing growth in holiness through the Holy Spirit's work, and ultimate sanctification at Christ's return.  nolongerlukewarm.com  [Biblical Training](#)



Posse peccare

Augustine's Four States of Human Will: Sin, Fall, Redemption, Glory

"Posse peccare" literally means "able to sin." It's actually part of **Augustine's broader framework about human freedom across different states of humanity.**

1. **Posse peccare, posse non peccare** ("able to sin, able not to sin"); this **describes Adam and Eve before the Fall.** They had **genuine freedom to go either way.**
2. **Non posse non peccare** ("not able not to sin"); **this is the state after the Fall. This is the actual bondage of the will; humanity lost the ability to not sin. We're stuck sinning apart from grace.**
3. **Posse non peccare** ("able not to sin"); **this is the regenerate believer under grace,** who can now genuinely resist sin (though not perfectly).
4. **Non posse peccare** ("not able to sin"); **this is the glorified state in heaven, where sin is no longer even possible.**

So in layman's terms: "posse peccare" describes freedom before the Fall, when sinning was possible but not inevitable. The "bondage of the will" is really about state #2, where sin became unavoidable apart from God's grace.



How to Use the Mountain Top Experience in the Valley

"God doesn't intend for us to live in a perpetual state of emotional highs when it comes to faith. The term "mountain top experience" comes from those moments in the Bible when God revealed Himself to people on a mountain."

We can't disqualify a mountain top experience as just an emotional reaction. God truly does reveal Himself to us in different ways, some more intense than others. Some experiences are more calm and rational moments. Not all mountain top experiences drip with emotion.

God knows how our brains work and how our individual personalities respond. So where one person might be on their knees in tears over an experience with God, another might simply

acknowledge the fact that they've learned something new about God. Both can be mountain top experiences, moments when we see God in a new way.

But if we don't use what we have experienced on the mountain to affect the valley, then they might as well just be quick reactions to a fleeting moment.

In the midst of ordinary

So what next? **How do we come down the mountain and begin living normal life while holding onto what we've learned?**



The disciple's timeline of becoming.

The traditional three-year framework comes mainly from John's Gospel, which marks off three Passovers (John 2:13, 6:4, and 11:55/13:1). Matching those markers against the Synoptics gives the Gospel harmonists a rough (not explicit) year-by-year reconstruction. Here's how it typically breaks down:

Year One — "The Year of Obscurity" *From Jesus's baptism to the first Passover*

- Baptism and temptation in the wilderness
- Calling of the first disciples; Andrew, John, Peter, Philip, Nathanael (John 1)
- Wedding at Cana (John 2)
- First Passover; cleansing of the temple (John 2:13-25)
- Nicodemus (John 3); the woman at the well (John 4)
- Rejection at Nazareth (Luke 4:16-30)
- More formal calling of the Four at the lake (Luke 5:1-11; Mark 1:16-20)
- Early Galilean healings; Peter's mother-in-law, a leper, the paralytic; Matthew called

Year Two — "The Year of Popularity" *First Passover to the second (John 6:4)*

- The Twelve formally chosen (Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16)
- Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7)
- Widespread Galilean ministry; parables, healings, the centurion's servant, the widow's son at Nain
- Jairus's daughter; the bleeding woman; the Gerasene demoniac (Mark 5)
- John the Baptist beheaded (Mark 6:14-29)
- **Jesus sends the disciples out two by two** (Mark 6:7-13)
- Feeding of the 5,000, near the second Passover (John 6:4)
- Walking on water, the Bread of Life discourse; many disciples desert here.

This is the high-water mark of popularity, crowds at their peak.

Year Three — "The Year of Opposition" - "in the Shadow of the Cross". *Second Passover to the final Passover*

- Peter's confession and rebuke; the first Passion prediction (Mark 8:27-33)
- Transfiguration (Mark 9:2-13)
- Arguing over who's greatest (Mark 9:33-35)
- Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem (John 7)
- The seventy sent out (Luke 10)
- James and John's throne request (Mark 10:35-41)
- Raising of Lazarus (John 11)
- Triumphal entry, Passion Week, Last Supper, Gethsemane, crucifixion, resurrection

This isn't a chronology the Gospels state outright; it's a harmonization scholars build from John's Passover markers layered against the Synoptic sequence, and the exact placement of some episodes.

Most of the disciples' worst failures; Peter's rebuke, the greatest-among-us arguments, James and John's request; **cluster in Year Three**, right as Jesus is turning toward Jerusalem and increasing the intensity of his teaching. **The closer they get to the cross, the more exposed their unformed character becomes.**



Sins and shortcomings

Glenn Packiam, Pastor of Rock Harbor Church in Costa Mesa, Substack out of Paul's letter to the Romans.



A friend of mine, Simeon Zahl, teaches theology at Oxford. His most difficult challenge is teaching Christian theology to undergrads, half of whom are not Christians. Of all the doctrines he covers, the doctrine of sin is the toughest. He can sense their hesitation. How should he begin to introduce them to the notion of sin? Big global issues like genocide or human trafficking? No. Too abstract. He decided

instead to get them thinking about the failures of their parents!

Suddenly everyone in the room knew exactly what is meant by sin!

The truth is, we don't have any trouble with the idea of transgression—of somebody crossing a line, or breaking our boundaries. That is indeed one of the meanings of the Bible's word "sin". We have no trouble cancelling someone, revoking our business, or chastising someone when they advocate for a politician we don't like or disagree with our view of what is right. We have a notion of "sin." We just don't know what to do with it. This is what Romans 3 is all about.



The Meals That Made the Twelve

Why the Table Mattered So Much

In first-century Jewish culture, who you ate with wasn't casual — it was a public statement of who belonged to whom. Reclining at the same table meant you accepted someone as one of your own: their status, their ritual cleanliness (or lack of it), their reputation, all of it. That's why the religious leaders' objection to Jesus was never really about food. "This man welcomes sinners and eats with them" (Luke 15:2) was a complaint about identity, not menu. Read against that backdrop, nearly every major turn in Jesus's ministry — a scandal, a revelation, a confrontation, a commissioning — happens over a meal.

The Meals That Were Scandalous

- **Levi's feast**, thrown for his fellow tax collectors right after his call — Matthew 9:9-13, Mark 2:15-17, Luke 5:27-32
- **The grainfields on the Sabbath** — the disciples eating, Jesus defending them — Matthew 12:1-8, Mark 2:23-28, Luke 6:1-5
- **The unwashed-hands controversy**, over ceremonial hand-washing before meals — Matthew 15:1-20, Mark 7:1-23
- **Zacchaeus's house** — "today I must stay at your house" — Luke 19:1-10

Meals at Pharisees' Tables

- **Simon the Pharisee's house**, where the sinful woman anoints Jesus's feet — Luke 7:36-50
- **A Pharisee's house**, where Jesus pronounces the "woes" mid-meal — Luke 11:37-54
- **A ruler's house on the Sabbath** — healing the man with dropsy, then the parable of the great banquet, told at the table itself — Luke 14:1-24

Meals of Ordinary Friendship

- **Mary and Martha's home** in Bethany — Luke 10:38-42
- **Simon the Leper's house**, also in Bethany, where Mary anoints Jesus for burial — Matthew 26:6-13, Mark 14:3-9, John 12:1-8

Feeding Miracles as Meals

- **Feeding of the 5,000** — Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:30-44, Luke 9:10-17, John 6:1-14
- **Feeding of the 4,000** — Matthew 15:32-39, Mark 8:1-10

The Meals That Revealed Him

- **Wedding at Cana**, water to wine — John 2:1-11
- **The Last Supper** — Matthew 26:17-30, Mark 14:12-26, Luke 22:7-38, John 13:1-17:26
- **Emmaus road**, recognized in the breaking of bread — Luke 24:13-35
- **Broiled fish with the disciples**, proving he wasn't a ghost — Luke 24:36-43

- **Breakfast on the beach**, the charcoal fire — John 21:1-14

Worth a mention even though no one eats: at the well, Jesus tells the disciples "I have food to eat that you know nothing about" — doing the Father's will is the meal (John 4:31-34).



Traveling over roads and water

It Wasn't Only Meals

The Twelve didn't just eat with Jesus; **they walked with him**, village after village, and got in a boat with him more times than most modern readers picture.

How Far They Walked

The Gospels never total up the mileage themselves — nobody in the ancient world tracked that — so any figure is a modern reconstruction built from mapping known place-names onto known first-century roads. The most commonly cited popular estimate puts Jesus's ministry-long travel at **around 3,000–3,125 miles** over roughly three years: about 200 miles in the early Judean ministry, some 2,150 miles during the extensive Galilean period (the bulk of it — constant village-to-village travel), another 600 miles in the later Judean/Perean ministry, and a final 175 miles across Passion week and the post-resurrection appearances. Treat it as a reasonable order-of-magnitude illustration, not a precise scholarly number — it's described even by its own source as a conservative floor, since it can't account for every short walk within a town.

How Many Villages

By name, the Gospels put Jesus in something like nineteen or twenty distinct places: Bethlehem, Nazareth, Capernaum, Cana, Nain, Bethsaida, Magdala, Gennesaret, Caesarea Philippi, the region of the Gerasenes, Tyre, Sidon, Sychar in Samaria, Jericho, Bethany, Bethphage, Jerusalem, Ephraim, and — after the resurrection — Emmaus. That's just the ones that got named. Layered on top are the Gospels' own summary lines, which make clear the real number was higher: "Jesus went through all the towns and villages" (Matthew 9:35), "he went around teaching from village to village" (Mark 6:6), "he went through the towns and villages, teaching" (Luke 13:22).

Crossing the Sea of Galilee

This is the one number that's genuinely debated, because the Gospel writers sometimes tell the same crossing three different ways and don't always specify whether Jesus went "to the other side" or just moved along the shoreline. Counting only the explicit "to the other side" crossings gives roughly seven documented round trips:

1. Out to still the storm, heading to the region of the Gerasenes (east shore) — Matthew 8:18, 23-27; Mark 4:35-41; Luke 8:22-25

2. Back across after healing the demoniac — implied in Mark 5:21, Luke 8:40
3. Across to the remote place near Bethsaida before feeding the 5,000 — Mark 6:32; Luke 9:10; John 6:1
4. Back that same night — the walking-on-water crossing — Matthew 14:22-33; Mark 6:45-53; John 6:16-21
5. Across to the Decapolis region for the feeding of the 4,000 — Mark 7:31–8:9
6. Back to Dalmanutha/Magadan afterward — Matthew 15:39; Mark 8:10
7. Out again, warning about the "yeast of the Pharisees" en route — Mark 8:13; Matthew 16:5

What kind of time would a row-boat trip across Galilee take in calm or inclement weather?

Depends on where they crossed, since the lake isn't uniform — the Sea of Galilee is about 13 miles long and up to 8 miles across at its widest, with roughly a 33-mile shoreline. But the actual Gospel crossings (Capernaum on the northwest shore to the region of the Gerasenes on the east) were more like 4–5 miles as the crow flies, not the full width.

The best physical reference point we have is the actual first-century fishing boat excavated from the lake mud in 1986 (the so-called "Jesus Boat") — about 27 feet long, 7.5 feet wide, built to be rowed by four oarsmen and also riggable with a small sail. A boat like that, under oar power alone in calm water, would realistically make something like 2–3 mph.

Put those together: **a typical narrower crossing (Capernaum to the eastern shore, ~4-5 miles) would run somewhere around 1.5 to 2.5 hours of rowing in calm conditions.** A full-width crossing (closer to 8 miles) would stretch toward 3 hours or more. Wind and a sail could speed that up considerably; a headwind — like the one in Mark 6:48, where the disciples are "straining at the oars" — could stretch it out a lot longer, which is part of why that particular night crossing became a whole story instead of a routine commute.

One nice anchor point straight from the text: John 6:19 says the disciples "had rowed about three or four miles" when they spotted Jesus walking toward them — so that's an actual in-Scripture distance for one of these crossings, even though it was mid-storm, not calm.

Sources:

- [Sea of Galilee — Wikipedia](#)
- [Sea of Galilee Boat — Wikipedia](#)
- [The Walking Ministry: Mapping the 3,125 Miles Jesus Traveled](#)
- [Jesus crosses the Sea of Galilee — The Bible Journey](#)
- [Jesus And The Sea Of Galilee — Associates For Biblical Research](#)