

Discussion Guide
for

The Revolutionary Part II

Prepared by Dan Graves
and staff

Gateway Films
VISION  VIDEO

Gateway Films/Vision Video
P. O. Box 540
Worcester, PA 19490
1-800-523-0226
Fax: 610-584-6643
E-Mail: info@visionvideo.com
Web: www.visionvideo.com

Welcome to *The Revolutionary, Part II*

In the following pages you will find the film broken down into the major incidents it depicts from the life of Jesus. After the title for each section you will find the approximate running time of that section in parenthesis. Also at the beginning of each section you will find Scripture references that will enable you to get back to the actual texts from which the scene was drawn. Then you will find comments and some suggested questions in italics. For some of the questions there are approaches to answering, and they are placed in brackets after the italicized question.

If you used the first part of *The Revolutionary*, we think you will find that Part II takes you even deeper into the amazing life and work of Jesus. This program does not just cover the same territory as in the first part. New dimensions and elements in his life and teaching are set forth that will enrich your groups understanding of Jesus.

Which picture of Jesus?

Any work of art, be it blueprint or painting, short story or film, history or poem, must be selective. It must leave things out. The full detail of a single day in any life would take more than a day to describe. Just think how many words you speak, sounds you hear, things you think. In order not to swamp an audience, the artist must pick images or events from a host of possibilities to suggest the truth he or she is trying to convey. The gospel writers, for example, each selected only some events from Christ's life to give their accounts of him. Matthew showed Jesus as the King of the Jews. Mark saw Jesus as a man of action. Luke gave us a compassionate healer and John described a glorious, living word.

Selectivity is especially critical with Jesus. No single view can capture his fullness. In part one of *The Revolutionary*, we saw Christ as master of nature. At the beginning of time, according to John chapter one, he created the universe. While incarnate, he turned water to wine, walked on water, calmed a storm. He healed people. Earthquakes and darkness accompanied his death.

Here in part two, we see Jesus from a somewhat different angle. You might want to begin by asking *What is the dominant theme of The Revolutionary, Part II? What action is Christ most frequently portrayed doing?* [Relating to those in need and conquering disease and death through faith.] *What are some names for Christ which show his many-sided character in this video?* [Healer, Truth, Life, Lord, Master, Teacher, King of the Jews, Friend, etc.]

1. Simeon (3:10)

Luke 2:25-35

After Jesus was born, his mother and father presented him at the temple. This practice went back to the first Passover, recorded in Exodus (Exodus 11, 12). At that time all the firstborn sons in Egypt died, except those protected by the blood of a lamb over their doorposts. The Egyptians died because they had defied the Lord. Afterward, God told Moses that all firstborn males belonged to him and had to be paid for (Exodus 22:29,30; 34:19,20).

Mary and Joseph obeyed the law and took Jesus to the temple. In the temple an old man named Simeon fussed over Jesus. (Luke 2:25-32) Somehow Simeon connected this one baby among many he had seen with the prophecies written centuries before. *How did Simeon make the connection? How does a person become attuned to the Holy Spirit?*

Simeon did not want to die until he saw God's salvation. *Why was it so important to Simeon to see this baby? What do you make of what Simeon said to Mary in Luke 2:33-35? Was this a word of hope or warning? How would it have made Jesus parents feel then and while raising Jesus as a child?*

2. Temptation (3:15)

Luke 4:1-13; Matthew 4:1-11

After his baptism by John the Baptist in the Jordan River, Jesus went into the wilderness and was tempted. *What three kinds of things was Christ tempted to do?* [1. To use his power for personal benefit (lust of the flesh); 2. To show off his power and win followers by doing a great miracle (pride of life); 3. To put something in God's place (lust of eyes). Compare I John 2:15-17 with Genesis 3 and Christ's temptation accounts.]

Jesus instantly recognized the allure of each temptation. *How would any of these temptations, if he had succumbed, have subverted the calling and ministry of Jesus? Is it wrong to be tempted?* Martin Luther, the great Reformation leader, said, "Temptations of course cannot be avoided, but because we cannot prevent the birds from flying over our heads, there is no need that we should let them nest in our hair." *How does this saying express the difference between temptation refused and temptation indulged?*

Discuss how the temptations of Jesus did not come in the form of invitations to gross evil but were seductions to pursue good ends by the wrong means.

Christ returned from the desert with power (Luke 4:14). *What gave him that power? How do you become filled with the Holy Spirit?*

C. S. Lewis wrote, "Virtue—even attempted virtue—brings light; indulgence brings fog." *Have you ever overcome strong temptation? How did you feel afterward?*

3. The Leper Healed (2:12)

Matthew 8:2-4

Leprosy is an especially horrible disease because a leper loses feeling. If a healthy person sprains an ankle, pain keeps him or her off it. If a leper sprains an ankle, he continues to walk, doing more damage. If we smash our thumb with a hammer, we don't use it because it is tender. The leper doesn't feel the pain and destroys tissues by continuing to use the injured member. Leprosy itself does not destroy the body so much as the unfeeling use of the body does.

A leper came to Jesus (Matthew 8: 2-4). *Was it faith or desperation that brought him to Christ?*

In Jesus' day a leper had to avoid contact with people who did not have the disease and had to announce his presence by calling out "Unclean, Unclean!" For Jesus to have contact with a leper was a social offense. *Why would he do such a thing? Who are the "unclean" or "untouchables" in our society. How do you think Jesus would treat them?*

The leper said to Jesus, "...if you are willing." Jesus *was* willing. *Think of a situation in which you could not bring yourself to touch someone because that person seemed too hateful or revolting. Do you think Jesus would have touched that person? Why?*

4. The Centurion and the Servant (1:50)

Matthew 8:5-13

A centurion was an officer commanding a Roman "century," that is, 100 soldiers. The Romans were an occupying force in Israel in Jesus' day. Thus they were intensely hated and resented by the people. *What does it show us about Jesus as we see how he related to the centurion? Does it remind you of a teaching from the Sermon on the Mount to "Love your enemies"?*

The centurion came to Jesus asking help for a sick servant. *What do you learn about the centurion's character by the fact he was willing to travel to get help for a servant?*

Jesus promptly offered to go home with the centurion. But the centurion said there was no need. Just give the command and the servant would be healed. He explained that he, too, was a man of authority and gave orders to his men knowing they would obey. *Who did the centurion think Jesus would give orders to? Where do you think the centurion found such faith? Did he have knowledge we don't have? Can we have such faith? Faith requires practice, too. How could you get practice at faith?*

Jesus taught his disciples faith by sending them out in pairs without supplies (Luke 9:1-6). They had to trust God for food and shelter.

5. Casting out Legion (2:05)

Luke 8:26-39

When Jesus entered the region of the Gadarenes, a man ran toward him from among tombs. (Luke 8:26-39) We would say the man was insane. Jesus saw that he was controlled by a legion of demons. The iron chains of the day could not hold him. He was in torment. *How do you think people get exposed to demonic control? Why are people sometimes in torment under demon control? Are there times when people are under the control of evil but do not display the hysterical symptoms shown in this incident?*

Jesus calmed the man and drove out the evil spirits. The spirits pleaded not to be sent into the abyss. Jesus allowed them to go into a herd of swine which stampeded into the sea. *Can we believe in demons and evil spirits in today's world? Where do they come from? What do they do? Are people like Hitler demon possessed? Can demons control themselves or are they driven by misery and malice and compulsion to do wrong? Have you ever done wrongs you didn't really want to do? Did you feel compelled? How is it that people can escape sin's compulsion even if demons cannot?*

6. Jairus' Daughter and the Woman (4:50)

Luke 8:40-56

Jairus' daughter was dying. Jesus agreed to come and heal her. It was a life and death situation. Yet on the way he stopped to take care of another problem. "Who touched me?" he suddenly asked. This seemed a strange question to everyone. *Have you ever felt embarrassed to ask a question in a crowd, especially if it seems like a stupid question?* Dozens of people were crowded around Jesus. Anyone could have touched him, and his disciples were quick to point this out.

But Jesus insisted on an answer. He had felt power go out of him. *What do you think Jairus felt when Jesus stopped to ask such a question while his daughter was dying?*

Usually it is not good to lose focus. We become impatient with people who do. Here Jesus allowed himself to be interrupted while on his way to an important task. *Does this and other incidents give us any clue to Jesus' sense of priorities?* Finally a woman came forward and confessed she had touched Christ's robe, hoping to be healed of a long-standing bleeding. *Why do you think it was hard for her to admit she had touched Christ's robe.* [Under Old Testament law, a woman was unclean if she had a bleeding and some things she touched also became unclean. Leviticus 15:25-30.] *Do you think she expected Jesus to yell at her? What do you think she felt when he commended her faith?*

While Jesus dealt with this woman, who wasn't in immediate danger of death, Jairus' daughter died. *What do you think Jairus felt then? What do you think went through Christ's mind?*

Jesus brought Jairus' daughter back to life. *Is it any more difficult for Christ to restore spiritual life than to restore physical life?*

7. Man Born Blind (5:00)

John 9

Look at John 9:1-2 and the perennial question of "who sinned?" Discuss the answer of Jesus in verse 3. The Bible suggests that the blind man was psychologically tough. *Imagine how you would respond if you were blind and a stranger came up to you, mixed some clay with spit, put it on your eyes and said, "Go wash in the pool down behind the high school and you'll be able to see." What kind of faith did it take the man to go to the pool? What effect did Christ's spirit have on this man to make him believe it was worth going to the pool? Would it seem far-fetched to you?*

After he was healed, the man was summoned before the Sanhedrin. He argued with the top leaders of Israel and made witty remarks which cut their hearts. *Did it take courage for him to stand up against these leaders? How do you think this man got so much pluck? Would you not have expected the leaders to be amazed and thankful for such a wonderful demonstration of the power of God? Why do you think the Pharisees threw the man out of the synagogue? [Pride and jealousy seems to be the clue to their behavior.]*

8. Prodigal Son (2:25)

Luke 15:11-32

Perhaps Christ's best known parable is that of the "Prodigal Son." A boy asks his father for his inheritance. Although an inheritance is given only when a father dies, this father gives it to his son while he lives. The boy squanders his money on loose living. Starving he remembers his father and retreats home to offer himself as a servant. The father sees him afar off, runs to meet him and embraces him.

Read Isaiah 30:18. *What does this say about God's character? How is the character of the father in the Prodigal Son like the character of God in the verse you just read?*

What does the story of the "Prodigal Son" tell us about forgiveness. What does it show about who may come to God for a new start? Why is it that so many come to their senses and return home only after they have eaten with the pigs?

9. Health and Doctors (:30)

Mark 2:16-17

Jesus not only cured the sick but used the image of health and sickness when discussing spiritual problems. *Whom did Jesus indicate that he came to help? Who are those who think they do not need any help?*

10. Test of the Coin (:55)

Luke 20:20-26

Some Pharisees came to Jesus with a question, hoping to trick him (Luke 20:20-26). Should we pay taxes to Caesar or not? If Jesus answered, "no," they would denounce him to the Romans. If Jesus answered, "yes," the people would turn against him because they hated the oppressive tax system. Either way Jesus was going to be in trouble.

Jesus called the Pharisees hypocrites. "Hypocrite" is the Greek word for "actor." *Why did Jesus call the Pharisees hypocrites?* [They usually protested the tax system; now they were going to support it if need be to accuse him to the Romans. Also, they came pretending merely to want his opinion and flattered him before asking the question.] *How do we play-act Christianity?*

Why did Jesus answer their question after saying it was a trap? Do you think his answer was wise? Have you ever wished you could respond quickly with such a wise reply? What did Jesus mean by his reply? What implications would it have for his fellow Jews in their day? What are the implications for us today?

11. Lazarus Sick (:40)

John 11:1-6

Why didn't Jesus go to Bethany when he heard Lazarus was seriously ill? Note: The story will be taken up again shortly in #13.

12. Woes (1:20)

Matthew 23

Jesus accused the Pharisees of putting burdens on people but not helping lift them. *What kind of help do you think Jesus wanted the Pharisees to give the people? What kinds of burdens do religious leaders put on people today? Jesus wondered aloud how the Pharisees could escape Hell. What behaviors doomed the Pharisees to hell? Were you surprised at the severity of the denunciation of the Pharisees by Jesus? Did his "name-calling" seem out of character for Jesus? Why did he utter his most caustic criticisms against such religious leaders? In Acts 15:5 we find that the early church did include Pharisees in its membership. Would this indicate that Jesus' strong words got some good results?*

13. Lazarus Raised (2:30)

John 11:11-44

Lazarus died. Jesus came to comfort the dead man's sisters Mary and Martha. Martha said, "Lord if you had been here my brother would not have died." Then she added, "But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask." *What do you think she had in mind? What prompted her to say that? Was she hoping beyond hope Jesus might be able to raise Lazarus? In forming your answer, remember that when Jesus told Martha Lazarus would rise again, she agreed that he would indeed rise in the general resurrection in the last days. What was the significance of the raising of Lazarus for what happened next in the life of Jesus? (John 11:53 tells how it triggered the plot to finally do away with him.) Why would not even such a dramatic action as raising Lazarus turn the hearts of his opponents? Are there some who simply will not be convinced by anything?*

14. Last Supper (4:05)

Matthew 26:20-30 Mark 14:12-26, John 13:34

The most important Jewish festival is Passover (Exodus 11,12). It commemorates an event in Egypt when the angel of the Lord passed over the houses of all who had put the blood on their doorposts. Israel became a nation, escaping from slavery in Egypt. Jesus, like every Jew commemorated the Passover. However, he changed the formulas of the Passover supper and created what is called the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist.

At the Last Supper, Jesus urged the disciples to love one another. *What is true love? Why did Jesus command us to love one another? If we don't love, can we call ourselves Christians? Why do you think Jesus said to Judas, "What you are about to do, do quickly?"*

What is the meaning of the Last Supper as your church understands it? Why do you think that this important observance of Christian communities from the very beginning has been the source of so much debate and division?

As you consider what Jesus said and did at the supper, is he preoccupied with what will happen to him or does he seem more concerned to prepare his followers for what is to come?

15. Betrayal on the Mount of Olives (1:00)

Mark 14:43-50

Jesus knew he was about to be betrayed. On an earlier occasion when his life was in danger, he had gone "underground" to escape his enemies (John 10:39,40; 11:54). Once he left Israel for a time, apparently in response to opposition (Mark 7:24). *Why didn't he try to escape this time? Do you think there is a time to withdraw and a time to stay? If so, how do we discern the difference? How did Jesus know the difference?*

We have all had, at one time or another, the bitter experience of betrayal. *Even Jesus was betrayed by one of those in his inner circle. What can we learn from the response of Jesus to betrayal and the betrayer?*

16. Jesus Before Sanhedrin (1:10)

Mark 14:53-65

The religious leaders were well aware of Christ's miracles (See, for example, John 11:47,48). Yet they put him on trial. No doubt they were motivated by jealousy and envy. This alone cannot explain why they rejected Jesus. *Why didn't these opponents accept Christ's healings, miracles, and raising of the dead?*

Read Deuteronomy 13:1-11. *Are we to believe every sign and wonder?* Despite Christ's miracles, the religious leaders at various times asked for a sign. To them, his miracles were not convincing. When Jesus finally gave them a sign, it was something to happen in the future. He said that as Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days so would he be in the earth. The trouble with this sign was Christ had to die for it to be fulfilled.

The Jewish theologians were distrustful of miracles because of Moses' warning. They thought of Jesus as a false teacher because he did not teach what they taught. They had created a large body of authority interpreting the law. As we know, Jesus did not follow their interpretations. In fact, he denounced the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 23:2, etc.). Because their authority was threatened, they could not open their eyes to see him for who he is. They could not believe that he is the Son of God because he didn't look like they expected the Messiah to look. He wasn't powerful, as a conqueror. He was friendly to Israel's enemies. They were looking for something, someone different.

Does Moses' warning have value for us today? [When antichrist comes, he will work miracles. Many people will be deceived by him. Even the very elect would be deceived if it were possible (Matthew 24:24).] *What are some of the miracles scripture says antichrist will perform?* [Calling fire from heaven, giving a statue life (II Thessalonians 2:9-12; Revelation 13:14-15)]

Standing before the Sanhedrin, Jesus was silent in his own defense much of the time. *Do you find it hard to be silent when you are falsely accused?* Jesus remained silent on some questions until adjured to answer in the name of God (Matthew 26:63). For the answer he then gave the priests condemned him. He told them he was indeed the Son of God. They saw this as blasphemy. He was making himself equal to God. *Why do you think Jesus answered the council even though he knew it meant sure death?*

17. Jesus before Pilate (5:45)

Matthew 27:14, John 19:9-10

Taken before Pilate, Jesus was again silent before many questions (Matthew 27:14; John 19:9-10). Criminals are often silent in our courts because they are taking the fifth amendment which protects them from incriminating themselves. *Why do you think Jesus was silent?*

When Jesus did speak, he spoke about truth (John 18:37). *Why? Do you think he was trying to save Pilate?*

Some Eastern traditions say Pilate and his wife became Christians. We know that Pilate could have rubber-stamped the verdict of the Sanhedrin. Emperor Tiberias had issued orders which told him to accommodate the Jews in religious matters. Instead, he decided to give Jesus a Roman trial, perhaps really wanting to see justice done, perhaps only wanting to thwart the pesky Sanhedrin. Under Roman law, Jesus was entitled to a defense. Since he would not speak up for himself and since no one else took his defense, Pilate became both advocate and judge. Scripture tells us Pilate realized Jesus was innocent and tried to save him. Yet in the end Pilate proved to be merely a politician. He caved in and did what was easiest. For complex political reasons he feared losing his status as a "friend of Caesar," and also the Jews were threatening a messy riot.

Jesus declared before Pilate that he was a king (John 18:36,37). Although this was technically grounds for a death penalty, Pilate's questioning showed him that Christ was not a direct threat to Caesar. *Describe Christ's kingdom. Why does he say it is not of this world?*

Pilate's wife warned him not to have anything to do with "that innocent man" Jesus (Matthew 27:19). *Did she recognize truth? Was she close to the kingdom of God?*

Pilate had Jesus flogged. *Why?* [He was trying to appease the Jews by giving Jesus a penalty lighter than the death sentence.]

Later Pilate thought he saw a way to free Jesus. He would offer the people a choice between Christ and a murderer. The people chose the killer (Matthew 27:15-21; Mark 15:6-11; Luke 23:13-23). *How do we choose Barabbas over Jesus in our world today?*

Stoic philosophers had given the Romans an ideal of the noble-minded man. Their ideal was a man dignified and reasonable. Jesus demonstrated great dignity and clear thinking when standing before Pilate. *Do you think Pilate had this ideal in mind when he said, "Behold the man"?*

Finally Pilate condemned Jesus but washed his hands saying, "I'm innocent of this man's blood" (Matthew 27:24). *Could Pilate really wash his hands of Jesus?*

Pilate is often seen as just a politician doing what is expedient. *Where do you see today in our world, in governments, even in religion, the same kind of compromise for expediency sake? Is it ever justified?*

18. Crucifixion (1:25)

Matthew 27:32-54

Isaiah 53:12 prophesied that Christ would be numbered with transgressors. Christ was indeed executed as a criminal between criminals. *How would you feel if you were lined up with a gang of criminals and led handcuffed to execution knowing you were innocent? How would you describe the humiliation that Jesus must have felt being publically exposed and brutalized with close friends and even his mother looking on? How did he understand his own death?*

In a real crucifixion the victim hangs from tortured wrists and feet. His breathing is cut off so that he must constantly strain upward to gasp for breath. He will almost pass out, unable to draw air; then the breathing reflex will force the body to arch upward and grab a sip of oxygen. This torment can last for days until weakness and dehydration kills the wretched victim.

No one can decide for himself when to die on a cross. Our inbuilt reflexes are too strong. By the time a crucified victim becomes too weak to catch breath any longer, one cannot shout "It is finished." Jesus, however, did so. *Does this help explain why the centurion at the cross said, "Surely this was the Son of God"?* (Matthew 27:54).

19. Tomb (2:14)

Matthew 28:1-4

The Pharisees were fully aware of Jesus' prediction that he would rise in three days (Matthew 27:62-66). Pharisees supposedly believed in resurrection (Acts 23:6-8). *Do you think they really believed in their hearts? If so, why did they asked Pilate for a guard? What does the presence of a guard at the tomb prove? After Jesus rose from the dead, the Pharisees heard the story of the earthquake and angels from the guards (Matthew 28:11-15). Why did they still refuse to believe in Christ?*

20. Thomas (1:20)

John 20:24-31

Thomas was one of Christ's disciples. He had heard Christ's prophecies. He had seen Christ's power. Yet he didn't believe the resurrection reports until Christ stood before him in person. Jews were trained from childhood not to use God's name as an exclamation. To do so was to violate the commandment "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." Yet when confronted by Christ, Thomas said, "My Lord and my God!" *What kind of language is that to use to another human? What does that tell us about Christ?*

Jesus rebuked Thomas. "You have believed because you saw. Blessed are those who have not seen but have believed." *Have you believed? Does the story compel your belief?*

21. Prophecy, Commission and Ascension (2:00)

Matthew 28:16-20

The disciples wondered why Jesus had to die. He explained that everything written by Moses and the prophets had to be fulfilled (Luke 24:44). *What did the prophets say about Christ? Name some prophecies already literally fulfilled.* [Town of birth (Micah 5:2); time of birth (Daniel 9); type of death (Psalm 22); place of ministry (Isaiah 9:1), etc.]

Jesus commissioned his disciples to be his witnesses. He promised them that he would be with them to the end of the age (Matthew 28:16-20). *How does he bring his presence to people today? Have you experienced the Lord with you?*

Angels spoke to the disciples when Jesus was taken up into heaven (Acts 1:9-11). They said he would return in the way he had gone up. *What does Jesus do now while in heaven?* [Romans 8:34]

From your experience of this film how would you sum up the life of Jesus?

Was he truly a "revolutionary"?

If so, what kind of revolution did he launch?

Does it have any meaning for our lives and world today?

Near the end of the film the words of John 20:31 are cited which tell us that the story was told so that you may believe something about Jesus.

What is that and what does it mean?

Further explanation is given at the ending from the words found in Romans 10:9 where Paul tells us that "if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

What does this mean?