

Part 4, Paper 133, The Return ...from Rome, Midwayer Commission

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Jesus' humanity, cross-cultural exchange, societal change, teachable moments, gender inequality, universal teachings, spiritual curiosity, social dynamics, philosophical discussions, human mind, inner exploration, wisdom and truth, hidden influences, shared meals, compassionate caregiver

SPEAKERS

John, Sarah

S Sarah 00:00

Okay, so are you ready to explore, like, a period that's, like, totally shrouded in mystery. We're talking about the years after Jesus's time in Rome. Yeah, we're diving deep into the Urantia Book for this one. And you know, a lot of the historical texts we've looked at, they kind of just like, tiptoe around this period, yeah, but in this book, we get a glimpse of Jesus as a teacher, right? Engaging in these, like, thought provoking dialogs with just everyday people. It's

J John 00:29

captivating. You know how this excerpt really emphasizes Jesus' humanity? It's all about his travels with guno. He's an Indian merchant, okay? And his son got it right. And it really showcases, I think, the power of, like, cross cultural exchange, yeah, and just the universal nature of his teaching. So

S Sarah 00:47

it really does. It sets the stage for some really insightful conversations so they slip out a room quietly after Jesus spends about a year teaching, there no big farewell tour, just kind of subtle, almost like he's letting the seeds he's planned to just kind of take root,

J John 01:02

yeah? It's such an intriguing detail, and I think it speaks volumes this quiet departure. It suggests that influencing hearts and minds, you know, it doesn't always require a loudspeaker, right, right? Sometimes it's about a gentler approach, just allowing those ideas to resonate, to

spread naturally, yeah, and

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Sarah 01:21

they head out on the Appian Way, going through all the different cultures and people of the Roman Empire, right? They're not even in a hurry to get to the next destination. It's more about the journey and what they're learning along the way. And

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John 01:34

this journey unfolds against this backdrop of like societal change. The Roman Empire at this time was this huge melting pot, cultures, social classes, ideologies, all kind of like clashing and mixing, Oh, yeah. And I think that makes their encounters even more potent, because it's like Jesus teachings. They become timeless against this backdrop of like a world in flux, much like our own, right, right?

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Sarah 02:00

And wow, do they encounter some, I guess you could call them like teachable moments. They do. There's this one incident on the road where Jesus he steps in to stop this bully who's picking on a younger boy. You'd expect something really dramatic, maybe even like divine intervention, but it's, it's really different than that. It's in

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John 02:18

those moments where you see the real depth emerge, right? So instead of just immediate punishment, which is kind of what Ganet expects, Jesus offers this really nuanced perspective. He makes this distinction between individual acts of mercy, okay, like when you step in to protect someone, versus the actual like execution of justice, which is much more complex and requires this, like, broader societal framework and impartial judgment. It's not always so clear, and

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Sarah 02:47

it makes you think, like, how quick are we to judge based on incomplete information, especially now with social media, right? It's a good point, yeah, and

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John 02:55

it's this really powerful reminder for all of us, I think, to approach situations with more empathy, you know, with humility, recognizing that like we don't always have the full story, it's so true. There's a timeless message. It transcends cultural boundaries. The incident really prompts us, I

think, to examine our own biases, yeah, and to remember that justice, true, Justice like you were saying, necessitates that commitment to understanding the bigger picture, something that we often overlook,

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Sarah 03:23

and this commitment to kind of confronting these societal norms continues in their very next encounter, this time in Tarentum, they see this man mistreating his wife. So Jesus, He intervenes as you'd expect, but he does it in this really unexpected way. Yeah, it's really

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John 03:40

interesting. Instead of condemning the guy, Jesus chooses empathy. He recognizes that there's an internal struggle going on within this man, right? And he gently guides him towards a more enlightened perspective. You could say this encounter becomes this opportunity for Jesus to talk about this deeply rooted issue, even back then, of gender inequality, yeah, which was, you know, radical for that time.

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Sarah 04:01

It's pretty amazing how Jesus frames equality, this idea of equality as a partnership with the divine right, you know, he really emphasizes men's responsibility for respect and protection. He even makes this parallel to the divine relationship between the Father and the Spirit mother, at least according to Urantia right, which is just, it's fascinating. It's

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John 04:19

revolutionary, even today, right? Like this idea that equality is rooted in something divine, right? It challenges us to really think differently, to reevaluate our relationships, our societal structures. It recognizes that true partnership can only exist when there's mutual respect, yeah, and when we start dismantling those power dynamics that are harmful. And it's like

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Sarah 04:43

every interaction they have becomes this opportunity for Jesus to kind of challenge things. Yeah. And so those seeds of change, and speaking of change, their journey takes them to Corinth. Oh, cool. It was this huge, bustling city, really diverse, known for. For, well, let's just say, a more open minded way of looking at morality, I guess, than what they'd seen

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John 05:05

before. Yeah, Corinth was like the ultimate melting pot. It

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Sarah 05:09

kind of mirrors the complexities of our world today, in a way, a fusion of cultures, beliefs, ways of life. I think it's the perfect setting to see how universal Jesus's teachings really were right, and how they connected with people from all these different backgrounds.

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John 05:24

And it's in Corinth where we start to see these ripples, you know, like the effects of Jesus's teachings, starting to take hold. He's really captivated by Judaism at this point, even says he wants to see what it's like at a synagogue service. That

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Sarah 05:38

fascination with Judaism is so telling it shows how when you're exposed to new ideas, it can really spark something, the curiosity,

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John 05:45

this longing to explore your spirituality. Yeah? It also shows, I think, how interconnected all these faith traditions are, yeah, like these common threads of wisdom that tie us all together. It's

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Sarah 05:57

true. And so while Crispus is over there, checking out the synagogue, totally engrossed in the rituals and the community there. Jesus is talking to Crispus, who's the synagogue ruler. They have this really deep theological discussion, which,

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John 06:11

knowing what we know about Crispus, is really significant. I mean, years later, he converts to Christianity, along with his whole family, right? With Paul Exactly. It's like this subtle foreshadowing, you know? It emphasizes how much these encounters mattered. Yeah? It's a reminder that these seeds that are planted in one moment, they can blossom in ways you never expect, right?

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Sarah 06:32

It's like this chain reaction, yeah? And it's

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John 06:35

chick's history, yeah, the way our beliefs evolve, that's pretty amazing to think, yes.

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Sarah 06:40

And speaking of unexpected encounters, there's this incident in Corinth with the courtesans. It really shows just how boundless Jesus's compassion was, more

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John 06:50

than any other encounter. I think this one shows how Jesus saw beyond the labels that society puts on people, right? You know, he recognized that every single person has inherent dignity, regardless of their situation their past. Yeah? Gannon, he's obviously uncomfortable. Yeah? He judges, which is understandable for the time, sure, but Jesus responds with empathy, as always, and that's such

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Sarah 07:14

an important lesson for all of us, right to challenge our own assumptions about people. Jesus didn't condone their actions, obviously, but he also didn't condemn them. He made that connection with them. Acknowledged their humanity. He recognized that there are these bigger phrases at play. Sometimes it's

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John 07:30

true, and it challenges us to consider how complex the human experience is. Right to not just make these snap judgments about people, oh, yeah, based on how they look, their social standing, whatever, it's a call to lead with compassion, with understanding, to remember that everybody has a story, a journey that led them to where they are.

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Sarah 07:53

And in this really remarkable moment, Jesus, He invites these women to share a meal at the home of this Jewish merchant justice. Justice is a devout follower of Jewish law, so for Jesus to do this, it's this radical act. It was definitely breaking some norms. You know, he's blurring the lines, making them confront their own prejudices. That's what I love about

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John 08:12

his approach to social change. He doesn't just talk about acceptance. He lives. It creates these moments of genuine connection that cut through all those societal barriers. It

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Sarah 08:22

makes you realize that sometimes the biggest transformations don't happen through speeches or grand gestures, right? It's those simple acts of kindness, shared meals, the willingness to welcome those that society has deemed unworthy.

J John 08:36

It's about recognizing our shared humanity, and from the heart of Corinth, they travel east, okay, drawn to Athens, you know, the intellectual hub of the ancient world. I think this shift eastward is important because we move from exploring social dynamics to like, the realm of philosophy, pursuit of knowledge.

S Sarah 08:55

Athens, with all its philosophers and thinkers, I can only imagine what it was like for Jesus to navigate that world, right?

J John 09:01

It was all about logic and reason, but he always emphasized the heart and spirit too. Yeah, it's an interesting

S Sarah 09:05

contrast. So tell me what happens when he meets these Athenian thinkers. Did they find any common ground?

J John 09:13

So one night, Jesus is at his lodging, okay? And he ends up talking with a Greek philosopher, and this philosopher, he's going on and on about observation, the power of the human intellect, okay? And Jesus is listening so intently, and when it's his turn to speak, he doesn't contradict

S Sarah 09:32

the guy. It's that respectful approach that makes his teaching so powerful, right? Exactly?

J John 09:36

He meets people where they are, acknowledges their perspective, and then ever so gently guides them to this broader understanding. I like that. So he says that science and logic are important, of course, yeah. He even says that scientists may one day understand gravity, light, electricity, but even then, he says they'll never fully grasp the essence of these forces. Interesting.



Sarah 09:56

So he's not saying science is bad, just that it's only part of this. Story,



John 10:00

right? It's like science is about how the universe works, okay, but spirituality is about the why, the meaning behind it all. And true wisdom, he's saying comes from recognizing that these two things are connected.



Sarah 10:14

It's like he's advocating for this holistic view of reality, right, one that embraces the things we can see and touch and the things we can't. Yes.



John 10:23

And he cautions against relying too much on logic and math when it comes to human interaction. He actually uses a really good analogy. I love a good analogy. Tell me more. Yes. The philosopher, you know, if you have 10 men sharing a sheep, would it be 10 times faster than just one man? And of course, mathematically, it makes sense, yeah? But in reality, yeah, those 10 men would probably just get in each other's way. That's



Sarah 10:45

such a great point. We're not always predictable. And yeah, sometimes too many cooks really do spoil the broth. Exactly.



John 10:52

He's highlighting that human beings are complex. You can't just put us into a formula,



Sarah 10:57

especially in our data driven world. It's good to remember that some things can't be measured or calculated.



John 11:03

And as their journey continues, we'll see how this idea of bridging the gap between the physical world and the spiritual world keeps coming up, okay, especially when they get to their next

destination, Ephesus.

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Sarah 11:14

So from Athens, you know, where it was all logic and reason, they go to Ephesus, this amazing city with the Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. It's like each stop on their journey focuses on a different part of what it means to be human. It's true,

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John 11:30

we had justice and mercy out on the open road right then social dynamics in Corinth, all that hustle and bustle, yeah, yeah. Athens was the life of the mind. And now in Ephesus, it's all about the soul, and it's interesting, because

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Sarah 11:42

even though Ephesus has this incredible temple, Jesus seems more interested in these quiet conversations that he's having.

J

John 11:52

Yeah, the grandeur of that temple, it doesn't seem to faze him much. You can almost picture him, though, totally in awe of it all.

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Sarah 11:59

Oh, I bet maybe even picking up some souvenirs along the way. Well,

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John 12:03

he is pretty captivated by this silver shrine to Artemis, which, thinking about his background, makes sense.

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Sarah 12:09

Oh, yeah, right, the divine feminine is a big part of Indian religion, exactly.

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John 12:14

But you're right. Jesus is having these deep conversations exploring the human spirit, yeah, it's like he's drawing this distinction between, like, outward expressions of faith, you know, and the inward journey of the soul. I guess you

inward journey of the soul, I guess, you

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Sarah 12:27

and this theme of inner exploration, it really comes up in this conversation that Jesus has with the scholar,

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John 12:32

and they're talking about the soul, which is something the scholar seems really preoccupied with.

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Sarah 12:37

Well, yeah, the soul, it's a mystery. People have been debating it forever,

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John 12:41

right? And the scholar is wrestling with this question, what is the soul? How do we even know it exists, if we can't see it or measure it?

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Sarah 12:50

I mean, it's a good question, right? It is, how do you reconcile something that's supposed to be spiritual with the physical world? So how does Jesus respond to that?

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John 13:00

Well, he describes the soul as this self reflective, truth, discerning and spirit perceiving part of man. And he points out that it's not just self awareness that makes us different from animals, okay, even they have that to some degree true. It's more about our moral conscience, you know, that internal compass we have exactly that ability to tell right from wrong, to me, that's what makes humans different. And it's

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Sarah 13:24

interesting that Jesus doesn't say we can prove the soul exists through science or anything. It's more about experiencing it, isn't it? Yeah,

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John 13:31

it's this experiential reality, like you said, some truths, especially about the soul, you have to live them to understand them

live them to understand them.

S Sarah 13:39

It's true. It reminds me of that saying the heart has its reasons which reason knows nothing of. So they leave Ephesus, and it's almost like their travels start mirroring these ideas that Jesus has been talking about.

J John 13:52

I like that. How you put that? They've seen all these different places, met all these different people, yeah, and now they're headed to Cyprus, where things take a bit of a turn. Yeah.

S Sarah 14:01

They go to the mountains of Cyprus to relax a bit, but then Ganede gets really sick, right? It's

J John 14:06

a reminder that even when things seem peaceful, life can throw you a curveball, and

S Sarah 14:11

it makes you wonder, do those tough moments happen for a reason? Is there something to learn from them?

J John 14:17

It's definitely something to think about. And yeah, we don't always know why things happen, but we can choose how we respond. And what does Jesus do? What did he do? He becomes the compassionate caregiver. Uses his knowledge of healing to help Ganet get better.

S Sarah 14:31

He's like a teacher, a healer and a wilderness medic all rolled into one, right?

J John 14:35

And once Ganede recovers their conversations, they start to focus on the human mind. Makes

S Sarah 14:41

S Sarah 14:41

sense when you're that close to you know your own mortality, you start asking those big questions, what does it mean to be conscious or read that different from animals

J John 14:49

in Jesus, being Jesus, He offers this really insightful perspective. He says that animals, they experience things, they even have memories, but they're not self reflect. If they don't have those inner dialogs that we have as humans. So self awareness is key, right? But it's more than that. It's also about understanding our place in time. He calls it time self consciousness, this ability to reflect on the past think about the future.

S Sarah 15:15

So it's like having this moral memory, knowing that our actions have consequences that can last

J John 15:22

exactly, and when you understand that we're all interconnected across time, it makes you really think about your choices. It adds this weight of responsibility, for sure, it

S Sarah 15:30

makes you want to live intentionally, and it reminds me of those hidden influences we talked about before.

J John 15:34

Yeah, how the people we meet, the things we go through, even the little things, they shape who we become, and they

S Sarah 15:40

eventually make it to Antioch, which is this really interesting city known for both its trade and its, let's just say, less than wholesome reputation, right?

J John 15:49

And it's an Antioch where you see Jesus getting more introspective, like he knows what's coming in Palestine, like he's preparing himself,

S Sarah 15:56
getting ready to step back into his destiny, exactly.

J John 15:59
And finally, they arrive in ur the city where Abraham was born. Talk about a place that's rich in history. Wow.

S Sarah 16:06
What a setting for a final conversation. So what's on gun Ned's mind as he's about to say goodbye? Well, he's still

J John 16:12
got questions. Of course, he asked about the difference between knowledge, wisdom and truth. That's a big one, right? Like, what is wisdom? So

S Sarah 16:18
how does Jesus answer that? He

J John 16:19
doesn't give him a straight definition. He says, Wisdom is the principal thing. Therefore, get wisdom with all your quest for knowledge, get understanding. Basically, knowledge is important, but it's what you do with it that matters, and that's what wisdom is, right? Yeah, it's about taking what you know and using it to understand the world to live a good life. So

S Sarah 16:38
they say goodbye, and gane and his father head to India, and they have no idea that the man they knew as Joshua will someday be known as Jesus of Nazareth. It's pretty incredible when you think about it, it really is. I mean, they had this amazing journey. Talked about justice, equality, the soul, the pursuit of wisdom, all

J John 16:58
without ever really knowing who their teacher was. It just goes to show that true wisdom,



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Sarah 17:01

it goes beyond titles and labels. So I guess the question for all of us is, who are those hidden influences in our own lives? What are those seeds of wisdom that have led us to where we are today?

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John 17:12

That's a great question, and it's a reminder to be open to the unexpected, to approach life with curiosity, with humility, because sometimes the most important lessons come from the quiet conversations, the shared meals and just the act of walking alongside a teacher open to whatever they have to teach us, that's

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Sarah 17:29

a great place to wrap up.