

Voice
Agency
Comics



Issue #10

The Hierophant #3

Summer 2026

Always \$1.00

AXIS MUNDI

TheVoiceAgency.net

VOICE AGENCY COMICS

The Hierophant #3

JOYCE'S FIRST LESSON

QUESTIONS
OPEN DOORS.
WISDOM
FINDS A HOME.



Good
conversations
change
everything.

GORDON ATKINSON





We Agree to the Following:

1. You and I will learn together what Jesus of Nazareth taught and believed. We will not concern ourselves with what happened after he died. The Church has strong opinions on what the death of Jesus means for humanity. If you want to know about that, you should seek a Christian minister for guidance.

2. The text we will study is Matthew chapters five, six, and seven. It is roughly four pages in my copy of the New Testament, so it is a manageable amount of material. Further, these four pages are popularly known as “The Sermon on the Mount.” It is a sample sermon from Jesus, specifically created to introduce people to the teachings of Jesus. It was compiled by the Matthean school of disciples in the earliest era of the Christian Church and formally written down around the year 80.

This passage allows the reader to understand what a sermon from Jesus was like, back in the day. That's why I think this is the perfect passage for you.

3. I will walk you carefully through these four pages, using the original language as our text. In addition, we will be using the New Revised Standard Version of the New Testament as a check and balance against my translation.

4. Your questions are the most important part of our relationship. I'll tell you some things, but the magic happens when you bring your questions. Ask anything and everything. We will chase every rabbit. Indeed, the rabbits are the most important part of any enlightenment experience.

5. I am only able to commit to guiding you through these four pages. I will stay with you until we finish that work together. You can stop anytime of course. If our study is not bringing meaning and excitement to your soul, you **SHOULD** stop.

If you agree with those five things, your first lesson is below.



Lesson One

The following is a summary of what scholars know and can reasonably surmise about Jesus of Nazareth. This is an accepted account by scholars who study Jesus outside of the guidance of the Church.



Jesus was born around 4 BCE and raised in or near Nazareth in Galilee. No one knows where he received his education or acquired his wisdom, and there is not enough reliable material to identify him with any known rabbinical tradition. He appeared suddenly as a Jewish teacher of wisdom between 27 and 29 CE and was crucified by the Roman Empire around the year 30.

He lived in a world dominated by Rome and by the Jewish ruling classes who had learned to survive under Roman power. Common people were caught between the power of Rome and the power of their own people cooperating with Rome. The rich profited under the Romans, but poor Jews were burdened by taxation, debt, land loss, religious exclusion, and violence.





Into this world, Jesus came preaching a new message. In Matthew Jesus speaks often of the Kingdom of Heaven.

At that time, Jewish theology did not have a carefully constructed doctrine of the afterlife, so Jesus was not talking about heaven as a destination after you die. That's reading a modern idea back into the text. The Kingdom of Heaven was the state of being that occurs spontaneously, when common people live uncommonly unselfish lives.

That was what Jesus believed and taught.

He did famously say in Luke's gospel, ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἐντὸς ὑμῶν ἐστίν, which can be literally translated, *The Kingdom of God is WITHIN you*. For Jesus, Kingdom life meant an alternative way of living NOW. Kingdom living was a life centered on others and not yourself. Rome ruled by force, wealth, hierarchy, and fear. The temple aristocracy maintained religious and social order in ways that often protected the powerful.

Jesus answered with shared meals, debt forgiveness, enemy love, nonviolence, mercy, and the radical inclusion of those called unclean, poor, sinful, or expendable.





More importantly and central to his message, Jesus asked his followers to be willing to die. To die within yourself by allowing your heart to be changed. To let die the idea that your life is more important than the lives of other people. And to stand peacefully before injustice and allow yourself to die, if it comes to that, so others might live.

“No one loves more deeply than this; that they lay down their life for their friends.”

Jesus said that.

It's the kind of thing he said all the time.

~ ~ ~

Perhaps this Jesus does not sound like the Jesus you thought you knew. If so, how blessed are you? You are about to discover The Secret. You are about to learn why humans from every corner of the globe gravitate to the message of Jesus. Especially hurting and powerless humans.

Bring me all your Jesus questions. All of them. Let us talk. Let us reason together. We're in no hurry. We will begin our study of the four pages in Matthew when your questions have been heard and answered to your satisfaction.



Or maybe the Jesus I've described is EXACTLY who you've suspected he was all along. You knew there was something revolutionary and radical about Jesus. There had to be, or why would they have killed him?

If that is the case, how fortunate are you?

You're ready to begin.



Send me an email with your questions.

OR

let me know you are ready to begin.

Gordon

Axis Mundi House

The Island Corfu in Northern Greece

A retreat center for pilgrims, seekers
and contemplatives.

Hosted by Gordon & Glenda,
the High Priestess and Hierophant
of Axis Mundi

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Buddhist & Taoist Practice
Lakota Spirituality
Tarot Guided Self Discovery
Wicca and Witchcraft
Women's Energy Work
Myth and Sacred Imagination
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Lifelong Nurturing Community

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Many Wisdoms
Open Souls
Surprising Connections