**Lectio Jesus Session Three: Commit Summary**

**Day 1 – Biography in Ancient Times**

(Q) How does the above quotation give the reader the impression that Lucien is conveying the truth about Demonax? (A) Lucian wants his readers to know “the sort of man Demonax was. If the stories are not true, this would not help his readers.

(Q) What does Josephus say in the above quotation that indicates the author is expected to tell the truth? (A) He is condemning Justus for telling falsehoods! “Veracity is incumbent upon a historian.”

(Q) How does Plutarch’s passage compare to John 21:25? (A) John notes the impossibility of including every detail of Jesus’s life.

(Q) Can you think of any passages in the Gospels that provide information about Jesus’s ancestry? (A) Mathew 1:1-17 and Luke 3:23-38 include genealogies for Jesus.

**Day 2 – Gospels as Ancient Biography**

(Q) What is implied by asserting the Gospels are folklore, fables or concerned only with moral truth? (A) The implication is that the stories are exaggerated or false? If the Gospels were written as folklore we would not have confidence in what Jesus really did and taught.

(Q) In the following verses, how do the gospel writers indicate their intention to tell the truth? (A) Luke 1: 1-4 Luke explains that he has “followed all things closely” and that he wants his readers to “know the truth” about what he is teaching. John 21: 24 John uses the words “testimony” or “bearing witness” to emphasize that what he is saying is true.

(Q) In the following passages from the Gospels what clues might indicate whether the Evangelists intend to relate historical information or pure fiction? (A) Matthew 2: 1-2 He states that Jesus is born under a particular ruler, King Herod. Historical data. Mark 15: 1 He includes details about Jesus’s trial before Pilate, whose governance over Judea is true. Luke 1: 5 He provides historical data regarding these events. He includes information about Zechariah.

(Q) In Matthew 1: 1-17, who are some famous figures from the Old Testament in Jesus ancestry? (A) Matthew provides an ordered, historical list of Jesus’s ancestry. Jesus is a descendant of Abraham, the father of faith of Israel. Matthew notes that Jesus is descended from David “the king.”

(Q) Look at the words Jesus used at the Last Supper. What differences do you find? (A) Matthew 26: 26-29 Matthew writes – “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.” Mark 14: 22-25 Mark states, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many.” Luke 22: 19-20 Luke says, “This cup which is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.”

**Day 3 – Lectio: To Compile a Narrative**

(Q) Which of Luke’s words communicate his commitment to providing readers with the truth? (A) “Eyewitnesses,” “having followed all things closely” and “orderly account”

(Q) Who were some of the likely eyewitnesses Luke used to compile his narrative? (A) Luke & Mark spent time together where Luke could have received information from Mark who heard it from Peter. Luke traveled with Paul and other Apostles who could have told him.

(Q) The word translated as “minister” can also be understood as “servant.” In the following passages to whom is Luke referring as “servants?” (A) 1 Corinthians 4: 1 Paul describes himself as a servant. Philippians 1:1 Paul & Timothy are described as servants.

(Q) Luke expressed the desire for his readers “to know the truth.” How likely is it that Luke is embellishing the story of Jesus? (A) Luke is emphasizing that he is trustworthy and has gone to great lengths to be thorough in ascertaining the truth about Jesus. He would not stress this if it were fabricated.

(Q) Luke states that he has had information delivered to him by “eyewitnesses” and “ministers of the word.” Why is it unlikely that he is writing folklore? (A) Luke is not including rumors or stories from just anyone. He is relying on those who saw it firsthand.

(Q) What are some ways you can imitate Luke in “following closely” the actions of Christ we read about? (A) Bible study allows us to “follow closely” to Jesus. Meditating deeply on Scripture allows us to reflect deeply on Jesus words and actions.

(Q) In the following passages note how Jesus allows his followers to follow closely. (A) John 13: 25 John reclines on Jesus, a gesture of deep friendship & love. Luke 7: 36-38 The women anoints Jesus’s feet, bathes them with her tears and kisses his feet. She is able to embrace Jesus and express her love and gratitude for his mercy. Jesus reveals God to us and allows us to see the Father.

**Day 4 – Historical Claims of the Gospels**

(Q) How does King Herod react when the Wise Men inquire about the sign they saw indicating that the “King of the Jews” was born? (A) Matthew 2:3-7 King Herod is “troubled” and want to know where this newborn king so he can kill him.

(Q) What event found in Matthew 2:16 is consistent with Josephus’s report of Herod’s character? (A) This passage tells of the slaughter of children two years old & younger. If Herod was willing to kill 6000 Pharisees and even his own family members, it is no surprise he is willing to kill these children.

(Q) When Herod dies, he is replaced by his son Herod Archelaus, who also has a reputation for cruelty. What does Matthew’s Gospel reveal about Archelaus? (A) Matthew 2:22 Joseph is afraid to return to Galilee because of Herod Archelaus. He is a violent ruler.

(Q) What happens to John the Baptist? (A) Matthew 14:3-12 Herod Antipas imprisons John the Baptist for publicly rebuking Herod for taking Herodias, the wife of his brother. Herod orders the execution of John at the request of Herodias’s daughter.

**Day 5 – Truth & Beauty**

Reflect upon Saint John the Evangelist on the island of Patmos.

(Q) John the Evangelist looks upward and in the corner of the painting Velazques gives us a glimpse of the visions John beholds. Look up Revelation 12:1-3. What vision is described. (A) “And a great portent appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars: she was with child and she cried out in her pangs of birth, in anguish for delivery. And another portent appeared in heaven behold a great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven diadems upon his heads.”

Taken from The Case for Jesus pages 70 & 71

 **FOUR ANCIENT GRECO-ROMAN BIOGRAPHIES**

**Biography Author Time Period**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Life of Josephus** | **Josephus – Jewish historian** | **AD 99** |
| **Parallel Lives** | **Plutarch – Greek Historian** | **AD 90-100** |
| **Lives of the Caesars** | **Suetonius-Roman historian** | **AD-120** |
| **Life of Demonax** | **Lucian- student of Demonax** | **AD 150-180** |

**Greco-Roman Biographies The Four Gospels**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Birth & Childhood (brief or missing) | **Birth & Childhood – Matthew 1-2; Luke 1-2** |
| Public Career (longest section of book) | **Public Career – Matthew 3-25; Mark 1-13; Luke 3-21 John 1-12** |
| Death - brief | **Passion & Death – Matthew 24-27; Mark 14-15; Luke 22-23 John 18-19** |