

My _____ of Jesus

What does Jesus look like to you?

What does Jesus do?

A _____ with Jesus

הלך (Hb., *halak*) – Gen. 3:8-13, 5:22-24, 6:9, 17:1; 48:15; Lev. 26:9-13; Ps 1:1-2, 26:1-7, 116:8-9; 2 Kgs. 20:1-3; Mic. 6:8

From _____ (*halak*) to _____ (*halakah*)

περιπατεω (Gk., *peripateo*) – Mk. 2:13-14, 7:5; Jn. 8:12; Gal. 5:16; Rom. 6:4, 8:4; 2 Cor 5:7; Col. 2:6

Composing a _____ Portrait of Jesus

- What pictures of Jesus do you, a witness, carry in your mind?
- Is your internalized portrait of Jesus biblically accurate?
- How does your portrait affect the way you live and communicate the message of Christ?
- What would Jesus say and do, if he walked in our world today? What would he say and do through you, a disciple called to walk in and with him daily?
- How does our shared portrait of Jesus affect our actions as a church in today's world? How have we each helped to formulate that portrait? Is it accurate and effective to the glory of God?

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Borchert, Gerald L., *Portraits of Jesus for an Age of Biblical Illiteracy*. Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, Inc., 2016. ISBN 978-1-57312-940-4 \$20

Portraits of Jesus

An Initial Sketch

A. My Portrait of Jesus

1. What does Jesus look like to you?

- a. Close your eyes and get a mental picture of Jesus as you envision him in your mind.
- b. Now, tell me how you see him.
- c. Look at these portraits that others have painted of Jesus.
 - 1) How are these portraits of Jesus alike?
 - 2) How are they different?
 - 3) Why are they not all the same?
 - 4) Each person sees Jesus from a different viewpoint.
- d. More important than a physical portrait of Jesus is our internalized portrait of what he taught and did.

2. What does Jesus do?

- a. Have class share the things they most remember about what Jesus taught and did.
- b. Rhetorical: How do his teaching/actions shape your words and actions in life each day?

B. A Walk with Jesus

1. The word “walk” is an important word in the Bible.
2. We know its common meaning “to go; to move about on legs.”
3. Walk has a special, figurative meaning in many occurrences in the Bible.
4. Let’s examine some important uses of “walk” in the Old Testament:

- a. Old Testament examples of “walk.”

הלך (Hb., *halak*)

- 1) Have volunteers look up and read the following verses with comments from me after each reading.

Gen. 3:8-13, 5:22-24, 6:9, 17:1; 48:15; Lev. 26:9-13; Ps 1:1-2, 26:1-7, 116:8-9; 2 Kgs. 20:1-3; Mic. 6:8. (Note there are more instances like these.)

- 2) What special definition of “walk” do we discern in these verses?
Walk = “our relationship with God; our experience with him on the journey of life.”

3) From Relationship (*halak*) to Rules (*halakah*)

“This concept of *halak*, however, was twisted slightly by the later rabbis who replaced the verb with its parallel noun *halakah*. Accordingly, instead of focusing on walking with God, the emphasis was shifted to focusing on rules. This seemingly slight alteration was a tragic, major shift away from the journey and experience with God toward words. Both are concerned with obedience, but the shift to rules and laws became for the people a convenient substitute for a living relationship with God. This pattern of substituting rules for a relationship is crucial to understanding of the coming of Jesus. . . . The Pharisees spoke of the Law of God, and Jesus emphasized the Law of God. The centrality of a relationship with the unseen God is often sacrificed for words, rules, and institutions” (Borchert, 2).

b. New Testament examples of “walk.”

περιπατεω (Gk., *peripateo*)

Mk. 2:13-14, 7:5; Jn. 8:12; Gal. 5:16; Rom. 6:4, 8:4; 2 Cor 5:7; Col. 2:6

- 1) Have volunteers look up and read the following verses with comments from me after each reading.
- 2) “As a mature rabbi, when Paul became a Christian, he clearly recognized this fundamental difference between Jesus and the rabbis. For this reason, Paul took a strong stance against legalism (see Gal 3). What is even more important at this point is that he returned to the use of the concept of “walking” (*peripatein* in Greek) to describe the Christian life and abandoned the rabbinic notion of *the walk* as a series of rules to guarantee acceptance by God” (Borchert, 2).

C. Composing a Biblical Portrait of Jesus

1. We will take a walk with Jesus through the scriptures to compose a biblical portrait of Jesus. Our purpose is to gain an authentic picture of Jesus so that we can better understand and communicate Jesus to those who live in this time of growing biblical illiteracy.
2. Dr. Borchert will challenge us to answer questions such as (Borchert, 5):
 - a. Who is Jesus?
 - b. What are we trying to communicate to people about God today?
 - c. How convinced are we in God’s transforming power through this message?
 - d. Where is Jesus in relation to our lives, our possessions, and our conversations as well as in our church sermons and lesson plans?
 - e. How will we present Jesus to a growing biblically illiterate generation?
3. Dr. Borchert says, “[There are] . . . various portraits of Jesus that emerge from the New Testament. . . . We need to recognize that all the portraits of Jesus presented in the New Testament do not need to be identical. In fact, the differences provide a basis for understanding the incredible breadth of the gospel writers in explaining both God and Jesus. This perspective can assist us in seeing how the divine has impacted our world in the past and continues to impact it today. . . . a portrait goes through the mind and feelings of the artist before it appears on the canvas.” (Borchert, 6-7).
4. Just as different artists paint a portrait of Jesus from their perspective, so the different biblical writers, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, paint us written portraits of Jesus from their perspectives.
5. Borchert adds, “The portraits of Jesus in the New Testament are not all alike . . . These differences in the presentation should never be viewed as mistakes or errors. They are instead the result of different foci in the Gospels and the other books of the New Testament” (Borchert, 7-8).
6. We will look for the purpose of each book that we study and discern the place of the portrait of Jesus painted within it within the book’s overall organization and purpose. Each book that we study will add texture and definition to our portrait so that we can better understand who Jesus was/is and how his message and ministry can still transform our lives and the lives of those with him we share him.
7. Review the study outline on the back of the sheet.
8. Note the reflection questions at the bottom of the study sheet. Keep these questions handy as we go through the study and continue to reflect on them.

Study Book Orders

Please order me a copy of Dr. Borchert's book, *Portraits of Jesus for an Age of Biblical Illiteracy* at a cost of **\$20 each**.

Name

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