“…On His Shoulders With Great Joy”: Jesus as Model of Ministry

1. Opening screen

2. Opening prayer

3. Motive for talk
   a. Love of the Church and/or love of Jesus?
      i. Being sure of our focus.
   b. “What did Jesus say, and how did He do this?”
      i. or “How have we always done this thing?”

4. Other models to consider
   a. Male and female founders of religious orders are not the primary focus
   b. E.g., the Daughters of Charity, are “animated first of all by the love of Christ,”
      i. Putting the person of Jesus front and center.

5. The Holy Presence of God
   a. Jesus’ activities: raise the dead; cure the sick and possessed and feed the thousands
      i. Demonstrate that Jesus is the Father’s Divine Son, and fulfillment of biblical prophesies
   b. Our response: comfort the dying; believe in the resurrection of the dead; food drives, food pantries,
      emergency relief; comfort the sick, medical research, and accessibility.
   c. The compassion of Jesus governs Church ministry.
   d. Curious miracles: Matthew 17:27 and avoiding scandal; waiting for water to freeze

6. It’s not just the miracles
   a. Jesus’ roles: carpenter, rabbi, master, lord.
   b. Jesus’ relationships: son, companion, friend.

7. His claim to authority:
   a. His authority was not from a human role, religious political or military
   b. His title: “Son of Man,” = “son of a human” = “human being”
      i. Daniel 7:13c-14
   c. All authority from the Father: Matt 11:26-27; John 5:43; 10:25; 14:7; Matt 26:53

8. Use of power
   a. Servant greatness and priority: Mark 10:42-45
   b. Modeling humble service: John 13:2-10
   c. Peter and the pretense of humility
   d. John IV of Constantinople – “ecumenical patriarch” (588 AD)
      i. Pope Gregory I (599-604) – servus servorum dei,
   e. Feet as symbols of human fragility, yet objects of the tender ministries of Jesus

9. Teaching adults or children?
   a. Jesus hugged children and taught adults.
      i. Modern practices flipping the paradigm
   b. Renewing the focus on discipling of adults.

10. Jesus answers peoples real questions
    a. Jesus was asked many questions, and took them seriously:
       i. From the crowds: Matt 19; Mark 12:28; John 4:9; 6:52,
       ii. From Jesus’ family and companions: Luke 2:48; John 1:48; 3:4; Matt 13:10; 15:33; 17:10,
b. Jesus provided answers accessible to the asker.

11. Jesus’ pedagogy
   a. Jesus’ pedagogy
      i. with a scholar of the law: Luke 10:25-28, pulling an answer from a learned asker,
      ii. with a ruler: Luke 18:18: using a teaching moment on the ten commandments:
         1. using a developmental approach, starting with basics, moving to the difficult,
            finishing with discipleship.

12. Unanswered questions
   a. Jesus does not answer every question: i.e., Pontius Pilate, Matt 27:13; Mark 15:4
      i. avoiding malevolent intentions, i.e., paying taxes to Caesar and Rome.
      ii. puzzled by Nicodemus: John 3:9

13. Answering current questions
   a. Jesus did not appeal to the authority of the Church, the synagogue or the Temple.
      i. avoiding “What the Church has always taught…” / “The Catechism instructs…”
   b. He provided answers that were persuasive in themselves.
   c. Most people questions are more practical than theological.
      i. Why do we want people to know what we want them to know…does it serve their needs
   d. Answer people’s questions, or expect them to go looking elsewhere for someone who will.
      i. use human reason.

14. Concrete answers
   a. Jesus’ clear preference was to create real life examples in his parables
      i. drawing from the gritty, everydayness of the audience.
   b. Modern parables’ sources:
      i. computers, traffic, colds, soccer, Netflix binging, mobile phones, on-line shopping, turn
         signals, etc.

15. Could he get angry
   a. Righteous anger against legalistic hardness of heart: Mark 3:1-6; Exod 31:14-15
      i. not waiting even one day to heal a withered hand.
   b. The cleansing of the temple, a barren lifeless place with small, reasonable, markups,
      i. Condemning the appearance of holiness, without the substance, and the practice of faith
         without compassion
   d. Not an attack on Judaism, but on misdirected clergy, lay leaders and laity everywhere.

16. What kind of news?
   a. An unambiguous message: the “good news.”
   b. The heart of the good news:
      i. that there is a God who breaks into human history,
      ii. that God’s motive is to seek us out, wherever we might be found;
      iii. that God’s judgment is that being human is something that God, himself, would do;
      iv. that God’s actions are incarnational, embracing our human condition in everything but sin;
      v. that God desires, not sacrifice, but mercy;
      vi. that the nature of God is to love,
      vii. and that the object of God’s love…is us.