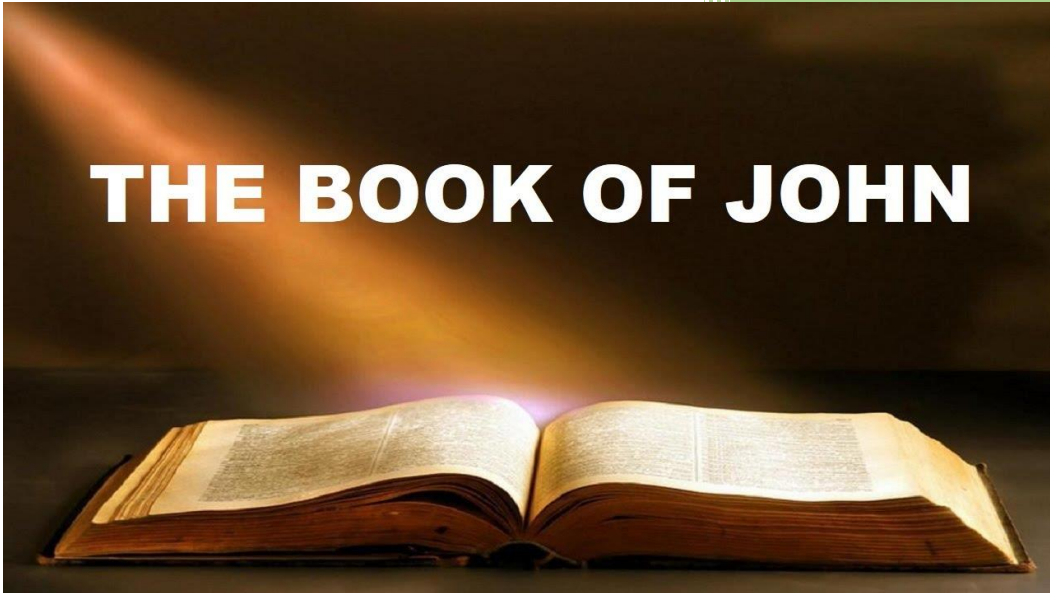


An Outlined Study

THE BOOK OF JOHN



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Kissimmee church of Christ

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INTRODUCTION

The Holy Ghost, through the pen of the apostle John, gives us a unique view of the life and events surrounding the earthly sojourn of our Savior. John's account gives us additional insight and information concerning the activities of the three-plus years of His personal ministry. These outlines, drawn from the King James Version of the book of John, form the second in a series of material that was prepared and presented in a classroom environment (*AN OUTLINED STUDY ON THE BOOK OF MATTHEW*). The enthusiastic encouragement of the students was paramount in the preparation and presentation of this material. The intent behind these outlines is that, hopefully, anyone can take this book and, with a small amount of preparation, teach the "good news." I claim no originality for any of the information contained in this volume. I have relied heavily on commentaries, concordances, word studies and various classes I have taken over the years. For that reason you will find no copyright on any of this material. Please use it freely. May the glory, if any, be God's.

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John 1

The Eternal Nature of Jesus

- I. Jesus' preexistence declared (1-14).
 - A. The Word as Creator (1-5).
 1. "In the beginning" is a reference to time, before time began (cf. Gen. 1:1; Prov. 8:23; Col. 1:17).
 - a. Most people make a comparison of Moses' statement in Gen. 1:1 and how John begins the account of Jesus' life.
 - b. The same words are used, but the emphasis is vastly different, i.e., Moses points to the things made, John points to the maker of those things.
 2. "Word" is from the Greek *logos* (cf. 1 Jn.5:7; Rev. 19:13).
 - a. Notice "the Word was with God", indicating He already existed "In the beginning" (cf. Jn. 17:5).
 - b. This may shed new light on how we look at some passages (cf. Ps. 33:6; 2 Pet. 3:5).
 - c. Before time existed, the Word was with God. There has never been a period in history when He did not exist as part of God (cf. 1 Jn. 1:1).
 - d. If the Word existed before creation He, therefore, could not be part of that creation.
 3. Not only did He preexist with God, He was/is God (cf. Isa. 9:6; Matt. 1:23; Jn. 10:30; 1 Tim. 3:16).
 - a. To make this read, "...the Word was a god" (NWT), can only be done by adding a word to the scriptures (cf. Deut. 4:2; Prov 30:6; Rev. 22:18).
God, the Word, is equal to God, the Father (cf. Phil. 2:6).
 - b. "All things" must mean all things (cf. Col. 1:16, 17; Heb. 1:2). Both logic and grammar rule out His being created.
 4. We see a notable contrast between life, light, and darkness in verses 4 and 5.
 - a. The Word is the source of physical life (cf. Gen. 2:7) and eternal life (cf. Rom. 6:23; 1 Jn. 5:13).
 - b. He is the source of light for this world both literally (cf. Gen. 1:2, 3), and spiritually (cf. Jn. 8:12; 12:46).
 - c. Darkness is equal to ignorance and guilt (cf. Acts 26:15-18).
 - d. Sin can cause some to be so blind they cannot see the light (cf. Jn. 12:37-40; Rom. 1:28).
 - B. The purpose of John, the baptizer (6-8).
 1. John, the baptizer, came before Jesus as a messenger (cf. Mal. 3:1; Matt. 3:1-3; Mk. 1:2).
Note: John makes mention of the name "John" 19 times in this account. He never uses it with "the Baptist". He also never uses this name (John) in reference to himself.
 - a. The intent was to show John, the baptizer, was not the Messiah. This

would have no importance to the first century reader if the traditional late date authorship, e.g., A.D. 95-98, is attached to this letter.

- b. He was a “witness,” which is a word meaning *testimony*. It is translated that way in several passages in John (cf. 3:32, 33; 5:34; 8:17; 21:24).
 2. No one, by definition, can be a witness today. A witness must see, first hand, what they are relating (Sorry J.W’s and all other who claim to *witness!*).
 - a. John, the baptizer, is the first in a lengthy list of witnesses we will see in this wonderful account.
 - (1). John, the writer (1:34).
 - (2). Andrew (1:41).
 - (3). Nathaniel (1:49).
 - (4). Nicodemus (3:2).
 - (5). Samaritan woman at the well (4:29).
 - (6). Martha (11:27).
 - (7). Thomas (20:28).
 - b. John the baptizer was not that light, but a reflection of it, as we should be (cf. Matt. 5:14; Jn. 12:36).
- C. The true light is declared (9-14).
1. John refocuses on Jesus, the true light (cf. 1 Jn. 2:8).
 - a. “Every man” of verse 9 must be modified by Mark 16:15, 16 (cf. 1 Tim. 2:4; Titus 2:11).
 - b. Every person who looks to the Light shall find it (cf. Matt. 7:7; Heb. 11:6).
 2. The Creator visits the creation, but the creation failed to acknowledge Him.
 - a. Shocking to us, but this is not new (cf. Rom. 1:20, 21).
 - b. He visibly came to His people, Israel (cf. Ex. 19:5; Deut. 7:6).
 - c. If anyone on earth should welcome Him, it should have been the chosen nation.
 - d. God foreknew the pending rejection of some (cf. Isa 53:2, 3; Lk. 20:13-15).
 3. “But” of verse 12 introduces a contrast, i.e., not all rejected Him.
 - a. Notice the steps set forth in this verse:
 - (1) Receiving Him, followed by;
 - (2) The privilege or “power” to become God’s children (cf. Rom. 8:14; Gal. 3:26, 27).

Note: This verse destroys “faith only,” and the doctrine that teaches every believer is a child of God.
 - b. Once a person believes, (receives) they are then in a position to obey.
 - c. “Born” in verse 13 has reference to the new birth (cf. 3:3-5).
 - d. “Not of blood” is plural, and does not refer to animal blood, but rather bloodlines, or heritage.
 4. A definite connection is made between verses 1 and 14. The Word *was* (always has existed) and was “*made flesh*” (a distinct point in history).

- a. He was “made flesh” through a natural birth (cf. Lk. 2:7).
 - b. He now had a body, which would be necessary to fulfill the Father’s will in a few short years (cf. Heb. 10:5; 1 Jn. 4:2).
 - c. They didn’t “behold” (examine) His glory at one specific time, but rather the entire time he was with them (cf. 2 Pet 1:16-18).
5. “The only begotten” has special meaning and is used by John a number of times (cf. 1:18; 3:16, 18; 1 Jn. 4:9).
- a. Jesus enjoyed a unique relationship with the Father.
 - b. Unique in birth, design and closeness.
 - c. We are all God’s sons (children) but, we are not unique like Jesus.
- Note: Any translation which makes this read “only child” is wrong, e.g., The Living Bible, RSV, Good News Bible, The Promise, SEB, ERV, etc.

II. John’s testimony as a witness (15-18).

A. John’s own words were to point the people to Jesus (15).

- 1. John the baptizer’s own words are the testimony (cf. Jn 1:29, 30; 3:26).
 - a. “After me” is used in two ways:
 - a. John was older than Jesus by possibly six months (cf. Lk.1:36).
 - b. John began his public preaching first (cf. Mk. 1:7).
 - b. “Before me”, shows the preexistence of Jesus (cf. 8:58).
- 2. John, the baptizer, made sure the limelight was shining on the proper person.

B. Jesus will reveal truth (16-18).

- 1. His “fullness” has been expressed in verse 14 (cf. Eph. 4:13; Col. 1:19; 2:9).
 - a. “Grace for grace” may mean an abundance of grace.
 - b. We daily receive more grace from above to add to the grace already received (cf. Matt. 13:12; Rom. 5:20).
- 2. The contrast of verse 17 shows Jesus’ superiority over the lawgiver, Moses (cf. Heb. 1:1, 2).
 - a. Law was not done away in Jesus, but “the law” (Old Testament law) was, i.e., we are still under a law. A new law (cf. Gal 6:2 James 1:25).
 - b. Human eyes have not seen God (cf. Ex. 33:20; 1 Jn. 4:12).
 - c. Mankind has been allowed a brief glimpse of His manifestation (cf. Num. 12:8).
 - d. Jesus is the bodily manifestation of the Godhead (cf. 14:9; 2 Cor. 4:4; Heb. 1:3).

Note: The first 18 verses of the book of John are unparalleled. The eternal relationship of the Godhead is clearly revealed.

III. John the baptizer declares the Lamb of God (19-34).

A. John bears witness, to the Jewish leaders, of the Christ (19-28).

- 1. The powerful preaching of John was stirring up the nation of Israel (cf. Matt. 3:5; Mk 1:5).
 - a. The Jews, it appears, accepted the teachings of John, for a period of time (cf. 5:33-35).
 - b. That period had passed and now they traveled approximately 20 miles to confront him (see verse 28).

- c. Jesus gives us the best description of John’s character (cf. Matt. 11:7-11).
 - d. This man was turning a whole nation around. Powerful, emotional and uncompromising is how John, the baptizer, is pictured (cf. Mk. 6:18).
2. The religious leaders wanted to know who he was (cf. Lk 3:15).
- a. John makes sure they knew he was not the Christ (cf. 3:28; Acts 13:25).
 - b. These Priests and Levites actually asked five questions of John:
 - (1). “Who art thou?”
 - (a) He immediately confessed he was not the Messiah (1:8).
 - (b) An underlying reason for this question to be included here is that some of John’s disciple, in the second half of the first century, asserted that John was the Christ.
 - (2). “Art thou Elias?”
 - (a) They were expecting Elijah to appear (cf. Mal 4:5).
 - (b) Jesus even called John Elijah (cf. Matt 17:12).
 - (c) John denied it because he wasn’t the reincarnation of the prophet, and probably didn’t understand his role in fulfilling the prophecy (cf. 2 Kgs. 1:8; Mk 1:6).
 - (3). “Art thou that prophet?” (cf. Deut. 18:15, 18).
 - (4). They repeated the first question, so they could give an answer upon returning to Jerusalem.
 - (5). “Why baptizest thou then....?”
 - (a) This baptism was something new and they felt that only one of these mentioned could introduce an addition to the law.
 - (b) In reality, John was preparing the way for the Christ (cf. Matt. 3:3; Lk 1:16, 17).
- B. John sees the Lamb of God approaching (29-34).
- 1. This event happened the day after the religious leaders had come from Jerusalem.
 - a. The writer leaves out the account of Jesus’ baptism (cf. Matt. 3:13).
 - b. Also left out is the information on the temptation (cf. Matt. 4:1).
 - c. What we have is probably Jesus’ returning from the forty days in the wilderness (cf. Matt. 4:2).

Note: This information is not contained in the other accounts, but would chronologically fit immediately after Matt. 4:11, Mk. 1:13 and Lk. 4:13.

 - d. John the baptizer and Jesus would have obviously known each other, being relatives (cf. Lk. 1:36), but John may not have known Jesus’ true identity until the baptism.
- Note: There would be a great difference, in John’s mind, between the son of Mary and the “only begotten Son of God.”
2. There is a great deal of significance in “the Lamb of God”.
 - a. The lamb was used in both daily and special sacrifices under the Law of Moses (cf. Ex. 12:3; 29:38).
 - b. Jesus may have represented either, or both, of these sacrificial lambs, but in addition, the Jew thought of a lamb as meek and gentle.
 - c. Jesus fits all of these ideas.
3. “Taketh away the sin of the world,” is also highly significant.

- a. The penalty of our sin fell upon Him (cf. Isa. 53:5, 11).
- b. The suffering for our sin fell on Him (cf. 1 Pet. 2:21; 4:1).
- c. His death was a substitute for our death (cf. 3:16).

Note: *Sin* and not *sins* is used here. This makes it all-inclusive. Not an act, but a concept.

IV. Jesus begins to gather disciples (35-51).

A. Jesus acquired His first two disciples (35-42).

- 1. These events took place the day after the events stated in verse 29.
Note: Starting with verse 19, we probably have three consecutive days mentioned.
- 2. John is shown “looking” at Jesus. He was intently gazing at Him (cf. Mk. 10:21; Lk. 22:61; Acts 1:11 all contain the same word.).
 - a. John, the baptizer, was standing with two of his disciples.
 - (1) From verse 40 we know that one of these disciples was Andrew.
 - (2) The other disciple remains unknown, but many feel it was the writer.
 - b. This is a perfect example of evangelism. Urging people to follow Jesus.
Note: If it is true that this was Andrew and John, just think of all the good which was done from that small audience before John the baptizer. No group is too small to teach.
- 3. “What seek ye?” was Jesus’ way of asking if the disciples knew what they were getting themselves into (Lk. 14:25, 26).
 - a. Jesus wants us to understand our discipleship so we can fully commit ourselves (cf. Lk. 14:27-30; 31-33).
 - b. It appears, from these verses, that they accepted Jesus as the “Master,” and He accepted them as disciples.
 - c. These disciples made a wise choice (cf. Prov. 13:20).
- 4. Andrew is a wonderful example of true evangelism.
 - a. Having “good news” and taking it to those who need to know (cf. Lk. 14:23; 19:10; Heb. 11:6).
 - b. “Messias” (Messiah) is Hebrew, “Christ” is Greek (cf. Matt. 16:20).
- 5. Peter is also a great example in responding, without hesitation, to Jesus.
 - a. Cephas is the Hebrew equivalent of Peter. Both names mean a stone.
 - b. Verse 40 shows that, although Andrew is the one who brings the good news to his brother, Simon is the best known of the two.

B. More disciples are added (43-51).

- 1. The next day Jesus is ready to go into Galilee (v 43).
 - a. Jesus was busy selecting disciples, some of whom would later become Apostles (cf. Lk. 6:13).
 - b. Three of His first disciples were from the same town (44).
- 2. It appears that Philip had the same evangelistic spirit that Andrew possessed.
 - a. Philip called Nathanael, who is only mentioned by name in the book of John (cf. 21:2).
 - b. This man is probably better known by the patronymic, Bartholomew (cf. Matt. 16:17; Acts 13:6).
 - c. Philip said the same thing that Andrew said in verse 41, but he used different words (cf. Isa. 9:6; Zech 6:12).

- d. Nathanael is expressing a common prejudice of his day. Jerusalem is the focal point of the nation, spiritually speaking. Surely the Messiah wouldn't come from obscure, remote, unmentioned Nazareth!
 - e. His mind was quickly changed and he acknowledges Him as the Son of God, the King of Israel (cf. Ps. 2:6, 7).
3. "Greater things" points to more powerful evidence to come, illustrated by what is said in verse 51.
- Note: The words "verily, verily", are exclusively used in John's account, and only used by Jesus.
- a. This is a figurative expression and very much like what we see in the case of Jacob (cf. Gen. 28:12).
 - b. Nathanael would be an eyewitness of Jesus ascending into heaven (cf. Acts 1:9-11).
- Note: In this first chapter Jesus is called, or calls Himself by the following names: the Word (1), God (1), the Light (7), Jesus Christ (17), the only begotten Son (18), the Christ (20), the Lord (23), the Lamb of God (29), the Son of God (34), Rabbi (38), Messiah (41), the son of Joseph (45), an Israelite (47), the King of Israel (49), the son of man (51).

John 2

Jesus uses a miracle to convince many

- I. A marriage festival in Cana (1-11).
 - A. The first miracle Jesus performs is water turned to wine (1-5).
 1. Cana is located north of Nazareth and west of the Sea of Galilee.
 - a. “The third day” links the beginning of this chapter to the end of the first chapter, i.e., the calling of Nathanael to follow Him (1:43ff).
 - b. Two or three days would give them the necessary time to walk from Bethabara (1:28) up to Cana (Approximately eighty miles).
 - c. Cana was the home of Nathanael (cf. 21:2).
 2. Marriages, in the east, were big social events (cf. Gen. 29:22; Matt. 25:1).
 - a. Mary, the mother of Jesus, was present at the wedding. It appears she was either related to those being married, or a close friend (2:5).
Note: Interestingly, John never uses Mary’s name in this account.
 - b. Jesus and His disciples were called to the wedding (cf. Matt. 12:19).
 - c. His disciples, at this time, numbered about five: Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathanael and probably John (cf. 1:40, 41; 44, 45).
 - d. Contrary to what some believe, Jesus did not lead a recluse life (cf. Matt. 11:19).
 - e. He enjoyed being with people. These were the ones He came to help (cf. Lk. 19:10). Nothing could be accomplished by avoiding those He was to aid in this life.
 - B. They had run out of wine during the festivities (6-11).
 1. It has always been a source of embarrassment for the host/hostess to run out of provisions when guests are invited.
 - a. The water pots were there for the various washings under the old law (cf. Mk. 7:3, 4).
 - b. These six large earthen pots contained around two or three firkins apiece.
 - (1). They had no standard of regulation concerning the size of these pots.
 - (2). The total amount could have been as low as 120 gallons, or as high as 180 gallons of wine made at this time.
 2. The question arises: Was the wine intoxicating or not?
 - a. From the original language, and from English, we cannot tell: (Intoxicating: cf. Gen 9:21; Eph. 5:18; Rev. 17:2. Non-intoxicating: Judges 9:13; Isa. 16:10; 65:8; Matt. 9:17).
 - (1). The Biblical view of intoxicating wine is plainly revealed (cf. Prov. 20:1; 23:29-32; Hab. 2:15).
 - (2). With this knowledge, can we safely say that the Son of God made 180 gallons of intoxicating wine? Not without a “woe” pronounced upon Him! (cf 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pet 2:22)
 - b. A person was selected as “ruler” of the wedding. An honorary position.
 3. This was Jesus’ first public miracle.
Note: He could have done a miracle in the wilderness, but it would have been for self-satisfaction, and not for God’s glory (cf. Matt. 4:3).

- a. This miracle caused His disciples to believe in Him (cf. 20:30, 31).
 - b. Much to the shame of the charlatans today, miracles produced and increased faith in the first century!
- II. Jesus now travels to Capernaum, then on to Jerusalem (12-25).
- A. He makes a brief visit to Capernaum (12).
- 1. Later, He would live and work in Capernaum (cf. Matt. 4:13).
 - a. Jesus' earthly family was with Him at this time (cf. Matt. 13:55, 56).
 - b. This definitively puts an end to the Catholic doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary (cf. Matt. 1:25; Lk. 2:7).
 - 2. Notice they went "down" from Cana to Capernaum. This is geographically correct. The Bible is always right, in every aspect!
- B. It is now stated why the visit to Capernaum was so short, the Passover was at hand (13-17).
- 1. Every male was required to attend this annual feast in Jerusalem (cf. Deut. 16:1, 2; Lk. 2:41).
 - a. From John's account we can determine how long Jesus was actively involved in public teaching while on earth, and how old He was when He was crucified (cf. Lk. 3:23; Jn. 2:13; it appears Passover festivals are mentioned in Jn 6:4; 11:55).
Note: This would make the ministry of Jesus slightly over three years in length.
 - b. The feast of Passover commemorated the passing over of the death angel when the Hebrews were in Egypt (cf. Ex. 12:21-23, 29).
 - c. Notice again, the geographical accuracy of scripture, e.g., "went up to Jerusalem". There is a difference of over 3,000 feet in elevation between these two cities (Capernaum up to Jerusalem).
 - 2. The "temple" mentioned here would be the outer courts. Only members of the tribe of Levi were allowed into the temple proper (cf. Num. 18:6, 7).
 - a. Jesus saw the temple being used as a house of merchandise (cf. Jer. 7:11).
 - b. He made a whip and drove out the animals and the men running the exchanging tables (cf. Matt. 21:12, 13).
 - c. Matt. 21, Mark 11, and Luke 19, all have Him driving people from the temple during His last week on earth, but this is the only account of His doing so early in His ministry.
 - d. Religious exploitation has always been a problem, i.e., all the way from those begging for food and money on our streets, to the millionaires on TV shows and commercials.
- C. The Jewish authorities wanted to know the "sign" which would indicate the authority behind His actions (18-22).
- 1. These religious leaders had already see two signs, i.e., the turning of water into wine at the wedding, and the cleansing of the temple.
Note: Like many today, they were looking for more than God was offering.
 - a. Jesus understood what they were looking for, so He answered with a reference to His resurrection (cf. Matt. 12:38-40; Mk. 8:11).
 - b. In effect, they were saying, "If you are doing these things by the authority of God, prove it!"

2. The temple had been under construction for forty-six years at that point in history (cf. Lk. 21:5).
 - a. This was not the third temple built in Jerusalem, but rather a reconstruction of the second temple..
 - (1) Solomon's temple (cf. 1 Kgs 6:1, 38).
 - (2) Zerubbabel's temple (cf. Ezra 3:10-12).
 - (3) Herod the Great's up-grade on Zerubbabel's efforts (Construction began in 19 or 20 B.C. and continued through the time of Jesus' ministry).

Question: If Jesus was thirty years old at the time His earthly ministry began (Lk 3:23), what year was it?
 - b. It appears the disciples did not clearly grasp what the Lord was saying, but later understood (cf. Lk. 24:7, 8, 44; Jn. 12:16).
 - c. Their understanding strengthened their faith (cf. 20:8, 9).
- D. Many were convinced by the miracles of Jesus (23-25).
 1. These miracles are not specifically recorded, but their results are (cf. 3:2).
 - a. They produced faith. This is the divine purpose of miracles (cf. Rom. 15:18, 19).
 - b. Jesus was not moved by this sudden popularity. These are the very same people who would cry out for His blood in two years (cf. Mk. 15:13, 14).
 2. Omniscience was part of His character (cf. Josh. 22:22; 1 Kgs. 8:39; Jn. 4:16ff).
 - a. The Lord still sees into the hearts of mankind.
 - b. Our lives are open and bare before Him. With this knowledge, we should live accordingly.

John 3

Jesus teaches Nicodemus

- I. Nicodemus comes to Jesus at night (1-13).
 - A. The new birth is taught (1-8).
 - 1. We know that Nicodemus came to Jesus at night (cf. 7:50; 19:39).
 - a. Why he came at night is total speculation. Inspiration has not revealed the intent or design behind the visit.
 - b. Regardless of why he came, the point for all to see is that he did seek Him out (cf. Matt. 6:33; Mk. 1:37; Acts 15:17).
 - 2. “Ruler of the Jews” probably meant he was part of the Sanhedrin. This was the ruling council, or congress, of the Jews, made up of about seventy members.
 - a. Jesus also calls him a “master”, which may refer to him being a great teacher among the people (cf. 3:10).
 - b. It is the same word Nicodemus used toward Jesus in verse 2, i.e., teacher.
 - 3. Nicodemus believed in Jesus because of the miracles He had performed (cf. 5:36; 7:31; Acts 2:22).
 - a. The words “we know” may indicate that more members of the Sanhedrin accepted the divine origin of Jesus (cf. Matt. 22:15, 16).
 - b. Nicodemus understood that those who could do miracles were the ones God was with (cf. Acts 10:38).
 - 4. Jesus declares the necessity of the new birth (cf. Gal. 6:15; 1 Pet. 1:3, 23).
 - a. Nicodemus misunderstood the new birth. He was the first of millions to misunderstand the teaching Jesus sets forth.
 - b. Nicodemus attempted to apply this information to the physical birth.
Note: A possible connection to the Jews thinking that if they were born into the Hebrew race they needed nothing else. A ‘new birth’ would change them spiritually.
 - 5. This new birth was forcefully declared to one of the religious leaders. He was very religious, but there was something he still had to do (cf. Matt. 3:9).
 - a. This new birth is a single birth with two elements, i.e., the water and the Spirit.
 - (1) Water is the regenerating power of baptism (cf. Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 1 Cor. 6:11; Titus 3:5; 1 Pet. 3:21).
 - (2) The Spirit is the revealed information available to mankind in written form (cf. Rom. 8:2; 1 Cor. 2:12; 1 Jn. 5:6-8).
Note: The two parts of the new birth pertain to different elements. The baptism (new birth) is for past sins. The Spirit is to live better in the future.
 - b. This new birth allows one to enter into the spiritual life.
 - c. A fleshly life is produced by flesh; the spiritual life is produced by the Spirit. Like begets like (cf. Gen. 1:11; James 1:21).
Note: Is it not strange that this religious leader of the first century stumbled at

- the very same thing so many stumble at today, i.e., baptism as a commandment of God, for the remission of sins (cf. Acts 10:48)?
6. This must be done in order to “see the kingdom of God” (vs.3).
 - a. The kingdom is a spiritual kingdom. Nicodemus was looking with his earthly eyes instead of his spiritual eyes (cf. Lk. 17:21; Jn. 18:36).
 - b. This kingdom is open to people who do the commandments of the Father (cf. Matt. 6:10, 33).
 7. The word “wind” in verse 8 is the cause of much confusion. It is the same word as Spirit in that verse (*pneuma*).
 - a. This is the only time (out of more than 200) that it is translated *wind* (cf. 3:5, 6, 8, 34).
 - b. “The Spirit breathes where it wills” is a more literal, and possibly a more understandable translation.
- B. Nicodemus begins to question the new birth (9-13).
1. To question, for the sake of understanding, is proper and good (cf. Lk. 1:34; Jn. 20:24, 25).
 - a. If more religious people would question the things they are taught, we would have far less error in our world (cf. Acts 17:11).
 - b. “How can these things be?” should be asked a lot today (cf. 1 Tim. 1:7)!
 2. Verse 11 contains the third “verily, verily” of this passage (3, 5).
 - a. Nicodemus is called “master”, or teacher, yet could not make proper application of the truths being taught (cf. Isa. 9:16; Jer. 8:8, 9; Matt. 11:25).
 - b. Notice the plural pronouns of verse 11. Jesus associates Himself with those who accepted the testimony and then changed in order to be obedient.
 - c. A “master” of the law should have been ready for the change (cf. Ps.51:10; Ezek. 18:31).
 3. Jesus makes a differentiation between earthly and heavenly things (cf. 1 Cor. 15:47).
 - a. The earthly things were things which pertained to affairs and matters done on this earth, i.e., the new birth.
 Note: It is certainly true the new birth is both originated and planned from above, but the act is done on earth.
 - b. The heavenly things were those things beyond the natural realm of understanding (13).
 - c. If Nicodemus did not understand the things he knew of, at least in part, how could he believe those things he knew nothing of (cf. 1 Tim. 3:16)?
 - d. No man had ever gone to heaven then returned to earth to report the findings. Later, Paul would tell of a trip, but would not be allowed to make a report of what was seen (cf. 2 Cor. 12:2-4).
 Note: The expression “which is in heaven,” may be best explained as being words of the writer and not the words of the Savior. This would have been written many years after His ascension.
- II. Jesus uses the Old Testament to further explain why He was on the earth (14, 15).
- A. He draws from a well-known incident to prophetically show His future (14).
1. The Jews sinned through their unbelief (cf. Num. 21:4-6).
 - a. Because of their conduct, fiery serpents bit them. Since there was no

- antidote for the bites, many died as a direct result.
- b. When the people realized their sin, they came to Moses in repentance (cf. Num. 21:7-9).
2. Jesus compares Himself to that serpent of brass lifted above the people. A reference to His being lifted up on the cross in the near future (cf. 8:28).
 - a. The serpent was the Israelite's only hope, once they were bitten (cf. Num. 21:8).
 - b. Jesus is our only hope, one we are bitten by sin (cf. Acts 4:12).
 - c. The multitude of comparisons, beyond this one fact, are often misguided, and at times, unscriptural, e.g., faith alone will save (cf. James 2:24).
- B. This illustration of Jesus ties together these verses and eternal life (15).
1. Eternal life is found "in him" (cf. Gal. 3:27).
 - a. The new birth (context) puts one "in Him" (cf. Rom. 6:3).
 - b. This same act of obedience also puts us in the church (cf. 1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:22, 23).
 - c. Notice the connection of "the Son of man" in verses 13 and 14.
 2. Faith, alone will save no one (cf. James 2:19, 26).
- III. The sin and consequences of unbelief (16-21).
- A. The gift of God's benevolence (16, 17).
- Note: I believe this section (16-21) should be taught and connected with the account of Nicodemus. The "for" (*gar*) of verse 16 reflects back to verse 15.
1. This passage is often called the "little bible", or the "golden text". Aptly so.
 - a. The tremendous love of the Godhead is demonstrated in the very act of this offering (cf. Rom. 5:8; Titus 3:4; 1 Jn. 4:9).
 - b. His love was demonstrated toward us, even in our sinful condition. Much like we would continue to love a child even when they are disobedient (cf. Matt. 7:11).
 - c. The sacrifice of the cross was not done so God *could* love us, but because He *already did* love us (cf. Titus 1:2; Rev. 13:8).
 - d. God's love for "the world" was expressed to a member of one of the most narrow-minded religious groups to have ever walk the earth (cf. Isa. 2:2). It must have been a shocking revelation for Nicodemus to consider.
 2. "Gave his only begotten Son" makes Jesus wonderfully unique (cf. 1:14,18; 1 Jn. 4:9).
 - a. The words "only begotten" comes from a Greek word, (*monogenes*) which denotes something unique in kind, i.e., the idea of only in "only begotten" (cf. 1Tim. 6:15).
 - b. A host of inspired sources have declared Jesus to be God's Son: Angels (Lk. 1:32); The Father (Matt. 3:17); Himself (Mk. 14:61, 62); His disciples (Matt. 16:16); His enemies (Matt. 27:54); and, by the power of the resurrection from the dead (Rom. 1:4).
 - c. Characteristically, God is a giving God. Even at that, the giving is always conditional. The gift must be received (cf. Josh. 6:2-4; Acts 2:41).
 3. "Whosoever" opens the door of salvation to everyone is the creation (cf. Matt. 28:19; Mk. 16:15; Rev. 22:17).
 - a. Believing (faith) is the foundation of our acceptance by God (cf. Heb.11:6).
 - b. Belief (faith) involves conviction, trust and obedience to Christ, according to Thayer's Lexicon.
 - c. The scriptures declare this definition to be true (cf. Rom. 15:18; Heb. 5:9).

- d. Biblical faith is not passive. It requires action (cf. James. 2:24-26).
- e. Illustrated in Noah, Heb. 11:7; Abraham, 11:8; the walls of Jericho, 11:30.
- 4. Those who believe and obey will not perish, but should have eternal life (cf. 1 Tim. 1:15, 16; e.g., Acts 22:16).
 - a. “[S]hould not perish” is important. “May not perish, but may have life eternal”, according to Berry’s Interlinear New Testament.
 - b. This is called the subjective mood, and it destroys the doctrine that a person is saved the instant they believe.
 - c. John is saying that, by virtue of their faith, believers are in a position to obtain eternal life (cf. 1:12; Heb. 5:9).
 - d. “[P]erish” does not mean to cease to exist, but rather it means “to ruin” or “be lost” (cf. 12:25; 18:9).
 - Note: It is the same word used to describe the prodigal son’s condition while separated from his father (cf. Lk. 15:24).
 - e. “[E]ternal life” is the positive side of eternal existence (cf. Rom. 6:22; 2 Cor. 4:17). (Something the Jews at Antioch had apparently forfeited Acts 13:46).
 - f. The negative side of our eternal existence is portrayed as “the second death” (cf. Rev. 2:11; 20:6, 14).
 - Note: This is a tremendous text, but much deeper than many suggest.
 - g. The truth of God’s word either affects us in a positive way or offends all that hear it. A text as basic and full of compassion as this verse offends many.
 - 1) “God” would offend the Atheist (This verse repudiates Atheism).
 - 2) “So loved” would offend the Deism. Deism teaches that God created the world and then backed off and allowed mankind to make their own way through the world (This verse repudiated Deism).
 - 3) “[H]e gave” would offend the Premillennialist. Christ came to die. They teach He came to establish a kingdom and failed (This verse repudiates Premillennialism).
 - 4) “[O]nly begotten Son” would offend the modernist. His uniqueness would be offensive to both the modernist and the Jew.
 - 5) “[W]hosoever” would offend the Calvinist. They teach a predestined number (the Elect) will be saved (This verse denies that doctrine).
 - 6) “[B]elieveth” would offend the Universalist. They say everyone is going to heaven (This verse teaches it is conditional).
 - 7) “[I]n Him” would offend the Sectarianist. This verse teaches the unity of the believers and not division.
 - 8) “[S]hould not perish, but have everlasting life” would offend the Materialist, who teaches when a person dies, that is the end of all things (This verse repudiates Materialism).
 - Note: If we removed every word from this verse that would be offensive to others it would read: “For...so...the...that...that.. should...not...but...have.”
- 5. Christ came to earth with a mission (17).
 - a. Jesus continues teaching this religious leader of the necessity of obtaining salvation through Him alone (cf. Zech. 9:9; 1 Jn. 4:14).

- b. This would be a shock to this member of the Sanhedrin. They expected the Messiah to restore them to glory over the Romans (cf. Acts 1:6).
 - c. He was not come to pronounce sentence on the world, (yet) but to be the Savior of the world.
 - d. This does not rule out condemnation (cf. 2 Thess. 1:8).
 - e. The second advent will be for the judgment (cf. Acts 17:31; 2 Cor. 5:10).
 - f. The purpose of the first advent was different.
- B. The serious consequences of unbelief (18-21).
1. “Believeth” is in the present tense. Literally, it means to “keep on Believing,” which destroys the false doctrine of “once saved, always saved.”
 - a. “Believeth” is a synecdoche representing the plan of salvation (cf. Acts 8:34-36). Note: Synecdoche” is where a part stands for the whole.
 - b. This is the individual not under condemnation (cf. Jn. 14:21).
 - c. We will not be condemned because of the power of the Son of God to remove our sins (cf. 3:36; 6:40; 20:31).
 2. The converse of this is that one group is condemned already because of their unbelief (cf. Mk. 16:16; Heb. 2:3).
 - a. Mankind is condemned when we refuse to do the commands as set forth in the scriptures (cf. Lk. 6:46).
 - b. Believing there was a man named Jesus, or believing He came as the Son of God, will do us no good without the proper belief which will cause us to obey (cf. Matt. 7:24-27; Rom. 1:5).
 3. The grounds for this condemnation (judgment) is symbolized by either receiving or rejecting the Light as offered by the Godhead (cf. 1:8, 9; 8:12; 9:5).
 - a. The scriptures use darkness to represent error, or sin (cf. Matt. 6:23; Lk. 22:53; 1 Pet. 2:9).
 - b. Statistics show that a much higher percentage of evil acts are performed during the hours of darkness.
 - c. “[L]est his deeds should be reprov’d” means more than simply being discovered. It carries with it the idea of condemnation. The truth of the light will expose the wickedness (cf. Eph. 5:12, 13).
 - d. In contrast, those who love the truth of the light will be guided by it (cf. 1 Jn. 1:6, 7).
Note: Truth is not some abstract philosophy, but rather something *lived*. This being true, it naturally follows that living a light-filled life cannot be done by accident. Our love for the truth will cause us to be directed by it.

IV. Jesus, John, the baptizer, and their individual disciples (22-35).

A. They were baptizing in Judea and in Aenon, respectively (22-26).

1. Jesus, along with His disciples, journeyed to Judea (cf. 7:3).
 - a. “After these things” means the Passover, (2:23) and after the conversation with Nicodemus (3:1-21).
 - b. Their journey to Jerusalem brought them to “the land of Judea”.
 - c. The reason for this was to baptize, though Jesus Himself, did not administer the act (4:2).

Note: This entire teaching and baptizing effort is overlooked in the other

accounts (cf. Matt. 4:11, 12; Mk. 1:13, 14).

2. Simultaneously, John was baptizing near Salim in Aenon (cf. Gen. 33:18; 1 Sam. 9:4).
 - a. The exact location of Salim remains a mystery. Nevertheless, we are given some important, divine information concerning this location, i.e., there was much water there. Mandatory for scriptural baptism.
 - b. If a few ounces or a cup of water could baptize, then “much water” would not be necessary (cf. Matt. 3:16; Acts 8:38).
 - c. Baptism (*baptizo*), by definition, means “to immerse” or “submerge” (According to Strong’s.).

Note: Both John, the baptizer, and Jesus were administering the same baptism, i.e., the preparatory baptism of the coming kingdom.

3. At this point in time John was still free from prison (cf. Matt. 4:12; 14:3, 4).
 - a. It is hard to determine just how long their teaching was contemporary.
 - b. Here we see information previously unrevealed (cf. Lk. 4:13, 14).
 - c. The “question” was a dispute between the disciples of John and the Jews (cf. Acts 15:2, 7).
 - d. Notice the inspired writer called one group of those disputing “Jews!” Were not they all Jews? There is a religious difference stressed here.
 - e. The disputing centered in the area of purification, but other than that we have nothing specific to draw from (cf. 2:6; Heb. 9:10).

Note: The Jews may have drawn a parallel between the baptism John was administering and the washing of purification under the old law.

- f. Many condemn the disciple’s actions, but I see great loyalty, though misguided (cf. 1:29, 30). They were defending their leader.
 - g. The waning popularity of their leader confused them, but John was not confused. His answer to them reveals his insight.
- B. John’s retort to their inquiry (27-30).
1. The “man” John refers to is himself. It cannot refer to Jesus, as some suppose, because He (Jesus) was still deity, even in the flesh (cf. 4:46-50).
 - a. John was not jealous of Jesus’ success. He knew that everything he had came to him from heaven (cf. Heb. 5:4; James 1:17).
 - b. Since all good things come from above, we should rid ourselves of envy (cf. Acts 7:9; Rom. 1:29).
 - c. Could we ever be in a position to be envious of what another gets from God (cf. James 3:14-16; 1 Pet. 2:1, 2)?
 2. John had told them from the beginning that he was not the Christ and that Jesus was the true light (cf. 1:20, 27).
 - a. John’s duty was being the harbinger of the Messiah (cf. Mal. 3:1; Matt. 3:3).
 - b. To John’s credit, he understood his position and did everything in his power to carry it out in a pleasing fashion. We all have a position to fill.
 3. What a wonderful illustration John verbalizes. He compares his position to the best man at a wedding. It has always been an honor to be the ‘best man.’
 - a. I’m told that in ancient times the best man made many of the arrangements for the wedding. John did this admirably (cf. Matt. 11:10).

- b. The church is compared to a bride with Christ as the bridegroom (cf. 2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:26, 27; Rev. 22:17).
 - c. This connection was divinely placed in his head.
 - d. The words “rejoiceth greatly”, and “my joy therefore is fulfilled” shows, beyond a doubt, that John was not envious of Jesus (cf. Isa. 62:5).
 - e. John would naturally decrease, as the “true light” became brighter (cf. Col. 1:18). The moon pales before the rising sun.
 - f. No religious system was to be based on John. His only purpose was to point people to the bridegroom (cf. Matt. 11:11).
- C. John’s testimony is of the Christ (31-36).
- Note: These are the last recorded words of John, the baptizer.
1. “Above” is the common direction noted for heaven, or those things coming from heaven (cf. 3:13; 6:33; 8:23).
 - a. The first “above” in this verse is a direction, (cf. 19:23) the second is a position (cf. Lk. 19:17, 19). Two completely different words.
 - b. As a mere human, John knew he was inferior to the Messiah (cf. Gen. 2:7; Rom. 9:5). As great as he was, he was never anything but human.
 2. John was perplexed at the rejection shown of Jesus (cf. 1:11; Rom 10:16-19). His own disciples were jealous of His popularity, as if this was some sort of competition between the two leaders.
 - a. There was a problem with rejection of the truth in the first century. Why should we be so surprised to see the same rejection today?
 - b. Comparatively few were receiving (accepting) Him (cf. Matt. 7:14), but those who did were a confirming seal of His Messiahship (cf. Rom. 3:3, 4; 1 Jn. 5:9).
 - c. In believing the Christ, they believed the Father, the prophets who predicted Him, and John the baptizer as witnesses (cf. 1 Jn. 5:10).
 - d. Interestingly, the words “hath set to his seal” are all from a single Greek word (cf. Eph. 1:13; 4:30).
 3. We see all three members of the Godhead revealed in this passage (cf. Matt. 28:19; 1 Jn. 5:7).
 - a. The Father sent the Son (cf. 16:28).

Note: Jesus did not become the Son of God until His incarnation. Before that point in time He was God, one-third of the Godhead.

 - b. The Son conveyed the words from the Father while here on earth (cf. 7:16, 17; 12:49, 50).
 - c. What He said was not His, personally, but the needed truth from the Godhead (cf. 8:26, 27).
 - d. There were no restrictions on the power behind the Holy Spirit as given to Jesus while on earth.
 - e. By implication, we know that the Spirit was given, in measure, to others.
 - 1) The Apostles and the household of Cornelius received a baptismal measure of the Spirit (cf. Acts 2:1ff; 10:44ff).
 - 2) A lesser measure was transferred to those upon whom the Apostles laid their hands (cf. Acts 8:18).

Note: We need to be cognizant of the fact that these were all measures of

the power of the Spirit and not measures of the Spirit Himself.

4. Faith is far more than simply believing. It required the conviction to be obedient (Lk. 6:46).
 - a. Twenty times, in Hebrews 11, the words “By faith”, or “Through faith” precede an act of faithful obedience (cf. Heb. 11:3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, etc.).
 - b. This same type of faithful obedience will assure anyone a place in “everlasting life” (cf. Jn.5:12, 13).
 - c. The converse is also stated in this passage. Failure to believe eliminates the possibility of being saved (cf. 1:12; Rom. 13:2).
 - d. It is not faith alone which gives life eternal, but rather “faith made perfect” (James 2:22) by obedience.

Note: John, the baptizer, should be every teacher and preacher’s example of unselfishness. He understood that no credit was due him. Only that Christ is to be honored.

John 4

The Samaritan Woman

- I. Jesus at Jacob's well, near the city of Sychar (1-26).
 - A. An introduction to the visit in Samaria (1-4).
 1. Jesus and His disciples depart to go back into Galilee.
 - a. We see, in this first section, examples of divine wisdom scarcely concealed beneath the surface.
 - b. The religious leaders were not happy with John's (the baptizer) success. They would be even less happy with the greater success of Jesus.
 - c. There were two problems which stemmed from the unhappy Pharisees:
 - (1) Any rift between the disciples of John and those of Jesus could be used against the common goal of the Father (cf. Acts 23:6, 7).
 - (2) A premature confrontation between Jesus and the Pharisees could damage His efforts to prepare the people for the coming kingdom (cf. Mk. 14:27, 50).
 - d. Instead of risking possible damage to the cause, He made the decision to move His efforts elsewhere (cf. Acts 19:9).
 - e. Also, we see divine wisdom in the fact that Jesus did no baptizing. This could have led to additional problems and divisions at some future time (cf. 1 Cor. 1:12-17).
 2. Their second journey to Galilee would lead them through Samaria (cf. 1:43).
 - a. The shortest route to Galilee would be straight north, through the land of Samaria.
 - b. Jews would often cross the Jordan and travel up the east side of the river to avoid passing through Samaria. It would double the travel time.
 - B. Jesus encounters a woman of Samaria (5-8).
 1. Sychar was a city near Mt. Gerizim, near the city of Shechem. This area had a rich history.
 - a. Abraham had been there (cf. Gen. 12:6; Acts 7:16).
 - b. Jacob purchased some land there (cf. Gen. 33:18, 19), and possibly fought for other land (cf. Gen. 48:22).
 - c. Joseph was buried there after he was exhumed and transported from Egypt (cf. Gen 50:25, 26; Josh. 24:32).
 2. This same well is still there and many have visited the very site narrated in these verses.

Note: Both J.W. McGarvey and Robert R. Taylor Jr. give first-hand accounts of visiting this well.

 - a. "The sixth hour" would have made it roughly noon (if Jewish time were being used for calculating.) (cf. Matt. 27:45).
 - b. Jesus asked this woman to draw water from the well for Him to drink. This was a common practice (cf. Gen. 24:13, 14; Ex. 2:16).
 - c. The word "meat" means food of all types (cf. Gen. 1:29, 30; Acts 27: 35, 36).
 - d. Notice the disciples had gone into the city to purchase the needed food, so He used this situation to open the conversation.

- C. Jesus introduces Himself as “living water” (9-14).
1. There were no “dealings” between the Jews and the Samaritans (cf. Lk. 9: 52-56).
 - a. This animosity stemmed from the Assyrian captivity. Gentiles were dispatched to live in the area of Samaria (cf. 2 Kgs. 17:24-41).
 - b. They were Gentile people who had been taught the books of Moses, but continued to mingle that knowledge with pagan idol worship (cf. 2 Kgs. 17: 25-28).
Note: I find no record of interracial marriages (cf. Matt. 10:5; Lk. 17:18).
 - c. When the southern tribes were allowed to return from Babylonian captivity and rebuild the temple and walls, the Samaritans wanted to help. They were refused the opportunity (cf. Ezra 4:1-5; Neh. 4:1-3).
 - d. This rift was never repaired. Hatred was high among these two people, yet, there appears to be some hypocrisy in the statement, because the Jews would barter and purchase from them. As the disciples were doing at this exact time (vs.8). Strange.
 2. Jesus was the very personification of the Godhead’s gift to mankind (cf. Isa. 42:6; Rom. 8:32; 2 Cor. 9:15).
 - a. Jesus skillfully directs her thoughts away from the water in the well to the living water for the soul (cf. 6:35; 1 Cor. 10:4; Rev. 7:17).
 - b. Jesus, again, leads her away from the literal water by pointing to the returning thirst of those who drank from that well (cf. Isa. 65:13; Lk. 16:24).
 - c. The “never thirst” is a contrast between water, which satisfies for a short Time, and the spiritual satisfaction, which comes from eternal life (cf. Rev. 7:16).
- D. Though she misunderstood, she was eager to have this “living water” (15-18).
1. If this stranger could give her water so she wouldn’t have to make the trip to the well each day, then He truly would be greater than Jacob.
 - a. She didn’t understand the idea of this water any better than some understood the idea of the bread Jesus spoke about (cf. 6:33, 34).
 - b. It appears she was just trying to avoid a daily trip to the well (6:26).
 2. Jesus begins to reveal to this woman just how much she needs the grace of God’s living water. He knew her condition (cf. Heb. 4:13).
 - a. Often, the best way to get a person to properly analyze their sinful condition, is for them to state their situation in their own words (cf. 2 Sam. 12:7).
 - b. The easy divorcement of her age made having five husbands possible. (Much like today) Yet, this last relationship wasn’t even given a thin disguise. A life of sin grows progressively worse (cf. Rom. 7:2, 3).
 - c. Interestingly, when confronted with the sin, she quickly changed the subject. Conversations of duty and obedience are often changed to abstract theological discussions (cf. Eph. 2:10).
- E. She appears to say, “You seem to know a lot. Answer this question” (19-26).
1. She was convinced Jesus had supernatural powers. Her insight was going to continue to grow until she called Him the Christ (29).
 - a. She had a question concerning the proper physical place to worship (cf. Deut. 27:11, 12; Josh. 8:33).
 - b. This Samaritan woman, like so many today, was basing her religion on

- family traditions, rather than scriptural facts (cf. Matt. 15:2, 3; Mk. 7:8, 9).
- c. Some of the traditions associated with this mountain were:
 - (1) This is where God made paradise for the first pair.
 - (2) Adam was created from the dust of it.
 - (3) The flood of Noah's day didn't cover it.
- d. The Jews worshipped in Jerusalem according to the scriptures (cf. Deut. 12:5-11; 1 Kgs. 9:3).
- 2. Jesus shows her a new order of worship is coming (cf. 1 Pet. 1:17).
 - a. In the near future ("the hour cometh") this old argument of Mt. Gerizim or Mt. Moriah would be of no consequence (cf. Acts 6:14).
 - b. Acceptable worship is always based on intelligence. The Samaritans were wrong because they only had a partial knowledge of what God expected (cf. Isa. 2:3; 1 Cor. 13:10).
 - c. The two-fold application of "spirit and truth" is a prerequisite of proper worship (cf. Rom. 1:9; John 1:17).
 - (1) Spirit means the proper attitude. Humble and sincere.
 - (2) Truth means in accordance with His word.
 - d. She was looking for the Messiah. Even in her error and partial knowledge, she had a desire to see His coming.
 - (1) We see the same thing all around us today. Partial knowledge is very dangerous (cf. Matt. 15:8, 9; 2 Thess. 1:8).
 - (2) There are only two ways in which people can attempt to worship: God's way, or man's way. These two ways are polarized.
 - (3) Man's way will leave all who follow it woefully short of salvation (cf. Matt. 15:9; Col. 2:22)!
 - e. Jesus plainly declares He is the Messiah. A fact He is often vague about (cf. Mk. 15:2; Lk. 22:70; Jn. 18:37).
 - f. Why was He so direct with this woman? Once she knew the truth she told a whole city about Him. (4:28-30) Evangelism!
 - g. These other people mentioned (refer to E. 2. e.) did not want to help spread the "good news".
- II. The Samaritan woman is used in positive outreach (27-42).
 - A. This woman invites others to the Christ (27-30).
 - 1. As the disciples return from purchasing food in the city, they see Jesus involved in a conversation with this woman.
 - a. This "marveled" the disciples. They thought they saw something wrong, but it was only wrong to the beholder (cf. Prov. 26:12; 30:32).
 - b. We regularly see people today jumping to conclusions with either no facts backing them up, or totally circumstantial evidence. This is sin.
 - c. It was considered improper for men to talk to women in public.
 - (1) The Rabbis said that a man should not even speak to his wife in public. "Let no man talk with a woman on the street, no not with his own wife."
 - (2) This shows how far Christianity has elevated woman.
 - (3) Socrates thanked his god daily that he was not born a slave, or a woman.

2. The woman had come to the well for water, yet in her excitement, she left the water pot there and hurried back into town with her news (cf. Matt. 28:8; Mk. 16:8).
 - a. “Which told me all things ever I did” may be part of that excitement surfacing. She was convinced He knew everything.
 - b. She wanted her friends and neighbors to enjoy this wonderful gift she had found (cf. Lk. 15:9).
 - c. The people came out of the city to see this for themselves (4:35).
- B. Jesus had a different kind of food (31-34).
 1. While the woman was gone, and before the multitude came out of the city, the disciples urged Jesus to eat something.
 - a. Jesus’ was human and grew hungry, just as we do (cf. Matt. 4:2; Mk. 11:12).
Note: Interestingly, in this passage it does not mention Jesus being hungry, only weary and thirsty (vv 6, 7).
 - b. The disciples misunderstand, as they would many other times (cf. Jn. 17:4).
 - c. They wanted to know if someone had given Him food without them knowing it.
 2. An opportunity had arisen to convert an entire city. His physical hunger could wait on these more important matters.(cf. Ps. 40:8; Jn. 6:38).
 - a. We often have decisions to make between our own gratification and possible eternal good for someone else. Choose wisely.
 - b. Notice his weariness is now gone in the face of this exciting turn of events. There is nothing more exciting than evangelism (cf. Gal. 6:9).
- C. A time frame is clearly set forth in this passage, e.g., four months until harvest. Harvest occurs in April. That would make it around December (35-38).
 1. The disciples knew that in the physical world it took time between the sowing and the harvesting, i.e., three months for the grain (cf. Amos 4:7).
 - a. This was not always the case with the spiritual seed (cf. Acts 2:41; 16:33).
 - b. Physical harvest times were times of tremendous joy (cf. Deut. 16:13, 14; Ps. 126:6).
 - c. Never underestimate the potential good which might come from any conversation you may have. Sow and let God give the increase (cf. 1 Cor. 3:6, 7).
 2. There cannot be a harvest without both sowing and reaping (cf. 1 Cor. 3: 8, 9).
 - a. The person who sows or waters is often not the one who does the reaping, but both are essential for the harvest.
 - b. The disciples had not sown seed to the Samaritans, but they were going to be involved in the harvest.
 - c. The “other men” (vs. 38) were the great prophets which foretold of the Messiah, the Jewish teachers and John, the baptizer (cf. Isa. 7:14).
 - d. We enter into the labors and reap the benefits of those who have gone before us. We owe them so much (cf. Acts 8:5, 14).
- D. Jesus protracted His visit to Sychar (39-42).
 1. Jesus had stopped at this location for some water and some rest. He saw

- people ready to receive the truth and took the time to give them what they needed (cf. Lk. 10:2; Rev. 14:15).
- a. Jesus and the disciple's teachings were successful as a direct result of this woman's ardent efforts (cf. Acts 8:1-4).
- Note: Enthusiasm is contagious. In this case, a whole city was converted.
- b. People have a responsibility to be ready hearers (cf. Matt. 11:15; Mk. 4:24). Hearing is the major point in the parable of the soils (Matt. 13:18, 19).
2. These Samaritans grasped the universality of His worldwide mission far quicker than the better-informed Jews did (cf. 3:17).
 - a. This shows the danger of preconceived ideas.
 - b. The Jews were looking for political freedom (cf. Acts 1:3, 6).
- III. Jesus and the disciples now travel back to Galilee (43-54).
- A. The arrival in Galilee (43-45).
 1. Luke adds additional information to this account (cf. Lk. 4:14, 15).
 - a. From this we can learn that He probably taught as they traveled along the road from Cana (vs 46).
 - b. This area has been His destination since the third verse of this chapter.
 2. Jesus' testimony that "a prophet hath no honor in his own country" is used in each of the other accounts, and has reference to His hometown of Nazareth (cf. Matt. 13:57; Mk. 6:4; Lk. 4:24).
 - a. We should apply this statement to the same city.
 - b. Though He was received favorably by these Galileans, it still was inferior to the reception of the Samaritans.
 - B. Jesus heals a nobleman's son (46-54).
 1. A nobleman travels twenty miles to seek Jesus' aid (cf. Matt.9:18; Lk. 7:2-5).
 - a. We know nothing about this nobleman. Most think him to be a Jew who associated with Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee (cf. Lk. 3:1).
 - b. "Come down" to heal him is geographically correct, as always.
 - c. I find "the point of death" interesting. Like many today, the Lord is only sought in total desperation, or when all other avenues have failed (cf. Matt.6:33).
 2. The need for "signs and wonders" seem to be contrasted with the ready acceptance of the Samaritan people (cf. 4:41, 42).

Note: There is no record of Him performing a single miracle for the Samaritans.

 - a. The "ye" of verse 48 is plural. Indicating this statement was directed toward all that could hear Him (cf. 2:18; Acts 2:22; 1 Cor. 1:22).
 - b. This nobleman, unlike the centurion who understood the precept of omnipotence, thought Jesus had to be present to heal his son (cf. Matt.28:18; Jn. 17:2).
 - c. To his credit, when the words were spoken, "Go thy way; thy son liveth," he accepted it as fact and departed (cf. Matt. 8:13; Rom 4:20).
 3. This far-reaching miracle had a positive affect on the nobleman's household (cf. Acts 11:14; 16:34; 18:8).
 - a. After a brief discussion with his servants, the nobleman put Jesus' words exactly at the moment of healing, at the same instant in time.

Note: The miracle was performed and it produced faith. The modern day charlatans have turned it around to protect themselves from exposure.

- b. The “second miracle” should be thought of as the second one, recorded by John, done in Galilee (cf. 2:11). These two miracles are probably the first two miracles, chronologically, in Jesus’ earthly life. Neither of them are recorded by the other writers.

Note: Many were converted in Samaria with no miracles performed. Two great miracles in His home area with one household converted. Regardless of the effort extended, the grain must be ready before there can be a harvest.

John 5

Jesus healing and teaching in Jerusalem

- I. Jesus cures an impotent man near the pool of Bethesda (1-16).
 - A. There was a gathering of people with infirmities near the sheep market (1-4).
 - 1. “A feast” brought Jesus back to Jerusalem this time (cf. Ex 34:23; Deut. 16:16).
 - a. This feast is, possibly, the second Passover Jesus attended after His ministry started (cf. 2:13).
 - b. This would make the feast mentioned in John 6:4 the third Passover and the one at His crucifixion the fourth (cf. 11:55).
 - c. From this we can calculate that His ministry on earth lasted for just more than three years.
 - 2. The “sheep market” (or gate), and the pool of Bethesda are both thought to be located north of the temple area (cf. Neh. 3:32; 12:39).
 - a. Many sick and diseased people gathered around this pool.
 - b. Legend had it that miraculous healing took place for the first person to enter the water after the waters moved.
 - c. I believe verse 4 to be nothing more than an explanation of the common superstition associated with this pool.
 - d. If the pool had miraculous healing power, then Jesus could have just helped him down into the water. We will see that this is not what happened.
 - B. Jesus performs a healing miracle (5-9).
 - 1. The time frame of 38 years of age was given to show the incurable state of this man (cf. Lk. 8:43; 13:16).
 - a. We are not told, specifically, what his disease was.
 - b. We do know he was helpless in his condition.
 - 2. “Wilt thou be made whole?” was a question which should make this man realize his desire for healing (cf. Lk. 18:41).
 - a. Many who have been handicapped for so long a time have no desire to regain their independence.
 - b. This man was then given a three-part directive:
 - (1) Rise (cf. Lk. 5:23).
 - (2) Take up thy bed (cf. Matt. (9:6).
 - (3) Walk (cf. Acts 3:6).
 - c. There was no long, drawn out, gradual recovery. After almost forty years he was commanded to get up and carry his bed. Real healing works this way (cf. Mk. 2:11, 12; Acts 9:34).
 - d. This was done on the Sabbath, which became a point of contention.
 - C. The Jews questioned the man that was healed (10-16).
 - 1. The religious leaders accused him of violating the law (cf. Jer. 17:27).
 - a. This would be parallel to saying that Jesus **told** him to transgress the law (cf. Matt. 5:17).
 - b. Jesus understood the practicality of taking the bed. The law was designed to keep people from working on the Sabbath (cf. Neh. 13:15).

Note: Resting on the Sabbath was more about fully concentrating of worshipping God and less about not working. We would do well to understand this principle in Christianity.

- c. Jesus never violated the law in any way (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21; Heb. 4:15).
2. The Jews questioned him about the healer who told him to carry his bed (cf. 9:16, 25).
 - a. If these religious leaders were not steeped in jealousy and traditions they would have said, “How wonderful! Point this man out so we can all pay homage to Him”.
 - b. Jesus slips through the crowd and goes to the temple where he comes in contact with this same man once again (cf. Lk. 4:30; Jn. 8:59).
 - c. In verse 14 Jesus implies that sin was the cause of this man’s illness. This is interesting in light of Jesus’ statement in John 9:3.
 - d. Whatever sin this man was involved in as a young person, it affected him physically.
 - (1) We see the same thing in many cases today. People suffering for the sins of youth.
 - (2) Liver damage from drinking. Lung disease from smoking. Mental and physical damage from drugs. Social diseases and emotional trauma from not remaining celibate. Broken homes. Untold misery.
 - e. This man may have wanted to go to the temple to show his gratitude to God for this healing (cf. Ps. 66:13, 14).

Note: If anyone truly knew what was acceptable or unacceptable on the Sabbath, it would be the Christ (cf. 1:3, 14, 17).

3. This man identifies Jesus to the Jewish authorities. There was no malice involved in this action. He may have even thought this would help these Jews.
 - a. From this point on the Jewish leaders set out to oppose Jesus (cf. Mk. 3:6; Lk. 6:11).

Note: This is the first reference in John to the religious leaders opposing Jesus. From this point we will see open conspiracies against Him.

- b. I’m sure that over the past year there had been a lot of talk in Jerusalem about Jesus (cf. 2:14, 15).
- D. Jesus rises up to answer his accusers. (17-24)
1. Without denying anything he had done, He presents a case which shows God’s (the Godhead) work is constant (cf. Gen. 2:1, 2; Acts 17:28; Col. 1:16).
 - a. God allows all the good things to continue on the Sabbath. He does not cease these things, but continues this work even on this day.
 - b. If God, the Father, is working and doing good on the Sabbath, God, the Son, will also be about doing good on that day (cf. Mk. 2:27)!
 2. Because He placed Himself on equal ground with God, the Father, they sought to kill Him (cf. 19:7).
 - a. This plan to take His life took exactly two years to materialize (cf. 13:1).
 - b. They failed to understand so much of what He taught, but properly understood the relation He and the Father had, and used it negatively (cf. 10:30, 33; Phil 2:6).
 - c. Jesus answers their charge with “Verily, verily”. He will retract nothing. He

- will, however, set the truth before them (cf. 3:3).
- d. The defense of His statements has four facets: (easily detected because they all begin with the word “for”)
 - (1) The first “for” (v 19) shows that there is perfect harmony between Jesus and the Father (cf. 5:30; 8:28; 9:4).
 - (2) The second “for” (v 20) shows the love that existed between these two members of the Godhead (cf. Matt. 3:17; Jn. 3:35; 17:26).
Note: The love, mentioned here, is *phileo* love. Warm and tender affection.
 - (3) The third “for” (v 21) shows the life giving power that each of them possess (cf. 12:1; Acts 3:15).
 - (4) The fourth “for” (vv 22, 23) shows the honor shared between the Father and the Son in judgment (cf. Acts 10:42; Rom. 14:10).
Note: In every facet of this defense we see total unity between the Father and the Son.
3. How does Jesus dispense “everlasting life”? Through His words. “Hearing”, here, means to receive the words **and** act accordingly (cf. 12:48).
 - a. Eternal life is based upon positive action on the hearer’s part (cf. [stated positively] Matt. 7:24; [stated negatively] 7:26).
 - b. Passing from life unto death is our conscious commitment to the truth contained in the words of the New Testament (cf. Josh. 24:15; Jn. 6:67-69).
Note: The state of passing “from death unto life” happens while we are still alive and able to make the proper choices. Postponing the decision until death will remove every chance of having life.
- II. Jesus’ authority to judge, and is a witness to Himself (25-47).
- A. Jesus had authority to judge this world (25-29).
 1. The “dead” are those who were spiritually dead (cf. Matt. 8:22; Eph. 2:1, 5).
 - a. “Cometh, and now is” refers to two different periods.
 - (1) “Now is” refers to the very teaching Jesus was presenting, i.e., a partial, preparatory presentation of the good news.
Note: This teaching was done *before* His death. The “good news” is that He died in our stead (cf. Gal. 1:4; 1 Jn. 2:2).
 - (2) At the first Pentecost after His resurrection the entire truth will be taught, hence “the hour cometh” (cf. 14:26; 16:13).
 - b. The result of hearing and heeding is life (cf. 12:49, 50; 1 Tim. 1:16).
 2. God, the Son, has life and will dispense it to all that are obedient (cf. 11:26; 14:6).
 - a. Jesus is uniquely qualified to be the life giver and judge.
 - (1) He was the key instrument in creation (cf. 1:3).
 - (2) Jesus had become flesh and knew the problems involved in the fleshly life, yet without sin (cf. Heb. 4:15). This allows a totally just and merciful judgment.
 - (3) Not hearers only, but *obedient* hearers shall have the life mentioned here (cf. James 1:22-26). Faith alone will not get us to heaven.
Note: He is called the Father’s Son and the Son of man in these verses.
 - b. The fact that He had life might surprise some. This is why verse 28 begins

the way it does, “Marvel not at this” (cf. 3:7).

- c. By the use of the word “all”, we know this is a reference to the judgment day (cf. 6:39, 40, 44, 54).

Note: These are not two different resurrections mentioned in verse 29. The “all” of the preceding verse makes it a general resurrection of “all” people.

B. Jesus does not bear witness alone (30-38).

1. Jesus seems to be going out of His way to impress upon the minds of these Jews that He and the Father are acting as one (cf. 8:28, 42; 14:10).
 - a. “Hath taught” (8:28) comes from a word which means to *impart instructions*, or *to be a teacher* (Thayer) (cf. Matt. 4:23; 5:2, 19).
 - b. His teaching was part of the will of the Father (cf. 17:4; Rom. 15:3).
2. To have only one witness was the same thing as having no witnesses under the old law (cf. Matt. 18:16; Jn. 8:17).
 - a. We shall see four witnesses presented over the next few verses, e.g., The Father, John, the baptizer, the works and the words of the Old Testament.
 - b. This statement must be modified by Jn. 8:14. It doesn’t mean His witness was untrue, just unsubstantiated according to the law (cf. Rev. 1:5).
3. If Jesus would have attempted to present His own testimony to these religious leaders, they would have rejected it without a second thought (cf. Deut. 19:15).
 - a. Jesus points them to God the Father, i.e., “another witness” (cf. 8:54; 1 Jn. 5:9).
 - b. No witness could be higher. He alludes to His greatest witness at the beginning of His defense, n.b. verses 36 and 37.
 - c. John, the baptizer, is the second witness presented (cf. 1:6-8, 15, 34).
 - (1) These same religious leaders had sent people to John with inquires of who He was (cf. 1:19).
 - (2) If they had been attentive to John’s reply, they would have heard the truth about Jesus (cf. 10:41).
 - (3) John was a teacher sent from God to light the way, which should have made an impression on these *supposedly* God fearing people (cf. 1:23).
 - d. The third witness was the very works which Jesus was doing before these people. He calls them a “greater” witness (cf. 1 Jn. 5:9).
 - (1) The miracles were designed to draw attention to the gospel, not attention to the one claiming to do the miracles, as we see in the charlatans of today (cf. 14:10-12; Acts 2:22).
 - (2) We have no way of knowing how many miracles Jesus had done up to this point in time (cf. 20:30), but we do have a few recorded:
 - (a) Turning water to wine, Jn. 2:1ff.
 - (b) Healing the nobleman’s son, Jn. 4:46ff.
 - (c) The net full of fishes, Lk. 5:1ff.
 - (d) Healing the man with the unclean spirit, Mk. 1:23ff.
 - (e) Healing Peter’s mother-in-law, Matt. 8:14, 15.
 - (f) Healing the leper, Mk, 1:40ff.

- (g) Healing the man with palsy, Lk. 5:17ff.
 - (h) Healing the impotent man by the pool, Jn. 5:1ff.
 - e. Fourthly, the prophets of old foretold of the coming Messiah and eternal blessing He would bring with Him (cf. Ps. 110; Isa. 9:6).
- C. Jesus points these religious leaders to the scriptures (39-47).
1. The words “search the scriptures” are not a command, but rather an acknowledgement of their familiarity with the Old Testament (cf. Ps. 1:2; 119:11; Jer. 8:9).
 - a. Their perpendance had guided them to be knowledgeable of facts, but oblivious of application, e.g., they had counted every letter in the Old Testament, but did not recognize the Messiah standing before them.
 - b. We still have this paradox today. Being familiar with the undefiled Word does not parallel salvation.
 - c. They/we must do more than just read the word. Proper application has always been required (cf. Matt. 19:16, 17; Jn. 14:23).
 - d. The scriptures that these teachers knew were the source of information concerning Jesus (cf. Matt. 17:2-5; Jn. 1:45).

Note: It is said that approximately 333 passages of the Old Testament are Prophetic utterances concerning the Messiah.
 2. They, in ignorance, refused to come to the very one who could give eternal life (cf. Jer. 5:21; Hosea 4:6).
 - a. There is a two-fold rejection stated here. Rejecting the scriptures, *and* rejecting the One the scriptures spoke of.
 - b. Underlying these verses is the salient point that only in Christ is there life (cf. 6:40, 68, 69; Rom. 6:23).
 - c. Having omniscience, Jesus was not overly surprised that He did not receive acclaim or honor from these religious leaders. He knew their hearts (cf. Lk. 16:15; Heb. 4:13).
 3. A false Christ would be accepted more readily than the true Christ (cf. Matt. 24:5, 24; Acts 5:36, 37).
 - a. Because they preferred the glory of humans more than approval of God, they did not have the humility needed to accept the true Christ (cf. James 2:1).
 - b. The flattery and praise of man attracts a lot of attention with most individuals, but it pulls us in the wrong direction, spiritually speaking (cf. Matt. 23:5-7; Jn. 12:43).
 - c. Moses was a teacher and lawgiver they respected (cf. 9:28; Acts 6:11).
Note: Jesus could have in His mind here the accusation of Him breaking the law of Moses as He speaks (cf. Rom. 3:20).
 - d. The coming Messiah was the focal point of the law and prophets (cf. Lk. 24:27, 44).
 - e. The logical conclusion that Jesus draws from this, is that these Jews did not believe in Moses in the first place. Because they rejected the true teachings of the law, they would automatically reject Him because the law testified *of* Him (cf. Jer. 6:16; Lk. 16:31; Gal. 4:21).

Note: The best way to pay honor to the Old Testament writers, like Moses, is to believe what they had to say concerning Christ and to conduct ourselves accordingly.

John 6

Five thousand are fed and Jesus walks on water

I. The feeding of the five thousand (1-15).

Note: This is the only miracle, which Jesus performed, that is recorded in all four accounts (Matt. 14:13ff; Mk. 6:33ff; Lk. 9:11ff and our text).

A. Many followed Jesus to the other side of the lake. (1-4)

1. If we combine the accounts, as recorded, we learn that “After these things” applies to the death of John, the baptizer (cf. Matt. 14:10-14).
 - a. We know from Luke’s account that the place they went to was Bethsaida (Lk. 9:10).
 - b. Jesus may have been getting Himself and His disciples away from Herod’s Jurisdiction, in light of John’s death.
2. A great multitude followed Him (cf. Matt. 12:15; 13:2).
 - a. “[F]ollowed” means they followed Him on foot (cf. Mk. 6:32, 33).
 - b. The aspiration of the people was not spiritual, but rather mundane (Matt. 4:24, 25).
 - c. This multitude which followed Him numbered five thousand men, not counting the women and children (cf. Matt. 14:21).
 - d. Many think He went up on the mountain to escape the multitude. I rather think He used the mountain as a natural amphitheater to teach them (cf. Mk. 4:1; Lk. 5:3).
3. John, alone, tells us what time of year it was, i.e., spring (Abib).
 - a. If we have correctly reckoned the time frame concerning chapter 5:1, then this is the third Passover since Jesus began His ministry (cf. 2:13; 5:1).
 - b. If this is true, then two things are manifestly evident:
 - (1) A year passes, without comment, from the end of chapter five to the beginning of chapter six.
 - (2) These events before us now, and those things we will see during the rest of this book, all take place in the last full year of Jesus’ life on earth.

Note: If we have correctly reckoned this time gap in John’s account, it means that all the information recorded in Luke 6-8, almost an entire year of Jesus’ life is undocumented in John’s writing.

B. Jesus feeds the five thousand (5-11).

1. They were in a desert (deserted) place and the disciples grew concerned about feeding the multitude (cf. Matt. 14:15; Mk. 6:35, 36; Lk. 9:12).
 - a. Prompted by the disciples’ inquiry Jesus poses a question to Philip.
 - b. This was a test of Philip’s faith (cf. Gen. 22:1; Deut. 8:2).

Note: Jesus knew what was about to happen.

 - c. It appears that Philip either did not have a good memory (cf. 2:7-11), or he did not understand the Savior’s power (cf. 1:10).
 - d. Philip could not rise above the transitory in his thinking. He automatically calculated the cost of such a meal.
 - e. If you can hear a tinge of shock in Philip’s reply it’s because 200

“pennyworth of bread” would be over six month’s wages (cf. Matt. 20:2; Jn. 12:3-5).

2. Andrew found a boy carrying his lunch. Interestingly, John is the only writer that attributes these supplies to the lad.
 - a. These “loaves” were more like flat crackers and the fish are described by inspiration as being “small”. Hardly a meal for a multitude (Described by one as “five soda crackers and two sardines”).
Note: Is it possible that “breaking of bread” comes from the idea of hard, flat loaves, typical of the day, were actually broken?
 - b. Barley grain was the staple of the common class (cf Ruth 1:22).
3. Jesus divides the multitude up in groups and they sit down on the grass (cf. Mk. 6:39, 40).
 - a. The idea of grass shows us this desert place is not our normal precept of a desert, i.e., an arid place without vegetation (cf. Acts 8:26, 36).
 - b. Having the multitude divided in this way would allow His disciples to expedite the serving more quickly and easily.
 - c. It would eliminate the possibility of anyone being over-looked. That surely would have caused problems.
 - d. He gave thanks and allowed His disciples to dispense the ever-multiplying food to the multitude (cf. Acts 27:35; Rom. 14:6).
Note: If Jesus, as God in the flesh, (incarnate) gave thanks, we should never neglect do likewise.
4. When they all had eaten, the commandment was given to “gather up” the leftovers. Possibly an example for us not to be wasteful.
 - a. From “five crackers and two sardines” come twelve baskets of leftovers.
 - b. The thought of “nothing be lost” is applicable to salvation as well as leftovers (cf. 2 Pet. 3:9). Provisions for all have been made (cf. 3:17; 1 Jn. 2:2).
 - c. The desired effect is seen in these people. They followed Jesus because of the miracles and ended up believing in Him (cf. Acts 7:37).
Note: By feeding the hungry we might open a door to nourishing the soul.
Caution should always be exercised in efforts of this type. Feeding the human body is secondary to feeding the soul.

II. Jesus walks on water (15-21).

- A. This miracle convinced them He was the Messiah (15).
 1. Their preconceived theology caused them to want an earthly king (cf. Matt. 20:21; Acts 1:6).
 - a. Their greatest concern was to get out from under the control of the Roman government. Physical rather than spiritual thinking (cf. 2 Cor. 4:18).
 - b. Misplaced zeal has been (and still is) the downfall of many religious people. (cf. Matt. 15:14)
 2. “Perceived” means to *be aware* or *have knowledge* (Strong) (cf. 1:10, 48).
 - a. Understanding the multitude’s desire, He sends them away and dismisses the disciples so He can be alone and pray (cf. Matt. 14:22, 23).
 - b. The multitude was about to “take Him by force” or declare Him to be their King (cf. 12:12, 13).
 - c. We must keep in mind that God never intended for the Jews to have an

earthly king (cf. 1 Sam. 8:6, 7).

d. In an effort to be like those around them, the Jews rejected God. The analogy should be obvious to us.

B. Jesus walks on the water (16-21).

1. When evening came His disciples entered the ship to sail to the other side of the sea of Galilee (cf. Mk. 6:47).
 - a. We learn from Mark 6:45 that He had to “constrain” the disciples to leave. (Thayer says this means *to drive or force*)
 - b. They headed toward Capernaum (Bethsaida) and were on the sea when darkness fell.
 - c. “And Jesus was not come to them” may indicate that Jesus had made arrangements to meet them and they were looking for Him.
 - d. A sudden storm come upon the disciples, who have now rowed about halfway across the sea of Galilee, e.g., 25 or 30 furlongs.

Note: This would be about three miles across the six-mile wide sea (That is, of course, assuming they rowed in a straight line).

2. With rough waters and total darkness, they saw Jesus walking to them on the water (cf. Job 9:7, 8; Mk. 6:49).
 - a. We know from Matthew’s account that this took place sometime between 3 am and sun up (cf. Matt. 14:25).
 - b. Their fear of the weather conditions was intensified by the appearance of the Master walking to them on the water (cf. Mk. 4:40; 6:50).
 - c. Jesus calms them with His voice (cf. Rev. 1:17).

Note: Matthew’s account adds Peter asking to walk on the water with the Lord (cf. Matt. 14:28-31).

d. When Jesus was with them there was no more trouble. What a lesson for all who “have ears to hear with” (cf. Phil. 4:9; 2 Jn. 3).

Note: “Contrary winds” will often blow in each of our lives, but Christ is never far from us. Our faith, courage and strength are often increased as we toil against the wind.

III. Jesus declares Himself to be the Bread of Life (22-71).

A. Some of those following Him were still seeking after mundane things (22-27).

1. These events would be taking place the day after the feeding of the five thousand men, plus the women and children (6:5ff).
 - a. Verse 22 is a reflection back on what happened the day before, i.e., the disciples left in a boat, but Jesus wasn’t with them.
 - b. They looked and only saw one boat (cf. Mk. 6:45, 46).
 - c. No doubt they were perplexed on how Jesus arrived on the other shore.
 - d. This rather difficult passage has a parenthetical statement in verse 23, which helps explain the mode of travel the followers took.
 - e. Since Jesus was not where they thought He would be, they used the boats (ferries or water taxis) to get back to Capernaum.
2. When they found Him, the first question they had was to satisfy their curiosity on how He got to Capernaum (cf. 1:38).
 - a. Satisfying this curiosity was not why He was on earth. He took the

opportunity to teach them that their hearts were in the wrong place (cf. Rom. 16:18; Phil. 2:21).

b. Bodies are often over-fed while the souls are starving.

Note: Try to imagine how knowledgeable we would be if we sought after spiritual food the way we seek after food for the body.

c. “Meat” refers to food of all types (cf. Matt. 3:4; 15:37; Heb. 12:16).

B. Jesus compares and contrasts Himself with the manna in the wilderness (28-40).

1. At least some of those who heard Jesus understood and wanted more information in obtaining the “true bread” (cf. Matt. 19:16; Acts 2:37; 9:6).

Note: So many today say there is not any work required for salvation. Even in their ignorance, these people were far ahead of many that call themselves *enlightened* in our day (cf. 1 Jn. 3:23).

a. Verse 29 is a deathblow to the false doctrine of “faith only.” If those who advocate this man-made doctrine were honest, they would realize this verse would eliminate faith itself, according to them (cf. Rom. 10:3; 1 Thess. 1:3; 2 Thess. 1:11).

b. These Jews required a sign. Evidence is important before honest faith can be established. Contrariwise, they had seen evidence, e.g., water turned to wine (2:6ff), food multiplied to serve many thousands (6:9ff), etc.

c. They revered the works of God through Moses as greater than what they had witnessed at the hands of Jesus (cf. Ex. 16:4; Ps. 105:40, 41).

2. Jesus shows them that the application of their reasoning was improper in two different areas:

a. Firstly, Moses had not supplied the bread in the wilderness, God had (Ex. 16:4).

b. Secondly, the bread, which came through Moses, has two inherent problems:

(1) People who ate Moses’ bread would get hungry again (cf. Ex. 16:4 Lk. 6:25).

(2) It would perish, unlike Him (cf. Ex. 16:19-21).

c. Hence, Jesus was superior to Moses in every way (cf. Heb. 3:4-6).

(1) Food and water are necessary for the body to live.

(2) The spiritual food and water, which comes only through Jesus, are necessary for life in the next world.

3. “[G]iveth me” (v 37) are those who have believed the evidence and are willing to comply with the teachings (cf. 17:6, 8, 9).

a. The “Father’s will” is that no one be lost (cf. 2 Pet. 3:9).

b. Jesus offers life eternal to all through His death (cf. 1 Jn. 2:2).

c. Being raised “at the last day” refutes every egregious error regarding the so called *Rapture* (39, 40, 44, 54) (cf. 11:24, 25; 12:48).

C. In the lives of many people, murmuring and complaining are much easier than acceptance and making necessary changes (41-51).

1. We must overcome murmurings in our lives (cf. 1 Cor. 10:10; Phil 2:14).

a. Thayer gives this definition of to “murmur”: *to grumble, to complain*.

b. To help their point they assumed that Joseph was His father (Many do the same thing today with assumed information!) (cf. 1:14; 3:18; 16:28).

- c. Their assumption was wrong (cf. Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:22, 23).
- 2. There are two facets to being drawn to Christ in these verses:
 - a. First, a person must have a desire to come to God (Negatively stated, 1:11; 5:40; positively stated, Rev. 22:17).
 - b. Second, a person must be willing to follow God's will in the "drawing" (cf. 14:21-23; 1 Jn. 2:3-5).
- 3. These followers had brought up the multitude Moses had fed, yet that entire multitude perished (cf. Num 26:65; Heb. 3:17-19).
 - a. Jesus was offering them "living bread," which would not perish.
 - b. This bread would be eaten in His kingdom, the church, (Matt. 16:18, 19) each first day of the week (cf. Lk. 22:19; Acts 20:7).
 - c. Those who are promised eternal life are in the church (cf. Acts 2:47; 5:14).
- D. Many of the followers were puzzled by His remarks, and some of the disciples began to murmur (52-65).
 - 1. It appears that the Jews lacked the very thought processes which would allow them to accept the simple truth (cf. Acts 7:51).
 - a. "[S]trove" (v 52) should not be misconstrued to imply that some of these Jews wanted to defend Jesus. They all opposed Him.
 - b. Jesus was not advocating cannibalism (cf. Matt. 26:26-28).
 - c. Interestingly, even these contrary Jews understood He was speaking metaphorically. The Catholics don't understand this simple rule, e.g., transubstantiation.
 - 2. "For my flesh is meat indeed" (v 55) refers to real food. Not for the body, but rather, for the soul (cf. 1 Cor. 10:3, 17).
 - a. "[W]ho can hear it?" (v 60) Not hard to understand, but rather hard to accept (cf. Matt. 3:10-12; Acts. 3:19).
Note: These "hard sayings" were not softened so they would be accepted!
 - b. Jesus' omniscience allowed Him to know their thoughts. That is why the phrase "Doth this offend you?" (v 61) is included (cf. Matt. 9:4).
- E. Like today, some choose to follow, others choose to fall away (62-71).
 - 1. If eating and drinking of the Lord was such a marvel to them, what would they think when it was time for Him to return to heaven (cf Acts 1:9)?
 - a. Many of these people had the same problem we face today. Great spiritual truths are wasted on earthly, physical thinking (cf. 1 Tim. 4:8).
 - c. It appears that Jesus is saying, beginning with verse 52, that He would return to heaven. There would be no chance for people to literally eat His body. Those things eaten and drank are transient. Spiritual things will last.
 - d. John explains that this was no surprise to the Lord that some would not believe on Him (cf. 2:24, 25; Heb. 4:13).
 - e. Those who were following for the wrong reason broke away and followed no more (cf. Lk. 9:62; Heb. 10:38; 1 Jn. 2:19).
 - 2. At their departure, Jesus turns to the twelve and asks if they also shall leave Him (cf. 2 Kgs. 2:2; Ps. 62:5).
 - a. Peter's reply is typical of his impetuous nature (cf. Matt. 16:16; 17:4, etc.).

- b. Peter was the ardent, self-appointed spokesman for the twelve, but one of them was of the devil (cf. 13:26, 27).

Note: In this exceptional chapter we find the Truth taught in one city (Capernaum) being based on a miracle performed in another city (Bethsaida). Truth is universal in nature and scope.

John 7

Jesus attends the Feast of Tabernacles.

- I. Jesus' half brothers urge Him to go to Judea (1-9).
 - A. "After these things," (v 1) reveals a period of time lasting from the Passover (6:1) to the Feast of Tabernacles (v 2) (1-5).
 1. A period of six months pass between these chapters (Note Jewish calendar).
 - a. John passes over a tremendous amount of information concerning Jesus' activities in these six months.
 - b. A comparative study of Matthew's account reveals that this six-month interlude covers Matthew 15-18.

Note: This would include such events as:

 - (1) Several healings. Matt. 15:21ff; 15:29ff; 17:14ff.
 - (2) The feeding of the 4,000. Matt. 15:32ff.
 - (3) Peter's confession. Matt. 16:13ff.
 - (4) The transfiguration. Matt. 16:21ff.
 - (5) Two prophecies of His coming death. Matt. 16:21ff; 17:22 and many more.
 - c. "He would not walk in Jewry" (v 1) means He did not stay in the southern area around the city of Jerusalem.

Note: We have already seen Jesus do this same thing twice in this book (cf. 4:3, 54). We will see Him flee from these people two more times (cf. 10:39, 40; 11:54).
 - d. The Feast of Tabernacles was one of the three major feasts of the Jews (cf. Ex. 23:16, 17; Neh. 8:14-18).
 2. We can determine that verse three has reference to His half brothers because of the use of "brethren" and "disciples" therein (cf. Matt. 13:55, 56).
 - a. The reason there is a differentiation between the "brethren" and the "disciples" is stated in verse 5.
 - b. Since they did not believe in Him, there must have been some sarcasm in their entreaty (cf. 2:12).
 - c. His family members could not see the Messiah in their half brother (cf. Matt. 13:57).
 - B. Jesus responds to His brother's pleadings (6-9).
 1. "My time" (v 6) would be yet six months away, at the Passover holiday (cf. 7:30; 8:20; 13:1; 17:1).
 - a. Interestingly, the true Passover would be offered at the Passover holiday (cf. Ex. 12:1-5; 1 Pet. 1:19; 1 Cor. 5:7).
 - b. Jesus did not allow His non-believing brothers to control His actions. What a lesson this is for each of us.
 - c. Jesus did attend this feast (v 13), but He chose His arrival to be separate from His brother's arrival.
 2. Since His brothers had nothing special to offer, there would be no one trying to harm them. They could attend at their will (cf. 1 Jn. 4:5).
 - a. Jesus teaches them that the world will not hate those who are like the world (cf. Lk. 6:26; James 4:4).

Note: Be concerned when everyone likes you. Something is very wrong!

- b. There is a great contrast between Jesus and His brothers (cf. 15:18, 19).
- c. The world hated Jesus because He was exposing its sinful nature (cf 3:19).

We see the same idea in Noah's life (cf Heb. 11:7).

Note: He rejected His brother's prodding for two different reasons. First, the time was wrong (v 30); second, the purpose was wrong (18:36).

II. Jesus attends the festival (10-13).

A. Jesus privately enters Jerusalem (10, 11).

- 1. The secrecy of verse 10 is in contrast to what His brothers proposed (v 3).
 - a. Many feel that Luke 9:51-56 is the only account of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem at this time.
 - b. If that is true, then the disciples were traveling with Him.
- 2. "The Jews," in this verse (v 11), means the religious leaders (cf. 1:19; 5:16; 9:22).
 - a. Some in the first century, as well as today, seek Jesus for the wrong reasons (cf. 6:26; 7:25; 11:56, 57).
 - b. Eighteen months earlier Jesus had healed the impotent man in that same city. (5:8, 9) From that point in time they sought to kill Him (5:16).
 - c. This explains Jesus' "secret" entrance into the city.
 - d. It also explains why they asked, "Where is he?" (v 11) (cf. 9:12).

B. The people were divided over the type of person Jesus was (12, 13).

- 1. There is a distinction made between the "people" (v 12 and the "Jews" (v 13) (cf. 7:32).
 - a. "Murmuring" means there was some disputing and disagreement among the people concerning Jesus. (This word is only used three other times in the new testament: cf. Acts 6:1; Phil 2:14; 1 Pet. 4:9).
 - b. This controversy revolved around His character. Imagine that! He lived sinlessly perfect among sinful men, yet they questioned His character (cf. 10:19-21)!
 - c. One group concluded He was, "A good man," i.e., pure in motive (cf. 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 Jn. 3:5).

Note: We must keep in mind that many of these people had journeyed to Jerusalem from the areas where Jesus had been teaching and healing. They had probably seen Him in action.

- d. Others thought Him to be a deceiver of the people. These must have been followers of the religious leaders, or at least had been influenced by their teaching (cf. Matt. 27:63; Jn. 7:47).
- e. This type of opposition to truth has always existed and will continue to exist as long as time lasts.
- 2. Fear caused people to talk in hushed tones (cf. 9:22; 12:42; 19:38; 20:19).
 - a. Open discussions would probably lead to some kind of action by the "religious leaders."
 - b. Let us never be ashamed to *speak up* and to *speak out* for the cause of Christ (cf. Rom. 1:16; 2 Tim 1:8).
 - c. We all understand this, but do we place the proper significance on it (cf. Mk. 8:38)?

Note: Truth knows no fear. Error and half-truths must be constantly guarded for fear of the light of truth exposing the darkness of error. (As seen in such things as forbidding people to study directly from God's word, placing "church doctrine" above plain bible teaching [e.g., baptism for remission of sins, the Bible's teaching on the singleness and unity of the one true church of the Bible, allowing mechanical instruments of music in the worship service, praise teams, women leading in worship services, ad inf.], etc.).

III. Jesus uses the feast of Tabernacles to teach in the temple (14-36).

A. The Jews marveled at His teachings (14-17).

1. The "midst of the feast" (v 14) indicates that somewhere near the middle of the eight day feast He boldly began to teach in the temple (cf. Lev. 23:33-36).
 - a. Information concerning this feast is provided in Num. 29:12ff.
 - b. Notice that this does not say He *arrived* halfway through the feast, but rather He started *teaching* when the feast was half over.
 - c. We may see a fulfillment of Malachi 3:1 in these verses.
2. In the religious leaders' eyes Jesus was unlearned (cf. Matt. 13:54; Mk. 6:2).
 - a. "[L]etters" (vs 15) probably meant the official Jewish schooling that all the rabbis took to be public teachers.
 - b. Jesus had never attended their schools, how dare He set Himself forth as a qualified teacher.
 - c. We see this attitude in religious circles today. Occasionally, even in the Lord's church, requiring a Bible degree as a prerequisite to teach.

Note: Using this logic, none of the original Apostles could preach today (cf. Acts 4:13).

 - d. Respect for a teacher should be based on Bible knowledge and understanding, not the number of degrees he has earned.
3. Jesus answers, His teachings were from God (cf. 12:49, 50; 14:10; Rev. 1:1).
 - a. Still today man's teachings and God's teachings differ (cf. 2 Jn. 9).
 - b. Those truly seeking to please God will look away from the religious confusion which permeates our world and look toward the one source of enlightenment, i.e., the Holy Bible.

B. Jesus is accused of having a devil (18-24).

1. The world has always been full of self-promoters (cf. Matt. 6:1, 2).
 - a. Jesus was not here to promote Himself (cf. 1 Pet. 4:11).
 - b. Faithful teachers have always relied on the authority of God's word to win souls (cf Rom. 1:16; 1 Thess. 2:13).
2. Jesus had knowledge of the religious leaders' plot to kill Him (cf. Matt. 21:38; Jn. 10:31; 11:53).
 - a. In reality, verse 19 is stated to show their plot to kill Him was in violation of the very law they pretended to exalt (cf. Ex. 20:13).
 - b. The people responded that He must be demon possessed. No one was out to take His life. This shows the plot was known to some, but not all. (v 25)
 - c. Jesus was often accused of having a demon (cf. Mk. 3:21, 22; Jn. 8:48, 52).
 - d. The "one work" (v 21) is a reference to the healing of the impotent man by the pool of Bethesda in chapter 5:1ff.

- (1) A healing which was done on the Sabbath (cf. 5:9).
 - (2) This healing spawned the murder plot (cf. 5:16).
 - e. The paradox in the circumcision, is that it was to be done in accordance to Moses' law, even if the eighth day fell on the Sabbath (cf. Lev. 12:3).
 - f. Jesus' point is this; if they could set aside the law (in one point, e.g., no work to be done on the Sabbath) to fulfill the law (in another point, e.g., circumcision), why couldn't He heal on the Sabbath day, as well?
 - g. This is the context in which we find, "...but judge righteous judgment."
- Note: This verse (24) modifies Matt. 7:1. It eliminates the false idea that Christians cannot be involved in any type of judging. It is required and even demanded.
- C. Jesus declared that He is, indeed, the Christ (25-31).
- 1. Some of the people who lived in Jerusalem expressed surprise that this man the religious leaders were plotting to kill was speaking so boldly (cf. 18:20).
 - a. Naturally, those who lived in the city would have more knowledge of this plot than those who lived far away.
 - b. There appears to be some confusion. He was boldly speaking and the religious leaders were doing nothing about it (cf. 11:47, 48).
 - c. Is it possible that the leaders have been convinced that this is indeed "the very Christ" (v 26)? (No, the reason they did not carry out their threat at this time is stated in verse 30!)
 - 2. These Jews were convinced that Jesus could not be the Christ because they knew where He came from (cf. Matt. 13:54-57).
 - a. This whole misconception may be based on Malachi 3:1.
 - b. Interestingly, they plainly state that, "no man knoweth whence he is" (v 27). The Messiah would mysteriously appear (cf. 9:29, 30).
 - c. This misconception was fueled by the traditions taught by the religious leaders. He would suddenly appear in the temple without warning.
 - d. Teaching traditions rather than truth is always a problem (cf. Col. 2:22).
 - 3. Jesus "cried" (v 28) means, according to Thayer, *to cry out, to cry aloud*. He knew what they were thinking and spoke loudly and forcefully with the evidence of who He was!
 - a. They might think they knew where He came from, e.g., Bethlehem or Nazareth (Matt. 2:1, 23), but He came from God (cf. 1 Jn. 4:9, 14).
 - b. The common people, not the religious leaders, tried to take Him (v 30). Jesus told them they were ignorant of God's plan to save them, They did not like that!
 - c. Through divinely orchestrated circumstances they could not lay hold on Him at this time (cf. 8:20). "His hour was not yet come" (v 30).
- D. The Pharisees try to take Him (32-36).
- 1. "The Pharisees and the Chief Priests" were the Sanhedrin, the Supreme Court of the Jews (cf. 11:47).
 - a. These rulers did not want this discussion to continue. The more information these people had, the more likely they were to see the truth.
 - b. That is exactly as it is today. Truth has nothing to fear.
 - 2. Jesus then speaks of His death and resurrection (cf. 16:5, 16).
 - a. "A little while" (v 33) would be six months, at the Passover (cf. Matt.

26:18).

- b. The irony of verse 35 is that this is exactly what did happen, through the efforts of Paul, Peter, Silas, Barnabas, Mark and many others.
- c. Verse 36 is verse 34 repeated. They seemed puzzled by the words He used, much like Nicodemus (cf. 3:4, 9).

IV. Jesus and the Pharisees on the last day of the feast (37-53).

A. Jesus speaks concerning the Spirit (37-39).

1. The “In last day, that great day” (vs 37) would be the eighth day of the feast (cf. Lev. 23:36, 39).
2. In this setting, Jesus stood among hundreds, maybe thousands, and cried out to the people (v 28).
 - a. The “thirst” (v 37) is a spiritual thirst (cf. 4:13, 14).
 - b. We have a strong desire to drink when thirsty. We need to have that same desire for the truth of the gospel. It, alone, can make one free (cf. 8:32).
3. “[B]elieveth” (v 38) is used as a synecdoche, standing for a belief which will cause obedience to the scriptures (cf. Matt. 7:21; Jn. 14:15, 21).

Note: Even in these verses there is a coming (“come unto me”), which is required, not just a believing.

- a. The “scripture” (v 38) may be Zech. 14:8 and possibly others.
- b. The “belly” (v 38) is the inner person (cf. Prov. 10:11).
- c. Verse 39 is divine commentary on what Jesus had just spoken (cf. Acts 1:4-8; 2:4, 17).

B. The people were divided concerning Jesus (40-44).

1. Some saw the words of Moses being fulfilled in Jesus (cf. Deut. 18:15-18).
 - a. It is interesting that after all He has taught and done that some of these Jews think Him to be the “prophet” and not the Messiah (cf. 1:21).
 - b. It makes you wonder what more He would have to do to convince them.
2. Others saw Him as He is, the Christ (cf. Matt. 16:14-16).
 - a. These knowledgeable (?) Jews understood enough of the Old Testament to know that the Messiah was to come from Bethlehem (cf. Micah 5:2).
 - b. The Messiah was clearly shown to come from the lineage of David (cf. Isa. 11:1; Jer. 23:5).
 - c. It was not God’s appointed time for Jesus to be taken (cf. Acts 27:23-25).

C. The Jews are angry that Jesus is not in custody (44-53).

1. These returning officers were the ones dispatched in verse 32.
 - a. These were Levites, sometimes known as temple police (According to J. W. McGarvey), who served and assisted the rulers (cf. Mk. 14:65; Acts 5:21-23).
 - b. These appear to be more honest than the leaders (v 47). They understood there was something special about the man Jesus (cf. Matt. 7:29; Lk. 4:22).
2. The arrogance of these religious leaders is despicable. They are basically saying that Jesus cannot be right because we are right and He opposes us !
 - a. We see this same type of attitude in false teachers today.
 - b. Truth needs neither guardians nor custodians. It needs followers!
3. Nicodemus raises a point of the law which generates justice (cf Deut. 1:16).
 - a. Much like today, there was a personal attack on Nicodemus rather than dealing with the scriptures (cf. Ex. 2:14).

b. Either logic or frustration won out and the people went to their houses.
Note: Many today believe Jesus was a good man, even a prophet, but do not accept Him as Christ. There is no middle ground (Jn. 8:24). He must be accepted as Christ. The worst ignorance is the ignorance that refuses to know. The worst blindness is a blindness that refuses to see.

John 8

The unique advantage of truth

- I. A woman taken in adultery and a confrontation with the Pharisees (1-32)
 - A. The woman taken in adultery (1-11).
 1. Jesus departs Jerusalem after the Feast of Tabernacles and goes to the Mount of Olives.
 - a. Geographically, this mount is located about one mile east of the city (cf. Matt. 21:1).
 - b. Many events in the life of Jesus are associated with this mount (cf. Mk. 13:3; Lk. 19:29, 37; Jn. 18:2).
 - c. It was also the home of His close friends (cf. 11:1) (Note the implication of John 7:53).
 2. The next day, some think near dawn, many people gathered to hear Jesus in the temple area (v 20) (cf. Lk. 21:37, 38; Acts 5:21).
 - a. Interest was high and Jesus intended to take advantage of it (cf. 4:34).
 - b. A seated position was customary for teaching at this time (cf. Matt. 5:1, 2; Lk. 5:3).
 3. The religious leaders wasted no time in ruining this teaching opportunity.
 - a. The woman is brought before Jesus. Significantly, the man is absent. This violates Lev. 20:10 and Deut 22:22.
 - b. The words “taken...in the very act” (v 4) indicate eyewitnesses. The man either escaped or was released.
 - c. These men knew what the Law of Moses stated in these cases, and they knew they had no jurisdiction to carry this sentence out under Roman rule.
Note: Roman law did not condone capital punishment for adultery. They, therefore, thought they had Him in a dilemma. Could they lay aside Moses’ law in this case (cf. Lk. 20:21-25)?
 - d. “[W]hat sayest thou?” (v 5) indicated their evil scheme (cf. Matt. 5:17; 22:16-18).
 4. Jesus bent over and began to write on the ground. We see, in this, two very important principles to follow in volatile situations.
 - a. One, be slow to answer. Think things through.
 - b. Two, be calm in the face of anger. Inner peace begets inner peace; the converse also being true.
Note: The only words, that we know of, that Jesus wrote went unrecorded. A shame.
 - c. With divine logic, Jesus switched the focus to *their* sins and motives.
 - d. Slowly, one by one, they are convicted of their own sins by self-examination, turned and left (cf. 1 Jn. 3:20).
 5. When all the people had dispersed Jesus tells the woman she is free to leave also.
 - a. Jesus neither condones the woman’s actions nor forgives her of her sins. This was a teaching opportunity (cf. Lk. 12:13, 14).
 - b. What a wonderful lesson for us in these verses. His compassion for the sinner is evident along side the condemnation of the sin. (cf. Lk. 9:56)
 - B. Jesus faces His enemies again (12-19).
 1. This section begins with one of the many “I am” statements of Jesus as recorded by John (cf. 6:35; 8:18, 23, 58, etc.).

- a. Jesus' self-declaration of being "light" (v 12) is a symbol of goodness and truth (cf. 1:4, 9; 3:19; Acts 13:47).
- b. An obvious contrast with darkness is drawn (cf. 12:35, 46).
- c. Only the Godhead can dispel darkness (cf. Ps. 18:28; 119:105).
- 2. The statement in verse 13 stems from the teaching of the old law, which required two or more witnesses to establish proper testimony (cf. Deut. 19:15).
 - a. This may refer back to when this trouble all started when He healed the man on the Sabbath (cf. 5:31, 32).
 - b. Jesus' answer shows a profound truth, i.e., He came from God. He would return to His rightful position with the Father.
 - (1) "Whence I come" (v 14) (cf. 7:29; 10:36; 13:3; 16:28).
 - (2) "Ye cannot tell whence I come" (cf. 9:29).
 - (3) "Whither I go" (cf. 6:62; 20:17; Eph. 4:9).
 - c. "Ye judge after the flesh," means they were judging according to appearance (cf. 1 Sam. 16:7; James 2:4)
 - d. Jesus will not judge in such fashion. He came not to judge, but to save. (cf. 3:17; 12:47).
 - e. How many witnesses did they need? The prophets, John, the baptizer, the voice from heaven at His baptism and transfiguration, the miracles, etc.
- 3. The Jews cynically ask about His father, totally misunderstanding His point.
 - a. They should have known Him, but did not (cf. 1:10; 1 Cor. 15:34).
 - b. If they did know Him they would have seen the Father (cf. Col. 1:15).
- C. Their failure to believe on Jesus would keep them from following Him (20-26).
 - 1. Jesus spoke these words in the "treasury" (vs 20), which was a part of the temple that all the Jews had access to, i.e., men and women (cf. Mk. 12:41-44).
 - a. His "hour" was yet six months away (see page 37, section B).
 - b. Interestingly, this treasury area is called the "court of the women," because the females could not draw any closer to the altar in the temple.
 - c. This fits perfectly with the context. The mob could bring the accused woman (vv 2, 3) to this place in the temple, but no further.
 - 2. They could not follow His glory because of sin (cf. Prov. 11:7; Isa 59: 1, 2).
 - a. Only the redeemed will follow the Lord to glory. (vs. 24)
 - b. Jesus equates unbelief with damnation (cf. 3:18, 36; Heb. 2:3).
 - c. "Who art thou" (vs 25) might mean, "who do you think you are?" Or, possibly, tell us plainly who you are (cf. Lk. 22:67; Jn. 10:24; 19:9).
 - 3. The truth needs to be spoken, even if some may be offended by it.
 - a. Running the risk of provoking these people even more was secondary to telling them the truth. His mission was to speak as He heard (cf. 8:40).
 - b. Jesus' teaching seemed to be hard for these people to grasp (cf. 6:60; Heb. 5:11, 12).
- D. Disciples will be made by knowledge of the truth (27-32).
 - 1. Their lack of understanding was willful ignorance (cf. Matt. 22:29; Rom. 10:3; 1 Cor. 14:38).
 - a. In our world many can see the simple teachings of the Bible, but are more concerned about what "their church teaches" than obeying divine commands, e.g., baptism for salvation, 1 Pet. 3:21; singing, Eph. 5:19, etc.

- b. These Jews knew He was speaking of God the Father, but would not accept it (cf. 8:47; 2 Cor. 4:3, 4).
 - 2. The “lifted up” (v 28) is a reference to the crucifixion (cf. 3:14; 12:32-34).
 - a. They did not recognize the connection between Jesus and the Father because they refused to see, spiritually (cf. Matt. 15:14; 2 Pet. 1:9).
 - b. When He was crucified they would know beyond a doubt who He was/is, and some would repent and turn to Him (cf. Acts 2:36, 37; 6:7).
 - c. His enemies wanted His mouth stopped, yet His death and ensuing resurrection caused many to believe on Him. God has the master plan.
 - d. Verse 29 has three powerful affirmations concerning Jesus:
 - (1) He was on earth because the Father appointed it (cf. 6:39).
 - (2) While here, the Father accompanied Him (cf. 16:32).
 - (3) He was completely attentive and amenable to the Father’s will, therefore, sinless (cf. 15:10).
 - 3. His words were the only hope these Jews had. Some accepted that hope (cf. 10:42; 11:45).
 - a. True disciples are those who continue in their obedience (cf. Rom. 11:22; Col. 1:23; James 1:25). Do not just start the race, finish it!
 - b. The “know” (v 32) does not mean knowledge, but goes beyond that to practice (cf. Matt. 7:21; Jn. 6:63; 12:26).
 - c. Application of the truths spoken will cause freedom from sin. Many know, but refuse to obey (cf. 2 Thess. 1:8; 3:14; 1 Pet. 4:17-19).

Note: There are no promises except to those who seek to do His will. Obedience and continuing commitment will bring eternal life. Anything short of that places one on the losing side in eternity.
- II. They boasted of being Abraham’s descendants, but their father was Satan (33-45).
 - A. Jesus clarifies His statement about making them free (33-38).
 - a. The Jews retort to verse 32 was that they have never been in bondage. This was an obvious lie (cf. Judges 2:18; 3:8; 4:3; Ezra 9:9).
 - b. It was even predicted, from the very beginning of the promise, that the offspring of Abraham would be in bondage (cf. Gen. 15:13).
 - c. This was either another example of deception by the Jews, or a severe case of selective amnesia.
 - d. They had been in bondage to Egypt, the Philistines, the Canaanites, the Sidonians, the Hivites, Assyria, Babylon and even at this point, to Rome.
 - e. Even at the speaking of these words the religious leaders were under bondage to their own traditions (cf. Mk. 7:5-9; Gal. 1:14).
 - 2. Jesus immediately shows them that He is not referring to political bondage (cf. Rom. 6:16; Titus 3:3; 1 Jn. 3:8, 9; Lk. 8:11).
 - a. The word “servant” (v 34) is the word for slave.
 - b. Sin causes slavery (cf. Matt. 6:24; Rom. 6:13).
 - c. Jesus then carries the idea of a slave living in a house as opposed to a son living in a house.
 - (1) The slave may be told to leave at any time, i.e., changed at will.
 - (2) The son will remain in the house (cf. Heb. 3:6). He won’t be changed or sold.

- d. This is correlated to the events surrounding Abraham, Isaac and Ishmael (cf. Gen. 21:10; Gal. 4:30).
 - e. These Pharisees claimed to be Abraham's seed, and indeed they were, but after the flesh only (cf. Lk. 3:8).
 - (1) They had not the faith of Abraham (cf. Heb. 11:8-19).
 - (2) They had made rules *for* God instead of following the rules *of* God (cf. Matt. 15:2, 3; Col. 2:8).
- B. Jesus contrasts His Father with their father (39-45).
- 1. These Jews immediately claimed to be descendants of Abraham (cf. Matt. 3:9; Lk. 16:24, 25).
 - a. Jesus counters with the word "if" (v 39). It is the equivalent of saying, "no you are not" (cf. Rom. 2:28, 29; Gal. 3:7; James 2:23)!
 - b. He then gives an example of why they cannot be Abraham's children. They were seeking the kill Him. Abraham would not do such a thing!
 - 2. They are pointed to their father, the devil (cf. Matt. 13:38).
 - a. It appears they finally understood the point Jesus was making.
 - b. Spiritually speaking, they were children of an idolatrous union with the devil (cf. Isa. 57:3).
 - c. Does Jesus sound like the milquetoast teacher as some would depict Him as being (cf. Matt. 23:13-16)? No, He was the epitome of strength and fearlessness.
 - 3. Members of the same family have the same father. Their father was not Abraham or God. It was Satan.
 - a. Notice their father was a murderer from the beginning (v 44). This refers to the beginning of recorded history (cf. Gen. 3:1-4; Rom. 5:12-14).
 - b. Since Satan is described as a murderer, and they were attempting to murder Jesus, then they were walking in their father's footsteps!
 - c. Lies, tricks and deception are his tools (cf. Acts 5:3; 2 Cor. 11:13, 14).
 - 4. They would not accept the truth, but would rather believe lies (cf. Gal. 4:16; 2 Thess. 2:10, 11; 2 Tim. 4:3, 4).
- III. His sinless and eternal nature (46-59).
- A. Their mind-set would not allow them to fully accept the truth (46-50).
- 1. Jesus says, in effect, "Show me proof of any sin in my life" (cf. Heb. 7:26).
 - a. They had foreknowledge of the Christ, i.e., hundreds of prophecies and first hand teaching from the Christ personally, but they had no real desire to know the truth (cf. Job 21:14).
 - b. Ignorance, prejudice and fear were at the root of this problem (cf. 11:48; 12: 42, 43).
 - c. If they could uncover even one sin in His life then Jesus would not have been a fit sacrifice for our sins (cf. Rom. 5:19).
 - d. This shows the extreme contrast of His perfect nature with their own nature (cf. 1 Pet. 2:22; 1 Jn. 3:5).
 - 2. Calling Jesus a Samaritan (v 48) is paramount to saying He had a devil (cf. 4:9).
 - a. It is probable that news of Jesus' success in Samaria had reached these religious leaders (cf. 4:39-41).
 - b. They were doing the devils work and were accusing Him of having a devil.

Very typical of many religious people today.

- c. Jesus shows that He is honoring God and they are not (cf. Phil. 2:6-9).
 - d. To dishonor Jesus would be the same as dishonoring the Father (cf. Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3).
3. Jesus, unlike these Jewish leaders, did not seek after earthly glory (cf. Matt. 6:1-6, 16; Jn. 5:41; 7:18).
- a. Each person shall receive a reward (?) of some kind (cf. Rev. 22:12).
 - b. In rejecting Jesus and His teaching we actually judge ourselves (cf. 12:48; Heb 2:3).
- B. Abraham rejoiced to see His day (51-59).
1. Jesus sets before them the universal nature of salvation (cf. Mk. 16:15; Jn. 3:15,16)
 - a. The wages of sin is death (cf. Gen. 2:17; Rom. 6:23).
 - b. If we are firmly planted in Christ we will not taste of spiritual death, even when the physical shell decays (cf. 5:24).
 - c. Both saint and sinner will experience death. Since the first sin it has been the plight of mankind.
 - d. Those in Christ will not taste of the second death (cf. Rev. 2:11; 20:14; 21:8).
 2. The illogical thought processes of the Jews deduced that Jesus' words proved He was demon possessed.
 - a. Their narrow-minded ideas would not allow them to think beyond a physical life and a physical death, e.g., "Abraham is dead" (v 52).
 - b. Their application is obvious. God spoke to and through Abraham and the prophets yet they all have died.
 - c. True, in one sense only (cf. Matt. 22:32; Lk. 16:23-25).
 3. The question of if He is greater than Abraham is a thinly veiled ploy to incite the multitude against Him.
 - a. To exalt Himself above Abraham would surely turn the crowds against Him. Jesus had seen this type of thing before (cf. 4:12).
 - b. "Whom makest thou thyself" (v 53) means *who do you think you are?* The answer? The Son of God (cf. 5:18)!
 - c. They continued to claim an allegiance with Abraham's God, but didn't even know Him (cf. Jer. 9:3; Hosea 5:4).
 4. The great patriarch Abraham looked forward in time to see the promises given to him fulfilled in the "Seed" (cf. Gen. 22:16-18).
 - a. "My day" (v 56) refers to the day of the Messiah, the promised One (cf. Gal. 3:8, 9).
 - b. These Jews still labored under the false idea of everything being mundane. What difference did it make how old, physically, Jesus was (cf. Rev. 1:8)?
 - c. "I am" indicates timelessness (cf. 1:1, 2).
 - d. Never coming to an understanding of His teaching, they thought He was blaspheming and were about to stone Him. He slips away and departs the temple.
- Note: The Master's patience is amazing as He deals with these religious leaders. They had made their choice of whom they would serve. Like many duped religious people of today, plain teaching and simple facts were not going to sway them.

John 9

Jesus and the blind man

- I. Jesus heals the sight of a man (1-12).
 - A. The man is born blind (1-7).
 1. Jesus was leaving the temple (8:59) when He came across this blind man (cf. 5:5).
 - a. The significance here, of course, is that this man had never seen (vs 32).
 - b. Jesus taught by words and by example. In fact, He followed His own teaching (cf. Lk. 10:30ff, the Samaritan).
 - c. He is fleeing a potential stoning by His enemies, yet finds time to help.
Note: Some of our greatest opportunities to do good come to us unexpectedly.
 2. More than 300 years before man devised the diabolical doctrine of original sin, Jesus teaches this doctrine is error¹ (cf. Isa. 59:2; Ezek. 18:20)!
 - a. Like many today, it appears these Jews were very misguided in their associating afflictions with sin (cf. Lk. 13: 1-5; Acts 28:3, 4).
 - b. Jesus gives the reason why this particular man was born blind (cf. 14:11, 12).
 - c. We should see urgency in verse 4. Even for Jesus the window of opportunity on this earth was limited (cf. Ecc. 9:10; Eph. 5:16).
Note: Whether we are young or old, the night of life could fall quickly upon us. We must redeem the time we have (cf. Col. 4:5).
 3. Jesus anoints the man's eyes.
 - a. As the light of the world He is going to bring light to this man's vision (cf. Ps. 146:8; Acts 26:18).
 - b. We see in verse 7 that the man obeys Jesus' command and receives the blessing. It is no different today. Obedience precedes the blessing (cf. 1 Pet. 4:17).
 - B. The healed man is questioned about his sight (8-12).
 1. The neighbors' surprise is shown in their reaction. They questioned the very identity of this man they knew so well (cf. Act. 9:21).
 2. Their question was how a man born blind could suddenly begin to see (cf. 3:9; 1 Cor. 15:35)?
 - a. Some even thought that this man might be someone else.
 - b. The healed man gave them personal, first hand evidence that he was the man blind from birth, but now can see.
 - c. Even at this testimony some didn't believe him (v 19).
 - d. No amount of evidence will persuade some, (cf 10:38) i.e., "don't tell me any facts, I'm happy where I am!"
 - e. Since the man was blind when he met Jesus, he would not know where He went or even what he looked like.
- II. The Pharisees' reaction and the man's faith (13-41).
 - A. The healed man is now taken to the Pharisees (13-17).
 1. There may have been two reasons for this man to be brought before the

¹ It is commonly accepted that Augustine was the first man to write about what he termed "original sin," Circa 354-430. This teaching influenced such famous false teachers as Luther and Calvin.

- Pharisees at this time:
- a. First, they were under the religious leaders. People would naturally turn to them for help in understanding this miracle, especially performed by one they were trying to kill (cf. 11:46)! (We do the same thing, “ask the preacher.”)
 - b. Second, this miracle was done on the Sabbath day. Was this a violation (cf. 5:16, 17)?
 - c. Actually, Jesus is able to accomplish two things by healing on the Sabbath:
 - (1) He challenges the thinking of the Jews in reference to the traditions of the Pharisees (cf. Matt. 15:2, 3; Lk. 6:5).
 - (2) By public defamation of Jesus, these Pharisees were giving Him increased notoriety with every confrontation.
2. In spite of clear evidence, i.e., the miracle, they were divided. This division was based on their own prejudice (cf. 7:43; 10:19).
- a. “[A] prophet” (v 17; means this man regarded Him as an inspired teacher) (cf. Lk. 24:19; Acts 3:22).
 - b. Notice the progression from verse 11. “A man” to “a prophet.”
- B. The parents of this man are summoned for testimony (18-23).
1. These capricious Jews now want additional proof of this healing (v 16).
 - a. They ask three questions (v 19):
 - (1) Is this your son (Doubt implied)?
 - (2) Who ye say was born blind (Accusation implied)?
 - (3) How then doth he see (An impossibility implied)?
 - b. Instead of believing what was right before them, they resorted to accusations of a conspiracy. They either had to admit He was the Christ or invent a way around it (cf. 5:44).
 2. The first two questions are easy for the parents to answer (v 20).
 - a. The third question was one the parents could not/would not answer (cf. 19:38; 20:19).
 - b. The healed man was “of age,” i.e., mature, and could answer for himself was little more than a hedge to avoid the consequences of being put out of the synagogue (v 22) (cf. Lk.6:22; Jn.16:2).
 - c. The son does not ape the cowardliness of the parents (cf. Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:9, 10)!
- C. The healed man’s defense of Jesus (24-34).
1. The religious leaders moved to do everything in their power to discredit Jesus.
 - a. They said, in effect, you can give God (the Father) credit if you so desire, but this Jesus is a sinner. He gets no credit (cf. Rom. 8:3; 2 Cor. 5:21).
 - b. Notice that they say, “we know” (vs 24). They had settled or determined He was a sinner. Nothing was going to change their minds (cf. 18:30).
 - c. When the healed man is called, he does not try to offer a defense of Jesus’ character or anything else. He was unqualified to do so (v 17).
 - d. The one thing he was sure of, he had been blind from birth and now he sees. Once shrouded in darkness, he now has light (cf. 5:15).
 - e. Every Christian was once the same as this healed man. Our thanks and defense should flow freely (cf. Rom. 5:5; Heb. 11:16).

2. They ask the same question for the third time. (The fourth time, if you count the time they asked his parents) (vv 15, 17, 19, 26).
 - a. It appears that this man, who could finally see, could see right through these false leaders (cf. Lk. 22:67).
 - b. Their alleged allegiance to Moses was totally fraudulent (cf. 5:46).
 - c. This healed man thought it amazing (marvelous, v 30) (Thayer, *causing amazement joined with terror.*) that they did not know Jesus.
 - d. How could a sinner open the eyes of a sinner (cf. 3:2; Prov. 15:29; Isa. 59:1, 2; James 5:16)?
 - e. “Thou wast altogether born in sins,” (v 34) was the common Jewish presupposition on earthly calamities (v 2, properly corrected by Jesus, in this case. v 3) (cf. Ezek. 28:15; James 3:9).
 - f. Because he would not bow to their dictates, he was “cast out”, i.e., no longer one of them, religiously (equal to Christian disfellowship).
- D. Faith in Jesus expressed (35-41).
 1. This man surely felt as if he had lost everything in this world. His entire life, both religiously and politically, revolved around the synagogue (cf. Ezra 10:8).
 - a. We should not be surprised that Jesus sought this man out (cf. Lk. 19:10).
 - b. He may have lost his world, but Jesus offered him heaven (cf. Matt. 8:22).
 2. Belief in Jesus is a prerequisite to salvation (cf. Acts 8:37).
 - a. His genuine desire to know the Son of God caused Jesus to reveal Himself to this man (cf. Matt. 18:11; Rom. 5:6).
 - b. An immediate confession fell from this man’s lips (cf. Phil. 2:11; 1 Jn. 4:15).
 - c. Notice, another step has now been taken; “a man,” “a prophet,” and now the “Lord” (11, 17, 38) (Note section II. A. 2. b.).
 3. Jesus sets forth two different kinds of sight, e.g., the physically blind will see and those who were able to see (spiritually) would be blind (cf. Lk. 4:18, physical; Matt. 6:23 spiritual).
 - a. Jesus will say that He came “not for judgment” (cf. 12:47). Here He states that judgment is His purpose (v 39). A paradox? No.
 - b. The truth Jesus brought will judge the world. How a person reacts to that truth will be their judgment (cf. Jn. 12:48; 1 Tim. 1:15, 16).
 - c. These Pharisees were guilty of not seeing (cf. Matt. 15:14).

Note: Being born blind may have saved this man’s eternal soul. Most of those who could see refused to be guided by the light.

John 10

The Good Shepherd

- I. Jesus teaches about sheep and there is a division among the Jews (1-21).
- A. The proverb or parable (1-6).
1. Jesus begins this proverb with the words, “verily, verily.”
Note: The renowned Greek linguist, A.T. Robertson, said that Jesus never used “verily, verily” to introduce a new subject. From this we can deduce that the teaching of the last chapter is continued here (Also from verse 21).
 - a. “Verily, Verily” literally means “truly, truly” and is used for emphasis (cf. 3:3, 5).
 - b. This particular combination of double words occurs twenty-five times in scripture. All twenty-five are in the book of John!
Note: John does not use the word “verily” without doubling it. (*Epanadiplosis*)
 2. We must picture an open corral, not a barn. Otherwise the climbing (v 1) would make no sense (cf. Acts 9:25; 2 Cor 11:33).
 - a. A “door” (v 2) gives proper access (cf. Rom. 5:1, 2; Eph. 2:18).
 - b. Entrance into the sheepfold is only allowed through the “door” (cf. 14:6).
 - c. This was the safe place for the sheep (cf. Lk. 2:8).
Note: When caught out in the open the shepherd would make a pen of stones or branches for the sheep, and then he would lay down across the opening (v 7).
 - d. “A thief,” is one who sneaks, and “a robber” (v 1) is one who acts in violence, these religious leaders were guilty of both.
 3. The real Shepherd would enter through the proper access (cf. Ps. 23:1; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 2:25).
 - a. “[T]he porter” (v 3) is a doorkeeper. The sheepfold would be the church. The Shepherd is Christ, but who this porter is remains unrevealed.
 - b. The sheep hear their shepherd’s voice and respond (cf. Rom 8:30).
 - c. Many shepherds may put their sheep together in a single enclosing for safety and convenience. They then would call them by name, the sheep would recognize the sound of their shepherd’s voice and follow.
 - d. A tender and loving relationship existed between the sheep and shepherds of the east (cf. Ps. 23:2, 3; Isa. 40:11).
 - e. Also, they were fiercely protective (cf. 1 Sam. 17:34-36).
 - f. Many who have visited the Bible lands bring back vivid descriptions of shepherds calling out and sheep following in proper order.
 - g. Jesus had a distinctive voice that should be followed (cf. 3:29; 18:37).
 4. This is called a parable (vs 6), but is not a parable by definition. This is the only time this word is translated *parable* (cf. 16:25, 29; 2 Pet. 2:22).
 - a. The whole idea of responding to the voice of the true Shepherd fits the scene of chapter nine and the healed man (cf. 9:38).
 - b. His acceptance and confession of Jesus was in stark contrast to the rejection of the Pharisees (cf. 9:41). They were blind and deaf!

B. Jesus explains this illustration (7-14).

Note: This is actually a two step explanation: (1) Verses 7-10 illustrates the idea of the door. (2) Verses 11-14 illustrates the idea of the good shepherd.

1. Jesus then plainly tells them that He is the door (v 7).

Note: Verses seven and eleven both state metaphors. Metaphors show equivalence.

- a. As the door, He was the only way they could enter into proper fellowship with the “Godhead” (cf. 14:6).
- b. The “all” (v 8) is everyone who falsely claimed to be able to provide access to the Father, i.e., false Christ’s, perverted leaders, etc. (cf. Matt. 7:15; 24:24; 2 Cor. 11:13).
- c. There is a mixed metaphor in verse 9 with both “the door” and the “pasture” mentioned (cf. Ps. 100:3, 4).
- d. Proper entrance empowers people to “be saved” (v 9) (cf. 5:24; Acts 16:30, 31).
- e. Going “in and out” (v 9) must mean the entering into the safe place where the sheep are kept and leaving to find nourishment (cf. Eze. 34:31).
- f. To steal, kill and destroy are apt descriptions of these callused Jews (cf. Rom. 2:21; 2 Pet. 2:1-3).

2. He plainly tells them that He is the good Shepherd (vs 11).

Note: The Old Testament often referred to the Father (or the Godhead) as the Shepherd (cf. Ps. 23:1; 80:1; 95:7; Eze. 34:12).

- a. “[G]ood” (v 11) means He was willing to do all things necessary for His sheep (cf. Heb. 13:20).

Note: Jesus was not simply a good shepherd. He was the good Shepherd. He was not one among many, but unique.

- b. The good shepherd would remain with his sheep during any type of danger (cf. Matt. 10:16; Acts 20:29).
- c. The very lives of the sheep depended on the watchfulness of the shepherd.
- d. One who is hired (v 12) to do a job will not have the commitment the owner will have.
- e. Attitude plays an important part in being a “hireling.” The simple fact of taking money does not reduce one to being the bad shepherd of these verses (cf. Lk. 10:7). Lack of love for the sheep made the difference.
- f. It cannot be denied that the shepherd’s life of ancient days was perilous (cf. Gen. 31:38-40).
- g. Making merchandise of spiritual things is what is being condemned and contrasted here (cf. Isa. 10:2; Matt. 23:14).

Note: Preachers or elders who work for money or prestige rather than duty and service would be classified as hirelings!

3. The words “know” and “known” (v 14) shows the love and concern reciprocated between the shepherd and the sheep (cf. 2 Tim. 2:19; 1 Jn. 5:20).

C. Other sheep (15-21).

1. Jesus’ total commitment is seen in His willingness to die for His sheep (cf. Gal. 1:4; 1 Tim. 2:6; 1 Jn. 2:2).

- a. The “knoweth” and “know” of verse 15 is the same thought as depicted in B. 3 (cf. Matt. 11:27).
- b. Notice Jesus “lay down” His life. It was not taken from Him, but rather offered in our place (cf. Heb. 9:25).

2. “Other sheep” (v 16) are not the many denominations in our world, but rather

the Gentiles who would be added to the church in due time (cf. Lk. 19:10; Acts 1:8; Col. 1:23).

- a. It is significant that we see the “other sheep” becoming part of the one fold, i.e., the church (cf. Rom. 16:16). They were not separate sheepfolds, as denominationalism rashly expresses (cf. Eph. 4:4-5).
 - b. Denominationalism is wrong and sinful. It is direct opposition to the will of the Father and the prayer of the Son (cf. 17:20, 21; 1 Cor. 1:10).
 - c. This verse is divine proof that we Gentiles will have access to heaven through the death of the Lamb (cf. 1:29; Rev. 13:8).
3. Division and confusion still abound in the minds of the Jews concerning the words spoken here (cf. 7:43; 9:16).
- a. This is directly related to the miracle of sight in the last chapter.
 - b. This is the third time we see Jesus being charged with having a devil (cf. 7:20; 8:48).
 - c. Some of this crowd was honest enough to admit this accusation was in error (cf. Isa. 35:5; Matt. 11:2-5).

Note: Robbers, thieves and hireling shepherds will destroy the “one fold.” The sects and divisions of the so-called Christian world are sinful!

II. Jesus deals with the Jews’ stubborn opposition (22-42).

A. Jesus’ followers have a secure place (22-30).

1. Jesus was in Jerusalem during the feast mentioned in verse 1. This is the only mention of this feast in scripture.

Note: This feast was started during the time between the Old and New Testaments. Also known as the Feast of Lights and, more commonly, Hanukkah. It celebrated the cleansing of the temple after Antiochus Epiphanes defiled it some 200 years before the events of this chapter. This can be noted in the Apocrypha (uninspired Jewish writings) in I and II Maccabees.

- a. It is now winter. Two or three months may have passed between verses 21 and 22 (cf. 7:2).
 - b. The mentioning of Solomon’s porch is connected to the idea of “winter.” It was an enclosed porch, offering a little shelter from the inclement weather (cf. Acts 3:11; 5:12).
2. The religious leaders were tired of the suspense and wanted to know “plainly” (v 24) if He was the Christ (cf. Matt. 26:63; Lk. 22:67, 68).
- a. “[R]ound about him,” (v 24) means, *to surround, to encircle, to Encompass*, Joseph Thayer (cf. Heb. 11:30).
 - b. In light of all that Jesus had said and done, this incident was for show and intimidation rather than for knowledge. Truth had no affect on them (cf. Mk. 14:61, 62).
 - c. From verse 31 we see this was not an honest question. Evidence galore had been previously presented, to no avail (cf. 1 Jn. 5:10).
 - d. Jesus had been plainly and powerfully proclaiming His rightful position for more than two years (cf. 8:36, 38; 10:18).
3. Being religious does not make one a follower of Christ (cf. 6:37; 8:47; 10:4).
- a. These Jews were the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy (cf. Matt. 13:14, 15).
 - b. Dissimilarly, some would understand and would be willing to follow His commands (cf. 13:17; 1 Jn. 5:3).

4. In verses 28 and 29 some mistakenly see the impossibility of apostasy taught.
 - a. The phrases, “they shall never perish,” and “neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand,” are modified by two essentials:
 - (1) The sheep hear His voice (cf. 10:3).
 - (2) A following takes place (cf. 10:4).
 - b. Without these two elements there will be perishing and plucking (cf. Gal. 4:9; James 4:8).
 - c. The scriptures are replete with warnings to get faithful and remain faithful (cf. 1 Cor. 10:12; Gal. 5:4; Rev. 22:14).

Note: Wolves devour sheep. They do not have to change into some other kind of animal in order for the wolf to destroy them.

 - d. There is safety and assurance if one continues to follow the Good Shepherd (cf. 2 Tim. 1:12; 1 Jn. 2:3).
 - e. “[O]ne” (v 30) shows union, and refers to their nature. It does not mean they are one in the same (cf. Matt. 19:5; 1 Cor. 6:16).
 - f. Jesus claiming union with the Father is the culmination of His argument before these Jews (cf. Phil. 2:6).
- B. The angry Jews gathered rocks to stone Jesus (31-38).
 1. They had “taken up stones” just a few months before, hence the word “again” (v 31) (cf. 8:59).
 - a. They were in the temple (v 23). How could they find so many stones to throw at Him in this place of worship? The constant rebuilding of the temple by Herod would afford many stones for throwing (cf. 2:20).
 - b. A stoning would be illegal under Roman law, but these Jews would stone Stephen to death (cf. Acts 7:58).
 - c. Jesus fearlessly challenged them to tell Him for which of His works was He about to be stoned (cf. Ps. 35:12; Jer. 18:20).

Note: Jesus did not back down from His unity with the Father (v 32).

 - d. The charge of blasphemy was leveled at Him. This was a capital crime (cf. Lev. 24:16).
 - e. Jesus was equal with God, but these blind and deaf Jews thought that He had made Himself to be God when, in truth, He had always been God (cf. Matt. 1:23; 1 Tim. 3:16).
 2. Jesus takes the same law they appealed to and shows them another pertinent point (cf. Ps. 82:6).
 - a. The term “god” (v 34) was used in several places to indicate the leaders of the people (cf. Ex. 22:28). Note: The same word is used in Ex 22:8, 9, translated “judges” in KJV.
 - b. These were the leaders of the people who were, technically, wearing this title. Why should they think it strange that the Christ would also wear it?
 3. Jesus powerfully asserts, “the scriptures cannot be broken” (cf. Matt 24:35; Lk. 16:17).
 - a. This statement shows the infallibility of God’s word.
 - b. It shows that the scriptures are just as immutable as any of God’s laws, i.e., time, gravity, etc.

- c. “[B]roken” (v 35) means *to make void*. Nothing, or no one, can make the law void (cf. Acts 2:23; 13:27-29).
 - d. Jesus stresses His union and equality with God (cf. Mk. 14:61, 62).
 - e. Proof of His position was the very works He had done (cf. 3:2; 5:36; Acts 2:22).
- C. Jesus leaves Jerusalem and goes beyond Jordan, where many believe on Him (39-42).
1. These hardhearted Jews would allow nothing to penetrate them (Lk. 4:28, 29).
 - a. Just eight verses before this they were gathering stones to kill Him. The wording in verse 39 indicates they want to arrest Him (cf. 7:30, 32, 44).
 - b. With this verse (39) we draw to a conclusion approximately three months of turbulent teaching in Jerusalem, i.e., chapters 7-10).
 - c. They have schemed to arrest Him twice, attempted to stone Him from anger twice and the plot to kill Him was revealed twice (cf. 8:59; 10:31; 7:19; 8:37).
 - d. He was able to escape, as before, from the harm they intended. His time was not yet come (cf. 7:8, 30; 8:20).
 2. He left the city and would not return until it was His time (17:1).
 - a. He took up residence in the area that John, the baptizer, was first active in his baptisms (cf. 1:28, 3:26).
 - b. He would live in this place approximately three months awaiting the time of Passover and His death.
 - c. Because of the preparation John had made, and now the teaching of Jesus, many in this area believed on Him (cf. 2:23; 4:39).
 3. “John did no miracle” (v 41) has caused some misguided questions. How could John be filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother’s womb (Lk. 1:15) and do no miracles?
 - a. The answer lies in the inaccurate assumption that equates being filled with the Holy Ghost with being baptized in the Holy Ghost.
 - b. Both of John’s parents were filled with the Holy Ghost, as well (cf. Lk. 1:41, 67). Also, examine Stephen and Barnabas (cf. Acts 7:55; 11:24).
 - c. We know that Peter and the other apostles were baptized with the Holy Ghost in Acts 2, yet in Acts 4:8 it says he was “filled with the Holy Ghost”. Obviously not a second baptism.
 - d. John was to prepare the way for the Lord. The light was to shine on the Christ, not on the harbinger (cf. 1:8).
 - e. Hence, the contrasting admission of the religious leaders in 11:47.
 - f. We are commanded to be “filled with the spirit” today (cf. Eph. 5:18, 19). Col. 3:16 tells us how to be filled with the spirit.

John 11

Lazarus dies

I. Jesus learns of Lazarus' sickness and death (1-16).

A. Lazarus becomes sick (1-6).

Note: Lazarus is not mentioned, by name, in the other accounts, but his name fills the next two chapters from the pen of John.

1. Jesus was successfully preaching beyond Jordan (10:40) when a message came to Him concerning His friend who was sick.
 - a. Both Lazarus and Bethany are common names from the first century (Lazarus: Lk. 16:20).
 - b. Hence, the descriptions "Lazarus of Bethany," and "the village of Mary and her sister Martha," (v 1) identifying both the person and the place.
 - c. This Bethany was located about two miles from Jerusalem, on the road which lead to Jericho (cf. Matt. 21:17, 18; Mk. 11:1).
 - d. Mary is further identified as the one who anointed Jesus with the ointment (v 3) (cf. Mk. 14:3-9).

Note: The event mentioned here will not actually take place until chapter twelve. John, writing many years later, (it is called a prolepsis) uses this unusual event to distinguish this Mary from the other four mentioned in the New Testament, e.g.:

- (1) Mary, the mother of Jesus (cf. Matt. 1:18).
 - (2) Mary Magdalene (cf. Matt. 27:56).
 - (3) Mary, the wife of Cleophas (cf. Jn. 19:25).
 - (4) Mary, the mother of John Mark (cf. Acts 12:12).
 - e. Parallel accounts of the event recorded in John 12 are recorded in Matt. 26:6, 7 and Mark. 14:3).
 - f. The account recorded in Luke 7:36ff is a different woman, done at a different time and for a different reason.
2. The sisters requested nothing from Jesus (v 3). They only wanted to get the information to Him about their brother (cf. Phil. 2:26, 27).
 - a. "[W]hom thou lovest" (v 3) is from the word *phileo*, meaning a warm, affectionate love (cf. 13:23; 20:2).
 - b. We are not told what the illness was, but we do know it would quickly become terminal (v 14).
 - c. Jesus, omnisciently, declares this sickness to be for the glory of God, and not for death (cf. Mk. 5:39-42).
 - d. Jesus' love for this family (v 5) may have been deeper than that of His own family, who did not believe on Him (cf. 7:5).
 - e. Martha, Mary and Lazarus had demonstrated support, companionship and a common goal.
 - f. The Father's work was most important to Jesus. Even a close friendship could not interfere with that (What a great lesson).
 - g. In delaying His trip to Bethany, Jesus would glorify the Father and bring His friend back to life (v 4) (cf. 12:28; 13:31, 32).

B. Jesus plans His return to Judaea (7-10).

1. After a two-day delay, He purposed to cross Jordan and go back to the area where His enemies waited (cf. Lk. 9:51).
 - a. Interestingly, Jesus used the general term, Judaea, here and not the specific city of Bethany.
 - b. He knew that His journey would eventually lead Him to Jerusalem, and to His imminent crucifixion (cf. 12:12).
 Note: When He entered Jerusalem this time He would not leave the city area again, in His present, bodily form.
 2. Jesus' disciples tried to convince Him to not return to this area because of the opposition recently faced (cf. 10:31, 39).
 - a. "[T]welve hours in a day," refers to the daylight time (cf. 9:4).
 - b. The contrast between light and darkness is obvious (cf. Prov. 4:18, 19; 1 Jn. 2:10, 11).
 - c. Notice there is more to this than being in darkness or light. The light can be missing in us, causing darkness (cf. Isa. 59:10; 1 Jn. 1:6).
- C. Lazarus' death declared (11-16).
1. The disciples misunderstood the reference to "sleeping" (v 11) (cf. 1 Thess. 4:14, 15; 5:10).
 - a. Death is often called sleep in scriptures (cf. Job 14:12; Ps. 13:3; Dan. 12:2; Acts 7:60, etc.).
 - b. The false doctrine of "soul-sleeping" is not taught in scripture, Jehovah's Witnesses notwithstanding. The soul is anything but asleep when it leaves this world (cf. Lk. 16:19ff; Phil. 1:23).
 - c. In this verse (v 12) the disciples thought Lazarus was resting and would recover.
 2. Jesus tries to explain the importance of this event, but the disciples did not understand (vv 12, 13) (cf. 2 Cor. 4:15).
 - a. Because Jesus was not there to keep Lazarus from dying, a much greater good will materialize from this death (cf. 14:10, 11; 1 Jn. 5:13).
 - b. Jesus' love for Lazarus, and his family, would have possibly caused Jesus to heal Lazarus before death took him (v 3) (cf. 11:35-37).
 - c. "I am glad" (v 15) seems harsh, on the surface, but the intent goes much deeper and is infinitely more important than Lazarus' temporary death.
 Note: The hearers of these words did not know about Lazarus' death, so it would not be a strange thing for them to hear.
 - d. The "intent" (v 15) was to provide substantiated evidence (cf. 19:35; 20:31).
 - e. This has been the design of His miracles from the beginning (cf. 2:11).
 - f. Both "Thomas" (*Aramaic*) and "Didymus" (*Greek*) (v 16) mean *twin*. Hence, an unmentioned sibling.
 - g. Thomas is usually noted for his doubting after the resurrection of Jesus (cf. Jn. 20:24, 25).
 - h. Here, (v 16) he shows faith and loyalty to Jesus. He felt that returning to Judaea meant certain death, yet he was willing to go and encouraged the others, also.
 Note: Thomas needs to be commended rather than condemned for his doubting. We need proof for the things that we believe (cf. Rom. 10:17).

- i. Thomas' love for the Lord is expressed in his willingness to follow Jesus even if it meant death (cf. Rev 2:10).

Note: In times of trouble we should try to use the example of Martha and Mary and trust in Jesus to help us.

II. Jesus raises Lazarus (17-46).

A. Jesus meets with Martha and Mary (17-24).

1. Lazarus is dead and was buried four days prior to Jesus' arrival (11:6).
 - a. Jesus had raised at least two people before this:
 - (1) The young man at Nain (cf. Lk. 11:15).
 - (2) Jarius' daughter (cf. Lk. 8:41, 42).

Note: Both of these cases were performed relatively close to the time of their respective deaths.

- b. Lazarus had been dead for a sufficient length of time that he had started to decompose (v 39). Therefore, no mummification.
 - c. This four-day period would effectively remove any doubt as to the validity of this miracle, even in the eyes of these hardhearted Jewish leaders.
2. The close proximity of Bethany to Jerusalem ("about 15 furlongs," v 18) afforded many friends to come to Martha and Mary to offer comfort. (Less than two miles.) (cf. Acts 1:12).
 - a. The large number of mourners probably indicates this family was held in high regard.
 - b. As soon as Martha heard Jesus was approaching, she broke away from the mourners and went out to meet Him (cf. Acts 10:25; 28:15).
 - c. Many make a big deal out of Martha going to meet Jesus and Mary staying behind. Mary simply did not know He was near (cf. vs 28).
 - d. Martha's statement demonstrated tremendous faith (vv 21, 22) (cf. Matt. 28:18).
3. Jesus plainly tells Martha that Lazarus "shall rise again" (v 23).
 - a. Martha did not follow the false doctrine of the Sadducees who did not believe in a resurrection (cf. Matt. 22:23).
 - b. Martha was thinking of the resurrection of the last day, (cf. 5:28, 29; 6:39, 40) but Jesus was speaking of something much closer at hand.
 - c. It appears Martha found little, or no comfort, in the doctrine of a resurrection in the last day. We often act as Martha did when a death occurs in our families or to our loved ones.

B. Jesus declares Himself to be the resurrection (25-27).

1. This section shows Jesus' declaration of His unique power over all things, including death (v 22).
 - a. Jesus utters some of the most comforting words in His entire ministry in these two verses (cf. Phil. 3:10; Rev. 21:4).
 - b. "I am the resurrection and life" extends far beyond Lazarus and the immediate situation (cf. 5:24-29).
 - c. The hope of all people is in Jesus the Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 15:20; 51-57).
2. "[S]hall never die" (v 26) needs to be tied to Jesus' statement in 8:51.
 - a. This is not a declaration of physical death, but rather the second death (cf. Rev. 2:11; 20:14, 15).

- b. Though Martha did not fully understand the implications of His statement, He asks her if she believes (cf. Matt. 9:28).
 - c. Martha answered in the affirmative (cf. Matt. 16:16; Acts 8:37).
- C. Jesus mourns with the family and friends of Lazarus (28-37).
1. Martha tell Mary about Jesus calling her (v 28), but in secret. Probably due to the great opposition surrounding Him at this time.
 - a. Jesus allowed Mary to come to Him at the same place He spoke to Martha. A private setting conducive to talk between grieving friends. A good idea which did not turn out too well.
 - b. Family and friends follow Mary out of the house thinking she was off to the tomb. A natural assumption (cf. Lk. 23:55).
 - c. Mary's faith was just as strong as her sister's (v 32) (cf. Lk. 8:41; 17:16).
 2. Because of Mary's weeping and the weeping of those Jews who accompanied her, Jesus was troubled and groaned within Himself (cf. Matt. 14:14; Lk. 7:13).
 - a. Sympathy and understanding of their feelings caused this reaction.
 - b. "[G]roaned" (v 33) comes from a word which means *anger* and *indignation* (Strong's) (cf. Mk. 14:4). The context points these feelings towards death itself.
 - c. "[T]roubled" (vs 33) means to *agitate* or *to have inward commotion* (cf. 5:7; 12:27) (Thayer). Jesus was genuinely touched by their feelings (cf. Heb. 4:15).
 - d. "Jesus wept" (v 35) is often only noted for being the shortest verse in the Bible, robbing it of the wonderful import of compassion and emotion (cf. Isa. 63:9; Lk. 19:41).
 - e. There is indignation in the statement of verse 37. They are, in effect, saying, "He healed the blind, why couldn't he save His friend?"
- D. Jesus goes to the grave and raises Lazarus (38-45).
1. Jesus arrived at the cave, a common place of burial in the East (cf. Gen. 23:19; 49:29; Matt. 27:60).
 - a. Many modern eyewitnesses have seen the great number of burial caves in that area.
 - b. Jesus tells the men, maybe His disciples, to remove the stone. (cf. Mk. 16:3)
Note: Jesus had the power to raise the dead, surely He could have moved the stone via miraculous powers also. True, but He never does for us what we can do for ourselves! The stone was moved by manpower.
 - c. Martha was concerned about decomposition (v 39) (cf. Acts 2:27; 13:36).
 - d. It appears in verse 39 that Martha thought Jesus wanted to look upon His friend. Jesus reminds her of the promise (v 40) (cf. 11:23-26).
 2. Jesus lifted His eyes (in prayer) thanked the Father for hearing His prayers. This is possibly the culmination of a prayer offered at an earlier time (cf. Phil. 4:6).
 - a. This audible declaration was to further reinforce their understanding of the close relationship between Father and Son (cf. 5:36; 10:38).
Note: If Jesus gave the glory to God for the things accomplished on this earth, should we do any different?
 - b. Jesus calls Lazarus, by name, and he immediately comes forth from the grave (1 Sam. 2:6).
 - c. The flesh was made whole, the blood flowed in the veins, the sickness was gone. Jesus' greatest miracle, done without fanfare and boasting.

- d. So stunned were the onlookers that they had to be told to unbind Lazarus from the grave-clothes (cf. 20:5).
- III. Reaction to the miracle (45-57).
- A. Caiaphas offers a prediction (45-54).
- 1. Many believed on Jesus because of the miracles that He did (v 45). Others refused to believe on Him in spite of the miracles (cf. Lk. 16:30, 31).
 - a. The evidence was clear to those who believed and to those who refused to do so. It has always been this way (cf. Acts 17:32; 28:24).
 - b. The reference to “the Romans” (v 48) stems from their false idea that the Messiah would be an earthly monarch (cf. 18:36).
 - c. We can see their misunderstanding based on the rather vague passages from the prophets of old (cf. Dan. 2:44; 7:13, 14).
 - d. Yet, Jesus had taught them the truth (cf. Lk. 17:20, 21).
 - 2. The High Priest, Caiaphas, says that Jesus should die (cf. Lk. 3:2; Acts 4:6).
 - a. “Ye know nothing,” (v 49) means that this was not a difficult question at all. Kill Jesus and preserve the nation (cf. Prov. 26:12; 1 Cor. 3:18, 19).
 - b. Caiaphas stated the Father’s design and the Son’s purpose.
 - c. Verses 51 and 52 form John’s inspired commentary on the statement made by Caiaphas in verse 50.
 - d. Caiaphas’ solution to preserve the nation was put into motion with vigor (cf. Matt. 26:59; Mk. 14:1).
 - e. He then leaves the city, as He had done before, for a short period of time (cf. 4:1-3; 7:1).
- B At the time of the Passover Feast, Jesus returns to Jerusalem (55-57).
- 1. John supplies no details of this journey to Jerusalem, but the other three writers offer pointed details of the trip (cf. Matt. 19-21).
 - a. The Passover was one of the required feasts of the Jews and Jesus would not/could not miss it (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 2:22).
 - b. This is the fourth Passover Jesus has observed in John’s record. That makes His ministry a little more than three years long (cf. 2:13; 5:1; 6:4).
 - 2. They were counting on Jesus’ faithfulness to the Law of Moses to bring Him to Jerusalem so they could kill Him (cf. Dan. 6:10).
 - a. The hidden desire to kill Jesus was now brought to the open and made “a commandment” (v 57).
 - b. Jesus’ hour has now fully “come,” so He would make Himself available for their evil plot (cf. 7:6, 30; 8:20; 12:23).

John 12

Mary anoints Jesus and the triumphant entry into Jerusalem

- I. Mary anoints the feet of Jesus (1-11).
 - A. Jesus is anointed at Bethany (1-3).
 1. The length of time between 11:54 and His return to Bethany is unknown. However, the tremendous amount of information contained in Matt. 19, 20; Mark 10 and Luke 18 and 19 all chronologically fit into this period.
 - a. Six days before the Passover would have been on the 8th day of the first month of the Jewish calendar (cf. Lev. 23:4, 5).
 - b. The Passover feast started the week long festival of unleavened bread (cf. Deut. 16:1-3).
 - c. From the description of verse 1, there can be no mistaking who this Lazarus was (The prolepsis of 11:1, 2).
 2. They prepared Him a meal and Martha served it (cf. Lk. 10:38-40).
 - a. The preparing and serving of the meal was in direct opposition to the “command” to turn Him in (cf. 11:57).
 - b. This account shows there was nothing unusual about Lazarus after his resurrection (v 2).
 3. Mary enters with oil and anoints Jesus’ feet (cf. Matt. 26:7; Mk. 14:3). There is no contradiction here. Both the head and feet were anointed.
 - a. John describes this oil as “very costly” (v 3). Nard, or spikenard was imported in alabaster boxes from India, accounting for much of the expense (cf. Song of Sol. 4:13, 14).
 - b. The Bible says this was a “pound” from a Greek work *litra*, derived from a Latin word *libra*, from which we get our abbreviation “lb.” for pound. It was about 12 ounces of liquid measure (cf. 19:39).
 - c. The fact that this was a rare ointment, along with the generous amount used, fill the house with a scent probably unusual to the common household (cf. Song of Sol. 1:3).
 - B. Jesus rebukes Judas (4-8).
 1. It appears the hypocritical Judas was not alone in protesting this use of spikenard (cf. Matt. 26:8). Judas was probably the first to speak up.
 - a. John reveals Judas’ selfish motives (v 6) (cf. Rom. 12:9 [Dissimulation]; James 3:17).

Note: Is it not interesting that the only thief in the group was the one designated to hold “the bag?” We must face our temptations, deal with our temptations and rise above our temptations.
 - b. If a penny was a day’s wage, then this spikenard was worth about ten months’ wages (cf. Matt. 20:2)! We can see greed being a factor here.
 - c. “[G]iven to the poor,” (v 5) indicates that it is not uncommon to see good motives used to accomplish evil deeds.
 2. Jesus tells them to leave Mary alone. She was fulfilling a purpose with the anointing (cf. Matt. 26:12).
 - a. This was the only anointing Jesus received from any of the females. (plus

- the account in Lk. 7:36ff, which is a separate setting.) They arrived at the tomb after He had risen (cf. Mk. 16:1-4).
- b. Is not this very study a striking fulfillment of Jesus' words in Mk. 14:6-9?
- C. These religious leaders also hated Lazarus (9-11).
1. The "people" of verse 9 would be the common people, as opposed to the religious leaders (cf. Mk. 12:37).
 - a. The raising of Lazarus from the dead had caused quite a commotion, which is very understandable.
 - b. Sadly, the implication of the word "see" (v 9) indicates a possible curiosity rather than seeking information and knowledge (Conversely, notice verse 21).
 2. Lazarus' resurrection was intended to bring faith, but it became an additional sore spot with the rulers of the people (cf. 11:4, 15, 26, 41, 42).
 - a. Lazarus' very existence was a living, breathing witness to the power of Jesus (cf. Matt. 11:2-5).
 - b. It appears these *religious leaders* had a common solution to every problem they confronted, kill the person and remove the problem (cf. Matt. 2:16).
- II. The triumphant entrance into the city (12-22).
- A. Jesus enters Jerusalem (12-19).
1. Jesus rides into town on a donkey (cf. Matt. 21:2-5).
 - a. This was a fulfillment of prophecy (cf. Zech. 9:9).
 - b. In Matthew's account we learn that some put their clothing on the donkey, probably as a makeshift saddle or cushioning (cf. Matt. 21:7).
Note: This is the only known case of Jesus riding any animal in His entire life.
 2. Palm branches symbolized victory and triumph (cf. Lev. 23:40; Rev. 7:9). Most think that is the reason that this event is commonly called the "triumphant entry."
 - a. The other three accounts of Jesus' life show that garments were also spread before Jesus as He rode into town (cf. Matt. 21:8; Mk. 11:8; Lk. 19:36).
 - b. This "carpeted" path was usually reserved for conquering heroes.
 - c. He now is accepted as their king. How quickly this popularity would wane (cf. Matt. 27:22)!
 - d. "Hosanna," (v 13) means *save now* or *save us now*. It is only used with reference to His entry into Jerusalem at this time (cf. Ps. 118:25).
 3. The disciples saw what was transpiring before them, but would not grasp its full meaning for more than seven weeks (cf. 14:26).
 - a. The people bearing testimony of His raising Lazarus from the dead were a vocal part of this procession into the city.
 - b. Because of the eyewitnesses' testimony, His fame was spreading (cf. 15:27; 21:24; Acts 1:22).
 - c. The Pharisees realized that their efforts to stop Him had failed. Exalted by the common people, Jesus enters the city (cf. Lk. 13:17).
 - d. Interestingly, "the world is gone after Him," means that the greater part of the teeming throngs supported Jesus at this point.
 - (1) Josephus wrote that as many as three million Jews would have

been in the city at this festival. This adds meaning to “the world is gone after Him” (v 19)

- (2) “World,” (v 19) is not used as normally use it today. It simply means they thought everyone was following Jesus.
- (3) The Pharisees were frustrated with their lack of effectiveness in quieting this problem (cf. Matt. 21:15; Acts 4:16, 17).

B. Some of the Greeks wanted to see Jesus (20-22).

1. These Greeks were probably proselytes who had a desire to learn more about this man they had heard so much about.
 - a. It does not follow that these “Greeks” were foreign Jews coming to Jerusalem for the festival, as some have supposed (cf. Acts 2:5).
 - b. The Jewish nation was scattered everywhere, but they were still considered Jews (cf. Acts 14:1; 16:1; 17:4, 5).
2. This “Philip” (v 21) was probably the apostle so named (cf. Matt. 10:3).
 - a. Some speculate that the reason they came to Philip was because of his Greek name (cf. 1:43). Peter and John also had Greek names.
 - b. They may have asked for help in meeting Jesus because the proselytes were restricted from traveling to many parts of the temple area.
 - c. “Sir, we would see Jesus” (v 21) needs to be the cry of all people (cf. Matt. 12:19-21). It needs to be the intent of every preacher and teacher. Allow the people to see Jesus.
 - d. Philip, possibly not knowing what to do with these Gentiles, takes the problem to Andrew. Then, together, they take the request to Jesus (cf. Matt. 10:5).
 - e. It seems that Andrew was constantly bringing someone to the Lord (cf. 1:40-42; 6:8, 9).

Note: The humble Christ allowed the people to declare Him as He really was/is this one time, as He enters Jerusalem for the last time. He is both victor and conqueror.

III. His glorification declared (23-36).

A. His death will bring about the glorification (23-26).

1. Jesus answers, “the hour is come” (v 23) for His death (cf Mk 14:41; Lk 22:53).
 - a. This was not a specific hour, but rather the culmination of the events surrounding His death (cf 17:1).
 - b. Inspiration has been leading us to this “hour” since chapter 2 (cf 2:4; 4:21; 5:25; 7:6, 30; 8:20).
 - c. To whom He was answering (v 23) is unclear, and probably unknowable from the text.
2. The “verily, verily” (v 24) introduces a tremendously important point. He has life in Him, like a seed does, but death must come to release the abundance of life (cf Ps 72:16; 1 Cor 15:36). Death precedes life.
 - a. This was His purpose in coming to this earth (cf Heb 2:9, 10).
 - b. This statement would be strange to the disciples. They had just witnessed His triumphant entrance into the city and fully expected Him to establish His kingdom presently (cf Matt 20:21; Acts 1:6).
 - c. Grain which does not die (planted) cannot bring forth life (cf Rom 6:5).

Note: Corn has been found encased with four thousand-year-old Egyptian mummies. The grain had not reproduced anything. When the corn was planted, even after this tremendous time variance, they produced corn!

- d. Following Jesus (v 26) implies obedience to His will (cf Lk 9:23; Eph 5:1, 2).
- B. He was troubled, but a voice from heaven gave Him strength (27-30).
 1. A proud Father hears the Son's reply of complete obedience (cf Heb 10:5-7).
 - a. We see Jesus involved in self-analysis as He ponders the impending death, i.e., "what shall I say" (vs 27)? (cf Matt 26:38; Lk 22:44).
 - b. His intent and design was clear (cf 1 Tim 1:15).
 2. This "voice from heaven" (v 28) was the third time the Father had audibly spoken to the Son on earth. First, at His baptism (cf Matt 3:16, 17). Second, at His transfiguration (cf Matt 17:5).
 - a. The Father was glorified in the life and miracles of Jesus (cf 11:4).
 - b. His resurrection from the grave would glorify the Father again (cf Heb 12:2).
 - c. The Father's voice was a great encouragement to Jesus, but the purpose of it was for the multitude (cf Ex 19:9).
 - d. The voice from heaven thundered the words. The Jews generally believed that all God's communication to man was directed through angels (cf Gal 3:19; Heb 2:2).
- C. The drawing power of the lifted up Christ (31-36).
 1. Jesus shows the contrast between Him and Satan, i.e., "the prince of this world" (v 31) (cf 5:24-27).
 - a. Jesus will dethrone Satan of his position on earth (cf Gen 3:15; Lk 10:17-19; Acts 26:18; 2 Cor 4:4).

Note: Satan has had dominion over the earth since the fall of man in Eden.
 - b. Jesus, as Christ, will be revealed as the true ruler of earth by power over sin and death (cf Rom 5:21; 8:2).
 - c. The idea of "cast out" (v 31) means Satan will lose his power over mankind, i.e., cast out of control. The cross of Christ and the empty tomb are the dividing line over his dominion.
 - d. "[J]udgment" (v 31) is not the final judgment, but rather the time of decision (cf 3:19).
 2. His type of death is revealed as Him being lifted "up from the earth" (v 32) (cf Gal 3:13; 1 Pet 2:24) (Already mentioned twice in this book (3:14; 8:28)).
 - a. Interestingly, Satan, and the people, wanted to destroy Jesus in His death, but the word "lifted up" means *to exalt* (Strong's).
 - b. The people wanted to know about this lifting up, and who the Son of man was/is (v 34) (cf Ps 72:17; Dan 7:13).

Note: "Law" here means from the book of Psalms or one of the prophets, indicating all the Old Testament was classified as law (cf Ps 110:4; Isa 9:7, etc.).
 - c. Notice that He did not answer them directly. Their defiant attitude was going to judge them.
- IV. Many did not believe on Him (37-50).
 - A. Intentional blindness is the darkest of all (37-43).
 1. The many miracles Jesus performed were designed to establish faith (cf 11:15).

- a. This is the reason the miracles were often referred to as “signs” (cf Josh 24:16, 17; Jn 20:30).
- b. Jesus did not fail, nor did the miracles He performed. It was the unmoldable hearts of the Jews that had failed. They had failed to see the salvation offered to them (cf Mk 4:12).
- c. Some of these very people had seen Jesus’ miraculous power, which ranged from the turning water into wine in John 2, to the raising of Lazarus from the grave in John 11.

Note: John only records seven of the miracles of Jesus, possibly examples of His power, or maybe more like a highlight reel.

2. Their rejection of the Messiah was a fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy (v 38). (cf Isa 53:1-3).
 - a. We are told why this rejection took place: the blinding of their eyes and the hardening of their hearts (v 40) (cf Isa 29:10; Matt 13:13-15).
 - b. God did not force them into this blindness. If that were true He would be responsible for their disbelief. This, in no wise, is the case (cf Isa 6:9, 10; Mk 6:1-6).
 - c. The closed eye cannot see. The plugged ear cannot hear. The fire from the “lamp” (Ps 119:105) hardens the clay and melts the wax!
 - d. Rejection of the truth does not necessarily reflect on the message or the messenger (cf Prov 1:30, 31; Hosea 4:6).
 - e. Many of the chief rulers, i.e., members of the Sanhedrin, believed He was the Messiah, but went no further with their faith. “Faith only” is dangerous and futile (cf James 2:24).
 - f. A prerequisite of salvation is confession (cf Rom 10:10).
 - g. Real faith will cause one to do as the word dictates (cf Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Jn 2:3-5).

B. Those who were not blind were fearful (44-50).

Note: This last paragraph of John 12 is basically a summation of Jesus’ ministry.

1. Jesus shows the union of the Father and the Son (cf 17:21).
 - a. This has been one of the great themes in the book of John thus far (cf 5:23; 7:16; 8:29, 42).
 - b. Darkness is equivalent of error. Jesus is the opposite of darkness (cf Isa 42:7; Eph 5:14).
 - c. Jesus’ first visit to this earth was not for the purpose of judgment. He brought the saving knowledge of God’s message (cf 1 Tim 1:15, 16).
 - d. Things will be different at His next visit (cf 2 Thess 1:7-9)!
2. The rejection of Jesus’ words will not be without dire consequences (cf Rom 2:16).
 - a. The Son spoke by authority of the Father. The message came from above and was being revealed via the Son (cf Matt 16:19).
 - b. “Life everlasting” is in the words of the Bible. It does not contain truth; it is truth (cf 6:63)!

John 13

The new commandment

I. Jesus washes His disciples' feet (1-17).

A. Events leading up to the Passover meal (1-2).

Note: The information contained in the next five chapters (13-17) all take place in the upper room in the presence of the chosen disciples (apostles).

1. This Passover feast (v 1) is mentioned in all four of the accounts of Jesus' life (Matt 26:2ff; Mk 14:1ff; Lk 22:1ff).
 - a. Some say these events either occurred before the normal time of eating of the Passover meal, (cf 18:28; 19:31) or, Jesus and the disciples partook of a "type" of the Passover meal a day early. I deny both of these supposed conclusions.
 - b. Some have suggested that the Pharisees observed the Passover meal on Thursday and the Sadducees on Friday (ISBE, page 2258).
 - c. This would be Thursday evening before the Friday crucifixion (cf Hosea 6:2; Lk 24:46, counting backwards from Sunday).

Note: This reasoning is from our modern viewpoint. Friday, for the Jews, began at sundown on what we consider Thursday evening.

- d. The apparent difference in 18:28 can be easily explained by understanding the whole week is referred to in several ways, e.g., Passover, Passover Festival, Passover Week, Feast of Unleavened bread (cf 2 Chron 30:22).
- e. The "day of preparation" often refers to the day before the Jewish Sabbath (cf Mk 15:42; Lk 23: 54; Jn 19:14, 31, 42).

Note: John is probably referring to the whole week as the Passover, which was a common way of stating it (cf Lev 23:5, 6).

- f. The conclusion, this was Friday (Jewish reasoning; Thursday for our reasoning) on which all four accounts agree.

Note: We must notice one problem area. Matthew 26:20 has them reclining at supper (cf Mk 5:40 ends with the same word translated "sat" (cf Ex 12:11).

2. "His own" (v 1) were His disciples. The impending trials, abuses, betrayal, denials and death would not lessen the love He had for them (cf 15:9; 1 Jn 4:19).
 - a. At the end of the supper (v 2) (literally, while they were at supper, cf 13:30). Judas succumbed to Satan and betrayed the Lord (cf Acts 1:25; Jude 6, 7).
 - b. The devil has no control over us unless we allow it to happen. Judas was not responsible for the temptation from the devil, but he was responsible for his own actions (cf Lk 22:31; Acts 5:3).

B. Jesus teaches humility (3-11).

1. "[A]ll things" (v 3) refers to all authority which had been given Him (cf Matt 11:27; 28:18).
 - a. Since He had all authority, He should be in the position to be served Yet, *He* washed *their* feet.
Note: In order to properly understand the situation we need to keep in mind the disciples' mindset (cf Lk 22:24).
 - b. Their lack of humility called for a vivid illustration of true humility from their Master (cf 13:13-15).

- c. The fact that their feet were still dirty is significant. Feet washing was not ceremonial, but functional, due to the road conditions. Servants did the feet washing, and none of these men would voluntarily submit to the task (cf Phil 2:3-7).
 - d. Jesus, in total silence, ties a towel around Himself, pours some water and begins to wash and dry the disciples' feet (cf Gen 18:4; 1 Sam 25:41).
2. The disciples say nothing until He reaches Peter, (v 6) who speaks from embarrassment, it appears.
- a. How many feet Jesus had washed before He came to Peter is unknown. Enough feet for Peter to be in deep introspection (cf Lk 5:8).
 - b. Jesus knew He would be able to get His point across, but the deeper meaning would be made clear at a future time (cf 16:13).
 - c. This makes it very clear (v 7) that the actual act of feet washing was not the intended point of the actions taken here. Peter eventually learned this lesson, (cf 1 Pet 5:5) but he had not learned it yet.
 - d. Peter lacked understanding, but his respect for Jesus caused the statement "Thou shalt never wash my feet" (v 8).
 - e. Peter had gone from respect and honor of the Lord (v 6) to questioning His judgment (v 8). Peter had not submitted, and therefore he had not learned the lesson.
Note: This is the reason for the stern tone of Jesus' reply, "If I wash thee not, thou has no part with me" (v 8). He must understand humility to be the servant Jesus needed him to be (cf Matt 18:4; 23:12; James 4:10; 1 Pet 5:6).
 - f. No true disciple will question the Lord's will, only obey and serve (cf Heb 5:9).
3. Peter's amazing inconsistency is revealed, once again, in verse 9.
- a. Peter quickly shifts from not allowing his feet to be washed to wanting an entire bath (cf Ps 51:2).
 - b. This is the same man who:
 - (1) Less than a year before this wanted to walk on the water only to cry, "Lord, save me" as he sank (cf Matt 14:30).
 - (2) This very night, would swing a sword at a man in defense of his Master, then flee into the night in fear (cf 18:10).
 - (3) Would boldly come into the very court where his Master was being tried, yet deny knowledge of Him three times (cf Lk 22:55-61).
 - (4) Gave up on following Jesus and went back to fishing, yet dove into the water because he could not wait for the boat to be rowed to shore when Jesus appeared (cf 21:7).
 - c. Peter was enthusiastic, but still mistaken about the intent of Jesus' words. To Peter it was still about the physical act of feet washing and not about humility (cf Isa 2:12; 1 Pet 5:5).
 - d. "He that is washed" (v 10) is a reference to the ceremonial washing, which was the custom of the Jews before attending the Passover feast, i.e., he was already clean and just needed his feet washed.
 - e. Judas was not clean spiritually speaking. Jesus knew he had betrayed Him and had foretold of this event a year prior (cf 6:70, 71; 13:19).
- C. Jesus takes the time to explain the preceding event (12-17).
- 1. The act of feet washing was completed, but did they understand the significance of it (cf Matt 13:51)?

- a. They knew Him as “Master and Lord” (cf Matt 23:8; Lk 6:46; Rev 19:16).
- b. In this role He humbled Himself to wash their feet when they would not wash one another’s feet (cf 2 Cor 10:1).
- c. It is plainly stated by inspiration that this act was for “example” (vs 15). It was never intended to be followed literally (cf 1 Pet 2:21).
- d. The particular need, e.g., feet washing, is no longer necessary in our society of clean streets and different style of foot wear (cf 1 Tim 5:10).

Note: 1 Tim 5:10 is the only case mentioned of this act after Jesus gave us this example here in John 13.

- 2. Jesus states that no disciple should hold themselves above the example of the Lord and Master (cf Lk 6:40; Jn 15:20).
 - a. This, like all lessons from inspiration, will lead us to be happier people as we go through this life (cf Ps 19:11; Rev 22:14).
 - b. Exalting oneself is a recipe for a downfall (cf Lk 14:8-11).
 - c. “[H]appy are ye” (v 17) is the same word Jesus uses in the beatitudes for “blessed” (Matt 5:3-11, each of these verses begins with this same word).

Note: Man’s way to greatness is to exalt self. God’s way to greatness is to have us serve our fellow man.

II. Judas carries out the betrayal (18-30).

A. Jesus had a message for eleven of the twelve apostles (18-20).

- 1. The single exception of “not all of you” (v 18) is Judas, who had been prophesied as the betrayer (cf Ps 41:9).
 - a. Jesus knew Judas’ character from the beginning (cf 13:11).
 - b. The Godhead knew Judas would fail in this manner, but he was not forced to do so. It was his free will (cf Josh 24:15; 1 Kgs 18:21).
 - c. Every person is tested in various ways. We will either stand or fall according to our own “test results.”
 - d. It should be comforting to realize that the cause of Christ can grow and prosper, even in spite of people like Judas (cf Acts 2:41; 4:4).
 - e. This was all the fulfillment of God’s plan (cf 17:12; Acts 1:16).
- 2. Jesus freely expresses His knowledge of Judas’ future activities so that the remaining apostles might have the foundation to increase their faith (cf Matt 24:25).
 - a. Up to this point, Jesus had held this specific knowledge to Himself (cf 13:10, 11, but no longer, 14:29; 16:4).
 - b. Notice the *he* at the end of verse 19 is italicized. This parallels the great “I am” of Ex 3:14 (cf Rev 1:17, 18).
 - c. A wonderful progression is revealed in verse 20 concerning the message and the messenger. The true messenger carries the message of Christ, who, in turn, carries the message of the Father (cf Matt 10:40; Lk 10:16).
 - d. The converse of this progression is that whosoever rejects Jesus (or His message) rejects the Father at the same time (cf 10:30).

B. The betrayer leaves (21-30).

- 1. Verbalizing the knowledge of the one who was to betray Him caused Jesus to be “troubled in spirit” (v 21) (cf 11:33; 12:27, same Greek word.).
 - a. Jesus knew the agony which awaited Him (cf Matt 26:38; Rom 9:2, 3).

- b. Interestingly, the next chapter begins with this same word being used in a protective way (14:1).
- 2. The disciples still were unsure of whom He was speaking (cf Mk 14:19; Lk 22:23).
 - a. Two things are apparent from this information:
 - (1) Only Judas knew whom He was speaking of, i.e., his deception was still intact among the apostles.
 - (2) They all had some inner doubts, and perfectly understood that Jesus knew them better than they knew themselves.
 - b. The one “whom Jesus loved” (v 23) is generally thought of as referring to John, the apostle. This is unprovable from John’s account, but most likely a correct assumption (cf 20:2; 21:7; 21:24).

Note: John never uses his own proper name in this entire book.

- c. “[L]eaning” (v 23) comes from the custom of reclining to eat; Da Vinci’s masterpiece THE LAST SUPPER (1495-1497) is wholly wrong.
- d. From this reclining position it would be easy to lean back and speak privately with another, prompting Peter request (cf Acts 12:17; 13:16).
- 3. Jesus now reveals the betrayer to all present by passing the dipped bread to Judas.
 - a. Judas was still trying to keep up appearances (cf Matt 26:25; 26:15-17).
 - b. Now, at the exposure of his betrayal, Judas totally gives himself to Satan (Lk 22:3; Jn 13:2).
 - c. “That thou doest, do quickly,” (v 27) seems to indicate that Jesus was tired of the pretense of Judas being a true follower (cf Matt 7:21).
 - d. The disciples did not understand the meaning of the words used by Jesus.
 - e. They supposed a couple of possibilities as to why he left. Man’s suppositions are typically wrong (cf Matt 16:13, 14). Facts must be the foundation for anything we believe.
 - f. There could be more than a mere fact stated in “and it was night” (v 30). Judas went from light to darkness. He went out into the darkness (cf 1 Jn 2:11).

III. Jesus offers a new commandment (31-38).

A. The new commandment is love (31-35).

- 1. Jesus’ attention now returns to His eminent death (cf Lk 9:22).
 - a. “[G]lorified” and “glorify” are used five times in verses 31 and 32. Jesus was stressing the coming events were necessary, not forced.
 - b. This should build faith and courage in His followers.
 - c. He could have avoided the conflict, if He so desired (cf Lk 4:30; Jn 5:13; 10:39).
 - d. There would be no glorification in avoiding the death. It must be done for man to be reconciled to God (cf Rom 5:10).
- 2. Jesus then refers to His disciples as “little children,” denoting great tenderness toward His faithful disciples.
 - a. Both Paul and John would use this expression, when referring to Christians in years to come (cf Gal 4:19; 1 Jn 2:1).
 - b. “Children” shows the proper relationship to the Father, only obtainable through Jesus Christ (cf 1 Pet 1:3).
 - c. The mentality of seeking (v 33) mentioned by Jesus has been stated to the Jews twice before (cf 7:34; 8:21).

- d. The difference is that the rebellious Jews would never follow Him, but the faithful disciples would follow at a future date (cf Matt 25:46).
3. This new law of love was much more than a simple reiteration the Mosaical utterance (cf Lev 19:18).
- a. If it were the same, then it would not be new (cf 2 Jn 5, 6)!
 - b. What was the difference? The new doctrine of love was based on Jesus' example of a higher form of love, e.g., "as I have loved you" (v 34) (cf 1 Jn 3:23).
- Note: The command to love was not new. The depth, demands and dedication of Jesus' love were completely new. Jesus' love demonstrated His total commitment, i.e., leaving heaven, suffering and His death.
- c. This love became the badge of the disciples (cf 1 Thess 4:9; 5:13; Heb 13:1; and love was exalted above faith and hope. 1 Cor 13:13).
 - d. This same love is supposed to be the identifying marker for modern day Christians.
- B. Peter's denial foretold (36-38).
- 1. Peter was confused about the roll he was to play in the revealing of the gospel message, and about Jesus' eminent departure (cf 16:17-19).
 - a. The Lord's work was nearly completed. Peter's work (and the other apostles, as well.) was just about to begin (cf Lk 24:49).
 - b. These great men would follow, in due time, according to conjecture and historical speculation, death (martyrdom) for their uncompromising faith. One of them relatively quickly. (cf Acts 12:2)
 - 2. Peter's question (v 37) shows a typical misunderstanding on Peter's part. Followed quickly with a brash and bold statement, which improperly put his love parallel to Jesus' love (cf Lk 22:33; Jn 21:15-17).
 - a. Jesus reveals to Peter his unfathomed weakness. A three-fold denying was unimaginable to Peter (cf Matt 26:34, 35).
- Note: It is now dark. The cock would crow very soon. This prophecy would be fulfilled in a few hours.
- b. Peter denied the Lord three times with his mouth and once with his actions (cf Matt 26:70-74; 26:56).
 - c. He was not yet ready to fully follow the Lord. He would, with time, exercise and the Holy Ghost, develop into the finest of examples (cf 2 Pet 1:1).
 - d. Peter can serve as our example of how not to act, as well as how we should conduct ourselves.

John 14

Jesus offers comfort to His disciples

- I. Jesus reveals a prepared place (1-6).
 - A. The Father's house (1-4).
 1. Jesus is actually saying, "You have no reason to be troubled." Being troubled at these circumstances, e.g., Judas' betrayal, Peter's denial, the trial, the crucifixion, etc., would certainly be understandable (cf 2 Cor 4:8).
 - a. The Bible "heart" (v 1) is the intellect or reasoning ability (cf Matt 13:15; 15:19; Rom 10:10).
 - b. Their belief in the Father was unquestionable (cf Isa 12:2).
 - c. Jesus encourages this same belief in Him (cf 5:23; 1 Jn 2:23, 24).
 2. In addition, their belief in heaven was strengthened (cf 2 Cor 5:1).
 - a. The dwelling places these men were used to were anything but mansions. Yet, their faith gave them right to an eternal mansion as their home (cf Rev 3:12, 21; Lk 9:58).
 - b. He would be leaving them soon, but there would be plenty of room for them to follow Him (cf Col 3:4; 1 Thess 4:17).
 - c. They had been told repeatedly where He was going (cf Mk 8:31; 9:12).
 - d. These words may have been stated to draw out the questions which followed.
 - B. Jesus declares Himself to be the way, the truth and the life (5, 6).
 1. Thomas was honest and calculating rather than impetuous, like Peter (cf 20:24, 25).
 - a. All of the apostles were confused at this point and would remain confused until the Holy Ghost came upon them (cf Lk 24:25; Acts 1:6).
 - b. Jesus promises the Holy Ghost this very night (v 26), but He would not come for over seven weeks (cf Acts 2:1-4).
 2. "I am," (v 6) is most emphatic. It is the strongest part of this verse (cf Ex 3:14).
 - a. Jesus, alone, is *the way* to eternal life (cf Acts 4:12; 1 Jn 5:11).
 - b. Jesus, alone, is the only answer to mankind's ignorance (cf 1 Jn 5:20).
 - c. Jesus, alone, is the answer to mankind's morality problem (cf 2 Tim 1:1; 1 Jn 1:2).
 - d. Jesus is the only answer for this life and the life to come (cf 1 Cor 15:55-57).
- II. A close intimacy between Jesus and the Father (7-14).
 - A. Jesus and the Father are one (7-11).
 1. The apostles did not fully know Jesus, i.e., the express image of the Father, even after more than three years at His feet (cf Heb 1:3).
 - a. Before Jesus came to this earth there was no reliable way to get a proper prospective of the Father (cf 1 Tim 3:16).
 - b. God was not thought of as a "Father" before Jesus' time on earth. He ushered in a new and better relationship (cf Matt 5:16; Rom 1:7).
 2. Philip now demands a visual manifestation of the Father (cf Rev 22:3, 4).
 - a. Philip had missed the point of the miracles and wonders done by Jesus over the previous three years (cf Acts 2:22).
 - b. Jesus was not some messenger from God, but "Immanuel" (cf Isa 7:14; Matt 1:23).

- c. Philip did not know the extent of what he was asking for (cf Ex 33:20).
 - 3. Jesus poses a question to Philip about His relationship with the Father (cf 10:30, 38; 1 Jn 5:7).
 - a. He bases this relationship upon His words and His works (Words: cf 3:33, 34; 7:16; Works: cf Matt 11:4, 5; Jn 10:25, 32).
 - b. Jesus had taught all this before. This should re-emphasize our need for repletion in teaching (cf 5:36; 10:37, 38).
 - B. The cause of the Father would also be advanced in those who believed on Him (12-14).
 - 1. These mighty works would begin on the first Pentecost after His resurrection (ref. Acts 2) (cf Mk 16:17, 18).
 - a. “[G]reater works,” (v 12) would be unimaginable. It must refer to the greater scope of their works, i.e., so many more getting to see the power of the gospel and accept it (cf Acts 1:8; Rom 15:19).
 - b. His return to the Father would allow these many mighty works to take place (cf Acts 2:33).
 - 2. Asking in His name is two-fold. Asking according to His authority and asking according to His will (cf Col 3:17).
 - a. Jesus gives us this example that very night (cf Matt 26:42).
 - b. By asking in the proper fashion, and by asking for the proper things, we can have confidence in our petitions (cf Eph 3:12).
- III. Love and peace awaited them (15-31).
- A. Keeping the commandments are necessary (15-17).
 - 1 Love is demonstrated in diligently keeping the commandments, not in lip service (cf 15:10; 1 Jn 2:5).
 - a. This is one of the most commonly ignored practices of the religious world today.
 - b. Placing one’s own will above God’s will, e.g., “I think”, “I like” and “I want” has placed millions outside God’s safety (cf Lk 6:46; Titus 1:16).
 - c. Paul warned the disobedient of their inevitable outcome (cf 2 Thess 1:8).
 - 2 “[A]nother Comforter,” (v 16) clearly indicates the presence of the first comforter, Jesus Himself (Same word as in 1 Jn 2:1).
 - a. The word “Comforter” means *intercessor, advocate* (Strong’s). Also: *helper, counselor, teacher* (Woods).
 - b. Jesus is comforting them with the fact that they would not be left without a “comforter,” even after His ascension (cf 15:26; 16:7).
 - B. Jesus promises Godly presence for their future (18-25).
 - 1 “[C]omfortless,” (v 18) literally means that He would not leave them orphaned (cf James 1:27).
 - a. He promises a return. Jesus would return from the dead in a few days. He will also return at the Judgment day.
 - b. It appears that neither of these apply to this text. His return from the dead would only last forty days (cf Acts 1:3). His return at Judgment time would be known and seen by all (cf Rev 1:7).
 - c. The context warrants the possibility of this being a reference to the Holy Ghost coming to the apostles (cf 15:26).

Note: Some see the “spirit” of Christ here as His apostles (and other disciples) manifest His teachings in their lives.

- d. “[B]ut ye see me,” (v 19) is in the present tense, indicating continuous action. This rules out the temporary, post resurrection appearances of Jesus.
 - e. The promise of His living and the promise of their living also would be a comfort to them (cf 6:51; Heb 10:38).
 - f. “At that day,” (v 20) probably refers to the day of Pentecost, when the gospel was preached, in its completeness, for the first time.
- 2 Possession of and practicing His commandments affords the responsive persons a twofold blessing (cf Lk 11:28).
- a. That person will be loved by both the Father and the Son.
 - b. Jesus will make Himself known (manifest, v 21) to that person (cf Acts 18:9, 10; 2 Tim 4:17).
 - c. Judas’ question (v 22) probably stems from the improper assumption that Jesus’ kingdom would be an earthly monarchy (cf Matt 20:21).
 - d. The command of verse 15 is repeated in verse 23, but the application is universal. “Man” is an indefinite pronoun (Same in Matt 16:28; Mk 8:3).
 - e. All three members of the Godhead live in people who are properly conducting themselves (cf Rom 8:10, 11; 1 Jn 4:15, 16).
Note: Scriptures make no distinction concerning the indwelling of the Godhead. Only the doctrines of men attempt to make a distinction. They all dwell in us in the same fashion.
 - f. This truth is spoken of in a positive fashion in verse 23 and in the negative in verse 24. The acceptance or rejection of one applies to both.
- C. The assurance of the coming Comforter (26-31).
- 1 A contrast is shown between verses 25 and 26, e.g., “these things” and “all things,” but the things He did speak were to comfort them.
 - a. Much of what He has spoken they did not understand. They were confused about the nature of the kingdom and other aspects of His teaching.
 - b. This will all be cleared up in the near future for the apostles (cf Acts 11:16; 20:35).
Note: If the claim of many today about having the Holy Ghost were true, then they would have perfect remembrance of Jesus’ statements. Just as important, they would all agree on everything. It is self-incriminating evidence of their false religions.
 - 2 Jesus speaks of peace (v 27) only hours before His ordeal would begin, yet, in this light He calls it “my peace” (cf Phil 4:7; Col 3:15; 2 Thess 3:16).
 - a. This is truly remarkable, and should be a communicable attribute (cf Rom 5:1; 8:6).
 - b. His apostles were to be neither “troubled” nor “afraid” (cf 14:1; Lk 12:4), but it was not limited to just them (cf 2 Tim 1:7; Rev 21:8).
 - c. Jesus does not deny His equality with the Father (v 28). He states the present position (as Son) and the humiliation He must endure before His triumphant reunion with the Father in Heaven (cf 8:29; 16:32).
 - 3 They did not understand all He spoke, but it was told them so that someday they would remember and believe (cf 13:19; 16:4).

- a. Jesus will soon be drawing His teaching to a close (v 30) because the agents of Satan would interrupt and lead Him away to die. He was not finished with the teaching (cf 16:12; Acts 1:3).
- b. Jesus then tells them to arise and prepare to leave the upper room. It is obvious that the information contained in chapters 15-17 is delivered in the upper room before they departed (cf 18:1).

Note: The true test of discipleship is in keeping the words of the Lord. Not some of them. Most people do that. The real test is in keeping **all** of them!

John 15

The vine and the branches

- I. Jesus speaks of Himself as the true vine (1-11).
- A. The Teacher and His students are one (1-6).
- Note: The next three chapters appear to be spoken after the disciples arose from the supper,
(14:31) and before they departed the upper room.
- 1 Jesus is more than a vine; He is the one, true vine (cf 1:9; 6:32).
 - a. The metaphor of a vine would be easy for the disciples to grasp since they had just finished partaking of the fruit of the vine (cf Matt 26:27-29; Lk 22:18).
 - b. The Old Testament often referred to the nation of the Hebrews as a vine, (cf Isa 5:1; Jer 2:21) which proved to be barren and wild.
 - 2 Christ, as the true vine, planted by the Father, would bare much fruit (cf Col 2:19).
 - a. That which had come before, i.e., the Old Testament law, was only a figure of what was to come (cf Heb 9:24).
 - b. The Father has care and concern for the vine, branch and fruit (cf 1 Cor 3:9).
 - 3 The Father is shown both pruning and nurturing the branches (cf Matt 3:10; Lk 13:7).
 - a. “[T]aketh away,” (v 2) means *to remove*, e.g., Mk 11:23.
 - b. Lifeless, dead branches are cut off to keep the other branches healthy.
 - c. This can happen in a number of ways, but the proper avenue is through scriptural discipline (cf 2 Thess 3:6).
 - d. Those who are umbilically connected to the vine still need some purging (cf Titus 2:14; Rev 3:19).
 - 4 The “word” has the power to transform the sinner into the saint (cf Mk 16:15, 16; Eph 6:17).
 - 5 We abide in Him by keeping His word (cf 8:31; Col 1:23).
 - a. Fruit bearing can only be done if the branch is connected to the vine (cf Acts 4:12; Col 1:6).
 - b. The “branches” (v 5) are disciples, not denominations, as many falsely teach (cf Rom 12:5; 1 Cor 12:12, 27). “Ye” (vs 5) is present tense. No denominations existed when these words were written (cf Eph 4:4)!
 - c. Anyone who chooses not to abide in Christ, the true vine, will wither as a branch cut from a fruit tree and eventually be eternally burned (cf Matt 7:19).
- B. There is joy and love in keeping the commandments (7-11).
- 1 Acceptable prayer has some prerequisites divinely attached (cf 1 Jn 5:14).
 - a. The Lord will only hear the obedient (cf Isa 59:1, 2; 1 Pet 3:12).
 - b. Living in the true vine will cause us to bear much fruit (cf Matt 5:16; 1 Pet 2:12).
 - c. Bearing “much fruit” (v 8) is two fold:
 1. Growing in grace (cf Gal 5:22).
 2. Making new disciples as opportunities and talents manifest themselves (cf Matt 28:19).
 - 2 True love of God is based on keeping the commandments (cf 14:15).

- a. The love demonstrated by the Father and the Son (Jn 3:16) is the same love the disciples are to show one for another (cf 13:34; Rom 13:8; 1 Jn 4:7).
- b. The only way to accomplish this is to keep the commandments (cf 1 Thess 4:1; Rev 22:14).
- c. To only keep the commandments we like, or the ones that are easy for us, is not the pattern we see in scripture. Jesus did not live that way (cf Lk 22:44)!
- d. Paradoxically, Jesus speaks of joy just hours before His death.
Note: This shows us that true joy transcends laughter and fun. Serenity, on the spiritual level, is the bible idea of joy.
- e. True joy is only found in an obedient relationship to the Father through the Son (cf 1 Jn 1:3, 4).

II. A command to love and a promise of the Spirit (12-27).

A. The Son's love for the disciples 12-17).

- 1 Jesus, again, shows the necessity of love (cf Eph 5:2).
 - a. Interestingly, this is exactly what Jesus stated in 13:34, without the thought of a "new commandment" tied to it (cf 1 Jn 4:7-11).
 - b. For Jesus, and the inspired writers, to bring up the subject of love so often must indicate the Godhead trying to get a point across to us!
 - c. The greatest love is stated in verse 13 and demonstrated in Christ's death on the cross.

Note: Many fathers have died for the families. Many mothers have done likewise. Some have even been willing to die for friends or country. Jesus died for His enemies! Unheard of (cf Rom 5:6-8)!

- 2 Our love is proven by our obedience (cf Matt 12:50; James 2:23).
 - a. The disciples are granted a special honor. To be called "friends" of God, manifested in the flesh, rather than servants, is special indeed (cf Philemon 16)!
 - b. We must observe that this special position is totally conditional. The word "if" (v 14) stands as a giant hurdle, which many refuse to clear (cf 14:21).
- 3 Jesus had personally selected these eleven remaining men to be His disciples. This is a reversal of the regular order of the student selecting the teacher.
 - a. The disciples of Christ are still selected today. Not by a personal encounter with the Lord, but rather, through the gospel (cf 2 Thess 2:13, 14).
 - b. Fruit bearing would be the result of this relationship, and divine help is promised, "in my name" (v 16).
 - c. Then Jesus repeats the command to love one another.

B. The hatred of the world (18-25).

- 1 A fair warning comes from the Master's lips about the unbelieving and the hatred they will have toward them and their message (cf Matt 10:22; 24:9).
 - a. The disciples of Christ are to be different from the world around us (cf James 4:4; 1 Jn 3:13).
 - b. We should ask, "Why would the world hate Christ and those who teach His message?" The answer is because sin is exposed (cf Micah 3:2).
 - c. If we are hated by the world, we are in good company. If we are not hated by the world, it might be time for a check to see what we are standing for and whom we are standing for!

- 2 We must be prepared for persecution. The Lord was persecuted, and His disciples are not above Him (cf Mk 8:35) (Not a reference to death as much as it is to giving in to Satan and giving up the proper path in our lives).
 - a. These very men, hearing the words of Jesus, were to be sent into the world with His message (cf Acts 1:8; Col 1:5, 6).
 - b. Then, as today, not everyone would be receptive to the truth. Some may reject the message and abuse the messenger for trying to share it
 Note: There is no place in God's vineyard for "thin-skinned" teachers.
 - 3 The Jews were guilty of rejecting the Messiah (cf 3:18; 12:48).
 - a. The sin of verse 22 is the rejection of the Messiah. A rejection that was made by those who were most prepared to receive Him.
 - b. To reject, or hate, the Son is to reject, or hate, the Father (cf 10:30-32; 2 Jn 9).
 - c. The evidences of Him being who He said He was were works beyond the scope of mere mortals, yet they hated Him (cf Matt 9:33; Mk 2:12).
 Note: To hate the Son and the Father for no reason (v 25) is both incomprehensible and self-condemning.
- C. The Comforter is promised (26, 27).
- 1 This is the third time that same night that Jesus had promised the Comforter to the apostles (cf 14:16, 26).
 - a. We will see that He reiterates this promise two more times before they leave the upper room (cf 16: 7, 13).
 - b. This would not only add comfort to the apostles, but also gave them the divine source of their teaching, which would remove apprehension.
 - c. This was fulfilled, or confirmed, shortly thereafter (cf Acts 2:33; 1 Cor 1:6).
 - 2 The witnessing of these events, and the receiving of the promised Comforter, are things uniquely restricted to the people of the first century (cf Acts 2:32; 5:32).
 - a. Today, we cannot bear witness because we have witnessed nothing. We simply teach the truth as revealed in the New Testament (cf 2 Tim 2:2).
 - b. The Holy Ghost is active today in convicting the sinner and correcting the saint. His power is channeled through the medium of the written word (cf Acts 20:32; Eph 5:17).
 - c. For anyone to claim otherwise puts them in a position of having **all** knowledge (cf 14:26) None, today, fits into that category.

John 16

The Comforter

- I. Jesus must depart before the Comforter will descend (1-15).
 - A. Jesus warns of persecutions to come (1-6).
 - 1 “These things,” (v 1) fit the context of the warnings issued in chapter 15 (cf 1 Pet 2:8).
 - a. Warnings were vital to their perseverance. There would be problems to face (cf 1 Pet 4:12).
 - b. One of the definitions of “offended” (v 1) is *to stumble* (Strong’s) (cf Matt 5:29; 1 Cor 8:13). Always used with the thought of moral stumbling.
 - c. The weak in faith are offended, or stumble, easily even today. The storms of this life cause them to be tossed about (cf James 1:6).
 - d. Jesus warned His Apostles so this would not happen to them. Sadly, to no avail (cf Matt 26:31).
 - e. The Jews were going to reject them (cf Lk 6:22; Acts 5:33; 1 Cor 4:13).
 - 2 The Jews hated the Father and the Son (cf 2 Cor 4:3, 4).
 - a. The idea of not knowing the Father (v 2) refers to understanding and obeying (cf 17:3).
 - b. Jesus had pointed this same thing out in 8:19, 55 and 15:21.
 - c. The words “because I was with you,” (v 4) indicate that Jesus protected, as well as instructed His followers.
 - d. They were unprepared, in the beginning, to face the hardship that would come their way (cf Mk 2:19, 20; Acts 9:16).
 - 3 Jesus has spoken plainly about His leaving. They were only concerned about their own sorrow and had not even asked where He would be going (He was asked previously by Peter, cf 13:36, also implied in Thomas’ statement 14:5).
 - a. If they could have only stepped into His shoes for a moment and realized how glorious a reunion was about to take place in heaven, their sorrow would quickly have faded to joy (cf 2 Cor 4:17)!
 - b. In this sorrow they also did not see the benefits, which were about to come upon them, as a result of His ascension, i.e., the Comforter coming to them (vs 7, 13).
 - B. Jesus must depart this world so that the Comforter would come (7-12).
 - 1 “Nevertheless” (v 7) refers to the sorrow of the disciples at His pending departure.
 - a. This departure would be of benefit to the apostles, immediately, and all disciples, ultimately (cf Apostles 14:26; Acts 1:5; all disciples 14:3).
 - b. “[E]xpedit,” (v 7) means *a means to an end* (Webster’s) (cf 1 Cor 10:23; 2 Cor 12:1).
 - c. Earthly monarchs are limited by geography and time. Our Monarch would have no such bounds while reigning in heaven (cf 11:50-52).
 - d. Without His death there would be no kingdom, or realm, to rule over (cf 1 Pet 1:18, 19; Rev 5:9).
 - 2 “[R]eprove,” (v 8) means *to convict, convince* (Strong’s) (cf Jude 15).

- a. This reproof would be accomplished by use of the apostles. He would act through their teaching and examples to convict and convince the world (cf 1 Cor 2: 10, 11).
- b. The three facets of the reproof are listed: sin, righteousness and judgment.
 - 1) The convicting of sin became evident the very day the Holy Ghost came upon the apostles (cf Acts 2:37).
Note: Rejection of Christ is self-condemning (cf 3:36).
 - 2) The convicting of righteousness is through the written word (cf Ps 119:172).
Note: The world condemned Jesus. The Father exalted Him to heaven, to be seen no more (cf 1 Cor 15:14, 20; 1 Tim 3:16).
 - 3) The convincing of a final judgment based upon His word (cf Heb 6:1, 2; 9:27).
Note: Those who crucified Christ intended for the cross to be the final judgment of Him. The Father turned it around so that the crucifixion became the blow to Satan's head (cf Gen 3:15).
- 3 Jesus desired to share with them more information and knowledge that would cause them to be of good courage and strength, but they were not ready to receive it (cf Mk 4:33; 1 Cor 3:1, 2).
 - a. Teaching must be geared to those receiving it, e.g., we would not teach an adult class as if the students were in grade school, and vice versa (cf Heb 5:13, 14).
 - b. They needed more information, but were unable to ingest it. We see this same thing in many people today. All will reach a saturation point.
- C. The mission of the Spirit (13-15).
 - 1 There is a great significance of the Comforter being called "the Spirit of truth" (v 13) (cf 14:17; 15:26).
 - a. If He (The Spirit of truth) gave **all** truth, then where did the so-called latter day revelations come from? Not from God! (Joseph Smith, Ellen G. White, Mary Baker Eddy, etc.) (cf 1 Cor 2:10, 13).
 - b. This one verse (v 13) is a devastating blow to every denomination and individual who claims additional inspiration. There was simply **no** unknown truth left! Otherwise, what could the word *all* mean (cf Gal 1:9)?
Note: This promise was to "them" not to "us."
 - c. Even future events would be revealed to them (cf Acts 20:29).
 - 2 The Spirit was to glorify the Son. Why? He is Christ, the Messiah, and salvation depends on His exposure to mankind (cf Acts 4:10-12; 1 Pet 1:11, 12).
 - a. "[H]e shall receive of mine," (v 14) means the Spirit's sole purpose was to glorify the Son (cf Acts 2:32, 33).
 - b. This passage clearly shows the three facets of the Godhead and the unique, but united part each has (cf Matt 3:16, 17; Col 2:9).
Note: Since the Spirit guided men spoke in all truth, it shows the futility of the "red-letter" additions of the Bible. It is all truth from God!
- II. Sorrow turned to Joy (16-22).
 - A. The Apostles did not understand His words (16-19).

- 1 In a short time He would be placed in a tomb, but He would still be revealed to them after that for a forty-day period (cf Acts 1:3).
 - 2 The disciples were puzzled over His saying.
 - a. Jesus had been trying to tell them of His coming death for nearly a year, yet they still could not see it (cf Matt 16:21; veiled reference (to them) in Jn 2:19-21).
 - b. Verse 19 is a wonderful example of God's omniscience. Jesus repeating what they had said, and even using their very words, must have made a deep impression on them (cf Matt 9:4; Jn 2:24, 25; Heb 4:13).
 - B. Jesus gives them an explanation (20-22).
 - 1 They would weep and lament (cf Mk 16:10).
 - a. Those opposed to Jesus would temporarily rejoice in the coming events (cf Mk 15:29-32).
 - b. This joy of His enemies had started earlier that night (cf Lk 22:5).
 - 2 Jesus parallels the coming events to a woman giving birth (cf Rev 12:2).
Note: Strange He should use such an illustration before an all male gathering.
- III. Jesus shares words of comfort (23-33).
- A. Prayer instructions (23-26).
 - 1 Things were about to change for the apostles. No need to ask for His physical presence. They would have a Spirit guide (cf 14:26).
 - a. Jesus' role was also to change. He would now become the mediator and not the primary teacher (cf 1 Tim 2:5).
 - b. Prayer is to be made to the Father through the Son (vv 23, 24). Praying to Jesus is not commanded or given by example. It is an extra-biblical idea and therefore not of faith, which makes it wrong (cf Rom 10:17)!
Note: This is the first time we learn of this truth. Prayer was not commanded to be offered in Jesus' name in the model prayer of Matthew 6.9ff.
 - 2 "[P]roverbs" (v 25) were unclear statements. This would not happen anymore (cf Prov 1:6). This word "proverbs" is only used five times in the New Testament. Three times in this context, once in John 10:6 and again in 2 Peter 2:22. It properly means *figurative language*.
 - B. Final words of comfort (27-33).
 - 1 The love of the Father is upon those who love Jesus (cf Eph 6:24).
 - a. Jesus' control of all events is plainly declared in these verses. He came from and was returning to heaven, as was arranged from the beginning. Nothing was forced or out of order (cf Heb 4:3).
 - b. Our love for Jesus is displayed in our desire to be obedient (cf 14:15).
 - 2 It appears the apostles finally grasped some of His teachings (cf 17:8).
 - a. Jesus questions the faith they professed. This should have caused them to look introspectively concerning their faith (cf 13:38).
 - b. Anyone can profess a faith. It is a completely different thing to possess it (cf Matt 7:21; Titus 1:16)!
 - c. If they truly understood they would not have returned to their former profession after His death (cf 21:3).
 - 3 Jesus has won the victory. We have the promise of the same victory because of Him (cf Rom 8:37; Gal 1:4)!

John 17

The Lord's Prayer

This prayer of Jesus, the longest prayer recorded by inspiration, naturally divides itself into three sections. We will allow those three sections to form our three main points of this study.

- I. Jesus prays for Himself (1-5).
 - A. The Son and the Father are glorified (1-3).

Note: "These words," (v 1) would be the contents of chapters 15 and 16 (cf 14:31), therefore, this prayer was offered while still in the upper room.

 - 1 Jesus raises His eyes to heaven and begins His prayer (cf Ps 123:1; Lk 18:13). A different posture than we are used to today.
 - a. A prayer that is proper addresses the Father (cf Matt 6:9; 1 Pet 1:17).
 - b. "[T]he hour," (v 1) refers to His eminent death, subsequent resurrection and ascension. This was the reason for His coming to the earth (cf Rom 3:25; 1 Jn 2:2).
 - c. The Father did not have to be reminded to glorify Him. Jesus was following good, scriptural advice (cf Phil 4:6).
 - d. The glory of the Father would be the Son, (who was temporarily about to be reduced to sin and humiliation), being raised, as prophesied (cf 2 Cor 5:21; Phil 2:7, 8).
 - 2 The sacrificial death and resurrection of the Son would grant all people the opportunity of eternal life (cf Eph 1:18-20; Heb 2:8, 9).
 - a. The scope of eternal life was for "all flesh," (v 2). (cf Mk 16:15).
 - b. Verse 2 contains an obvious division. All flesh is different than those that have been given. Those with proper belief coupled with obedience have eternal life (cf Rom 6:23; 1 Jn 2:4; 4:8).
 - c. A person must know the Father and the Son in order to be saved (cf 1 Jn 5:11). This one thought is devastating to the world religions.

Note: Jesus is speaking in the third person in the first three verses of this prayer.
 - B. The assigned work is finished (4, 5).
 - 1 Jesus states His life has been one of glorifying the Father (cf 14:13).
 - a. The declaration that "I have finished the work," (v 4) dogmatically rules out Calvary being a defeat of God's will (cf 19:30). Premillennialism not withstanding!
 - b. "I have glorified thee," (v 4) refers to Jesus' perfect life on earth (cf 8:46; 2 Cor 5:21; Heb 7:26).
 - c. Finishing "the work," (v 4) was His duty, (cf 4:34) as well as ours (cf 2 Tim 4:7).
 - 2 "[B]efore the world was," (v 5) announces and affirms His eternal existence (cf 1:1, 2).
 - a. He temporarily gave up the glory, which He had from the beginning, to come to this earth to bring the salvation that we need (cf 6:62).
 - b. This glory was fully restored (cf Phil 2:5-11).
- II. Jesus prays for those disciples standing before Him (6-19).
 - A. A specific prayer for them, not for the world (6-12).

- 1 By the use of the words “thy name” (v 6) Jesus is declaring that He set forth the character of the Father, e.g., His mercy, His law, His plan for redemption, etc. (cf Ex 9:16).

Note: There should have been no need for Jesus to reveal the Father to the chosen Jews.

 - a. He pointed everything He did on earth to the Father.
 - b. Jesus describes His followers as those who kept the word. This eliminated Judas from the group (cf 18:9).
 - 2 The apostles were a little slow in grasping all that was taught to them, but were beginning to see His teachings more clearly (cf 14:7-9; 16:30).
 - a. The very words revealed to the apostles were the revelation of the Father (cf 7:16, 17).

Note: God has always taught with words and not with ideas or vague thoughts, e.g., Noah, Gen 6:13 (cf 1 Tim 4:1).
 - b. We have the same obligation today, to speak only that which has been revealed by the Godhead. To go beyond this is sin (cf Deut 4:2; Prov 30:6; Gal 1:8).
 - 3 Jesus prayed for the disciples and not for the world (Lk 22:32).
 - a. It was not/is not wrong to pray for those in the world. In fact, later in this same chapter He will pray for the world (20, 21; cf 2 Tim 2:2).
 - b. This was a specific prayer for those chosen men (cf 14:16; 16:26).
 - c. His time was up on the earth, but those men He was praying for would carry His name and doctrine to the whole world (cf Mk 16:15; Rom 10:18; Col 1:5, 6, 23).
 - 4 The unity prayed for at the end of verse 11 is a picture of true unity. The twelve apostles, later to become thirteen, (Paul) would be working and acting as one.
 - a. When the Holy Ghost came upon them they were together physically (cf Acts 2:1; 8:1).
 - b. Eventually, they would be scattered in every direction taking the “good news” with them. Yet, they would remain as one with what they taught.
 - c. This is the obligation for us also (cf 1 Cor 1:10; 12:12).
 - 5 Jesus did much more than simply teach these men while on earth. The word “kept,” (v 12) has been translated *preserve* (1 Thess 5:23) as well as *reserve* (1 Pet 1:4; 2 Pet 2:4).
 - a. The only one lost was “the son of perdition” (v 12), which is a reference to Judas (cf 6:70, 71; 13:18).
 - b. Judas was called the “son” of perdition because of the character he revealed (cf 2 Thess 2:3).
- B. Jesus’ followers are not of the world (13-19).
- 1 Jesus prayed that the joy that filled Him would also fill His apostles (cf Heb 12:2).
 - a. We can lose the joy we are to possess in this world. If this happens we lose something precious (cf Acts 13:52; Rom 14:17; Gal 5:22; 1 Jn 1:4).
 - b. The hatred of the world toward the apostles was directly related to the teaching of the word of God (cf Prov 29:27; Matt 10:24, 25).

- c. Jesus' terse statement early in His ministry revealed this same truth (cf 3:19, 20).
 - d. This being true, we should not be surprised at the opposition we meet (cf 15:18).
 - e. Removing the apostles from the world would do the Cause no good whatsoever. They/we must be around those who need the help in order to be that help (cf Phil 1:21-25)!
- 2 Sanctification (vv 17-19) is contained in the words of God (cf Ps 119:104; Jn 8:32; 2 Thess 2:13).
- a. Pilate's question, "What is truth" (18:38) can be answered without hesitation (cf Ps 119:151, 160, 172).
 - b. The word "[S]anctify" (v 17) means *to hallow or make holy* (Strong's) (cf Matt 6:9; Lk 11:2).
 - c. Their obedience to the word would make them holy and set apart. Holy in God's sight and set apart from the world (cf 1 Pet 1:22, 23).
 - d. The mission of the disciple was/is the same as the Master. Go into the world with the message (cf Matt 28:19, 20).
 - e. Jesus "sanctified" Himself in total service and obedience to the Father, therefore leaving the proper example to His Apostles (cf 1 Cor 1:2; Heb 10:29).

III. Jesus prays for future believers (20-26).

A. A prayer for future disciples (20-23).

- 1 Jesus' prayer goes beyond His apostles only, as He fervently prays for those who would "believe on me through their word" (v 20).
- a. The faith that saves can come only through the information contained in the Bible (cf Acts 4:4; Rom 10:17).
 - b. By the same token, once a person is a Christian the word must be remembered (cf 2 Pet 3:2).
Note: It should impress us deeply that just hours before His crucifixion the Lord was praying for us!
 - c. The inspired words of the apostles (plus Mark, Luke and Jude) are the conduit to salvation (cf Eph 2:20; 2 Pet 3:15).
- 2 A prayer for unity permeates "our" part of Jesus' prayer (cf Acts 4:32; 1 Pet 3:8).
- a. How can this unity come about? Inspiration holds the answer (cf Eph 4:3).
Note: This being a fact, the Lord was praying against denominationalism (cf Amos 3:3). There has never been room for "my way" or "our way" in religion. The concept is totally divisive.
 - b. An example of unity is incorporated into the text (vv 11, 21).
Note: "Unity in diversity" is foreign to the Bible and the very opposite of what Jesus was praying for.
 - c. All disciples have part in the "glory" (v 22) (cf Heb 12:10; 1 Jn 3:24).

B. Jesus prays for a future time, when His disciples would be united in heaven (24-26).

- 1 "[W]here I am," (v 24) is a prophetic statement concerning Jesus' eminent reunion with the Father in heaven (cf Acts 7:55, 56).

- a. In heaven His disciples will see the glory, which belongs to Him from the foundation of the world. Refer to section I.B.
 - b. The words “I will,” (v 24) have a much deeper meaning than *I desire*. Notice the usage in Matthew 8:2, 3.
- 2 Jesus ends His petition to the “righteous Father” (vs 25).
- a. We can only declare the name of God today by teaching the truth, in its entirety, to those who need it.
 - b. “[A]nd will declare it,” (v 26) means the time after the resurrection (cf Acts 17:23; 2 Thess 2:16).

Note: Jesus prayed for eternal benefits rather than focusing on terrestrial, temporary things. What a lesson for us.

John 18

Jesus' betrayal and arrest

- I. Jesus' arrest (1-14).
 - A. Jesus enters the garden (1, 2).
 - 1 "[T]hese words," (v 1) probably refers to the prayer just concluded, although the entire discourse may fit the context, i.e., chapters 13-17.

Note: The last three chapters have started with basically the same words.

 - a. The "brook Cedron," (v 1) separates the city of Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives (cf 2 Sam 15:23; 1 Kings 15:13, etc.).
 - b. There, on the western slope of the mountain, was the garden known as Gethsemane (cf Matt 26:36). Gethsemane means *a place of oil presses*.
 - c. John records no details of Jesus separating three of the disciples at the entrance to the garden (cf Matt 26:37).
 - 2 Jesus retires to the familiar surrounding of Gethsemane (cf Mk 11:11, 12; Lk 21:37; 22: 39).
 - a. It is obvious that Jesus was not trying to hide (See verse 4). He had accomplished His mission and the time was at hand (cf Matt 26:45; John 17:1).
 - b. Now, under the cover of darkness, Judas and the Jewish leaders act upon their devilish desires (cf Acts 2:23).
 - B. Judas leads the men to the garden (3-9).
 - 1 The word "band," (v 3) means an unknown number, but may include as many as several hundred (cf Acts 10:1; 21:31; 27:1).
 - a. There is no reason, from the context, to think that these were Roman soldiers. The "chief priests and Pharisees," (v 3) would have no rule, control or jurisdiction over Roman soldiers.

Note: The words "Roman" and "soldier" are not used in the entirety of John 18. Let us not add to the scriptures.
 - b. This group of men certainly did not expect such an easy prey. They came prepared to hunt and search for Him in every dark place, hence the lanterns and torches. This was Passover. The moon was full.
 - 2 The large number of men approaching did not intimidate Jesus. These entire events had been divinely scripted (cf Mk 10:33, 34). God is always in control!
 - a. Jesus asked, "Whom seek ye" (v 4) (cf Prov 28:1).
 - b. His actions were more than merely confident. He may have stepped forward to stop the mob short of the disciples. Possibly indicating protection.
 - c. Jesus' response is terse, "I am *he*" (v 5). The word "he" is supplied, making this exactly what Jesus said in 8:58 (cf Ex 3:14).
 - d. We must make a special note of the position of Judas. He now stands "with them." He is relegated to the wrong side by his bad choices (cf Josh 24:15).
 - e. Where we chose to stand is very important (cf Josh 24:15).

Note: Only in John's narrative is the kiss of betrayal omitted.

- 3 The arresting party falls to the ground at Jesus' bold confrontation.
 - a. There is no indication of miraculous power here. They must have fallen to the ground in awe of the calm and unintimidated Master (cf 7:26).
 - b. Jesus is in complete control and asks them again whom they seek (v 7). This probably indicates a hesitation on the part of the arresting mob.
 - c. When they answer as before, Jesus states the desire for the freedom of His disciples (17:12).
 - d. What a wonderfully revealing lesson for us. Jesus prays for His disciples, then goes about doing everything in His power to make it happen (cf Josh 7:6-10).
- C. Peter's reaction to these events (10, 11).
 - 1 The disciples had two swords among the twelve of them, counting Jesus, (cf Lk 22:38) and Peter had control of one of them.
 - a. Peter was ready to fight to the death, if necessary (cf Lk 22:33).
 - b. Having but two swords indicates that the statement made in Luke 22:36 is not to be taken literally. If so, two swords would not have been "enough" (v 38).
 - c. Only John records who did the sword wielding and reveals the person who suffered the wound (v 10) (cf Matt 26:51; Mk 14:47; Lk 22:50).
 - d. Peter was deadly serious about defending the Lord. Only quick reactions by Malchus kept his head on his shoulders.
Note: Jesus did not condemn self-defense, in fact, just the opposite (cf Lk 22:36).
 - 2 The apostles were still foggy about the divine intent of the night and of the coming kingdom (cf 18:36; Acts 1:6).
 - a. An expanded explanation for the sheathing of the sword is recorded in Matt 26:52, 53. (cf 2 Cor 10:4).
 - b. This all must come to pass in order for the divine scheme of redemption to be instituted for mankind (cf Heb 4:3).
 - c. The question asked concerning the "cup" (v 11) is rhetorical (cf Matt 20:22; 26:39, 42; Heb 12:2).
 - d. Interestingly, John does not include the healing of the ear (cf Lk 22:51).
Note: The difference between this account of Jesus commanding the sword to be sheathed in compliance to authority, both civil and divine, and what we find in Matt hew26:39 can only be explained by the information contained in Luke 22:43.
 - e. Jesus was fortified that His death would bring immortality, His shame would become glory and the cross would be changed to a crowning victory.
- D. Jesus is bound and taken to Annas (12-14).
 - 1 Jesus is bound (unnecessarily) as a common criminal (cf Matt 26:50).
 - 2 He is taken to Annas first (cf Lk 3:2).

Note: According to Hebrew law the High Priest served a life-long term (Num 20:25-28; 35:25). The Roman government arbitrarily appointed new High Priests as they deemed necessary. The Jews were required to conduct themselves accordingly. Annas was appointed High Priest in 6 A.D. and removed nine years later. Two other “High Priests” were appointed and removed before Caiaphas was appointed in 18 A.D (Josephus, Antiquities). (Some think Annas was the legitimate High Priest, deposed.)

a. Annas was an ex-High Priest who still retained the title and wielded great power over the people (cf Acts 4:6).

b. It is not disclosed why He was taken to Annas first.

Note: It was during the arrest and binding of Jesus that the disciples fled the garden (cf Matt 26:56).

c. Annas’ interrogation of Jesus is contained in verses 19-23.

d. This Caiaphas was the one who gave “counsel,” (v 14) referring to the information contained in 11:49-52.

e. Caiaphas offered an unwitting prophecy concerning the Savior.

Note: This was the first of three illegal trials conducted by the Jews this night. Here, before Annas, the second is before Caiaphas, and will be seen in the next lesson. The third trial is revealed by Luke before the Sanhedrin.

II. Peter’s denials and Annas sends Jesus to Caiaphas (15-27).

A. Peter’s first denial (15-18).

- 1 After fleeing into the night, two of the disciples follow Jesus. Peter and “another disciple,” (v 15) universally accepted to refer to John, the writer (cf Mk 14:54).

Note: Based upon the following verses: 19:26; 20:2-8; 21:20-24 we will proceed under the assumption that this does refer to John, the penmen of this book.

a. Either recovering from their fright, or so curious they had to know the outcome of the arrest, these two follow the mob to the High Priest’s residence.

b. We do not know how the High Priest knew John. Speculation will avail nothing.

- 2 Peter and John became separated at some point, but John’s relationship with the High Priest allowed Peter access inside the palace area (cf Matt 26:58).

a. John simply spoke to the women at the door and Peter was allowed entrance (cf Acts 12:13).

b. Entrance was probably granted into a courtyard of the residence of the High Priest. Some reason that Annas and Caiaphas lived in the same house.

c. This woman recognized Peter. This provoked the first denial of the early morning. This happened immediately upon entrance, before he was in the courtyard (cf Matt 26:69).

Note: It is not probable that Peter was in any danger at this time. Because Peter was the one who had cut off the ear of the High Priest’s servant it is possible this fact provoked the denial.

- d. At this point Peter was no better than nor any different than Judas!
 - e. Peter found himself standing with the wrong people just as Judas had a little earlier that night (v 5).
 - f. Peter was warming by the devil's fire (cf Ps 1:1; Prov 13:20; 1 Cor 15:33)!
- B. Jesus is abused and then sent on to Caiaphas, who asks several questions (19-24).
- 1 The first question was about His disciples, the second question was about His teaching (v 19) (cf Lk 20:19).
 - a. They wanted to know the number and whereabouts of the disciples. Possibly because they still feared open rebellion at His arrest (cf Lk 22:2).
 - b. Questioning Jesus about His disciples and His teaching seems superfluous in light of the close watch they had kept on Him to this point (cf 7:32, 46).
 - c. Interestingly, Jesus avoided any questions directed at His disciples (still obviously protecting them) and concentrated on His doctrine.
 - d. His doctrine had been openly taught (cf Matt 4:23; 13:54; Mk 12:35).
 - e. "[I]n secret" (v 20) does not mean He did not teach privately, but rather that what He taught privately or publicly was always the same (cf 7:4).
 - f. Verse 21 is very interesting. Jesus could not be on trial without witnesses to corroborate the charges (cf Deut 19:15). There were no witnesses present. Jesus may have mockingly gestured to the imaginary witnesses at this point.
Note: As they accused Jesus of breaking the law they were guilty of that very fact!
 - g. It is possible there were some present that had heard Him speak, but the witnesses they really wanted were false witnesses (cf Matt 26:59, 60; Mk 14:55, 56).
 - h. "[W]ith the palm of their hand," (v 22) can mean with either the hand or with a rod (cf Mk 14:65; Lk 22:63, 64).
 - 2 Jesus' physical abuse continues (cf Acts 23:2-5).
 - a. Jesus had done nothing wrong, therefore there was no apology offered to Annas, rather we have the question offered in verse 23 (cf 1 Peter 2:20).
 - b. We need to see that this was not a common slap on the face of Jesus. The word "smitest" (v 23) means *to scourge, to thrash*, (Strong's) and has been translated by the word "beat" (cf Matt 21:35; Mk 12:3; Acts 5:40).
 - c. Jesus' reaction to being smitten was not physical retaliation (Matt 5:39). He did not raise His hand, but did raise His tongue.
- C. Peter's denials reveal that his position had not changed. Still warming by the devil's fire (25-27)!
- 1 Peter's second denial was so unlike the man in the garden with the sword. In the garden Jesus boldly declared "I am" (v 5). Peter, conversely, now declares, "I am not." (v 25).
 - 2 Peter's third denial was before a relative of the man who had his ear cut off! This vehement denial was accompanied with cursing and swearing (cf Matt 26:74).
 - a. The first two denials were associated with his presence with Jesus. The third was connected to the assault on the man's relative.

- b. At this point the Lord looked upon Peter and Peter recalled the Master's words about his denial (cf Mk 14:72).

Note: These words (curse and swear) do not indicate profanity, but an oath that it was not he in the garden and a curse upon himself if it was he.

III. Jesus before Pilate (28-40).

A. The Jews reveal their requested sentence (28-32).

- 1 The blatant hypocrisy of the Jews, i.e., not entering the judgment hall of a Gentile to keep from being defiled, is a mockery of the law they lived under (cf Ps 35:16).
 - a. The Jews did not have the power to execute a prisoner. They could punish under their law, but the power to mete out the death penalty was removed by Roman jurisdiction (v 31).
 - b. Since they could not go into the Gentile's judgment hall, this meant that Pilate was forced to arise at an early hour and come out to them.
- 2 Pilate, possibly irritated at the intrusion, asked them of the charge. The vague reply was He is a "malefactor" (v 30) (cf Lk 23:2-4). Pilate then told them to handle the problem according to their law.
 - a. This would never satisfy the bloodthirsty Jews! Capital punishment was not available to them under their law.
 - b. The Jews stoned people to death (cf Acts 7:58; 14:19). Jesus had already stated He would "be lifted up," (12:32, 33) indicating His manner of death. He knew the final outcome.

B. Pilate questions Jesus (33-37).

- 1 Pilate now moves inside the judgment hall. This would mean the accusing Jews were left outside (cf Mk 15:16-18). Here Pilate asks the question, "Art thou the king of the Jews" (v 33)?
- 2 Jesus responded with a question rather than an answer. The question was necessary in order to respond with the pertinent answer.
 - a. If Pilate was asking about a political king and kingdom Jesus could respond in the negative (v 36) (cf Lk 17:20, 21).
 - b. If the question were concerning Him being the Messianic King, then the answer would come in the affirmative (cf 1:49; 12:13, 15).
 - c. Interestingly, Pilate responded to Jesus' question with another question, "Am I a Jew?" (v 35) Pilate was only interested if Jesus had some political crime associated with Him (cf Acts 18:14, 15).
- 3 His kingdom was not of this world, i.e., not a political kingdom (cf Dan 7:14; Jn 6:15).
 - a. The kingdom's essence and citizenship were not of this world. (cf Rom 14:17; Phil 3:20)
Note: Jesus uses the possessive term "my kingdom" three times in verse 36.
 - b. Not surprisingly, Pilate was confused and asked, "Art thou a king then?" (v 37). Materialist thinking is not just a problem in our time, e.g., Nicodemus (Jn 3) could not think past the physical birth. The Samaritan woman (Jn 4) could not think past physical water. We need to raise ourselves up to proper spiritual thinking.

- C. At Jesus' response, Pilate asks Him, "What is truth?" (37-40).
- 1 The profoundness of the question asked by Pilate is timelessly thought provoking, yet he did not wait on or want an answer. Too bad, he had asked the right person (cf 8:31, 32; 14:6; 17:17)!
 - a. In reality, Pilate was not asking the question as we normally present it. He was dismissing the statement of Jesus with the idea of, "I'm not interested in truth, only political correctness."
 - b. Pilate then goes back to the courtyard to proclaim Jesus' innocence (cf Lk 23:14).
 - c. At this point the trial should have been dismissed and the mob sent home.
 - 2 The cowardly Pilate tries again to release Jesus under acceptable circumstances to the Jews. Politics outweighs justice once again!
 - a. If Pilate thought the Jews would ask for Jesus over Barabbas, he was sorely mistaken (cf Lk 23:18, 19, 25).
 - b. The cry of, "Not this man, but Barabbas" was but five days after the words recorded in Matthew 21:9.
Note: Jesus took the place of the condemned Barabbas. Jesus took the place of us all!

John 19

The compromising Pilate ignores justice and gives Jesus to be crucified

- I. Pilate's improper decision (1-16).
 - A. The cruelty of the treatment Jesus received at the hands of Pilate and the soldiers (1-3).
 - 1 Jesus was declared to be innocent (cf Lk 23:4, 14).
 - a. It is possible that Pilate was trying to expedite a way for the innocent Jesus to circumvent the cross (cf Lk 23:16). This magnifies the cowardliness of Pilate.
 - b. This scourging was the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy (cf Isa 53:5; Matt 20:19; 1 Pet 2:24). Also, this was illegal since He was found innocent.
 - c. The scourging was a common prelude to crucifixion (cf Mk 15:15; Lk 18:33).
 - d. Scourging was such a brutal torture that it was often the cause of death. Note: For more details on scourging and the whip used see Outlines on Matthew, page 146, same author.
 - 2 Both Matthew and Mark give longer, more detailed accounts of this abuse than John reveals (Matt 27:27ff; Mk 15:16ff).
 - a. A crown of mockery was platted and placed on His head. Note: We do not know what plant was used for this makeshift crown. It is revealed by Celsius that sixteen varieties of thorny plant thrive in Palestine. Since it is an unspecified plant, we do not know if this was mockery alone or if cruelty was also involved in this act.
 - b. The mocking continues with the placement of a purple robe upon Him.
 - c. Mockingly, they render obeisance to Him in pretense (cf Matt 27:29).
 - d. They then became physical in their abuse and "smote him" (v 3). The verbs used in Matt 27:30 are in the continuous tense, (imperfect) and indicate continuous action. They spit on Him and continued to spit on him. They smote Him and continued to strike Him.
 - e. The cruelty of these Roman soldiers probably did not reflect any personal dislike of Jesus, but rather contempt for the Jews in general. They understood He was being tried as a king. They were having some "fun" with the accused. How sad!
 - f. I hope these men learned the truth and obeyed it. Someday they will be forced to honor Him for what He truly is (cf Phil 2:10, 11)!
 - B. Pilate presents the beaten and abused Jesus to the Jews (4-7).
 - 1 Pilate reiterates his finding of innocence in Jesus (cf Matt 27:4, 19, 54).
 - 2 The strength and composure of Jesus under these distressing events disclosed His meekness and disposition to fulfilling the divine plan for our redemption (cf 12:27).

Note: Pilate lacked the commitment to do what he knew was right. An unnumbered throng of humanity fits this anemic description (cf James 4:17).

 - a. "Behold the man" (v 5) was intended to soften the hearts of the howling mob (cf 1:29).

- b. Pilate, a ruthless and cruel puppet in the Roman bureaucracy, was more compassionate than those who claimed to be following God (cf Mk 15:9, 10)!
- 3 The chant of “crucify, crucify,” no doubt drowned out any attempts for mercy by Pilate (cf Matt 27:22; Acts 2:23; 3: 13-15).
- 4 Pilate seems to be saying, “I find Him innocent, yet you still scream for His death. You take Him then and kill Him. I will not.”
 - a. He stood acquitted of the Jewish charges as presented and had broken no Roman law (cf 8:46; 2 Cor 5:21).
 - b. Thwarted at having Him killed under Roman law, they revealed their true motive for His death (cf Mk 14:61, 62). The law they referred to is Lev 24:16.
- C. Pilate condescendingly speaks to Jesus (8-13).
 - 1 Originally, Jesus was charged with being a king. Pilate’s new found fear was based on the assertion that Jesus was God (cf 18:37).
 - a. This is understandable when we realize that many in that day believed gods appeared in human form (cf Acts 14:11, 12; 28:6).
 - b. In addition to this, John leaves out the message of Pilate’s wife concerning Jesus, which, undoubtedly, added to his mental turmoil (cf Matt 27:19).
 - c. Pilate was seeking more information. Hence the question, “Whence art thou?” Literally, “Where are you from?” The answer; silence (cf Acts 8:32).
 - d. Jesus’ placid demeanor before this ruler must have added to his unraveling. No begging for His life. No animosity toward the pagan ruler. Nothing but quiet calmness. He was still in control (cf 1 Pet 2:23).
 - e. In this given set of circumstances there was no acceptable answer He could have presented. If Pilate were looking for evidence to release Him, it would have already happened!
 - 2 With unmitigated arrogance Pilate reminded Jesus about the authority he held as the official Roman governor (cf Matt 27:2).
 - a. This reveals that Pilate was as corrupt as the religious leaders. A judge is to determine guilt or innocence based on facts, not social position or status (cf Ps 89:14; Prov 21:3).
 - b. Jesus tersely tells Pilate that God extends the power to rule (cf Jer 27:5, 6; Dan 4:17, 32).
 - c. This is the very point Paul makes in Roman 13 (cf Rom 13:1).
 - d. Jesus’ rebuke of Pilate again indicates who it is that is truly in control of these events. Pilate had no power but from above (cf Col 2:15).
 Note: This applied to more than just the Roman Empire. Jesus was delivered to Pilate by the counsel of the Jews. The leaders of the Jews and the nation, in general, had rejected God’s perfect gift (cf Mk 15:1).
 - e. Pilate wanted to release Jesus, but the Jews turned the charge of treason around and used it as political blackmail against Pilate (cf Lk 23:2).

- f. This is an indicator of just how easy it is to keep drifting further and further away from a safe position once a step is made in the wrong direction (cf 1 Cor 10:12; 2 Pet 2:20).
- D. The Jews finally have their diabolical desire culminated with the death sentence (13-16).
- 1 The cowardly Pilate was not going to risk a negative report about his actions or conduct getting back to Caesar. (This would have been Tiberius Caesar).
 - a. After repeatedly finding Jesus innocent of all charges he now takes the official judgment seat to condemn Him to death (cf Ps 94: 20, 21; Amos 5:7).
 - b. “Gabbatha” (v 13) means *raised or elevated* (Thayer’s). Literally, a judgment throne.
 - c. So exact is the account (eyewitness) that the very hour this transpired is recorded. The sixth hour would be 6 a.m. Roman time or about sunrise on Friday morning (cf 19:31). The Sabbath would begin at sundown on Friday evening.
 - d. This corresponds perfectly with Mark’s account that the crucifixion occurred at the 3rd hour (Jewish time, or about 9 a.m.) (cf Mk 15:25).
 - e. “Behold, the man” (v 5) is now changed to Behold, your King” (v 14) (cf 19:19-22).
 - 2 The Jews denied God unwittingly and acknowledged their single allegiance to an earthly king (cf Hosea 10:3; Zech 11:6).

Note: As Guy N. Woods so correctly stated, “The Jewish system committed suicide on that fateful morning when it renounced its heavenly King for Caesar.” (Taken from Comm. on John, page 399.) (cf 1 Sam 8:7; 12:12).

 - a. Their declared king (the Roman government) would totally annihilate their city and eradicate their religious system in slightly over 40 years (cf Matt 24:15).
 - b. It was at this point that Pilate attempted to symbolically wash away the guilt by washing his hands in public (cf Matt 27:24).
 - c. Pilate then delivers Jesus to the Roman soldiers to be led away to the cross (cf Lk 23:24).
 - d. Abused, beaten, humiliated and bloody, the Sovereign and Supreme is led away by mere mortal man, condemned to die an unspeakable death.
- II. The crucifixion (17-27).
- A. The crucifixion on Golgotha (17, 18).
- 1 As was customary, in Roman executions, that the condemned would carry the cross they were to die on.

Note: The other three accounts have Simon of Cyrene helping to bear the cross (cf Matt 27:32; Mk 15:21; Lk 23:26). We have no further explanation concerning this.

Note: For additional information about the events, which transpired immediately before His trek to Golgotha, please see Outlines on Matthew, page 147, same author.

 - a. There is no record of Jesus falling under the weight of the cross. That is unfounded supposition.

- b. The word “bearing,” (v 17) means *to carry* or *take up* (Strong’s). The same word is used in Lk 10:4; Jn 10:31; Acts 3:2.
 - c. We see in this a fulfilling of both duty and example (cf Matt 10:38; 16:24).
 Note: From the frequent references to carrying ones cross we may conclude it was a common enough site at that time to forgo any explanation (cf Mk 8:34; 10:21).
 - d. We should also see His willingness to carry the cross. Willing to follow through, willing to die, willing to be obedient to the very end (cf 12:27).
- 2 The “place of the skull” (v 18) now is pictured with three crosses and three men, condemned to a horrible death (A fulfillment of Isa 53:12.).
- a. The types and anti-types of the Old Testament are clearly seen in His being taken outside the city to die (cf Heb 13:11, 12).
 - b. The crucifixion was not just a means of brutal death. It acted as a deterrent for all who would witness the death, and then later to see the rotting bodies hanging on the crosses. This is the reason the crucifixions occurred in public places (vs 20).
- B. Pilate affixes a public notice to the cross (19-22).
- 1 Pilate personally writes the words on the sign. All four accounts mention the sign, but only John reveals the one who did the writing. Notice the wording in each account: Matt 27:37; Mk 15:26; Lk 23:38.
- a. It was written in three languages, possibly explaining the wording variances.
 - b. Pilate may be striking back at the Jews with this sign. They had forced his hand. His retaliation was spinelessly weak in light of the sentence.
 - c. Jesus is indeed King, but neither the Jews nor Pilate believed it (cf 1:29).
- 2 With the “title” (v 19) literally, *a placard*, in plain sight, the Jews were worried about the impression travelers might feel if their “king” was crucified. Hence, their requested modification of the wording, which Pilate denies.
- C. The scene around the base of the cross (23-27).
- 1 The soldiers divided the clothing and gambled for His coat.
- a. The reason the clothing was divided into four parts was the custom of the Romans to assign four soldiers to each cross.
 - b. The compassion of family and friends would surely run high at the sight of the terrible torture of the crucified individuals, making security necessary
 - c. The “coat” was an inner garment, “*a tunic or undergarment*” (Thayer). If cut into four pieces it would be rendered useless.
 - d. This fulfills the prophecy of David in Psalm 22:18.
 - e. There might be an interesting parallel with the Old Testament’s High Priest’s robe (cf Ex 39:22, 23).
- 2 Contrasting the gambling and revelry of the soldiers, the family and friends were standing near by the cross with heavy hearts.

- a. There were probably four women mentioned in this verse: Mary, Jesus' mother, her unnamed sister (possibly Salome, whom many think was John's mother), Mary, the wife of Cleopas and Mary Magdalene.
- b. In this setting, Jesus turns His mother to John, as one who will care for her. The last mention of Mary in the Bible has her with John in Jerusalem (cf Acts 1:14).

Note: It is possible Jesus' half-brothers were not ready to live Christian lives at this point (7:5). Sometimes spiritual brotherly support can be better than a fleshly pretense of support.

III. His death and burial (28-42).

A. His death on the cross (28-30).

- 1 John leaves out many things the other writers include in their narratives, e.g., the darkness, the veil tearing and many things Jesus said from the cross.
- 2 John records two of the seven sayings uttered by Jesus. First, "I thirst" (cf Ps 69:21).
 - a. The suffering and probably an accompanying fever caused the thirst.
 - b. The vinegar (diluted sour wine) would have been something different than the drink he had refused (cf Matt 27:34; Mk 15:23).
 - c. Since the limbs (branches) of the hyssop bush are comparatively short we may have some indication of the height of the cross (cf Matt 27:48).
 - d. The second saying recorded by John is His last, "It is finished" (cf 4:34; 5:36).

Note: "It is finished" comes from a single Greek word, *tetelestai*. According to David Roper it is a word used by artist when they finish a painting or sculptor, step back and carefully observe their work. If nothing needed to be corrected or improved upon the word *tetelestai* is used. The death was not a failure, but a perfect success!

B. Jesus is removed from the cross (31-37).

- 1 We see more religious hypocrisy permeating this passage. They had just insisted that an innocent man must die, but it would be "against their religion" to have Him on the cross during the Sabbath (cf Deut 21:22, 23? Does not mention the Sabbath.)!
 - a. The breaking of the legs would cause the victims to suffocate. Death would be comparatively quick. (It has been recorded that a hammer was used to break the leg bones!).
 - b. The other two victims had their legs broken, but there was no need to break the legs of Jesus. Another fulfilled prophecy, see verse 36. This typified the Passover sacrifice. (cf Ex 12:46) (Prophetically seen in Ps 34:20).
- 2 His side was pierced and blood and water flowed forth (cf Zech 12:10).
 - a. Many have written much concerning the blood and water being separate as they came forth from His side. It is a medical fact that in some rare cases a ruptured heart will cause such a phenomenon as described here. But, this takes time, and the time factor is not available to justify this hypothesis.

- b. John may be doing nothing more than proving that Jesus really died on that cross in a real human body (cf 1 Jn 5:6).
- C. Jesus is buried (38-42).
- 1 How strange that Joseph and Nicodemus would team up to bury the Lord while His close disciples stood by idly (cf 12:42).
 - a. As those who openly confessed to follow Jesus shrank back into the shadows, this man, who had previously been secretive about his discipleship, steps to the forefront to claim the body (cf 9:22).
 - b. Nicodemus (3:1) must have been a wealthy man in order to supply “about an hundred pound weight” (v 39) of burial spices (cf 2 Chron 16:14).
 - c. His wealth and position may be the reason he was able to secure the body from Pilate for burial.
Note: “Pound” is from *litra* (Gr), which comes from *libra* (Latin). It was about 12 ounces and, therefore, this quantity was about 70-75 pounds of spices.
 - d. A quick burial was common among the Jews. They did not embalm as the Egyptians did (cf 11:39; Acts 5:6, 10; 8:2).
 - e. These two men did the best they could to make proper burial arrangements. Time was pressing. He must be buried quickly (v 42). Actually, burial arrangements had begun six days prior (cf 12:3-7).
 - 2 The body of Jesus is buried in a new tomb (cf Isa 22:6).
 - a. The tomb, belonging to Joseph, was in a garden. Only John mentions the garden.
 - b. It appears this site was selected because of convenience. A “proper” burial may have been planned for after the Sabbath. This would explain the women coming to the tomb early on Sunday morning (cf 20:1).
 - c. Jesus has gone from Gethsemane to Golgotha and then to the grave. Vanquished? No! With God’s plan still intact, glory awaits in the next chapter!

John 20

The greatest day known to mankind

- I. The resurrection (1-29).
 - A. His disciples find an empty tomb (1-10).
 - 1 With the Sabbath now passed (cf Matt 28:1) Mary makes her way to the tomb, possibly wanting to make proper burial arrangements for the body of Jesus.
 - a. Mary started this journey to the tomb while it was still dark, arriving at sunrise (cf Mk 16:2).
 - b. “The first day of the week,” (v 1) is mentioned by all four writers of Jesus’ life. Couple this with Luke (Acts 20:7) and Paul (1 Cor 16:2) we have proof positive of the proper day to worship.
 - c. The stone was already removed when Mary arrived at the tomb (cf Matt 27:60).
 - d. Mary was not expecting a resurrection. Her love for the Lord, rather than her faith in His promises, caused her to go to the tomb that morning (cf Matt 20:19; 27:63).
 - 2 Mary notifies the disciples of the missing body. Peter and John ran together to the tomb (cf Lk 24:12).
 - a. John beats Peter to the tomb, (not necessarily an indication of John being younger, as some attempt to say) but, he did not enter (v 5)
 - b. When Peter arrived he entered the tomb and then John had the courage to enter also (Adventurous, impetuous Peter) (cf Matt 14:28).
 - c. They saw the grave clothes and napkin, which once wrapped the dead body of Jesus (cf 11:44).
 - d. It immediately caused belief in John that Jesus was the Christ, the Messiah (cf 2:22). Jesus had taught about His resurrection many times, as well as the many prophecies from the Old Testament. These teachings had not penetrated to the point of knowledge (cf Ps 16:10; Lk 24:44-46).
 - e. The fact that they each returned home indicates their belief in the resurrection. No search party was formed to find the body.
 - f. We might be puzzled at the lack of understanding in the disciples, but when we realize they had no thought of the Messiah dying, there would be no reason to think of a resurrection (cf Matt 20:21).
 - B. Jesus appears to Mary (11-18).
 - 1 Mary, in her sorrow, returns to the tomb in tears, to find two angels in the tomb (Matthew and Mark record one angel. Luke and John record two).
 - a. Mary was apparently unaware these were angels. She exhibited no signs of fear normally associated with such an encounter (cf Dan 8:17; Mk 6:49; Lk 1:12).
 - b. These angels were described as being dressed in white (cf Acts 1:10; Rev 3:4; 7:14) (A visible manifestation of spiritual beings. Literal clothing would be unnecessary).

Note: The Bible always describes angels as being male.
 - c. Mary did not understand the significance of the events like Peter and John did (v 8). She wept, still concerned about the body of Jesus (cf 20:2).

- 2 She then sees Jesus who promptly asks her two questions: “Woman, why weepst thou?” and “Whom seeketh thou?” (v 15).
 - a. She failed to recognize Him immediately. Clear vision of both mind and eye were clouded by grief. Probably different than the case revealed in Mark 16:12.
 - b. She assumed the “gardener” would know whom she was speaking of (*him* v 15) and His whereabouts. She was prepared to “take him away.”
 - c. At the sound of His voice speaking her name she recognizes the Lord (cf 10:3)
 - d. She calls Him “Rabboni,” (v 16) (Literally, *my great teacher*) (cf 1:38, 49:3:2).
 - e. “Touch me not” (v 17) probably means not to cling to Him. He was not afraid of being touched (cf 20:27).
 - 1) Mary needed to be doing other things at that moment (cf Matt 28:7).
 - 2) “I am not yet ascended,” (v 17) means He was real and not a vision. There was no need for her to touch Him to verify His existence.
 - 3) The relationship has now changed. Now His “brethren” were joint heirs of eternal life (cf Rom 8:17; Gal 3:29).
 - 4) Mary becomes the immediate instrument for spreading the good news.
- C. An appearance to ten of the apostles (19-25).
 - 1 Some interesting time factors are revealed in verse 19.
 - a. The time is pinpointed as being the evening of the “same day,” i.e., the resurrection day, the first day of the week (cf Matt 28:1).
Note: John wrote this many years after the resurrection. We need to see that the Hebrew way of dealing with time was done away with. Otherwise, a new day would have started at sundown. John offers no explanation, so it was something accepted.
 - b. The mentioning of closed doors is given to show this was a miraculous appearance (cf Lk 24:31; Jn 20:26).
 - c. Closed doors, drawn curtains or the cover of darkness cannot keep God out!
 - d. Jesus enters the room with “peace” on His lips. This is how He ended the conversation with the disciples in the upper room just days before (16:33).
 - e. Jesus’ breathing on them (v 22) was a symbolic gesture to show the Holy Ghost was to come upon them. Why symbolic and not literal at this time?
 - 1) Jesus must leave before the Comforter would come (cf 16:7).
 - 2) When He did come He would guide them in all truth. They were not there, yet (cf Acts 1:6).
 - 3) Thomas was not present at this time (cf 20:24).
 - f. Verse 23 has the same meaning as Matthew 16:19 and 18:18.
 - 2 For some unknown reason Thomas was absent when the Lord appeared.
Note: I have often used this verse to point out the possible blessings missed by not attending Sunday evening services. Thomas missed out on joy, peace and seeing the Lord.

- a. Thomas was not going to take their word for anything. He wanted proof. Many condemn Thomas for his actions here. I commend him for his desire for facts.
 - b. Empirical evidence was available to him and he wanted it (cf 10:38; 1 Jn 5:20).
 - c. If people today would not take anyone's word for matters concerning faith, but would go to the *book of facts*, religious division would soon vanish (cf 8:32)!
- D. The next Sunday the Lord appeared when Thomas was present (26-29).
- 1 "Eight days," (v 26) would be the next Sunday, counting both Sundays and the six days between them (cf Mk 16:2, 9; 1 Cor 16:2).
 - 2 Thomas' requested "proof" was now at hand. Jesus, knowing the hearts of all people, knew what Thomas wanted and provided the answer for him. His faithlessness would quickly fade to belief (cf 1 Tim 1:14).
 - a. With nothing to hide the request was granted to place his finger in the wounds (cf 1 Jn 1:1).
 - b. Thomas believed because he saw and acknowledged Him as God (cf Isa 25:9).
 - c. We can believe because they who saw the evidence recorded that information for us (cf 2 Cor 5:7; Heb 11:1; 1 Pet 1:8).
- II. John's purpose for writing is declared (30, 31).
- A. Many other signs were done while Jesus was on earth (30).
- 1. The magnitude of Jesus' accomplishments on earth is succinctly summed up in 21:25.
 - a. John records only eight miracles performed by Jesus, and one of those was port-resurrection (cf Jn 21:6-11). The other three writers record 20, or more, miracles each.
 - b. The twenty-one chapters in this marvelous book are little more than a skeleton outline of what He did while in the flesh (cf Job 26:14).
Note: Why wasn't more written? The easy answer is, nothing else was needed (cf Ecc 12:12; 2 Tim 3:16, 17).
 - 2. "Signs" (v 30) are a reference to the miracles and wonders He did, which point to Him being the Messiah (cf 10:25).
- B. The recording of these facts should impart faith (31).
- 1. John, like the other biographical writers, only recorded a small portion of the life and events of Jesus.
 - 2. The facts of the resurrection are recorded and presented in such a fashion as to eliminate the possibility of error or doubt in the honest reader (cf Rom 10:17).
 - a. The empty tomb, which was witnessed by several people at different times, is evidence which cannot be refuted.
 - b. The miraculous appearance to His disciples on several occasions over a period of forty days is further proof.
Note: Westcott said, "Taking all the evidence together, it is not too much to say that there is no single historical event better or more variously supported than the resurrection of Christ." (The Gospel of the Resurrection, page 136).

John 21

Jesus appears to His disciples by the sea of Tiberias

- I. Jesus appears to seven of the eleven disciples (1-14).
 - A. Simon leads the disciples on a fishing trip (1-3).
 - 1 “After these things” (v 1) refers to the events recorded in chapter 20, (Probably 20:19ff) but no specific length of time is given.
 - a. Jesus “showed” Himself to His disciples at the sea of Galilee, as He promised He would (cf Matt 26:32; Mk 16:7).
Note: Only John refers to this sea with the name of Tiberias (6:1, 23).
 - b. Since most of the disciples were Galileans, and He has done most of His teaching in Galilee, it was natural to head in that direction (cf Matt 2:22; 3:13; 4:18, 23).
 - c. It is possible that we can connect Acts 13:31 with 1 Cor 15:6.
 - 2 Seven disciples are mentioned, five by name.
Note: Why does John mention so many, and five of them by name? These were witnesses to support the facts of this appearance.
 - a. Peter is designated as the leader of this fishing expedition. No details are given as to why they decided to go fishing.
 - b. No doubt they were discouraged and confused by the events surrounding the crucifixion and resurrection. Maybe as ex-fishermen they simply wanted to go fishing, or maybe they thought they could raise some money from such an endeavor, or maybe they wanted to do something they were comfortable with.
 - c. One thing for sure, they had lost the concept of Matthew 4:19.
 - d. They fished all night without catching any fish (cf Lk 5:5).
 - B. Jesus makes His appearance on the shore (4-6).
 - 1 The seven disciples did not recognize Jesus standing on the shore (cf 20:14).
 - a. Not being able to identify Him as the Lord was probably do to the early hour and the distance (cf 21:8). (Unlike the appearances of Mk 16:12; Lk 24:31).
 - b. A man’s voice would easily carry the three hundred feet to the boat for communication (cf Mk 4:1; Lk 5:3).
 - 2 Jesus calls from the shore inquiring about the catch of the night.
 - a. “Meat” (v 5) is a word which means food of any kind (cf Lk 24:41, 42).
Note: It is also used in the figurative sense (cf 4:34).
 - b. They were fishing off the wrong side of the boat. Jesus knew it, but it was supernatural knowledge (cf Lk 5:4-6). The tally of the catch will be revealed in verse 11.
 - C. The disciples hurry to the shore to be with the Lord (7-11).
 - 1 John was the first to perceive it was Jesus, but the impulsive Peter was the first to act (cf 6:67, 68; 20:4-6).
 - a. Peter dove into the water to hurry to shore. He did not have time to wait on the net to be brought aboard or the boat to be taken to shore.

- 2) If it is referring to the other disciples then He must be reflecting back to Peter's boasting of his great love (greater than the other disciples) the night before the crucifixion (cf Matt 26:33).
 - 3) We cannot know which of these is correct, but both ideas have application in our lives.
- 2 We have often heard that Jesus and Peter used two different words for "love". (*agapao* and *phileo*) In light of the fact that two different words are also used for "flock," "feed" and "knowest" in these same verses, it appears that many commentators may be fabricating an alleged significance from the word "love."
- B. Peter's independence would be changed (18, 19).
- 1 Peter was a man who was used to self-direction.
 - 2 This would change in his future. His commitment to the cause of Christ would restructure his existence (cf 1 Pet 4:12-14; 2 Pet 1:14).
Note: Why would this be included in the text? It was probably written years after Peter's death. Yet, another point of proof for the doubter.
 - 3 "Follow me," (v 19) was exactly what Peter did, according to history. The violent death of crucifixion, to be followed by a glorious resurrection (cf 1 Cor 15:23, 52).
- C. Peter receives some pointed teaching concerning John's future (20-23).
- 1 Peter understood the Lord's teaching concerning the harshness of his own future. He and John were friends. He was interested in what would face John.
Note: to imply jealousy seems to be the very opposite of the text and context.
 - a. This paragraph reflects back to the "follow me" of verse 19.
 - b. Jesus does not answer Peter's inquiry directly, but rather rebukes his concern for the duties of others when he should be concentrating on his own duties.
Note: This is a common trap for many of us. We should never be concerned about whether another's pathway is easier or harder than ours. We each must follow in the path our life takes us.
 - 2 Jesus' statement (v 22) gave rise to a false doctrine that John would not die. This gave way to legends and absurdities, which have continued, to this very day.
- D. John concludes with a significant statement of testimony (24, 25).
- 1 For one to testify they must, by definition, be an eyewitness to the event(s) (cf 19:35; 1 Jn 1:1, 2).
Note: This is contrary to all modern "testifiers" who have "eye-witnessed" nothing. Since nothing has been "witnessed," both the word, as applied, and the false practice, need to cease.
 - 2 "[M]any other things" (v 25) shows the condensed material given in this book. More miracles, signs and details could be listed (cf Ps 40:5; Matt 11:5; Acts 10:38).
 - a. What we have been given was/is sufficient to establish a saving faith in Him, if believed and obeyed (cf 2 Thess 3:14; Heb 5:9; 1 Pet 4:17).
 - b. The apostle John, after a long and fruitful life in His service leaves behind the blessed words to guide others in like fashion. Amen.

