

## **The Story, chapter 24** **(excerpts from Matthew 5, 6; John 13; Mark 4)**

*As Jesus began to travel and teach, it soon became clear he spoke with unusual authority. One day, he taught his disciples, “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

<sup>4</sup> Blessed are those who mourn,  
for they will be comforted.

<sup>5</sup> Blessed are the meek,  
for they will inherit the earth.

<sup>6</sup> Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,  
for they will be filled.

<sup>7</sup> Blessed are the merciful,  
for they will be shown mercy. (Matthew 5:3-7)

*Jesus helped people reinterpret the Ten Commandments in light of God’s loving intention. Then he said, <sup>34</sup> “A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. <sup>35</sup> By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (John 13:34-35)*

*Jesus told people to put God first. <sup>25</sup> “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? <sup>33</sup> But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*  
(Matthew 6:25,33)

*Jesus’ most widely-witnessed miracle proved this. Thousands of people had gathered to hear Jesus teach and see him heal sick people miraculously. As evening came on, the disciples urged Jesus to send the hungry crowd away. <sup>15</sup> As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a remote place, and it’s already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food.”*

<sup>16</sup> Jesus replied, “They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat.”

<sup>17</sup> “We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish,” they answered.

<sup>18</sup> “Bring them here to me,” he said. <sup>19</sup> And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. <sup>20</sup> They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over.

(Matthew 14:15-20)

*Jesus also demonstrated remarkable power over the forces of nature. One night, the disciples were caught in a terrible storm on the Sea of Galilee. They shouted at Jesus,*

<sup>35</sup> That day when evening came, he said to his disciples, “Let us go over to the other side.” <sup>36</sup> Leaving the crowd behind, they took him along, just as he was, in the boat. There

were also other boats with him. <sup>37</sup> A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. <sup>38</sup> Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don’t you care if we drown?”

<sup>39</sup> He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Quiet! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.

<sup>40</sup> He said to his disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”

<sup>41</sup> They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey him!”

(Mark 4:35-41)

*Clearly, Jesus was no ordinary man. He had power over heaven and earth, over spirits and diseases and the forces of nature. But with all his authority, Jesus taught his disciples to humbly pray: <sup>9</sup>“This, then, is how you should pray:*

“Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name,

<sup>10</sup> your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven

(Matthew 6:9-10)