

Book of John

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Chapter 1

John 1:1-2

Written by Apostle John – the Apostle of Love

John's Gospel Chapter 1. The Gospel according to John was written by the Holy Spirit through the apostle John. The apostle John ultimately became known as the apostle of love. But it is important to understand that John did not speak from a lofty, theological perch far removed from real life. You see, all of Jesus' original disciples died violent, brutal deaths except for John. But it was not for lack of trying. The Roman emperor, Domitian, ordered John put into a cauldron of boiling oil. But when that failed to kill him, he was exiled to a rocky, seemingly God-forsaken island called Patmos, where he received the Book of Revelation. Following his release from exile on Patmos, probably nearing one hundred years of age, John returned to Asia Minor, where he went from church to church, sometimes carried on a stretcher. The historian Eusebius tells us that when John would come into the meeting places, people would break out in applause for this one who knew Jesus, this one who had leaned on His breast. "Give us the word, John," they would say. "Tell us something heavy." But all John would deliver was a single-sentence sermon: "Children, love one another.", and then sit back down. From church to church, John traveled with his single message: "Children, love one another." "Why don't you say something a little weightier, a little more meaningful?" asked an elder. Eusebius says John looked the elder in the eye and said, "The sole commandment of Christ is to love, for he that loves has no need of anything else."

Not Always Apostle of Love

It wasn't always that. He originally was a part of the wrestling tag team known as the Sons of Thunder (hahaha). John and his brother James wanted to rain fire down from heaven on a village in Samaria who had rejected Jesus. Reminds me of my friend Tim who would read his bible in the break room during lunch, and the other workers would mock him and make fun of him; so one day as they mocked and he read, he stopped and looked upwards and said, "what's that Lord, you want me to kill them all" (hahaha). So John wasn't always the Apostle of love, but we see that God can change us, as we walk with Him, as we communion with Him, as we look and gaze upon Him, He changes us from glory to greater glory. Do you want change, do you want to be more like Him, I will promise you this that you invest in these 21 chapters about Jesus, you will never be the same, God will change you from the inside out.

Luke 9:51–56 (NKJV) ⁵¹ Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, ⁵² and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. ⁵³ But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. ⁵⁴ And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?" ⁵⁵ But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. ⁵⁶ For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." And they went to another village.

A Little Bigger Each Time

In John's account believers find an ongoing source for expanding their concept of the Savior's greatness. The serious student of John will find that each time he returns to the Gospel, Christ will be a little bigger—something like Lucy's experience with the lion Aslan (the Christ symbol in C. S. Lewis's Chronicles of Narnia) as she again gazed into his large, wise face.

"Welcome, child," he said.

"Aslan," said Lucy, "you're bigger."

"That is because you are older, little one," answered he.

"Not because you are?"

"I am not. But every year you grow, you will find me bigger."

My hope is that as we work our way through the wonders of this book, we will find Christ bigger and bigger and bigger.

Gospel of John Unique / The Synoptic Gospels

The Holy Spirit used John in the writing of the Gospel, the writing of first, second and third John and then the writing of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, the final book in the Bible. The Gospel of John is unique among all four of

the Gospels. Matthew, Mark and Luke are known as the synoptic Gospels, synoptic meaning seen together. They cover much the same territory. They're all necessary; you'll never have a complete picture of Jesus by just reading one of the Gospels. You need all of them. They cover largely the same territory, his birth and the parables and the miracles and these different events, the genealogy. Two of them covered the genealogies and all. Because they cover much the same material, they're known as the synoptic Gospels.

Different Emphasis / Why 4 / Different Angle – Perspective / Kids 400 Dollars School Photo

Each one of the Gospels has a little bit of a different emphasis concerning Jesus. You look at the Gospel, you say, "Why would he do four? Why wouldn't He just have the super duper new improved Gospel?" If it contains all of it. The reason is because each one of them, there's a little different view of Jesus, the needed view. A person can take a look at another person's face from four different angles and will see the face a little differently from each angle. Jesus is the face that we love. Someone will come to you and say, "Listen, which one of the four or which three of the four should we throw away?" You say, "I'm not throwing away any of them, I love every angel. It is like those photos you get at the school and they send home with your child. They take all these pictures of your kids and then they have you come in and look at. You are set upon only buying \$22 worth of pictures. They bring in the \$400 set and they lay it out. It is \$400 and that \$400 can buy all of them, or buy your 22 dollars' worth and they will throw the rest away. We say, those are pictures of my little baby, you can't throw them away, and so 400 dollars later we have all those photos. As for me, I don't even delete the blurry or out of focus photos I take on my phone because if I can even remotely make out the picture I keep it, because although the picture is blurry, it still reminds me of the moment, the moment with the face that I love. And Jesus is the face that we love, and we love every last picture the Bible gives us of Him.

Theme of Gospel's

The Themes of each Gospel:

- Matthew was written principally with the Jew in mind. It emphasizes Jesus is the king, as the Messiah. That's why Matthew repeats over and over again by the Spirit of God that it might be fulfilled, that it might be fulfilled, that it might be fulfilled. The Gospel according to Mark was written with the Roman in mind.
- The great emphasis of the Gospel according to Mark is at the servant, Jesus as a servant. Mark doesn't deal with genealogy. He doesn't deal with births, when he starts that Gospel, its right to John the Baptist in the wilderness, the temptation, the baptism out there at the Jordan River and on we go. He's a man of action. The Romans were people of action. They were people who understood servanthood. They highly esteemed servanthood. The Lord provides them with the Gospel, that kind of person with the Gospel that says, "You admire servanthood. Well, let me show you the greatest servant who ever lived."
- Then, Luke's Gospel, the emphasis upon the humanity of Jesus. Probably written with the Greek in mind who, if they didn't worship the human body, they certainly, highly esteemed it. The Greek could never understand Jewish circumcision. It was the mutilation of the human body. They could never get over it. If a Jewish boy was circumcised on the 8th day and later became a great athlete and was to participate in the Grecian games, they would reverse the circumcision so that it would, that mutilation to them would not appear. When Paul writes and says, "If you've been circumcised, come to Christ and stay circumcised and they'll be uncircumcised." You think, "How in the world could you undo the thing?" They did. They worship the human body. They worship ... It says we deified the emotions of men, the body of men. What does it have to provide the Greek that kind of mind with the greatest life they've ever seen? Here is a life to study. Here is a human life, all God, all men, all at the same time. Study this one. Tell me what you think and see if you don't conclude that He is the only man, that God man to be sure that is worthy of your worship.
- Then, the Gospel according to John was written and its great emphasis is upon Jesus as God, God the Son, the Son of God, the deity of Jesus Christ. You put the four Gospels together and you have heaven communicating to man. Matthew's Gospel, behold your king. Mark's Gospel, behold your servant. Luke's Gospel, behold the man. John's Gospel, behold your God. All of them communicate in this beautiful message concerning Jesus Christ to us.

Purpose of John – That you Might Believe

Now, the purpose of the Holy Spirit in the writing of the Gospel according to John is found almost at the end of the book. I'd like you to turn with me to it in John 20:30. The purpose clearly stated that the conclusion of the book and John declares by the Spirit of God and truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples which are not written in this book. John later writes and says, "Listen, if we included everything, the world couldn't contain the books." He said, "These are written. These signs are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the promised Messiah, the son of God in His deity and the believing, you may have life in His name.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

John 21:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true. ²⁵ And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.

John concerned that Every Person "BELIEVE" / Life is Found in Jesus / Believe – 98 Times

We're going to see in just a couple of minutes that this word believed, he repeats it twice in verse 31. Some version of it, all the way through, there was this concern on the part of the apostle John that every single person would believe in Jesus as the Messiah, that is, as the Christ, and that He is the son of God. That's what he is concerned about. Why he states it there, because in believing this about Jesus, that's where it is, that we find life in His name. That's where the everlasting life is going to be found. Continually, he brings up this word believing, believe, believe, believe, all the way through the book (some 98 times in some form or fashion). This concern that everyone would believe in Him and have the everlasting life that's found there.

Proves Jesus is God by 7 Miracles

His method, he stated his purpose there in Chapter 20, that the method by which he was chosen by the Spirit of God to get people to believe this about Jesus is all built around seven miracles of Jesus and seven great "I am" statements of Jesus. The whole Gospel is built around seven miracles. It could have hundred miracles and a thousand miracles, 10,000 miracles, but he doesn't do it. He chooses seven by the Spirit that's carefully chosen so that as a person looks at those miracles realizes Jesus did those miracles, that you can only come to one conclusion about Him. He is the promised Messiah and He is God the Son.

- Miracle 1, Water Into Wine (John 2:1-11)
- Miracle 2, Healing the Official's Son (John 4:43-54).
- Miracle 3, The Healing at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5:1-9)
- Miracle 4, The Feeding of the 5000 (John 6:1-5).
- Miracle 5, Walking on the Water (John 6:16-25).
- Miracle 6, Healing The Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41).
- Miracle 7, Raising Lazarus From The Dead (John 11:1-44).

7 "I AM" Statements

7 "I AM" statements,

1. I AM the Bread of Life (John 6:35)
2. I AM the Light of the World (John 8:12)
3. I Am the Door (John 10:9)
4. I AM the Good Shepherd. (John 10:11)
5. I AM the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25)
6. I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6)
7. I AM the Vine (John 15:5)

John 6:35 (NKJV)

³⁵ And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

John 8:12 (NKJV)

¹² Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

John 10:9 (NKJV)

⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

John 10:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

John 11:25–26 (NKJV)

²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. ²⁶ And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

John 14:6 (NKJV)

⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 15:5 (NKJV)

⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

Exodus 3:13 / No Present Tense – No Past Tense – Existence Tense / The Becoming One

I am was a name for God in the Old Testament. God would come ... Remember, when Moses, the Lord met with him in the burning bush and Moses, and he commissions him and go to the children of Israel. Moses said, "What's your name?" Who should I say sent me? The Lord said, "I am that I am. I've always been, I am now, I always will be. In fact, there is no past tense, present tense with me. I am the self-existent one. I always live in the present tense." That's who sent you. Have fun explaining it to them. But it's the name for God, and Jesus seven times, through this Gospel He says, "I am. I am the way, the truth and the life. I am the good shepherd. I am the door" over and over again. What is He communicating? He is communicating, clearly understood by the Jewish mind, that He's divine, that He's to be understood as being divine.

In the Hebrew language, the words "I AM" can be translated to mean, "Becoming One". God, Jesus, is saying I am the "Becoming One", and I desire to become to you all that you need. I want to become to you your salvation, your peace, your truth, your life, your leading, your protector, your love, I want to, and I can, become all things you you. Beloved of God, what do you need Him to be to you today? He will be that to you, He has the ability to be that to you because He is God! Jesus is God, the Eternal One, who knows you by name and loves you! What do you? Let Him become that to you today.

Exodus 3:13–15 (NKJV) ¹³ Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?" ¹⁴ And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" ¹⁵ Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.'

Let's begin this marvelous study through this tremendous book, and as Lucy said, "wow, you look bigger".

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:2 He was in the beginning with God.

Verse 1:1a - In the beginning was the Word,

The Word – Capitalized / Verse 14 – Jesus is the Word

Chapter 1:1 In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. We immediately know this "Word" is important. Notice it is in capitalization. We don't have to guess who this Word is, because you keep reading down on to verse 14 and notice, the word became flesh. He dwelt amongst us and we beheld His glory. The glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." Jesus, Jesus is the Word.

John 1:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Jesus was There in the Beginning / Jesus is Eternal - Preexistent

Verse 1, very important to John is the declaration of the deity of Jesus. He begins by saying, "In the beginning was the Word." When the beginning began, Jesus was already there. He's known as the pre-existence of God, the pre-existence of Jesus. Whenever the beginning of everything that has a beginning began, He did not begin at that time, He already existed at that time. It's a way of saying that Jesus is eternal. In other words, when He came into

that manger on that Christmas morning, He didn't begin to exist at that point in time, He's always existed, the pre-existence of Jesus. The fact that He's eternal. The Holy Spirit declares concerning Him, "In the beginning was the word and the word was with God."

Eternal God – Knows your Beginning & End

Why is Jesus being eternal important to you? Because if He is the Alpha and Omega (the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet), the beginning and the end, then He knows your beginning and your end, and everything in between. You need not go through this life alone, you need not try to figure it out all on your own, you have a God who created you, loves you, and walks with you. He is on the throne, in control, and nothing happening on earth surprises Him, and nothing happening in your life personally is missed by Him. He is the Alpha and the Omega, and He is your beginning and End, and everything in between. You can rest in that, you can live in power because of that, the Alpha and the Omega of the whole universe is your God.

Revelation 1:8 (NKJV) ⁸ "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."

Verse 1b - and the Word was with God

Jesus was With God

The second thing that John reveals about Jesus and about God, and revealing this about Jesus, is that the word was with God. The word 'with them' literally means face-to-face. They're face-to-face to one another.

Talking about You

What is the Father and Son talking about when they are face-to-face? They are talking about you, they are in love with you.

Psalms 139:17–18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! ¹⁸ If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; When I awake, I am still with You.

Verse 1c - and the Word was God

Jesus is God

Then the rest of the sentence, "The word was God" in no clearer words, Jesus is God. You have Jesus as God with God, Jesus as God with the Father.

Plurality of God / Godhead / Face-to-Face

The only way you can have Jesus being God and at the same time with the Father who is also God, what that requires or necessitates is the plurality in the God. You must have more than one person within the Godhead when it speaks here of the fact that the word was with God. The word 'with them' literally means face-to-face. They're face-to-face to one another.

Trinity / I Don't Understand – Welcome to the Club / Great is the Mystery of Godliness (1 Timothy 3)

Now, concerning God, the bible teaches that there is one God manifested in three persons – God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit - One God, three persons. When Jesus gave the Great Commission and He spoke to the disciples and He told them to go out make disciples, baptizing them in the name, singular, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. One name, one God but three persons within the Godhead. You may say, "I don't understand how there can be one God and three persons." Welcome to the club. It's a club that has some very highly-esteemed members including the apostle Paul who wrote to Timothy and said, "Great is the mystery of Godliness. The God which manifested in the flesh ..." He goes on to that verse to speak of Jesus.

Matthew 28:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

1 Timothy 3:14–16 (NKJV) ¹⁴ These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; ¹⁵ but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. ¹⁶ And

without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.

Augustine – the Atlantic Ocean

The early church father Augustine said trying to explain the trinity, is like trying to pour the Atlantic Ocean into a bucket.

I might add to that, as this little pea-size brain tries to think through all the things of the Trinity, it feels like someone is pouring the Atlantic Ocean into my head, and it is just gushing over the edges. What I do find is what Lucy found..... You God, look bigger, but God says no Ray, you have simply grown.

It's a Mystery / Finite Man meets Infinite God

It's a mystery. This is one of the things that everyone must accept if you're going to have or we're going to have a personal relationship with God is that whenever you have the finite, you and I, in relationship with the infinite, that is God, then there is going to be a point in that relationship where there's going to be mystery. You can only track with God so far and then you have what is known as the vanishing point where your mind goes out to a place you can no longer track.

Don't think you Can Tie Every Loose End Together / Main Point clearly Spelled Out

If a person is going to have a relationship with God, there just has to be this acceptance of the fact that there's going to be mystery involved. I can only track with him so far. Otherwise, you become a Jehovah Witness or you become some other kind of group who cannot and will not accept mystery concerning God. They want to solve every kind of mystery even if it means error in doing so. Even Christians do this by trying to take every doctrine of God and tie it together in some airtight argument, putting a bow upon it, and saying "I have figured every detail out about God". It can't be done, it is impossible to be done by a finite sinful mind before an Infinite Holy God. There are some things we cannot and will not fully figure out until we see Him face-to-face. However, know this, the things He wants us to fully know and comprehend can all be found right here in this Word. How to have eternal life, how to walk in the Spirit, how to live in this world, how to treat your spouse, where to live your life, that is all clearly spelled out for us through the Scriptures.

Billy Graham

By the way, if you ever had or are having a crisis of faith over the mysteries of God, please read the news article about Billy Graham when he was just beginning his ministry. He almost quit after a crusade he felt was a total flop, but also at that time he was struggling with some of the mysteries about God as presented by his friend and "at that time" was known as the greatest evangelist in the world, his name was Charles Templeton. Templeton would later walk away from the faith, write a book called "My Farewell to God". I do add, we don't know what happened in his final days and hours of life, whether he came back to the Lord or not. That too is a mystery.

Plurality found all the Way Back In Genesis

So here you have this. Without controversy, great is the mystery of God. Now, the foundation for the plurality of the God began very, very early in the bible. In fact, the foundation for the plurality of the God is as early as Genesis 1:1. You can't get earlier than that. Where God declares, "In the beginning ..." You notice the similarities here with the start of John here. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." The interesting thing about the word God in Genesis 1:1 is the word that's used there for God is "Elohim". In the Hebrew ... Elohim is Hebrew for God and is "plural". Elohim is a plural noun. Should it read "gods" everywhere Elohim is used? Not necessarily, it depends how it is used in the sentence and with what verb, and the context. The word Elohim is a very complicated word, scholars, theologians, and rabbis have scratched their heads over it for 4,000 years.

Genesis 1:1 (NKJV) ¹ In the beginning God (Elohim) created the heavens and the earth.

Examples of plural nouns in English:

- Deer – I saw 7 deer by the road; not there were 7 deers
- Fish – I got 7 fish; not 7 fishes
- Offspring – they have 7 offspring; not offsprings

- Species – they are of the animal species; not specieses
- Salmon – we bought 7 salmon at the store; not 7 salmons
- Moose – I saw a herd of moose; not mooses.

Here are how the Hebrew words break down:

- El - Singular
- Eloh - Dual
- Elohim – plural (3 or more)

Elohim is the word used in Genesis 1.

Names of God Word Counts NKJV (using Logos Bible Software):

- Elohim – 2599
- Eloh – 58
- EL – 235
- Adonai – 770
- Tetragrammaton (YHWH – YHVH – JHVH - JHWH) Jehovah/Yahweh - 6828

Genesis 1:26-27

One place it is clearly used as a plural is in Genesis 1:26-27. The Lord speaks and says, “Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness” plural pronouns. You have a conversation going on as it relates to the creation of man. As God is saying this ... Notice its God saying “Let us ...” so whoever is saying this is God, “Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” People say, “Well listen that is God speaking to angels. But it can’t be, because then in verse 27 it says, “And so God created man in His own image, in the image of God.” If he was talking to angels, then we would be created in the image of God and angels. The only people that are talking in this conversation are God, is God, the plurality there in the conversation.

Genesis 1:26–27 (NKJV) ²⁶ Then God (Elohim) said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” ²⁷ So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Deuteronomy 6:4 / Compound One / Not Indivisible One – else John 1:1 violates Prior Revelation

Now, let’s go to Deuteronomy chapter 6. In Deuteronomy 6:4, you have what is known as the Great Command, the Great Command of the Jews or the Great Shema. In that Deuteronomy 4:6, it declares, “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.” The bible teaches clearly that there is one God. The Shema says God (Elohim) is one (ehad). The Hebrew word that is used in Deuteronomy chapter 6:4 for “one” is an interesting one, it is in the Hebrew the word “ehad” and it means one. It absolutely means one but it refers to a compound unity. That would be like the Baltimore Ravens are one football team, but they are made of a compound unity. There is another word in the Hebrew language for one and it is the Hebrew word “yachid”; “yachid refers to an absolute indivisible one. If the Lord had given in Deuteronomy chapter 6:4, Hear oh Israel the Lord our God, the Lord is “yachid”, an indivisible one. Then we would come to John's gospel and we would close up our bibles and we would go home because this revelation would violate the prior revelation. “yachid is not the word that is used, “ehad” is the word that is used. In using that word God is quietly even in the book of Genesis, even in the book of Deuteronomy making room for the truth that he knew that he would yet reveal through Jesus.

Deuteronomy 6:4–5 (NKJV) ⁴ “Hear, O Israel: The LORD (YAHWEH) our God (Elohim), the LORD (YAHWEH) is one (ehad)! ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

Ehad

The Jewish scholars will quickly say that the Christians are trying to make something out nothing; they say “ehad” doesn’t mean compound, or the major majority of the time is doesn’t mean a compound but.....they say it means “foremost, first, above all, unique” all of which is true, however here is where else it is used, and we see it means compound unity. Genesis 1:5 is first time word is used, and we see an evening and a morning, two unique things make up “a” day. We see it used in Genesis 2:24, where a man and woman come together and are “one”, a compound unity. We see in Numbers 13 that one cluster of grapes, had grapes plural on it, kind of like the football

team example. But, most of all, I know it is a compound unity because Jesus quotes it in Mark 12, and Jesus is the Second Person of the Trinity.

*Genesis 1:5 (NKJV)*⁵ *God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.*

*Genesis 2:24 (NKJV)*²⁴ *Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

*Numbers 13:23 (NKJV)*²³ *Then they came to the Valley of Eshcol, and there cut down a branch with one cluster of grapes; they carried it between two of them on a pole. They also brought some of the pomegranates and figs.*

*Mark 12:28–31 (NKJV)*²⁸ *Then one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him, "Which is the first commandment of all?"*²⁹ *Jesus answered him, "The first of all the commandments is: 'Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one.'*³⁰ *And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.'* *This is the first commandment.*³¹ *And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'* *There is no other commandment greater than these."*

Deuteronomy 6 wipes out Mormonism

By the way, again the bible teaches clearly that there is one God, and that verse (Deuteronomy 6:4) alone wipes Mormonism (which believes in multiple gods and that each Mormon becomes a god) off of the map in terms of something to be considered seriously. That's why with Mormonism you have this Pearl of Great Price, document covenants, you have the Book of Mormon, every effort made to keep you out of the Bible. The problem is that anytime you have subsequent revelation that you claim has come from God it must always be tested by prior revelation. If it violates the prior revelation then you hold to the prior revelation and you reject the subsequent revelation. They can completely fail the previous revelation. That's another study. There are about 15 million Mormon's in the world today, being deceived by this lie.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:1 / Can't make Stronger Statement that Jesus is God / Jehovah Witnesses insert "a"

Not only was Jesus with God but then we're told that he was and is God. The word was God. You cannot make a stronger statement for the deity of Jesus Christ than the one that John does here. The word was God. In fact, it is so clear and the statement is so strong that those that don't want to believe in the deity of Jesus Christ as is the case with the Jehovah Witnesses (around 8 million followers), they must resort to horrible things to try and distort the verse or to confuse the verse to confuse the clear teaching of the verse. What they have done in their New World Translation is they have inserted in violation of all manuscripts that in the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was, and they insert the word 'a', a God. They say Jesus was a God in the same way that the judges of the Old Testament were Gods in that they took a position in which they represented God. They inserted an 'a'. That is a deliberate, wilful, known act on the part of the leadership of Jehovah Witnesses to deliberately distort and come against the clear teaching of John chapter 1:1. Most of the people that come to your door they don't have the slightest idea that this has been done. John chapter 1:1 alone completely dismantles the entire religious system known as Jehovah Witnesses. You cannot believe John chapter 1:1 and remain a Jehovah Witness because the two things are absolutely contrary to themselves.

Greatest Converts to Cults are those with Christian Background (but Untaught)

I know that sometimes when we're taught to witness to the Jehovah Witnesses and I'm spending time here in this area because these folks are very very active. Part of my responsibility as a pastor is to make sure that all of us are equipped to be able to stand our own biblically as it relates to these things, not be pulled into this stuff. In terms of Mormonism and Jehovah Witnesses, the greater number of their converts are those with a Christian background, but who were untaught concerning the word.

Hebrews 1 / God the Father calls Jesus God

John 1:1 is clearly declaring that Jesus is God. And, how about Hebrews chapter 1, for right there God the Father calls Jesus God. By the way, the JW's have no idea about this verse, they are purposely kept from this verse because it dismantles their whole doctrine that Jesus is not God, and there is not Trinity. So if you ever get that chance, just ask them that if you could point in the Bible where God the Father calls Jesus God would they believe it. But they will quickly tell you, there is nowhere in the Bible that says such a thing. Take them to Hebrews 1 and

then end the conversation there telling them they have some serious things to consider. But oh what a powerful verse for us who believe. It is a quote from Psalm 45.

Hebrews 1:8–9 (NKJV) ⁸ But to the Son He says: “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. ⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.”

Psalm 45:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. ⁷ You love righteousness and hate wickedness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions.

Let’s go to Revelation 1

Let’s go to Revelation 1. Final book of the bible where you have Jesus ascribing deity to Himself. In John 1:1, you have the Holy Spirit ascribing deity to Jesus. In Hebrews 1, you have the Father ascribing deity to Jesus. Then in Revelation 1, you have Jesus ascribing deity to himself. In chapter 1:10 where John writes and says, “And I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day and I heard behind me a loud voice as of a trumpet.” Here’s what he heard the voice saying, “I am Alpha Omega, the first and the last.” Isaiah 41:4, the first and the last is clearly speaking of God, notice the all capital LORD, as the is the name for Jehovah, God as used throughout the Old Testament. Some will make the argument that some of the verses in Revelation it is the Father speaking, and other verses it is Jesus speaking, especially chapter 21 verse 7 that it is the Father speaking and referring to Himself as God. If that be the argument, then in the end you still end at the same place, If Jesus calls Himself the Alpha and Omega (clearly Revelation 1), and if it is the Father calling Himself the Alpha and Omega (in any of those other passages), then you still come to the place, Jesus is identifying Himself as God by calling Himself the Alpha and Omega.

Revelation 1:7–8 (NKJV) ⁷ Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. ⁸ “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,” says the Lord, “who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.”

Revelation 1:10–13 (NKJV) ¹⁰ I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, ¹¹ saying, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,” and, “What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.” ¹² Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

Revelation 1:17–18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

Revelation 21:5–7 (NKJV) ⁵ Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.” ⁶ And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. ⁷ He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

Revelation 22:12–13 (NKJV) ¹² “And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.”

Isaiah 41:4 (NKJV) ⁴ Who has performed and done it, Calling the generations from the beginning? ‘I, the LORD, am the first; And with the last I am He.’ ”

(Isaiah 44:6 NKJV) “Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, And his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the First and I am the Last; Besides Me there is no God.

The Trinity Confirms Jesus is God

So what we have here is the Trinity confirms Jesus is God.

- The Holy Spirit – John 1:1
- The Father – Hebrews 1:8-9
- The Son – Revelation 1:10-11

Walter Martin / Alpha & Omega

Now, Walter Martin tells a story, and if you are familiar with his ministry he was known as “Iron Jaws”, as He would quote his bible by the chapter and then all of their books of the cults, he knew the books of the cults better than they knew it themselves. Walter Martin, when he was a young man just coming out of Bible College and Bible

School, he went to visit the Watchtower Organization in Brooklyn, New York. He knew he was going to head in to apologetics, and I guess he began to visit all of these headquarters while he could anonymously. He goes in there for a tour of the place. They show him where everything's being printed and all this they give him a fabulous tour. He's heading out and there's a man that's sitting at the desk there in the reception area. As he walks out, he says to the man that's sitting at the desk, he said, "If I could show you where Jesus called Himself divine in these scriptures, would you believe it?" The guy said, "Well, if you could show me, then fine, but it's not there in the bible." Walter Martin and those of you who knew him ... You can picture. The desk is right there. The guy is down there. The bible is opened up. Walter Martin not content to just read the verse, he pounds the desk, "I am Alpha and Omega. The first and the last and at every word kaboom, kaboom, kaboom. He lays the thing out and then he walks out of the place. Many years later, true story, many years later he's at a place speaking at a church and he always had these strict rules that nobody could take over a meeting that Walter Martin was lecturing at. You could ask questions but they didn't come to hear whoever, they came to hear what he had to say and he maintained control of a room. A guy stood up and he started to say something and it was obviously going to be something other than a direct question to Walter Martin. He said I think you'll want to hear this and I think Walter Martin by the spirit of God let him go. He said years ago I sat at a receptionist desk at the Watchtower organization and you came in. He went through the whole thing and you pounded on that desk I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I am Alpha and Omega the beginning and the end. I am Alpha and Omega the beginning and the end. He said that night I went home and I laid down on my bed and I tried to go to sleep and it was like thunder in my ears. I am Alpha and Omega the beginning and the end. He got down on his knees and he gave his life to the Lord on that.

John 1:2 He was in the beginning with God.

Jesus is the Alpha & Omega / He Loves You

Then notice in verse 2 that He was in the beginning with God. Here you have this declaration again where the Holy Spirit is reiterating that Jesus did not exist or did not come to exist at the beginning but when there was the beginning that he was there with the Father. That Jesus is eternal. John chapter 1:1, the preexistence of God, the plurality of the Godhead and then the deity of Jesus Christ. He knows your beginning and end, and every detail of your in between. The eternal, preexistent God, is for you, loves you, and you can trust Him with your whole being today, tomorrow, and into eternity.

Communion Service – John 1:1-2

Jesus on the Cross – Not Elohim

I find it so interesting (curious to me) that when Jesus quoted Psalm 22: from the cross, that word for God in Psalm 22:1 is not Elohim, but "El" (the singular) version. Jesus, the Father and the Holy Spirit are One", but as the mystery is at the same time, it also speaks of the separation, it is no longer "Elohim", the plurality of let "Us" make man in our image, but Jesus alone on the cross by Himself taking the sins of the world. Jesus is still God, but separated from the Father as He took on the sins of the world. Jesus is filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:1), but separated from the Father, and hence why He cries "EL,EL, why has thou forsaken Me. So there is a depth there, a mystery, but the heart of the mystery is that God died for you, Jesus was willing to be separated from the Trinity for you and for me.

Psalm 22:1 (NKJV) ¹ My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning?

Matthew 27:45–46 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Luke 4:1 (NKJV) ¹ Then Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

End of Study

News Article – Billy Graham Altoona PA 1949

June 22, 2014 12:24 AM / Associated Press / By Peter Smith / Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

ALTOONA — In the fall of 1949, the Rev. Billy Graham led an eight-week series of revival meetings in Los Angeles, drawing multitudes and making converts of celebrities and commoners. He rocketed into the headlines and hasn't left them since, even today at age 95 and in frail health.

But there almost was no Los Angeles, no epochal career preaching to hundreds of millions as the 20th century's dominant personality in evangelical Christianity.

Sixty-five years ago this month, before most people had ever heard of him, Rev. Graham's evangelistic career was nearly buried here in the Central Pennsylvania railroad hub of Altoona.

A look back at Billy Graham's 1949 revival in Altoona

He arrived here to conduct a two-week revival from June 12-26, 1949, counting on broad support from the city's numerous churches.

But as he recalled it, local pastors quarreled with him and each other, conversions lagged behind his expectations and services were disrupted. He recalled leaving the coal-burning town "discouraged and with painful cinders in my eyes."

"If I ever conducted a campaign that was a flop, humanly speaking, Altoona was it!" Rev. Graham wrote in his 1997 memoir, "Just As I Am."

"We could not help but sense that Satan was on the attack," he wrote. Rev. Graham, by then 30 years old and a veteran of more than 10 years on the revival trail, he thought of quitting and focusing on his day job as president of a Minnesota Bible college.

"I pondered whether God had really called me to evangelism after all," he wrote.

His song leader, Cliff Barrows, said the crusade team could only "pray and wonder what had happened and wish the meeting would get over with so we could get out of town," according to author William Martin's biography of Rev. Graham, "A Prophet With Honor."

Rev. Graham was also undergoing a crisis of faith that compounded his ordeal in Altoona.

But in fact, longtime Altoona-area residents who participated in the crusade recall it more positively. And at the time, the Altoona Mirror newspaper published glowing accounts of the services, with Rev. Graham reaping hundreds of converts and volunteers to the mission field.

There's no way at this distance in time to verify such numbers, but "the services were well-attended," recalled John Luciano, 94, a retired Pennsylvania Railroad mechanic who served as an usher at the crusade. "People were getting saved. ... Most of the fundamental churches backed him up, all the Brethren churches, the Assemblies of God churches, even some of the Presbyterians."

But some local pastors refused to sit on stage with others of different doctrinal views. Other ministers, including a visiting radio preacher, protested out front with placards, objecting to Rev. Graham's cooperation with churches that "didn't believe as they believed," Mr. Luciano recalled.

"It was the churches that were supposed to be preaching the Gospel that were against him," Mr. Luciano lamented.

'Christ for Altoona'

On a recent quiet afternoon, Bob Leidy returned with a reporter and photographer to the Jaffa Shrine, the 4,000-seat auditorium owned by local Shriners and rented out, then and now, for civic and religious activities.

As a small group prepared for an upcoming dance recital, Mr. Leidy stood on the same stage where he sang in the crusade choir during Rev. Graham's services. The wooden folding chairs with the leather upholstery remain as they were then, as do the auditorium's ornamental Arabic lettering and Moorish trim.

Despite the distance of the years, the old-time gospel music still came back easily for Mr. Leidy.

"Christ -- for -- me, yes it's Christ -- for -- me," Mr. Leidy sang. "He's my savior, my Lord and king; I'm so happy I shout and sing."

Mr. Leidy, 88, weathered but vigorous and full-haired, is a retired school custodian who keeps busy tending his backyard greenhouses. He regularly attended church since childhood and has long been a song leader at revival services. When he heard Rev. Graham was "coming to the little town of Altoona, I was just thrilled," he recalled.

An advertisement in the Mirror promoted the revival with the title, "Christ for Altoona ...City-Wide Victory Crusade." It touted the free parking and "4,000 upholstered seats." There was no air conditioning and the weather was stifling, and Mr. Leidy recalled an enthusiastic attendee who took it on himself to open the hall's upper-level windows.

The Altoona Mirror gave regular front-page treatment to the services. It praised the revival's musical performances led by soloist George Beverly Shea and the volunteer choir. The paper made no mention of any behind-the-scenes conflicts.

Rev. Graham's sermons bore titles like "Hell Fire and Brimstone" and carried fiercely anti-communist themes. Headlines about his revival shared space with stories of an Alger Hiss spy trial and other Cold War drama.

"American guns cannot stop the philosophy of communism," Rev. Graham told the Mirror. "The only hope for America and the Western world is an old-fashioned revival of religion."

On June 27, the Mirror reported: "The two-week evangelistic campaign conducted by the Laymen's Association of Altoona came to a successful conclusion. Thousands of persons heard the soul-stirring messages of the renowned evangelist Billy Graham and participated in the song services."

At the time, Mr. Leidy saw the revival as a success. But when he learned of the disputes in discussions with pastors afterward, "I was very discouraged and dejected," he said.

Mr. Luciano said Rev. Graham showed no signs of the stress he was experiencing.

"He was upbeat all the time," he said.

Faith under siege

If Rev. Graham's memories of Altoona were worse than the reality, it may be because he was vexed by more than cinders in his eyes.

"My very faith was under siege," he later recalled in his autobiography.

Earlier in the 1940s, Rev. Graham had been preaching with the group Youth for Christ, which mixed wholesome vaudeville acts and other entertainment with hard-sell evangelism.

The Youth for Christ team included a dazzling young evangelist named Charles Templeton.

Mr. Templeton, however, began to share his doubts with Rev. Graham -- first about the crusade gimmicks, then about the Bible itself.

Rev. Graham struggled to parry Mr. Templeton's challenges to the scientific accuracy of the book of Genesis or the notion that a loving God would consign people to hell.

Soon after Altoona, the evangelists met for two days of intense discussions at a New York hotel. "All our differences came to a head," Mr. Templeton wrote in a memoir, "Farewell to God: My Reasons for Rejecting the Christian Faith."

For Mr. Templeton, avoiding the hard questions meant "intellectual suicide," he wrote. He was posing a foundational challenge to Graham, whose sermons pulsed with the authoritative phrase, "The Bible says ... "

Rev. Graham later wrote that while he never considered abandoning the faith, he was studying theologians who affirmed basic Christian creeds -- but rejected a belief that everything in the Bible was literally true.

Later that summer, Rev. Graham took a solitary walk in the California woods, praying: "Oh, God, ... I cannot answer some of the questions Chuck is raising and some of the other people are raising, but I accept this Book by faith as the Word of God."

Then came Los Angeles, which validated Rev. Graham's conclusion that "when I take the Bible literally ... my preaching has power." A historic career was launched.

His early supporters in Altoona were thrilled.

"We sent him letters telling him we were backing him up no matter what," Mr. Luciano said.

Added Mr. Leidy: "We did not forget him. We know the Lord was in it all."

Rev. Graham never returned to preach in Altoona. But in 2012, the evangelist's daughter, Ruth Graham, spoke at the Jaffa Shrine at a fundraiser for Precious Life, a local program helping single mothers.

When she told her father she'd been to Altoona, "He got a twinkle in his eye and said, 'That was a tough one,'" she recalled.

Ms. Graham, who wasn't even born in 1949, said of her own Altoona experience: "People tried to make it up to Daddy through me," she said. "They couldn't have been kinder."

End of Study

John 1:1-14

Written So You Might Believe

This gospel was written so that you might believe.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*

John 14 / 75-85AD / 70 Years Ministry

The Gospel of John. John first met Jesus around the age of 14 it appears from early church writings. The time of this writing of this gospel was somewhere between 85 to 95 AD. When you put that together, John has been in ministry now for close to 70 years and he's writing this gospel now.

500 – 120 – 70 – 12 – 3 - 1

He's sharing his heart of an eye witness to Jesus Christ. John's unique at this situation because John was part of the 500 that we read in 1 Corinthians 15 who had seen Jesus after the resurrection but many had fallen asleep. We know John was part of the 120 in the upper room on the day of Pentecost. We know that John at one time was one of the 70 who were sent out in Jesus' name and of course we know he was one of the 12 apostles that were selected by Jesus after a night of prayer. We also know that this John, he was the, what we call the inner circle Peter, James, and John, the 3 that were with Jesus on their unique occasions, raising of Jairus' daughter from the dead, the scene of Jesus transfigured there on the Mount of Transfiguration and he was with Jesus in the garden when Jesus prayed if there be any other way let this cup pass before me. John in a very unique group has received this but then there's John who's the one on the Island of Patmos as he was banished by the Roman Emperor Domitian. There's John and Jesus as we read in the Book of Revelation and he has this revelation of Jesus being the alpha and the omega. The beginning and the end and, as we always say, and everything in between.

1 Corinthians 15:3–6 (NKJV) ³ *For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. ⁶ After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.*

Last Survivor / Rests Head on His Chest / Heard the Heartbeat of God

The unique ministry of John and at the time of this writing, it is possible that John is the last survivor who had seen and witnessed Jesus Christ. We don't know that for sure but we know that the eye witnesses are very few at this point as its some 70 years since Jesus and his ascension into heaven. I believe John writes from a very unique perspective in that this is the one who will identify himself as the one whom the Lord loves and he will identify himself as the one who leaned on the breast of Jesus during the last supper. You can imagine that innocence of a 14-year-old boy much more mature than our 14-year-olds are today, that he leans on the heart of Jesus in that last supper. He who writes this gospel wasn't just a casual observer, but was one who had such intimacy with the Lord that he would go in a room full of men and be close enough and tender enough to lean his head on the chest of Jesus. He heard the heartbeat of God.....

John 13:23 (NKJV) ²³ *Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.*

He Heard Heartbeat of God – then Lived his Life with his Heart for God / Summed up Life – John 13:23

Imagine he heard the heartbeat of Jesus and then his heart would beat for Jesus himself in 70 years of faith. He writes us this gospel and he tells us why he writes it there in the chapter 20 verse 30 that you might believe. That's why he is writing this book that people might believe. The whole heart of the book is to believe on Jesus Christ. John, I think, we can sum up his whole life as we studied last week, he was the apostle of love. He wasn't always that as he was full of fire and brimstone at some time wanting to judge people but here he is at the end of his life. He's known as the apostle of love and I like that John identifies himself simply as the disciple that Jesus loved, and the disciple who loved Jesus (just rested his head on His chest, like a son to a father). Can I ask you, what's important to you today? If you were to summarize your whole life or what's important to you, if you were to summarize what your ultimate goals and plans are in your life, how would you summarize them? To be a great person in the work force, to be some great athlete, to be someone who has mastered the financial market, somebody who is known for his wit, his humor, somebody that would be known because of their looks or would

you, could you, could we be like John? The summation of our identity is the one who Jesus loved and the one who loved Jesus back, we found life in its fullest and finest by just loving Jesus and being loved by Jesus.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:2 He was in the beginning with God.

No Genealogy or Lineage / King -

Verse 1, it's been said that the Gospel of John has no genealogy like the other gospels. I would counter that and I would challenge that in that there are the genealogies clearly seen here in the book of John.

- We had the genealogy there in Matthew and that goes from Abraham through David and the point is to prove that Jesus is the king and has the right to the throne of David and to fulfill all those prophecies. I remember going to church, a religious church with my family and I had my little nephew, he was about 3 years old on my lap, in the church. The priest read us those 3 sets of 14 so 42 names. So and so be done, so and so be done, so and so be done. Must have taken 10 minutes to read through the whole thing and you're just sitting there like when is this going to end. Then it finally ended and of course the whole church is silent and then my nephew just screams out with a great big loud noise "Dee" and the whole church looks at me, "Why can't you keep your kid in order?" It was rather humorous and then they're singing hymns from I don't know what century it was. Nothing that I knew and I'm just sitting there and then at the end of all the hymns it's all silent again and my nephew says loud enough for the whole church to hear, a couple hundred people, "Uncle Ray, you don't know these words? Because you don't sing." Of course everybody in the church service turns and looks at me including the priest up there on the platform. Matthew's lineage was to show Jesus had a right to the throne of David, and there is great riches in reading it, even when it may seem long and boring, for God and His Word is anything but boring.
- Mark just simply starts with Jesus the son of God and so there is the lineage of Jesus to God the father.
- Luke goes all the way back to Adam and so the lineage is from Adam through Mary and the point about that for further study if you like is because that skips a blood curse that was put upon the lineage that would go through David to the throne. It just proves out the supernatural birth. A virgin birth is the only way to skip the blood curse,
- but here in John, we go beyond lineage and genealogy. We go back to the pre-existence eternal God had. We go to a vanishing point of the human mind, the finite man trying to look into the infinite God and look into the depths of God. There's a lineage here and it was in the beginning, was the word that's Jesus and Jesus was with God and Jesus was God. He was in the beginning with God. There's the lineage and the genealogy if you would we trace Jesus back to before time began eternally existent. Yeah. Wrap your mind around that one.

Virgin Birth

Just recently I was asked, how do you explain a virgin birth. I said 2 things and I went on this long dissertation on the prophecies about this skipping of the blood curse and the Old Testament prophecies of Jesus and Isaiah chapter 9, Isaiah chapter 7 and all those type of things. It was rather lengthy and the person goes "Hmm, okay." I go "Oh I forgot the second point.", as my first point didn't really grabbed the person. Thankfully I remembered the second point. I said, "If God's not big enough for a virgin birth, then he's surely not big enough to raise from the dead," and he immediately goes, "Aah, I like that. I can understand that." For us how big is your God or how small have you made him. He's not just big enough for a virgin birth, he is big enough to be an eternal existent God and he's big enough that we'll see in verse 3 to make all.

Isaiah 7:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

John 1:3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.

Jesus is Creator / Colossians 1:16 / Has to be Big Enough to Create – Else not Big Enough to Overcome Grave

In verse 3, Jesus is the creator of all things. We immediately jump to Colossians 1:16 which confirms Jesus holds all things together. Jesus is the creator of all things and that would include you and that would include me. Just Jesus' creating power is mind blowing and I know it's hard and I can see why people would come up with evolution

because it's a massive step of faith to believe that there's a being powerful enough to create all that we see but again if he can't do a virgin birth, and if he can't create all that we see, then he definitely would not have the power to overcome sin and death and raise from the dead to give us new life. In this book of John, we'll keep bringing and showing miracles of Jesus Christ so that we might believe he wants to grow us in our faith of the awesome power and wonderment of our God and King Jesus Christ, all the wonder and powerful creation that Jesus has made.

Colossians 1:15–17 (NKJV) ¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.

Text Illustration: Bring Your own Dirt

There was a group of scientists who got together one day and decided that man had come a long way and no longer needed God. So they picked one scientist to go and tell God that they were done with Him. The scientist walked up to God and said, "God, we've decided that we no longer need you. We're to the point we can clone people and do many miraculous things, so we just don't need you anymore." God listened very patiently and kindly to the man and after the scientist was done talking, God said, "Very well, how about this, let's say we have a 'man-making' contest." To which the scientist replied, "OK, great!" God added, "Now, we're going to do this just like I did in the old days with Adam." The scientist said, "Sure, no problem" and bent down and grabbed himself a handful of dirt. God just looked at him and said, "No...you get and make your own dirt."

Evolution / Start with Faith / The Bible written Outside of Time Domain

Evolution has its problems when you try to get back to the beginning, they have no powerful starting point as the Scriptures do. Please see my study on Creation versus Evolution that lays out how both of them "end" at the place where you have to "start" with faith. But my faith gets strong because the amazing Word of God (Bible) and when you examine it and cross-examine, you see that it was written outside of our time dimension, as hundreds and hundreds of prophecies prove out we have a book written by someone outside of this time domain. Please see my notes on the website about the accuracy of the Scriptures.

Theistic Evolution

There is a theory that's going around that's called theistic evolution and people say that God spoke and then spoke the eternity into existence, the earth into existence, the universe into existence and then just let it evolve and hence why you can have evolution and creation in the same statement and it's called theistic evolution. They say that God's Word is still true, but instead of literal days, the days represent periods (like hundreds of million years). The problem with that I just want to make that point is on the third day Jesus created grass, herbs, seeds, fruit trees etc., brought forth the grass and its kind. What theistic evolution says that these are long period, millions and millions of years and so it took millions and millions of years to form the grass and the evolution into the fruits etc. The problem with that is that in the next verse, on day 4, God is creating the sun and the moon, and so the problem would be if sunlight did not come until after the herbs and the grass were made then when evolution was happening with the daylight, it would be sunlight for these long periods, so long that the sun would have just scorched the grass and killed it or the period of night would have been so long that the grass and the fruits would have been frozen out and died because of no sunlight. There's just no way around that you can put a daylight and a nighttime into long periods and then have this fruits and grass and herbs come about being. It just doesn't work from a theistic evolution. You have to throw out theistic evolution and you just have to come to the place of it's either Jesus created (in a literal 6 days) and hence the power to create, which then of course I say then He has the power to save you from your sin and raise from the dead..... or you believe evolution. But theistic evolution has the weakest argument of (Creation – Evolution – Theistic Evolution). Now, if you believe evolution, there is no God and there is no hope that man is most miserable. That's quite the dilemma and theistic evolution is not the answer. If you're in the theistic evolution you have to make a decision on what you truly believe, creation or evolution. God or chance. Both take faith to believe. However, what we have in our hands is an amazing book, that if you study it through, proves that it was written outside out time domain, therefore proves there is a God.

Genesis 1:11–19 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. ¹² And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. ¹³ So the evening and the morning were the third day. ¹⁴ Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night; and let them be for

signs and seasons, and for days and years; ¹⁵ and let them be for lights in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so. ¹⁶ Then God made two great lights: the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. ¹⁷ God set them in the firmament of the heavens to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good. ¹⁹ So the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

Jesus Created "ALL" Things – that means You

So Jesus created all things, and therefore that means you.

Your body contains:

- Enough iron to make a small nail,
- Enough salt to fill an ordinary shaker
- Enough sugar to fill a small bowl
- Enough lime to whitewash a small chicken coop
- Enough phosphorus to make a dozen matches
- Enough fat to fill a twelve-pound pail

I think if you went to the recycle yard your body might be worth 3 dollars, but as we study through this Bible, we see the Scarlet Thread, that it cost God His only Son to buy us out of the prison of sin and death.

How special you are

He has to be big enough to create the universe, else He isn't big enough to raise from the dead; but even in His hugeness, He is intimately involved in every detail of your life, because He is big enough to do that for you and me, and all the rest of the world. He is not a distant far away God, but God who is near, and near to you, so close that He wants you to rest your head (if you would) on His chest and hear how His heart beats for you. Just how special you are to God. Are you special! Let me just share a small glimpse of how special you are.

Know how special or Satan will rob you

If you go through your whole life never fully understanding how special you are to God, you will miss out on the many blessing the Lord has for you, also Satan will be able to defeat you in many areas of your life cause you will believe some of his lies.

3 Creations

We are going to look at 3 creations, and see just how special we are.

- Creation 1: The Creation of Man.
- Creation 2: The Creation of You.
- Creation 3: The Creation of You: Part 2

Creation 1: The creation of man.

Let's read Gen 1:4, 1:10, 1:12, 1:18, 1:21, 1:25; we see the repeated statement: it was good:

- *(Genesis 1:4 NKJV) And God saw the light, **that it was good**; and God divided the light from the darkness.*
- *(Genesis 1:10 NKJV) And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw **that it was good**.*
- *(Genesis 1:12 NKJV) And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw **that it was good**.*
- *(Genesis 1:18 NKJV) and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness. And God saw **that it was good**.*
- *(Genesis 1:21 NKJV) So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that moves, with which the waters abounded, according to their kind, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.*
- *(Genesis 1:25 NKJV) And God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind. And God saw **that it was good**.*

But things change on His last creation:

*(Genesis 1:31 NKJV) Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was **very good**. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.*

Very Good / Intensifier / Final Creation / Crown

At the end of every day of creation God said "it was good", until the sixth day, when God said "it was very good". The word "very" as used here is used often with other words to intensify them; in this case it would mean especially good, exceedingly good, great. Why did God say it was so good? Because in His final act of creation, He created man. Do you know what the Hebrew word for man is here "Adam", but it is used in its generic sense meaning "mankind". So here we see God is talking about all of the human race, and that includes me and you. And God said it was VERY good. The creation of man was God putting the crowning jewel on top of His creation. And He said, "It was VERY good"

Adam was first, but it very well could have been us, for we, man, are created in God's image.

Genesis 2:7

(Genesis 2:7 NKJV) And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being

Picture the Day / All eyes on the Lord / Starts forming the dirt / The Animals watch

When I read the Bible I like to put myself in the story, like I was standing right there. So Picture the day in this tropical climate, the lush green garden, a cool mist coming out of the ground, and along comes the Lord. We know from Scripture that wherever the Lord is, all eyes are upon Him. When Jesus walked the earth everywhere He went all eyes were upon Him. When Jesus returns all eyes will turn to see Him, God is the center of His creation. So can you picture all the animals in the garden? When God passed every eye turned to Him, but He didn't just pass, He stopped and started to do something in the dirt. The attention of all the animals are locked in on what He is doing. A lion comes over cocking his head in wonderment, two beavers leave the water to get a closer look, a giraffe uses his height advantage to get a better look, some squirrels hang out on branches to get a bird's-eye view, and a few rabbits hop over to watch. They all watch in silence as God puts some dirt here, some dirt there, and begins to shape it.

Formed / Jeremiah 18 / Ish 64 / The Master Potter

The Hebrew word used here in Genesis 2:7 for "formed" is the exact same Hebrew word used for "potter" in Jeremiah 18. The picture it brings to mind here in the garden is God forming Adam just as a potter forming a piece of clay. God knew specifically what He was going to make when He started to form Adam.

(Jeremiah 18:1 NKJV) The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying:

(Jeremiah 18:2 NKJV) "Arise and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause you to hear My words."

(Jeremiah 18:3 NKJV) Then I went down to the potter's house, and there he was, making something at the wheel.

(Jeremiah 18:4 NKJV) And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make.

(Jeremiah 18:5 NKJV) Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying:

(Jeremiah 18:6 NKJV) "O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?" says the LORD. "Look, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are you in My hand, O house of Israel!"

(Isaiah 64:8 NKJV) But now, O LORD, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand.

Rozelle / Finished Product

Mike Rozelle, who is considered to be a Master Potter, which is no small claim, in other words he is considered one of the best in the world in this field. He and his wife Pam do the "Potters Field Ministry", they go around the world ministering. Pam sings, and Mike gives a Biblical teaching about this verse, while he gives a live demonstration on how to make a clay pot. One thing I'll never forget Mike saying was that every time he begins with that lump of clay, he doesn't even see the clay, but only the finished product, he sees that beautiful finished product. So too with God, for he is the Master of Master Potters.

Every Move shape takes place / Adams face - 930 / The Creator hands get Dirty

Now, picture it, with every move of the Master's hand a distinguishable form begins to appear, can you imagine the joy God had as He formed Adam's face, the face He would look at and fellowship with for 930 years. Here is the creator of the universe getting His hands dirty to create man.

Shaping Done - God Leans Back / Animals Silent / the Breath

After all the shaping was complete I picture God leaning back to stop and admire what He had fashioned. All the animals remain silenced wondering what is it, and then the Creator of the universe leans forward, possibly chest to chest, and breathes life into the nostrils of Adam.

Creator stands / Lifts His Creation / Animals erupt

The Creator stands, then He extends His hands and lifts Adam to His feet and presents him to the rest of His creation. At this point the garden erupts into a euphoric cheer, lions are roaring, monkeys screeching and shaking the trees, squirrels chattering, and birds singing. All of creation rejoicing, the animals in amazement at the beauty of God's creation, the crown of God's creation, MAN.

Creation stopped on Universe / Didn't stop with Adam / Same love interest in Us

God may have stopped creating the universe after six days, but He didn't stop creating with Adam, but He is active in the creation of every one of us. And the same love and interest that God put into Adam, He puts into us.

Creation 2: The creation of you.

(Psalms 139:13 NKJV) For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb.

(Psalms 139:14 NKJV) I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well.

(Psalms 139:15 NKJV) My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

(Psalms 139:16 NKJV) Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them.

v.15 Wrought / embroiderer, needlework / every detail / Artwork

In verse 15 of Psalm 139, the word wrought means "embroiderer, needlework", the picture it gives us is God with a needle and thread, ever so patiently making us. God being so interested in every little detail of how he makes us, bringing the fabric together into a beautiful piece of art. For that's what needlework is, it is art. God considers us his piece of art.

V16 formed - same as Gen 2:7

In verse 16, days fashioned is the same word used for "formed" in Gen 2:7. God doesn't just make you and let you go, He is actively shaping your future, before you are even born, God is preparing your future for you.

He Still Isn't Done

But, God still isn't done. When He finished His artwork as He created you, He begins to create His poem about you.

Creation Three: The creation of You: Part 2

You are a wonderful poem God is writing about you.

(Ephesians 2:10 NKJV) For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

workmanship" is "poiema

The Greek word for "workmanship" is "poiema", from where we get our English word "poem". You see that is exactly what we are, we are God's poem, a love poem at that.

God's Poem / Whole new shaping / New Audience / The Creator Stands / Heaven Erupts

As God creates His poem a whole new shaping takes place, and a whole new audience is present. When we give our life to Jesus Christ God starts to shape us from the inside, conforming us into the image of Jesus Christ. And now the audience has changed from creation to the heavenly angels. They watch on, and much like on day six all they see is some dirt here, some dirt there, but the Master begins to shape it. Now, picture it, with every move of the Master's hand a distinguishable form begins to appear, can you imagine the joy God has as He forms us

knowing what the finished result will be? The Creator stands, then He extends His hands and lifts us to our feet and presents us to the host of angels in heaven. And heaven as in the garden erupts with euphoric cheers as they rejoice in the great work of God, they stare in amazement at the masterpiece of beauty God has created and all of heaven exalts God for His greatness.

He is not Done / Philp 1:6

My friends if you feel discouraged or defeated right now please know that God is still actively involved in your life, and He is still forming and shaping you. How precious you are to Him.

(Philippians 1:6 NKJV) being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

He Loves you / Ever Doubt it / Go to the Cross

God loves you, He can't stop thinking about you, nor can He take His eyes off you, you are His poem. If you ever doubt God's love, than think of these three creations, but most of all Go Back To The Cross, and you will see a Love that is undeniable. God first got His hands dirty for you, then He got His hands bloody for you, and said He counted it all worth it.

(John 15:13 NKJV) "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

How Precious you are to God / Kola Bear

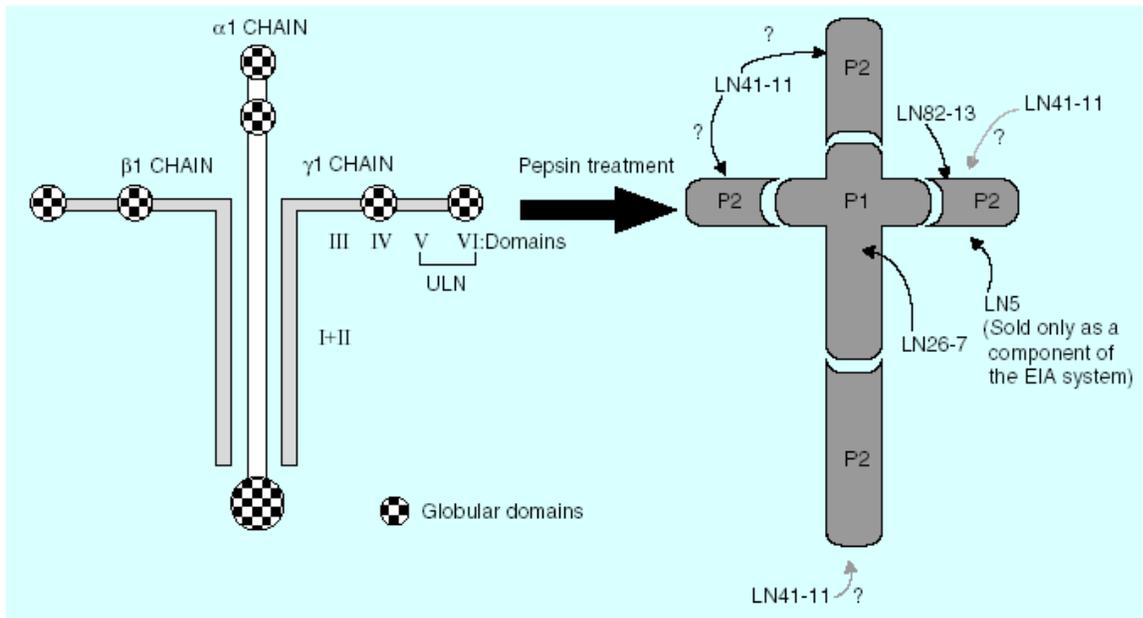
How precious we are to God that we would be the crown of His creation. I don't think so, we may argue over what is the most beautiful species on the planet, a man, a lion, kola bear, etc; but never what is the most precious. For it was man that Jesus Christ became, and it was for man that Jesus Christ died.

Rest in His Love

Rest in His love, that's is what He is doing.

God Weaves His Love Story through the Universe / Life through the Cross / Laminin

Just a side note, as Colossians says that He holds all things together. Scientist agree, they have no idea what hold all the particles together, why atoms just don't explode, they simply call it "atomic glue". Well, just a side note as I love to look into these type of things, and that is the building block of all life is the cross. The cross is the center of the universe, all the history of man from Adam and Eve flowed to the cross, and all the history of mankind up to this very moment flows from the cross. The cross determines the destiny of eternal life. The cross is the building block of human life, no cross as your foundation, then there is no life. God weaves His message of life all through the universe, we see Him in the Creation around us, we see Him in this Bible, and He continual weaves and tells His story of love for man in all kinds of places; one of those places is in medical science. Now medical science can add years to your life, but only God can add life to your years. I am amazed at the love message God sends us through medical science, and that is in the protein called "Laminin", which medical scientist call the basement molecule, the scaffolding protein, in that they say it is the base, the foundation that all living proteins are built off of. The starting point of living protein, starts at the Laminin, and builds from there. Open up any medical journal, medical text book, and you will see that the structure of that molecule forms a perfect cross. God has woven in before time began, I will even weave in my love story of the cross to mankind, at the very foundation of all life, they will see the cross – for all life flows through the cross. You can't have life without the cross.



John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

Zoe Life – Vines Dictionary

Definition of Life in Vines Dictionary (Zoe in the Greek) as used in the NT “of life as a principle, life in the absolute sense, life as God has it, that which the Father has in Himself, and which He gave to the Incarnate Son to have in Himself, John 5:26, and which the Son manifested in the world, 1 John 1:2.

Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W., Jr. (1996). Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words. Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.

Zoe Life – More Definition

The richness of the word “zoe”

- God Life (for it is the life that comes from God and is God's Life)
- More than this Life (John 10:10 – that we might have life and that more abundant)

Greek Words

Here are how the different Greek words are used throughout the Scriptures.

- Bios – living life, livelihood, manner of living
- Psyche – life as in breathing, “existence”, contrasted to being dead, and not breathing
- Zoe – A God Life, Absolute Life, More than this Life (Bios & Psyche)

Zoe Life – Summarized

Life emanating (coming forth) from God, manifested (made known) by Christ.

John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

God Loves You / You are not some Random Chance / No Mistakes

There in verse 3, “All things were made through him and without him nothing was made.” What God wants us to know is he made you, discreetly and uniquely, in the depths of his love. Psalm 139 says, “He formed us in our mother's womb.” Ephesians 1 says we are his masterpiece, his poema, and both of those words give a conveyance of a tapestry. We are knitted. Needlework is what that is in Psalm 139, in that verse. Jesus knit us in our mother's womb, and so there's an intimacy and there's an involvement on his behalf in our lives. We're not just some random accident or some afterthought. Even if someone would come and say that that was a mistake. God makes no mistake and God forms every person in the womb and he's forming them for a reason, just like he formed

Adam and Eve, to have a personal relationship with them, to walk with them and to have an intimate experience with them. That's how much he loves you. And, how precious life is in that God created every person in this world today. May we honor life.

God Demonstrates His Love for You / Whole Theme of Book is You Might Believe

He demonstrates his love, and that's the whole theme and reason that John's written, that you might believe, that you might grow in that faith and knowledge of how much he loves you and how deep his passion is for you. We have just these three verses, the depths of them. Last week we discussed the Trinity and how mind blowing the Trinity is, and here we are discussing evolution, theistic evolution, creation by a being outside of our time domain and this will blow our mind, but what God wants us to do is read through this Word and he's promising that those who do, that they might believe.

Zoe Life – Full Life / Light of Men – to Illuminate the way to Zoe Life / Find Zoe Life only 1 place – In Him

Verse 4, "In him was life and the life was the light of the men." That word there for life is zoe, in the Greek. It means abundant life. It's not the word that means breathing and life as an existence in the body, but a spiritual life, an eternal life. In him, Jesus was zoe life, and I just summarized that, abundant life, absolute life, in him was abundant life and there can only be a life, and an abundant life be found in Jesus Christ. The second half of the verse goes on to say, "And the life was the light of men." Hence, Jesus came to be a light, an illumination to all of man. Here is where you can find abundant life. Life emanating from God, manifested by Christ. Another great definition for zoe, life emanating from God, manifested by Christ. Jesus is the light of all man and he's pointing and showing men this is where you can find abundant life, in me. Try to find it anywhere else and you will fall short. Try to find it in your job career, try to find it in your children, try to find it in your spouse, try to find it in your night life, try to find it in your party life, and none of them will bring you to a zoe and abundant life. It will always leave man short.

Keep Weaving Verse 1; Alpha & Omega / Not Salvation & Death – Everything In-between

We have to keep weaving this theme together of Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and then end. Can I say that to you as those who believe that Jesus is the life? That he died for your sins and that you have eternal life through him and that when you die you will go to heaven? Listen, relationship with God is not just an Alpha and Omega. It's everything in between. So many people want to have an Alpha. "Yeah, I asked Jesus into my heart when I was this certain age, or at children's church, or at a Billy Graham crusade," and then they say, "And when I die I will go to heaven." But God wants to be the Alpha and the Omega. He wants to be everything in between, not just salvation and death, but everything in between of our lives he wants to meet us and be a part of it, because in him is zoe life.

John Writes

John writes, that we might believe so that we might have this type of life, God's Life, life more than this world can give, full life, abundant life, eternal life in heaven that has no end.

***John 20:30–31 (NKJV)** ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*

John 1:5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

God wants us to Comprehend

They didn't comprehend, but make no mistake God wants all men to comprehend.

That they might Believe – God's wants man to Comprehend / Only 600 Words

The theme of the book, the reason for writing, the desired outcome "that they might believe," I believe if someone sits and reads through these 21 chapters, they will come to that place of belief. You know what's interesting to me? I've only found about 600 different words used through this magnificent gospel. Only 600 different words, and here's he's speaking the depths of the universe, and yet he's only using through 21 chapters 600 different words. Do you know what that equates to? That's a six-year-old's language level. It's been said that for the first

six years the child learns about 100 new words a year. At the age of six he has about 600 words, and this is literally what God is doing in this book. He's writing it so simple that even a six year old can believe it and understand. We can think and make these things deeper than they are, but God through John is writing of, it's that simple. These pictures and promises of Jesus Christ that we see, all that he is and all that he's done, he makes it so clear and so simple that even a six-year-old can understand it.

*John 20:30–31 (NKJV)*³⁰ *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*

Lot's of Doctrine / Establishing why he is Telling the Stories

Yeah, I know it can kind of be tough as we are plowing through and studying so much doctrine (such as last week's study). But John is masterfully laying out the whole context of the rest of this Gospel. He is not just telling stories about Jesus but He "is establishing why he is telling every story". By the way, I never make an apology for digging into the depth of doctrine, just as this morning I see the Mormons on the front ad of CNN. They are 14 million strong, with huge money to back them, and they are going after more to draw into their deception.

*2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NKJV)*¹⁶ *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

John 1:6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

John 1:7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.

John 1:8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

John the Baptist / Verse 7 so You Might Believe / Then – by Believing

Then in verse 6 -8 it talks about a man whose name was John, and this is not John referring to himself but John the Baptist, and we'll study that in the next study that we're together. But he says, "John the Baptist came to be a witness of the light, Jesus Christ," and the key word at the end of verse 7 is that all through him might believe. The whole purpose of the Book of John is that men might believe, and all men. The invitation goes out to all men. But the light shines on all men but we'll see not all men will come to the light. It's written that all men might come to believe Jesus Christ is the Lord. When we look at John 20 verse 30 and 31 it says, "These are written that you may believe," there's your Alpha, if you would, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and if by believing that's a plural or a verb tense, a continual verb tense that by believing, continuing to believe that you might have life in his name. That's where the life comes, it's through Jesus, again.

*John 20:30–31 (NKJV)*³⁰ *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*

We Go Verse-by-Verse / Jesus will become Bigger / I am Growing

I tell you, that's why we go verse by verse, and if you go verse by verse through this book, I will promise you that you will see Jesus in a bigger way and a greater way, and you'll see him like you've never seen him before, whether you've been saved a week, a month, a decade or 40 years, you will know him more because we're going through his Word. That's why we go verse by verse. A lot of people want us to get off the verse by verse, become more entertaining, put in more jokes and sermonettes and to make everyone feel good, but I will challenge you with this. Ask anyone who has gone verse by verse, and continues to go verse by verse and study this Word that became flesh, and they will tell you all the same thing, because everyone I've met and meet tell me the same thing, "I am learning so much." I don't mean that by my ministry. I mean that by those who do systematic studies, not just coming here on Sunday but they're reading the Word at home on their own. They're doing their own private studies. They're coming to Ladies Studies, Men's Study and they say, "I am learning and growing so much."

A Challenge

I want to challenge anyone here today, anyone who's reading this, that if you have doubts about Jesus, if you have doubts about God I want to challenge you to two hours. Two hours is about how long it will take to read 21 chapters of this Gospel of John. Sit down and dedicate two hours. Turn off the phone, the texting, the internet, the television, just sit in two hours of silence and read this book from in the beginning all the way through the end. Do yourself that favor because God wants you to believe. If you've never read this book cover to cover, this Book of John, then that is God's challenge, my challenge to you today, because whether you're seeking to understand

Jesus or you already know Jesus, and the Word. In the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning, verse 14, and the Word became flesh.

Not a Book but a Person

We are not just reading a book of doctrine and theology. The Word is a person, and the person is God himself. We're not going through the Bible, but the Bible, the Word, God himself is going through us, and you'll never be the same, ever, when you let God's Word, the person of Jesus Christ go through you and flow through you.

John 1:9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.

John 1:10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

John 1:11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.

Came to His Own – but Rejected

Verses 9 through 11, why Jesus came, that the world might know him. Then it says, "But he came to his own," that would be the nation of Israel, the Jewish people, "And his own did not receive him," as we'll study through this book, they will reject him. Why was the nation of Israel created? It goes all the way back to Adam, not Adam, excuse me, Abraham so that he selected, elected Abraham to make him a great nation so that all the world would look on and go, "So that's what it's like where God is my King, where God is the ruler and reigner of that nation. I want to be part of that nation. I want to know that God." That's what Israel was made to be, that they would show the whole world what it's like to have God leading them. But eventually they became full of themselves and they turned to rebellion, and they no longer wanted to be under the rulership and the kingship of God himself. When God came in the flesh, in Jesus Christ, he was rejected because they did not want to give up their pride. They did not want to give up their rights to do what they wanted to do, and they didn't want to bow a knee before Jesus and so they did not receive him.

Darkness could not Extinguish the Light / Political Campaign Defeat / Satan's Celebration - Shorted

The darkness could not extinguish it even when Jesus hung on the cross Satan no doubt assuming victory was secure as darkness came over the land, but it wasn't enough to distinguish the light of God because he is eternal. Did anybody watch some of the election this week? Even candidates that I don't particularly care for, even I have some sympathy for them when I watch when the final results come in. They're all gathered together in their party, and they're having this big celebration. Victory is sure. We're optimistic. We had a great campaign. People love us. Then the results start coming in, and things look close and everybody is hopeful, but then there comes that final all results are in, all precincts have been counted, and the results are so and so has won and so and so has lost. As you watch those camera shots as they're in those campaign headquarters, people are optimistic and they're celebrating, but when that final new comes in, you could just feel the air go out of the place. Defeat has been accepted, and it's been proven. I just wonder what it was like for Satan in his campaign headquarters as him and his henchman are celebrating what they believed was a sure victory. They believed that the vote was in as people voted Jesus out. We do not want this man to rule over us. They're celebrating as Jesus hung on the cross and as he grasped for his last breath, Satan must feel that victory is imminent, and then Jesus dies. The Father does not intervene. Jesus does not step off the cross. Jesus dies and is laid in the grave and oh, the celebration how it must have began. The celebration of victory for 3 day, but that was Friday. But Sunday was coming. I can image that Satan's campaign headquarters just the air going out of the place when Jesus rises from the dead. I love it. The world tried to extinguish the light, but nothing can extinguish the light, and the light shines on all men, and the light is calling out to men, "Come and have "zoe" (absolute life), eternal life, abundant life, through Jesus."

Israel and her Witness / Witnessing by Glorifying

Verse 11, the nation Israel, given that they might be a light and all the world would look on and say, "I want that." That's how it is when God's the Lord and King. I want to be part of that nation. We can sit, and we go, "Man, Israel how did you blow it?" I want to just ask you and ask myself, "Am I that far away from that? Do people look upon my life as a Christian and go, 'Is that what my life can be like? Can I have a life like his when Jesus is my Lord and King?'" Or can I be like Israel so many times. I'm not shining a light. I'm not bringing a Glory to the Lord. I think we make witnessing more than in is. We think we have to get in the confrontations, a lot of people. I hate witnessing. I hate sharing my faith. I tell you what witnessing is. It's just glorifying Jesus. "Hey, did you get a new car?" "I did.

God blessed me. He blessed me so much, and oh, I just love him." "Hey, how was your weekend?" "Oh, it was great, man. We spent family time, spent time with some of the folks from the church. Just love being with them." "Hey, um, so what did you do yesterday?" "Oh, we go to a prayer meeting. God's so good to us, and we just love to come back and have a time of praise." That's witnessing. The walking around complaining, walking around with frowns, we should be the most joyous people in the world. As it's been said, joy is a choice, and we should choose joy, because boy, greatly have we been blessed by the Lord. That's what witnessing is.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

John 1:13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Those who Receive Him / What did Abraham do to be Chosen

Then verse 12 and 13, "But those who do receive Him, he gave the right to become children of God." What did Abraham do to be God's elect? What was it? Why did God pick Abraham out of all the world? Absolutely no reason. There is no reason. There was nothing of Abraham that was lovely and beautiful, and even pure. He was a moon worshiper when God met him. He did not know who God was. Even after God met him and told him, "I'll make you a great nation," 25 years Abraham lives a lie telling everybody who would come, "Yeah, my Sarai is my sister," trying to tell half-truth, and the whole world's watching. But God still kept with him. There was something of Abraham that we can all be, and it says, "And Abraham believed the promises of God and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

We Believe / Believing is Receiving / Everyone must Come to Own Decision

That's all that we do. How do we receive Him? By believing. Receiving is believing and believing is receiving Him. He's done all the work, now we believe it and we receive it. Notice it says that we don't become,

- not by blood, we're not received by Jesus by blood, meaning no one is born into the Kingdom, not because you're an American or ... Everyone must come to their own personal relationship. No one is, there's no grandkids in heaven.
- Notice it says, "Not by the will of the flesh," meaning there's no work, there's no works that we can do to earn our way to heaven.
- "And not by the will of man." We can't say this is what I choose to be, therefore I will become.
- It's nothing of us but it's by God. He's the only way, Jesus Christ.

To Become / A Legal Right / How did you Receive Him – For Me it was in my Bedroom 1991

Verse 12 and 13, "We've been given the right to become children of God." That word right, it's a legal term. We've been given the power to become. We have this right now to be His sons and daughters. Notice that word, become. You were this. Now you became that. That means we were not always children of God, but we are now children of God because we have become children of God because we received him. How did you receive him? I'll tell you how I received him. In my bedroom 1991, February, Cocoa Beach, Florida, just reading the Word, and I came to the place, an understanding, God, Jesus Christ died for me. He gave his life for me. There was no alter call. There was no trumpets. I simply believed and received Jesus Christ right there at that moment. It's not complicated, and it's that simple. You today can receive Jesus Christ by receiving him by believing in him.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

His Glory – A Movie Theater

In verse 14, says, "They beheld his glory." That word in the Greek is where we get our word theater. They were just mesmerized as they watched Jesus walk and move through his ministry here on earth. The love, the compassion, and the grace that he came and they just were mesmerized by it like going to the movie theaters as we would today. I love that it says, "He was full of grace and truth."

I Want Grace & Truth

I'm all for grace, and I think I do a great job teaching on grace of God, but it must be coupled with truth. I don't want to just know Jesus loves me, this I know for the Bible tells me so. I want the truth. I want to know the truth about myself. I want to know the truth that are the things that are not pleasing to God. I want to know the truth of the things that I need to change in my life. I want to know the truth of the things that will harm me. On the same side, I don't want my relationship with God to just be a bunch of facts and a bunch of paths to follow. I want his grace. I want to enjoy his presence. I want to know his warmth and his love and that it will never end for me that he is my alpha. He is my omega, and everything in between, everything in between he is involved in in my life.

Text Illustration: THE CHRISTMAS STORM: A Modern Parable by Paul Harvey

"This is about a modern man, one of us, he was not a scrooge, he was a kind, decent, mostly good man, generous to his family, upright in his dealings with others. But he did not believe in all that incarnation stuff that the Churches proclaim at Christmas time. It just didn't make sense to him and he was too honest to pretend otherwise. He just could not swallow the Jesus story about God coming to earth as man. I'm truly sorry to distress you, he told his wife, but I'm not going with you to church this Christmas Eve. He said he'd feel like a hypocrite. That he would much rather stay home, but that he would wait up for them. He stayed, they went. Shortly after the family drove away in the car, snow began to fall. He went to the window to watch the flurries getting heavier and heavier, then went back to his fireside chair and began to read his newspaper. Minutes later he was startled by a thudding sound. Then another and another. At first he thought someone must be throwing snowballs against his living room window. Well, when he went to the front door, he found a flock of birds huddled miserably in the snow. They had been caught in the storm and in a desperate search for shelter they had tried to fly through his large landscape window. Well, he couldn't let the poor creatures lie there and freeze. He remembered the barn where his children stabled their pony. That would provide a warm shelter -- if he could direct the birds to it. He quickly put on his coat and galoshes, trampled through the deepening snow to the barn, opened the door wide, and turned on a light. But the birds did not come in. He figured food would entice them in and he hurried back to the house, fetched bread crumbs, sprinkled them on the snow making a trail to the yellow lighted wide open doorway of the stable, but to his dismay the birds ignored the bread crumbs, and continued to flap around helplessly in the snow. He tried catching them, he tried shooing them into the barn by walking around them waving his arms -- instead they scattered in every direction except into the warm lighted barn. Then he realized they were afraid of him. To them, he reasoned, I am a strange and terrifying creature, if only I could think of some way to let them know they can trust me. That I'm not trying to hurt them, but to help them. How? Any move he made tended to frighten them, confuse them. They just would not follow. They would not be led or shooed because they feared him. If only be a bird myself he thought. If only I could be a bird and mingle with them and speak their language, and tell them not to be afraid, and show them the way to the safe, warm barn. But I'd have to be one of them, so they could see and hear and understand. At that moment the church bells began to ring. The sound reached his ears above the sound of the wind. He stood there listening to the bells. *Adeste Fideles*. Listening to the bells pealing the glad tidings of Christmas. And he sank to his knees in the snow.

SOURCE: Paul Harvey Contributed by Jeff Strite, Church of Christ at Logansport, IN.

Conclusion

That was a mighty packing of the amazing God, and we only half way through chapter 1, with 20 more after it. We are growing, and our God is getting bigger.

End of Study

John 1:14-34

Written so We Might Believe / Zoe Life / More Know – Trust – Obey – Abide - Fruitful

Written so we might believe, and by believing we will have Zoe (abundant, absolute, God Life, a life more than this life). And how we have that Zoe life is by believing, and how we believe is by reading about Jesus and His life, and as we do Jesus does get bigger for He is always His awesomeness, but it is us who grow in our understanding of just how big He is.

- The more we get to know Him, the more we will trust Him,
- and the more we trust Him the more we will obey Him,
- and the more you obey the more you have that abiding relationship with Him,
- and the more you have that abiding relationship with Him, the more fruit you will produce because you are attached to Him. How much fruit we bear is all dependent on how well we know Him.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Romans 10:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “LORD, who has believed our report?” ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

John 15:5 (NKJV) ⁵ “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

Galatians 5:22–23 (NKJV) ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

We all Need more Belief / Lord Help my Unbelief

We all believe, but don't we all need more? I am reminded of the story of the father whose son kept throwing himself into the fire, the disciples tried to heal him to no avail (obviously they needed more belief), and Jesus said “all things are possible to him who believes”. Which the father said, “Lord I believe, help my unbelief”. I think we all can say that, and need to cry that to the Lord.....Lord I believe you can do this this and this, but there are other areas I still have yet to trust and believe you in, oh Lord help my unbelief. Lord I know you can save me, but I don't know if I believe you can and will take care of my finances, or my relationship, or my addiction, or my struggle, so please Lord help my unbelief.

Mark 9:14–24 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And when He came to the disciples, He saw a great multitude around them, and scribes disputing with them. ¹⁵ Immediately, when they saw Him, all the people were greatly amazed, and running to Him, greeted Him. ¹⁶ And He asked the scribes, “What are you discussing with them?” ¹⁷ Then one of the crowd answered and said, “Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. ¹⁸ And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not.” ¹⁹ He answered him and said, “O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me.” ²⁰ Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. ²¹ So He asked his father, “How long has this been happening to him?” And he said, “From childhood. ²² And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.” ²³ Jesus said to him, “If You can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.” ²⁴ Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!”

I remember my Struggle / Playing Tennis / The Person of Jesus is Flowing Through Me

As we abide, the word just does a work, for the Word is a person, the person of Jesus Christ (that became flesh and dwelt amongst us), and so it is Jesus who is moving through us as we read of Him, so it is not that we are going through the Word, but the Word is going through us (Jesus is going through us), and changing us from the inside out. I remember shortly after I got saved I recognized “wow” you have a temper, and you use vulgarity, and then when your temper lights off, the vulgarities are ten-fold. So I tried to manage my temper and my tongue, I would wake up in the day and through the day be saying ok, I am not going to go off, I am not going to go off, and would try to manage the tongue and temper. It was not a joyous day or life trying to manage and control. But then I just started to pour myself into the Word, and the Word poured into me, and it was quite interesting one day I can remember. Me and my brother would play tennis all the time, and he would egg me on, he would taunt me, and if my game was struggling it would be magnified my frustration and the temper would rise. I would hit the racket off the net if I missed the slam, I would hit the racket off the ground if I blew an opportunity, and that would just fuel my brother even more to taunt me. Then one day, about 6 months of just absorbing in verse-by-verse study of the Word, and the Word (the Person of Jesus) flowing through me, I was having a terrible game, my brother was taunting me, and I remember watching him taunt me and I started to laugh within myself, I was like he is such a

jerk (a jerk I loved of course), instead of getting angry I laughed, and said he is just having a good ole time at my expense now isn't he. But it was at that moment I realized, wow I didn't cuss, I didn't slam my racket, and I saw wow what God has done in just 6 months, just the fruit that came by abiding.

Oh the Joy of Growing – Maturing – Believing – Trusting – Obeying – Abiding - Fruitfulness

Oh the joy of growing, maturing, believing trusting, obeying, abiding, and then bearing fruit.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Became – Means was Not Always / Reference back to 1:12-13 / Jesus is the God-Man / God Died for You

Verse 14 - And the Word became flesh - And the Word became flesh. You become something you were not. Back in verse 12 and 13 we saw that we got become something that we were not, and that is children of God. So as we study, if we became children of God, we were not always children of God. We become children of God by receiving Him, asking Him into our heart. So we see that word became here in verse 14, and Jesus (the Word – remember verse 1 and 2), He became flesh, meaning He wasn't always flesh. It is again the picture, the reference, the statement that He is God. So Jesus becomes the God-Man, and the reason I make that point is that even in the flesh, He was always God, and it is God going to the cross for you and for me.

Do we Grasp That – God left Glory

Do we grasp that? That God left the glory of heaven, and then if that doesn't blow our mind, He left the glory of heaven and the perfect unity with the Father, to die! In His John 17 prayer Jesus will say oh that they may know the glory that we experience together (verse 5) before the world was. Jesus came so we may come into and experience the glory that He and the Father had (since before the world was laid), but in order to do so for us, He had to leave the glory He had and come into this sin sickened world (that was as wretched then as it is today).

John 17:1–5 (NKJV) ¹ Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, ² as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. ⁴ I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. ⁵ And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

Missions in Nicaragua

I did missions in Nicaragua several years ago, and we did outreaches at the city dump. At least 2,000 people lived there, smoke continually arose from the garbage as it was burned in certain areas of the dump. It was at least 100 degrees. Not a tree in sight for shade. People picked through the trash for scraps of food, for pieces of metal and glass to recycle. These scraggly cows wandered the dump, but no one would eat them because they were disease ridden. A cow was eating a soiled diaper one time while I was giving testimony. It was horrible. When I would leave the dump I couldn't get clean enough it felt like, I would scrub and scrub in the shower trying to get the filth off of me. From my middle class home and life in Maryland, to walking amongst the city dump, what a far cry. Not even a drip of the ocean of what it must have been like for Jesus to leave the glory of heaven, the throne, the angels singing praise of Him, and the sweet-sweet fellowship with the Father. We romanticize the Christmas story with the nativity, but have beautiful Christmas cards, but we have no idea how far that step really is out of glory into this sin-sickened world.

Dwelt – Tabernacled / Exterior – Badger Skin / Interior – Gold & Precious Stones / The Chabod

Verse 14 - and dwelt among us - The Greek word translated "dwelt" literally means "tabernacled" or "encamped." We are reminded of the "Tabernacle" that God had them make after they left Egypt. It was the place that God would dwell among them. The Word, the Logos, the Creator, Sustainer, and Reason for All Things became flesh and tabernacled among us. The tabernacle, covered with badger skins, was plain on the outside. But the interior was adorned with gold, silver, fine embroidery, and precious stones, for the chabod—the presence, the substance, the glory of God—was to be found inside. The same is true of Jesus. So ordinary looking was He externally that Judas had to identify Him to the Roman soldiers with a kiss.

Exodus 25:9 (NKJV) ⁹ According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.

Jesus can become Ordinary – Until I step back (Theatre) and Behold Him

As it was then, so too it still is today among many, myself included at times, that Jesus can become so ordinary to me, so common, so one of the crowd, that I forget and/or don't recognize the glory that is within Him..... Until I stop, step back, and "behold" Him. The word there for "behold" is "theamai" where we get our English word "theatre". Funny when I am at the movies, how attentive I am to the story that is before me. I am watching the movie, not talking and texting. It is when we gaze upon Him intently, behold Him, that we see past the ordinary into the glory, we see and experience the grace, and understand and seize the truth.

John 1:15 John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.' "

Chronologically – John Baptist 6 Months Older / John 8:58

Chronologically, John the Baptist was six months older than Jesus. They were 2nd cousins (Luke 1:35-37). Yet Jesus said, "Before Abraham was, I AM," (John 8:58). Thus, John's reference was not to the chronological age, but to the eternal nature of his younger cousin (2nd cousins).

Luke 1:35–37 (NKJV) ³⁵ And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. ³⁷ For with God nothing will be impossible."

John 8:58 (NKJV) ⁵⁸ Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."

John 1:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God.

Jesus & Apostle John were Cousins

Here is something interesting, as it appears that Jesus and John (the Apostle – the writer of this Gospel) were cousins. The deduction is made by piecing passages together. It is neat to do such things, because it is like treasure hunting. So that first piece was the woman standing near the cross with Jesus' mother Mary; In John's account it says "His mother's sister", and the in Mark's account the woman's name is inserted "Salome". Now, second, Salome is then also identified the wife of Zebedee, as John is identified as the son of Zebedee. The picture is then complete. Salome is identified as Mary's sister and John's mother - John was therefore Jesus' cousin.

John 19:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

Mark 15:40 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ There were also women looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the Less and of Joseph, and Salome,

Matthew 4:21 (NKJV) ²¹ Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them,

Matthew 27:56 (NKJV) ⁵⁶ among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

Imagine them as Children

So Jesus is much older than John the Apostle, probably by about 20 years. But Jesus and John were only about 6 months apart. Jewish customs said that when families went to the Feasts in Jerusalem they would travel together or meet up somewhere along the way. So Jesus and John the Baptist most likely would have met up and traveled together, played and laughed together. I can picture Jesus bring Mary a cup of cold water from the stream they passed, a flower from along the roadside. Then here comes John the Baptist, here mommy, fresh grasshoppers. Salome saying, John get those grasshopper legs out from between your teeth, you are embarrassing me.

John 1:16 And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.

Everything Found In Jesus / We are Complete in Him / Colossians 2:9-10

Verse 16 - And of His fullness we have all received – Everything you need spiritually you will find in Jesus.

Everything you need you already have, for we have received His fullness. Colossians 2 says that we are complete in Him. You have everything you need to walk this walk, you just need to get up and walk it out. There is nothing

new to receive, all you need you have. You don't have to wait to be all you want to be in Christ, you can claim it today, you can walk out of here today saying, claiming, knowing, you are complete in Him.

Colossians 2:9-10 (NKJV) ⁹ For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; ¹⁰ and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

Wave after Wave of Grace / Your Sin is Covered Too

Verse 16 – and grace for grace – Grace upon grace, another way of saying it is wave after wave. If you ever sit down at the ocean the waves just keep rolling in; and so too it is with God's grace for us. What this simply means is the grace is continually, it never ceases, it continually flows, because it is attached to Him, and we have His fullness, so we have the fullness of His grace. Even where sin abounds, grace abounds more (Romans 5:20). You cannot exhaust the grace of God if you embrace the Person of Jesus Christ. It is not a onetime thing, it is daily, therefore you can claim it daily, and get up and enjoy it daily. What a great place to be, we don't have a worry in the world when Jesus is for us and pouring out His grace upon us.

Romans 5:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,

Lamentations 3:22-24 (NKJV) ²² Through the LORD's mercies we are not consumed, Because His compassions fail not. ²³ They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. ²⁴ "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I hope in Him!"

Spurgeon Quote:

The wonderful wordsmith C.H. Spurgeon, expounding (as only he can) upon this matter of Christ's fullness - His grace, heaped on top of grace, and much more grace (the unmerited favor of God) still.

"In Christ, there is a fullness of blessings of every sort and shape;

- a fullness of grace to pardon,
- of grace to regenerate,
- of grace to sanctify,
- of grace to preserve,
- and of grace to perfect.

There is a fullness at all times;

- a fullness of comfort in affliction;
- a fullness of guidance in prosperity.

A fullness of every divine attribute,

- of wisdom,
- of power,
- of love;
- a fullness which it were impossible to survey, much less to explore.

Oh, what a fullness must this be of which all receive! Fullness, indeed, must there be when the stream is always flowing, and yet the well springs up as free, as rich, as full as ever. Come, believer, and get all thy need supplied; ask largely, and thou shalt receive largely, for this "fullness" is inexhaustible and is treasured up where all the needy may reach it: even in Jesus, Immanuel - God with us."

Zoe Life Today

So many people talk about the good-ole days of when they first got saved, and they were involved in this and doing that, and they talk about the good-ole days with a gleam in their eye, a missing of those days. I want to tell you that you can have the good-ole days today, you can enjoy His fullness today, because the fullness then is the same you have today, the grace you received then is the grace the same today. You can have the Zoe (abundant, absolute, fullness, God Life) today. You don't need to live in the good-ole days past, for you can have them today, for Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever to you. You don't have say God worked in your life some time ago, but you can say God is working today in my life.

Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

How do You Do That

How do you do that, just walk with Him, be like John the Apostle who writes this to us. Behold His glory daily, be captivated by Him like watching a movie, read of Him for the volume of the Book is written of Him. Pray to Him, just try it for 5 minutes get on your knees (because you won't be distracted there) and talk to Him. Worship Him,

let a worship song flood over you, consider the words, pray them along, behold the words and think of Him. You can have the good-ole days today, enjoying His fullness, enjoying that you are complete in Him.

John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Law & Grace

The law and grace:

- The law was given on a quaking mountain. Grace and truth were born in a quiet manger.
- The law was written on tables of stone. Grace and truth were wrought in a heart of love, the heart of God.
- When the law came down, three thousand people died (Exodus 32:28). When the Spirit came down, three thousand were saved (Acts 2:41).
- The law kills. Jesus gives life.

This is truly amazing grace.

John 1:18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

Want to See the Father / Look at Jesus / Declared – Expound - Unfold

Want to see what God the Father is like, just look at Jesus. Jesus will say I chapter 14, that he who has seen me has seen the Father. The word “declared” here means to “expound”, it also means “to unfold”. The Greek word translated “declared” is exegeomai, from which we get our word “exegesis,” meaning “to expound.” Jesus expounded on the Father because Jesus had seen the Father. Jesus unfolded the Father for us, opened Him up and laid Him out so we could easily understand Him.

John 14:8–11 (NKJV) ⁸ Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.” ⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’ ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. ¹¹ Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

What does God Think, Feel, mad, Joy, / How handle Situations

Jesus unfolded God before us, we can know what God thinks, how does He feel, what makes Him mad, and what God would do in certain situations, and what does God think. What would God do if a friend betrayed Him, what does He think when He sees people being mistreated, what does He think of children, what does He think of religion, so many things we can wonder about God, and we will know what God thinks, because we will see Jesus face and deal with all these things in this Gospel we will study over the next months. We will behold God, we will be amazed at how He handles situation, and what moves His heart, as Jesus will unfold the Father before our very eyes. Want to see a bigger God, you will, but it won't be God that gets bigger but it will be you that becomes bigger.

We too Simply Unfold

Again, The Greek word translated “declared” is exegeomai, from which we get our word “exegesis,” meaning “to expound, unfold.” Jesus expounded (unfolded) the Father because Jesus had seen the Father. We are to expound (unfold) Jesus because we have seen Jesus. People have Jesus all folded up and tucked away, they say and think He is too hard to understand, they say and think the Word is too hard to understand, so they fold Him, they fold the Word up and put it away. We simply come and unfold Jesus, we make it clear and simple to them so they may understand Him.

John 1:19 Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?”

John 1:20 He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.”

John 1:21 And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.”

John 1:22 Then they said to him, “Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?”

Big Crowds – Come to Check it Out

So John is drawing big crowds out in the desert, and word is getting back to Jerusalem hey something is going on and nobody cleared it through us first. So they send their representatives out to John to find out who he is and what his claims are. That we their job to do that.

Who Are You / Messiah – Elijah - Prophet

“Who are you?” was a logical question. Was he the promised Messiah? Was he the Prophet Elijah who was supposed to come before the Messiah appeared? (Mal. 4:5) Great crowds had gathered to hear John, and many people had been baptized. Though John did no miracles (John 10:41), it was possible the people thought that he was the promised Messiah. John denied being either Elijah or the Messiah. (In one sense, he was the promised Elijah. See Matt. 17:10–13.). The term “that prophet” refers to the one prophesied in Deuteronomy 18 who would come to the nation of Israel and fully explain the way of God. That Prophet is none other than Jesus Christ (Acts 3:22-23. John 6:14, John 7:40)

Malachi 4:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

Matthew 17:10–13 (NKJV) ¹⁰ And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?” ¹¹ Jesus answered and said to them, “Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things. ¹² But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands.” ¹³ Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist.

Deuteronomy 18:15–16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ “The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear, ¹⁶ according to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.’”

John 6:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ Therefore they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten. ¹⁴ Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.”

John 7:40–41 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, “Truly this is the Prophet.” ⁴¹ Others said, “This is the Christ.” But some said, “Will the Christ come out of Galilee?”

John 1:23 He said: “I am ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Make straight the way of the LORD,” ’ as the prophet Isaiah said.”

Isaiah 40:3 / They would know that Passage

John quotes Isaiah 40, which the religious leaders would be well aware of as they were to be looking for the one in the wilderness first, before the LORD would come.

Isaiah 40:3 (NKJV) ³ The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God.

Notice LORD (YHVH) – Jesus is God

By the way, notice “LORD” that in the OT means “God”, and the second part of the verse says make a highway for God. Clearly, another verse declaring Jesus is God.

Glean Much from John Baptist Answer / John was a Priest – A Prophet – A Miracle Birth – Malachi 4

Now, we can glean much for our lives today by looking at John’s response, a response of humility. John through his lineage is part of the priesthood (see Luke 1). John knows he is a prophet as he is out in the wilderness proclaiming the word of God, Jesus will confirm to us that John is a prophet (see Like 7). But when asked “Who am I?” John could have answered, “I’ll tell you who I am. I am a priest. I am a prophet. I am the miraculously born son of Elizabeth and Zacharias. I am called of God and chosen by God. I am the one prophesied in Isaiah and Malachi. I am the forerunner of the Messiah—that’s who I am.” But he didn’t....what a picture of humility.

Luke 1:5–10 (NKJV) ⁵ There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶ And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. ⁷ But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years. ⁸ So it was,

that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division,⁹ according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.¹⁰ And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense.

Luke 7:28 (NKJV)²⁸ For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

Beethoven

One evening the great conductor Arturo Toscanini conducted Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. It was a brilliant performance, at the end of which the audience went absolutely wild! They clapped, whistled, and stamped their feet, absolutely caught up in the greatness of that performance. As Toscanini stood there, he bowed and bowed and bowed, then acknowledged his orchestra. When the ovation finally began to subside, Toscanini turned and looked intently at his musicians. He was almost out of control as he whispered, "Gentlemen! Gentlemen!" The orchestra leaned forward to listen. In a fiercely enunciated whisper Toscanini said, "Gentlemen, I am nothing." That was an extraordinary admission since Toscanini was blessed with an enormous ego. He added, "Gentlemen, you are nothing." They had heard that same message before the rehearsal. "But Beethoven," said Toscanini in a tone of adoration, "is everything, everything, everything!" This is the attitude we need toward ourselves and toward the Lord Jesus Christ. I am nothing, you are nothing, but he is everything! That was John's attitude, and it is the attitude of every authentic messenger of Christ.

Our Identity / Mid-life Crisis / Where should I be – What should I be Doing / Where Are – Be All There

John was not concerned about establishing his identity, proving his identity, demanding to be honored by his identity, he simply wanted to point people to Jesus. Folks, you will never lack identity if you learn the secret of John the Baptist: that you're simply a voice to talk to people about Jesus Christ. So many people go through midlife crises, now early life crisis, because they don't realize their stability can't be found in the right situation vocationally or the right location geographically. Consequently, they're always wondering, Should I work somewhere else? Should I live somewhere else? Should I do something else? Gang, follow the example of the Baptist and say, "No matter where I am, I realize I'm not the Christ; I'm not the prophet; I'm not Elijah. I'm simply a voice to talk to whoever comes my way on any given day about the Person, nature, and return of Jesus Christ. Wherever you are, be all there; when/should God move you, then be all there where He has you.

They not Worthy of Impressing

Can I make a comment, don't worry about trying to impress that so-called somebody. We want to impress them and be recognized by them, but I tell you this, they aren't worth impressing if they need to be impressed by you. See, they prove they are full of themselves if they have to be impressed, if they don't give you the courtesy and respect of the person you are. You are God's creation, you are a Countryman, there should be no ranking and filing, but common respect and courtesy. I talk to everyone at work, I say hi how are you to the custodian to the big-wig. I find the custodians all appreciate the greeting, but I have found some of the suits and ties look at me in disbelief that I would actually speak to them. They aren't worth impressing, but still worthy of respect, as I am to be subject to my employer.

You are Complete in Him

Again, we are complete in Him, His fullness is given to us and in us. Our identity is in Him, we need not find it in the world, at our jobs, or even in the ministry, but in Him. The world wants to tell you that you are not full, and thus you need them (politicians), or need their product (Madison Avenue – average America bombarded with 4,000 advertisements each day), or are less than them (people wanting to be recognized); but God says you are complete in Him, you are full, you lack nothing, you are "complete", and above all He sees you, receives you, and loves you..... as you are.

Colossians 2:9-10 (NKJV)⁹ For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;¹⁰ and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

John 1:16 (NKJV)¹⁶ And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.

We are not the Christ – the "Can Do" Mentality

Also, I know no one here thinks they are the Christ, but follow this through with me for a minute. We will find our true identities when, like John the Baptist, we realize we are not the Christ. "Oh, I already know I'm not the Christ!"

you say. Do you? If you go to your job thinking you can pull it off through your own ability; if you work on your marriage thinking you can make it because of your own insight; if you raise your kids thinking you can draw on your own experience—no matter what your mouth may say, your life says, “I am the Christ.” If, however, you truly realize you are not the Christ, you will be a man or woman who spends significant time in prayer today, because you will know that without Him, you can do nothing (John 15:5). Life starts when you put away your “Can Do” mentality and realize you can’t do anything without Jesus.

John 1:24 Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees.

Pharisees = Fundamentalist / Sadducees = Liberals

We are going to be seeing a lot of these religious people in the chapters to come so we should get to know them. The Pharisees were the fundamentalist of the Jewish religion, they believed the literal word of God. Their problem became that they missed that the Word was a person, and they turned it into a rule book, they became so right they were dead right, and they became critical and judgmental of everyone else and thought themselves above all people (including Jesus when He shows up). The Sadducees were the other religious sect, and they were more the liberals, they really didn’t take the word literal, and they did not believe in miracles or the resurrection. Since they didn’t believe in the resurrection, that is why they were sad-you-see.

Required by Preaching License

I know, I know, but you see it is a rule, we have to sign a piece of paper agreeing to say these things when we get our preaching license. Every time we talk about the religious group in the bible called the Sadducees, who didn’t believe in the resurrection, we have to say “because they didn’t believe in the resurrection, they were sad you see”. When Jesus cast the demons into the pigs, that is the place where I have to say here is the first mention of “deviled ham”. That the man is to make the coffee in the morning because it says “He-brews”. And when the disciples gathered in the upper room and were in one accord, I have to say that it proves they drove a Honda because they were all in one Accord. What season did Adam sin, in the Fall. It’s just a rule, we have to say to keep our preaching license, I didn’t make the rule up, I just have to comply to it.

John 1:25 And they asked him, saying, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?”

John 1:26 John answered them, saying, “I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know.

John 1:27 It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose.”

Baptism – Public Profession – Changed Life

Baptism was a public profession of a changed life. People were moved by the preaching of John, the people being baptized were making a public profession they wanted to get their lives right before God, before God came.

City would Prepare the Road In – Make it Straight

The people who were being baptized were preparing the way of the Lord, just as John’s ministry was purposed to be. When a king was coming into a city, they would prepare the way for the king. They would fill in the potholes of the dirt road leading in, the final mile coming into the city would have no bends in it as they would make it a straight shot into the city, they would plant vegetation, they would light place lamps up on posts to light the way, they would remove all the eyesores, they would do what Washington DC does every time dignitaries come to town, they relocate the vagabonds. So it is that we should do in our hearts daily, prepare the way, make clear the way of the Lord.

Stands “One “ / Jesus was in their Midst

Verse 26 - but there stands One among you whom you do not know. – Notice the “One” capitalized; Jesus was in their midst, He was walking among them as John was declaring prepare the way. Why was Jesus in the desert with John? Was it because He wanted to talk about politics, sports, or financial strategy? No. Jesus was standing in the midst of that group because He knew John the Baptist would be talking about Him. Talk about Jesus in your home this afternoon, and that’s when you will sense His presence. Talk about Jesus in the office tomorrow morning, and

that's when you will have an awareness of His nearness. Whenever someone talks about Jesus, He'll be there. Parents do you want more of Jesus in you kids, talk about Jesus in your home and Jesus will show up. Couples do you want more of Jesus in your marriage, I can assure that your marriage needs more of Jesus, then talk about Him over coffee with your spouse, discuss a bible verse when you go for a drive, pray together and Jesus will be there.

What Humility

Verse 27 - whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose – Not worthy to loose His sandal straps. Even with all John's great resume (prophet, priest, miracle, and prophecy fulfilled), look at his great humility.

John 1:28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

Worth the Trip

No one knows for sure where Bethabara is, but it was wilderness and it was a ways away. It was off the known path, it wasn't a hangout spot. Bethabara was located in the rough, rocky region surrounding the Dead Sea. But, people who made the trip to hear the message were not left deserted or emptied. You will always be blessed when you make the trip to meet with the Lord. I commend you for getting up and coming out to meet with the Lord, and I know He will bless you accordingly.

John 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Behold – Discover the Lamb

This word is different from verse 14 (we beheld Him as looking at a movie in the theater). The word "behold" means "to see, to know, notice", and my favorite "discover". Discover the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Discover Him, seek Him out like a treasure, search Him as a mystery, dig until you have uncovered all there is of (which is endless). Discover the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Takes Away – To Pick Up

Takes away means "to remove", to "lift up", "to take upon one's self", "to carry off", and in fishing it was used to "draw up a fish". Discover the Lamb of God who lifts off, to take upon Himself, who carries away, the sins of the world (to as many as received Him as we read in verse 12-13).

Sin of World / Sin is Singular

Very early in this Gospel is being declared that salvation is open to any and all who are willing to receive it (the world), not just the Jews, but the whole world; from Israel, to Iraq, to Australia, China, Russia, and all the way to Glen Burnie Maryland. The word "sin" is singular, as it represents man is a sinner, therefore he sins; not because man sins he is a sinner. Every man, woman, and child are born with the sin nature, and the sin nature is why we sin, and why we are separated from God, and why we need to be born-again, given a new nature. To be baptized, to change identity, to be made new.

John 3:3 (NKJV) ³ *Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*

Romans 5:12 (NKJV) ¹² *Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—*

Sin Nature only dealt with by the Lamb

The sin nature can only be "taken away" through the Lamb, the final Lamb. The hearers of John at this moment know exactly what is being said, for the lamb was associated with sacrifice, as when a person sin they were to take a sacrifice (at Passover it was a lamb) to the Temple, lay their hands on the head of the sacrifice, confess their sin, and the priest would pierce the throat of the animal, then sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice upon the person as a sign that the blood covered their sin. The key word there is "covered" (kaphar in the Hebrew) as the animal sacrifice only covered their sin for that moment, until they sinned again, and they would need to return and make sacrifice again to cover the new sin. I would just walk around with a lamb with me all the time, because I wouldn't make far I know. The Hebrew word "kaphar" was used for "atonement" in the Old Testament, as man could have

fellowship with God once he made his sacrifice, and interestingly it is the word (kaphar) that is used to cover the ark (genesis 6:14) with pitch (tar), and what was the ark but a means to escape God's judgment on the earth. But Jesus came, and His sacrifice doesn't cover sin, it takes it away, He rolls it upon Himself, He bears it, lifts it, and carries it away. Our sin is not covered, but cleared forever, once and for all.

Romans 6:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

Leviticus 1:4 (NKJV) ⁴ Then he shall put his hand on the head of the burnt offering, and it will be accepted on his behalf to make atonement (cover over) for him.

Genesis 6:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Make yourself an ark of gopherwood; make rooms in the ark, and cover (kaphar) it inside and outside with pitch.

Genesis 22

Israel was not only waiting for Elijah to come, or the prophet to come, but they were waiting for the Lamb to come, because they were waiting for Genesis 22 to be fulfilled. As Abraham climbed Mount Moriah to offer his son as a sacrifice in obedience to God's command, Isaac said, "Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" (see Genesis 22:7). Where is the lamb? That is the question that rings throughout the Old Testament. Here in the New Testament, we hear John the Baptist's answer as he points to Jesus and announces, "Behold the Lamb!" That sacrifice that Abraham performed was a ram, not a lamb, so there was a fulfillment to come. And as we have studied in times past, the very spot that Abraham and Isaac went, Mount Moriah, is the exact spot that God the Father sacrificed Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world. Oh precious person, "DISCOVER" the Lamb.

Genesis 22:7-8 (NKJV) ⁷ But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" ⁸ And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.

We can be the Greatest Prophet

We too can be the greatest prophet among men. Jesus said there is no greater prophet than John the Baptist, even though he performed no miracles, never raised the dead, wrote no books, and pretty much only had one prophecy.....but oh what a prophecy, the Lamb of God who takes away (clears away forever) the sins of the world. Do you want to do great things, you can, because we like John, get to say to a seeking world the same he did, behold (discover) the Lamb of God who takes away forever your sin.

Matthew 11:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

John 1:30 This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.'

John 1:31 I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."

John 1:32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him.

John 1:33 I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'

John 1:34 And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."

Synoptic Gospels

We read of this account in Matthew's Gospel and the other synoptic Gospels (also Mark 1 and Luke 3):

Matthew 3:13-17 (NKJV) ¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. ¹⁴ And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?" ¹⁵ But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him. ¹⁶ When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. ¹⁷ And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

John did not Know Him – Supernatural of God to be Revealed

Verse 33 - I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me – John knew who Jesus was, but did not know He was the Christ until God showed him. They were cousins, but John did not know that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. It takes a supernatural work of God to see Jesus, but wants all to see, and He is revealing Himself to you today, through this Gospel.

Written so we Might believe

Written so we might believe

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Amazing Grace

In the seventeenth century a young boy was born into a Christian home. His father was a seaman, and not home often. For the first six years of his life, he heard the truths of the gospel by his mother, and was dearly loved. Sadly, though, his mother died. The young boy went to live with his relatives and was maltreated, abused, and ridiculed for his interest in Christ. The boy couldn't tolerate that situation and, though still a boy, fled and joined the Royal Navy. In the Navy the boy's life went downhill. He became known as a brawler, was whipped many times, and participated in the keelhauling of some of his comrades. Finally, while he was still young, he deserted the Royal Navy and fled to Africa, where he attached himself to a Portuguese slave trader. There his life reached its lowest point. There were times when he actually ate off the floor on his hands and knees. He escaped, then became attached to another slave trader as the first mate on his ship. But the young man's pattern of life had become desperately depraved. He stole the ship's whiskey and got so drunk that he fell overboard. He was close to drowning when one of his shipmates harpooned him and brought him back on board. As a result, the young man had a huge scar in his side for the rest of his life. He could not get much lower. Finally, in the midst of a great storm off the coast of Scotland, after days and days of pumping water out of the boat, the young man began to reflect on verses he had heard as a boy and was marvelously converted. The new life he found is reflected in these famous words:

Amazing grace—how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost but now am found;
Was blind but now I see.

This young man, John Newton, became one of the great preachers of the seventeenth century—all because of the amazing grace of God.

End of Study

John 1:35-39

Written so We Might Believe / Zoe Life / More Know – Trust – Obey – Abide - Fruitful

The Gospel of John, written so we might believe, and by believing we will have Zoe (abundant, absolute, God Life, a life more than this life). And how we have that Zoe life is by believing, and how we believe is by reading about Jesus and His life, and as we do Jesus does get bigger for He is always His awesomeness, but it is us who grow in our understanding of just how big He is.

- The more we get to know Him, the more we will trust Him,
- and the more we trust Him the more we will obey Him,
- and the more you obey the more you have that abiding relationship with Him,
- and the more you have that abiding relationship with Him, the more fruit you will produce because you are attached to Him. How much fruit we bear is all dependent on how well we know Him.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Romans 10:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “LORD, who has believed our report?” ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

John 15:5 (NKJV) ⁵ “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

Galatians 5:22–23 (NKJV) ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Let’s pick up in verse 35 and finish the chapter (verse 51).

I Wonder What I would Preach

So this week I was wondering what would I preach if I was pastoring elsewhere, if was ministering in a different area. What would I say if I was preaching at the border, in Israel, in the Ukraine, or in Iraq. To be quite honest, as I read the news this week I was continually and near completely quenched.

- The Boarder Crisis – it is a humanitarian issue, anytime human lives are in great need it is a humanitarian issue. My burden is that I just wonder why it is only a humanitarian issue, crisis, when they reach our border, and why no one cares until then. Why doesn’t anyone go help deal with the issue at the heart of the issue, if they are fleeing violence, why doesn’t someone go help deal with the violence at the heart of the violence right there in Honduras, El Salvador, Mexico? What would I say to the families?
- The Malaysian passenger plane shot down over the Ukraine, and the world just doesn’t seem to be in shock over it. What would I say to the families?
- The USA fought in Iraq for a decade, and now it is now within 3 months in the control of Islamic, who this week have given the decree that all Christians have three choices, leave, pay a tax for not being Muslim, or stay and die. Why that is not a humanitarian issue and front page news is hard for me to grasp. What would I say to the families?
- Israel and the Palestinians are warring, and the Middle-East is a powder-keg with the potential to explode into an all-out war, yet it is not a top priority of the world to try to broker peace, and daily people are dying. Reports are 62,000 Palestians are displaced, the Palestians have launched 1800 rockets into Israel, and Israel has struck back at 2,300 terror targets. Dozens are dead. Sounds like a humanitarian issue to me, but not to the world. What would I say to the families?
- What am I to say about MTV’s new show that tracks young teenagers losing their virginity. Or Burger King is selling this week a rainbow colored wrapper for their Whopper, to promote Gay Pride. What should I be saying about these things as a Minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

What would I say, how would I respond, what would I teach..... I would teach today’s passage. Because all those things are horizontal, and the Lord wants me, wants you, to go vertical, to look at the horizontal, and then take our eyes and heart to the vertical, to the heavenlies, where He does not just sit, but where He reigns from, and to hear Him speak the words to us, that He spoke in this passage.....”what do you seek”, tell me, and then hear me say “come and see”, come and spend time with Me and I will answer your question, all your questions, and you will see that I am the answer to all the questions.

John 1:35 Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples.

John 1:36 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"

Behold the Lamb – Never say that Enough

Verse 36 - And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" -, you can never say that's enough to anyone. You can never say in this world and in your lifetime enough times "Behold the Lamb of God". What an honor and what a great privilege it is to be able to say those words to a world around us - a world that is seeking, a world that is wondering what's going on, a world that is meandering as so many people are aimless in life, the world who knows there's more to this world but don't know what it is. But then God speaks to us and has revealed to us the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, and we in turn get to tell the world the same. As we'll read in our passage today, as we watch Jesus calling his first disciples as they come to him and He receives them, we're going to see the first six disciples. We'll see lives that were changed and we see and know the same change happened to us and then be given the honor to get to say the same thing, "Behold the lamb of God."

John Baptist – Greatest Prophet Ever

Jesus will say John the Baptist. He's the greatest prophet that ever lived and yet he only had one message and it was "Behold the Lamb of God." We too can be great. We too get the opportunity to be great in our lifetimes with this simple message of "Behold the lamb of God."

Luke 7:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

Lamb – Context of Nation Israel – Sacrificial System / Sacrifice for all Mankind

We may not clearly see it. It might not jump out to us in our life but John the Baptist is speaking in the context of Israel. They know the sacrificial system. It was the lamb that would be the sacrifice, it was the Passover lamb that would be slain, that's blood would then be sprinkled upon the person and death would pass over and cover their sin. For John the Baptist to speak "Behold the Lamb of God" and point to Jesus Christ, he's making that statement "Here comes the sacrifice, the final sacrifice that will take away sin once and for all." They know the lamb is a sacrifice. Let it be known the lamb is a sacrifice for all of mankind. It's an offer to all of mankind. It is not a limited offer to only a select few. It is offered to all, "Behold the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

OC Street Ministry – Talk is Cheap

I remember some friends who were doing a street ministry there on the boardwalk in Ocean City. They were videotaping and I saw the video thereafter. They were sharing Christ with some teenagers. They said, my friend said, "God loves you and the boy in defiance and sarcasm and in his era. He said, "Oh, yeah. Well, talk is cheap." Then my friend responded, "He died on the cross for your sin." Right there, there was silence among the crowd. The boy, his mouth was silenced.

Talk is Cheap – Cross was Anything but Cheap / He says Come – for He is the Door

Talk is cheap but the cross was anything but cheap. The cross was anything but easy, it was anything from free. The cross came with a tremendous price, God himself, the eternal one, Jesus would step out of heaven and come into this earth and be beaten, would be spit upon, would be bruised and he would be pierced and he would spend six hours on the cross, separated from his Father in heaven so that he might say these words, "It is done." When it is done, then he can open up the invitation, "Come on to me all you who labor and heavy laden and I will give you rest." He opens the door because he's the only door, he's the only way for man to have a relationship. A sinful man with a holy God can only come through Jesus Christ. We'll see that as it builds on today's passage.

John 10:9 (NKJV) ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

God loves you.

Sacrifice for Whole World / God Loves You – God is not out to Damn the World

God loves you. God loves the world. I find today more than ever, I've been walking with the Lord two decades and then some. The world has this view that God is just waiting to damn them, that God is a damning God just looking to crush. The world doesn't know the love of God. If they would come and discover the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, they would see a God of love who demonstrated his love by becoming the sacrifice, expanding his life and giving his life. Discover the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. He's not a damning God, he's a loving God. He wants to have a relationship with man.

John 1:37 The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

John 1:38 Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?"

Can you Hear those Words – What do you Seek / First Words Public Ministry

Verse 38, Can you hear those words? He'll speak them to you. It's not just the story that we're reading. He asked every person in this room, He asked each person who will have an ear to hear "What do you seek?" These are the first recorded words of Jesus in his public ministry. In Luke 2, we read the story of the first words of Jesus when he's separated from Mary and Joseph at the feast there in Jerusalem. They said, "Son, why have you done this?" He says, "Don't you know I must be about my Father's business," Jesus approximately the age of 12 years old. In Matthew chapter 3, it will be the next words of Christ that are spoken. It's at his baptism and John says, "Oh, I can't baptize you. You should baptize me." Jesus says, "Permit it to be so, so that all righteousness might be fulfilled." There we see in Luke 2 it's the singular focus of Jesus Christ's life even at the age of 12. "My singular focus is to be about my Heavenly Father's business." Then in Matthew 3 at his baptism, he's making the statement that he is the one prophesized as John the Baptist would say, "Prepare the way for the coming King Jesus would say, "I am that king." Then here in John 1, after His wilderness experience and His first words that he will speak to men when he starts his public ministry full of the Holy Spirit, he will say "What do you seek?" Then in Mark chapter 1, Jesus after John is imprisoned, Jesus will come and he will take over and start the preaching. He will tell people to repent and believe and to follow him.

Luke 2:46–50 (NKJV) ⁴⁶ Now so it was that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions. ⁴⁷ And all who heard Him were astonished at His understanding and answers. ⁴⁸ So when they saw Him, they were amazed; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You done this to us? Look, Your father and I have sought You anxiously." ⁴⁹ And He said to them, "Why did you seek Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" ⁵⁰ But they did not understand the statement which He spoke to them.

Matthew 3:13–17 (NKJV) ¹³ Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. ¹⁴ And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?" ¹⁵ But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him. ¹⁶ When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. ¹⁷ And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

John 1:37–39 (NKJV) ³⁷ The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸ Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?" ³⁹ He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).

Mark 1:14–15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

What do You Seek – What is on Your Heart / He wants you to Share your Heart

I like how the first words weave together a story for us to follow. The story for us today here in John chapter 1 is the Holy God speaking to you and speaking to me and saying, "What do you seek? What is it that you want? What is on your heart that you want to speak to me about?" He wants you to ask him. He wants us to share our hearts with Him, because He loves you, and is so desirous to be intimate with you, to share your heart with Him, and He His heart with you.

John 1:39 He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).

Where Staying – We want to get to Know You Better

Verse thirty-eight. He said, "Rabbi, where are you staying? Where can we go to get to know you better? Where can we fellowship? Where can we know about you? We know who you are, but now we want to know you personally. We know about you, but we want to know you intimately." And Jesus says, "Come and see." and, again, that we say to the Lord, "I know about you. I want to know you personally," and you'll hear him say, "Come and see."

Passage Proves Out – Jesus never Turn Anyone Away / Once Come you will Never Leave

You know what's proven out in this passage before us, Jesus will say to these disciples, "Come and see." Jesus will never turn anyone away who comes to him. All honest seekers, Jesus will never turn them away. He will always say the same thing, "Come and see." He wants people to come, he wants them to discover because he knows like these disciples once they come they'll never leave. "Once you've tasted and seen", Psalm 34 verse 8, "that the Lord is good, you'll never want to be anywhere else. "It will be later that people will be leaving Jesus and he'll turn to the disciples and he'll say, "Will you leave me also?" I love what Peter will say, "Oh Lord, where would we go?" That is once you've tasted and seen that the Lord is good, once you've come and discovered him and spent time, you'll see there's nowhere else I'd want to be. There's nowhere else I could go. I can't go back to the world. I have too much Jesus in me, I have too much of him. I know the world would be so empty and fleeing.

Psalm 34:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!

John 6:60–69 (NKJV) ⁶⁰ Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?" ⁶¹ When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, "Does this offend you? ⁶² What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before? ⁶³ It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life. ⁶⁴ But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. ⁶⁵ And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father." ⁶⁶ From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. ⁶⁷ Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?" ⁶⁸ But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹ Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

It is an Invitation / Given Continually Through the Whole Scriptures

Jesus says, "Come and see." It's an invitation. It's an invitation all the way through the scriptures. We'll read to that invitation all the way to the end of the book that John will write, the book of Revelation. He'll say, "The Spirit and the bride says "Come."" It's an invitation from the Lord for all to come and see. That's why he came to this earth, that men might see him and experience him and see the heart of God, not a damning God but a loving God and men will know. "Come and see" and they will see the beauty of the Lord.

Revelation 22:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.

Note – 10th Hour / Why does it Matter? – God Records the Time He spends with You – It is Precious to Him

Verse 39, it says "The 10th hour." That's 4 PM on the Jewish calendar or clock. The sunrise starts at 6 AM. Why does it matter that the 10th hour is put in there? Because God wants us to see and make the point of that He records the time exactly. It matters to him. The moment you spend time with him, it's precious to the Lord. It's just precious on to you. It's precious on to the Lord. He records the moments and the times that we make to come to him and spend time with him. That word there "and remained", it means to carry, to stay, to abide. When you carry and you abide, you see him in a special way and as precious to him. He records the time, it's memorable to him.

Most Scholars Believe the Other Disciple is John / John Remembers the Hour Exactly

Here's what's so interesting is most of the scholars they believe that the other disciple with Andrew is John himself, the one who's writing this book. As we read this book, John never really calls himself out. He never points to himself. We see a great humility but there's great indication that he was present for everything that we read. He's not just retelling a story and that many believe that this is John himself. To consider this, he's writing this book now, John is in his 90s. It's estimated that at the time of coming to Jesus was about the age of 14, 15, or 16. If you can grasp that now, we're talking about something that is 70 some years ago and yet John remembers the very hour. He remembers the very hour that he met Jesus. It was the 10th hour, it was 4 PM. "I remember it like it was yesterday that I came and I met Jesus. I remember the day."

Remember the Day / Have you Had a Day for Salvation

Do you remember the day? It's a precious day, isn't it, the day you met Jesus? If you haven't met Jesus how about today? How about marking the calendar today, marking the time today, the day that you came and you opened your heart and you asked Jesus, "Where do you stand? What are you about? Would you really receive me?" As Jesus would say, "What do you seek?" and he remembered the day he said, "Come and see."

Do you Still Make the Trip Today / Is it an Alarm Clock or a Calling

Make the trip, spend the time. Jesus will mark the time, you'll mark the time. Come and stay with him. Spend time to tarry, abide and just as it's been promised in John 15, "Abide in me and you'll bear much fruit." Not just a fruit of a one-time relationship but a daily fruit that will come as we discover him, as we spend time to seek him and to sit at his feet. Jesus is always worth the trip. I commend you for making the trip to spend time with him this morning. I would encourage you greatly to spend time with him this week daily, sitting at his feet and hearing him say, "Come and see." How about us? Are we taking the time to go away with him? When he says "Come and see", do we come and see? Do we wake up to see or do we hit the snooze? Do we wake up because we know he has something to show us, something to reveal to us, something that we can discover about him? Anyone who comes and sees, who makes times to see, he will by no means cast away and he will always show himself in a great way. Greg Laurie had a great question that he has, "What gets you up in the morning? Is it a calling or is it an alarm clock? What is it that you seek?" Because Jesus wants to be that, become that to you. What we'll see is the greatest thing to seek when life has purpose and fulfillment, it's when we seek Jesus and we ask him to become our all in all.

Psalms 27 – One Thing I Desire

I am reminded of Psalm 27, King David, he's got his enemies around him and about him. He's under threat of death. Who knows the full situation, all that we know is he's praying because enemies are coming against him. He's in a dire situation and yet in the middle of that song, amazingly he sees through all of the immediate things that are before him and pressing against him. He separates himself from it all and he just says, "You know what, there's just one thing I desire, just one thing. I only want one thing, that I might behold the beauty of the Lord." He sees through all the problems of the world and he comes to this one thing, "I just want to see you Lord. I just want to see the beauty of the Lord. I want to sit in your temple. I want to sit at your feet. I want to sit with you and behold your beauty." That is what we find when we come and see, we see His beauty and my what a beauty to behold.

Psalm 27:3-5 (NKJV) ³ Though an army may encamp against me, My heart shall not fear; Though war may rise against me, In this I will be confident. ⁴ One thing I have desired of the LORD, That will I seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD All the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the LORD, And to inquire in His temple. ⁵ For in the time of trouble He shall hide me in His pavilion; In the secret place of His tabernacle He shall hide me; He shall set me high upon a rock.

Prodigal Son – Everything he was Looking for was at Father's House

One of my favorite stories in the Bible is the story of the prodigal son. It is the story of a young man who went out from his father's house where there was safety, security, provision and everything else one could hope for in life. He went out into the world to find out what he could find. He took his portion of the inheritance that was coming to him from his father. He squandered it. He wasted it on prostitutes and wild living and made a wreck of his life. One day he came to his senses and decided to go back home and return to his father who welcomed him with open arms, smothered him with kisses and then said, "Let's have a party. This my son who was dead is alive again. He who was lost is found again." They killed the fatted calf and put clean clothes on him. They put the ring on his finger. This story has so many important lessons, but let me key in on one thing. Everything that the son was looking for was found in his father's house. Judging from his actions, what did this boy really want? He wanted nice clothes. He wanted to party. He wanted to eat well. He went out into the world and the Bible says there was a famine in the land. He was starving. He was living in rags and misery. He comes back to his father and everything he wanted was waiting for him. The feast started. The party began. The ring was on his finger. Fine clothes on his back. Here is my point. Everything you are looking for in life is in Jesus Christ. You can say, "Preacher, you don't know what you are talking about. I am young. I am going to go out there in the world and find out for myself." You will. I hope you find out soon before you spend too much time on that detour because it will be a waste of your

life. Or you can take God's word for it. He is telling you it is in a relationship with Him. "I don't know if that is true." Then come and see. That is my answer to you. Come and see. Say, "Lord, I want to know that in my own life." If you have never made that commitment to Jesus Christ, I would like to close by giving you an opportunity to come and see for yourself who Jesus is.

Luke 15:11–24 (NKJV) ¹¹ Then He said: "A certain man had two sons. ¹² And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood. ¹³ And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. ¹⁴ But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. ¹⁵ Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. ¹⁶ And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! ¹⁸ I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, ¹⁹ and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.'" ²⁰ "And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. ²¹ And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.' ²² "But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. ²³ And bring the fatted calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; ²⁴ for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry.

End of Study

John 1:40-51

Written so We Might Believe / Zoe Life / More Know – Trust – Obey – Abide - Fruitful

The Gospel of John, written so we might believe, and by believing we will have Zoe (abundant, absolute, God Life, a life more than this life). And how we have that Zoe life is by believing, and how we believe is by reading about Jesus and His life, and as we do Jesus does get bigger for He is always His awesomeness, but it is us who grow in our understanding of just how big He is.

- The more we get to know Him, the more we will trust Him,
- and the more we trust Him the more we will obey Him,
- and the more you obey the more you have that abiding relationship with Him,
- and the more you have that abiding relationship with Him, the more fruit you will produce because you are attached to Him. How much fruit we bear is all dependent on how well we know Him.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Romans 10:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “LORD, who has believed our report?” ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

John 15:5 (NKJV) ⁵ “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

Galatians 5:22–23 (NKJV) ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Let’s pick up in verse 40 and finish the chapter (verse 51).

Today’s Study / Follow Me

The author (under inspiration of the Holy Spirit) is the Apostle John; John in his epistle will say to us, “I have seen Him with my very own eyes, I have touched Him with these hands that write this Gospel to you. I walked with Him for 3 years, I heard Him speak, I watched Him heal, I leaned my head upon His chest and heard the very heartbeat of God. It was beautiful, it was glorious, God made Himself known to me, and desires to make Himself known to all men/women. He calls all men everywhere to Himself, and He reveals Himself to them, and He says “follow me”. Today we will see the calling of the first 6 apostles, we will see Jesus speak amazing words, just two simple words (Follow Me), but words so powerful that whomsoever responds to them will never be the same (as we will see in our study), two words that are the whole meaning life, the whole purpose of creation, the whole purpose of each person’s existence, to follow Jesus.

1 John 1:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—² the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—³ that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

Everything is in Jesus

Everything man truly is desiring is found in Jesus. All men/women everywhere have desires in their heart, things they are looking to be fulfilled, and what many don’t realize is that what they are truly desiring is Jesus, and thus all is found in Jesus. He created man like that, He put a desire in their heart, a God shaped hole in their heart that can only be filled by a personal relationship with Him, by responding to the calling of “follow me”.

2 Corinthians 1:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.

3 Groups

We will see three groups in and throughout this gospel account (and the others too):

- Multitudes – as anyone can be in a crowd
- Followers – as anyone can be a hanger-on
- Disciples – the ones who will follow Him, with the purpose of becoming like Him, even at great costs. Disciple means “learner”. A disciple of Jesus is always learning of/about Jesus. I commend you for being a person who is continually learner of/about Jesus.

John leaves Prosperity to Follow / Is Saying it was all Worth It

John who writes this is writing on the other side of walking with Jesus now for some 70 years. He has faced persecution by the Jews, He has been boiled in a cauldron of boiling oil by the time he writes this, he may have already been banished to the island of Patmos in isolated confinement by the time of this writing, and let us not forget this..... He came from a prosperous and respected family (as we can see from John 18), but he chose to walk away from that all, to follow Jesus. John writes on the other side of his lifetime, 70 years of walking with Jesus, not written a couple years after walking with Jesus, but a whole long lifetime. He has not only counted the cost, he has endured the cost, and he writes, he says to us today, it was all worth it, I saw Him, I touched Him, and I heard His heartbeat.....and it was all worth it, and he says to us today, it will be worth it to you, follow Him with your whole being, don't hold back, do follow from a distance, be all in, and watch what He will do in your life when you do.

John 18:15–16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest. ¹⁶ But Peter stood at the door outside. Then the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to her who kept the door, and brought Peter in.

So verse 40.

**John 1:40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.
John 1:41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ).**

Andrew always Bringing People to Jesus

Verse 40, the first one that we see follow is Andrew. He doesn't get the press that everyone else gets, but what a story he is. Another thing about Andrew as you study through his life, what a great example he gives us in our life. One of the things we see about Andrew, is that he's always bringing someone to Jesus. When you read about him, he's bringing somebody to Jesus. Here in chapter 1 he is bringing his brother Simon Peter, in John 6 he will bring the lad with 5 loaves and 2 fish, and in John 12 he will bring the Greeks (non-Jewish) to Jesus. Great life examples in there for us.

- Here in John 1, he brought his brother, Simon Peter. Andrew demonstrates the power of the one on one ministry, the power of the family ministry. Have you told your family yet, have you told them lately?
- In John, chapter 6, we'll see that when the 5,000 (that's men so there's probably the feeding of probably like 15,000 to 20,000 when you give out wife and children in there). Andrew's the one who brought the young lad and says, "Lord, he got these 5 loaves and 2 fish. We don't know what you can do with it but here's what we got." When we see him, he's bringing people to Jesus. He brings this lad. I see an example for us in people's lives. You know, we don't have to try to solve their problem apart from Jesus, we just need to bring them, the problem, what little resources we have, to Jesus. Like the feeding of the 5,000 we don't have to try to solve their problems. Sometimes, actually, solving their problems is the worst thing we can do. People with financial problems and we can help bail them out, don't try to help people apart from Jesus. Yes, help them. If they have a financial need, help them. If they have an addiction problem, help them. If they have a marriage problem, help them. But don't help them apart from Jesus because they need Jesus. Jesus is the only one who can help them and help them for the long term, for a long staying, healing, whatever the need is. Sometimes we can give them counsel that really helps them financially and they recover financially but then they never see Jesus. We can help people with an addiction problem, get them into a program apart from Jesus and they'll actually get off of those drugs but they'll never see Jesus. They're not in a better state. They're better off, but they're not in a better eternal state. We can help people with their marriage and give them marriage counseling, but give them apart from Jesus and they've missed all that they could have. Don't try to solve anyone's problem apart from Jesus but don't feel that you have to have the answers, either. You don't have to have every answer when people are hurting and people have problems. Just take them to Jesus. Say, "I don't know but come to church with me. I don't know how to answer what you're going through, but here's the Gospel of John. It did wonders and ministered to me, greatly and I think it will do the same to you." Take them to Jesus.
- In John, chapter 12, the Greeks will come and they'll say to Philip, "Hey, we want to see Jesus." Philip's like, "These are Greeks, man. I don't know if Jesus is going to receive Greeks? I think he's only receiving

the Jewish people." He doesn't know what to do and he comes to Andrew. He brings them to Andrew and the Greeks are, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." What does Andrew do? He takes them to Jesus. He just brings them to Jesus. "I don't know what the answer here is, it's beyond me, but I'll just bring them to Jesus." In the ministry, whether you're teaching Sunday school or you're witnessing on the street or you're in the workplace, people need to see Jesus. Just bring them to Jesus and let Jesus take it from there. All that we do is to let people see Jesus. People wish to see Jesus, start with that presumption that people want to see Jesus, and it will relieve you of the pressure that you have the burden of responsibility to get them to the place of wanting to see Jesus. Give them Jesus. Don't give them stories, don't give them antidotes, just give them Jesus and let Jesus take care of it. As Andrew would bring those Gentiles there in John, chapter twelve, he doesn't sit with the stigma, and the world's perception, and the world's opinion, "Hey, the Gentiles aren't going receive this, and that this is a Jewish gig going on here," and so too today, the Andrew example that we need. We can have this stigma, "Oh, he'll never come to Jesus. He's a druggie. He's a Muslim. He's gay. He has this issue. This one, he's too rich and educated." Just bring them to Jesus, and let Jesus take it from there.

John 6:3–9 (NKJV) ³ And Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat with His disciples. ⁴ Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near. ⁵ Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" ⁶ But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do. ⁷ Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little." ⁸ One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, ⁹ "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?"

John 12:20–22 (NKJV) ²⁰ Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. ²¹ Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." ²² Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

John 1:42 And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).

New Name – who Peter shall be Made into

Verse forty-two. Jesus looks at Peter and says, "You are Simon, the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas." Cephas means rock. Peter means rock. That's what you shall be called, Cephas. It's translated Peter, and here it's clear, we don't even have to guess. It means a stone, it's a rock. What we see through the life of Peter is he's like shifting sand. In fact, we'll see Peter, he cowers at a little servant girl before the fire. Jesus says, "Though you're shifting sand. Although you have the foot and mouth disease, and although you'll deny me three times," all the things that Jesus would see, he goes, "But I'm calling you a rock right now. You are going to be as solid as a rock," because Jesus is the alpha and the omega. He sees the beginning, and the end, and everything in between, and he knows the life of Peter. He knows the future of Peter, and though you may cower before a little servant girl (even after 3 years of walking with me), and deny me, and even curse the anathema, and say you don't even know who I am, there will come a day that the Holy Spirit will get hold of you, and you will a rock. Peter, on the day of Pentecost, Peter will lead three thousand people to Christ. He'll stand boldly. He'll cower before no man or woman ever again, and he will go and die for his Savior. He'll go from cowering before a servant girl to standing and giving his life in a brutal death. Because you know what? God knows what he can do when he gets hold of a man or woman. When God gets hold of you, he'll do the same. Philippians 1:6. He who began a good work will be faithful to complete it. He knows what he can do when he gets his hands on you.

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) ⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

God will change Your Name to who You will Become

Peter's name changed to The Rock. I want you to know, God changes your name. He changes your nature. He changes what you're known for. Maybe someone looks at your name as Ray, and all they ever remember is Ray, but failure Ray, the partier. Ray, who did this, and Ray, who did that, and the world remembers you by your name, but God's not like the world of remembering you by the name you carry now, but I have a new name for you, and that's a name that is shaped and based on what I will do in your life, and what I will make you. It actually says when we get to heaven we will receive new names. We'll find out what our new name is. I think it's good to remember where we came from, our life as Simon. I think we have to remember, right now at this moment we continually

remember, we have a new name, because we have a new nature, and God will make us into the name that He's given us, just like he did Peter. He's going to do that for us. Jeremiah 18, the potter and the clay, and Isaiah 64. *Isaiah 64:8 (NKJV)* ⁸ *But now, O LORD, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand.*

Revelation 2:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it."*

Jesus Beheld Peter – Pierced Him

Verse forty-two. It says Jesus beheld him. Jesus looked at him. The word literally means to pierce into. Jesus pierced into his heart. He looked into his heart, and he saw his heart. Jesus does that to us. He can look in, and see in. He pierced into our heart, and the most amazing thing is he still wants us. He still will receive us, even with everything that he sees, because it's grace upon grace, wave upon wave. Interesting enough, again, the same word, when the cock crows the third time, Jesus will look at Peter. Same word, pierce his heart. Look right into his heart, and yet he will still come to Peter after the resurrection, and he will come, and he will restore Peter. Hey, listen, we don't have to hide it. We don't have to ignore it, nor do we have to justify that thing that's in us. Jesus sees it. He pierces through it, and he still wants us. He still receives us, because like Peter, he knows what the master potter can do and shape when he gets His hands upon us.

Luke 22:60–62 (NKJV) ⁶⁰ *But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying!" Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. ⁶¹ And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." ⁶² So Peter went out and wept bitterly.*

Jesus the Creator / Satan Father of Lies

We have seen here in this chapter that Jesus is the creator of all things physical and He holds all things together. By Him all things were made, and without Him nothing was made. God created you, He loves you. The Devil has no power to create anything physical, but he did create something, and that is lies, as he is the father of lies. Satan wants you to believe his lies that you are nothing, that God doesn't care about you, that God doesn't have a plan and purpose for your life, that you might as well give up and just quit on God because of your past. The Spirit speaks to each of us here right now, that the Lord turns no one away, and when we come and follow Him, He begins a wonderful and mighty work and transformation in our lives.

John 1:3–4 (NKJV) ³ *All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.*

John 8:44 (NKJV) ⁴⁴ *You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.*

John 1:43 The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."

Who finds Who

Verse forty-three. In verse forty, Andrew goes and finds his brother, Peter. He said, "I found the Messiah." It's kind of funny, and Jesus found him, but anyway, nonetheless, Andrew says, "Peter, I have found the Messiah. Come and see." "Have you told your family?" Peter was Andrew's brother. "Have you told your family?" Then Peter comes, and he, too, will follow Jesus.

Jesus wanted to Go to Galilee

Verse 43, don't miss that word there, Jesus "wanted" to go to Galilee. Jesus wanted to go and he wanted Philip to go with him. He called Philip, "Come on with me. Follow me. Do this with me." Jesus wants us to partner with him. Can you imagine when they're walking? Philip responds, he starts walking, "Wow! Jesus wants me to be with him. Jesus wants me to go with him!" Imagine that as Philip walked with Jesus from Bethsaida to Galilee. Just getting to have that time with Jesus, hearing Jesus, gathering and gleaning from his heart.

Jesus wants to Go to the Hospital – Person in Need – Kids over there

Jesus wanted to go and he wants someone to go with him. That's you, that's me. "Hey, I want to go. I want to minister to that person in the hospital. Will you go with me? Hey, I want to go to that family that's in need. They're having some hard time, will you go with me? Hey, that kid over there, everybody thinks he's got it

together but I know better. I want to go to him and I want to show him myself and reveal my heart to him. Will you go with me?" It's an amazing thing that God calls us to partner with him. I want to tell you, he wants you. Wanted, he wants you to go with him.

Wants to Touch the Hurting / Camden in Bethany Beach

Jesus wanted to go ... Jesus just wants to go and minister. It's his heart, and he wants to minister through flesh and blood, not just through a Holy Spirit that falls upon people. He wants the Holy Spirit in and through people that will go to people, to be his hands and feet. He knows the heart that hurts, and I can remember a time back. Camden was probably eighteen months, two years old. He had just started walking. We were down in Bethany Beach, and we came ... It was an evening. The sun was setting. It was quiet on the beach. It was sparse at the time. There sitting on a chair, just looking out at the ocean, was an elderly lady, in her very late golden years. She's just looking out at the ocean. Me and Renee, we were just looking at the ocean and talking. We turned and we see Camden over there next to this lady, and he's just holding her hand. He's just looking out at the ocean, and that's just so out of the normal for Camden. He's not that type of touchy feely. But he just went over and he grabbed that elderly lady's hand. He just held her hand, and he just looked out at the ocean, and she's just staring at him, and you could see her heart's warmed by this little child that would come and hold her hand. You know what's amazing? We go over and we start talking to her, and she says, "I was just sitting here, looking out at the ocean, and remembering all the memories, because we have a house here. This is where we would come as a family. Me and all my children, we would spend our summers here, and they were just the greatest memories of sitting on this beach with my children as they grew." She goes, "But they've all grown now. They've all moved on and moved out, moved away. My husband has since passed away, and I was just sitting here remembering all those memories, and then your son came, and just took my hand, and held my hand." It was a beautiful moment. Jesus wanted to go to Galilee. Jesus wanted to go to Bethany. Jesus wants to go to Pasadena, and Jesus wants to go to Glen Burnie. He says to you, "Follow me." And Phillip goes.

Follow Me – Join Me

Jesus says Follow Me, another way this Greek Word here could be said is "Join Me". Jesus is saying to Phillip, Join Me, come and be part of what I am doing. Join Me and learn of Me, let me take you beyond this world and vanity of it, join with Me and receive eternal life for where I am you too will be, and when this life is over I go to the Father and so too will you.

Jesus says Follow Me

Jesus says "follow me", can you hear Him speak those words to you today? He will speak those words continually through the scriptures:

Matthew 4:18–20 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." ²⁰ They immediately left their nets and followed Him.

Matthew 8:18–22 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave a command to depart to the other side. ¹⁹ Then a certain scribe came and said to Him, "Teacher, I will follow You wherever You go." ²⁰ And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." ²¹ Then another of His disciples said to Him, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." ²² But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

Matthew 9:9 (NKJV) ⁹ As Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him.

Matthew 16:24–26 (NKJV) ²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Matthew 19:20–22 (NKJV) ²⁰ The young man said to Him, "All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?" ²¹ Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me." ²² But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

John 10:25–30 (NKJV) ²⁵ Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. ²⁶ But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow

Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. ³⁰ I and My Father are one."

John 12:24–26 (NKJV) ²⁴ Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. ²⁵ He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ If anyone serves Me, let him **follow Me**; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.

John 21:17–22 (NKJV) ¹⁷ He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. ¹⁸ Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish." ¹⁹ This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me." ²⁰ Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" ²¹ Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, "But Lord, what about this man?" ²² Jesus said to him, "If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? **You follow Me.**"

My Rule

I have a rule in my teaching, it keeps me balanced, and that is that my bible studies I prepare have to be able to be preached anywhere in the world, and the doctrine of theology still applies. It keeps me balanced I believe, and surely keeps me from giving a watered down gospel, an easy-believe gospel, and anything even remotely close to a prosperity doctrine.

Before Chapter Over – 6 Called / Nothing will Turn them Back

Before this chapter is over, we will see six disciples called. They come and see. Oh, they taste and see that the Lord is good, and nothing will deter them or change them from seeking and following Him. But let us not forget the price they paid with the willingness to follow Jesus.

- Andrew will be crucified and shot full of arrows.
- Peter, his church history is going to tell us he'll be in prison the last six months of his life, a brutal prison that then I think most people died before they even got out of the prison to be executed because it was such a filthy, rotten dump full of germs, and dysentery that killed the people there. Before they would kill him, they'd make him watch his wife get beheaded, and his words to his wife on the way to her death was, "Woman, remember thou Lord. Never waiver in that Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life." He himself would be crucified upside down. That was at his request. They wanted to crucify him like Jesus, and he would say, "I'm not worthy to be crucified in the same manner as Him," and so he requested to be crucified upside down.
- John will follow, and he'll be exiled to the Island of Patmos, dumped in a boiling cauldron of oil. He'll never waiver.
- James (brother of John – not half-brother of Jesus) will be beheaded.
- Phillip will be impaled in India, and
- Nathaniel will be skinned alive.

Yet, none of them would waiver. None of them would turn from Jesus. All would lay down their life to the Lord willingly, because see when you find Jesus, you know you've found the real thing, and you know that there's nothing in this world that would be greater than what you have found in Jesus, once you have tasted and seen that the Lord is good.

Psalms 34:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!

Pastor Bob

We may not be asked to lay our life down for Jesus here in the United States, but again how would I preach this message if I was in Iraq, Sudan, Iran, and the multitude of nations like that where being a Christian can cause you your life. However, there's a time where he's going to say, "Follow me," and you'll have to make a decision if you're going to follow Him, and what the cost might be follow Him. There's no promise that it's going to be an easy following. I remember my teacher in Bible College. He said, "There comes a time where God just says, 'Follow me.'" He was making a hundred thousand dollars a year playing in a rock band. He was the setup band. He would be the band that played before Aerosmith and ACDC, the big, big name bands. He gave his life to the Lord, and he says, "One day I'm in the hotel room. We had a gig that night, and I was getting ready in the morning, and God just spoke and said, 'You know this isn't what I want for you,'" and God literally said to him, "Follow me." He said, "I

had to make a decision, and I walked out. Told the band, 'Guys, God told me to walk, and I'm walking.'" And he walked away, just like that. He walked away from a hundred thousand dollars a year to nothing to follow Jesus.

John 1:44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

John 1:45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

Jesus Nazareth – Very Specific who Jesus Messiah Is / Not Jesus of Miami

In verse 45, he makes the statement, "Jesus of Nazareth, son of Joseph". Don't believe that Nathanael would know what that means, but what the Holy Spirit is doing is being very clear which Jesus is the Messiah so no one can work the Scriptures days later or years later. The guy down in Miami, Jesus of Miami, saying that he's the Messiah. It's Jesus of Nazareth, not Jesus of Miami, son of Joseph.

Jesus written of in the OT / 300 Times

In verse 45, grab that. Philip says, "We found him whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote." Jesus was prophesied over 300 times in the Old Testament. The chances of that prophecy of just 8 of them is staggering. The proof of Jesus being God is in the Old Testament scriptures. That's where he's proven out and that's where the faith can be found in the prophecies of Jesus Christ. It's not blind faith, there is enough prophecies that you have to look and go, "This is undeniable."

Top 8

His Birth & Lineage

- 1.) The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Micah 5:2a / Matthew 2:1-2
- 2.) The Messiah would be a descendant of David. Isaiah 9:7 / Matthew 1:1

His Environment & the World Setting

- 3.) The Messiah would be announced to his people 483 years, to the exact day, after the decree to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. Daniel 9:25 / John 12:12-13
- 4.) The Messiah would be killed before the destruction of the temple. Daniel 9:26c / Matthew 27:50-51
- 5.) The Jew's authority to administer capital punishment would be gone when the Messiah arrived. Genesis 49:10c / John 18:31

His Death

- 6.) The Messiah would be sacrificed on the same mountain where God tested Abraham. Genesis 22:14 / Luke 23:33
- 7.) The Messiah's back would be whipped. Isaiah 53:5c Matthew 27:26
- 8.) The Messiah's hands and feet would be pierced. Psalm 22:16c Matthew 27:38

All facts that can be backed up by historical writings

The Law of Compound Probability / The Quarter – 10 to 17th / Blindfold

The following probabilities (The Law of Compound Probability) are taken from Peter Stoner in Science Speaks (Moody Press, 1963) to show that coincidence is ruled out by the science of probability. Stoner says that by using the modern science of probability in reference to eight prophecies, 'we find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 10 to the 17th.' That would be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. That is more than the number of stars in our galaxy. In order to help us comprehend this staggering probability, Stoner illustrates it by supposing that "we take 10 to the 17th silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas (which is about 270,000 square miles) It took me 16 hours to drive across the State from border to border, and I still had to get a hotel room in El Paso. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. "Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What

chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man."

John 1:46 And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."

Come and See – Start Talking Like Jesus

Now in verse 46, Philip finds Nathanael and says, "Hey, we found the Messiah." Nathanael says, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" And Philip says, "Come and see." Do those words sound familiar to you? Come and see? They're the very words that Jesus said to Andrew and John. "What do you seek? Where I'm staying? Come and see!" You know, when you hang out with Jesus, you'll just start talking like Jesus. You'll start taking on the heart of Jesus and your natural response is just going to be the words of Jesus. Philip, he's just like Jesus, "Come and see."

John 1:37–39 (NKJV) ³⁷ The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸ Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?" ³⁹ He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).

We don't need all the Answers

Here again, we see, "Hey, I don't need to have all the answers. Nathanael, I can see you're critical. I can see a challenging spirit upon you. I don't have to answer all these questions, I'm just going to say, 'Well, come and see. Come to church. Here's the Gospel of John, read it. Here's a gift from me to you. Come and see. See what he says. See what he's about. Spend time with him.'"

Nazareth – Other side of Tracks / Ohh the Glory Jesus Departed from in Heaven

In verse 46, Nathanael says, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Nazareth, it was the other sides of the track. It was a poor area. It was a down and out area. It was not in the main stream of Israel. It was to live in Nazareth it was to be looked down upon and yet this is where Jesus would live. I don't know if we can fully grasp the glory that he departed for us. He leaves the glory of heaven, the angels worshiping and ministering to him, bowing before him in fellowship with the Father and the Spirit. He would step out of that into this sin-filled world to show us the glory. So that he might take us in to the glory. I think that we forget the heights of glory that he left so that he might become the Lamb of God, to take away the sins of the world.

John 1:47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!"

Great Ministry Example – Disarm Them

In verse 47 though, Jesus gives us a great example. Here comes Nathanael and he's coming with the challenge. Jesus can see it and looks how Jesus just disarms him. It's a witness for us. You know, when people come with their challenges, don't challenge them back. Come and just be like Jesus. I remember a young man had given his life to Christ here and was just all excited about the Lord. I stopped over his house and his brothers saw me coming. I see his brother and he's just like bee-lining for me. As I'm getting out of the car, he's leaving the apartment. He's like bee-lining it for me. I could just see that he's coming with the challenge. He comes, I'm not even into the apartment and he stops me halfway. He goes, "I got a question for you." He asked some question or two, you know, "How could this be? Why would God allow this or that?" It was a challenge, there was skepticism. I said to him, "Boy, those are great questions. You know, they're probably the most asked questions. The questions you asked me are probably the most asked questions that I get all the time. So I commend you for that, to think these things through and not just be blind faith. Because God wants you to reason with Him. It actually says in the book of Isaiah, 'Come let us reason together.'" I tell you, it totally disarmed him. It went from a tense, combative situation to a total acceptance and there was a pleasantness. We had, for the next 60 minutes, just great discussions. I got to share Christ with him. We see Jesus as the example. Jesus, he disarms Nathanael by going, "Ah an Israelite, indeed in whom is no deceit." He gives him a compliment, he greets him in kindness and acceptance. Then we're going to see him just open the door of Nathanael's heart.

John 1:48 Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."

John 1:49 Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"

Supernatural

Whatever's happening in verse 48 and 49, it's just supernatural. Jesus just sees it and knows it. That this is a prophetic, that he would know that he was under the fig tree. Just an interesting passage.

Skeptic to Believer

In verse 49, Nathanael comes as a skeptic but he immediately knows he is standing in the presence of the Holy God, as the Holy Spirit would reveal to him. All of his skepticism and all of his questions go away. He's not, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" It's just immediately silenced as he stands in awe of the Holy God that is before him.

California Street Witnessing

I remember street witnessing in California, sharing Christ with these kids, but it started with these teenagers. It started with all kinds of skepticism and challenges, "What about the belly button? Who did Cain and Abel marry?" all those types of questions. "Who created God?" And we just got to, "Hey, can we just share the good news of Jesus Christ with you?" We shared the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. The Lamb of God who loves you enough to leave the glory of heaven and to step into this earth. Then make the sacrifice, become the sacrifice for your sin so that you might have personal relationship with the Father in heaven. I remember they received Jesus and you know what? They stopped asking the questions about the belly button, about where did the wives come from, who created God. Their questions were, "How can I know him more? How do I find a good church? Where should I start reading about him in the bible." And I find that so often that the questions go away once somebody comes and sees and tastes that the Lord is good.

John 1:50 Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these."

John 1:51 And He said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

Genesis 28 / God was in this Place

In verse fifty and fifty-one, Jesus, he's referencing back to Genesis twenty-eight, the story of Jacob and the dream that Jacob had when he was on the run from his brother Esau whom he had stolen the birthright from through trickery and deception. I think one of the keys here as Jesus made this statement is that what Jacob said at the end of ... When he awoke from his dream, "God was in this place and I didn't even know it, but now I do." And it should be noted, that when Jacob was tired and worn out, when he had come to an end of himself, that is when heaven opened up before him.

Genesis 28:12–18 (NKJV) ¹² Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. ¹³ And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: "I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. ¹⁴ Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed. ¹⁵ Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you." ¹⁶ Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it." ¹⁷ And he was afraid and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!" ¹⁸ Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it.

These 6 Men Didn't Know at First – But then They Did

Here we see all six of these men. God is in this place. They didn't know it, but then after discovering and spending time with Him, they do know it now.

Jesus Make Clear Statement – I am the Ladder

Jesus is making a clear statement by referencing Genesis twenty-eight, heaven opening and the angels ascending and descending upon the son of man is that Jesus is the ladder between heaven and earth, and there's only one way between heaven and earth, and that is through Jesus Christ.

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

One Hand on Grace – One Hand of Truth

Verse fifty-one. We see Jesus the ladder. He's full of grace, and he's full of truth. He's full of grace, because he has one hand on man, and man can only come to the Lord through grace. He has one hand on God, the Father, the Holy God, and He's full of truth, and there's the balance between grace and truth, the hand upon man, and the hand upon God.

You have not Seen Anything Yet / Same for Us

These guys, at the end here, verse fifty-one. After hearing these words and Jesus, they have to be like wow, he blew me away, and he does. The Lord blows me away every day when I study his word, and I grow deeper, and I discover Him more, and you shall, too.

End of Study

Chapter 2

John 2:1-11

Written so We Might Believe / Zoe Life / More Know – Trust – Obey – Abide - Fruitful

The Gospel of John, written so we might believe, and by believing we will have Zoe (abundant, absolute, God Life, a life more than this life). And how we have that Zoe life is by believing, and how we believe is by reading about Jesus and His life, and as we do Jesus does get bigger for He is always His awesomeness, but it is us who grow in our understanding of just how big He is.

- The more we get to know Him, the more we will trust Him,
- and the more we trust Him the more we will obey Him,
- and the more you obey the more you have that abiding relationship with Him,
- and the more you have that abiding relationship with Him, the more fruit you will produce because you are attached to Him. How much fruit we bear is all dependent on how well we know Him.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Romans 10:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "LORD, who has believed our report?" ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

John 15:5 (NKJV) ⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

Galatians 5:22–23 (NKJV) ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Recap Chapter 1

Today we begin chapter 2. Chapter 1 was loaded with rich manna from heaven as we read:

- Jesus is God, Jesus is Eternal, Jesus can handle whatever is before you today (1:1).
- Jesus created all things and by Him all things are held together, and that means He created you, your spouse, your children, and he knows every detail of your life, and He holds you in the palm of His hand, and He can hold your life together even when it seems it is falling apart (1:3).
- John the Baptist came to prepare the way of the Lord for all men everywhere to receive Him into their hearts. Today we have been passed that high honor to point all men everywhere to Jesus, so they may open their hearts to receive Him as Lord and Savior. What an honor. We are now the voice in the wilderness calling out to people to prepare the way (1:23).
- We saw that Jesus is the Lamb of God, the one and only sacrifice, to take away the sins of the world. Have you laid your hands upon His head and asked Him to take your sin, your punishment, so that your sin may be forgiven? (1:29)
- We read the first words of Jesus' public ministry, and they were "What is it that you seek", and He still ask all men today that same question as he wants people to tell Him what is on their heart, and then He responds to them, "come and see", as I have an answer to all your questions (1:37-39).
- And then we closed out the chapter as we read of Jesus calling the first 6 disciples, and saying those words that He says to all men everywhere....."follow Me" (1:43)

So, verse 1 of chapter 2, Jesus' first miracle, and why He choose a wedding as the first will absolutely warm your heart.

John 2:1 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.
John 2:2 Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.

Why a Marriage for 1st Miracle

- Every marriage needs a miracle and Jesus wants to do one in every marriage
- Wine is a symbol of communion, and the Lord wants communion (oneness with you)
- Wine is a symbol of Joy, and the Lord wants to fill your life with Joy.
- The wedding feast is a picture of our (the Bride) 7 year Feast with the Lord

Jesus is into Marriage

3 Days – 7 Days Total of His Public Ministry

Day three means 3 days after the chapter 1. Actually when you add the day and time stamp given throughout chapter 1 and this verse, we are on day 7 of the public ministry of Jesus. The other gospels tell us that Jesus has already done His 40 days in the wilderness, and thus what we have been reading is the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. And we are now on day 7 of it. Jesus just started His public ministry, He has lots to accomplish in a short time, yet He makes time to make it to this wedding. Jesus' presence at this particular wedding signals His stamp of approval upon all aspects of the institution of marriage—civil, legal, and religious. Day 7 of ministry, lets to accomplish, yet Jesus makes this wedding, does His first miracle at that, and makes it clear "I am totally into marriage", and therefore for you, He is saying "I am totally into your marriage", what is it you seek, what are you asking me to do in it, great..... come and see, come away with Me, spend the day with Me, and let me tell you all I have for your marriage.

John 1:29 (NKJV)²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

John 1:35 (NKJV)³⁵ Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples.

John 1:39 (NKJV)³⁹ He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).

John 1:43 (NKJV)⁴³ The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."

John 2:1 (NKJV)¹ On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.

Jesus has a Miracle for Your Marriage / And wants your Life filled with joy

Jesus has a miracle for you marriage, He wants to do a miracle in your marriage, as every marriage needs a miracle every now and then. Jesus also wants you marriage, and your life, to be filled with joy, and let's read on to see what all that means.

Wine is symbol of Communion

Wine & Communion

Wine is one of the elements of communion, which a symbol of His blood, His sacrifice. And in the second half of this chapter we will see Jesus saying destroy this body and in 3 days I will raise it up. So all so subtly, the picture of communion is before us in this chapter, the broken body and poured out wine. God wants to commune with us, be one with us, and that is truly a miracle that that holy God would desire us as He does, He is such a good God. I love Him, let's praise Him, for being so wonderful.

Joy

Festive Occasion / Jesus is the Life of the Party – because he is Life / In His Presence is Fullness of Joy

It was festive occasion, a joyous occasion, and Jesus was invited. Jesus is life, therefore He is the life of the party. In the scriptures when you read two words used in the same sentence (fullness and joy), every passage is in the reference and context of being in the presence of God. I am amazed still, and yet why I still don't get it, how every day that I start with cultivating the presence of the Lord in my life, how I am filled with the love of the Lord, the peace of the Lord, and the joy of the Lord.

Psalms 16:11 (NKJV)¹¹ You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Difference between Joy and Happiness

Now let's notice the difference between happiness and joy. Happiness is an emotion, and it can change with the weather, literally. Joy is a state, it is a condition, and you can still have joy even when the circumstances around are not pleasant, and not comfortable, because joy is a state, and the state of being is..... being in the presence of Jesus, and when we can get through the emotions and into His presence, we will always find joy, because Jesus is there, and could there be anything less than joy when we get ourselves into the presence of the Lord whether that be in private devotional prayer, or a corporate gathering like we are here now, when Jesus is there, those things of the emotion seems to grow strangely dim do they not?

My Friend's Car Restoration

I am reminded of my friend Chris who found himself a 1970 SS Chevelle and restored it to perfection. He replaced old with new original, he replaced quarter panels, rocker springs, seats, and instruments, it was restored to perfection. He bought it in the fall, and spent all winter restoring it, eight months in all. Then in the spring it was done, he drove it one mile to the 7-11 with the idea of buying an ice tea and going for a cruise. Guess what, when he came out of the 7-11, it was gone! And so was his happiness. The Lord in this passage (and throughout this Gospel) is showing us the difference between joy and happiness, and that true happiness can only be found in joy, and joy can only be found in His presence, for in His presence is fullness of joy.

Jesus wants to do a Miracle

Jesus wants to do a miracle in your life, and it is a quite the miracle, he wants us to be in His presence. Come and enjoy and experience a miracle right now as we read the Word, the Word that became flesh and dwelt amongst us. *John 1:14 (NKJV)*¹⁴ *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Marriage Supper of the Lamb

Jewish Marriage Celebration 7 days / Marriage Supper of the Lamb

Now for the context, in Jesus' day, Jewish wedding celebrations lasted for one week, during which time relatives and friends would stay in the home of the bride and groom—sort of a honeymoon/family reunion/honorable bachelor party/wedding shower all rolled into one! During this seven-day celebration, the bride would be tucked away in a secluded part of the house and would not be seen by anyone but her groom. At the end of the week, she would emerge with great fanfare and celebration. This is fascinating as it relates to the Marriage Feast of the Lamb. You see, when the Rapture takes place, we—the bride of Christ—will be carried away into heaven for seven years. Just as the Jewish bride was in seclusion with her groom for seven days, we will be tucked away in intimacy with our Lord Jesus Christ, away from the Tribulation that will be unleashed upon the earth.

*Revelation 19:7-8 (NKJV)*⁷ *Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.”⁸ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

Cana 4 miles from Nazareth / Jesus not Odd

Cana is about 4 miles from Nazareth. So the people getting married were friends or relatives of Jesus and his earthly family. I think that is important to see in that Jesus wasn't odd, some mystic person that people couldn't relate to. Jesus had friends, Jesus was invited to weddings and cookouts, baby dedications, family reunions, and the likes. Jesus was like you and me, and Jesus was very likeable and approachable we will see throughout all the gospels.

Lots to do – But Jesus loves Weddings / Invite Him to Yours

Jesus is busy, He has just started His public ministry, He only has 3 years to do all that the Father has before Him, but He will go to any wedding He is invited too. So if you are getting married, invite Jesus to your wedding, if you are married then invite Jesus to your marriage. Again, Jesus' presence at this particular wedding signals His stamp of approval upon all aspects of the institution of marriage—civil, legal, and religious. It was festive occasion, a joyous occasion, and Jesus was invited. I just loved it here last Sunday after service as we had our BBQ and potluck, people enjoying each other, there was just an energy about the place, there was joyous atmosphere here, and it was because Jesus was in our midst, and we were enjoying Him and being part of His family.

John 2:3 And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.”

John 2:4 Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.”

Maam / Camden Story

Woman – the word here is not a sharp word, but an endearing word, “ma’am”. It is respectful. Now last Sunday my son Camden was not using such endearing words with his mother, myself included. His ear infection was so bad that the ear drops just totally incense his ears, the pain is tremendous, and thank you for your prayers. Well Sunday night he was wrestling so hard I had to come and lay beside him and hold his arms and legs so Renee could get the ear drops in. Ohh he was beside himself. After he was laying there totally upset, moaning, and he said “I am calling the police of you two, you tow are going to jail for what you did to me”. Ah, kids.

His Hour will Come on a Hill in Palestine

My hour has not yet come – Jesus hour would be those 6 hours that Friday on a hill in Palestine for you and for me.

John 17:1–5 (NKJV) ¹ Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, ² as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. ³ And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. ⁴ I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. ⁵ And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

Maybe Mary waiting for Redemption of her Character

Maybe Mary has been waiting for this day all her life, the day that all will know what she knows, Jesus is God, He came into the world through the virgin birth which she was blessed and honored to be the vessel. But that honor came with a cost, as no one then, just as no one today, would ever believe in the virgin birth. Mary would hear the sneers in the market place, there is that fornicator and adultery, she cheated on Joseph, probably with one of the Roman soldier stationed at the Garrison in Nazareth. She went and sowed some wild oats and ended up pregnant, what a tramp. For 30 years she would hear that, we know it is true because even the religious leaders knew the story because they accuse Jesus of being born in fornication.

John 8:41 (NKJV) ⁴¹ You do the deeds of your father.” Then they said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God.”

Jesus says to Mary it is not your Time Either – But I know what you Going Through

But Jesus is saying, “Woman... Mary... Mother...” said Jesus, “I better than anyone know you have been waiting patiently. I know better than anyone how you have been hurt. I understand better than anyone your situation. But it is not time to rectify everything... not quite yet.” What does this say to us? Oftentimes, I think we ask the Lord to do something that will get us off the hook or make us look a little better. We ask Him to do something that will smooth our road or lighten our load. Like Mary’s, our requests might sound very noble, very generous, very altruistic—but in reality, they’re self-centered. And in such instances, Jesus might whisper in our hearts, as He did to Mary, “What have I to do with thee? This is not the hour. This is not the time. This is not the place. The problem will be solved. Your reputation will be salvaged. The provision will be made. The healing will be enjoyed. But not yet. Mine hour is not yet come.”

My Story

I remember when I went to Bible College (nearly 20 years ago) and left the Space Center everyone thought I had lost it, was mad with religion. When I got out 2 years later, I thought for sure God was immediately going to do something great and show everyone I heard God, and God had a plan in all this. Well, when I got out, nobody came running with ministry opportunities, and nobody wanted to hire me either. I went 9 months without a job, and my high calling at the church was to answer the phones on Saturday and then vacuum the floors after people left. Even Christians started to ask me, do you think you misheard God? Some would even say do you think God is punishing you for disobedience, that you weren’t supposed to quit your job and go to Bible College, and now He is disciplining you for doing it. And yes, I continually was saying come on Lord, where are you, show them that you spoke to me, prove to them that you called me, Lord do a miracle and people will actually get saved because they will see my life and go wow God does do miracles, God’s Spirit is upon me. But it didn’t happen that way, for God had a different plan and a different timing, and I can see now how He used all that to do what He is currently doing here today among us.

Example of Daniel on Waiting / Remain Ready

What are we to do while we wait? As with Mary, today we have a great example of waiting, and there is another story in the Bible we can relate this to, and that was Daniel. Daniel was in a place of prominence and tremendous authority in Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom. Then, when he was about sixty-five years old, Nabonidus came into power, and Daniel was removed from office. For twenty years, Daniel is not seen in the narrative given to us in the book that bears his name. But then the day dawned that Belshazzar called for him to interpret the mysterious writing on the wall (Daniel 5:13). When Darius the Mede seized control of the kingdom shortly thereafter, Daniel was placed in a position of prominence once again. Thus, for twenty years, Daniel was neither used in ministry nor given a position of responsibility. Yet Daniel, being a man of integrity, did what we must do: He remained ready. Be like Daniel, gang. Don't say, "I've been walking with the Lord for five years, and nothing's happening, so I think I'll just go to the movies, join the city softball league, or take up bird-watching." Folks, it is your job and my job to be ready—to walk with the Lord, to spend time in the presence of the Lord, and to learn about the Lord so that when Belshazzar says, "What does this mean?" like Daniel, we can say, "I can tell you because for twenty years I've been in touch with God. For twenty years, I've been in the place of prayer. For twenty years, I've been close to the Lord." Are you in prayer? Are you studying the Word? Are you loving the Lord? Are you ready? In a certain moment, your hour will come. Your time will arrive. A significant task, a life-changing opportunity will arise, and then it will be too late to prepare.

Disciples were not Ready

As Jesus descended the Mount of Transfiguration, He was met by a man who said, "Master, I brought my epileptic son to Your disciples but they couldn't help him." Jesus then cast out the demon within the boy. "Why couldn't we do that?" asked His disciples. "This kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting," answered Jesus (Matthew 17:21). If it takes prayer and fasting to cast out a demon of that nature, how were we to know we would have that kind of encounter? the disciples must have wondered. But I believe Jesus was implying that, because they wouldn't know when opportunities to minister would come their way, they should have been living a life of continual prayer and fasting. Why weren't the disciples praying? I suggest it was because Jesus was on the mountain with Peter, James, and John. I suggest it was because the nine disciples down below were saying, "It's always Peter, James, and John. They get to go up the mountain. They're always in the inner circle. But what about us? We never get to do anything." And because that was their mentality, they weren't interceding. They weren't praying. They weren't ready. So, too, there are those today who say, "The Lord never uses me. The church never calls on me." But when the opportunity arises before them, they are either unable to meet it or are completely unaware of it. Saint, your responsibility in ministry is to be ready and then to rest. Study the Scripture in the place of intimacy and prayer. Worship the Lord. Get to know Him all the more. Then just rest, saying, "Lord, when the hour comes in which You want to use me to do something for Your glory, I'm ready."

John 2:5 His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

Words of Mary / Highly Esteemed / Last Words of Mary

Anyone who esteems Mary equal with Jesus bring them to this verse (Mary was the most blessed among woman, she is worthy of honor, but not worship – I say that with the utmost respect for her). Mary says what ever He says, do it. These are the last recorded words of Mary, and she says whatever He says – do it! Jesus says, follow Me – I am the way the truth and the life.

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 1:43 (NKJV) ⁴³ The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."

Mary Brings Problem to Jesus

Mary gives demonstration of our study from last week, and that is to bring your problem to Jesus. Don't go to Him when all else fails, start with Him and skip the wasted steps. Bring your problems to Jesus, hear Him say, "What do you seek", and then hear Him say "Come and See". Jesus never turns anyone away who seeks Him.

John 2:6 Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece.

Massive Volume

We are talking some volume here, 120 to 180 gallons. You see the rabbis had a saying, "where there is no wine, there is no joy". Jesus is going to bring volumes of joy upon these people.

Irish Priest

An Irish priest is driving down to New York and gets stopped for speeding. The state trooper smells alcohol on the priest's breath and then sees an empty wine bottle on the floor of the car. He says, "Sir, have you been drinking?" "Just water," says the priest. The trooper says, "then why do I smell wine?" The priest looks at the bottle and says, "Good Lord! He's done it again!"

John 2:7 Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim.

John 2:8 And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it.

John 2:9 When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom.

Some of You Waiting for a Miracle / One step at a Time

Jesus is doing a miracle. Now when did the water turn to wine we do not know, it was sometime between fill and deliver. So for you who seek to serve Jesus to a greater degree, there are three important characteristics of the servants to note in this story....

- The first is obedience. The servants didn't argue with Jesus, or ask questions of Him. They simply did what He asked them to do, they took the first step of faith.
- The second is whole-hearted. The servants filled huge twenty-gallon vessels to the brim, even though they had no idea what would happen next. There was nothing halfhearted about these guys! They didn't fill them half way up, three-quarters, even 99%, but they filled to the brim.
- The third is faith. Jesus didn't say, "Okay, servants, huddle up. Here's the plan. See those big water pots over there? I want you guys to fill them with water. Then, as you begin to pour them out and serve them to the governor, a miracle will take place and the water will turn into wine. John will write about it in the second chapter of his Gospel, and you guys will be famous!" No, Jesus told the servants what to do only one step at a time. First, they were to fill the water pots. After they had done that, He instructed them to draw the water out and take it to the governor. The miracle occurred only as they faithfully followed each step. Too often, I want to know what steps two through five are going to be before I follow step one. "Let me know where this is all going, Lord. Let me know where I will be next month, next year, and three years from now. Lay it out clearly, Lord, and then I'll go for it." The Lord doesn't work that way. He unfolds His plan for us the same way He did for the servants at the wedding: one step at a time. And the point where we stop obeying is the point where that stops happening. Has He called you to do something, then take that first step..... in faith, with full commitment and investment (with all your heart), and then wait for step two. You and I will never see the miracle if we don't take the first step, and then each step, in faith and faithfully.

John 2:10 And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!"

It's Wine – Not Grape Juice

It is wine, it is not grape juice. Some people want to say that it was unfermented wine, which silly because unfermented wine is grape juice. The master of the ceremony is not saying wow you saved the best grape juice for last. He says wine. Now people want to say it is not fermented wine because they have a personal position that says alcohol is a sin, and thus they don't want to have a verse that would promote drinking. We have to stick to the scriptures, regardless of personal convictions, and the Scriptures nowhere say that wine (drinking alcohol) is a sin. Now we are told that drunkardness is a sin, and drunkardness is when the alcohol influences the thoughts and

the behavior. In proverbs we are told that wine is a mocker, meaning it can make people look so foolish. But drinking wine is not a sin. We are told not to cause another brother stumble by our actions, so I personally do not drink, the liberty just is not worth it if I was to cause one person who looked up to me to take a drink, especially one of my children. The scripture is clear that leaders in the church (overseers/bishops) are to be given to wine, but even still it doesn't say they cannot drink. The word (in Titus 1:7-10) describes a person who sits long with the cup and thus drinks to excess. The fact that Paul advised Timothy to use wine for medicinal purposes (1 Tim. 5:23) indicates that total abstinence was not demanded of believers.

1 Corinthians 6:7–10 (NKJV) ⁷ Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated? ⁸ No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and you do these things to your brethren! ⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

Proverbs 20:1 (NKJV) ¹ Wine is a mocker, Strong drink is a brawler, And whoever is led astray by it is not wise.

1 Corinthians 8:9–13 (NKJV) ⁹ But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. ¹⁰ For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? ¹¹ And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? ¹² But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. ¹³ Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

Titus 1:7–10 (NKJV) ⁷ For a bishop must be blameless, as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, ⁸ but hospitable, a lover of what is good, sober-minded, just, holy, self-controlled, ⁹ holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict. ¹⁰ For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision,

1 Timothy 5:23 (NKJV) ²³ No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities.

Proverbs 31:4–5 (NKJV) ⁴ It is not for kings, O Lemuel, It is not for kings to drink wine, Nor for princes intoxicating drink; ⁵ Lest they drink and forget the law, And pervert the justice of all the afflicted.

Should you Not Drink

Should you not drink, should you not drink, maybe you are asking yourself; God speaks to His people, and will clearly speak to you, so get alone with Him and ask Him.

Hebrews 1:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; ³ who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

God saves the Best for Last / Satan and World offers the Best First and Pain Later

Look at what the servants did. They obeyed and everyone was blessed. Verses 9 and 10. "When the master of the feast had tasted the water that had been made wine and he did not know where it came from (but the servants knew), he called the master of the feast and said, 'Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk they bring out the inferior but you have kept the good wine until now!' " Interesting. The devil and this world always offer the best wine at first and the diluted later. In contrast God always saves the best for last. Oh listen. The devil, he is smart. He knows what he is doing. He always offers attractive temptation. You know if you're going to be tempted it has got to be tempting. You know we talk about that piece of forbidden fruit in the garden. I think it must have really had something special about it. Because you have to consider the fact that Adam and Eve were living in the garden in the pre-sin state and there was not the effects of sin on the world yet and how glorious it must have been. But this one fruit stood out from all the others. I always thought maybe it pulsed or something. It got Eve interested. She walked over. What on earth is this? And she was curious. And Satan of course whispers in her ear and he says, "Go ahead and eat thereof for in the day you eat you will be as a god knowing good and evil." And look at how the devil just takes generation after generation down the same old road doing the same old things. Isn't it amazing how young people think they are the first ones to discover illicit sex, drinking or drug? And more and more fall into it every day. He kind of entices you. He makes it attractive at first. But then you end up paying for it. Never mind if so many lives have been destroyed through immorality, the

devil says, it won't destroy you. So people take the bait and then they bite. But as the years pass you see the long term repercussions of sin. Whereas what God gives us just keeps getting better and better, because the more we know and grow in the knowledge of Him, the more we obey, the more we abide, and the more fruit we bare, and the more joy we have, because in His presence is fullness of joy.

John 2:11 This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

Wine Symbol of Joy / One of the Elements of Communion

What was the reason for this miracle? Wine very often through the scriptures is a symbol of joy. Wine is one of the elements of Communion – (koinonia) oneness with the Lord.

My first Miracle

Now, if I were the Lord, I would have chosen as my first miracle:

- to resurrect someone from the dead,
- cleanse someone from leprosy,
- or cast out a demon—something spectacular or necessary.

I Want Your Life Full of Joy

But Jesus chose to do His first miracle in a way that says very clearly to you and me, “I want people to be full of joy, to have joy in their life, to have oneness with Me.

- Whether it's a marriage that's watered down
- or a life that is empty or washed up
- I want to bring in one hundred twenty plus gallons of sparkling, bubbling joy—better than anything you've ever tasted before, better than anything the world can offer.
- I want to do something to bring you joy—joy in your parenting, joy in your profession, joy in your hearts.”

God Never Changes

Our joy comes with our relationship with the Lord. Things might go bad around me, but I am still secure in my relationship with God. John writes his epistle to us that our joy might be full. John knew and saw that being with Jesus, walking with Him, watching Him, that joy would abound. Having spent three years in the physical company of Jesus, no doubt John had countless memories of time spent with Him. After all, it was John who said that even the world itself could not contain the books that could be written about Him

(1 John 1:4 NKJV) And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

Close to Jesus – Joy Abounds

Whenever people are with Jesus, close to Jesus, learning about Jesus, joy abounds

(John 15:11 NKJV) "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.

If So – EXPLAIN This

“If that be true,” you say, “how do you explain what I'm going through this week? How can you explain what I've experienced this month? If 1st John was written in order that our joy might be full, if Jesus declared He wants us to be filled with joy, why has the last week, month, or year been anything but joyful for me?”

Jeremiah 48

For the answer, turn to the Book of Jeremiah....God is writing to warn the Jews, and also some Gentile nations that a time of testing will come upon them, God is going to stir them up. For Moab they had a life of ease, they were just cruising along, but God said that is all going to change:

(Jeremiah 48:11 NKJV) "Moab has been at ease from his youth; He has settled on his dregs, And has not been emptied from vessel to vessel, Nor has he gone into captivity. Therefore his taste remained in him, And his scent has not changed.

OT Wine

To understand what this means, we have to know how wine was made in those days. In Old Testament times, and into the NT, wine was made by pouring the juice of crushed grapes into a large vessel and allowing it to sit until the lees—the dregs, the impurities—settled to the bottom. At just the right time, the winemaker would pour the wine into another vessel, leaving the dregs behind. This process would be repeated sometimes twelve to fifteen times.

Why?

Not Poured – Poor Taste

If the wine wasn't poured from vessel to vessel, it would begin to take on the bitter taste of the lees. So in order to make wine that was pleasing to the taste, smell, and sight, the winemaker would pour the wine again and again until there were no dregs left.

When I Understand – Makes Sense / I want to Flood You – Top Shelf Wine

God was going to do this to Moab, and He still does it today. When I begin to understand that this is God's process for purifying people as well as wine, my life makes a lot more sense. You see, the Lord says, "I want to flood you and fill you with the wine of the Holy Ghost. This means that not only will I provide the wine of My joy in your life—but that I will purify it as well."

When I get Settled – Winemaker Pours Me / I Whine

Thus, when everything is relaxed and peaceful and wonderful, when I get settled, lethargic, and comfortable, the winemaker will stir up my life as He overturns my vessel. "Poor me!" I cry. "How could You do this? Why is this happening?" – and I Whine!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

I Desire to Sparkle / But Can Get Comfortable

The Lord knows that what I truly desire is to be filled with the sparkling, bubbly, pure wine of joy, a wine that is pleasing to Him, a wine that is contagious for others. He also knows that stagnation and comfort will circumvent the purification process because when I get comfortable, all too often:

- I stop seeking God;
- I don't go to church;
- Or if I do it is just to punch in then punch out.
- I don't read the Word.

Cut Off – Less Flavor / Mad Dog 20/20

And as I am cut off from the One who is the source of joy, my life gets shallower, narrower, and smaller. And I become bitter as a result. I take on a flavor that is anything less than top shelf, more Maddog 20/20, not a wine for special occasions, not 100 dollar a bottle, not your 5 star restaurant wine.

I'm Gona Overturn You

So the Lord says, "Because I love you too much to leave you in the dregs and let your life become a drag, I'm going to overturn it regularly.":

- Job Stress
- School Stress
- Health problems
- Ministry Struggles
- Some disappointment in Life
- Spiritual warfare

Poor Me – Pour Me / Lose Dregs – Lose / Fine Wine – Pure wine

And finally, after being poured from vessel to vessel each time I get comfortable, instead of, "Poor me," I hear myself saying, "Pour me, Lord. Pour me," as I begin to learn that it is a process that produces in me a joy

unspeakable and full of glory. It is a process that matures, deepens, and purifies me; a process that keeps me from becoming polluted and defiled by the dregs of my own complacency.

Some Say Whoopee – Other Woe is Me / Trust – Can't trust

Why, when they go through the twists and turns and “pourings” of life, do some people say, “Whoopee!” while others say, “Woe is me”? I believe it all has to do with trust. Regardless of the dips and turns in the career, the family, the sports field, or the classroom, one person says, “Although my stomach’s a bit queasy, I trust that God knows what He’s doing perfectly.” Yet other persons—even though he may know God’s in control theoretically—says, “This is it. It’s all over. I’m doomed. I’m going to crash.” Because of his basic fear that God cannot be trusted in the pouring process, that His timing is wrong, that His pouring is too severe.

Red Sea / After - Before

Remember in the Book of Exodus....With the Egyptians barreling down upon them, they would have stoned Moses had God not parted the Red Sea. And when they had crossed over to the other side, Miriam grabbed a tambourine and led the children of Israel in a song of praise. “Our Lord has done gloriously. Horse and rider He has thrown into the sea.” As fitting as their praise was, how much better it would have been had the Israelites grabbed the tambourine before the water parted, saying, “

(Exodus 15:20 NKJV) Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took the timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.

(Exodus 15:21 NKJV) And Miriam answered them: "Sing to the LORD, For He has triumphed gloriously! The horse and its rider He has thrown into the sea!"

Learning Lord I Trust You

There are those of us who shake the tambourine when the Red Sea parts—but not until. Others of us are learning to sing praise before the Red Sea parts, to say, “Lord, I trust You.”

Trust Him – Communion / I am Committed to You – This Blood is For You

Precious people, we can trust God to purify the wine within us because of the cup of wine on the table of Communion. You see, in saying, “This is My blood shed for you,” Jesus is saying, “I’m deadly serious about My commitment to you. I’m totally and completely in love with you. I only want the best for you. And I prove it absolutely with the wine of My blood before you.”

Let Him Have Way with You

Allow the Lord to have His way in your life. The pouring process He puts you through, the seemingly wild ride He takes you on won’t cause you to crash. Oh, it might be a bit interesting from time to time—but rather than wiping you out, it will fill you up with the wine of great, great joy.

Exciting Life

Do you want a life that is full of joy, then walk with Him, even when times get tough, trust that He knows what He is doing. He wants to do a miracle in your life.

Look at John

Look at John, he writes because He knows. It is most likely that John wrote this after he was released from Patmos, this may be his last writing. Look what he experienced, yet he still writes that we can have fullness of joy:

- Boiled in oil.
- 14 years exiled on Patmos.
- Yet he saw the Revelation of Jesus

Go back to Cross

Anytime you wonder what God is doing in your life, go back to the Cross and from there you can clearly see, and know that He is doing what He considers best for your life. I have come that they may have life, and that more abundant, I have come so that their joy may be full.

John 2:11-25

John 2:11 This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.

John 2:12 After this He went down to Capernaum, He, His mother, His brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days.

John 2:13 Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

First Passover / 30AD

The year of this event it would be thirty AD March or April because this is the first of three Passovers and Jesus will be crucified in thirty two AD in the month of March or April in our calendar known as Nisan in the Jewish calendar.

Imagine the After Miracle walk to Passover Feast

Who is with Jesus? Verse 12 tells us his disciples, his brothers, his mother, all who are with him in Cana of Galilee for the wedding. This is who is with Jesus and no doubt after the wedding feast and great miracle you imagine they must go, "Wow, what a miracle." He turned water into wine. This is their first trip to Jerusalem with Jesus after his coming into the public ministry. They understand he's the Lamb of God, as the John the Baptist had told them that but they surely haven't figured the whole thing out yet at this point, but they think miracle, the wonder worker, He is so kind and so sweet to step in and blessed in this wedding. No doubt they have this wonderful trip to Jerusalem as they would journey together from Cana and just enjoying the fellowship and the great high time that they had at the wedding and the thing that Jesus did. Everybody was always in a celebratory attitude as they went to the Feast of Passover. This is their vacation. This is the time of the year they forward to. This is the time they're just going to have family and friends. They were going to eat and they were going to laugh and they were going to enjoy the life that they had for that 7 days. Estimates are that over 2 million pilgrims will be making their way to Jerusalem; the roads will be packed, hearts will be lifted, it was a time of celebration and joy.

Didn't Expect a Confrontation / We can Deceive Ourselves to think it Doesn't Happen

Now here they come. This isn't what they were expecting. They didn't expect the confrontation. They didn't expect Jesus to start turning over tables. Jesus didn't tell them on the way down, "We try to get there. I'm going to take care of some business." They had no idea and this was part of the deal, "I didn't know this was coming hanging out with Jesus. I just thought it was going to be all good times. I thought it was going to be all lighthearted. I thought we were going to laugh, eat and just drink together and tell jokes and just to have a good time." They had no idea this was coming. Can you imagine their nerves? Can you imagine what they must have been thinking and seeing as they see this happening? Here's the point. We can get like that. We can think that this Christian life is non-confrontational. But it is anything but, and our passage today is a reminder of that. We can see that there's confrontation that's going to happen as a Christian and there's a place where we can't be passive and there's a place where this is not in accordance with God's word and will, and I will speak.

Sometimes Judgment Needed to Keep Joy

And before this chapter is over, we will see that joy and judgment go together; sometimes God has to judge, upset, confront, and drive out before there can be joy. For there are certain things that will rob and quench joy, and God says they have got to go, else you will never experience joy. In our last study we saw that wine was a symbol/picture of joy. We saw that there is only one place where man can find fullness of joy, and that is in the presence of God. This gospel account we hold in our hands was written so that we might have "zoe" life, which is abundant, absolute, a God life, that is beyond this life we live on this earth.

Psalm 16:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

John 15:5 (NKJV) ⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

John 2:13 Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

John 2:14 And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business.

Always Go Up to Jerusalem

You always go up to Jerusalem. Everywhere in the scriptures always reads that you go up to Jerusalem, even if you were already at a higher physical elevation, even if you were heading south, it always says that you go up. Jerusalem is the picture of the place of meeting with God, and thus you always go up. Maybe your week hasn't been up, been somewhat of a downer, then head up to Jerusalem, head up to the place where you meet God, and spend time on that mount, and you will find your heart being lifted up.

4 Courtyards

Now here is the layout of the Temple for orientation of what is going on here. In front of the temple were four courtyards separated by four doors leading from one to the other. The first courtyard, the court of the Gentiles, was accessible to everyone. Men and women, Jews and Gentiles could all enter the court of the Gentiles. Beyond the court of the Gentiles was the court of the Israelites. Gentiles were barred from this court upon penalty of death. The third courtyard was the court of men. Jewish males were the only ones allowed access to this court. Finally, adjoining the temple itself was the court of priests, where only priests were allowed admittance. Beyond the court of the priests was the Holy of Holies, where the High Priest entered once a year to make atonement for the nation of Israel, it is/was where the Glory of God dwelt in the Temple. In the court of Gentiles, is where the oxen, sheep, and doves were sold.

Purchase & Exchange started off a Good Thing

Verse 14. This started off as a good thing. This started off as a good thing, the ability to exchange your currency, the ability to purchase a lamb for the sacrifice. The Passover was 1 of 3 Jewish feasts that every male over the age of 18 was required to attend. Josephus, the historian, by his accounts it tells us that there was probably about close to a quarter of a million lambs that were slain each year during the Passover. Just to equate that when you have a Passover lamb for a family, you're talking there's an easy 2 million people in Jerusalem at this time. Many of them have traveled dozens of miles, some hundreds of miles, to come and celebrate the Passover. You can imagine to bring a lamb from your own home to this region and herd a lamb 100 miles or 200 miles that would be quite the burden. Along with the sacrifice that could be purchased, it could only be purchased with a temple coin, and that temple coin that would be used for currency or to pay the temple tax for that year, that temple coin could not be the Roman coin because it had the face of Ceasar on it, and that would be considered blasphemous to use in the Temple. It was only the Jewish coin and so these are convenience things that people could come and have a currency exchange. They could come and purchase a lamb so it started off as a good thing, but then it became corrupted.

We should Beware we Don't do the Same.

I think there's a great lessons there to look at. Maybe not that it always will end up being corrupted but just there's so many things that we can do in the church and in Christianity that starts off good but then a bureaucracy then a layering of sophistication happens, and the whole point of it is no longer of value. It is no longer a blessing to the church and to the people. The Church and Christians should always be doing an evaluation of the things they are doing, because they can become a ritual that has lost the heart of God. In times past we have been part of ministries that meet the need of people (feeding, clothing), and always after our involvement for some time we get asked to pick up a day to serve the meal, or take over the clothing sorting and storing, and each time I respectfully decline. You know why, because our focus is to preach the Gospel, and minister spiritual needs. I have lost track of how many churches start off with a spiritual focus, but then become absorbed with the physical, that they no longer offer any spiritual manna to the person but just physical bread. The person goes away warmed and filled, but their life never changes because no one ministered spiritually to them.

John 2:15 When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables.

Word of Warning / Jesus makes Whip – His Emotions are Undercontrol

A word of warning to any who thinks that Jesus is weak. Jesus makes whip. Do you know how long that would take? Jesus is under control, emotions are not controlling Him.

Jesus moves with Power & Authority

In verse 15 we see the power of Jesus and let it be known and may the point be made, Jesus is no wimp. He goes he overturns tables, walking amongst the temple precinct as he willed and no one confronted him physically. No one grabbed him. No one laid hands on him. No one tried to wrestle him physically. They would confront with words, but they would not confront with a physical touch. Jesus is moving through this event with power and authority. When they will come to him to confront him, they will not say, "Why did you do this?" They'll ask, "Under what authority did you do this?" They know they're guilty. They know they're wrong and I believe the Holy Spirit is moving and working upon the people and we already know the Spirit of the Lord is upon Jesus as Jesus himself said, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me."

Luke 4:18–19 (NKJV) ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

Don't Mistake His Meekness for Weakness

Let it be known make no mistake. Do not mistake Jesus' meekness for weakness. Jesus was more than a man's man. Jesus is the man and every man should try purpose in their heart to become a man like Jesus.

Problem Today of Christians being so Passive – Becomes Weakness / Weakness won't change World

Christian, have we become too passive in this political correct world? We are not to be so passive that we are weak and I think that's a problem that can be happening in Christianity today that Christian so wants to get along with people, that Christian so does not want to get in confrontations with people, that the Christian has become passive and the Christian doesn't stand up for what is black and what is white, what is wrong and what is right. They think, "I'll just be passive and hope for a better opportunity and for a better day to present and try to convince that God's ways are the right ways." There's a place where Christians become so passive. They're weak and the weakness will never change the world and the society around us.

Isaiah 5:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

John 2:16 And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!"

John 2:17 Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up."

Did not Harm a Dove

Did not even harm a dove. Jesus took nothing away from anyone, everyone left with what they came with, maybe some had to pick their money off the ground, but it was all still there nonetheless.

You can Have Zeal without Screaming

You can have zeal, have passion, speak with boldness, move with power, without having to be different than you are right at this very moment. You don't have to scream and get red-faced to have zeal for the things of the Lord.

Jesus moved methodically with Control / Not Man Out of Control – but Man with a Purpose

The movies always portray this as Jesus yelling and screaming, running and darting, and maybe that is (we will find out when we watch the re-run in heaven during the 7 year Marriage Supper of the Lamb. I believe Jesus moved slowly, purposely, engaging eyes as He moved and acted, and that made it even more powerful. Because it wasn't a man out-of-control, but a man with a purpose, a man with boldness, and people knew this wasn't some high emotional out-of-control man, but a man with pure power, and such power they were afraid to physically respond to Him.

The Message

I like the message translation:

***John 2:13–17 (The Message)** ¹³ When the Passover Feast, celebrated each spring by the Jews, was about to take place, Jesus traveled up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ He found the Temple teeming with people selling cattle and sheep and doves. The loan sharks were also there in full strength. ¹⁵ Jesus put together a whip out of strips of leather and chased them out of the Temple, stampeding the sheep and cattle, upending the tables of the loan sharks, spilling coins left and right. ¹⁶ He told the dove merchants, “Get your things out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a shopping mall!” ¹⁷ That’s when his disciples remembered the Scripture, “Zeal for your house consumes me.”*

Court of Gentiles – Place to Meet with the Lord / Who can be Spiritual after Ripped Off

This market place where Jesus comes in to this is the court of the gentiles. This is where these tables would have set up it would have been in a court of the gentiles, this is the place where people could come and meet with the true and living God. Here we see they’ve turned it in to a market place they’ve taken away from people come in to just fellowship with the Lord there was an historical writings that said that the price of the lamb was fifteen times higher in the market in this place where Jesus is and then a price of a lamb would be outside. The Rabbi’s or the Jewish religious leaders would say it because they were a spotless lamb, but we know that’s not so we know they were marketing it up to rip people off. There was also an exorbitant exchange rate and they were ripping people off so they’re ripping them off charging fifteen times the going price for a lamb and then they were ripping them off by charging an exorbitant exchange rate because you could only buy the lamb with Jewish coinage this is why Jesus is getting fired up. People who come and to meet with the Lord this is a place where people are coming to have a time of fellowship with the Lord, a time to celebrate with the Lord and yet who wants to be spiritual, who wants to whosoever in a good mood after you get ripped off, after someone takes advantage of you. It’s hard to get taken advantage of, it’s hard to get ripped off and walk away and just laugh it off.

Churches making Business Models / Not Servant Models / We Sensitive about the Money Thing Here

So many churches they want to make a business model out of the church and therefore church has become about money and numbers because numbers are people and people equate the numbers and they build this whole business model off of it, they don’t build it off as a servant model but a business model. I’ve been approached in outreach so many times about how to brand this church, how to market this church and I say no thanks. We’re very sensitive about the commercialization of the church also that’s why we don’t our personal preference we don’t pass them off frankly. We don’t want money in any way to be a distraction to people thinking that the church is in it for the money. We want them to just come freely sit, if they feel lead of the Lord to give they’ll find out how we give here in this church. The Lord is passionate about you. He’s passionate about meeting with you and he’s passionate about doing a work in you.

God Angry when people Distracted from Seeing Him / God wants to Meet with you Right Now/Here

Here these people are coming and they’re getting ripped off and they’re not going to be able to enter in to the things of the Lord and enjoy him because they are being ripped off. Christian look and see this, see the passion in the zeal of the Lord because he’s passionate about meeting with you. He has a zeal about wanting to meet with you. He’s going to get upset on anybody, anything that gets in the way of you and Him meeting and he placed that here in this passage scripture and he wants to meet with you right now, right where you’re at. Right now at this moment he wants to meet with you. He wants to have a time with you.

How Could these Leaders Do That? / But are we Guilty of the Same Here?

We can read this and we can look at these religious leaders and say, how could you? How about us closer to home? Can we do that here today? Sundays when they come? Can we come here and cause people to miss the Lord, to be distracted from the Lord? I think it’s something for everyone to consider, when I come here or my actions in any way distracting somebody from meeting with the Lord the way you greet them or the lack of greeting. The way you move in the sanctuary and the way you don’t move in the sanctuary. The way you look at people or not look at people. This is holy ground, God wants this place prepared to be holy ground because he wants to come and meet with people that’s why he put he sets a high emphasis on ordering our service. He don’t want at the service to be filled with distractions we asked people to stay if you have to go to the bathroom I understand that but please just sit out in the conversation area and watch the rest of the service online on the television. Because you know what happens when you come back into the sanctuary everybody is looking at you and no one is hearing what the word of the Lord is saying. It’s not me because the word of the Lord is going out.

We start talking during the service to the person next to you? People are going to lean what they're talking about? Can we do that? See God's passionate about preparing a place that people come and meet with him.

Temple is Brick / How much Zealous for You is He?

See, this Temple is made of brick, and if He would have such zeal for that, how zealous he is for us. The scriptures are clear that you are the temple of the living God and the spirit of God lives in you but hear this your body is not your own the scripture say. The spirit of God is not going to dwell in the place that is unfit, that is unprepared. Here's an interesting thing and that is the Passover it was a one day celebration, but the Feast of Unleavened Bread was a one whole long week celebration and was one day after Passover. What would happen the Feast Unleavened Bread? Leavened being a symbol and a picture of sin throughout the scripture during the feast of unleavened bread the father of the house the leader of the house was to go through the whole house and they were to sweep out all the leavened in the house. It was a picture of sin and suppose to clear that out and it's interesting while people are home that week this time at this time cleaning out the leavened from their house from that's where they used to cook and bake their own bread. They were sweeping it out Jesus is down in the temple sweeping out the leavened. He's taking care of the Father's house, he's the head of the house and he's readying the house for the Passover. Jesus was passionate about people being distracted when they came to meet with him in the temple and hence His zeal. God wants us to clear out of our lives, anything and all things, that distract us and keep us from the intimacy with Him. Here we see the tying of Joy and Judgment together. Sometimes, only a cleansing (maybe coming in the form of judgment from the Lord) can restore us to the place of Joy, for in His presence is fullness of Joy (Psalm 16:11), and these things can quench that Spirit and rob the joy.

1 Peter 1:13–16 (NKJV) ¹³ Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; ¹⁴ as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; ¹⁵ but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

1 Corinthians 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? ¹⁷ If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Jesus will Make a Chord in Your Life

Jesus will make a chord in your life sometimes to drive these things out, to turn some things over, to pour us from vessel to vessel (last week's study on wine), because he wants intimacy with us, He wants the best for us, he wants to turn us into that sparkling and pure wine.

Revelation 3:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.

Hebrews 12:5–11 (NKJV) ⁵ And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; ⁶ For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives." ⁷ If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten? ⁸ But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons. ⁹ Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live? ¹⁰ For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness. ¹¹ Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

2nd Cleansing – the Lame and the Blind Came

Jesus will cleanse the temple again in 3 years, and here an amazing thing as we would read the second cleansing his last Passover, in Matthew 21 it says, that after he drove out the money changers that time the lame came to him and the blind came to him. They came to meet him in the temple and were ministered to him, they're in the temple and we see a picture there, when we're filled with these type of things it can be distractions, these things it can be unleavened. These things they could be materialistically when we're filled with ourselves people don't come but when we empty ourselves and cleanse our self, prepare our self and the Holy Spirit comes makes his place there amongst us and moves amongst us and it's amazing and people start coming to us to see the Lord.

Matthew 21:12–14 (NKJV) ¹² Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. ¹³ And He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you have made it a 'den of thieves.'" ¹⁴ Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.

Will do it Again in 3 Years

Verse 17. Jesus will do this again in 3 years, the final Passover that he will celebrate. He'll do it again in 3 years. Obviously, it means that they came back. The question is how soon was it before they return again. I would say much probably a day, especially if there were 2 million people in town. They weren't going to miss their opportunity and we can be appalled by that.

How Long Until the Returned / How About Us – How Long until we Return / Expects us to Listen

God Himself comes, gives them opportunity and yet they would return so shortly and just repeat it again. That's to look at my own life and say, "How many times does the Lord said to me that thing in your life has got to go?" Remove it from your life. It's hurting you. It's robbing you. It's diminishing your relationship with me. How often I kick it out only to let it back into my life again. God expects us to listen to him. When he says it goes, he means for it to go. When he flipped the table and says, "Get out," he meant for them to get out and to stay out. The grace allowed them to come back and continue, but God's word was God's word and he meant for them to go and that's what he does to us. He means for it to go. Will we obey him when he says, "That thing has got to go. Clear out my house because it's my house. Your body is my temple."

Can't Approach Casually / But Much Fasting and Prayer

I refer you back to last week's study, and that is that these kinds do not come out with much fasting and prayer. We need to be a people of fasting and prayer if we are going to drive out these things in our lives, we can't approach them casually and think they will be gone from our lives. Fasting doesn't have to be some 3 day thing. It could just be one meal. The point of fasting, is to slow down. I am going "too" fast, I am going "to" fast. Fasting slows us down, separates us from the daily routine, and it brings us into a singular focus, and that is the Lord.

Matthew 17:14–21 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And when they had come to the multitude, a man came to Him, kneeling down to Him and saying, ¹⁵ "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is an epileptic and suffers severely; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. ¹⁶ So I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him." ¹⁷ Then Jesus answered and said, "O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him here to Me." ¹⁸ And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him; and the child was cured from that very hour. ¹⁹ Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said, "Why could we not cast it out?" ²⁰ So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. ²¹ However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

John 2:18 So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?"

Not Challenge Why – But What Authority

In verse 18 people back down. They had a temple guard. The temple guard, we'll read about the Acts 5 Peter and the Apostles they were thrown in prison by the temple guard. There's Roman guards that oversaw the temple pre sink and Acts 21 they grab Paul and there was an uprising no one would move against Jesus and that's interesting. No one challenge him and said why are you doing these things? Because they know he's doing it because they're wrong, they know they're de-fouling the temple. They know what they're doing is not right. They asked under whose authority? Who sent you?

Authority

Speaking of Acts 5, Peter and he say he's got the words life, speak the words of life we have the words of life and that's just power in our life that we have words of life that can change people's lives. When we tie these back to our message last week Jesus was ready for this. Jesus spent forty days in the wilderness. Jesus was as we read rose early in the morning to meet with the Father. Jesus was a man of fasting and prayer, Jesus was ready. Jesus said, without much fasting and prayer, these types do not come out and here we see the picture when you're ready you're ready.

Acts 5:17–21 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Then the high priest rose up, and all those who were with him (which is the sect of the Sadducees), and they were filled with indignation, ¹⁸ and laid their hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison. ¹⁹ But at night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said, ²⁰ "Go, stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this life." ²¹ And when they heard that, they entered the temple early in the morning and taught. But the high priest and those with him came and called the council together, with all the elders of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought.

Need to be Ready to Turn over Tables

You'll never know when you're going to have to turn over tables, and you know what? I don't think you'll never know you should be turning over tables if you're not a person that's ready. I think things can happen around us and we just let it go, it kind of just goes over us so we're just not ready, we're just not willing to engage, because we weren't filled with the spirit, we weren't in prayer, we weren't fasting and therefore we're not ready. Speaking of that lamb that they would purchase Bethlehem was known as the lamb power, and that's where Passover lambs would be raised.

Only 1 Sign – the Resurrection

Verse 18. People asked for a sign and Jesus is only going to give 1 sign, his death and resurrection, for that 1 sign speaks for it all. Lots of people are looking for signs today and God is not going to be the genie in the bottle and He's not going to be responding to man to put on a circus show. He gives 1 sign and that sign was His son. His blood, it went to the cross and that was given for us and poured out for us and that's the only sign that we need.

John 2:19 Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

John 2:20 Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"

John 2:21 But He was speaking of the temple of His body.

An Accusation Against Jesus at Mock Trial

Verse 21. This will be an accusation that they will call up and use against Jesus in his mock trial. They'll say that he was plotting to destroy the temple. They will mock Him with these words while He is on the cross.

Matthew 26:61 (NKJV) ⁶¹ and said, "This fellow said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and to build it in three days.' "

Matthew 27:39–40 (NKJV) ³⁹ And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads ⁴⁰ and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build it in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross."

How God speaks Spiritual – Man thinks Physical

How often God speaks something spiritual but man confuses it with the physical, missing the whole point. But how often God uses the physical things to reveal a spiritual thing. How often He will use an uncomfortable moment to reveal the heart of man, to a man, and how He is calling for change.

64 Years to Build / A Whole Lifetime

In verse 20 they say they have been working on this temple for 46 years. History books will tell us it will take them another 19 years to finish the temple. That's 65 years to rebuild the temple from the time it was destroyed to the time that they first began to rebuild the temple. It would take 65 total years to rebuild the temple. I find that significant and that 65 years takeaway the early childhood and takeaway the latter years of the golden years. 65 years is a whole lifetime. It was a whole lifetime that was spent to rebuild a temple, but the presence of God never was a part of. The presence of God never came and dwelt in again. The temple would be finished around sixty seven AD and historians history tells us around sixty eight AD is when the Jewish revolt begins and around seventy and seventy AD is when Titus and the Roman legion comes and destroys Jerusalem and the temple. They had like one year to enjoy the temple. They spent all those years sixty five years building the temple and they got to enjoy it for one year, that's going to be so much like the world and religion you can spend all those time, invest all those in into it and then only enjoy it for a short time because it's bound to crumble and it will crumble.

Spirit Departed Long Ago

We are told in the Old Testament that the Spirit of the Lord had departed from the temple long ago because people were coming and people were just playing religion in the temple. They were no longer coming ... At least the religious leaders were no longer coming for relationship that turned it into a religion and, as we have read, they turned it into a business; a whole lifetime a building only to be destroyed.

Ezekiel 10:18–19 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Then the glory of the LORD departed from the threshold of the temple and stood over the cherubim. ¹⁹ And the cherubim lifted their wings and mounted up from the earth in my sight. When they went out, the wheels were beside them; and they stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD's house, and the glory of the God of Israel was above them.

John 2:22 Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.

John 2:23 Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did.

First of 3 Passovers

Verse 23. This is Jesus' first Passover. He will have 3 Passovers that he celebrates. This is Passover number 1. Jesus knows the prophecy. He knows the day. He knows the time that he will be crucified and the year because he knows Daniel chapter 9 because he wrote Daniel chapter 9. Jesus is on the countdown no doubt, "This is my first Passover of 3, 2 to go until I become the Passover lamb that I will become the final lamb that will take away the sins of the world."

So Looked Forward to this Final Passover

Jesus was so looking forward to the communion as he had the last supper in the third Passover. He says, "I still look forward to this time and I'll be looking forward to the time where we'll break bread again and commune again. I won't drink of the vine until we are one together again." Speaking of heaven reminds me of Hebrews chapter 11, "For the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despising the shame, and now seated at the right hand of the Father." The Lord is looking forward to a communion with us in heaven, a final Passover, if you would, where we all celebrate together.

Luke 22:14–18 (NKJV) ¹⁴ When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. ¹⁵ Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; ¹⁶ for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." ¹⁷ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; ¹⁸ for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

John 2:24 But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men,

John 2:25 and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.

3 Groups

We will see three groups in and throughout this gospel account (and the others too):

- Multitudes – as anyone can be in a crowd
- Followers – as anyone can be a hanger-on
- Disciples – the ones who will follow Him, with the purpose of becoming like Him, even at great costs. Disciple means "learner". A disciple of Jesus is always learning of/about Jesus. I commend you for being a person who is continually learner of/about Jesus.

Jesus did not Commit Himself to Them

Verse 25. It says many of these people believe, but Jesus didn't believe in them. He knew they were just following for the miracle and you could be sure that some of these very people who believe in him and saw his miracle were the very ones that 3 years later were back there in Jerusalem at the same Passover, 3 years the final Passover, and they were the ones who screamed, "Crucify, crucify," because the only miracle, the greatest miracle and the place that faith is developed is on the word of God. Romans 10:17 says, "Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God."

Romans 10:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

John 3 – See Faith Based on the Word

They're just looking for what they can get out of God not what they can be with God and make together with him. In John 3 though we'll see the faith of Jesus does committing self to as we look in at Nicodemus at Night. We see a faith that's based on the word of God.

End of Study

Chapter 3

John 3:1-21

John 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

John 3:2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.”

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

Written so we Might Believe / Have Zoe Life

We have come to chapter 3 in our verse-by-verse study of the Gospel of John. The book is written so that we might believe that Jesus, and by believing we will have Zoe (abundant, absolute, God Life, a life more than this life).

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

3 Must

In our chapter today we will read of “3 Musts”, and in those “3 Musts” we will see man’s needs, God’s provision, and man’s response:

John 3:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’

John 3:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

John 3:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ He must increase, but I must decrease.

Born-Again / 77% Christians – 42% Born-Again

And so right from the start there is a word that many people get uncomfortable with (Born Again), they think fanatical, they think radical, they think strange, they think extreme, but unfortunately for many they don’t think “MUST”. In a recent Gallup Survey, 77% of Americans identify themselves as Christians, but only 42% identify themselves as “born-again”. Jesus would say, and I quote, “You must be born again”. There is no other Christian, except a born-again Christian, you cannot be a Christian unless you are born again, for Jesus Himself says.....you must be born again. That is man’s need, and there is only one way to be born-again, and that is by Jesus being lifted up on the cross. And man’s response, non-optional (just as being born-again is non-optional, and only by Jesus on the cross can a person be born-again), man’s response is non-optional, He (Jesus) must increase, and we must decrease.

John 3:7 Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’

Let get into the Word, and let the Word speak to us what it means to be “born again”.

John 2:23 Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did.

John 2:24 But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men,

John 2:25 and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.

John 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

There was a Man / Contrast with Many Believed because Miracles / Separate from the Crowd

A contrast being made here in that as we ended chapter 2 there were men that believed when they saw the miracles, but Jesus did not believe in them. The word for believed in verse 23, is the same word for commit in verse 24. So you have this contrast that many believed Jesus because of the miracles He did, but Jesus didn’t believe in them because He saw they only followed because what they saw and could get from Jesus, but then there was a man.....verse 1. Here is a man that is separate from the crowd, here is a man who is seeking Jesus to know Him more, to understand Him more. This man, Nicodemus, comes to Jesus to seek Him, not His stuff, and as we will as we study Nicodemus, this man, he will believe, he will follow, he will become a disciple of Jesus not because of signs and wonder, but because the Word of God, will be spoken to him from the mouth of

God, and his faith will come by hearing, and his hearing by the Word of God. When you faith comes by hearing, you may at times be shaken, but you will not be moved. You will come and stand on His Word, and therefore you will stand on the solid rock, the sure foundation.

Romans 10:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Many follow for What they can Get / Then Something Happens – Feel Got Let them Down / Quit

There are many people who follow Jesus for what they can get from Him, and they are happy to follow as long as they are getting. But, for so many, something happens, a tragic event, an economic hardship, a relationship ends, an illness comes, and they feel that God has let them down, that God has not performed as he should, and they turn from Him. Sometimes they turn in pain, sometimes in anger, sometimes in disappointment, but in any of those cases they turn and say I quit on you, because I feel you quit on me.

When Faced with what I Don't Understand – Go Back to What I Do / World or People Failed Me

When I am faced with the things I do not understand, I go back to what I do, and that is that this Word say that God loves me, so much so that He gave His only begotten Son for me. And I can't fully grasp all of that to be honest, God loves me a sinner, but I know His word is true, and I stand on it. And, when hard times come, I can see in this Word, that this world is fallen because of sin, and bad things happen in a fallen world. He hasn't failed me, this world has failed me, that person has failed me, but He never fails me..... all the way to the cross, He didn't miss a step, He did not turn to the left or the right, but stepped out of heaven, into this fallen world, walked 33 years in perfection, then picked up my cross, and walked to the hill called Calvary with my cross on His back, and His last step ended with nails through His feet, so my sin could be nailed to that cross. But then on the 3rd day, He walked out of that grave, and shortly thereafter walked back into heaven, and now is seated, rests in the finished work, and lives to intercede for me. God has not failed you, nor ever will, and His love for you never fails, nor gives up. You can be sure of that because this Word says so. Love never fails, and God is Love, therefore neither God nor His love can, or will, ever fail you.

Romans 8:31–39 (NKJV) ³¹ What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? ³³ Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." ³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Corinthians 13:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.

1 John 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

John 3:2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

Overview of Nicodemus

Three words come to mind in describing Nicodemus: religious, rich, and ruler. As a Pharisee, Nicodemus was extremely religious. We know this because the entire Pharisaical brotherhood, numbering six thousand, was dedicated to keeping the most minute regulations of the Old Testament law, as delineated by their fellow brotherhood, the scribes. It was the scribes' job to interpret the law and the Pharisees' job to implement it. As for riches, we know Nicodemus was wealthy because in John 19, we read it was he who brought costly myrrh and aloes to the tomb of Jesus. Thus, it is not surprising to read that Jewish tradition names him as one of the three wealthiest men in the nation of Israel. Furthermore, the fact that Nicodemus is identified as a "ruler of the Jews" means he was a member of the elite seventy-member Jewish Supreme Court, the Sanhedrin—a position that would have guaranteed him the highest regard and respect.

The Pharisees – Started out Good / Zealous for the Lord / But started to Fill in the Grey Areas

Nicodemus was a Pharisee. The Pharisees started out good and how often that can be? Things that start so well then all of a sudden they become corrupted or ritualized and then they lose what their intent was. The Pharisees came out of the Maccabean Revolt (about 160 BC) as a group of people who were zealous for the Lord and says, “Let’s live life according to God’s Word. Let’s take his promises and believe that they are true and actually go and live them. Let’s see what the Lord would do by living in that bold faith.” They started and they lived like that and God honored it, but then over time they started to want to fill in the blanks of the gray area. This is what God’s Word says, but it’s not totally clear if we should do this or do that and so they started filling in the blanks with a bunch of rules and regulations.

Rules & Regulations Turned into Bondage / No Longer Living in Spirit

Then they started to lay those rules and regulations on the people and it just turned into a place where people were no longer living freely by the Spirit of God, but they were in this bondage of fear and worry about failing the Word of God. God writes his Word and He writes it very clearly to us. The do’s and the don’ts are clear, but there’s a reason that all the blanks aren’t filled in, the gray areas aren’t exactly filled in because God wants us to take the Word, believe the Word, apply the Word, but let the Holy Spirit have a way with us and let the Holy Spirit fill in the gray areas, let the Holy Spirit speak to us, to keep the Word as a relationship with Him, not a rulebook with Him.

Flee Youthful Lust / Seek Spirit for the Details

The Word flee youthful lust (2 Timothy 2:22), I think that’s pretty clear. Stay away from the things of lust. Young men, even if you’re older, don’t get engaged in fornication and adultery and drunkenness and those things. I can think of my friend and it was the beginning of the internet. We actually had to take epoxy and fill in his modem jack of his computer. This was before the days of Wi-Fi. We filled in the modem jack of his computer so that he couldn’t cruise the internet anymore because he became addicted to it, the adult content. It was just consuming his life and that’s what we had to do, but imagine if that’s what the Word of God would say in a ridiculous way making His point flee youthful lust, put epoxy in your modem jack. That might apply and protect this man, this friend of mine, but you know what it would do? It would totally prevent and take away from my other friend, lots of friends, global media outreach, who use the internet to further the Gospel. They aren’t bound and addicted and wrapped into the lust of the internet and they are able to go out and preach Christ on the internet, have a website that people come and these people answer the Gospel and tell them how to be free and to live life. Imagine if the gray area says fill in the modem jack, then that would totally be wiped out. God makes his Word clear, but He writes it in such a way that it’s clear what to do and what not to do but then seek the Holy Spirit for details.

2 Timothy 2:22 (NKJV) ²² Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Pharisees Lost the Seeking of Spirit / Nicodemus saw Something in Jesus

The Pharisees lost that and here we have their story and one of their men, Nicodemus, knew there was more. There was something about Jesus that drew Nicodemus to Him. We can see two events that have just happened, turning water into wine and the turning over of tables. The miracle of turning water into wine would speak for itself, but I believe more so for Nicodemus as a Pharisee, as a religious leader, it was the turning of tables. There was something to be saw in Jesus more than a sign, he saw its holiness, he saw the zeal of Jesus for my Father’s house shall not be a den of thieves.

I Appreciate when I See Holiness

I appreciate that in my life when I see holiness. I’m glad that God moves me around and puts me in different positions and places that I can see other people, other ministries and be in contact with other people. I remember going to the Ukraine and just feeling- I was young in the Lord three or four years in the Lord, feeling like I was really being used by the Lord and I had a lot of things going my way in terms of walking with the Lord. I had forsaken those big sins and I was zealous for serving the Lord and the evangelism, all things you would think and say, “Oh wow that’s mighty.” I remember sitting with a missionary in the Ukraine and after sitting with him for about 15 minutes, my heart just became gripped because I said to myself, “I’m sitting in the presence of a man who knows Jesus in a way that is way beyond anything that I do and I experienced.” His holiness even made me nervous because I was afraid that he was going to stop in the middle of our conversation and say, “The Lord has spoken to me and there’s a sin and there are sins in your life, that though you’re hiding them from men, you think

you got it covered, God sees it.” I literally worried about that as I sat with him but of course I couldn’t move from him because I so enjoyed sitting in the presence and hearing him speak and talk. There was something so different about him that he made me want to become like him. He made me want to seek and attain that same level of holiness. That’s what I believe is happening here with Nicodemus.

Nicodemus saw Something in Jesus / Nicodemus Knew the Tables needed Turned Over

He saw something in Jesus turning over the tables and Nicodemus said to himself, “I knew deep in my heart all along that this was wrong and I went along with it. I played part of the crowd and I didn’t want to turn and say ‘no, this is wrong.’ I went along with the 70 others, but all along in my heart I just felt that this was wrong. Something wasn’t right about marketing God and marketing the temple and ripping the people off no matter how I could justify and we justified it. I knew it was wrong. When Jesus came through and did what he did, I knew immediately that’s what needed to be done. I should’ve been the one that did it. Why does He do what He does and why couldn’t I do what He did? Surely there’s a difference between us and was it is?” Nicodemus comes to Jesus at night. He’s drawn to Jesus for His holiness, His power and His might. Now, Jesus is going to reveal that to him and make it an invitation to receive it onto himself.

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

John 3:4 Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”

John 3:5 Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

John 3:7 Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’

George Whitfield

The great preacher George Whitfield’s central message was “you must be born again”. Whitfield was used of the Lord during the American and British Revival known as the “Great Awakening”. It was 1730-1740. Whitfield led hundreds of thousands to the Lord. He is still known as one of the greatest open air preachers ever placed on earth by the Lord, and would preach to 10’s of thousands at a time (with no voice amplification). Benjamin Franklin heard of his great booming voice as word of Whitfield traveled across the ocean and America, but he thought it fanciful embellishment. But when Whitfield preached in Philadelphia, Franklin came to hear him preach, and was amazed. Franklin, who was obviously a great engineer, walked outwardly from where Whitfield was preaching, and continued until he could hear no more, and calculated that Whitfield could be heard by over 30,000 people at a time. Whitfield preached over 18,000 sermons, wow! Whitfield continually preached “you must be born again”, and when asked why do you always preach that you must be born again, to which Whitfield replied, I always preach you must be born again, because..... You must be born again!

Must be Born Again – It is not Optional

Must be born again, not optional, it is a necessity of the spiritual birth to be born again.

Not Rehabilitation – but Regeneration

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not about reformation or rehabilitation, but about regeneration. Not trying to rehab the old man, but to make a completely new man, as new as a new born baby. In a few verses Jesus will tell Nicodemus how he can be born again, but right now Jesus is establishing the point to Nicodemus and us today, it is not about fixing up the old man, but creating a completely new man.

Nicodemus a Picture of America

And look at who Jesus is talking to, and America should think upon this deeply, especially those in the statistic of 77% profess to be Christians, but only 44% say they are born again, there is a 30% delta there, and those 30% should take serious note. Look at who Jesus is talking to, a religious person, a man who read the scriptures, a man who taught the scriptures, a man who went to religious assembly (the Temple), a man who was a descendant of Abraham, a man who was practicing and keeping religious customs. A man who was respected, a man who was

financially well off. Nicodemus could be a poster man of most Americans. Americans have religious roots, churches on every corner, people are more financially well-off than most everyone else in the rest of the world, American churches have their religious ceremonies of baptism and major religious holidays like Christmas and Easter, yet Jesus would still say to us today.....none of it matters, all that matters is the “must”, and you “must be born again”.

Jesus call Nicodemus to Start all Over

Jesus calls Nicodemus to abandon all that, and start all over, start anew, as a child, as a baby.

John 3:8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

Nicodemus calls Jesus Teacher / Nicodemus is Honest with himself

In verse 2 Nicodemus came to Jesus and called Him Rabbi, great teacher from God. Nicodemus we will read was the teacher of Israel (verse 10), yet he comes to Jesus and calls Jesus the great teacher. For Nicodemus, a great teacher of Israel to come to Jesus is humbling just in that as a member of the Pharisees, but then add that he is one of the top 70 in all of religion and comes to Jesus is mind blowing, and then to be the top teacher in Israel and then come to Jesus and to call Jesus the top teacher, we barely scratch the surface of all that is going on in this man’s heart. Students sat at the feet of the teacher in this day, and I can picture Nicodemus not sitting next to Jesus, but as the lower, he sat at His feet. Nicodemus submitted to Jesus, this great man submitted. Nicodemus laid his pride aside to get to Jesus. Nicodemus was honest with himself, he knew something was missing, and he knew Jesus had the answer to what it was. Nicodemus was honest with himself that all was not well with him spiritually, even though he was hip-deep in religion. Please, I beg of you, be honest with yourself today, open your heart right now and say Jesus, I know all is not well with me Spiritually, and I need you to speak to my heart today, I want to be changed, I want this new life you bring.

Wind Blows – Don’t have to Understand Everything about the Spirit to Experience

The wind blows where it wishes: Jesus’ idea to Nicodemus is “You don’t understand everything about the wind, but you see its effects. That is just how it is with the birth of the Spirit.” Jesus wanted Nicodemus to know that he didn’t have to understand everything about the new birth before he experienced it.

But Respond when Feel the Wind

You don’t have to understand everything about the new birth to experience it, but like the wind and feeling it blow across your body, when the Spirit of God blows across your heart, now is the time to respond to it. You know not when the wind, the Spirit of God will blow again upon you, and today is the day to respond to God speaking to your heart.

2 Corinthians 6:2 (NKJV) ² For He says: “In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Rich Ruler Asked – Walked Away / Nicodemus didn’t ask – But Wind was Blowing

Another rich ruler will come to Jesus and say, what must I do to inherit eternal life. Jesus will say sell all you have and follow me, but that man will walk away sad for he had much riches. Jesus put his finger on what that man’s God was, and said walk away from that God, and follow me the true God. But, did you notice that Nicodemus did not ask how to have eternal life, he came to Jesus and said you can only do what you if you are sent of God, but Jesus doesn’t even respond to that, but immediately goes into how a man must be born again. It is almost like these two are having different conversations, not on the same page. And thus we see, you never know when the Spirit is going to move, to impress upon, to call a man or woman that today is the day of salvation.

Luke 18:18–25 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Now a certain ruler asked Him, saying, “Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” ¹⁹ So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. ²⁰ You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’” ²¹ And he said, “All these things I have kept from my youth.” ²² So when Jesus heard these things, He said to him, “You still lack one thing. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.” ²³ But when he heard this, he became very sorrowful, for he was very rich. ²⁴ And when Jesus saw that he became very sorrowful, He said, “How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! ²⁵ For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

John 3:9 Nicodemus answered and said to Him, “How can these things be?”

John 3:10 Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?”

John 3:11 Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness.

John 3:12 If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?

John 3:13 No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven.

We – Jesus and Holy Spirit that is Blowing / Testifying to what He has Seen from Above

Verse 11 - We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness.

Jesus is speaking in plural form of “we”, and I believe He is referring to Him and the Holy Spirit, that is blowing across Nicodemus right now, and moving on His heart. Jesus says He is speaking of things He has seen and heard. He has seen it and heard it because He came from above, sent down from heaven, testifying to being eternal!

Jesus tells the Teacher – It is All there in the OT

Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? Jesus chides Nicodemus for not being aware of the need and the promise of the new birth, because these are plainly laid out in the Old Testament. Nicodemus knew these passages well, but didn’t know how they applied spiritually. But he should have known better!

Jeremiah 31:31–34 (NKJV) ³¹ “Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—³² not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. ³³ But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴ No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”

Hebrews 10:11–18 (NKJV) ¹¹ And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. ¹² But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. ¹⁴ For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified. ¹⁵ But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, ¹⁶ “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,” ¹⁷ then He adds, “Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” ¹⁸ Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

Today People Reject God – Yet Never read the Bible

It was all there in the Scriptures, and even the greatest teacher in the Temple missed it. But, is today that far off? How many people I have met who totally reject Jesus Christ, the Bible, and the Gospel, yet have never read the bible. I must ask, what is it that you base your rejection on if you have never read the whole Bible. For myself I was launching rockets at the Space Center, and to get that job and keep that job I had to read and comprehend books of rocket engine technology, aerodynamics, and physics. But one day I said to myself (now I see the wind was blowing), I said I read all these books so I can get a degree and make a living, but I have never read the Bible which is suppose to be the Book of Life. So I went and got a bible, and 30 days later, after reading through the whole OT, even though I didn’t understand much, I understood I was a sinner and separated from God, but I was discouraged or without hope, for I knew something good was coming, and it did when I got to the NT, and I saw Jesus lifted up. I only ask anyone here today who rejects Jesus and the Gospel, that before you walk away for good, I beg you to read this whole Bible before you make that final decision.

John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

John 3:15 that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

The 2nd Must

Now the 2nd “Must” of this chapter, the Son of Man must be lifted up.

1500 Years Prior / Numbers 21 / Serpents = Evil, Bronze = Judgment

This event happened 1,500 years before Jesus came to earth, we read of it in Numbers 21. Serpents are often used as pictures of evil in the Bible (Genesis 3:1–5 and Revelation 12:9). However, Moses’ serpent in Numbers 21

was made of bronze, and bronze is a metal associated with judgment in the Bible, because bronze is with fire, a picture of judgment. So, a bronze serpent does speak of sin, but of sin judged. In the same way Jesus, who knew no sin became sin for us on the cross, and our sin was judged in Him. A bronze serpent is a picture of sin judged and dealt with. We would have wanted to diminish our sense of sin, and put the image of a man up on the pole. Our image of man might represent “both good and bad” in man. But a serpent is more apparently sinful, and shows us our true nature and true need of salvation.

Numbers 21:4–9 (NKJV) ⁴ Then they journeyed from Mount Hor by the Way of the Red Sea, to go around the land of Edom; and the soul of the people became very discouraged on the way. ⁵ And the people spoke against God and against Moses: “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and our soul loathes this worthless bread.” ⁶ So the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. ⁷ Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, “We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD that He take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.” ⁹ So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

Snake not wrapped on Pole – But a Banner / The Picture of the Cross

Many traditions show the serpent being wrapped around the pole, and this is the source for the ancient figure of healing and medicine—a serpent, wrapped around a pole. However I don’t believe that is so, for the word used for pole in the Hebrew is “banner”. A banner held a flag, and thus a banner had a horizontal beam, it is easy to see how this also was a visual representation of the cross. Interestingly, banner is one of the names God calls Himself, to describe His nature, and that was recorded before this event of the fiery serpents.

Exodus 17:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ And Moses built an altar and called its name, *The-LORD-Is-My-Banner*;

Jesus on the Cross – the 2nd Must

The second “must” of this chapter, first you “must be born again”, and second the only way for a person to be born again, is that the Son Man, Jesus the Christ, “must be lifted up”.

John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

For God – the Greatest Person

so loved – the Greatest Act

the world – the Greatest Company

that He gave – the Greatest Sacrifice

His only begotten Son, – the Greatest Gift

that whoever – the Greatest Opportunity

believes in Him – the Greatest Simplicity

should not perish – the Greatest Protection

but have – the Greatest Certainty

everlasting life – the Greatest Possession

Pray over Key Words

Want a powerful devotional tomorrow, just take these verses and pray each of these 10 key words uniquely, and dwell on them deeply, and you will find yourself soaking in the glory of the Lord.

Son – the Center

Although I know it is somewhat coincidental, I find it interesting that in our English translation of this verse, the middle word is Son. It is no coincidence, however, that those who have experienced God’s presence most powerfully are those who have made the Son the center of their lives. Just as Jesus is the center of the greatest verse in all Scripture, He must be central in our hearts and lives if they are to have meaning, purpose, and impact (Ephesians 1:10). This means that any person, pursuit, or passion in my life that cannot be centered on Jesus Christ has no place in my life.

The Kingdom of God

Back in verse 3 Jesus said unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. What is the “Kingdom of God” what all does that mean? Quite simply, the Kingdom of God is where Jesus is.

- When Jesus walked this earth 2,000 years ago, that is where the kingdom of God was.
- When a person opens their heart to Jesus and gives their life to Him, God takes up residence within that person, and thus where the Kingdom of God is, because wherever Jesus is, is where the kingdom of God is.
- And, when we get to heaven, there He will be, and there of course is where the kingdom of God will be.

What the kingdom of God is not, is told to us in Romans 14, it is not this world, the gathering of things and the following of things, but the things of God. Thus we are to seek first the kingdom of God, and those other things will take care of themselves. You keep Jesus the center, and all will fall into place.

1 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?*

Romans 14:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) ³³ *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

Kingdom of God – Where Jesus is / Little Luke – Become Part of God’s Nation

The Kingdom of God is where Jesus is. Little 7 year old Luke at the baptism this past weekend, when I asked what does baptism represent and illustrated, and he said, “to become part of God’s Nation”. I love it.

John 3:17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

John 3:18 “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Definition of Believe / The Gospel

What does it mean to believe? It is more than just a statement of I believe. Let me save you 4 years of seminary and boil it down. Believe means to Recognize, Repent, and Receive.

- Recognize – Recognize you sin offends and separates you from the Holy God.
- Repent – being willing to turn from your sin, and turn to follow God.
- Receive – to humble oneself and say Lord I need a Savior, come into my life and save me; Lord I give you my life.

That is believing unto salvation, that is being born again, that is the new beginning. It is not rehabilitation, but regeneration, a washing away of sin and Jesus coming in and taking up residence within you, the kingdom of God is here. Jesus said you must be born of water and blood (3:5). The blood a picture of the punishment of sin which Jesus took for “whosoever will receive it”, and the water a picture of being totally cleansed, washed anew, and just as when the water breaks in child birthing, when the water breaks upon whoever believes they are birthed into the kingdom of God.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Acts 3:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ *Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,*

Romans 10:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ *that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.* ¹⁰ *For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.* ¹¹ *For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.”*

John 3:5 (NKJV) ⁵ *Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.*

Not Born Again to Remain the Same

Why and how can you be born again, if you remain the same? How can you stay the same, if you are born again. To be born is a start, a new start, it is not to start at the same place you left off. There will be a change, a new

beginning when one is truly born again, not a profession and leaving off the same place you were before making that profession.

How know Wind is Real – I see its Affect

How do I know the wind is real even though I can't see it? I can see its effect on the trees as the leaves moves, I can feel the wind upon my skin. How can I know the spiritual birth is real? I can see the effect of it in my life as I am not the same, the spirit moved upon me, and it changed my life. I can see the effects upon people I knew before, and now know now, I can see the change in their life, just like I can see the leaves move from the wind blowing through them on a tree.

No Condemnation for those in Jesus / Camden Baptism

Before moving on, let me talk about condemnation to those of you who have received Jesus, yet you condemn yourself for your past and recent failings. God does not condemn you, he loves you, He gave His only Begotten Son for you. Oh how my heart was moved at the baptism last week as my son ran to the water to be baptized. My heart and mind is filled with the memory of holding him in the water, and praying with him, it was a most special moment in my life. Now I think the day he had made a huge mess in the basement, Renee was not pleased at all considering she just finished cleaning it. She was stern with Camden about having to go clean it, and how she was not pleased, and I sensed she wanted me to back her up. When I turned to look at Camden, all I saw, was me holding him in the water, needless to say, all I wanted to do was bend down and kiss him again. So it is with the Lord, how He loves you, how He is not angry or upset you. Yes our sins and failings will grieve Him, yes there are times He must discipline us, but all those times are wrapped in His arms holding you and kissing you, a heart that is moved by you, and that you are His, you are His treasure.

Romans 8:1 (NKJV) ¹ There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

John 3:19 And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

John 3:20 For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.

John 3:21 But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

Reason People don't Believe

Why don't people come to the light? It is not because they don't believe the gospel intellectually or because they struggle with it philosophically. Please remember this the next time you're involved in a discussion with those who attempt to undermine your faith. The issue is never evolution, Cain's wife, or the Immaculate Conception, and not even the deception of Satan. According to Jesus, the one and only reason people don't come to the Light is because they prefer darkness. Remember, believe doesn't mean I believe or don't believe Jesus exist, God has testified that in every person's heart that He exist. Believe means to Recognize, Repent, and Receive. People don't or won't "believe" because they do not want to turn from their sin, bow their knee, give up their throne, leave their kingdom, and come into God's Kingdom, and allow Him to rule and have dominion in their lives.

Romans 1:20–21 (NKJV) ²⁰ For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, ²¹ because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

Luke 19:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.'

Only Jesus Reaches Down

Jesus came to this world not to come down on people, but to reach out to people. God sent His Son into the world not to point His finger at the world, but to embrace the world and draw it to Himself.

An old legend tells of a traveler attempting to circle the globe who found himself trapped in quicksand. As he slowly sank, Confucius came by and said, "Confucius say, it is evident man should avoid such situations." And he went on his way.

Mohammed came by and said, "Alas, it is the will of Allah." And he went on his way.

*Buddha came by, and said, "Let this man's dilemma be an illustration for many." And he went on his way.
Krishna came by and said, "Better luck next time." And he went on his way.
Jesus Christ came by, reached out to the man, and pulled him out.*

You see, the unique thing about our Lord is that, while all others tell us what we must do to reach up to heaven, He alone reaches down from heaven and pulls us out of the quicksand of sin. God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, to give us some cute spiritual sayings, or to make us feel bad because of our spiritual inadequacy. No, the purpose of God in sending His Son was singular: to save us.

Nic came at Night

Nicodemus came at night, I like that. The day is done, the business is over, and in the cool of the evening when everyone has gone home, Nicodemus comes out and seeks out Jesus. Did you ever notice how many extra radio stations, and/or how much clearer they are in the evening? The reason is because there is less solar energy interference. It is in the quietness, the stillness of the night, the signal becomes stronger. I pray that right now today the quietness of this moment, the stillness of the day, that you can hear the voice of the Lord speaking to you, that you must be born again, and the only way is by and through Jesus being lifted up upon the cross.

John 3:22-36

Written so we Might Believe / Have Zoe Life

We have come to chapter 3 in our verse-by-verse study of the Gospel of John. The book is written so that we might believe that Jesus, and by believing we will have Zoe (abundant, absolute, God Life, a life more than this life). *John 20:30–31 (NKJV)*³⁰ *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*

3 Must

In our chapter 3 today we will read of “3 Musts”, and in those “3 Musts” we will see man’s needs, God’s provision, and man’s response:

*John 3:7 (NKJV)*⁷ *Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’*

*John 3:14 (NKJV)*¹⁴ *And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,*

*John 3:30 (NKJV)*³⁰ *He must increase, but I must decrease.*

5 Great Points

In our passage today here are 5 great points, but really several more. So your homework assignment is to pick the verses that speak to you, and then jot them down and pray over them all week, and I will assure you that you will be blessed tremendously. But for today due to time limitation, here are the 5 points we will focus in on.

- 1.) A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him by the Lord (v27).
- 2.) My joy is fulfilled (v29)
- 3.) He must increase, but I must decrease (v30).
- 4.) God is True (v33)
- 5.) The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand (v35).

John 3:22 After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He remained with them and baptized.

John 3:23 Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized.

Why There – Much Water / Don’t Overcomplicate God’s Will

Why did John baptize in Aenon? Was it because he had received heavenly instructions to minister there? No. Was it because he was fulfilling Old Testament prophecy? No. John baptized in Aenon “because there was much water there.” Too often, we make finding the will of God very difficult. I believe we would do well to demystify the process of discovering what God wants us to do. John simply went where the water was. His location was perfectly suited to what God had instructed him to do. So maybe God will show you “much water”, and say “go for it”. I have a whole 50 minute bible study on knowing God’s will for your life, but I can sum it up in 10 seconds, and that is love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, and soul, and your neighbor as yourself, and then from there do whatever you like. See if you are doing the first two things, you are in God’s will and those two things will always keep you in God’s will no matter what you are doing.

John 3:24 For John had not yet been thrown into prison.

John 3:25 Then there arose a dispute between some of John’s disciples and the Jews about purification.

John 3:26 And they came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified—behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him!”

20 Miles Apart

The two locations are about 20 miles apart.

Not Competition – but Completion

At this point, John was presented with news from his disciples that multitudes were coming to Jesus for baptism. But John's disciples missed the point. What they perceived as competition to John's mission, John saw as completion of his ministry.

BTW – Selah

By the way, speaking of baptism, last week a young 7 year old named Selah wanted to be baptized. She had been baptized a few years prior when the family was living in another area. I asked her, her name is Selah, why would you like to be baptized again, and she said well I was baptized a few years ago, but I love Jesus more today than I did then. And, I want everyone in this church to know.... I love Jesus". I think we should all get baptized again ☺

Notice Tactic of Satan

Do you notice this tactic of Satan? Jews came to John the Baptist's disciples and rose a question about baptism and purification. So it was a theological question. They probably are saying things like, hey what does this baptism represent? Is this about religious purification, is this some new cult thing, why are you guys dunking in water? See the Jews had religious purification as prescribed in the OT, and it was for various reasons (dedication to priesthood, or if touched something unclean). But John made clear why he was baptizing and that was as a demonstration of the heart, to repentance of sin, a person preparing the way of the Lord, a person saying I want to do an outward display to show what is going on in my heart, mind, and soul. So it appears John's disciples whips them in the theological debate, because we can see these Jews then threw another stink bomb out, and said something along the lines of, why is your leader losing all his followers, why are more people going out to be baptized by this Jesus rather than your John. See, Satan when he loses the theological debate, where he can't get churches to divide over doctrine and theology, he then tries to get them divided over "success". He whispers at get-together of Christians, wow you should see what is happening at our church, we are busting at the seams, hint-hint, if your church isn't wonder why? Or, the spiritual superiority, we have 500 you have 5, we must be the spiritual giants and you must be spiritually weak. Don't fall for it, don't get roped into it, God knows what He is doing at each church, each ministry, and He makes each one unique.

Numbers 19:20–22 (NKJV) ²⁰ *But the man who is unclean and does not purify himself, that person shall be cut off from among the assembly, because he has defiled the sanctuary of the LORD. The water of purification has not been sprinkled on him; he is unclean. ²¹ It shall be a perpetual statute for them. He who sprinkles the water of purification shall wash his clothes; and he who touches the water of purification shall be unclean until evening. ²² Whatever the unclean person touches shall be unclean; and the person who touches it shall be unclean until evening.* "

Mark 1:4 (NKJV) ⁴ *John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.*

Mark 1:2–3 (NKJV) ² *As it is written in the Prophets: "Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You."³ "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.' "*

Picture in Nehemiah

Chapter four of the Book of Nehemiah ends on a note of great victory; the people of God are doing the work of God, and doing it despite all obstacles—they work with a sword in one hand and a trowel in the other, and will not let their enemies stop them. But in this section of chapter five, there is no mention of working on the wall! The work has stopped! What made the work stop? First, strife among God's people. The enemy could not stop the work of God by direct attack, but the work could stop when God's people weren't unified and working together! A *great outcry of the people and their wives against their Jewish brethren* means one group is fighting against another, and when God's people are fighting one another, they certainly are not fighting the real enemy, nor getting God's work done!

Nehemiah 5:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ *And there was a great outcry of the people and their wives against their Jewish brethren. ² For there were those who said, "We, our sons, and our daughters are many; therefore let us get grain, that we may eat and live."*

John 3:27 John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven.

Abilities – Gifts – Ministry (Come directly from God) / If you Excel it is Because of God

John knew he had nothing apart from God. Any abilities, gifts, or ministry he possessed came directly as a gift from his heavenly Father. So, too, if there is any area in which you excel, it is solely because God sovereignly and graciously gave you the necessary desires, abilities, and provisions. Truly, God uses and blesses us not because of

who we are but in spite of who we are! Please, I have heard it too many times, people talking about how great they are at work because they work so hard, because they are so smart, because other people are so lazy; be careful, God may have to knock you down off your high horse for stealing His glory.

Underline it – It is a Great Truth / You don't have to Strive

I'd like you to underline that in your Bible, and here's why: The great truth of it is you don't need to strive. If you just accept who you are today and what you have today, it doesn't mean that you won't have more or less tomorrow and it doesn't make any difference if you have more or less yesterday, it's what you're doing today with what he's given you.

Settle who You Are / Settle God gave you what you Have / If you Have Tension – You are Overreaching

A man can have nothing except it be given him from heaven. You look at some people and you want to be where they are. It's called envy. You see what some people have and you want it. That's called covetousness. You desire something that's not yours. That's called lust. You see when you're at peace with yourself, then you realize that you who you are. A great philosopher once said, "I am, who I am. I'm Popeye the sailor man." He was settled with who he was. When you are settled with who you are and you realize God gave me this family, God gave me this education, God gave me this neighborhood, God gave me this position in life, God gave me this intellect, God gave me this humor, if you realize who you are is what heaven gave you ... You back up from there and say, "Why is there is so much tension with who I am?" Probably because you've overreached what God has given you and you're trying to reach into the world and take things that he never designed you to have.

It is Ok to Challenge Yourself / But don't Compare to Others – Else you become Judgmental / Rank People

This gives you a lot of peace. A man can receive nothing except it be given to him. This is after they are wondering about Jesus baptizing and John baptizing, and is there competition? For the person that realizes who they are in the Lord, there can always be a competitive edge to them. You can always be trying to better your time riding your bike or jogging or catch the bigger wave surfing or going to a higher altitude before you pull the ripcord. There's always a competitive edge, but when it comes about you being stressed out comparing you to other people, that goes away instantly. You don't become critical of other people. You don't get judgmental of other people. You accept the fact that that's who they are. If they're better, smarter, more intelligent, in a higher place in life than you or a lower place, you're not better than anybody and nobody is better than you.

FIRST THING GIVEN IS LIFE

The first thing each person here today has to be reminded of and solidified on is that the first thing God gave you..... is life.

When Accept Receive Nothing except from God – Life has new Meaning / We are Fearfully & Wonderfully Made

You can have nothing except it be given to you from heaven. When you accept that, life really takes on new meaning. What does that mean that a man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven? It tells us we each have a time. We each have a time period. God designed us. He knows that your time will be up at a certain time and you don't know it. Our DNA tells us that we're related to one another, but when it comes to who we are in the Lord, you're a very special man, a very special woman, so in Psalm 139, verse 13 it says, ¹³ For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. ¹⁶ Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them. That tells us a lot. There's a book written down that tells about your construction and your creation. Do you realize that? Your reins, that which controls you going left and right, God controls you. He put it in you of who you're going to be. Look at those verses carefully because in another psalm (32) it says, "I do not want to control you like the horse with the bit and the bridle and the reins, turning you to the left or the right, or like a mule with a stick."

Psalm 139:13–16 (NKJV) ¹³ For You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in

secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. ¹⁶ Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them.

Psalm 32:8–9 (NKJV) ⁸ I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye. ⁹ Do not be like the horse or like the mule, Which have no understanding, Which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, Else they will not come near you.

Womb – Place of Protection / Not Abortion

He says, "You have formed my inward parts" in Psalm 139, verse 13. "You control me. You've covered me in my mother's womb." Otherwise, the womb is not to be a place that a human being would be aborted, but protected. Everything about the womb for a mother is protection for the child that is made in the image and likeness of God. From the placenta to the umbilical cord to the fluids to everything, the diet of the mother, what she is doing, that child is totally covered and protected is what it's saying there. Man has come along and said, "No, a child has no rights. A child can't be protected. You can do whatever you want with that child." That's hideous. That makes us more powerful than God.

Fearfully & Wonderfully

Fearfully means "with awe" – God was in awe when He created you.

Wonderfully means "unique" God says you are one of a kind

You are special, you are priceless, he was intimately involved in your creation.

Man made in Likeness of God / Drugs & Alcohol alter the Chemical balance He has Designed in You / Not You

Look what he goes on to say. "[I'm going to praise you because I'm fearfully and wonderfully made.](#)" Here's the insidiousness of drugs and alcoholism. It says you're not fearfully and wonderfully made. You can change the chemical balance of your brain. You're nothing. You can kill your brain cells with some speed or some ice. You're nothing. No, the schools have pushed out that you're fearfully and wonderfully made. That statement's a scary thing in a federally funded school district, but you are fearfully and wonderfully made. You don't want to mess with the chemicals. God balanced those chemicals. He gave you serotonin. He gave you the ability that certain endorphins would be released when you exercise and you have a feeling of euphoria. He gave you other ones that when the metabolism slows down, you start getting sleepy. He balanced it, but you start putting cocaine or meth or marijuana or something else into your system, you're no longer fearfully or wonderfully made. You're fearfully and wonderfully askewed. You're off balance. You're no longer you. You've altered who you are. You have a conscious state that is no longer who God made you to be. Think of this. Everyone knows somebody that's had a drug problem, in the '60s and then again in the 80's when the drugs first started on a national scale, and made another great leap, we (the USA) were going to have a war against drugs. How many millions of Americans have committed suicide on drugs? How many millions of families have been destroyed? How many people are crippled mentally today because of drugs? It's like every other thing the devil throws at us. Begin to lose the battle, we just accept it as part of society. We just accept there's drugs out there. We accept that there's 1 out of every 10 drivers day or night in the USA is drunk on the highways or the streets of our city. We accept that people have certain lifestyles that say they're not wonderfully made.

World says you are Nothing – Don't be Satisfied / Put Self Down – Beat Self Up / Loser - Failure

I want you to know that you're fearfully and wonderfully made. "Marvelous are your works," he says, "[that my soul knows right well the works that God put together to make you are marvelous. My substance was not hid from you.](#)" There's your genes and your chromosomes, your DNA, the substance that came together to make you into who you are today was not hid from God. In secret, God made you. He thought you out. "Your eyes did see my substance being unformed together. My mother didn't even know my father yet. There was no exchange between their love for each other, but before they were perfect and came together, God thought you out and blessed you. You're found in a book. "[All my members were written.](#)" Your height, your weight, the color of your eyes, the color of your hair, your metabolism, everything about you was carefully thought out, but the world has you thinking, "No, eat, drink, and make merry, for tomorrow you die because you're nothing. You evolved from animals. You're just a high-bred species of a monkey." No way. That's a lie. That's a complete lie, and people that propagate that are complete liars. You're a wonderful person. You're made in the image and the likeness of God, and God thought you out.

- "I want her to be the happiest woman in all of town."

- "I want him to be the greatest guy, the lover of all people."
- "I want this one to be a politician that will lead the people and not fleece the people."
- "I want this one to be a minister."
- "I want her to be a mommy, to have such love for children."
- "I want her children to grow up and to be great people in their community."
- "I want him to help people that are down."
- "I want her to be a lawyer." "I want him to be a coach."
- "I'm putting all these abilities in this person,"

But the world says, "No, don't be satisfied with yourself. Don't be happy with yourself. Put yourself down. Beat yourself up. You're no good. You're a loser. You're a failure. Who are you?" And hence, one of the reasons people try to drown those thoughts out, numb themselves from those thoughts, with alcohol and drugs.

Psalm 139:14–16 (NKJV) ¹⁴ I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Marvelous are Your works, And that my soul knows very well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. ¹⁶ Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, The days fashioned for me, When as yet there were none of them.

2nd – We Each Have an Assignment

The second thing about this that we can receive nothing except to be given from heaven, thinking about this that we can receive nothing except to be given from heaven is that we each have an assignment. Look at Jeremiah. I love him. He was a preacher's kid. His father was a priest in the town of Anathoth. Jeremiah was just a teenager when God called him. He said, "Oh, Lord God, I can't speak. I'm just a youth. Don't send me anywhere," and God said in verse 5, "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, Jeremiah. Before you were born, I sanctified you. I made you special. I set you aside. I ordained you a prophet to the nation." This tells us we not only have a time that we were formed and a reason in this time, we have an assignment. "Jeremiah, before I formed you, I knew you and I sanctified you. I set you apart."

Jeremiah 1:5 (NKJV) ⁵ "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; Before you were born I sanctified you; I ordained you a prophet to the nations."

John 3:28 You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent before Him.'
John 3:29 He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled.

John finds Joy in Sound of Jesus Voice / The Best Man of the Bridegroom

When John first "met" Jesus, both were in their mother's wombs. John leapt for joy when Mary, pregnant with Jesus, entered the room (Luke 1:41). Here in our text, we see that, at the zenith of his ministry, John still finds his joy in the sound of Jesus' voice. To explain the reason for his ministry and the basis for his joy, John used an analogy very familiar to his disciples. You see, wedding custom in John's day dictated it was the best man, the "friend of the bridegroom," who invited the guests to the wedding, made preparations for the wedding, and finally, upon completion of the wedding, escorted the bride and groom into the bridal chamber. Thus, it was the voice of the bridegroom signaling to him that everything was okay within the chamber that brought joy to the heart of the best man.

Luke 1:39–41 (NKJV) ³⁹ Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, ⁴⁰ and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Psalm 16:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

When is Joy Fulfilled – Not When Getting Something / But Hearing the Voice of Bridegroom

Do you know when joy is fulfilled? It is not when we get something from the Lord, or do something for the Lord, but when we hear the voice of the Lord. If you are expecting your joy to be fulfilled through a nicer husband, faster car, or better job, you are headed for disaster. If you are caught up in thinking, If I can move to this place, teach that Bible study, or sing with the other worship team; if I can just be effective here, or used there, then I will be joyful—you are headed for disappointment and despair. But if you spend time with the Lord, reading His Word, and simply listening for His voice, your joy will be fulfilled. If you are a baby Christian like John in the womb, you will leap for joy at the sound of His voice. And if you are a seasoned saint like John in the desert, your joy will be full when you realize that what you longed for all along is found in Him.

John 3:30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

We Get it Other way Around

That's a big one. He increases. We decrease. We have it the other way around. You can tell it by your giving, by your tithing, by your donations. Is He the one that increases or are you the one that increases? Does His kingdom grow or does your kingdom grow? Are you stingy and selfish or are you generous and gracious? He increases. Is it people around you getting blessed or is it you drawing from people getting blessed and always taking and draining people? Or are you one that just empties yourself like a cup of cold water?

Emphatic / Hard to do because Can't See Him

He must increase. It's a must. It's emphatic. In my life, more than any of your lives, Jesus must increase. There's too much of me. It's so hard isn't? We've never shook his hand. We've never thrown our arms around him. We've never really walked hand in hand, arm and arm with him. We know He's there, but we've never seen Him. It sometimes becomes easier for me to make my decision than to allow somebody that I can't see to make the decision for me.

He must Increase / Doesn't give up Free Will / The More Him Unleashed – More Kingdom / More Me - Less

He must increase.

- He must increase in our home.
- He must increase in our marriage.
- He must increase in our family.
- He must increase in our business.
- He must increase in our education.
- We must keep decreasing.

Does it give up free will? Absolutely not because you are choosing what is right. The more of Him that can flow through you, the brighter He becomes in you. The more of His power that is unleashed around you, the more people can come into His Kingdom. The more of me that is unleashed around me, the less people that come into His kingdom. The more of my attitude that comes out as opposed to His attitude of kindness and gentleness and meekness, totally different than a religion isn't it? That if you don't believe my way, off with the head. He's a person, He's lived, He's experienced everything that you have. John came to a place that said Jesus must increase, I must decrease. More of Him and less of me.

How hard with all My Opinions

He must increase. How many times when I should be loving the group of people that I'm in the meeting with at work and I'm getting so upset at their attitude that I want to put out my opinion as opposed to let Jesus increase in that room and just let His presence be there and keep my lips sealed, quiet.

Die to Self / Kingdom only comes through the Cross

Die to yourself. What does that mean? That doesn't mean physically commit suicide. We've already set the precedence that you are fearfully and wonderfully made. Never take your life in your own hands. This is going to end it all. No. You are an eternal being. Whatever you're trying to end in this dimension, will go into the next dimension with you probably. Settle it now with Him. Die to yourself means self. Selfishness. Self-grandizement, Self appeasing, self feelings. Oh touchy feely, it's all about me. No die to self. Die to self. What else did He say? Pick up your cross. There's the hard part. Some of you have a cross that you're bearing today because you went down road left instead of road right. Some of you are bearing a cross today that's very heavy because you never saw yourself fearfully and wonderfully made. The Kingdom can only grow through the cross; it took Jesus to die on the cross, and in our world around us today people will only see Jesus in us when we go to the cross and die to ourself, decrease, so He can increase.

Matthew 16:24–26 (NKJV) ²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. ²⁶ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Son – the Center

Although I know it is somewhat coincidental, I find it interesting that in our English translation of 3:16, the middle word is Son. It is no coincidence, however, that those who have experienced God's presence most powerfully are those who have made the Son the center of their lives. Just as Jesus is the center of the greatest verse in all Scripture, He must be central in our hearts and lives if they are to have meaning, purpose, and impact (Ephesians 1:10). This means that any person, pursuit, or passion in my life that cannot be centered on Jesus Christ has no place in my life.

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Ephesians 1:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him.

John 3:31 He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.

John 3:32 And what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony.

John 3:33 He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true.

John 3:34 For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure.

He has Watched for 4000 Years

Remind you this, that "He has seen and heard" all things. Jesus is not only creator, but for 4,000 years has watched man fail in his ways, and has watched men live abundant lives when they follow the way of the Lord. God's way works! Receive and be blessed.

Let God be True

Beloved, will you let God be True? As Paul said, let God be true and every man a liar. When God says it can be done, then it can be done. God says, "Rejoice evermore. In everything give thanks. Be ye holy, for I am holy." But mankind refuses to receive His testimony, saying, "I can't rejoice evermore because I'm emotionally starved. I can't give thanks because I came from a dysfunctional family. I can't be holy because I'm co-dependent." The one who does receive His testimony will proclaim loudly with John, "God is true!" for the one who believes God's commandments are His "enablers" will find God true every time. The one who refuses to excuse sin with psychological jargon and instead steps out in faith to "flee youthful lusts," to "reckon the old man dead unto sin," to "judge not" will experience God's faithfulness at every step.

Romans 3:4 (NKJV) ⁴ Certainly not! Indeed, let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: "That You may be justified in Your words, And may overcome when You are judged."

2 Corinthians 1:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ For all the promises of God in Him are Yes, and in Him Amen, to the glory of God through us.

John 3:35 The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand.

You Can Rest – He is in Control / He Holds you in Palm of His Hand

The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hands. Since all things have been given into the hands of Jesus, we can rest in Him. He's the same one that said in John 14:1, "Let not your heart be troubled." How many times do we get troubled hearts? Let not your heart be troubled for my Father's house, there are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you that where I am, you may be also. If I go, I shall come again to receive you unto myself. The disciples said, we don't know the way or what you're going. What are you talking about? He said, I am the way. I'm the truth and I'm the life. That's why that if you'll accept the first premise that God fearfully made you and you're planned out by Him, then you can realize you can receive nothing of that which Heaven has given you. You accept your lot in life and you accomplish what you can. In Psalm 37:7, the psalmist, King David, wrote a very simple sentence. He said, rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him. When you have got things that haven't come to you from Heaven, when you've reached over and you've taken something from the world and you're holding the bag, that's stressful. You need to rest and wait patiently and you'll find the strength you're looking for. Since the Father loves the Son and since all things have been given into His hands, we should allow His authority to rule and that allows us to decrease.

John 10:28–30 (NKJV) ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. ³⁰ I and My Father are one."

Psalms 37:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for Him; Do not fret because of him who prospers in his way, Because of the man who brings wicked schemes to pass.

If Jesus has All Authority – I rest In Him

When it's the authority of the words of Jesus, that are ruling our life, I made this decision because I remember this parable. I said that because I know this premise. I act like this because the Lord said. Now you can really rest. You don't need to make all the big mistakes you used to make. Since all authority has been given to him and you allow His authority to rule, it allows us to decrease so He can increase. You don't have to have all the answers anymore. You don't. Some of you think the world won't keep turning unless you are in complete control. Some of you have a grip so tight, your knuckles are white. You're wound too tight. No relax, let go, everything's going to work fine. We should allow His love to be sufficient. If the Father loves the Son, shouldn't the love of God be sufficient for you and me? That allows Him to increase. If I say that I am a loser, I am a failure, I am nothing. Who am I? That's pretty negative. If I say that I was made with a plan and I'm the one that can change or mess up the plan and I submit to this authority that's been given to His Son, then I say, His love is sufficient. This may not be what I want, but this is what He wants. Since the Father loves the Son ... since the Father loves the Son, we can rest in Him. No religion in the world relates the love of a father. Do you know that? There isn't a religious group or sect that talks about God being a father that loves the family other than this God of the Bible. No religion in the world shows it power like love. There is a great religion showing anger and vengeance, but love, but love. Whatever mistake you've made has been covered by the love of God through His Son Jesus Christ. Trust God for your life and for your duty you've been designed to accomplish. John realized his struggle would be dying to self. Hey, he's over there baptizing people. What about you? No problem. I told you I'm not the one in charge. I'm only preparing the way for the One coming. When the bridegroom stands there, the bride is with Him. The bridegroom rejoices that his day has come, that the marriage is going to take place. He took second fiddle, he stepped back. John realized dying to self was the issue of everyone. When John saw God gave Jesus authority, he found all of his answers to life. I will end up where God wants me to end up, when God wants me to end up, and how God wants me to end up. If I keep my character and I submit to His love and find it sufficient, then I will decrease and He will increase. I know the Father's given all things to Him but I also know that all I have and all I am has been given to me by Heaven.

John 3:36 He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

It is Everlasting Zoe Life

It is everlasting "zoe" life. He who has the Son has the everlasting "God Life", absolute life, life beyond this life.

Abide - Continual

The word there for "abide" means continual. Tremendous words of love and life we have read in these few verses today, yet God leaves a somber and direct reminder, YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN.

John 3:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

Definition of Believe / The Gospel

What does it mean to believe? It is more than just a statement of I believe. Let me save you 4 years of seminary and boil it down. Believe means to Recognize, Repent, and Receive.

- Recognize – Recognize you sin offends and separates you from the Holy God.
- Repent – being willing to turn from your sin, and turn to follow God.
- Receive – to humble oneself and say Lord I need a Savior, come into my life and save me; Lord I give you my life.

That is believing unto salvation, that is being born again, that is the new beginning. It is not rehabilitation, but regeneration, a washing away of sin and Jesus coming in and taking up residence within you, the kingdom of God is here. Jesus said you must be born of water and blood (3:5). The blood a picture of the punishment of sin which Jesus took for "whosoever will receive it", and the water a picture of being totally cleansed, washed anew, and just

as when the water breaks in child birthing, when the water breaks upon whoever believes they are birthed into the kingdom of God.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Acts 3:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

Romans 10:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

John 3:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

Push-Ups

A Religion Professor named Dr. Christianson taught a required survey of Christianity course at small college. Every freshman was required to take the course regardless of his or her major. Although he tried hard to communicate the gospel, students viewed the class as nothing more than a waste of time. One particular year Dr. Christianson had a student named Steve. Steve was the Center for the college football team and also a strong Christian who intended on going to Seminary. One day Dr. Christianson had an idea and he asked Steve to stay after class. "How many push ups can you do?" He asked. Steve said, "I do 200 every night." The professor asked Steve if he could do 300. "I have never done 300 before" Steve said, "but I think I can do it." "Good," the professor said, and he proceeded to tell his plan to Steve. Friday came and Steve got to class early. Dr. Christianson came in with a large box of fluffy, cream filled doughnuts. The class was excited, it was Friday the last class of the day, and they could start their weekend early. Dr. Christianson went to the first girl in the row and asked, "Cynthia would you like a donut?" "Yes," she said. Dr. Christianson then turned to Steve and asked, "Steve would you do ten push-ups so that Cynthia can have a donut?" "Sure." Steve jumped down out of his desk and counted off ten push ups. Dr. Christianson laid the donut on Cynthia's desk. Joe was next. He asked Joe the same question and Joe said "yes." Steve did 10 more pushups and the professor laid the doughnut on Joe's desk. And so it went all the way down the first row and half way down the second until it came to Scott. He was a basketball player and friendly to female companionship. Scott replied to the professor's question by saying, "I want the doughnut if I can do my own push ups." Dr. Christianson said, "No Steve has to do the pushups." Then Scott said, "Well I don't want one if I can't do my own." Dr. Christian turned around and asked, "Steve, would you do ten push ups so Scoot can have a donut he doesn't want." Scott said, "hey! I said I didn't want one!" Dr. Christianson said, "Look, this is my classroom, my class, my desks, and these are my donuts, Just leave it on the desk if you don't want it." And he put the donut on Scott's desk. Steve had begun to slow down a little and sweat had begun to form on his cheeks. Dr. Christianson started down the third row. Students were beginning to get a little angry. Dr. Christianson asked Jenny, "Jenny, do you want a donut?" Sternly, Jenny said, "NO!" Then Dr. Christianson asked, "Steve, would you do ten more push ups so Jenny can have a donut that she doesn't want?" Steve did ten-Jenny got a doughnut. By now a sense of uneasiness had filled the room. The students were all beginning to say "no." There were uneaten donuts on every desk. Steve was now putting forth a lot of extra effort to get the pushups done for each doughnut. A small pool of sweat was on the floor, his face was red, and you could see the sweat soaking through his shirt. Dr. Christianson asked Robert, the most vocal unbeliever in class, to watch to make sure Steve did the full ten. Dr. Christianson started down the fourth row. Students from other classes had come in and were sitting along the side of the room watching on. When the professor saw them he counted and saw that there were now 34 people in the room. He was worried about Steve, "Could he do that many push ups?" Jason, a recent transfer student, didn't know what was going on and came in to see. The class yelled, "Go away! Don't come in!" Steve picked up his head and said, "let him come in." Jason was asked and he said "yes." "Steve will you do ten push ups so Jason can have a donut?" Steve did ten pushups very slowly and with great struggle. Jason, confused, was handed a donut and he sat down. Dr. Christianson then finished the fourth row and began on the visitors. Steves arms were shaking uncontrollably with each push up. By this time sweat was pouring off of his face and arms. The very last two students were cheerleaders. "Linda, do you want a donut?" Linda cried and said, "no thank you." Professor turned to Steve, "Steve would you do ten push ups so Linda can have a donut she doesn't want?" Grunting from the effort, Steve did ten very slow push ups for Linda. The last girl was Susan. "Susan would you like a donut?" Susan was full of

tears and did not answer. "Steve would you do ten push ups so Susan can have a donut?" Susan asked, "Dr. Christianson why can't I help him?" Dr. Christianson had tears in his eyes also and replied, "I have given him this task and he is in charge of seeing that everyone has an opportunity for a donut whether they want it or not. When I decided to have a party I looked at the grade book and found that Steve was the only person with a perfect grade. All of you had failed a test, skipped class, or turned in inferior work. Steve told me that in football practice, when a player messes up he must do push ups. I told Steve that none of you could come to my party unless he paid the price by doing your push ups. He and I made a deal for your sakes." Steve slowly got up off the floor, he had done 350 push ups, his arms buckled beneath him as he started to get up. Two students helped Steve up off the floor and to a seat, physically exhausted, but wearing a thin smile. "Well done good and faithful servant", said the professor, "not all sermons are preached in words class." Turning to the students the professor said, "My wish is that you may fully comprehend all the riches of grace and mercy that have been given to you through the sacrifice of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. God did not spare His only Son but gave him up for all of us. Whether or not we accept His gift is our choice. The price has been paid. Wouldn't you be foolish and ungrateful to leave it lying on the desk?"

Zoe Life

Tremendous words of love and power given to us in this chapter and passage today.

Great Promises:

- 1.) A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him by the Lord (v27).
- 2.) My joy is fulfilled (v29)
- 3.) He must increase, but I must decrease (v30).
- 4.) God is True (v33)
- 5.) The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand (v35).

Absolute Abundant God Life is available to you today, a life where you can let go and let God. If you have yet to believe Jesus is the savior, then today make that commitment to Him. For those that have received Him, then today, settle this, that He must increase, and you must decrease, and in that I will promise that you will find what John the Baptist did – my joy is fulfilled!

Chapter 4

John 4:1-34

Overview

We move into chapter 4. Jesus' prominence and reputation are on the rise. Last chapter we read of the "3 Musts". Jesus' encounter with Nicodemus, and those words of life "You Must be Born Again", and the only way a person can be born-again is that the "Son of Man Must be Lifted up (speaking of the cross as the only way for forgiveness of sin and salvation)", and then we closed the chapter with John the Baptist summing up the key to the abundant life, and that is "He must increase, and I must decrease".

John 3:7 (NKJV) ⁷Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

John 3:14-15 (NKJV) ¹⁴And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:30 (NKJV) ³⁰He must increase, but I must decrease.

Some Things we will See in this Study

- Jesus needed to go through Samaria (v1-5)
- The Loneliness of the Woman (v6)
- The Wells of the World will leave you Empty and Thirsty (v7-15)
- There is no Conversion without Conviction (v16-18)
- Worship Draws the Father to Us (19-24)
- Every Moment is a God Moment (v25-33)
- He who Wins Souls is Wise (v34-38)
- Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the World (v39-42)

Jesus needed to go through Samaria (v1-5)

John 4:1 Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John

John 4:2 (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples),

John 4:3 He left Judea and departed again to Galilee.

John 4:4 But He needed to go through Samaria.

John 4:5 So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

Jesus is Baptizing

Verse 1 - Jesus made and baptized - Because Jesus is baptizing we see the importance of baptism, as it is a public demonstration of repenting of the old life, and turning towards a God life. Now baptism is important Jesus shows us, but it isn't necessary for salvation, else Jesus would not have left it up to His disciples to carry out. Jesus is making the point by letting His disciples do the work, that it is not a means to salvation. A few weeks back as we were preparing for our baptism, we explained baptism to my 8 year old Camden and asked if he would like to be baptized. We explained that it is going into the water and burying the old man, and coming out a new person, a changed person. A few days later as he and I were driving in the car and out of the blue he says "daddy I don't want to get baptized, I don't want to look like someone else". He took the change literal! But I think, how out of the mouths of babes..... how powerful it would be for all of understanding to take baptism as literal as Camden did, expect that when they made this profession before man, and this commit to God, that they would literally be a changed person, and their life would reflect it from that day on.

Jesus Keeps on the Move

Verse 3 - He left Judea and departed again to Galilee - So Jesus knows the religious Jews are going to start to conspire against Him, so we will see throughout the life of Jesus. Jesus will choose when the confrontations will be, and He will not allow them to be as frequent as the Jews would like, nor will He allow them to distract from His

ministry. I think a good principle for all involved in ministry, don't allow the distractors to distract, else you will never get anything accomplished in the ministry. There will be a time where you will have to face confrontation, but as best you can, engage at your saying, not theirs.

3 Regions of Israel

Verse 5 - So He came to a city of Samaria - Israel is divided into three regions: Judea in the south, Galilee in the north, and Samaria in the middle. When a Jew wanted to go from Judea to Galilee, the most direct route led through Samaria. But good Jews would never go that way. They would go through Perea on the other side of the Jordan River. Why? Because there was such tension between the Samaritans and the Jews, that Jews uttered the word "Samaritan" only as a curse word. Why were the Samaritans so despised? In the year 722 B.C., the Assyrians invaded Israel from the north and carried the majority of the people from the ten northern tribes into captivity. The Assyrians then sent some of their people to Israel, where they intermarried with the Jews not taken into captivity. The marriages that took place between the Assyrians and the Jews produced the Samaritans—half-breeds in the eyes of the Jews. Banned from the temple, the Samaritans built their own temple on Mount Gerizim. Although they still believed in the Pentateuch—the first five books of Moses—they changed the stories. The Garden of Eden was on Mount Gerizim. Noah's ark landed on Mount Gerizim. And Abraham offered Isaac—you guessed it—on Mount Gerizim. They basically changed their theology to fit their situation.

People Change their Theology

The same still happens today actually, as we watch people change their theology and doctrine to fit their situation. There are many denominations that have so twisted and perverted the Scriptures to make a religion that fits their needs and situation. One that doesn't require repentance, or one that doesn't require service, one that is all about service (and hence you earn your salvation), there are some that don't want to believe there is a hell so they change those passages of scriptures, and the list goes on. People today no different than people then. But, the group I just mentioned I think are man-made religions, and I highly question if they really know Jesus. But I must say I watch many a Christians change their theology based on their situation. Drug and alcohol abuse is a sin, until it is their child, then it is a disease; profession, repentance and abiding is the only way to salvation until their child becomes a prodigal and then it need only be profession; and how many times divorce was against God's word, but when they want out it becomes God's will. Don't change your theology, change your mind, believe that your prayers matter, believe Your God has the power to change the situation, turn off the tele, get out of the bed, get on your knees and believe God can raise the dead, and can bring to life whatever that thing is that looks dead.

Stage is Set

So the stage is set for us, we see racism and man-made religion, and here comes Jesus right into the middle of it. Jesus must go through Samaria, because He must meet this woman at the well, and Jesus will go right through and into the middle of anything to reach you, to meet you, to speak to you, that He is the life that you been seeking, he is fullness you desire, and that the world is not, as the world will only leave you empty and dry in the end.

The Loneliness of the Woman (v6)

John 4:6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

Jacobs Well

Verse 6 – Jacob's Well - Jacob's well still stands. One hundred fifty feet deep, it's one of few verifiably authentic biblical sites. But if you get the opportunity to visit Jacob's well, take your helmet, as it's located in the war-torn West Bank.

Jesus was Weary / Hot and Dry / Me Painting my Deck / It was a Forced March

Verse 6 - being wearied from His journey - Jesus is weary, the word here is extreme fatigue, exhaustion. Now this area of Israel is extremely hot and arid, very dry, and if you don't have water you will be wiped out in no time. Last week I was staining my deck and it was like 100 degrees, and there was a couple points where I was working fast

and hard so I could get done with a section and then take my break, but the section was too big an undertaking and about half way through I just sat down, then laid down, and just then thought I was going to pass out. Well that is the kind of weary Jesus is, and what I believe is Jesus is making a forced march to Sychar, because He has a divine appointment to keep. Jesus knows all about this woman we will see, and thus I believe He knew at the 6th hour, she would be there at the well, and He wasn't going to miss that moment, and thus He is doing double-time in the extreme heat to make it to the well.

Noon Time – She is All Alone

Verse 6 - It was about the sixth hour. – It was about the 6th hour, and in Jewish accounting that means it is 12 noon, it is peak hour, it is the hottest hot of the day. In the culture, and at that time of day, people were either indoor resting, or under trees resting, they were not on the move in the heat of the day. History tells us that the woman would go get water in the cool of the morning for the day's needs, and then again in the evening for the night's need. For woman, the mornings and the evenings of getting water were also their social time, the time to meet the other ladies and catch up on what is happening, and no doubt a little gossip. It was their social hour. So we notice in our story here, that this woman doesn't go in the morning or evening, she goes at noon, the worse time to go. After having 5 husbands, and now living in sexual immorality with this current man, she knows she is not welcomed. She knows the gossip hour will be all about her. She knows the sneers, she knows the cold piercing eyes, she can hear the whispers. Maybe some of the other women married her ex-husbands, maybe they suspect or fear that she has had or wants to have affairs with their husbands. This woman at the well comes at noon, she comes alone, because she is all alone.

She was a Little Girl Once

At one time she was a little girl, pigtails and freckles. Then she grew into a woman, an attractive woman, and attention came her way by men. When she walked into the room, the market, heads turned. She is no different than any of us, just wanting to be loved and accepted. So she finds her love and acceptance in men. She gives herself away, again, and again. Five times to five men, and each came with a commitment that didn't last, either because of her or because of them, or what I find it is usually 50-50. Now she is on number 6, and she, nor he, love enough to commit. So here she is, and as the scriptures declare, each time she gives herself away to a man she gives a piece of herself away. The word for joined together in Genesis 2 is actually a word that meant to permanently glue. The only way to separate glued pieces is to fracture and tear them, and each piece is left with pieces of the other, and thus each piece loses a piece of itself during the separating. The giving away of one's self to the other is the intent of marriage, but when it becomes casual or noncommittal, people are left as shells of who they originally were. It is like peeling the onion, and each layer is given away until the person is a shell of who they were. This woman has given herself away, and she now is a shell of who she once was, she is alone and she is empty..... but a God Moment is on her way, and if you are here and you feel alone, empty, then I pray today you will have your God moment with Jesus Christ, the Savior of the World, and we will tell you how you can do that at the end of our study today.

Genesis 2:24 (NKJV) ²⁴Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Proverbs 6:32 (NKJV) ³²Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; He who does so destroys his own soul.

Dad's

Dad's, your little girl wants to know she is loved and accepted. Make sure she gets that unconditionally from you, else she will go look for it elsewhere.

Jesus can Relate through His Mother Mary

You know who can relate to this woman? Jesus. Yes Jesus can because He knows the things that were said about His mother Mary, He knows the looks given to her, the whispers (there's that girl who had an affair on Joseph), hmm she talks like she is so spiritual but we know she is adulterous. Mary knew what it was like to go to the market, Mary knew what it was like to gossiped about, and Jesus watched it His whole life, and He knows the loneliness and pain that it brings. Jesus can relate to pain, to loneliness, and He is tender about it, and He doesn't come to judge it and say you brought this upon yourself, He comes to ministry to it and comfort in the midst of it.

Noon the Shepherds Rested – the Little Lamb

There is another beautiful point in this story, and that is in Israel, even today, at high noon the Shepherds rest their flock, and they rest themselves. And now here is the Great Shepherd resting at the well, and here comes His little lamb, and He is going to bring here rest. He wants to bring you rest today, whatever your need is, bring it to the Great Shepherd and let Him bring you rest.

The Wells of the World will leave you Empty and Thirsty (v7-15)

John 4:7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give Me a drink.”

John 4:8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.

John 4:9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?” For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.

John 4:10 Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.”

John 4:11 The woman said to Him, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?”

John 4:12 Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?”

John 4:13 Jesus answered and said to her, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again,

John 4:14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.”

John 4:15 The woman said to Him, “Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw.”

Give me Drink

Verse 7 - Jesus said to her, “Give Me a drink.” – this can sound kinda of chauvinistic, Jesus saying hey give me a drink. Verse 8 leads me to believe that the disciples took whatever there was with them. I don’t think it means that Jesus is asking the women to draw the water because the disciples are not there to do it for Him. Jesus is the servant, and He came to serve, and not be served. Why is He asking this woman, because He is going to start connecting with her and drawing out her need, and drawing her to Him where the need can ultimately be fulfilled. Jesus in one request, tears down all the walls that were built by the last 700 years of racism and religion. It was written that the Jews if they got the dust of Samaria soil on their shoes would shake it out. Jesus here by asking for a drink, is saying I don’t consider you the dust under my feet, I don’t consider you the dirt of the world, I don’t reject you. By asking for a drink from her, asking her to give Him something, Jesus is saying I value you, there is no separation between you and I. Jesus is elevating her by asking her to give something to Him.

Just Like Nicodemus – Jesus using the Surrounding / Jesus Drawing Out

Just like Nicodemus, Jesus uses the surrounding setting to illustrate His point. Jesus told Nicodemus as the wind blows and you know not where it came from, so the Spirit moves. I believe at that moment a wind was blowing in the cool of the evening, and Nicodemus felt it and related to it. And here Jesus is relating to this women the illustrations of the well. Now this well still exist today, and it is over 100 feet deep. Now imagine lowering your bucket down 100 feet (ten stories) and then hauling it up 10 stories. This is an effort to draw out this water. And here this women says I would love to have this miracle fountain you are talking about, because this is laborious drawing this water each day, especially at high-noon. Jesus has connected to her by requesting drink, valuing and elevating her, and now He is beginning to draw out her, her emptiness. This woman has been drawing out of the wells of the world, year after year, man after man, and each time she has to go back to the well of the world to refill, because what she draws out of the well of the world runs dry and empty every time. And so it is today still, man will never find satisfaction in this world, they will always have to go back to the well for more, because what we have is never enough, there is never enough respect, acceptance, materialism, money, love, laughter, and thus back to the wells of the world for a refill, which eventually runs dry. But in verse 10, Jesus offers her “living water”.

Living Water - Zoe

Verse 10 – Living Water: the word here for living is “zoe”,

Zoe Life – Vines Dictionary

Definition of Life in Vines Dictionary (Zoe in the Greek) as used in the NT “of life as a principle, life in the absolute sense, life as God has it, that which the Father has in Himself, and which He gave to the Incarnate Son to have in Himself, John 5:26, and which the Son manifested in the world, 1 John 1:2.

Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W., Jr. (1996). Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words. Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.

Zoe Life – More Definition

The richness of the word “zoe”

- God Life (for it is the life that comes from God and is God's Life)
- More than this Life (John 10:10 – that we might have life and that more abundant)

Greek Words

Here are how the different Greek words are used throughout the Scriptures.

- Bios – living life, livelihood, manner of living
- Psyche – life as in breathing, “existence”, contrasted to being dead, and not breathing
- Zoe – A God Life, Absolute Life, More than this Life (Bios & Psyche)

Zoe Life – Summarized

Life emanating (coming forth) from God, manifested (made known) by Christ.

John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

This Woman had Bios & Psyche – but was Empty and Dry / The Empty Water Pot was a Picture of Her Life

This woman had the bios life, she had a manner of living and it left her dry and empty. This woman had the psyche life, as she was alive, she was no doubt beautiful, she attracted men, there was a time that when she walked into a room all eyes turned to her, but now she doesn't want the eyes to turn to her because she can feel their stares pierce like knives, and here she is empty and dry, the empty water pot she brought to the well is a picture of her whole life. Now Jesus is offering her “zoe” life, and that can't be draw up from a well on the earth, but requested fountain of heaven, pouring from the throne of God, where Jesus is seated. You can have this water today, you can find absolute life today, through Jesus Christ.

There is no Conversion without Conviction (v16-18)

John 4:16 Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.”

John 4:17 The woman answered and said, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You have well said, ‘I have no husband,’

John 4:18 for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly.”

Why Call Husbands? / No Conversion without Conviction

Why did Jesus ask her to call her husband? Because there is no true conversion without conviction. Jesus doesn't say believe in me and go on living like you have before. This woman knows sexual immorality is an offense to God, even the God that her forefathers of this land have made and twisted from the true and living God. To all hearing today, salvation is free, but discipleship will cost you your life. God does not wink at sin, nor turn a blind eye to it, God is holy, and calls His people to be holy. There is no conversion without conviction; don't deceive yourself, and don't change your theology to fit your lifestyle.

Acts 3:19 (NKJV)¹⁹Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

1 Peter 1:15–16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ because it is written, “Be holy, for I am holy.”

Matthew 7:21–23 (NKJV) ²¹ “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

Worship Draws the Father to Us (19-24)

John 4:19 The woman said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.

John 4:20 Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.”

John 4:21 Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.

John 4:22 You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.

John 4:23 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

John 4:24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

Salvation is of the Jews

Salvation is of the Jews, for it is a Jewish root. Salvation is not for the Jews only, but salvation is for all, but through the Messiah Jesus, who was a Jew.

She Tries to Change Subject

She tries to change the subject, but Jesus just weaves the subject into the point He is making. She is empty, the world has left her empty, and Jesus is the Zoe Life she needs. She tries to change the subject; I was doing open air preaching in the Ukraine back in 1995, and I was using an interpreter. I was going for it, and then there is this guy who started to get all excited, so much he cant sit still, and he calls out to my interpreter in Russian, and they dialogue for a about 30 seconds, and I am like wow this is great he is going to get saved right here and now and what a witness to all the others listening. So after they are done talking my interpreter turns and says, he said he has a cousin who lives in New York, and by chance do you know a Joe in New York. Anyhoo.

Do You feel a Million Miles from God – Let Him find You

Verse 23 - for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. - The Father seeks worshipers. If this verse isn't underlined in your Bible, underline it now. Whenever you feel far from God, don't try to find Him. Let Him find you. He can find you a lot easier than you can find Him, so just start worshiping. With bended knee, lifted hand, and open heart, embrace Him through your praise. This is a real key for your Christian walk. When you feel God's a million miles away, worship. If it's in your car during lunch hour, if it's locked in your bathroom when everyone else is still asleep, if it's walking down the street—whatever it might take, get away and start worshiping. Start acknowledging the greatness and goodness of God. The Father is seeking those who do

Every Moment is a God Moment (v25-33)

John 4:25 The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming” (who is called Christ). “When He comes, He will tell us all things.”

John 4:26 Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am He.”

John 4:27 And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, “What do You seek?” or, “Why are You talking with her?”

John 4:28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men,

John 4:29 “Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?”

John 4:30 Then they went out of the city and came to Him.

John 4:31 In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.”

John 4:32 But He said to them, “I have food to eat of which you do not know.”

John 4:33 Therefore the disciples said to one another, “Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?”

John 4:34 Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.

The Disciples / Missing God Moments

We have seen the woman, Jesus, and now a third cast enters the stage before us, and it is the disciples. And what I see in them, is the missing of the “God Moments” of life. All day long for every one of us, like these disciples, God moments come and go, and how often we miss them because we are so focused on other things. In verse 27 they marveled that Jesus would be talking to this woman. They marvel because they must have had their preconceived ideas, prejudices, judgmentalism, of the people of Samaria, and woman.

Don’t Put God in a Box – Or People

These disciples didn’t think would work in this town. Can I say this, don’t put God in a box, don’t project who God will touch, who He will reach out to. And, don’t put people in a box. Don’t project who will be open, and who will be closed to His invitation. Know God wants to extend His invitation to every person, and believe that every person can be open to the Gospel. Chapter 3 we saw Nicodemus, he was rich, he was respected, he is moral, and he was religious, but he knew something was missing. Here this woman is meager (has to draw own water), she is rejected and scorned, she is immoral, and she is irreligious as she has her own form of religion. Yet both come to Jesus.

God Moment Going On – But Disciples Miss It

There is a God moment going on here, and look at their response to it, they say Jesus have some food. What I see here as I gather the whole story together is that these disciples are more focused on their immediate physical needs, rather than anything spiritual. I have to wonder what it took 12 men to go get food for 13. I think they all wanted to go to the market as a form of relaxation and entertainment, just like us going to the mall. I think it is safe to deduce they only had the physical on their mind, because they came back with food only. What do I mean by that is that they did not bring one person back with them, after going to the center of the town. They didn’t go and say to people, “hey do you know who is in your town right now”. See the people were a blur to them, they couldn’t see them for they only saw the physical before them, get some food.

So for Us God Moments Come and Go

So it is in our lives, God moments come and go before us, and we can totally miss them because we are busy, our mind has a different focus. Because we are increasing and He is decreasing. We are compartmentalizing our lives in here is when we do spiritual things, here is when we do work things, and here is when we do relaxing or recreation things, not realizing that each moment can be a God moment.

Consider Every Meeting, Game, Grocery Store a God Moment / Maybe just to Pray for

Catch this, and that is that every meeting is a God Moment. Watch how your life will change when you view that meeting at work as a God moment, rather than a work moment. When going to the grocery store, or pumping gas, or going to your kid’s soccer game, is a God moment. It is a God moment, because Jesus wants to meet them. Maybe Jesus just wants you to make is a God moment by praying for them. Looking at that guy across the table and praying that the Lord would touch his heart, or that lady serving food at the restaurant and asking the Lord bless her marriage, asking the Lord is she a woman at the well, does she have all the world promotes but inside she is empty and ready to call it quits on her marriage. Maybe your God moment is to pray for them, or maybe God will open up to share with them. Regardless, it is a God Moment.

Street Ministry in CA

I have had God Moments where the Lord literally spoke to me and said go right. Yea I was doing street ministry one night in Southern CA and I came to a busy intersection and the Lord spoke to me to go right, I started to go right but the traffic was heavy to cross the street, so I said that probably was just me and my thoughts, I will go left as that way is clear and easy. I made it about 20 feet and the Lord spoke again, he said “I told you to go right”. So I abruptly turned and started heading to the right. I fought through the heavy traffic, made my crossing, got to the other side, and about 20 feet down the road was 3 teenagers and their dad. I asked the dad if I could share the good news of Jesus with his kids, he said sure, and I shared Christ, and at the end all three kids said they wanted to ask Jesus into their hearts, and the dad me too. So all 4 prayed to receive Jesus that night as Lord and Savior.

This week – Just Asked and Had Amazing Moments

But this week, I just prayed each day, Lord help to see the God moments, and open the opportunities for God moments, and every day this week I came home to tell Renee a story of an amazing God moment I had had, moments I thought were impossible. But hear this, here is the beauty of the God Moment, and what I found is while I pray for them, wait for them, and have them..... I found a wonderful dynamic, He increased and I decreased. I found myself continually thinking of Him, I found myself continually watching my tongue, extending gentleness and kindness, and thus I found Jesus flowing through me and a fresh and powerful ways every day.

How Many God Moments will you Have this Week? / How many will you Miss?

How many God moments will you have today, and how many will you miss because people become a blur. Don't let people become a blur.

John 4:34-54

Last Week / Lonely Woman at the Well / Wells of the World / Samaria Prejudice

So last week we made it all the way through verse 33 we saw that Jesus needed to go through Samaria because there was a lonely woman there. The world would see beauty and desire, but Jesus knew that she was left empty and thirsty. That empty water pot that she brought was a picture of her life empty dry as she continually drew from the wells of the world and continually came up empty continually and had to go back to the wells of the world and continually came up dry. So then here we see Jesus comes in the Samaria region that the Jews had rejected and there was much prejudice and animosity towards them and Jesus has to go through, Jesus has to meet this woman and Jesus meets her and tells her all that she ever did and still invited her to come and drink from the water of life to enjoy him.

She is a Picture of Us / Jesus extends Himself to Her

So it's a picture of us today as anyone who would really sit back and consider their lives would consider and see the world leaves us empty and the world leaves us dry there's nothing that this world can offer us that would last or something inside of us that left us longing and wanting more and we met Jesus extending himself and he said, drink from the waters of life drink from the water of heaven and we came and we saw we enjoyed this new life and so we pick up today here in verse 34 of us to start reading from there, but let's back up to verse 25 for context.

John 4:25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things."

John 4:26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."

John 4:27 And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?"

John 4:28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men,

John 4:29 "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"

John 4:30 Then they went out of the city and came to Him.

John 4:31 In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."

John 4:32 But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know."

John 4:33 Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?"

John 4:34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work."

Jesus is Revived by doing Work of Father

Verse 34 - Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work - When the disciples arrived with food, Jesus was no longer hungry because He had experienced revival, refreshment, and renewal as a result of reaching out. "My meat," said Jesus—"that which sustains, refreshes, and nourishes Me—is to do My Father's will and to finish His work." Want to be revived, is your walk a little dry and weary, do the work of the Father and you will find yourself revived.

John 4:6 (NKJV) ⁶Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.

Finish the Work / Billy Graham

Verse 34: "Jesus says, 'My food is do the will of him who sent me,'" and underline this, ... 'and to finish his work.'" This is kind of a springboard, but I heard a story of Amy Graham, Billy Graham's daughter, and they said, "What's it like being Billy's daughter?" She said it was wonderful. She goes, "But he, every moment, is a constant reminder of someone who just lives everything for Jesus, someone who's so dedicated and focused on Jesus." She goes, "He, in his life and his way, he wants to know how can I please God walking from the living room to the kitchen to get a soda and bring it back. That's the level of detail that, Lord, in all that I do, even the smallest things. How can I be pleasing to you? That just kind of challenged me beyond more than I can imagine of, do I live in that consciousness of God? I know it can sound extreme, "... from the kitchen to the living room," but can I just consider it? How about from the office to the meeting? How about from the pulpit to the coffee area? How about the walk around the neighborhood? In all that I do, Lord, to be pleasing to you in everything, my thoughts, my words, my eyes, my hands and what I do with them.

Should not My Food be to do the Will of Father – to Please Him in Every Detail of my Life

He must increase, and I must decrease. Should not my life be like that of Jesus' that every detail of my life is to please the Father, to bring Him glory. Should that not be what I live for.....even going from the living room to the kitchen.

Finish the Work – Even the Hard Work / Use Me – Even in the Hard Places

Jesus says finish the work. Hey, don't change what God has before you just because it's hard. You change if God tells you to change but you don't change because things are getting hard and things are becoming difficult. You change if God says, "I want you to change this job. I want you to change where you live."

Remember God's put you in a place to do the work that he has before you because someone has to be there. If you leave then whose there. Someone always has to be there to represent the Lord and be the voice of the Lord and be the light in the dark place. Finish the work. Don't quit, don't change.

When you're in that hard place and you're in that difficult place then look unto the Lord and say, "Use me, Lord. Use me as I am, use me where I am, use me with what I am. I know I'm not much Lord, I know I'm not qualified with all the great qualifications of some of the greats but I know I can make a difference because your spirit dwells in me and I can be as filled with the Holy Spirit as anyone else can and you're just looking vessels. You're just looking for someone to stand in the gap." Cry out to the Lord, beg the Lord, "Use me." You've got to ask him and you've got to be willing to be used even when it's difficult.

John 4:35 Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!

The Field is White / Turbans and Robes

Verse 35 - Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! - See with me in your mind's eye the Samaritan men to whom the women had witnessed coming toward Jesus, dressed in turbans and robes of white. What harvest was white and ready to reap? To which harvest was Jesus referring? The field of the Samaritans. The same is true today. The people in our culture who are ignored and forgotten, those no one else wants to be around, those others we pass by are the ones who are ripe for the picking.

4 Months – was a Saying / Revival – a Word of Wait, Not Today / Procrastinate – no Hurry / It always Right Time

So this saying, "Are there not still four months before the harvest and Jesus will say, 'Lift your eyes now and look at the harvest'", it was the saying of the day. It was a common saying. How would I liken to today? Man says things such as, "Well, when in Rome." The indication there is well, when you're in Rome you do what they do in Rome. They're trying to make an application. The situation that you're in and the environment you find you just go along with whatever the environment is. I don't like that saying when in Rome. We should be when in Christ do what Christ would do.

Jesus really making a statement against that saying of the day, "Is there not four months until the harvest." It was the saying of the day meaning hey, be patient. Slow down. Isn't there four months until the harvest? Meaning you plant and you wait four months. Jesus isn't literally saying, "Hey, there's four months to go because the harvest just happened." It wasn't like just plant at the fields and their four months ago and Jesus is making a reference to that.

It's a saying of the day, "Hey, slow down. You just plant it. Now you got to just wait. You got to just sit. You got to just relax. Don't rush things. Slow down." Jesus doesn't like that statement. He's telling them in this way: There's no need to wait. There's no need to procrastinate. The harvest is here upon you. Don't sit and say, "Oh in four months we'll be ready."

You know there's a word and we use it all the time and the word is revival. You know what that word revival always indicates? Future. It's never today. We're always praying for a revival that's going to happen someday in the future rather than a revival right now, rather than people just saying, "I want to have the revival right now in my heart. I'm going to celebrate Jesus right now. I am going to live all out for Jesus. I'm going to tell everybody about Jesus."

The problem with the word revival is so much, it brings the word procrastination. A word of waiting. Well, we want revival but it ain't going to happen today. It's not going to happen anytime in the near future but we're going to pray for it, we're going to hope for it.

Jesus says, "No. Revival is now. Today. Seize today. Don't be looking for tomorrow." So much in the Christian world is we're always waiting for tomorrow I can go and glean that harvest. The picture is here comes all this men with their long flowing white robes coming up on the hill to hear and see Jesus. Jesus is pointing to his disciples and he's saying, "Look. Revival is before you right now. There's a harvest before you right now."

Don't see a blur. Don't think, "Oh, this is good. We're going to go make a plan on how to form a church and then we'll do some demographic and survey and then we'll find a perfect place to build this church. Then we'll plan some crusades and then we'll draw people to the crusades and then we'll plant them into the church." All of it is a planning of tomorrow, whereas Jesus says, "No. Today. It's before you today." Glean it. Grab it today because you never know what tomorrow might bring.

Jesus is telling these disciples, "You don't have to wait for the right time because it's always the right time." I so much always procrastinate him. Always I will go do this witnessing at this point and this time and I procrastinate. What I need under me is a continual fire and reminder that the great commission is today. It doesn't have conditions of tomorrow.

The great commission is today and I'm called to it today. I need to beg the Lord because of my laziness and my lack of boldness and my empathy towards the law lost that Lord light a fire under me that I would see that today here comes the flowing robes.

Here comes the people. There's women at the well all over the place waiting to hear. Then there's people coming and go, "Tell me what you told her. I want to hear the same things because that's what I need in my life." The great commission is today, not four months from now.

My job is to just get into the harvest field and start to work. It's not up to me who comes, who's gathered in during the harvest. All that I have to do is get myself into the harvest field and be there to work whatever that would be. I know there's times where there is a right reaping ready to take and I can step right into that field and be a part of that response.

There's other times I know it's going to take weeks, months, years to continually build and harvest the peak and the plant and the weeds out to water and to turn over the soil in this person's life until they're ready and fully understand.

I See my Need to Continually Change my Routine / Take Different Routes

Jesus had to go through Samaria. You know what I found, speaking of this woman at the well? I need to go out of my way. I need to drive a different way to work. I drive the same way to work every day. I take the same route every day, and the Lord has just been showing me ... I get gas at the same place. I do my grocery shopping at the same place. I drop my laundry off at the same place. The Lord is just speaking to me that you need to go out of your way. You need to go through some area sometime. Take a different route to work, get gas at a different gas station, meet someone else new, offer them an invitation to church or to come to Harvest America. I take the same routes in the hallways to go to my meetings, and the Lord's speaking, you need to go a different route so you can meet someone else. I see the same people every day. I can work with 3,000 people but I pass the same 100 people every day. So the Lord just speaks, go a different route. I go to the same shopping center. The Lord speaks, go to a different shopping center. Meet different people. Look for the God moment and be ready for a God moment. It's going to require me to go out of my way. It's going to require me to go out of my routine, and it's good to break routines.

John 4:4 (NKJV) ⁴But He needed to go through Samaria.

He who Wins Souls is Wise (v34-38)

John 4:36 And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.

John 4:37 For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.'

John 4:38 I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors."

People Coming because Jesus is There / Woman Experienced Unconditional Love

Verse 35, what I want you to see here is, the people are coming. Because Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the world. That's why the people are coming. There was a sign, the sign was an immoral woman who knows she's

forgiven. She has this forgiveness, so she comes into this town and she tells the whole town. Because when you know that your forgiven there's spring in your step.

As the Scriptures say, "Blessed is the man whose sins are forgiven, covered." Have you Christian, enjoyed that forgiveness today? Do you remember that forgiveness? Would you just remember that that forgiveness is unconditional. It's based on His word, it's not on your performance.

Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the world. He comes with unconditional love, and this woman can go into a town and say, "All I ever did, He knew, and yet He still says, "Come to me.", He still offered me living water, He still offered me a personal relationship with Him. He still received me as His daughter. He didn't look down at me, He didn't bring up my past and hold it against me. He showed me my past, and showed me how the things of the world constantly left me dry and empty, but He offered me a new beginning and a new life."

This unconditional love moves, and just explodes in our heart, and we go and we share that with people. The people are coming because Jesus is there. That's the reason that anyone would come to the Gospel, because Jesus is there.

We don't have to put the burden on us, people aren't coming to the Gospel because of us. They didn't come because of the Disciples, that's for sure, the Disciples didn't invite anyone. These people come because Jesus is there. These people came because this woman knew and experienced unconditional love and it was enough for her to just speak, "Come and see for yourself. All that I ever did, and he still said to me, "Come.""

He who Wins Souls is Wise

Verse 36 - And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. - We rejoice, because....."He that winneth souls is wise," Solomon declared (Proverbs 11:30). Daniel said the one who turns many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever (Daniel 12:3). Jesus says he who reaps presently shall receive wages eternally.

Proverbs 11:30 (NKJV) ³⁰The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who wins souls is wise.

Daniel 12:3 (NKJV) ³Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.

We Need to Believe – That there are Woman at Wells all over our City / No Pressure on Us

Nations build borders. Jesus has no borders. Jesus has a world without borders. We need to see our city without borders, our neighborhoods without borders. Believe that any time there's a woman at the well and there's a town that's ready to receive. Again, the pressure is not on us, John 6:44, Jesus will say, "No one comes to the son unless drawn by the father." It's God who draws the people, and that's where we get to reap where we have not sown. God might call us to go labor so that someone else can reap, and I'm okay with that. Some people aren't okay with that. They believe the labor should come with the reward, but sometimes God will put you in a place you just labor. You work and someone else comes and harvests. They get the name. They get the recognition. That's how God works. We need to be okay with that.

John 6:44 (NKJV) ⁴⁴No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

Jesus is the Christ, the Savior of the World (v39-42)

John 4:39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did."

John 4:40 So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.

John 4:41 And many more believed because of His own word.

John 4:42 Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."

He is the Savior – Who do you Say that He is?

In Verse 42: "Now we believe, they say, not because of what you said for ourselves, for we ourselves have heard him and we know that he is indeed the Christ, the savior of the world." They make a recognition who Jesus is, but this verse kind of leaves it open with a question, to read that verse and to read their response, should have every

person make a question to themselves, so who do I think he is? Jesus will even ask Peter, "Who do people say that I am?" Then he'll turn the question to Peter and go, "Well, who do you say that I am?" Peter will come and answer, "You are the Christ." I think everybody has to make a decision who he is. Is he the Christ? Is he the savior of the world? So the question is opened, and the question is ready for all men to decide and receive for themselves.

No Sinners Prayer

Notice no sinners prayer, and no altar call. When the Word of God pierces a heart, people see He is the Christ, He is the Savior of the world.

More Believed

Verse 41 - And many more believed because of His own word. – Many Believed.

Definition of Believe / The Gospel

What does it mean to believe? It is more than just a statement of I believe. Let me save you 4 years of seminary and boil it down. Believe means to Recognize, Repent, and Receive.

- Recognize – Recognize you sin offends and separates you from the Holy God.
- Repent – being willing to turn from your sin, and turn to follow God.
- Receive – to humble oneself and say Lord I need a Savior, come into my life and save me; Lord I give you my life.

That is believing unto salvation, that is being born again, that is the new beginning. It is not rehabilitation, but regeneration, a washing away of sin and Jesus coming in and taking up residence within you, the kingdom of God is here. Jesus said you must be born of water and blood (3:5). The blood a picture of the punishment of sin which Jesus took for "whosoever will receive it", and the water a picture of being totally cleansed, washed anew, and just as when the water breaks in child birthing, when the water breaks upon whoever believes they are birthed into the kingdom of God.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Acts 3:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

Romans 10:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

John 3:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

John 4:43 Now after the two days He departed from there and went to Galilee.

2 Days / Imagine the People – Unconditional Love / Jesus Breaking Disciples Prejudice / No Borders

Verse 43 said they stayed two more days. You know what Jesus is doing here, one of the things He's doing here, of course He's ministering to these people, and you can just imagine that it was two days of people just constantly wanting to be with Him. Enjoying unconditional love, receiving Him, asking questions about the Kingdom.

One of the things that Jesus is doing though, he's breaking his Disciples, He's breaking them of their prejudice, He's opening their eyes to an understanding that God doesn't have boundaries, He doesn't have border. Nations have borders, God has not borders.

He wants to remove them of their prejudice, their resentment, their predisposition their judgementalism, all the things that they have that are so not Jesus. Early in the ministry He's showing, "I have no borders, I have no boundary. I put nobody in a box, and don't you put anybody in a box, and don't put God into a box. Because God is always going to do over and abundant of anything that we could ever think."

It's says here in the Scriptures, that when these Disciples seen him talking to a woman, let alone a Samaritan woman, they are marveled. It's a word that just says, "Jaw-dropping." They are blown away that Jesus would reach out to this woman. How beautiful this picture is.

I've been to Russia, I've been to the Middle East. I've met Palestinians, I've met Russians, I met people from Central America. I met people from communist Nations, and I want to tell you, yeah, I would not trust the Russian government for anything, ever.

Russia, Vladimir Putin, they are a threat to the peace of mankind. The aggression is just displayed clearly of what's going on in the Ukraine. Putin the puppet master trying to cause civil unrest so he can come in and save the day. We're all afraid to rise up and do anything, they say, "Don't do it." What a picture of Ezekiel 38 and 39, where they say, "The world just watches on, and says, "Don't do that.""

But no one intervenes, the world is tired of war. The only people who are not tired of war are the war mongers. They live for war. They live for that power. That's why that will be such a dramatic picture in these last days. People are just tired of war, they're tired of death, they are tired of fighting. They don't want to fight no more.

Then here comes war mongers, they love the fight, they love the war, they love the aggression. Now you have someone who's fueled by their love against those who are fueled by their exhaustion by it. The exhaustion can't rise up to the energy of the war monger.

Russia is definitely a threat to the peace of the whole world right now. We'll keep an eye on that, but you know what I want to say, I've been to Russia and the most of the people, the ninety percentile that I meet, they just want to do what we want to do, "I just want to live a peaceable life. I just want to have a job that puts food on the table and clothes on my childrens' back."

Ninety percent of them don't care about being rich, they just want to be content. They want to have what they need to live. They're not war mongers, they're not haters. I've met them, I've walked the streets with them, I've sat and had tea with them. I've had times of laughter, and times of sorrow with them, as I hear their life and go visit the past of their world and their country, that has been filled with so much war. They're just beautiful people. They're just sweet people.

I was there in 1993 right after the coup attempt, I've got pictures of myself outside the smoked ... What would be the equivalent to their White House, and there I am standing outside of it.

It was an amazing day, but as I talked to people I would ask them, "What do you want? What would you like? What government would you like? Communism? Democracy? Some mixture form of it?" Almost all of them said, "It wouldn't matter, it doesn't matter, it's not going to change our life at all. Things will always just be the same."

My point that I make is they're just beautiful people. The people of Central America, they're just beautiful people. The people of Mexico, they're just beautiful people. The people of Maryland, Anne Arundel County, Pasadena, Glen Burnie, they're just beautiful people.

I think it's important for us to see people not borders. To see souls and not counterparts that are against us. We have to be wise in our policies as a Nation, but may we see the beauty of the people.

That's what Jesus is doing here, He's breaking these Disciples down. See people not borders. They want unconditional love, they want the same thing you want, unconditional love. They want to know that they're forgiven. They want to know that they can have life and a peace with God, the same thing that we want.

Jesus is breaking down their judgementalism so that He can open them up, because He will never take their Gospel to the rest of the world if they are limited by the borders, and the people, and the policies.

I know our borders need to be secured, but I tell you, I've been to Mexico and Central America and I've held those kids in my hand. I've sat in the Orphanages and they're beautiful, but I tell you I fear the gangs and I fear the thugs.

I walked down the street and I've had, in Central America, two men (probably part of a gang) following behind me with a burlap bag over their arm and their arm extended an extra twelve inches from their hand. It didn't take me much to know what was the plan and I literally stop and turn in the street, and I say, "I know, I know what you're looking ..." and I'm speaking in the most broken Spanish you can imagine, I said, "... but I have no money I was robbed already last night. I don't have any money left in me, so there's nothing else to get out of me."

Then they just looked at each other, shrugged their shoulders and walked away. What was under the burlap bag was a billy club. Broad daylight, to club me and to steal me.

Yeah, I fear those people and I've had the experience of those people and I'll be the first to say we need to secure our borders, we got to make sure that it's not open to violence.

But here Jesus is breaking His disciples of seeing borders and walls, and to see people, real people, not blurs, but hearts that need Jesus.

John 4:44 For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.

Samaria Believed on Word – Cana wanted Signs

In Verse 44, “Jesus says, ‘The prophet without honor,’” and the point that he's making here is he's just left Samaria. It's not his region. He's heading into Canaan, which is his hometown. He's going to say, "A prophet's not without honor," and he's correlating between two in that in Samaria they believed him because of the word, not because of a sign. You can say the immoral woman was a sign, but that was based on the word of unconditional love and forgiveness. Here in his hometown he's not honored or not. "Tell us your word and we'll go live by it." They want to see signs. "Show us a sign and we'll believe. That's how we'll believe that you're a prophet." We're going to see a tie-in with this nobleman, though. He's going to see a miracle, but he's going to have to believe it based on the word of God first.

Jesus was a Doer of the World / We must be Doers of the World

It must have been hard for Jesus to leave the revival in Samaria—where people were responding and folks were getting saved—to return to Galilee, where He knew He would not be received in the same way. Why, then, did He go to Galilee? Matthew 4:12–16 gives us a clue. You see, the prophet Isaiah predicted Messiah would go into the dark region called “Galilee of the nations.” Truly, it was an area of darkness and death, for not only was Galilee far removed from Jerusalem, the center of worship, it was also constantly attacked and overrun by Gentiles. Yet Isaiah prophesied that when Messiah came, He would go to this very place and shine brightly (Isaiah 9:1, 2). Therefore, I believe Jesus returned to Galilee because He understood what the Word said about His ministry. Think through this with me. The Scriptures to Jesus were not only predictive, but directive. That is, when Jesus read the Scriptures, He found not only predictions about His ministry, but direction for His ministry. As He matured in His understanding, He realized increasingly that the prophecies written about Him must be fulfilled by Him. Thus, Jesus was not just a hearer of the Word, He was the quintessential Doer of the Word. The great need for the church corporately as well as for you and me personally is not just to be hearers of the Scriptures but to do them. Jesus would later say, “Happy are ye if ye do these things” (John 13:17). Happiness does not come from hearing Scripture or agreeing with theology. Happiness comes when we get it in gear and carry out the things the Word directs us to do. Jesus is a doer of the word, and that's for sure. To be not hearers of the word only but to be doers of the word.

Matthew 4:12–16 (NKJV) ¹²Now when Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, He departed to Galilee.

¹³And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali,

¹⁴that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying:

¹⁵“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles:

¹⁶The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned.”

James 1:22 (NKJV) ²²But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

John 4:45 So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast.

They Recognize Work in Jerusalem – but Not Samaria / If you don't – Then You Don't know Power of His Love

In Verse 45, they make note that they see Jesus for the miracles that he did in Jerusalem when he was down there at the Passover feast, no doubt referring to the turning over of the tables and was standing toe to toe, the religious leaders and all they're ... Literally, they had military might behind them with the temple guards and yet nobody would touch him, and the word gets out. Jesus stood and face to face and challenged them about turning the Father's house into a den of thieves instead of a house of prayer and a house of refuge for people.

But notice in Verse 45 through 47, they don't recognize the work that Jesus did in Samaria. They didn't want to recognize the work that Jesus did in Samaria, because they themselves have this prejudice against the people of Samaria, and they don't want to hear that God would stop at Samaria and reach out to these people.

You know, some people have a problem that Jesus would save a Samaritan. We can read the bible and go, "What? How could they?" But you know what? You go around, you find some professing Christians and you'll start seeing it alive and well today when good Christians, they'll be upset when they hear that some person who was

immoral, even vile, that would be forgiven. They think that the sin should be judged and it should be judged for eternity, that no forgiveness should come.

People reject and will not believe that one of the greatest serial killers and I mean greatest as in the most vile, retched acts of humanity, a man named Ted Bundy (at least 30 murders), came to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Dr. James Dobson of Focus on the Family, you can hear his story as he was the one who led Ted Bundy to the Lord, and Ted Bundy believed all the way.

People today, they get upset that people can claim to be born again. They think it's a cop-out. I just had a conversation this week where somebody says, "People say they're born again because they think that entitles them to unconditional forgiveness. No, to be a Christian, you have to live it out and you have to be perfect and you can't do these type of thing."

Of course, their definition of "perfect" is much different than Jesus'. Their definition of "perfect" is that you don't murder and you don't kill and you don't rape, but it's okay to be a drunkard, to be sexually immoral and those type of things. Of course, this week, it's domestic violence. Nobody gets unconditional love if they're guilty of domestic violence.

People today, professing Christians, they'll say there's no way that someone like Ted Bundy could be forgiven. Son of Sam, a serial killer in New York. You know who he listens to? It's pretty funny. He's given his life to Christ. He held New York City in a terror and paralyzed the city back in the '70's. He has ... I forget. I think his prison sentence is 383 years. Basically, he'll never see the world again.

But he gave his life to Christ, and he has a website telling his story, telling the darkness of his life, and then he tells a story of how Christ stepped in and met him through a prisoner who was bold enough ... He said he hated the prisoner, but the guy just kept coming and being friends to him and kept sharing his faith and living out his faith.

Then Son of Sam, David Berkowitz, he says, one day the prisoner read him a verse. It was our verse from this week, Psalm 34:6, and it says, "The poor man cried out and the Lord heard him and saved him out of all his troubles." He said he kept hearing that passage over and over in his cell that night, and he got down on his knees and he said, "Could this be true for me too, even with all my heinous crimes?" He said the Lord met him and he knew forgiveness.

He now leads others to Christ in prison. He tells his story of forgiveness. Someone has a web page to carry his story. He serves as an assistant to the prison chaplain, administering to the other prisoners.

He now gets rejected for his faith. He now gets mocked for his faith because he is so gentle and kind now. Instead of fearing him for the murderer that he is and the violence that he is, people actually mock him because they're not afraid of him because he's so timid now and gentle, only by the work of Christ. He started a ministry in the prison for prisoners who have special needs, and he ministers to them. It's quite a story.

If that bothers you and upsets you, that Ted Bundy can be forgiven, that David Berkowitz can be forgiven, that the woman at the well could be forgiven, unconditionally, then you don't know the depths of the power of the gospel. You don't know the love of Jesus, that his love is enough and great enough to forgive Ted Bundy, David Berkowitz, the woman at the well, and me, your pastor.

If you don't know that his blood is rich enough to buy all those names mentioned above out of hell, that's how powerful his blood is and how deep his love is. He's great enough to do these things.

John 4:46 So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum.

John 4:47 When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

The Bow Wave

You see I can tell you that there's a bow wave that went before Jesus because here this nobleman, he's 25 miles, 20, 25 miles north of Cana there in Capernaum but the word had already reached that Jesus was in town, that Jesus was coming into the region and he starts making his way from the north to the south. Jesus is moving from the south to the north. He's moving from Samaria up into Cana. Word of him is going before him, people are hearing, people are coming but these people when the Galilee region, they're not looking and they're not receiving what Jesus just did in Samaria.

Nobleman Rich, Respected, Revered - Devastated

Here is this nobleman, we can gather much just looking at the historical documents and writings of the time, he's a nobleman meaning he supported the king, he was on the king's staff. It doesn't necessarily mean that he was of Jewish descent or Jewish religion, he was just a nobleman up there and so we can gather he was respected, revered, feared, financially well off and we can put ourselves in this place and consider it was our son, he would've poured everything that he had. He would've had the greatest physicians in that area come to look at his son. He would've paid whatever the price was to get the best there to come and try to heal his son, pull him out of what we can see was a fever.

He, like us, would've poured everything that he had, the love of his life, is fading away and here Jesus is down in Cana in Galilee. Here this nobleman, he's north up in Capernaum, it's about 20 miles on a straight shot. It's not how life worked in those days, weaving back and forth on the paths. It could have been 25 miles away if not more. Here he is, he's making a beeline to Jesus, all of his money, all of his connections, everything that he had comes to nothing. You know death is the great equalizer in all of our lives because it is a place that in the end we have no ultimate say over, we have no ultimate answer to and response to in this world. We take death as it's dealt to us and we have to accept it unless we look to Jesus.

Here he comes, this nobleman, he's looking into Jesus, he's heard about Jesus and mighty works and he's on his way to make it to Jesus. Correlation, two miracles there in Cana of Galilee, the turning the water into wine, we've studied that back in chapter two and we saw wine, a symbol of joy, as Jesus can take a washed up life, a diluted life and turn it into pure joy. Then the great equalizer, death that we all face, Jesus shows that he has power over death. Two miracles in Cana, present life, joy, eternal life, he has the power to give us but it come through the believing and receiving part.

John 4:48 Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe."

John 4:49 The nobleman said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies!"

I was in Love with Camden Day he was Born / Holds my Heart in his Hand / This Nobleman no Different

I was in love with Camden the first day he was born. Now here, eight years later, obviously my love has increased every day. He takes my heart away. I never get tired looking at his face. I just ... So many times just sit there and go, "I can't believe that this is my gift of life and love that has been given to me."

I just stare at his face. I love the beauty of it. He grips my heart. It's been eight years since I watched his chest heave up and heave down, as he gasped for air there in intensive care. The day he was born we held him, Renee held him, for all of about thirteen seconds. I didn't get to hold him at all.

They whisked him away and put him into a special incubator and there he was, gasping for air to breathe. I keep the bill on my desk to remind me of what that day was like. I have a bill for resuscitation eight years ago.

I was in love with him then. On my knees before the Lord, "Please Lord, let him live. Please Lord, let me have this gift of life and love." God was so good to me. He put His hand upon Camden, upon those physicians, and He brought Camden through it. Two weeks in intensive care, as he was born five weeks premature.

You see I love Camden. Even from day one. Now eight years later he holds my heart in his hand.

We are no different from this Nobleman, this is his son. His son holds dad's heart in his hand. Dad's willing to trade away all respect, and run to Jesus, and humble himself before Jesus. He's willing to give away all gold that he has, willing to give away his position. There's a possibility that when word of this gets back to the King this Nobleman loses his job. For what would be considered humiliating the Kingdom by following this man who they consider already a threat to the Kingdom.

Jesus in Story seems Distant – But nobody is Unknown to Him – His Heart Beats for them / He Coming 4 you

Not much has changed today as Kings and Princes try to hold on to their Kingdom, so they try to silence Jesus. Make him out to be a heretic, make him out to be a threat. When all that Jesus does is bring unity, life, and love for those who will come to him.

I want you to understand because Jesus can seem, in our stories that we read, like he's so distant, like these people that are coming to Him are all unknown to Him. He's God, His heart beats for these people.

He is Father, Son, Holy Spirit, not three individuals but three-in-one. Don't ask me how it can be, but Psalm 139 is true, "He forms everyone in their mother's womb and he stands in awe of them."

God does as he creates, as he steps back, all the way back in the garden I picture what it must have been like after God created Adam. Willing to get his hands dirty and form Adam from the dirt, the dust of the ground. Then lean forward and breathe, face-to-face, the breath of life into Adam. He must have stood, and raised him up, and stood in awe going, "Amazing creation."

On day one Adam gripped God's heart. One day one you gripped God's heart. He stood in awe of you. In our story today, and our story last week, God created that woman at the well. His heart was so rich and so deep for her. As a Father, the woman held His heart in her hands, and how Jesus would be moved. All my life, all your life, I have been waiting for this moment that we would become one together and you would recognize me, and you would receive me.

When this Father, this Nobleman comes, this boy's no stranger to Jesus. This boy holds Jesus's heart in his own hands. Jesus is doing more than a miracle to prove His deity. Jesus, He has a heart for this boy.

This is a father whose child holds his heart in his hand. How his heart is breaking to be separated. You know, you felt distant from the Lord today, would you know that you hold his heart in your hand. He's so in love with you. He's so passionate for you. He just wants to be with you. You take His breath away.

If you don't know Jesus, he's coming for you, he's coming out of his way for you. He wants to meet you along the way. He'll meet you at the well, and listen to your story and your heart. He knows your story, and he still wants you, and still wants to receive you. He'll even allow these hardships of the fallen world into your life, so that the eternal life will be established. That the forever life, this world is a blink and it's over, eternity is eternity. He wants us to spend it with him.

Nobody in this World

There is nobody in this world, there is nobody in this room, that does not grip the heart of God. He loves you, He loves them, and He extends His arms to all and says come to Me, I want a personal relationship with you.

Matthew 11:28–30 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

Pastor Saeed

May we remember to pray for Pastor Saeed imprisoned in Iran. This will be the third year that he will miss his child's birthday. All for the sake of the Gospel. May we pray for him, that the Lord would comfort him, comfort his child, comfort his family. How hard this must be, keep him in your prayers. In fact, let's pray for him right now.

John 4:50 Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your son lives." So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way.

Take Jesus' at His Word

Jesus severely tested this man's faith, forcing him to believe in Jesus' word alone. But the man took Jesus at His word and departed (NIV). All Jesus gave him to trust in was His word, but real faith is simply that—taking Jesus at His word. What difference would it make in our lives if we really believed what Jesus says?

John 4:51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, "Your son lives!"

John 4:52 Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him."

John 4:53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives." And he himself believed, and his whole household.

Story of Street Ministry in CA

Verse 52 just reminded me of one time I was doing street ministry in California, and man, we were under a war and a tremendous battle, and we were just going toe to toe with Satan. I can't even remember the whole story. I think it might have been the time someone pulled a gun on us or pulled a knife on us, it was crazy stories, crazy life. It was always, no matter how tired I was, I always came back revived and rejuvenated from going out and going into the battlefield like that. We were battling one day, and it was fierce, and then a peace came over the situation. God did a mighty work. It was a total God moment, total God opportunity that came before us.

Two days later I came across a buddy. He goes, "Ray, man, I just want to let you know, on Saturday I just felt the spirit of the Lord come upon me to pray for you, so I just stopped what I was doing and grabbed a couple people and we just started praying for you." He goes, "What was going on Saturday? Anything?"

I told him the story of what was going on on the street and the battle. I go, "What time was it?" It was something like, he goes, "It was four o'clock." I go, "Oh, wow, we were in the battle and the battle was raging at three o'clock, but it was over by then." It's just interesting. Then we stopped for a second. We go, "Wait a minute. You were in New Mexico or Arizona." He goes, "Right." We go, "So there's a one-hour time difference." We added the time difference, and you know what it came out to be. It was the exact moment. It was the exact moment. It's an amazing moment.

Life is exciting when you follow Jesus. When you just lay yourself out there. You say, "Lord, use me." Then when we finish the work, I know it's hard, but I'm not going to quit. I know it's challenging, but I'm not giving up.

Not till Verse 52 we Know it is a Fever / We can Limit God on His Power

Verse 50 ... We don't know what the ailment is until Verse 52, but Jesus heals without knowing the ailment. It was a fever, whatever it was. It could have been typhoid fever. It could have been some type of disease, a bacteria. Jesus doesn't need to know the details, though he does. I think we see the point is, we think we can rack and stack what God can heal and can't heal. We think, God, you can heal this ache and pain, but, oh, its cancer and God will never heal cancer. We've heard story after story of people being healed of cancer.

John 4:53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives." And he himself believed, and his whole household.

Sometimes God working a Greater Work than Healing

Sometimes God doesn't heal and sometimes because he's working a greater work. He's working an everlasting and a greater work.

Camden and the Death of Betty

We all want miracles, and there are times miracle do not come as we want them to, but God is always do a greater work. He did these signs and miracles we read here in the Book of John, so that we might believe.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;* ³¹ *but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*

There was an 86 year old woman we were visiting this past month, she was bedridden, waiting to go home to be with Lord as she had untreatable pancreatic cancer. Camden went with Renee several times to visit her in her bed. A few days ago she went into glory. Renee told Camden that Miss Betty went home to be with Jesus. Camden from the backseat of the car:

- Mama is Miss Betty healed now?
- Silence, then a few moments later
 - Can Miss Betty walk now?
 - Mama, is Miss Betty young again? (from the movie Heaven for Real, as the child says there are no old people in heaven, as everyone is young).

God is doing a work greater than today, as great as today is, He is doing an everlasting work.

Sometimes because When Weak – He is Strong

Sometimes God doesn't relieve the painful situation in our life because he knows that when I am weak, then I am strong, as Paul would say, that the suffering produces a humility, that the suffering puts us in a place that we would seek him more. Sometimes we could find ourselves not seeking the Lord if all the finances came in. Sometimes nobody will notice Christ in us, until the trial and suffering, and they see our faith hold strong.

2 Corinthians 12:7–10 (NKJV) ⁷ *And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.* ⁸ *Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me.* ⁹ *And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will*

rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. ¹⁰ Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Sometimes it is Because it is a Fallen World / Remove Sin to Remove Fallen World

But let me caveat that. Sometimes it's just a fallen world, and we live in that. God's not angry with you. God's not punishing you. God's not, "I'm going to make you sweat until you break." He's not like that. The fallen world happens and God uses the fallen world. Then sometimes God just intervenes in the fallen world so that he can show himself strong. Sometimes he just rides up, walks up, better said, like this story here, and he intervenes.

There's a lot of people in that region who were sick and he didn't intervene, because Jesus had a singular mission and it's still the singular mission, and that is redeem man from the fallen world. Maybe you wonder and you go, "Why doesn't he intervene right now? Why doesn't he stop the world? Why doesn't he stop this cancer? Why doesn't he stop Ebola? Why doesn't he stop starvation?"

Because all those things are an outcome of the fallen world. They're part of sin that's in the world. For Jesus to overcome all those, to wipe all those out, he has to remove sin from the world. I think you're following where I'm going. For him to remove the sin from the world means he has to remove the sinners from the world. Once he removes the sinners from the world there is no world. That's why he doesn't wipe out all these things, because then he would have to remove all from the world.

Remove the Fallen from the Fall

In order to bring the world back to perfection, back to how it was before Adam fell, that perfect state where there was no hurricanes, no cancer, no disease, no war, no hatred, to restore the world back to that state of perfection God would have to remove the fallen out of the fall..... That is you, that is me, that is every person who has not received Jesus, that would mean final judgment. There will come a day when God will do that, where He will make a new heaven and a new earth, perfect again just as back in the Garden was, but right now it is what is called the age of grace where man can come and freely receive Jesus based on His finished work at the cross, and not based on man's work, which all fall short before a perfect and holy God.

Romans 5:12 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

Romans 5:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,

Revelation 21:1-8 (NKJV) ¹ Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ² Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." ⁵ Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." ⁶ And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. ⁷ He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. ⁸ But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

His whole Family Believed / Parents – Kids are Watching

Verse 53 - And he himself believed, and his whole household. - We read in Verse 52, the guy returns home. He turns and Jesus says, "Go. Your son lives," and he goes. You know what, parents? Kids are watching how you respond to crisis. They're not going to watch how you respond to prosperity and ease, but when a crisis comes they're watching how you respond, and they glean more than you think. As we say, more is caught than taught. Here, this whole family watches how a dad responds to the word. He comes and goes, and Jesus said it and I believed it, and he walks into the house and here you are, the whole family responds in the same manner then. We believe it too. Jesus is the Christ, the savior of the world.

Parents, remember that, your kids are watching you. How do you respond in a situation? How do you respond should be in accordance with the word of God. If you've got financial hardship, you should be quoting to your kids, "God will provide." The kids don't need to see you cheating, stealing cables, cheating on your taxes. They don't need to see you short-cutting and ripping people off, whatever that might be.

When your marriage is in crisis, your kids need to see you, "God says he'll give me love." They need to see you applying the word of God when your marriage gets hard. I just have to say it. So many people get divorced for

unbiblical reasons, and what you're telling your kids is, "I know what the word of God says but not this time. It's too hard. I'm not going to apply it this time."

How can you expect them to honor any word of God if you apply ... The word of God doesn't apply when it comes to divorce but apply it when it comes to your life. Don't do drugs. It applies when you come to your life. Don't get into sexual immorality. Your kids need to see you living the word of God and share that. Tell the kids why you do what you do. Tell them, "This is hard, but this is what the word of God is and this is why we're going to do it this way. This is why we're going to trust the Lord." More is caught than taught.

John 4:54 This again is the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.

The 2nd Miracle – Brought Joy

Verse 54 again, this is the second miracle in Canaan. The first was the joy of turning water into wine, and what we see there is that the people, there's a celebration going on and Jesus brought joy into it. Well, it's the same picture here in this story. There was sorrow in a family. There was depression upon a home, but when Jesus touched that home, the joy came into the home just like the joy at the wedding. There's a great correlation between these two.

Let God Use You

Let God use you, let God use you, believe that God will use you. Look out to the fields, they're white. People are coming because of Jesus not because of us. All that we need to do is like woman at the well and simply believe that we have unconditional love, simply believe that he's received us and nothing will ever separate us. Our past, our present and our future, none of those things shall separate us from the love of God therefore we can believe God will use us. We can believe that God wants to do work in us, with us and through us. Let God use you.

Let God Love You

And I close, let God love you. Nothing will keep Him from coming to you, you gripped His heart from moment you were created. Now He says come to Me, let us walk together, let us live together.

Chapter 5 John 5:1-18

Written so we Might Believe / Have Zoe Life

We have come to chapter 3 in our verse-by-verse study of the Gospel of John. The book is written so that we might believe that Jesus, and by believing we will have Zoe (abundant, absolute, God Life, a life more than this life). *John 20:30–31 (NKJV)* ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Written for Complete Knowledge – Compassion & Power / Know Him – Live the Day as we Do

"So far as we have studied, John's aim is that we see the complete knowledge, the heartfelt compassion, and the sovereign power of Jesus. This is how you get to know Jesus. This is how you build a relationship with Jesus. You meet him here in his word. And you speak to him. You tell him what you think and feel about his knowledge and compassion and power. You ask him to shape your thinking and your feeling around this sight of his glory. Then you walk out of this room, or out of your morning encounter with him, into the day and live in the fellowship of this Jesus. Not an imaginary one. Not a self-made one. But the real living Jesus revealed with absolute authority in the words of his apostle."

Our Story Today

In our story today we are going to read about a man who was lame for 38 years, laying at the Pool of Bethesda, along with a multitude of others, who thought when the water bubbled, the first person in would be healed. Jesus comes through, sees the man, moved with compassion, asks "do you want to be made well", that word also means "whole". So that question to this man, and the question to anyone today, do you want to be made "whole", is there something in your life that is keeping you from "fully and wholly" living for the Lord? Today, the Lord has a Word for us all.

John 5:1 After this there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

Unknown Time Gap

Verse one there is an unknown time gap from chapter 4 to here of chapter 5

Unknown Feast – Probably Feast of Tabernacles

"Since Jesus went up to Jerusalem for this feast, it likely was one of the three major feasts held in that city (Passover, Tabernacles, Pentecost [Weeks]) that all Jewish males were required to attend (Deut. 16:16; cf. Ex. 23:17; 34:23)." It is not Passover, because in chapter 6 it will say that the Passover is near; so most likely this is one the Fall Feasts, and thus the Feast of Tabernacles, because Passover and Pentecost were Spring Feasts.

John 5:2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches.

Bethesda – House of Mercy

Bethesda it means "house of mercy" and we are familiar with Bethesda as it is a major medical center here in our region (which includes Walter Reed Army Medical, National Naval Medical Center, and John Hopkins), and it's a place of healing and so we have this place a healing that Jesus is coming to, a place of mercy and let's watch and see what he does. And by the way do you ever wonder why there is no atheist hospitals from all the hospitals were created by Christians in the beginning of our country and how come you don't ride around and see hospitals called "Atheist Union", or "Atheist Memorial", or "No God Needed Center". I know the ACLU hates anything to do with God, this week they attacked Arkansas State University who had crosses on their helmets in honor of player who died in a car wreck and a staff member who was shot to death, but to the ACLU the cross was more offensive to them than the heartbreak these people were enduring. But I wonder if these folks would boycott surgery and treatment at hospitals that have association to God and Christ; I don't have to wonder to long, especially if it was their little girl or boy.

Jacobs Well – Pool of Bethesda (For just such a Purpose – Display His Glory) / Thus your Creation for His Glory

I believe Jacobs well was dug for the woman at the well and I believe the pool Bethesda was made and created for this man who was lame. Why, so God can display himself. So that means you, or more valuable than any well. You have been created by God, created so that he might show his glory and his glory might be displayed.

Archaeological Ruins / Real Places – Real People – Real Stories

Verse two the sheep gate is a historical gate that has recently been discovered and archaeological excavation, just as Jacob's well has been. The five porches they too were discovered in the excavation. There were 5 porches meaning they had a cover a place that you would go to get out of the sun. These porches and this pool has been discovered by archaeology all just. So 2000 years ago this book was written and it included real places, real people, and real stories. History continually confirms the Bible.

George Washington / Jesus Existed –History Confirms It / He Divided Time / Who do you Say He is?

A man named George Washington walked this earth 2000 years ago resume with walked this earth 200 years ago. Nobody in this room has seen him. In all my life I have never met anyone that had any lineage or linkage to him, I never met anyone who knew somebody who knew George Washington. But I believe 100% the George Washington existed and that he was president of the greatest nation on the planet the United States of America. History confirms it. Jesus was a real person, he walked the earth. Jesus divided time, and he is the greatest historical figure in the history of the world. He existed, now each man or woman have to decide was he God or was he a lunatic. If he was not God he was a lunatic because any man who would proclaim himself to be God and not be God is surely a lunatic. Even today some of the most critical skeptics still all agree that a man named Jesus Christ walked this earth. All the major media outlets CNN NBC, Fox News, all tests to Jesus Christ walked this earth. So now the question has to be was he who he said he was, was he a lunatic. He could not be a good man, because a good man doesn't say that he is the way to heaven he had to be either God or a lunatic. Who do you say that he is.

If You Doubt – Prove it / Josh McDowell

If you doubt Jesus existed, then prove it. Prove it with facts, not feelings. I tell you if there was a person that “had reason” to doubt God existed, it was Josh McDowell (born 1939). Josh grew up with an abusive alcoholic father, his mother's health made her pretty much an invalid. His father beat him, and beat his mother. Josh at age 11 concluded there is no God, for what kind of God would allow this. His mother needed a helper, so they hired a man to do domestic chores to help around the house, while Josh and dad would work on the farm. From the age of 6-13, this man sexually abused Josh. Josh hated God, hated his father, and hated this man. Josh told his mother about the abuse several times, but each time she rebuked him for saying such things. At 13 when he was old enough and big enough, he told this man if he ever touches him again, that he would kill him. When Josh was big enough he would tie up his father to fence posts in the barn when friends came over so not to be embarrassed by him. Josh would find his dad's liquor bottles and urinate in them. He was filled with hate and rage. When old enough he joined the military. Then after that he enrolled in college. His entertainment was to make fun of the Christians and mock their God, even the disrespect the Christian professors at the school and call them fools for believing a myth. Then one day a student and professor challenge him and said if you could disprove the resurrection of Jesus Christ, then you could disprove all Christianity, and Josh took the challenge. He read every book he could find, and because the small college in the Mid-West had such a limited library he transferred to a bigger college. From there he went to Europe and studied every writing he could get hold of. Then one day after years of research, it just hit him like a ton of bricks, and he said as he sat in a library in Europe reading an original manuscript, he heard himself speak out loud..... “IT IS TRUE”. Then he said it again, and he know that Jesus Christ and all His claims were true. Sometime several months later, he gave his heart and lie to Jesus, and became a follower of Christ. Today he has written over 125 Christian books, is one of the leading and foremost experts on apologists. His great passion is reaching youth, and Josh McDowell has publically spoken to more youth, than anyone on the planet, in the history of mankind. I was privilege to be a counselor years ago at one of his youth crusades. He is my number one source I go to when I want to study the various challenges to the Bible and Jesus Christ. So I say to any skeptic today, “Prove it”, prove it with facts, not feeling, put aside your bias, and simple prove that Jesus didn't exist, and prove that He did not raise from the dead.

John 5:3 In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water.

Multitude = Many / Many more because it is Feast

It says a multitude, many would be several, and multitude would be too many to count. So the scene is the multitudes of people laying lame and sick here at this point. I would expect that there are more than usual because it is a Feast time, and the population of Jerusalem would swell upwards to a couple million people. No doubt people from far away brought love ones and laid them by the pool in hopes of healing. Maybe even the thought was that God is going to move mightily this week because it is a special week, a Feast week.

John 5:4 For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had.

How many People miss Jesus – Because waiting for Something to Happen

The first one in wins. So if you were waiting for the water to be moving what would you be staring at the water or Jesus Christ. How often people looking for something to happen in their life some move some parting of the water some event and they don't notice when God shows up multitudes here had missed Jesus because there staring at the water staring at their trouble. They can happen in the church to, people miss him all the time, looking for something to happen in the church that's exciting, they miss that Jesus is right there in their midst. Looking for the greatest movement for the latest excitement is, they miss Jesus stands right before them.

John 5:5 Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years.

Some call this Folklore – but he and Others Kept Coming Back

Some say it was legend folklore I say it is what it says. When in doubt, take it for what it says. I think it is literal because this man kept coming back along with the multitude kept coming back, he came back for 38 years it appears. He testifies along with the others that when people stepped in and they were healed.

John 5:6 When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?"

John 5:7 The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me."

Jesus Knew him Perfectly – Knows you Perfectly

"When you know Jesus, this is the kind of person you know. A person who knows you perfectly—knows everything about you, inside and out, and all you have ever felt or thought or done. "You discern my thoughts from afar. . . . Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether" (Psalm 139:2–4). The more you know about Jesus, the more precious this truth becomes."

This man Couldn't Come on Own – Jesus had to Look for him / Man Hopeless – End of Self / When Lifeguard

Verses five and six just noticed this, this man didn't and couldn't come to Jesus on his own. Jesus came looking for him, and Jesus came looking for you when you were helpless and hopeless. Notice this man he was hopeless and helpless, he was at the end of himself. When I was a lifeguard, a short lift experience, we trained to not rescue someone drowning until they were tired, because if you got there when they were still strong and full of energy they would grab on to you and take you down with them. Now this is old-school I know, I doubt they train like it today, but we trained that the last stroke in came in with a thump on the head to stunned them, so then I could spin them around and wrap them up from behind and rescue them. The strong can't be saved those who are self-sufficient can't be saved. Jesus waits until the end so often, of ourselves and our resources, before he comes in he can save us. Sometimes we even need to feel that thump, that struggle and that pounding of the world, before we finally give up. Are you at the end of yourself?

Do You Want – Jesus drawing Desire / When Come to End of Self – out Resources – Let Jesus be Resource

Verse six do you want, do you desire is the question is being asked, to be made well. Jesus is drawing the desire out of him. Is it in your heart, your deepest desire to be made well. There was nothing in this man that would make him well, he had to look outside himself to be made well. In every good work God has done in my life personally, it was when I said there is nothing within myself to overcome this. To sustain this. It was always when I reached the end of myself and said I desire, but I can't, and like this story and with you when you come to that point the Lord would say I desire and I can. Jesus doesn't ask if the man has a resource, but a desire. Jesus didn't ask do you have a desire but no resource. Jesus is asking do you have a desire, because he wants to show this man (an all people) that He will be your resource.....you just need the desire.

Jesus is Resource to Better (Husband – Dad – Friend)

When I seek the Lord and my full desire I said Lord make me a better husband to become my resource to become a better husband, when I say Lord make me a better father I can't do it in and of myself, the Lord becomes my resource to become a better father. Lord become a resource to be a better friend. When I say Lord make me less selfish Lord will say come to me I will be your resource for you of that.

John 5:8 Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk."

John 5:9 And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath.

Like a Camping Bed

A bed would be like the bed we use when we camp, a little portable roll-up mat, not a full-on bed we use in our houses.

Jesus had to go Through Sheep Gate (like Samaria) / Jesus always moved towards Hurting

See the compassion of Jesus—this is one of the other things we know that makes his knowledge of us more precious. Jesus chooses to go to this pool. He did not have to. It didn't "sneak up on him. He didn't stumble by. He knew what he was doing. He was going to this pool the same way he went to Samaria to find the woman at the well, and the same way he went to sign-seeking, prophet-dishonoring Galilee to find a kingly official who had a sick son. Jesus moves toward need, not comfort. Toward brokenhearted sinners, not the self-righteous."

9 Times Moved with Compassion

"I counted at least nine times in the Gospels where it says Jesus was moved with compassion or pity. So not only does Jesus know you perfectly, but he is easily moved by the misery you feel. His therapies are not always what we want. But that's not owing to his heartlessness. He is not heartless. He is compassionate to us in our misery. He is a sympathetic High Priest for those who will trust him."

NOW QUESTION - - Do you Want to be Made Well

Now....."That is the great question we must face. If you are not a believer, I am responsible to pass on to you Christ's question: Do you want to get well? Do you really want to be healed? Do you truly want to be forgiven and made new? Because if you want to, you can be healed right now. If you remain unconverted even though you have a knowledge of Christ in your life, it is because you choose to be lame. You really do not want to be healed. You haven't said yes to that tenderly aggressive question from Jesus Christ. For those of us who are already Christians, there is also a question we must keep asking ourselves. Do we really know our own hearts? As we get to know ourselves, we find more and more that needs healing. But the question is, do we really want to be healed?"

It is Yes or No Answer / Man gave Excuse / God asks You Today – Made Whole (not 50%, not 75%)

Jesus asked the question do you want to be made well maybe your translation reads do you want to be made whole. It is a question, and it is a yes or no answer. Do you want to be made well, that's the question before all men today. Notice this man doesn't answer he gives reasons why he cannot be healed. God ask you today do you want to be made well, do you want to kick that addiction, change that behavior, when and have victory over that stronghold. God asked you today the question, and the question is before you today, not by me, but by the Scripture before you and the question is do you want to be made well. You want to say I can't because my situation, my depression, my finances, my past, my present, my future. Don't make excuses why you can't, just

answer the question, do you want to be made whole to you want to be made well. And the word is made whole and not partial not 50% not 75%, Jesus asked do you want to be made whole, 100%.

Man said he Couldn't – I Hope You Can't

Verse seven this man says I can't do it. Have you come to that point in your life. And I hope that your job is in keeping you from that place of I can't do it I hope your money is not keeping you, I hope your body and looks is in keeping you, I hope none of these things are keeping you strong because in the end they all fade.

IMMEDIATELY / God's Command Supercedes our History

Notice in verse nine says immediately, as soon as the word was spoken man walked. Jesus gives three commands rise, take, walk. He commands we respond and life changes. God command supercedes our history. It doesn't matter if the man was lame for 38 years, God's command supercedes our history. So whatever your history is whatever it is that's burdening you, and you say you are bound to it and cannot escape, no this God's command supercedes your history and God is able to overcome that which is bound you maybe even for 38 years.

At His Word (Nobleman – Woman at Well – water to Wine) / Romans 10:17

Jesus says rise up and take your bed and walk in the man rises up takes his bed and walks, at the word of God.

- At the word Jesus told the noblemen go home your son is healed.
- And Jesus word he says to the woman at the well I am he when she says the Messiah will come, and at that word she goes to town to tell all that the Messiah has come.
- And a Jesus's word the servants brought water that he would turn in to wine.

It is the word of God that when we take it to believe it, receive it, and go do it, it's when it has power. Romans 10:17 it says faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Mary was the originator, Nike copied her, she said whatever he says do it. Nike copied it and made it into a megamillion slogan just do it, but Jesus his mother originated at 2000 years ago and it says the same to us whatever his word is just do it and watch the power and watched the victory. Nike is the Greek word for victory and is a good analogy for us today you just do it and you'll see an experience victory.

Romans 10:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

BUT – Some People Love their Bed – Gives them Excuses

But.....Some people love their bed. Some people say they hate it, becomes an old friend of them, a place of comfort, they are comfortable because they know what to expect. Some people like the attention of their lameness their weakness makes them invalid. To them it's an excuse of why they can be they are and never have to change. Some like their bed because he gives power over other people feel compassion and sorry for them and therefore then feeds them rather than help us try to lift them. For all of us the resource must be Jesus we should not be the ones who try to make the lame walk. Yes we should help them, we should comfort them, we should come alongside them, but never at the expense that they look to us rather than looking at Jesus Christ. If a person needs you more than they need Jesus. Then you just became their Jesus Christ. We must not be a person's Jesus Christ because they need Jesus more than they need us.

When will my Son Kick the Addiction – When Sick

I've been asked by so many heartbroken mothers' second fathers when will my son quit that thing that sin that has bondage and power over them. And I always say when they're sick of it. It's not until were sick of it that we have a desire to be separated from it. Your parents you have a child whose wrapped up in sin and in the bondage of sin, pray for them to become sick of it, pray that it will be like the quail back in the time of the children of Israel in the desert wandering that that sin will be puked out of their noses their nostrils because they become so sick of it

Maybe that is You – you like Your Sin / Be careful of Plushy Prison Cell

Maybe that might explain describe some of you here today you say I'm okay with my sin I like my sin is the problem with it is like a plushy prison cell and you can find yourself with all the comforts and ease of the world in your prison cell and you can feel no reason to leave until it's time to leave to escape the coming judgment but when you arise and find that the prison door has been locked and sealed shut and there's no way out of it the time to leave the prison cell is today come to Jesus today.

John 5:10 The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, “It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed.”

Poor Man – you mean Today isn’t the Day?

This poor man I've been crippled for 38 years, and you're telling me that today isn't the day.

Legalism wants to Keep you Under Rules – So never made Well

Verse 10 legalism wants to keep you under the law, rules and regulations, so you can never be made well, so you can never be made whole. Because these Jews would rather see him lame on the Sabbath rather than walking in freedom on the Sabbath. The Sabbath was meant to give rest and here the Jews, the religious leaders, give this give this man no rest.

John 5:11 He answered them, “He who made me well said to me, ‘Take up your bed and walk.’ ”

Man blames Jesus – We can be Timid when faced with Hostility

Verse 11 the man says hey wasn't my fault this guy told me to do it. Somebody heals you after 38 years, you know that person has a connection to heaven. There was always a bow wave of where Jesus went, and word of the great healer was well known in Jerusalem and the surrounding regions. But why would he not be jumping for joy praising the man who came and he will him and proclaiming how awesome he is? How we can be the same in a hostile and unfriendly environment and we can become silent when faced with the challenges of Jesus Christ. I will refrain from talking badly about this man, because I have to be honest that I have been guilty of the same more than I care to count or remember. Lord deliver me from the fear of man.

Proverbs 29:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.

John 5:12 Then they asked him, “Who is the Man who said to you, ‘Take up your bed and walk?’”

Didn’t Ask who Healed – they Knew / But who Broke Sabbath – Start gathering Evidence

They didn't ask who healed you who told you to take up the bed. They knew who healed it was Jesus Christ. There wasn't five and five or 10 people healing in Jerusalem at this time, the stories were rampant there's a healer there's a mighty miracle worker and his name is Jesus. These religious leaders know that it's Jesus they just want his name for the record sake so they can start their process of persecution so they can deliver him and to death

Jesus didn’t meet Expectation of Religious Leader / Maybe you have Felt that way About Him / Trust

This poor man I've been crippled for 38 years, and you're telling me that today isn't the day. For these religious leaders their expectation of the man an expectation upon Jesus was not what they expected of God. We can have our expectations of God we can expect how we think he should act and react and then like these religious leaders we can become angry when God doesn't act the way that we think he should. Maybe you say I prayed, I served, I witness, I did everything for God asked me to do and then things still didn't turn out the way that I thought they should we can become angry. It just comes down to a place of trust or we have to trust him that he knows what he's doing.

Proverbs 3:5–8 (NKJV) ⁵ Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; ⁶ In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths. ⁷ Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD and depart from evil. ⁸ It will be health to your flesh, And strength to your bones.

Sabbath Law

The Talmud (Jewish commentary of the Torah – written by Rabbi's) tells us that the Jews divided the Sabbath into 39 categories and then that categories had subcategories. They had laws on the Sabbath, that are not in accordance with the writings of the Bible:

- You could spit it, but only on a rock, if on dirt, then mud would be produced and then that would be considered plowing, and you could not plow on the Sabbath
- a woman is not allowed to look in the mirror on the Sabbath. Because if she saw a gray hair and plucked it and that would be considered harvesting, and you could not harvest on the Sabbath.

- There was a weight limit you could carry nothing heavier than a fig.
- This devotion to the rabbis' interpretation of the Sabbath law still goes on in modern times.
 - When I was in Israel they have Sabbath elevators, and they on Saturdays they stop on every floor, hence you don't have to push the button, because that would be considered work.
 - I remember on one Saturday driving in the tour bus and about 100 Orthodox Jews were standing along the roadside yelling us in anger (yelling Sabbath). They believe you can't drive a car on the Sabbath because turning the ignition sends a spark which starts the fire of the engine, and kindling a fire on the Sabbath is prohibited. If you were to see their faces and anger yelling at us, they themselves were kindling a fire of rage.
 - An April, 1992 news item: Tenants let three apartments in an Orthodox neighborhood in Israel burn to the ground while they asked a rabbi whether a telephone call to the fire department on the Sabbath would violate Jewish law. Observant Jews are forbidden to use the phone on the Sabbath, because doing so would break an electrical current, which is considered a form of work. In the half-hour it took the rabbi to decide "yes," the fire spread to two neighboring apartments.
- And sadly what we see here with these religious leaders all they see is the burden the man does carry in the bed, and they don't notice the burden God lifted off the man by making him hold.

John 5:13 But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place.

John 5:14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you."

The Lord Meets us in Pain & Prayer & Praise

The Lord meets us in the place of pain and the Lord also meets us in the place of praise here this man is in the temple the house of the Lord the house of prayer is met Jesus twice now in pain and praise and you'll find the same in your life

Jesus looking for You to Speak Wisdom

Jesus is looking for you and has words of wisdom to speak to you. Jesus wants your attention and he wants you to look at him, so he can speak words of wisdom to you.

What's Worse than 38 years – Eternity / We Elevate Physical over Spiritual, Present over eternity

Verse 14 what's worse than 38 years of infirmity, it would be eternity in hell. So often we elevate this physical around us and here Jesus is showing it's the spiritual that's greater than the physical is the spiritual that supersedes all physical things. We elevate the present over the eternal.

Grace not License to Sin

By the way, Grace is never a license to sin.

Romans 6:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

It is Shame When Healed walk away from Lord

I've been in ministry long enough, and seen it so many times, but someone's life is crippled, or life is lame, and God comes into their life and they cry out to him please heal my marriage, please meet this financial need, please find me this employment, then they baste the Lord along the way they find themselves trawling to the Lord and coming into a personal relationship with the Lord. And how many times that I see after the marriage is healed, the money is met, the employment is found, they walk away from the Lord never to turn back and look at him again.

Seekers will Find

Verse 14 again Jesus is seeking him out if you say you're a seeker, God will find you, and reveal himself to you. But there's many people who say they're seeking but they won't see Jesus, they say they're on a spiritual journey, they

exclude Jesus from that spiritual journey. They will go to some faraway land, and meet with some so-called guru, go dip themselves in some dirty water, will sit with their legs folded and speak chance, and I'll say they're on a spiritual journey seeking God. But the truth is they're not on a spiritual journey because all spiritual journeys end up with Jesus. So many people they won't seek out Jesus because they're prideful, they think their intellectual, but they're not spiritual they exclude the seeking of Jesus. Jesus says anyone who comes to me I will by no means turn away. Anyone on a spiritual journey and they seek and truly see Jesus Christ, they will find him, because they will find that he came seeking them first. Romans 3:11 says there none that seek after God no not one, but we know those who see in turn when Jesus comes seeking he will receive them.

Romans 3:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ *There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.*

John 6:35–37 (NKJV) ³⁵ *And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. ³⁶ But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. ³⁷ All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.*

John 5:15 The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.

Jesus got his Attention

Now he names him Jesus my name. Why did the man go back to the Jews, why not disappear, and avoid all the confrontation. Because Jesus got his attention, because Jesus got his attention and eternity was on the line.

John 5:16 For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath.

John 5:17 But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."

John 5:18 Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

Jesus Ready for Confrontation

Back in verse eight why did Jesus say take up your bed and walk. Jesus is in Jerusalem and Jesus is ready for confrontation, he knows this man taking up his bed and walking, after being healed, in front of the Jewish leaders, he knew would start the rise of the conflict. But Jesus is ready for the conflict. Conflict will be so great read in verse 16 that they want to kill him for this healing on the Sabbath. Hey I want you to know Jesus may put you in a place that will cause conflict, and you'll have to decide if you're ready for the battle for you to let someone else go to war.

Changes from Chapters 1-4 (Light of the World – Wonderful and Warm) / Chap 5 - Conflict

In chapters 1 through 4 we saw Jesus be in the light of the world it's been wonderful and warm. But chapter 5 is the beginning of hostility and we will read for the chapters to follow to the end of the hostility against Christ.

Religion hates Spirituality – It knows when Someone Else has It and they Don't

Religion hates real spirituality because they know when someone else has it and they don't.

Tough Questions

But even in the midst of the rising conflict and hostility, we see a beautiful and compassionate passage of scriptures. But it is not one without a tough question to be asked, and that is why doesn't Jesus heal all? Why one man out of the multitude, and why not every believer today who has physical illness?

Sometimes it is Because it is a Fallen World / Remove Sin to Remove Fallen World

First let me answer theologically, and that is because we live in a fallen world. God's not angry with you. God's not punishing you. God's not, "I'm going to make you sweat until you break." He's not like that. The fallen world happens and God uses the fallen world. Then sometimes God just intervenes in the fallen world so that he can show himself strong. Sometimes he just rides up, walks up, better said, like this story here, and he intervenes. There's a lot of people in that region who were sick and he didn't intervene, because Jesus had a singular mission and it's still the singular mission, and that is redeem man from the fallen world. Maybe you wonder and you go, "Why doesn't he intervene right now? Why doesn't he stop the world? Why doesn't he stop this cancer? Why

doesn't he stop Ebola? Why doesn't he stop starvation?" Because all those things are an outcome of the fallen world. They're part of sin that's in the world. For Jesus to overcome all those, to wipe all those out, he has to remove sin from the world. I think you're following where I'm going. For him to remove the sin from the world means he has to remove the sinners from the world. Once he removes the sinners from the world there is no world. That's why he doesn't wipe out all these things, because then he would have to remove all from the world. In order to bring the world back to perfection, back to how it was before Adam fell, that perfect state where there was no hurricanes, no cancer, no disease, no war, no hatred, to restore the world back to that state of perfection God would have to remove the fallen out of the fall..... That is you, that is me, that is every person who has not received Jesus, that would mean final judgment. There will come a day when God will do that, where He will make a new heaven and a new earth, perfect again just as back in the Garden was, but right now it is what is called the age of grace where man can come and freely receive Jesus based on His finished work at the cross, and not based on man's work, which all fall short before a perfect and holy God.

Romans 5:12 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

Romans 5:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,

Revelation 21:1–8 (NKJV) ¹ Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ² Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." ⁵ Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." ⁶ And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. ⁷ He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. ⁸ But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."

Look at Physical/Eternal Aspect

And now let's look at the physical side of this story, and look at the picture here, Jesus starts the death sentence here, and who does he start it over, an invalid, diseased with sin, hopeless and helpless. A picture of you, who He came for, at whatever the cost. Jesus is working out eternity. We so much put all the focus on the physical and the here and now, and we overlook the eternal. Jesus' focus is always foremost on the eternal. Here, He starts His death sentence for a man who had nothing, no doubt meant nothing, surely not the Jewish leaders because could care less that he was healed, but Jesus starts His death sentence for this man, who is a picture of you and me.

Unknown Feast – I think it is Feast of Tabernacle

I personally think the Feast that is being celebrated here is the Feast of Tabernacles, and it is a fall feast, for in chapter 6 which is another time gap, says the Feast of Passover was near. The beautiful picture is that Tabernacles was a time when the Nation of Israel would sleep outside their homes, in booths (tabernacles) as a reminder of their wilderness wandering, and God great deliverance not only out of Egypt (a picture of the world), but into the Promised Land (a picture of heaven). The booths were a reminder it is temporary, this world we are just pilgrims passing through, and there is a permanent home we wait for, a place of real rest, real peace. Jesus does His miracle here, and reminds us there is a heaven to come, a place where there is no more sorrow of the world, no more pain, no more crying, where He will wipe away every tear. That day will come, He will make all things new, including those with cancer, autism, downs syndrome.

We will be Here for You

Jesus is moved with compassion, and He is teaching us, showing us His heart, and wants to give us that same heart. For you here with children with special needs, we are here for you, and we want to help you in your time of need. You with cancer, sickness, loneliness, until the new haven and the new earth, we are committed to you. And maybe God has moved some of you here today to be the hands and feet of Jesus, and would like to minister to those in the pain of this fallen world, come see us and we will tell you where you can help.

My Father has Been Working – And I have Been Working

And remember all, Jesus says, My father has been working until now, and I have been working, God takes no days off, and He does not rest, He will never leave you nor forsake you.

Hebrews 13:5-6 (NKJV) ⁵ Let your conduct *be* without covetousness; *be* content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” ⁶ So we may boldly say: “*The LORD is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?*”

End of Study

John 5:17-47

John's Style

John's style, he follows a miracle or event, with a teaching.

Jesus Heals Lame of 38yrs / Shows Love & Compassion & Power / Same Heart for You – Intimate & Personal

We have studied in the first half of this chapter Jesus healing a man who had been lame for 38 years at the Pool of Bethesda, a great and awesome miracle by the sovereign, mighty, God of Love. The same God who loves you, and knows everything about you, all your pain and all your sorrow, and He has great compassion for you, and He comes to you, and He wants to show Himself to you in an intimate and personal way.

Dramatic Shift from Warm & Wonderful / Jews Incensed – Kill God – 2,000 yrs / God is Not Dead – Lives in Us

But, we see a dramatic shift in our warm and wonderful gospel. Chapters 1-4 we saw the light and love of Christ as He turned water into wine (a picture of joy He wants for all of us). He meet, received, and called the women at the well (past and all). He healed the nobleman's son, even though the nobleman had no religious linkage to Him. And then the lame man at the pool. The Jews are incensed over the lame man because Jesus healed him on the Sabbath, and so our story shifts as we see from this point on the Jewish leaders start their plotting and scheming to kill Jesus (also known as God). Killing God, something haven't changed in 2,000 years as man continually tries to kill God, say He is dead, doesn't exist. IF they can kill God, then they feel they are free from answering to Him. As the song the Newsboy sing, and the movie declared, God's Not Dead, He is surely alive. We know it is true because He lives in us, we sense and experience His presence, and we know it is true. The Jewish leaders want to kill Him because He didn't meet their expectations, they thought He should act and respond in a certain way, and when He didn't, they became hardened against Him. Jesus healed on the Sabbath, and they considered that breaking the Law of God (Mosaic Law), for no work was to be done on the Sabbath; and what is funny about that is a couple things, and first is that Jesus didn't do any work, He simply spoke, and secondly healing is no burden to, ministering to the hurting is no burden to Him, it is His heart and compassion to do say. So it is with you, as you are never a burden unto Him, and it is His pleasure coming to you and ministering unto you, for He loves you. These Jewish leaders did not know Him, and thus had different expectation of Him, and sadly missed Him.

John 5:16 For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath.

Get to Know Him – His Heart, Knowledge / Do it through this Word

Don't you miss Him, please pour all you have into getting to know His heart, grow in the knowledge of Him every day, and we do that here in His Word as he displays His heart to us.

No one Challenged John 10:10 / For they Saw it in Him / Hebrews 1:9 – Oil of Gladness / What was Secret

At this point, as tension is heightened and the war is at hand, Jesus gives an incredible, insightful, and important defense of why He could blow apart Jewish traditions, of why He was not bound by religious systems, of why He did what He did. Jesus lived the most attractive, powerful, beautiful, joyful, wonderful life ever lived. There was a quality about Him, a joy emanating from Him, a peace within Him, a love flowing through Him that attracted the common people to Him like moths to a flame (Mark 12:37). When He said He had come that they might have life abundantly (John 10:10), no one challenged him, saying, "Why don't we see abundant life in You?" No, so abundant was Jesus' life that people left everything to be near Him. Hebrews goes on to say Jesus was anointed with the oil of gladness "more than any of His fellows" (1:9). That is, He had a gladness about Him unparalleled in any other person. Truly, whoever looks at the Lord cannot help but be impressed with Him. One would think the secret to such attractiveness, effectiveness, and joy would be very complex. One would think that Jesus must have understood esoteric mysteries and implemented difficult methodology. But such is not the case, for in the remainder of the chapter, we see the simplicity of the secret Jesus understood that produced in Him the life that was so successful and so beautiful. What was this secret? In the following defense, we see not only why Jesus healed on the Sabbath, but the very foundational principle that governed His entire life: His relationship with His Father. If I were to question you about the defining principle of your life, you might say, "It's my ministry," or "It's my family," or, "It's this vision," or, "It's this attempt to see the kingdom grow." But as valid as those things might be, they are insignificant in comparison to your relationship with the Father. That's all there is—no other agenda, no other ministry, no other vision, no other priority. Jesus was so focused on His relationship with His Father that

nothing else mattered. As a result, everything else fell into place beautifully. His life was fruitful. His relationships were special. His ministry was bountiful. In the following passage, we see seven statements Jesus makes about His relationship with His Father. There are way more than 7, but we will group them for time sake today, and even that will be hard to cover.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

Hebrews 1:9 (NKJV) ⁹ *You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions."*

For Us

For us, we too can have the oil of gladness, live the abundant "zoe life" (abundant, absolute, God life, life beyond this world's life), by seeing what made Jesus live with joy, even in the midst of conflict, as we apply His life lessons, to our lives personally and practically. Jesus in these verses unlocks the keys to "abundant living" for the son and daughter of God.

Jesus Unlocks Whole Relationship with Father

Jesus in this passage, unlocks His whole relationship with His Heavenly Father; He explains why He does what He does, why He has the power that He has, and really this whole passage, opens deeper understanding to not only what we have seen up to this point, but what we will see in the rest of the chapters, leading to the cross, and the resurrection. These 31 verses are pure power.

7 Statements

The Son is watching the Father (v17-19b)

The Son is in Continual Contact with the Father (v19a)

The Son has Security in the Father (v20)

The Son is in Harmony with the Father (v21-29)

The Son is in Submission to the Father (v30)

The Son has Validation from the Father (v31-38)

The Son Glorifies the Name of the Father (v39-47)

The Son is watching the Father (v17-19b)

Jesus lived the abundant life, and was anointed with the oil of gladness because.....Simply put, everything Jesus did, He did it because He saw the Father do it.

John 5:17 But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."

John 5:18 Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

John 5:19 Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

Verb Tense – Continually Working / Son never stops Working for You

The verb tense in verse 17, is "continually working", and we see the Lord God never rests, never stops working on your behalf, and for the world.

Jesus only does what Sees the Father Do

Jesus says He only does what He sees the Father do. Jesus is speaking of His oneness and unity with the Father. But here too speaking of the miracles Jesus will perform, I would say then all of them should be something that was already performed and done. If Jesus says I only do what I saw the Father do, then we should see them done in the Old Testament.

The 7 Miracles of John

Miracle 1, Water into Wine (John 2:1-11)

- **Exodus 7:20–21 (NKJV)** ²⁰ And Moses and Aaron did so, just as the LORD commanded. So he lifted up the rod and struck the waters that *were* in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh and in the sight of his servants. And all the waters that *were* in the river were turned to blood. ²¹ The fish that *were* in the river died, the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink the water of the river. So there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt.
- **2 Kings 4:38–41 (NKJV)** ³⁸ And Elisha returned to Gilgal, and *there was* a famine in the land. Now the sons of the prophets *were* sitting before him; and he said to his servant, “Put on the large pot, and boil stew for the sons of the prophets.” ³⁹ So one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered from it a lapful of wild gourds, and came and sliced *them* into the pot of stew, though they did not know *what they were*. ⁴⁰ Then they served it to the men to eat. Now it happened, as they were eating the stew, that they cried out and said, “Man of God, *there is* death in the pot!” And they could not eat *it*. ⁴¹ So he said, “Then bring some flour.” And he put *it* into the pot, and said, “Serve *it* to the people, that they may eat.” And there was nothing harmful in the pot.
- **Exodus 17:5–6 (NKJV)** ⁵ And the LORD said to Moses, “Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go. ⁶ Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.” And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

Miracle 2, Healing the Official’s Son (John 4:43-54).

- **1 Kings 17:20–23 (NKJV)** ²⁰ Then he cried out to the LORD and said, “O LORD my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?” ²¹ And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the LORD and said, “O LORD my God, I pray, let this child’s soul come back to him.” ²² Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived. ²³ And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, “See, your son lives!”

Miracle 3, The Healing at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5:1-9)

- **2 Kings 5:9–14 (NKJV)** ⁹ Then Naaman went with his horses and chariot, and he stood at the door of Elisha’s house. ¹⁰ And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, “Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored to you, and you shall be clean.” ¹¹ But Naaman became furious, and went away and said, “Indeed, I said to myself, ‘He will surely come out to me, and stand and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his hand over the place, and heal the leprosy.’ ¹² Are not the Abanah and the Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?” So he turned and went away in a rage. ¹³ And his servants came near and spoke to him, and said, “My father, if the prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it? How much more then, when he says to you, ‘Wash, and be clean?’” ¹⁴ So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

Miracle 4, The Feeding of the 5000 (John 6:1-5).

- **Exodus 16:4–5 (NKJV)** ⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. And the people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in My law or not. ⁵ And it shall be on the sixth day that they shall prepare what they bring in, and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.”
- **2 Kings 4:2–7 (NKJV)** ² So Elisha said to her, “What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?” And she said, “Your maidservant has nothing in the house but a jar of oil.” ³ Then he said, “Go, borrow vessels from everywhere, from all your neighbors—empty vessels; do not gather just a few. ⁴ And when you have come in, you shall shut the door behind you and your sons; then pour it into all those vessels, and set aside the full ones.” ⁵ So she went from him and shut the door behind her and her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured it out. ⁶ Now it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, “Bring me another vessel.” And he said to her, “There is not another vessel.” So the oil ceased. ⁷ Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, “Go, sell the oil and pay your debt; and you and your sons live on the rest.”

Miracle 5, Walking on the Water (John 6:16-25).

- **Exodus 14:21–23 (NKJV)** ²¹ Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry *land*, and the waters were divided. ²² So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry *ground*, and the waters *were* a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. ²³ And the Egyptians pursued and went after them into the midst of the sea, all Pharaoh’s horses, his chariots, and his horsemen.
- **Joshua 3:14–17 (NKJV)** ¹⁴ So it was, when the people set out from their camp to cross over the Jordan, with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, ¹⁵ and as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest), ¹⁶ that the waters which came down from upstream stood *still*, and rose in a heap very far away at Adam, the city that *is* beside Zaretan. So the waters that went down into the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, failed, and were cut off; and the people crossed over opposite Jericho. ¹⁷ Then

the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.

Miracle 6, Healing The Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41).

- **Genesis 1:1–4 (NKJV)** ¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. ³ Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. ⁴ And God saw the light, that *it was good*; and God divided the light from the darkness.
- **Psalms 146:8 (NKJV)** ⁸ The LORD opens *the eyes of the blind*; The LORD raises those who are bowed down; The LORD loves the righteous.
- **Exodus 4:11 (NKJV)** ¹¹ So the LORD said to him, “Who has made man’s mouth? Or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seeing, or the blind? *Have not I, the LORD?*”

Miracle 7, Raising Lazarus From The Dead (John 11:1-44).

- **2 Kings 4:32–37 (NKJV)** ³² When Elisha came into the house, there was the child, lying dead on his bed. ³³ He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the LORD. ³⁴ And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands; and he stretched himself out on the child, and the flesh of the child became warm. ³⁵ He returned and walked back and forth in the house, and again went up and stretched himself out on him; then the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes. ³⁶ And he called Gehazi and said, “Call this Shunammite woman.” So he called her. And when she came in to him, he said, “Pick up your son.” ³⁷ So she went in, fell at his feet, and bowed to the ground; then she picked up her son and went out.
- **1 Kings 17:20–23 (NKJV)** ²⁰ Then he cried out to the LORD and said, “O LORD my God, have You also brought tragedy on the widow with whom I lodge, by killing her son?” ²¹ And he stretched himself out on the child three times, and cried out to the LORD and said, “O LORD my God, I pray, let this child’s soul come back to him.” ²² Then the LORD heard the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came back to him, and he revived. ²³ And Elijah took the child and brought him down from the upper room into the house, and gave him to his mother. And Elijah said, “See, your son lives!”

Jesus does what He saw Done by the Father

So we see Jesus doing what He saw the Father do.

John 5:18 Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

Accuse of Causing another to Sin – No Prophet Would

Although Jesus did not do any work on the Sabbath, they will accuse that by Him telling someone else to break the Sabbath Law, He was guilty of breaking the law Himself, for no prophet of God would lead another into sin.

Equality with God considered Blasphemy / True – Unless You are God / Disproves JW and Mormon Doctrine

To make oneself equal with God the Father, was blasphemy to these religious Jews. That would be true, unless you were equal with God the Father. To be equal with God, therefore means to be God, and so as those cults today say Jesus is not God, here is a passage that proves Jesus is God. To be equal means He wasn’t created (this disproves the teachings of Jehovah Witnesses and Mormons).

The Son is in Continual Contact with the Father (v19a)

Jesus lived the abundant life, and was anointed with the oil of gladness because.....Everything Jesus did, he did because of His direct contact with the Father. There is tremendous power in principle, and it will empower you greatly. Jesus performed miracles only because He was in contact with His Father and empowered by the Spirit in the exact same way we can be.

John 5:19 Then Jesus answered and said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

Philippians 2:5–8 (NKJV) ⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

V.6 did not consider it robbery to be equal with God,
Jesus Christ is God, and is equal with the Father.

Jesus and the Father are One:

(John 10:30 KJV) I and my Father are one.

(John 14:7 KJV) If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

(John 14:8 KJV) Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

(John 14:9 KJV) Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?

The Divinity of Christ – based on the Trinity:

(Deuteronomy 6:4 KJV) Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: (this word for one, means a compound unity – like a team. The Ravens are 46 players, but they make up one team.)

(Genesis 1:26 KJV) And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

(John 1:1 KJV) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

(John 1:2 KJV) The same was in the beginning with God.

(John 1:3 KJV) All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

(John 1:14 KJV) And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

(Colossians 1:15 KJV) Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

(Colossians 1:16 KJV) For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

(Hebrews 1:1 KJV) God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

(Hebrews 1:2 KJV) Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

(Hebrews 1:3 KJV) Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

v. 7 but made Himself of no reputation

The word used here for reputation is “kenoo” fit means to make empty. Jesus emptied Himself.

Here we stand on Holy Ground. This is one of the most profound, most important theological Scriptures in the Bible. We have already seen that Jesus is God, so what did He empty Himself of, not His Deity (for we have already seen that He didn't).

He obviously stepped down from the throne and the recognition He deserves, and took the role of a servant, to do the will of the Father. He didn't come and assume the title President, CEO, or Emperor.

Look at the three things that only God can do. Be Omnipresent (all present), Omniscient (all knowing), and Omnipotent (all-powerful). Jesus did not exercise these freely when He became a man, He allowed Himself to be limited, just as man is.

(John 19:5 KJV) Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!

Lets look at how He limited Himself:

Omnipresent (all present):

Jesus was flesh and blood, He bled, and He could only be one place at any given time.

(John 11:21 KJV) Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

Omniscient (all knowing):

As God, He still knew all, yet He would seek the Father in prayer for guidance and strength. He stayed in contact with the Father, so He would do the will of the Father, not His will.

Jesus said He didn't even know when the earth would pass away.

(Mark 13:31 KJV) Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

(Mark 13:32 KJV) But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

He sought the Father in prayer.

(Matthew 26:36 KJV) Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

(Luke 3:21 KJV) Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

(Mark 6:46 KJV) And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.

Omnipotent (all-powerful):

Jesus never would use His divine power for His own needs. I can't explain it, but even though He had the power of the universe coursing through His veins, He would not use it.

If He didn't empty Himself of these things, then He could not relate to us in terms of temptation, cause if He had all this power to use freely, then these things in His fleshly body would truly not be temptations, would they? The remembrance of his own sorrows and temptations, makes Christ mindful of the trials of his people, and ready to help them. He is ready and willing to help those who are tempted, and seek him. He became man, and was tempted, that he might be every way qualified to help his people, seeing that he had passed through the same temptations himself, but continued perfectly free from sin. Then let not the afflicted and tempted despond, or give place to Satan, as if temptations made it wrong for them to come to the Lord in prayer. No soul ever perished under temptation, that cried unto the Lord from real alarm at its danger, with faith and expectation of relief.

(Matthew 4:1 KJV) Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

(Matthew 4:2 KJV) And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered.

(Matthew 4:3 KJV) And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

(Matthew 4:4 KJV) But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

(Hebrews 2:16 KJV) For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.

(Hebrews 2:17 KJV) Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.

(Hebrews 2:18 KJV) For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.

(James 1:13 KJV) Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

(James 1:14 KJV) But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

Everything Jesus did, He did as directed by the Father and Empowered by the Holy Spirit. He walked closely to the Father, praying to Him daily, and believing in the Father's directives.

(John 5:16 NKJV) For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath.

(John 5:17 NKJV) But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."

(John 5:18 NKJV) Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

(John 5:19 NKJV) Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.

(John 5:20 NKJV) "For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel.

Jesus did not miracles until after He was baptized and filled with the Spirit for the work of the ministry, to do the will of the Father. If you want a summation of the definition of the ministry it is this – To Do The Will Of The Father. Reminder He was filled with the Spirit since birth.

(Mark 1:9 KJV) And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

(Mark 1:10 KJV) And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:

(Luke 4:13 KJV) And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

(Luke 4:14 KJV) And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

When Jesus performed miracles, he looked to heaven and did so by the empowering of the Holy Spirit.

(Mark 6:41 KJV) And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

Why is this so important, cause it means everything Jesus did (the feeding of the 5000, walking on water, water to wine) He did not do them because of His own power, but through the power of the Holy Spirit. We can read the miracles and so what, that Jesus – He’s God. But when we know the theology of Kenosis here in Philippians 2, His miracles take on a whole new meaning. It means that everything Jesus did as a man was through His personal contact with the Father, and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. The miracles and strengths of Jesus now become examples to me.

I therefore have the same opportunity for empowering as Jesus did. Special things can happen through me. And any temptation that comes my way, I know that I have all the power to overcome it, just like Jesus did. God is all the willing to exercise the same power in and through me as he exercised it through Jesus.. Jesus was a man just as me, and everything He did, I can do to if I am lead and directed by the Father. These are real examples for me. I am to pray with the same type of consistency and expectancies as Jesus did. Amazing.....if you believe it.

Knowledge of Good and Evil

In the Garden of Eden, the forbidden fruit came from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And once man ate of the knowledge of good and evil, he said, “I know what’s good and what’s evil, what’s right and what’s wrong. I can intellectually figure it out.” In so doing, he became independent of the simple childlike relationship that asks, “Father, what about this? Father, should I do that?” How do you know from which tree you’re eating? It’s so simple! Do you pray? That’s the whole issue. If I pray, I’m saying, “Father, I’m not sure what’s right here, and I just pray Your will be done, that You will nudge me in the right direction, that You will inspire my thoughts, that You will guard my heart.” If you’re praying today—just today—then you’re on the right course. But if you haven’t prayed today, it’s indicative of pride because you think you can pull it off by yourself. Have you eaten of the forbidden fruit today? There’s no condemnation, but how I pray you might move into maturation and say, “Lord, I’m tired of thinking I know what to do.” The solution is simply prayer.

The Son has Security in the Father (v20)

Jesus lived the abundant life, and was anointed with the oil of gladness because.....The Son has security in the love of the Father, and that security was the foundation of everything us. When we know, are convinced, settled on, that the Father loves us then we won’t find ourselves living in the doubts, insecurity, seeking the approval of man, and the praises of man, but like Jesus can rest in the love of God.

John 5:20 For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel.

Greater Work is Resurrection

Greater work will be the resurrection of Jesus after they crucified him

What a Day – Father loves Me / Doesn’t Matter what Others Think / God Demonstrated His Love

What a day you will have if, like Jesus, you’ll simply say, “The Father loves me and shows me everything necessary for me to navigate through this day successfully. And I know He’s going to show me greater things down the road.” How simple your life will be if you find your security not in what your spouse, the crowds, or society thinks of you, but in what the Father thinks of you. How does the Father feel about you? When you were your most rotten and vile, God said, “I’m so in love with you that I am going to send My Son to die for you (Romans 5:8). Why did the Father send the Son? Why didn’t He die for us Himself? He did. He was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself (2 Corinthians 5:19). When the Son, pinned to the Cross, cried out, “My God, My God, Why hast thou forsaken Me?” the Father felt the pain, the Father felt the agony, and something in the Father was dying at the same time, for God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself. How dare you or I say, “I’m not sure God loves me.” God demonstrated His love for us conclusively in that while we were dirty, rotten, foul sinners, He died for each of us personally.

The Son is in Harmony with the Father (v21-29)

Jesus lived the abundant life, and was anointed with the oil of gladness because.....The Son does not act independently of the Father; the Father and Son are in complete Harmony together, they are on the same page with the same objective, and same heart. So is a powerful principle for my life, to be in harmony with the Father, to be involved in what He is doing, to be focused on what He is doing, and to be in agreement with what He is doing. And, to make His thing my thing, and not being doing my own thing, to be doing something independent of what He is doing, but being in harmony with Him.

John 5:21 For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.

John 5:22 For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,

John 5:23 that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

John 5:24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

John 5:25 Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.

John 5:26 For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself,

Judgment

Jesus and the Father are in harmony and agreement on holiness and judgment. Some have this concept of angry Father and loving Son, but simply not true. Both are in agreement on holiness and the judgment of sin.

Permanently Passed from Death

Verse 24, "but has passed from death to life", means to permanently pass. So the application is to permanently pass from death to life. You who have received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior are free of death forever. In life is only found in the father and the son.

God Alone – Keeper of 3 Keys (Sky – Womb – Grave)

"The Father raises the dead, so I too raise the dead," declared Jesus. This would be a mindblower to the Jews who taught that God alone is the keeper of three keys: the key to the heavens, which He uses when rain falls (Deuteronomy 28:12); the key to the womb, which He uses when a couple conceives (Genesis 30:2); and the key to the grave, which He used when the dry bones came to life (Ezekiel 37). But here comes Jesus, saying, "I have the same key. Just as the Father opens the grave and gives life, so do I. Just as the Father receives honor, so must I. If you don't honor Me with the same honor you give Him, then you're not honoring Him at all."

Deuteronomy 28:12 (NKJV) ¹² The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow.

Genesis 30:2 (NKJV) ² And Jacob's anger was aroused against Rachel, and he said, "Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?"

Ezekiel 37:4-6 (NKJV) ⁴ Again He said to me, "Prophecy to these bones, and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD! ⁵ Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: "Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. ⁶ I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live. Then you shall know that I am the LORD." ' "

John 5:27 and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.

John 5:28 Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice

Jaws Dropped

The word marveled means these Jewish leaders are standing their with their jaws dropped because they can't believe what they are hearing.

John 5:29 and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

Jesus Tempted in All Points – Thus can Judge

Why does the Father let Jesus do the judging? Because Jesus walked in the same places we walk. He was tempted in all points like you and me (Hebrews 4:15). “I’m in harmony with the Father,” said Jesus. “I do the same things the Father does—including judging.”

Hebrews 4:15–16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

The Son is in Submission to the Father (v30)

Jesus lived the abundant life, and was anointed with the oil of gladness because.....Jesus had no program, no agenda, no vision other than the Father’s will

John 5:30 I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

Jesus had no Agenda – But Father’s

Jesus lived the abundant life, and was anointed with the oil of gladness because.....Jesus had no program, no agenda, no vision other than the Father’s will

World has Problem with Judgment – and Misses the Offer

World focuses on the judgment, and has a problem with it. Sadly they miss the part of the offer to escape judgment. The passion of God screams aloud, that God forgives, that God has provided a way out of the judgment. Judgment is the black backdrop of the canvas so that the red stands out, the blood of Jesus, demonstrating God's love is clearly proclaimed on the black canvas background.

Mark Twain

Mark Twain, not exactly a die-hard Christian, wrote these words: “Most people are bothered by those passages of Scripture they do not understand, but the passages that bother me most are those I do understand.”

The Son has Validation from the Father (v31-38)

Jesus lived the abundant life, and was anointed with the oil of gladness because.....The world raises up and challenges Jesus for what He is saying, what He is doing, and who He associates Himself with. But Jesus isn’t swayed by their aggression and challenges, for the Father validates, puts His stamp of approval upon Jesus, bearing witness that He and the Son are in perfect harmony.

John 5:31 “If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true.

John 5:32 There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the witness which He witnesses of Me is true.

John Pointed to the Lamb

John the Baptist testified that Jesus is the Messiah as he pointed and said behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

John 5:33 You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth.

John 5:34 Yet I do not receive testimony from man, but I say these things that you may be saved.

Jesus offers Salvation to the Critical at Heart / You can never go too Far

Verse 34 Jesus offer salvation to these critical people, the offensive people, the evil at heart people. Even on the cross those that raise and shake their fist at him he will say father forgive them they know not what they do. Do you know you can never go too far, God will find you and God will seek you out and proclaimed his love to you

regardless of how far you've gone. But in the end it's always an invitation and man has to decide whether to receive the invitation for forgiveness, to reject the invitation and self-sentence themselves to the judgment that they have earned.

Jesus – God of Compassion

The lame man, the woman at the well, the noblemen, all pictures of who Jesus came for, and who moves his heart with compassion. God loves you and he's coming for you prepare the way of the Lord in your heart.

Notice – Religious need to be Saved

But notice, Jesus is speaking to the highly religious, and He is telling them they need to be saved. They surely thought they were saved. Are you religious, raised in a Christian home, reared in the scriptures, went to church with parents, and can quote the Scriptures? But that doesn't mean you are saved, like these religious men. They needed to recognize they were sinners, that their good works could not get them to heaven, and that they needed to humble themselves and say Lord I am a sinner and I need you to save me from my sin. A place where the person falls at the feet of Jesus and says "save me", for I can't save myself.

Jesus loves these Religious Men

In Chapter 13 and 14 of Leviticus, the priests were given instruction how to diagnose and deal with lepers among them. But chapter 14 goes on to instruct on what to do with a leper that was healed (but no leper was ever healed, the law sat on the books for 1500 years for this very day). In Leviticus 14 it says the High Priest had to examine this man and if he was indeed healed of leprosy, the priest was to make sacrifice on behalf of that man. Jesus told the leper to do this as a testimony to the high priest (Levt 13 says to Aaron or his sons and they were the High Priests). Annas and Caiaphas, were the High Priests, they had to examine him, and declare him clean, the very same men who would condemn Jesus, even though they saw Him heal what was considered impossible, 1500 years this law never used, no doubt they had to go pull out the instructions to know what to do.

(Luke 3:2 NKJV) while Annas and Caiaphas were high priests, the word of God came to John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

(John 18:13 NKJV) And they led Him away to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year.

(John 18:14 NKJV) Now it was Caiaphas who advised the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

Leviticus 14

The ceremony was to take 2 turtledoves, one was to be killed draining its blood in an earthen vessel with water running over it (picture of Jesus the earthen vessel filled with living waters – John 4). Then the living bird would be dipped in the blood and water and let free, and the blood and the water would be sprinkled 7 times (with the brush made of hyssop – Ex 12 the Passover) over him that was cleansed. After 8 days the High Priest would sacrifice a lamb with oil, dip the blood on his right ear, right thumb, right thumb, then do the same with the oil, all a picture of those that have been cleansed will be lead by the Spirit (oil) in all that they hear, do, and go. After this the High Priest was to call all the nation together, and would pronounce him clean, and accepted back into the community, his family. Jesus was sending a message of love to the religious center of Israel, that lepers are being transformed, and I offer that same love to you.

(Leviticus 14:1 NKJV) Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

(Leviticus 14:2 NKJV) "This shall be the law of the leper for the day of his cleansing: He shall be brought to the priest.

(Leviticus 14:3 NKJV) "And the priest shall go out of the camp, and the priest shall examine him; and indeed, if the leprosy is healed in the leper,

(Leviticus 14:4 NKJV) "then the priest shall command to take for him who is to be cleansed two living and clean birds, cedar wood, scarlet, and hyssop.

(Leviticus 14:5 NKJV) "And the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water.

(Leviticus 14:6 NKJV) "As for the living bird, he shall take it, the cedar wood and the scarlet and the hyssop, and dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water.

(Leviticus 14:7 NKJV) "And he shall sprinkle it seven times on him who is to be cleansed from the leprosy, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field.

(John 4:10 NKJV) Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

(Exodus 12:22 NKJV) "And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning.

(Psalms 51:7 NKJV) Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

John 5:35 He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.

John 5:36 But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.

John 5:37 And the Father Himself, who sent Me, has testified of Me. You have neither heard His voice at any time, nor seen His form.

John 5:38 But you do not have His word abiding in you, because whom He sent, Him you do not believe.

Miracles Testify

Jesus is stating that the miracles He performs testify that He has been sent from the Father, just as the prophets said the Messiah would do.

Luke 4:17–19 (NKJV) ¹⁷ And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

You have not Heard His Voice – Shocking Words because thought so Spiritual

Verse 37 is shocking words that Jesus would say here to them, shocking words to themselves because they thought themselves so spiritual. Jesus is declaring how far short they fall even in the midst of their so-called super spirituality. I believe there is some passion here in this discourse with Jesus and the religious leaders, I believe he is fired up even more so, because of their lack of compassion for this lame man.

The Son Glorifies the Name of the Father (v39-47)

Jesus lived the abundant life, and was anointed with the oil of gladness because.....Jesus lived a life of gladness, power, and peace because He knew His life brought glory to the Father's name.

John 5:39 You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.

The Volume of the Book

Jesus said in the volume of the book it is written of me. From the Old Testament (as spoken then) through the New Testament written after Jesus' first coming, all of it speaks about Him. He is the center of history, He is the center of the world, He wants to be the center of your life.

Hebrews 10:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Then I said, "Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God." "

They Studied – Had Knowledge – Missed Word that became Flesh

Verse 39 these religious leaders they thought themselves something because they knew the Bible, they knew all the laws of the book of Moses, they knew it inside and out. Because of their knowledge of the Bible they thought they were doing so well, they thought they were really diligent, but the problem is although they knew the word they did not know the word that became flesh and dwelt amongst them.

- DL Moody said: "The scriptures were not given for our information but our transformation."

Key to Bible Study – Every Passage look for Jesus

Here is the key to Bible study and that is looking for Jesus and every passage, looking at the heart of God and the compassion of God in every verse that you read. If you will read the Scriptures to see Jesus, to see his heart and his compassion, then your Bible studies will be rich and blessed. If you say you can't read from Ms. that you are reading ink on the page instead of looking for flesh and blood dwelt amongst man, and is the spirit of the living God that seeks to commune with you. The key to studying the Bible is to look for Jesus in every passage, and when you find Jesus you find Bible study is rich and alive and wonderful and warming to your heart. You will be drawn to the word because you want to meet Jesus want to look and find him and be moved in your heart by actually conversation and fellow shipping with him.

John 5:40 But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.

Saddest Verse

Verse 40 possibly one of the saddest statements ever spoken, but you are not willing to come to me that you may have life.

John 5:41 “I do not receive honor from men.

John 5:42 But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you.

John 5:43 I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive.

Israel Today

Even today Israel is still looking for a “man of peace” who will come. When I was in Israel I would talk to Jewish people and ask how will you know when the Messiah will come, and they said he will be a man who brings peace upon the land. Sadly, we know that man will be the Anti-Christ, not Jesus Christ.

Daniel 9:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.”

John 5:44 How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God?

Jesus only Cared Honor of the Father

Jesus cared only about the honor that came from the Father—not the honor that came from men. That’s why He was free to fulfill the Father’s will. Solomon was right when he said that the fear of man will trip you up, but the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 29:25; 9:10). Jesus could say, “Father, I’ve finished the work You gave Me to do, and I’ve glorified You” (John 17:4) because He sought honor from God rather than man.

John 5:45 Do not think that I shall accuse you to the Father; there is one who accuses you—Moses, in whom you trust.

John 5:46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.

John 5:47 But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”

Moses wrote of Jesus

For he wrote about Me: Where did Moses write about Jesus? In many pages, but here are a few:

i. The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear. (Deuteronomy 18:15)

ii. Then the LORD said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole; and it shall be that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, shall live.” So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived. (Numbers 21:8–9)

iii. Jesus was typified in the rock that gave Israel water in the wilderness (Numbers 20:8–12 and 1 Corinthians 10:4).

iv. The ministry of Jesus was shown in almost every aspect of the seven different kinds of offering that God commanded Israel to bring (Leviticus 1–7).

v. Jesus and His ministry were shown in the Tabernacle and its service. One place where the New Testament makes this connection is with the word propitiation in Romans 3:25, which speaks of the mercy seat on the Ark of the Covenant.

vi. The law of the bondservant speaks of Jesus (Exodus 21:5–6 and Psalm 40:6–8).

vii. No wonder Jesus could say Behold, I come; in the scroll of the Book it is written of Me (Psalm 40:7). He could teach a Bible study where beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. (Luke 24:27)

The Law Given to Point to Need for Savior

The Law Given to Point to Need for Savior, and Jesus was and is the Savior of the world.

*Galatians 3:24 (NKJV)*²⁴ *Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*

*Romans 3:20 (NKJV)*²⁰ *Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

10 Commandments

What is the law, we find it in Exodus 20:

- #1. "You shall have no other gods before Me... (Exodus 20:3).
- #2. "You shall not make for yourself a carved image... (Exodus 20:4-6).
- #3. "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain... (Exodus 20:7)
- #4. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy... (Exodus 20:8-11)
- #5. "Honor your father and your mother... (Exodus 20:12)
- #6. "You shall not murder. (Exodus 20:13)
- #7. "You shall not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)
- #8. "You shall not steal. (Exodus 20:15)
- #9. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. (Exodus 20:16)
- #10. "You shall not covet your neighbor's goods; (Exodus 20:17)

10 Commandments on Supreme Court

Just a note on our country and trying to remove the 10 Commandments, they have a little problem down in DC. Justice is the guardian of liberty. What I have just stated it is written on the pillar of the supreme court of the United States of America. On the top of that pillar is a picture of Moses holding the two tablets of the law. That's rather humorous when you consider the country wants to separate church and state, there has been this continual push to remove the 10 Commandments from the grounds of state and federal buildings. The 10 Commandments have been removed from many of schools and they have been removed from many courthouses in the United States. There was a reason that they were placed there on the walls monuments made and placed in various locations on the grounds or inside the building because the founding fathers believed that justice is the guardian of liberty. And what that means is laws must be enacted and upheld for the people to be free. You can only find liberty and freedom in justice. For the Christian the law condemns us, the law judges us, and we were under the sentence of that crime. Justice had to be enacted and carried out on the lawbreaker, but God in his great love for us sent his only son to step in and take the punishment take the judgment that was to come and to step in and be judged and to serve the sentence that justice might be fulfilled, so then we can have liberty and freedom what a gift of life the father has given us.

Start of Internet

The start of the internet, really was the telegraph, and here is a little story to consider, as it originated out of a room in the Supreme Court. Samuel Morse, a son of a preacher, had been interested in electricity and he was talking over his idea of the telegraph with some people and they thought it was a good idea. Unfortunately, Samuel didn't have enough money to build his telegraph he also didn't have the knowledge needed to complete the telegraph. A friend of Samuel's, Leonard Gale, offered to help him. Samuel still needed money. Between 1840-1842 he was given a patent and \$30,000 by Congress to build a test line between Baltimore (Annapolis Junction) and Washington D.C. a distance of 40 miles. The first message on his telegraph was made on May 24, 1844. It said, "What hath God wrought!" which means, look at what God has done. The message, " What hath God wrought? " sent later by "Morse Code" from the old Supreme Court chamber in the United States Capitol to his partner in Baltimore, officially opened the completed line of May 24, 1844. Morse allowed Annie Ellsworth, the young daughter of a friend, to choose the words of the message, and she selected a verse from Numbers XXIII, 23: "What hath God wrought?"

Word is Pure Power

The more you know this book, the more power you will have.

- DL Moody said: *"The scriptures were not given for our information but our transformation."*

End of Study

Chapter 6

John 6:1-14

Recap

We have seen and experienced amazing things up to this point in our study of this wonderful Gospel. It has been warm and wonderful as we watch Jesus moving and loving on the hurting and hopeless. He has been doing miracles to show His power, but more so He has been teaching about the Kingdom of God and how man can experience an intimate and personal relationship with Him. The book is written so that we might believe, and by believing not just have eternal life, but what God calls “zoe” life (as the word used in the Greek), and it means to have an abundant life, an absolute life, a life beyond this life today, to have a God life such as Jesus lived when He walked this earth.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

7 Statements from Chapter 5

As we closed out chapter 5, Jesus gave us 7 keys to living the abundant life, as He gave us the “secrets (if you will)” of how He lived and His purpose when He walked this earth. I can’t encourage you enough to write these on an index card and pray them regularly, for as they unlocked the power of Jesus’ life, so too will they unlock the power of your life.

- The Son is watching the Father (v17-19b)
- The Son is in Continual Contact with the Father (v19a)
- The Son has Security in the Father (v20)
- The Son is in Harmony with the Father (v21-29)
- The Son is in Submission to the Father (v30)
- The Son has Validation from the Father (v31-38)
- The Son Glorifies the Name of the Father (v39-47)

Today’s Study

Today’s study is the miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 and in it we will see God’s love and care for people, and as always receive tremendous principles for living the Christian life to its fullest. So let’s get into our study.

John 6:1 After these things Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias.

Jesus is always on the Move / Always Working for You

Verse one says after these things and what it is after is all the things Jesus has done up to this point and now he's moving on to another thing. What we see is Jesus is always on the move and Jesus is always working and he works for you and he works for me. We read last chapter Jesus says the father's been working and I've been working would you know that he was working for you looking out for you what your best interest is always on the move in your life he's always going before you to prepare the way he's always presently with you to speak to your heart and to extend his heart to you. After these things, so after this study Jesus will have something more for you and after this afternoon Jesus will be doing more for you because Jesus is always on the move for your life in my life.

John 5:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath. ¹⁷ But Jesus answered them, “My Father has been working until now, and I have been working.”

Multiple Names

The Sea of Galilee was also known as the Sea of Tiberias, because the city of Tiberias was located on its western bank. This city, the capital of the province of Galilee, was named after the Roman Emperor Tiberius.

John 6:2 Then a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His signs which He performed on those who were diseased.

John 6:3 And Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat with His disciples.

John 6:4 Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near.

1 Year from Cross

By mentioning this Passover, we know at this point in time we are about 1 year from the cross. It also tells us that about 6 months has passed since chapter 5. Lots has happened, and you can fill in the details by reading (Mark 3-6, Luke 6-9, and Matthew up through chapter 13).

Roads Packed

Passover was one of the 3 mandatory Feasts that were required for attending; Josephus the historian estimated that Jerusalem would be 2-3 million pilgrims. So, it was all foot and (and a few donkey) traveling as people would make the trek to Jerusalem. This area of Galilee would be a pass-through on the way to Jerusalem, thus a large crowd passing through.

Feast of the Jews

John spoke of the Passover as a feast of the Jews. Actually, of course, it had been instituted by God in the OT. He had given it to the Jewish people, and in that sense it was a feast of the Jews. But the expression a feast of the Jews might also mean that God no longer recognized it as one of His own feasts because the Jewish nation celebrated it as a mere ritual, without any real heart interest. It had lost its real meaning, and was no longer a feast of Jehovah. Jesus has no interest in religion, and religious exercise, He wants people's heart, he wants to have a real relationship that talks to Him that walks with Him, and that rests their head on His bosom. If you speak more about your religion than you do Jesus, this verse should speak to you; Are you Catholic, are you Methodist, are you Chapel, are you Calvinist, or are youHis?

Leviticus 23:39 (NKJV) ³⁹ *Also on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the fruit of the land, you shall keep the feast of the LORD for seven days; on the first day there shall be a sabbath-rest, and on the eighth day a sabbath-rest.*

John 6:5 Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?"

Guarantee Prayer – Show me the Multitude

Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward: Mark's account of this event says that when Jesus saw all the people He was moved with compassion. Mark's Gospel says that He was moved with compassion when he saw the people. The word for compassion literally means "deeply moved (bowels). He was so moved it moved His internal organs. Another meaning of this word says that "He felt everything of every individual, and knew every problem and every pressure they faced". Jesus lifted up his eyes and saw the multitude of the people and their needs, and I believe a guaranteed prayer answer for each and every one of us, is to lift up her eyes from what we were doing, and look at what is coming before us, and we will see the multitude that is before us. I think sometimes people are just a blur to us because we are moving so fast, our eyes are focused down on what we are doing, our thing, that we miss the people and their needs. Here we see the heart of God, and His heart is for people. May the Lord break our heart of the things that break His.

Mark 6:33-34 (NKJV) ³³ *But the multitudes saw them departing, and many knew Him and ran there on foot from all the cities. They arrived before them and came together to Him. ³⁴ And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.*

John 6:6 But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do.

John 6:7 Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little."

200 Denarii – 7 months of Wages

200 denarii is about 200 days of wages, as a days wage was close to 1 denarii. So Phillip is saying hey we would need about 7 months' worth of wages to feed all these people, and that would still be to just feed them a little.

Phillip from Bethsaida / Imagine taking that Order – Hold the Pickles

Why did Jesus ask Phillip this question? Maybe because he was from Bethsaida (John 1:44) and this is near where this miracle took place (Luke 9:10). By asking Phillip who this was his backyard, it removed all hope in resources and connections. If anyone would know where the local all-night McDavid's was it would be Phillip, but he says it just can't be done. Their problem is in two parts. First, they don't have the resources to feed the multitude. Second, even if they did have the money it would be impossible to purchase enough bread to feed them all. There is no Food Lion or McDavid's nearby. I would hate to take that order; 15 thousand people, yes ketchup only, no pickles, no cheese. Just so you know, if I go get the food, the order just goes in as 5 hamburgers please, I don't have the patience for special orders.

Jesus lived Daily – Seeking the Father / Sermon on Mount

Even if they had all this money they still didn't have enough. One of the things I like to point out is to see that Jesus really live day by day. Had we been studying in chronological order we would have seen that the Sermon on the Mount has already happened and in that sermon Jesus would teach his disciples how to pray and in that place is give us this day our daily bread. Jesus lived it daily. Jesus didn't live to accumulate and to make his whole purpose comfort and ease. We see the Jesus God himself didn't have enough money in his pocket to feed 15,000 people even though he could create the heavens and the earth and he owns the cattle on 1000 hills, but he lived day by day trusting in the father and trusting God's provision. Jesus lived what he preached and he preached what he lived. Jesus says don't worry about tomorrow for tomorrow has enough to worry in itself. Jesus shows us a life that was totally dependent on the heavenly father for everything even down to the most basic need of daily bread. One example for us to just be living a life that's connected with the father. This whole feeding of the 5,000 is a reflection of the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 6:9–13 (NKJV) ⁹ In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. ¹⁰ Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as it is in heaven. ¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread. ¹² And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. ¹³ And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Matthew 6:19–21 (NKJV) ¹⁹ "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; ²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. ²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

Matthew 6:25–34 (NKJV) ²⁵ "Therefore I say to you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? ²⁷ Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? ²⁸ "So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; ²⁹ and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? ³¹ "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Matthew 7:7–11 (NKJV) ⁷ "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ⁹ Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? ¹¹ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

Maybe a Question for those Going on Missions

Verse 5 - "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" - Where shall we get so much, is the same question all of you may ask who are planning on going to Cambodia. God already knows what he's gonna do, he is looking to you to look within yourself to see what you do and whether you step out in faith. It is easy for me to say this now, because I have lived on the other side of faith now, I have seen Him provide (it is His nature and character – Genesis 22), I have seen and can testify that He can provide. But I know it is hard, especially the first time you step out in faith.

Genesis 22:8 (NKJV) ⁸ And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together.

Genesis 22:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, "In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

John 6:8 One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him,

John 6:9 "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?"

Didn't Live in Shadows of Peter

Verse eight Andrew kept being Andrew even when people wanted to just make him Peter's brother. He continually gets referred to as Peter's brother but I like it that he never lived in the shadow of his brother but was his own self. Maybe that's you here today live in the shadow of a parent or you live in the shadow of a successful brother or sister maybe you live in the shadow of an abusive parent, the Lord would speak to you today to hear in your heart is live in no one shadow, live connected to the father. Live being who you are in Christ and the treasure that you are to him and in him. No one here today is to live in anyone shadow, but to live under the grace of God, the love of God, and the mercy of God..... and you will live abundant life. So if you live in the shadow step out of that shadow today live the abundant Zoe life for God has for you.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Andrew always Bringing People to Jesus

Back in John 1, Verse 40, the first one that we see follow is Andrew. He doesn't get the press that everyone else gets, but what a story he is. Another thing about Andrew as you study through his life, what a great example he gives us in our life. One of the things we see about Andrew, is that he's always bringing someone to Jesus. When you read about him, he's bringing somebody to Jesus. There in chapter 1 he is bringing his brother Simon Peter, in John 6 he brings the lad with 5 loaves and 2 fish, and in John 12 he will bring the Greeks (non-Jewish) to Jesus. Great life examples in there for us.

- John 1, he brought his brother, Simon Peter. Andrew demonstrates the power of the one on one ministry, the power of the family ministry. Have you told your family yet, have you told them lately?
- In John, chapter 6, we'll see that when the 5,000 (that's men so there's probably the feeding of probably like 15,000 to 20,000 when you give out wife and children in there). Andrew's the one who brought the young lad and says, "Lord, he got these 5 loaves and 2 fish. We don't know what you can do with it but here's what we got." When we see him, he's bringing people to Jesus. He brings this lad..
- In John, chapter 12, the Greeks will come and they'll say to Philip, "Hey, we want to see Jesus." Philip's like, "These are Greeks, man. I don't know if Jesus is going to receive Greeks? I think he's only receiving the Jewish people." He doesn't know what to do and he comes to Andrew. He brings them to Andrew and the Greeks are, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus." What does Andrew do? He takes them to Jesus. He just brings them to Jesus. "I don't know what the answer here is, it's beyond me, but I'll just bring them to Jesus." In the ministry, whether you're teaching Sunday school or you're witnessing on the street or you're in the workplace, people need to see Jesus. Just bring them to Jesus and let Jesus take it from there. All that we do is to let people see Jesus. People wish to see Jesus, start with that presumption that people want to see Jesus, and it will relieve you of the pressure that you have the burden of responsibility to get them to the place of wanting to see Jesus. Give them Jesus. Don't give them stories, don't give them antidotes, just give them Jesus and let Jesus take care of it. As Andrew would bring those Gentiles there in John, chapter twelve, he doesn't sit with the stigma, and the world's perception, and the world's opinion, "Hey, the Gentiles aren't going receive this, and that this is a Jewish gig going on here," and so too today, the Andrew example that we need. We can have this stigma, "Oh, he'll never come to Jesus. He's a druggie. He's a Muslim. He's gay. He has this issue. This one, he's too rich and educated." Just bring them to Jesus, and let Jesus take it from there.

John 1:38–42 (NKJV) ³⁸ Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?" ³⁹ He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour). ⁴⁰ One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹ He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ). ⁴² And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas" (which is translated, A Stone).

John 6:3–9 (NKJV) ³ And Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat with His disciples. ⁴ Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near. ⁵ Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?" ⁶ But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do. ⁷ Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not

sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little.”⁸ One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to Him,⁹ “There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?”

John 12:20–22 (NKJV)²⁰ Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast.²¹ Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”²² Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

Little Loaves & Little Sardines

The word here the fish is a reference to very small fishes, such as sardines. And the loaves obviously are not the bread loaves we think of today, but little flatbreads smaller than English Muffins.

Barley – Animal Feed

Five barley loaves: Barley was always regarded as simple fare, more often fit for animals than for men. In the Talmud, there is a passage where one man says, “There is a fine crop of barley” and another man answers, “Tell it to the horses and donkeys.”

God says Bring me the Absurdity

What are they among so many? There wasn’t much to work with here, but God doesn’t need much. “Small things are not always contemptible. It all depends on the hands in which they are.” (Taylor) Jesus says to you today, as He said to them back then, give me the absurdity of the 5 loaves and 2 fish, give me what is obviously not enough, let me multiply it.

Bring what in Your Hand

Verse 9, bring to the Lord what you have, let him take it and do with it what he desires. Someone may say:

- this is just a slingshot that God will look upon it as a giant killer
- some will say it's just a jawbone of a donkey God will look upon it as a slayer of thousand,
- some look upon it and just say it's a staff it's a piece of wood Lord look upon it say in part to see.

Bring to the Lord it's in your hand even if you think it's little or nothing and see what he will do with it.

- These are just car keys you may say I may say great I have someone I need you to pick up and bring the church.
- You may say this is a pen it's only a pen, God was a great I need you to write a letter to someone who's hurting.
- You may say this is just four dollars God made me say great I want you to takes that person out for coffee and just let them speak and hear what's on their heart.
- You may say it's just a couple Bible verses that I know, God is a great I have some little children I want you to share that with.
- And you may say it's just a couple dollars God will say that's the faith I need to send you to show and demonstrate what I can do with a couple dollars.

John 6:10 Then Jesus said, “**Make the people sit down.**” Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

Much Grass – Spring in Galilee

There was much grass, and if you've ever been there Israel you know how beautiful the Sea of Galilee region is just how luscious the fields are in that area and so what this would tell us is it is spring time just as we know that the Passover feast is in the springtime. Here we see a picture of the shepherd having his sheep lay down in green pastures so that he might tend to them and nourish them and love upon them. What a beautiful picture of our great Shepherd Jesus Christ.

15,000 People

Notice it just says men, as that is the way they counted back then. So add a child and a wife for an average and we are talking about 15,000 people.

Shepherd – Lie down in green Pastures

Make the people sit down: Jesus here takes authority as the Lord; as a loving shepherd, He makes His “sheep” to lie down on green pastures. He fulfills Psalm 23:1–2: The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters.

Psalm 23 (NKJV) A Psalm of David. ¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. ² He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. ³ He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. ⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. ⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. ⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

Mark's Gospel – Moved with Compassion

Mark's Gospel says that He was moved with compassion when he saw the people. The word for compassion literally means “deeply moved (bowels). He was so moved it moved His internal organs. Another meaning of this word says that “He felt everything of every individual, and knew every problem and every pressure they faced”.

Mark 6:33–34 (NKJV) ³³ But the multitudes saw them departing, and many knew Him and ran there on foot from all the cities. They arrived before them and came together to Him. ³⁴ And Jesus, when He came out, saw a great multitude and was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd. So He began to teach them many things.

Drive Through Devotions

Jesus wants to feed them, and in Mark's Gospel we read that Jesus taught them. You know, too often we have a “drive-thru” perspective of devotions. “Okay, Lord, I've got six minutes before I have to be out the door,” we say as we flip open the Scriptures and expect to be fed. It doesn't happen that way. Not usually. As He did here, the Lord would have us not only sit down, but slow down.

God of Order / Spirit & Truth

The men sat down, in number about five thousand: Jesus administered everything in an orderly way. Creation shows us that God is a God of order and organization. I have been asked if our church is “spirit filled”, to which I reply “yes” for we seek the Lord in Spirit and Truth, hence the balance. See really most of time they are asking if by the end of the service someone will be swinging from the chandeliers, roaring like a lion, screeching like an eagle. Imagine if it was first come first serve for the food, 15 thousand people who haven't eaten all day, imagine the chaos. God is a God of order, and He has them sit in order, so He can meet everyone's needs, not just the strongest or the ones with the loudest voice. We apply that principle here, as we balance spirit and truth. We don't believe that truth can flow in disorder and confusion; but we also know that over-structure, can quench the move of the spirit. So we seek a balanced. Everything you see in this church has been carefully and much-prayerfully thought through so we can strike a right balance of spirit and truth.

1 Corinthians 14:40 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ Let all things be done decently and in order.

1 Corinthians 14:33 (NKJV) ³³ For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

John 4:23–24 (NKJV) ²³ But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. ²⁴ God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

1 Thessalonians 5:19–22 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies. ²¹ Test all things; hold fast what is good. ²² Abstain from every form of evil.

John 6:11 And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted.

The Miracle is in His Hands / Where do you Put Your Need

Jesus took the loaves ... He distributed them to the disciples: The miracle resided in the hands of Jesus, not in the distribution. Little is much in His hands. The miracle is in His hands, so the question for you today is where do you put your need, in whose hands is the outcome placed in?

Jesus Thrives on Limited Resources

Jesus thrives on limited resources. Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Genesis – Knowledge of Good & Evil / Wisdom – Fig Leaves

Back in Genesis 2 we saw the man eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. That it says to make one wise. Interestingly the first wise move that they made was to soak fig leaves on to their body, that is painful if you've ever seen a fig tree it is all fuzzy appointee very quickly tree. As you see Satan wants to tell people they are wise, our flesh likes to think ourselves to be wise, we always like to consider ourselves wiser than another. With the knowledge of good and evil, knowledge of wisdom, is part of the fall. If we are to seek true wisdom we need to connect ourselves with our heavenly father and seek his wisdom from above and that will only come by slowing down and entering into a time of prayer with him. It will only come by learning and understanding wisdom of the Scriptures this is where the wisdom of God can be learned.

Genesis 3:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ And He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"

Back in Verse 9 they Look at Andrew / Faith versus Logic / Logic is not Conclusive of God's Will

Back in verse 9 maybe after Andrew said this everybody turned and looked at him and he probably put his head down going that was stupid. But we see as we know the end of the story that Andrew was on the something Andrew really do that he had something here that once in the hands of Jesus could do miraculous and mighty works. But the problem is that faithful step out, and then reasoning and logical step in, and the faith will be crushed by reason and logic. There's a time when you step out in faith that even when people look at you and mock you have to send the markers out, and you have to step out and continue what you believe God has set before you to do. Logic and reasoning will crush faith. But you know what I also find it is so many times I continue on in and with something because it seems so logical that it seems to me to be the will of God. Imagine if you would if Andrew said no problem here I happen to have access to 15,000 lobes and 15,000 fish we have enough for everyone to eat I will go and get that. It can seem so logical it would seem the right thing to do because everything appeared to be in line. The fact is in this situation God wanted to do a miracle, in this situation God wanted to have them in a place of limitation, in a place of no resources in and of themselves but to look to him to be the resource. How many times we can have all the resource and then naturally just say this must be the will of God it seems so logical, and so we step out and do something that was never the will of God, and we didn't even ask him because we taking of the knowledge of the tree of good and evil we think of that were so wise and that this is the smart thing to do. Whether it's logical or illogical the path is still always the same, we bring it to Jesus and say here's what we have what would you like to do. And don't move forward until you are sure you have heard the voice of God speak to you on what he would like you to do. Don't let logic keep you from faith, but don't let logic also enter in to something that is not of the Lord.

John 6:12 So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost."

Filled - Glutted

The Greek word translated "filled" means "glutted." What Jesus did wasn't a trick, a gimmick, or a potluck. It was a miracle.

Gather Up - Must be Good Stewards / Church of USA

"Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost." - but we still must be good stewards. This is a must know verse for the Church of America as we can easily waste the leftovers because we have such an abundance of wealth.

Missions to Cambodia

I have been asked recently, and 20 years ago asked the same question. Should we send missionaries to Cambodia or Nicaragua, or would it be better to just send the money. Can I tell you this, we can do both. Our Father owns the cattle on a thousand hills, and He is more than able to send people and money. The average dog in America eats better than 80% of the world's population; American dogs are living good. I regularly, every few months go through all my expenses and say, this has to go, this has to go, this wasteful, this isn't necessary. We have the money to send both people and money, so let's do just that. It might mean taking that 10 dollar a month thing and

redirecting the money to missions, but we will be glad we did it in the end. Also, just a note, God wants to send eyes and ears to foreign fields to change that person's life, and then return and tell others what they saw God do, and so they become a voice of the people and God for that mission field.

Psalm 50:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *For every beast of the forest is Mine, And the cattle on a thousand hills.*

Leftovers – I saw this in Nicaragua

Verse 12 no one lacked anything there was an abundance of food, even to the point that there was leftovers. I have seen this firsthand personally in my life when I was in Nicaragua doing missions we were building an orphanage and we had finished laying the foundation and that was a big celebration so we had the word go out we were gonna celebrate God's great provisions and we invited the people locally to come and join us. There were already many people there who had come for the medical missions that we did at the same time that we were building the foundation. We invited all to come to the expected 100 people we had provisions for 100 people but in the end there were at least 200 if not more people had come. I can honestly say every time I came back to the grill and looked into the bin where we had the food, the food in the bin never dropped. I would come back every 30 minutes and there would be the same amount of food in the basket as when I was there 30 minutes prior to that we had just cooked and served another 50 people. I would come back 30 minutes later we had just cooked and served another 50 people and I would look in the basket and it was still at the same level with the food. I personally have watched God multiply the loaves and the fish, and today the chicken and the rice.

John 6:13 Therefore they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.

They wanted to Send them Away – If so Would have Missed the Miracle

In Mark's gospel we read that they wanted to send the people away because they were so tired. Imagine if they had, what they would have missed. But how refreshed and revived they were after watching and being a part of this great miracle.

Mark 6:35–38 (NKJV) ³⁵ *When the day was now far spent, His disciples came to Him and said, "This is a deserted place, and already the hour is late. ³⁶ Send them away, that they may go into the surrounding country and villages and buy themselves bread; for they have nothing to eat."* ³⁷ *But He answered and said to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them something to eat?"* ³⁸ *But He said to them, "How many loaves do you have? Go and see." And when they found out they said, "Five, and two fish."*

4 Solutions to Every Problem

We have seen 4 solutions to every problem.

- 1 – Get Rid of the Problem (Send it Away) – back in Mark's gospel we read of this account that the disciples were tired and wanted a break, and they ask Jesus to send the people away.
- 2 – Throw Money at the Problem – we with our American capitalist mentality, we think start a fund raiser, we need more than 200 denarii, and raise enough money and we can buy the problem away.
- 3 – Just do Something (anything) – hey here is 5 loaves and 2 fish, and yes that is a great start, but just doing something doesn't mean it is the right thing to do. Five loaves and two fish would have come up short.
- 4 – Give it to Jesus – This is the pure and perfect solution as we have seen in our study today.

When we Self-Sufficient we Miss Him

When we are self-sufficient we miss the hand of God upon us. He so wants us to know His love and power, his concern for every detail of our lives, and He so often shows that to us in hard times, lean times, and impossible times. He wants us to come to Him, say we need help, we know you provide, show me your glory. But when we are self-sufficient, we say I can figure this out, I can work this out with the sweat of my brow, or the intelligence of my mind, and when we do that we totally miss Him, and having an intimate moment with Him.

Some here Know Jesus – But not His Power

Some of you here today know Jesus, but you don't know His power that is available to you for all your needs that are beyond you. You think it is all up to you, you are controlling your own life, hanging on to it with every fiber of strength you have, and you are tired and worn out. Jesus wants to teach you to trust Him, to let go, and let Him. He wants you to see His provision for you, the power available to your everyday life, but first you have to trust Him that He can. You think you are just a number to Him, that He is distant and far away, but He wants to tell you that He formed you in your mother's womb (Psalm 139), and He hasn't stopped holding you since. He loves you, and wants to have intimacy and communion with you..... in every detail of your life.

John 6:14 Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."

Prophet – but Not God / Looking for Physical – will always miss the Spiritual

Truly this is the Prophet: The Prophet they expected was predicted by Moses: The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear. (Deuteronomy 18:15). They see a prophet, but they still don't see that Jesus is God. Look for the physical will always have a person missing the spiritual.

Who do you say He is?

End of Study

John 6:15-21

John 6:15–21 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone. ¹⁶ Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, ¹⁷ got into the boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was already dark, and Jesus had not come to them. ¹⁸ Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing. ¹⁹ So when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were afraid. ²⁰ But He said to them, “It is I; do not be afraid.” ²¹ Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.

Miracle #5 / Proves He is God / But Also – so that we Might Have Zoe Life

So we come to John 6:15-21 today, and we read the account of Jesus walking on water, which is miracle number 5 of 7. We read miracle number 4, the feeding of the 5,000 in verses 1-14 of this chapter. As it will be pointed out theologically, the miracles are to prove that Jesus is God, and is sent of the Father. This is certainly true, as John 20:30-31 says these things were written so that we might believe Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, but also as the verse goes on, so that by believing you may have life in His name. The word for life as we continually remind in each study, is to have “zoe” life. Zoe life (as the word used in the Greek), and it means to have an abundant life, an absolute life, a life beyond this life today, to have a God life such as Jesus lived when He walked this earth.

- Miracle 1, Water Into Wine (John 2:1-11)
- Miracle 2, Healing the Official’s Son (John 4:43-54).
- Miracle 3, The Healing at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5:1-9)
- Miracle 4, The Feeding of the 5000 (John 6:1-5).
- Miracle 5, Walking on the Water (John 6:16-25).
- Miracle 6, Healing The Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41).
- Miracle 7, Raising Lazarus From The Dead (John 11:1-44).

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Life has its Share of Storms / God shows Purpose of Storms – To Take us into Zoe Life

Now, life as you have found, is not always smooth sailing. Life comes with more than its share of storms, trials, and hardships. If we are completely honest with ourselves, we would say we really don’t like storms, we really prefer sunny skies and smooth sailing. Well in our text today, God wants to show us His purpose for storms, His power in them and over them, and how He uses storms in our lives to develop “zoe” life, in our lives, to take us into the abundant life He desires for us.

Football Days / God wants to Develop You into Greatness

Sadly when I played high school sports I had one football coach who was exceptional, but unfortunately in my junior year he was offered and accepted a new head coaching job at a larger and more prestigious school (as we were just a good ole steel mill town). And it is truly a great regret for me because he was a great football coach, who knew how to develop his players. The new coaches that came after they were terrible to say the least, they weren't mature enough themselves to lead themselves let alone others. We watched their personal life and they surely could not lead their families, let alone a group of young men. And, all the raw talent that was available went to waste because these coaches did not know how to develop the athletes, including myself, beyond their limits that they had, and take them to a new level of performance. And they took a football team with tremendous talent, and simply made it mediocre. My senior year we were ranked number 6 in the State of Pennsylvania (which in the 80’s was in the top 5 States of college football recruitment). So we started off ranked # 6 in the State, and we won a total of 2 games. The coach who finally replace that coach after reviewing all the films of the past year said if he had that type of talent he would be in the state championship every year. Beloved, Jesus wants to develop you beyond your limits that you've set, and sometimes we kick against the goads because it's too hard. But it's true no pain no gain, and sometimes we have to go through pain to achieve great gain. For godliness is

great gain. So allow the Lord to push you, allow Him to put you in hard positions, because he knows how to develop you from your present state, into a greater state, because he wants you to grow and mature so you can experience the zoe life He desires you to have.

Let's Jump In

Let's jump into these verses, and see how the Lord uses storms to develop the zoe life in us, the abundant life, a life that is beyond this present worlds life, the God life.

4 Things to know/remember in a Storm:

- FIRST POINT – Remember Jesus put you In the Boat
- SECOND POINT – Jesus is Looking Over You
- THIRD POINT – Jesus is Coming to Reach You
- FOURTH POINT – You will see Jesus in a Way you never have Before

John 6:15 Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone.

Jesus not Impressed with the Crowd / Wanted to be Alone with Father

They were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king: Mark's Gospel tells us that Jesus dispatched the crowds, sent His disciples ahead of Him in the boat, and then Jesus went to the mountain to pray. So we see Jesus tapping into the power source of His life, His prayer time with the Heavenly Father. This miracle really impressed the crowd and fueled their revolutionary hopes. But Jesus refused to further His kingdom this way. Instead, He departed again to a mountain by Himself alone. Jesus was more interested in being with His Father in heaven than in hearing the applause of the crowd.

Mark 6:46 (NKJV) ⁴⁶ And when He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray

Make King for Bread – Throw off Yoke of Rome / Jesus not going to Allow because of Material Blessings

To make Him king: They wanted to make Jesus king because they thought He was the Messiah they wanted. The Jews expected that when the Messiah came, He would renew the giving of manna. This crowd was willing to support Jesus so long as He gave them what they wanted—bread. This was a political title. The crowd was willing to support Jesus because they wanted to use Him to throw off the yoke of Roman oppression. Jesus wasn't going to let them receive Him, nor He them, He wasn't going to join them, because they were only seeking after the material blessings. Jesus is much more than a provider, He is the Messiah, the Savior, the Bread of Life that gives eternal life.

People Today still Misunderstand Jesus' Primary Mission in 1st Coming

Verse 15, people today still misunderstand his mission, is number one mission is to seek and save that which is lost. Today many people misunderstand his mission and they think that God is here on this earth to make life comfortable to ensure that man stay on earth is pleasant, but his mission has not changed in 2000 years and that mission is to seek and save man from their sin and he demonstrates his love in the midst of a fallen world today so the men may come to him.

Luke 19:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; ¹⁰ for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Interesting – Bread & Circus / 93 Days of Party – Entertainment / Drunkenness & Sex

There's something totally interesting and that is maybe you've read about this in your history books the Romans had what they called "bread and circus". The bread and circus was that the people (Roman citizens) got 93 days of vacation per year. Now the purpose of those 93 days was they would turn it into a party, there was always something to do on those 93 days of vacation. They would have the circus in town, they would have all the food and liquor that you could drink. And see what they were doing was it was a controlling and manipulating method. Because the people would always be looking to their next day off your next party the next circus, and by doing that they thought they were living in the greatest place in the world. They would think hey this is awesome I get to get drunk and have sexual orgies and gluttony and eating and drinking all that I can want and have. But what the

Romans were doing was keeping them under control and manipulation, as the people would do whatever they wanted because they so looked forward to bread and circus. We're not too far away from that in the United States, as we have plenty of bread, plenty of entertainment, plenty of liquor, plenty of sexual activity, all that you could ever ask for and watch just by click of a button or swinging by certain locations. So the Romans kept the people manipulated and under them, because they were always looking forward to that carnal vacation that was coming soon.

Jesus not Going to Allow It – Perceived because fed 5,000 with Bread (Glutton)

Jesus was not going to allow himself to be dubbed the King of the bread and the circus. As people were following him because he could do circus acts (if you would) of miracles and wonders. He wasn't going to allow people to follow him because he could provide them bread, all that they could eat and be gluttony. Back in the beginning when we studied the feeding of the 5000 we saw that they were filled in that word means to be gluttony and, they ate until they had to unfasten the belt buckle. They wanted to make Jesus King, and we read here that says he perceive that and thus he departed. Jesus is not to let them make him the bread and circus King.

Mark 6:42 (NKJV) ⁴² So they all ate and were filled.

Jesus didn't need Man to Make King – He was King / Jesus Secure in Father's Love / You must be Secure

Jesus perceived in his heart they want to make him King. Jesus didn't need man to make him King for he was already king. Do you notice how secure Jesus is in his position and who he is? You see how different Jesus is from man on how he receives praise? A man would quickly receive the people and let them receive him and make him King, because man craves those type of acceptance and praise and accolades. Jesus isn't moved by carnal motivation, nor is Jesus moved by man's means and methods, Jesus is moved by a true heart seeks him for who he is not what he can do. See, Jesus is secure in the love of the Father, and therefore He needs nothing us. When you are secure in your heavenly Father's love, you will not be moved by the praises of man, the acceptance and validation of man, you will be secure in Christ.

John 5:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel.

7 Statements from Chapter 5

1. The Son is watching the Father (v17-19b)
2. The Son is in Continual Contact with the Father (v19a)
3. The Son has Security in the Father (v20)
4. The Son is in Harmony with the Father (v21-29)
5. The Son is in Submission to the Father (v30)
6. The Son has Validation from the Father (v31-38)
7. The Son Glorifies the Name of the Father (v39-47)

John 6:16 Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea,

John 6:17 got into the boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was already dark, and Jesus had not come to them.

Seasoned Fisherman – No Fears of Night Crossing

It was already dark: Several of the disciples were fishermen, all accustomed to fishing on this very lake. It didn't bother them at all that they would be rowing across the lake at night

God wants to Break Self-Sufficiency

The interesting note is that these disciples, the majority of them, are fishermen we know from the Gospels. And so here are these fishermen are who are well acquainted with this Sea of Galilee, with storms that arise while out in the sea, but here they are in the storm totally being beaten and tossed around. Here is a main point I make, and it is so often God will put you into a storm in the place of your greatest strength, so as to tear down your strength and your self-sufficiency, and see in every situation and every need, Jesus is the answer. There's some of you here today you don't worry about finances because you feel in your own strength that you can answer your financial needs because of your great work ethics that you have or the hard-working position that you earned. And I

commend you for that except that you always remember a man receives nothing unless it has been given to him from the Lord. Some of you are strong in secure in your health, some of you are strong and secure in your relationships, and in all those things in all those examples you may find yourself in a storm someday just so God can remind you that you need him in every situation and in every place of your life.

God pushes you Beyond your Resources – So to See His

God must always push us beyond our resources, so that we can see his.

John 6:18 Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing.

Wind and Waves

Then the sea arose: The wind alone was bad enough, but the wind also whipped up the waters, making for troublesome seas. The Sea of Galilee sits about 600 feet below sea level, is surrounded by mountains, and borders against hot, dry and arid Middle East regions. It is the perfect environment, for perfect storms such as this as the hot airs rise from outside the mountains, get caught up into the cool humid air over the Sea of Galilee, and when those two meet, energy meets, and the winds start to whip. It has been recorded waves caused by these winds can be as high as 15 feet.

Always start as 1 footers

I lived in Cocoa Beach Florida for many years, and I always remember how all the hurricanes, the whipping and rising tides, all started out as little 1 foot waves. Hurricane Sandy, started out several hundred miles away as a one foot wave, but by the time it reached NY and NJ, it was several feet high, and did tremendous damage. Seems so often that is how trials in our lives start, little one foot waves, we feel we can ride them out, but then they brew and brew, and become major storms. Good life principle, call out to Jesus when they are one foot, so you are not alone, and will be prepared, if/when they turn into major storms. Don't rely on any of your own self-sufficiency, but all of Him and His resources.

This is Storm #2 / Storm #1 – Matthew 8 (Jesus in Boat with Them)

Now moving on to another point, this is not the first storm for these disciples, in Matthew's Gospel we see they were in a storm once before. In the first storm (Matthew 8:24), Jesus was present with them in the boat. But in this storm, He asks them to trust his unseen care and concern for them.

Matthew 8:23–27 (NKJV) ²³ Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. ²⁴ And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. ²⁵ Then His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" ²⁶ But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. ²⁷ So the men marveled, saying, "Who can this be, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

Jesus put them into the Boat / He knew What was Coming

Verse 16 - His disciples went down to the sea, got into the boat: Matthew and Mark tell us that Jesus made His disciples get into the boat (Mark 6:45). He knew exactly what He was doing when He put them into this boat on the Sea of Galilee at this time.

Mark 6:45–46 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ Immediately He made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitude away. ⁴⁶ And when He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray.

Going into – are In – Coming out of (a Trial)

If you are in a trial currently today, or if you enter into one tomorrow, I want you to remember for things. It is been said you're either going into a trial, or you are in the middle of a trial, or you're coming out to the trial, doesn't it seem like so often it's just one trial after another as we try to live out this Christian faith fully and faithfully.

FIRST POINT – Remember Jesus put you In the Boat

The first point, if you're in a trial remember this, it was Jesus who put you into the boat. It was Jesus who allowed this to happen, He is sovereign and in perfect control of your life, and he is working to do a work in your life in the middle of this trial. And as you look at this story remember this it was he who put you in the boat, and it was he who will take you to the other side. What we come down to isdo we trust him, do we believe that he knows

what's best for us? And if we trust him then we know He is going to see us through this trial, and get us to the other side.

Things Break Down – when we Doubt He is With Us / We think we Have to Figure it Out / Adam's Fig Wisdom

Where things begin to break down and go wrong for us is we don't think he's in the boat with us, or we don't think that he knows what's best for us, so then we take it upon ourselves that we have to figure out how to get out of this trial and so we start to do our own self-sufficiency of figuring out what can I do next and how do I get out of this trial based on my knowledge, my intellect, my strength, and my wisdom. I take it back and I take control. Reminder, the first wise thing that Adam and Eve did after they ate of the tree of good and evil was the sew fig leaves on to their body parts and if you know anything about figs you know how itchy they are and how prickly they are and how painful they are against the human skin. Adam and Eve thought they were wise, but what we can see is that was just plain foolish.

Storm #1 Jesus with Them / God Developing Them / Parting Red Sea – Crossing Jordan

In storm number one Jesus was with them in the boat. In storm number two they are alone without Jesus in the boat. And what we see is God is developing their faith he is taking them deeper and further in their trust in him and their ability to lean on faith and trusting in him and him only. We see the picture this the children of Israel as they leave Egypt God parts the Red Sea for them and then several months later when it was time to cross the Jordan River we see the Lord God asked them to step out in faith first by the priest stepping on the water. It was not until the priest stepped on the water by faith did the water part. So we see God growing the children of Israel in their faith by first parting the Red Sea and the second time seeing you step out now you take a step of faith, and here we see him doing it with the children of Israel. And here we see him doing it with these disciples in the first trial I'm going to be with you, and at least have me to look over and say Jesus is here be okay. In the second trial there is no Jesus there, and their faith is growing as they have to call upon the Lord to remember even though I can't physically see him I'm going to learn to trust that his eyes are always upon me. Now they don't pass this test in flying colors, but they will grow in the faith little by little in each and every trial that they experienced. And I want you to know that that's what God's doing in your life each trial he's growing you more and more and is taking you deeper and deeper, he is maturing you in your faith.

Exodus 14:15–16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ And the LORD said to Moses, "Why do you cry to Me? Tell the children of Israel to go forward. ¹⁶ But lift up your rod, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it. And the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea.

Joshua 3:14–17 (NKJV) ¹⁴ So it was, when the people set out from their camp to cross over the Jordan, with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, ¹⁵ and as those who bore the ark came to the Jordan, and the feet of the priests who bore the ark dipped in the edge of the water (for the Jordan overflows all its banks during the whole time of harvest), ¹⁶ that the waters which came down from upstream stood still, and rose in a heap very far away at Adam, the city that is beside Zaretan. So the waters that went down into the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, failed, and were cut off; and the people crossed over opposite Jericho. ¹⁷ Then the priests who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan; and all Israel crossed over on dry ground, until all the people had crossed completely over the Jordan.

Major trial 20 Years Ago – Minor Irritant Today

There are some trials that 20 years ago to me were stopped the world woe is me share my cry. Now those same trials they can happen to me every day and now I just consider them like pebbles in my shoe this is just an irritant I wish it wasn't there I'd like to shake it out but it's not gonna stop me from walking. And so the Lord does that he grows us in our faith is he takes us through trial and trial and then another trial.

No Trial beyond us to Handle

The apostle Paul will say there's no trial that comes upon us that it is too great for us because God will only allow us what we can handle. And it's true have you ever got to the end of the trial and found you made it. Of course you have because you made it. You got through the trial. Not until the other end of the trial could you say I got through the trial. But in the middle of the trial, how often we say I'm not going to make it this is going to end in disaster I'm going to die I'm going to go under I'm going to drowned, and yet we make it and we learn something and we grow we can become stronger and stronger.

1 Corinthians 10:12–13 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. ¹³ No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.

You still Have Free Will in Trial / Don't Check Out

I want you to understand this, even though God put you in the trial you still have your free will. You still have your free will to exercise, he's trying to do something and build something in you. And, even though he is sovereign, He will still allow you into the trial to see how you're going to do, more so, so you can see how you're going to do, to show you where you're at in your spiritual maturity and the depths and the trust you have in him. Can I say this to you, please don't check out of your trial. What I mean by that is don't say it's too hard for me I can't bear it anymore and then you check out and try to find some easy way out. We check out by saying:

- you know what this is too hard for me I'm going to go back to the bars,
- I'm going to go back to the Internet and cruise all those filthy sites because it's a way of releasing tension so you think.
- Don't check out of your marriage,
- don't check out of the church,
- don't turn on your friends and family and your church brothers and sisters who are trying to help you, don't turn on them because you're going through a hard time and you feel angry at somebody.
- above all, don't check out on God.

The Stragglers got Picked Off

Don't check out, stay in the boat and watch Jesus to a mighty work. I might add to the children of Israel we see them in their 40 years of wandering through the wilderness know who their enemies always picked off? It was those people who were trailing behind and lagging behind, ones who weren't fully engaged and part of the main group, ones who were straggling behind were the ones who the Amalekites would come to conquer and devour. You can do that yourself when you're in a trial by saying you know what I need a break I'm going to check out I'm not gonna stay fully engaged in the battle, and you know what Satan sit in their he's waiting and he's just waiting for that opportunity because he wants to get you when you're outside on the fringes and you're not deep in the midst of the protection that comes with staying in the boat and stand with your brother and your fellow brothers and sisters in the Lord, he waits until you're on the outer fringes and he comes in and he devours you. Don't go on the outer fringes stay in the middle, know that God has put you here, know that God is doing a work, even if it is hard, stay the course.

Deuteronomy 25:17-18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ "Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt, ¹⁸ how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you were tired and weary; and he did not fear God.

1 Peter 5:8-11 (NKJV) ⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. ⁹ Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. ¹⁰ But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you. ¹¹ To Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

John 6:19 So when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were afraid.

Mark 6 – Jesus was watching Them

In Mark 6:48 we read that Jesus watched the disciples as they rowed across the lake. His eye was on them all the time. God tells us this story so that we know that His eyes are always upon us, that He is not distant and far away, but always intimately watching us, whether storms or sunshine.

Mark 6:48 (NKJV) ⁴⁸ Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by.

SECOND POINT – Jesus is Looking Over You

Secondly in your storm remember that Jesus is looking over you. Jesus was up on the mountain praying for them, and he had his eye on them the whole time. Jesus is doing the same for you for these the same yesterday today and forever, then these disciples are no more precious to him than you are, you are precious in his sight and in his heart and his eyes are always upon you. And know this since he has put you into the storm, and he is watching over you in the storm, you are in the safest place in the world. There is no greater place to be and in the center of God's will. And don't in your mind say in a trial this is bad and then when things are blue skies and there's money in

the bank, and the job is great and everything seems so perfect that you say this is good. You see anywhere you are in God's will is good even the hard places is good because you are in his hand.

Rowing 6-8 Hours

Another Gospel account says they started to row around dusk, and rowed until what is now about 3am. So 6-8 hours. Have you ever rowed for 6-8 hours? How about walked? Can you imagine their fatigue at this point? Imagine their arms and shoulders? Imagine the callous and blisters on their hands.

Mark 6:47-48 (NKJV) ⁴⁷ Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He was alone on the land. ⁴⁸ Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by.

Hey – Ministry should be Easy

We so often feel that when we are doing the work of Jesus, it should be easy. After all, isn't God helping us? But sometimes, God tells us to do something and allows it to be hard as we do it.

Don't Know if Can Fully Grasp / We are going to be Princes Prime Ministers

I don't know if we fully can grasp what's happening here let's just put ourselves in the disciple's sandals and think about what it would be like that day right after the feeding of 5,000. They've just left this great miracle is a wonderful and warm day and everybody is lifted up and feeling good. So good they want to make Jesus King, so what would that make these 12 disciples? Start rowing, and rowing, and rowing, and imagine the conversation as they were rowing? No doubt saying our time has arrived, Jesus is going to be king and we are going to be prince. Jesus is going to be king and were going to all be prime ministers in the nation of Israel. You know people would have been coming up to them going hey here with Jesus aren't you, you're one of his right hand man aren't you? People would have recognized them for me and Jesus his inner circle, and people would've been drawing near to them when they couldn't get near to Jesus. No doubt as their rowing they're talking about these things and their feeling real good now, but here comes the storm, and they needed this storm more than anybody who has read this story. They need this storm because God has to change their mind about something, God has to take their mind off of worldly greatness, and get it on to the eternal kingdom. Jesus had to intercede for these men, for their own good, they needed this trial to adjust their eyes on the correct thing, on the right thing.

If Smooth Sailing – Challenges why Jesus is Waiting to be King

You see if all things were going well for them, if it was smooth sailing, here's what would've started to happen, they would've started to complain and question. You see the longer things are smooth sailing, the more time they would have had to say why hasn't he established his kingdom, why has he taking so long, why is he just sitting there rather than doing something. See they would have started to murmur, they would've started to question. The more and more time they had to think about it, the more they would've started to question. But God in his great grace sends them into a storm to get their mind off of these worldly things and get their mind back onto the eternal things. They won't see the bread king in this trial and storm they will see the storm King. They will see the king that can walk on water, and they will see the King never takes his eyes off of them, they will see the king that is always coming to them in the midst of their trial, and they will see the kingdom that will never leave them nor forsake them. Maybe you feel like you're going through a trial and storm God may very well be protecting you from something to steer you away from a group of people who are trying to influence you in the wrong direction. You may have friends who want to take you to the bread in the circus, you may have people who want to sway you into a place that is not intended for you by God. Don't look at trials as something bad, yes you can look at them as something hard, but don't look at them as something bad, because God's in the boat with you in every trial.

Some of You getting More Counsel from World than Jesus

Some of you here today are hearing more and getting more counsel from the world than you are Jesus. You are spending more time with them, than Jesus, and they may be influencing your thoughts and actions. Be thankful when God brings you into a storm, alone, and not with them, as we know most of the time when a storm comes all the people leave, and it is just you and God. Be thankful for that, sometimes that is the only way to break the influence of the world's counsel, sometimes it is the only thing that will take us back into seeing the Lord, to deeper devotions, to walks with him, to a place where you say "here am I Lord, speak your servant listens".

Storms of Life

There are various storms in our lives at any given moment:

- Storms of Protection: God has to bring us a storm to protect us from getting involved in, going along with, something that may harm us.
- Storms of Correction: Sometimes we are in a trial because of our own doing, and God allows it, because of our disobedience. We can't help t think of Jonah, he ended up in his storm because he was disobedient of doing what he knew the Lord directed him to do.
- Storms of Direction: and in that same story with Jonah, we see a storm (in the belly of the great fish) to change the direction he was going, to get him in the place God desired for him.
- Storms of Perfection: God will allow us in a storm to perfect us, to change, mature us, grow us, into His image. We grow in our trust for Him, seeing He is good, and that His eyes are always upon us, and is changing us from glory to greater glory.

Text Illustration – Muhammad Ali

In an April, 1988 edition of Sports Illustrated, there was a story titled "Ali and His Entourage". Sports writer Gary Smith went to Ali's farmhouse to interview the three-time world champion. On the floor leaning against the walls, were mementos of Ali in his prime. Photos and portraits of the champ punching and dancing. Sculpted body. Fist punching the air. Championship belt held high in triumph. "The thrilla in Manila." But on the pictures were white streaks – bird droppings. Ali looked into the rafters at the pigeons who had made his gym their home. And then he did something significant. Perhaps it was a gesture of closure. Maybe it was a statement of despair. Whatever the reason, he walked over to the row of pictures and turned them, one by one, toward the wall. He then walked to the door, stared at the countryside, and mumbled something so low that Smith had to ask him to repeat it. Ali did. "I had the world," he said, "and it wasn't nothin'. Look now."

John 6:19 So when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were afraid.

THIRD POINT – Jesus Coming to Reach You

The third thing to remember in the storm is that Jesus is always coming to reach you. He's coming for you and he will never leave you nor forsake you because he loves you and anytime you down to go back to the cross to see the outstretched arms in this is how much I love you and I came to redeem you and I come in your greatest hour of need I come in your pain in your suffering and I am here to be with you because I love you.

Disciples Keep Rowing – Obedient to Jesus Command

There's two storms one is a storm of correction, and we see that in the life of Jonah as he was disobedient to God and God brought a storm to correct him to adjust his course. This storm that we see here with these disciples ask a storm of perfection there being obedient they are staying the course even if it means hard times for them to turn back would mean to disobey what God had for them. They continue the row and here we see it's a storm of perfection because God wants to perfect them into the beauty of his image.

Wonder where Baskets of Bread Are

I wonder where the baskets of leftover bread is. Just a look would be a reminder that God cares about every detail of our life. I wonder if they kept looking at those baskets remembering the power of their God, and how He has the power over creation.

Jesus is the Great Shepherd / Jesus Great Shepherd in the Storm Also

We saw in the feeding of the 5,000 that Jesus is the Great Shepherd, we saw Him moved with compassion as He looked upon the people as sheep without a shepherd. We saw Him fulfilling Psalm 23 as He has them lie down on green pastures, and feeds them until their cup runneth over. Precious people, remember Jesus is the Great Shepherd in the storm as well as in the bread. He loves you, you are precious to Him, and he will be with you in the storms as well as the plenty.

Psalm 23 (NKJV) A Psalm of David. ¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. ² He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. ³ He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. ⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. ⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. ⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

Interesting Note about Anointing

Anointing was an ancient custom practiced by the Egyptians and afterward by the Greeks and Romans and other nations. Olive oil was used, either pure or mixed with fragrant and costly spices, often brought from a long distance. (See note at Matthew 26:7 Alabaster—Tables) Anointing was done not only as a part of the ceremony in connection with the coronation of kings (see 2 Kings 11:12 Coronation Ceremonies) and at the installation of the High Priest (Psalm 133:2), but also as an act of courtesy and hospitality toward a guest. Thus Jesus accuses Simon of lacking hospitality in neglecting to anoint His head when Simon invited Him to eat with him (Luke 7:46). There are illustrations on Egyptian monuments showing guests having their heads anointed. Oil was used for other parts of the body as well as for the head, and at home as well as when visiting. Biblical references are numerous: Deuteronomy 28:40, Ruth 3:3, Psalm 92:10 and 104:15, Ecclesiastes 9:8, Micah 6:15, Matthew 6:17, and many others. The neglect of anointing was considered a sign of mourning (see Samuel 14:2 and Daniel 10:3). Conversely, an anointed face was a sign of joy, and so we read of being anointed with the “oil of joy (gladness, KJV)” (Psalm 45:7 and Hebrews 1:9). In our text-verse, the Psalmist represents himself as an honored guest of the LORD, who prepares a table for him, hospitably anoints him, and pours out for him such an abundance that his cup overflows. In a book published in the early 1800s, *Oriental Customs*, a Captain Wilson wrote about an experience he had that was like that spoken of by the Psalmist: “I once had this ceremony performed on me in the house of a great and rich Indian, in the presence of a large company. The gentleman of the house poured upon my hands and arms a delightful odoriferous perfume, put a golden cup into my hands, and poured wine into it until it ran over. Assuring me at the same time that it was a great pleasure to him to receive me, and that I should find a rich supply of my needs in his house.”

Freeman, J. M., & Chadwick, H. J. (1998). *Manners & customs of the Bible* (pp. 313–314). North Brunswick, NJ: Bridge-Logos Publishers.

John 6:20 But He said to them, “It is I; do not be afraid.”

POINT 4 – You will see Jesus in a Way you never have Before

The fourth point is Jesus will show you more of himself in a greater understanding and before you went into the storm. They thought he was a ghost Jesus shows in his flesh and blood real life will always get a greater understanding of Jesus and who he is in his heart and how it beats and moves for us when we come out of the storm and are in the middle of a storm because we'll see him in a way that we normally would never have seen had we not enter into the storm.

His Name / I AM – Becoming One

Jesus in the original language is saying, “It is I Am”. He is making the statement that He is God. The definition of this Hebrew word means to exist, be, become. God is the “Becoming One” and He wants to become all we need: *(Exodus 3:14 NKJV) And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”*

I Can Be all You Need

I can be to you all that you need, I will provide for you (Jehovahjireh), I will be your Healer (Jehovah Rapha), I will be your Banner (Jehovah Nisse) and My Banner flies over and it says Satan you have no claim to this person, they are mine and touching them is a declaration of war. I will be your Peace (Jehovah Shalom), I will lead your life into still waters and green pastures as your Shepherd (Jehovah Ra), I will bring you into right standing before the Father in Heaven (Jehovah Tsedeq), and I will never leave you nor forsake you, for I am ever present with you (Jehovah Sham).

- Genesis 22 – The Lord will Provide – Jehovah Jireh
- Exodus 15 – The Lord is Our Healer – Jehovah Rapha
- Exodus 17 – The Lord is Our Banner – Jehovah Nisse
- Judges 6 – The Lord is Our Peace – Jehovah Shalom

- Psalm 23 – The Lord is our Shepherd – Jehovah Ra
- Jeremiah 23 – The Lord is Our Righteousness – Jehovah Tsidkenu
- Ezekiel 48 – The Lord is the Ever Present One – Jehovah Shammah

I AM Statements of Jesus

Jesus uses this I AM statement to show that He is God (the 7 I AM statements), and what He means to us:

(John 6:35 KJV) And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

(John 8:12 KJV) Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

(John 10:7 KJV) Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

(John 10:11 KJV) I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

(John 11:25 KJV) Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

(John 14:6 KJV) Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

(John 15:1 KJV) I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

Jesus wants them to See more than Bread & Circus / To see the Great I AM

Jesus wants to take his disciples away these 12, and he wants to show them more than bread and circus, he wants to show them “The Great I AM”.

Jesus brings Storm when Alone – Not in a Crowd / Jesus do Same for Us – so See Him in Different Way

I want you to see that Jesus allows the storm to happen when the disciples are alone with him not with the crowds. Jesus wants them to see, wants the disciples, to see him in a different way in a unique way, a way that's different from any time in any way they have seen him before. This time Jesus walks on water. They get to see Jesus in a different way for they never seen him walk on water. So it is true for us so often God allows us to come into a trial so that we might see him in a way that we never would have before. We enter into a trial and see him in a way that we never would've seen in everyday life when things are going well when the bread is flowing.

Peter walks on Water (Matthew 14)

John is writing about what is important, the theme of his gospel, and we see that all throughout as he doesn't record everything Matthew, Mark, and Luke do.... and vice-versa. But, I would like to add that this is where Peter walks on water. Now Peter asks the Lord to call him to come to Him (Lord if that is you bid me to come to you). Probably not the best idea if you are called “stone”. Maybe Peter was mocked for sinking and crying out to Jesus “save me”, but anytime someone brought that up, if I was Peter I would say, “yea but I walked on water, did you”. See Peter saw Jesus in a way he had never before, and it moved him so much he would literally “step out in faith”. Yes he sank, but he is growing in his faith and will soon be all his name said, ‘a rock’. He becomes a rock not by the bread, but by the storm.

Matthew 14:28–32 (NKJV) ²⁸ And Peter answered Him and said, “Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water.” ²⁹ So He said, “Come.” And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, “Lord, save me!” ³¹ And immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and caught him, and said to him, “O you of little faith, why did you doubt?” ³² And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased.

Now the Worship Him

Back at the end of the feeding of the 5,000 the people said Jesus is surely a prophet. But Matthews's account of this storm tells us something of great value, it says after the boat reached dry ground, the disciples worshipped Jesus, and said you are the Son of God. You will always see Jesus in a different way in the midst of the storm.

John 6:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.”

Matthew 14:33 (NKJV) ³³ Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, “Truly You are the Son of God.”

John 6:21 Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.

Marks Account – Be of Good Cheer / When I am Fearful – Jesus is Cheerful

Jesus will say be of good cheer it is I. I can be terrified that Jesus is still cheerful because he's in control he knows what he's doing and he is for me and not against me. Jesus will say to us of good cheer though you may have tribulation in this world to have peace in me. Jesus said be of good cheer he is overcome the things of the world.

Mark 6:49–50 (NKJV) ⁴⁹ And when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed it was a ghost, and cried out; ⁵⁰ for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, “Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid.”

I Know it is Hard – But don't Quit / Perfecting You

I now it is hard being in storms, but know God has you in this situation because he's perfecting in you. As Paul the apostle would say if God before us who can be against us, no matter what's coming against you always know the one who's with you. Whether it's a storm of perfection or storm of correction he loves you. He is working a plan in your life to conform you into his image and to turn you into a beautiful man woman of God. He has great plans for you so whatever you do don't quit, don't walk away, don't find yourself on the outskirts stay in the boat stay in the middle of the battle and let God be God and watch him do a great work in your life.

God Saved Me in Storm

When I was 18 years old God saved me in a storm. It was Cheat Lake West Virginia, I was not a believer at this time, but God still had His eye and hand upon me. I was about half way across the Lake, which was at least a mile wide, and I got a cramp in my side and went under 3 times. I remember looking up and seeing the sun from underneath the water, and I thought I can't believe I am going to die this way. I remember fighting to the surface, going under again, and then the next thing I remember was seeing the shore 6 feet away. The Great Shepherd took His staff and pulled me out of the water. He is a good God, and He decides when, “when” is (regarding your time of death).

Jesus is in Your Storm

And Jesus is in your boat, through your storm

- Storms of Marriage
- Storms of Illness
- Storms of Death
- Storms of Trials

They Worshipped Him

In another Gospel it says after this event, the disciples for the first time will say, “truly you are the Son of God”, and then they will worship Him. See last study we saw the great miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 and the disciples were right there. But, they didn't call Him the Son of God then, nor worshipped Him, it is not until now that they do. You see, you don't need a “bread king”, you need a “storm king”.

Matthew 14:33 (NKJV) ³³ Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, “Truly You are the Son of God.”

End of Study

John 6:22-71

Miracles set up the Teaching

We have seen two amazing miracles here in chapter 6 (Feeding of 5,000 and Jesus walking on water). Now, as is the design of this Gospel, Jesus does a teaching on them. The theme and point of this teaching, “how to have life”, and specifically, “zoe life”. The word life is used 47 times in the Gospel of John, and you will find it used 12 times in our passage today. That is 25% of the time, right here. The passage is “life” central!

- Jesus asks all people, what do you seek (6:22-26)
- Jesus tells all people, how to find life (6:27-29)
- Jesus calls all people to partake of Him (6:30-40)
- Jesus says some hard sayings (6:41-60)
- Jesus says to you today, “don’t turn back” (6:61-71)

Zoe Life – Vines Dictionary

Definition of Life in Vines Dictionary (Zoe in the Greek) as used in the NT “of life as a principle, life in the absolute sense, life as God has it, that which the Father has in Himself, and which He gave to the Incarnate Son to have in Himself, John 5:26, and which the Son manifested in the world, 1 John 1:2.

Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W., Jr. (1996). Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words. Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.

Zoe Life – More Definition

The richness of the word “zoe”

- God Life (for it is the life that comes from God and is God’s Life)
- More than this Life (John 10:10 – that we might have life and that more abundant)

Greek Words

Here are how the different Greek words are used throughout the Scriptures.

- Bios – living life, livelihood, manner of living
- Psyche – life as in breathing, “existence”, contrasted to being dead, and not breathing
- Zoe – A God Life, Absolute Life, More than this Life (Bios & Psyche)

Zoe Life – Summarized

Life emanating (coming forth) from God, manifested (made known) by Christ.

John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

Life

Verses that use “life” in chapter 6 (12 times in 11 verses – 25% of the uses in the whole Gospel of John:

John 6:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.”

John 6:33 (NKJV) ³³ For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

John 6:35 (NKJV) ³⁵ And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

John 6:40 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

John 6:47 (NKJV) ⁴⁷ Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.

John 6:48 (NKJV) ⁴⁸ I am the bread of life.

John 6:51 (NKJV) ⁵¹ I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.”

John 6:53 (NKJV) ⁵³ Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

John 6:54 (NKJV) ⁵⁴ *Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.*

John 6:63 (NKJV) ⁶³ *It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.*

John 6:68 (NKJV) ⁶⁸ *But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.*

Everlasting Life

We can see by repeated words what the theme is of a teaching, and "everlasting life", is clearly unlocked here in this passage (22-71). Eternal Life/Everlasting Life is used 17 times in this Gospel of John, and you will find it 5 times here in chapter 6.

John 6:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ *Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him."*

John 6:40 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ *And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."*

John 6:47 (NKJV) ⁴⁷ *Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.*

John 6:54 (NKJV) ⁵⁴ *Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.*

John 6:68 (NKJV) ⁶⁸ *But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.*

Summation:

Jesus will say, "I Am the Bread of Life", and Jesus says come and partake, and you will have "eternal life, and zoe life (a life that comes from God, that is greater than a life this world can offer).

John 6:48 (NKJV) ⁴⁸ *I am the bread of life.*

Crowds – Religious Leaders – the 12

Verses 26 through 40 Jesus is speaking to the crowd. And then this sets up the response of Jesus to the religious leaders who can't handle what he just said (starting in verse 41), and then Jesus turns to the 12 and asks, will you leave also (verse 67).

Jesus asks all people, what do you seek (6:22-26)

We will see the people come and ask Jesus a question, but Jesus turns the question, into a question on them.

John 6:22 On the following day, when the people who were standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except that one which His disciples had entered, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples, but His disciples had gone away alone—

John 6:23 however, other boats came from Tiberias, near the place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thanks—

John 6:24 when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.

John 6:25 And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You come here?"

John 6:26 Jesus answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.

Jesus turns the question into a question

They asked Jesus how did you get here, Jesus doesn't answer their question. Jesus asks, where you going.

Purpose of Miracles

As we have said in past studies these miracles that Jesus does the proof that he is God, sent from the father, as only God can do these things. But he also uses these miracles to teach his life lessons such as the feeding of the 5000 and how he is God the provider. As walking on the water, to show us that he is the God of the storms in our life. But after each of these miracles we see in John's writing there's always this teaching because God wants to use

these miracles to open up discussion with man. He wants man to ask questions, to evaluate circumstances, to seek within themselves what is this all should me, what does it mean to me, then what is God trying to say to me. Jesus here is using the miracles to reveal the heart of man, and how far off man is from what God is desiring for them.

They followed for their Stomachs / Jesus pointing Away from Temporal to the Eternal

They admired Jesus only because of what He gave them materially. They were not moved by full hearts, but by full—or empty—stomachs. This passage of Scripture Jesus is developing deeply and he's making a direct clear point, and it is about eternal life. For a man and a woman living to seek eternal life, to not be wrapped up deceived and blinded by this temporal life.

Jesus not being Harsh – But Honest / They Misunderstand Jesus' Mission – Going Wrong Direction

Verse 26 Jesus is not being harsh, more irritated by them, we will see that when he talks to religious leaders and the self-righteous he becomes harsh and even somewhat irritated by them. For these people here Jesus is not upset with them, but is honest with them. He tells them what they need to hear, but their understanding of Jesus is and what his mission is, so that they understand it very clearly. Right now they don't understand, they are mistaken, and they are going in the wrong direction.

Jesus corrects them on why they are Following Him

Jesus doesn't answer their question, but instead asks them a question, because He wants them to look closely at themselves and ask, why is it that I follow Him? Is it because I want "things", or I want "Him". Some people come to church because it is good for their business, some come to church because they want to find a spouse, some come to church because they feel it is an obligation, some come to church because they think if they don't God will smite them. Many follow Jesus because what they expect to get out of Him, but here Jesus asks the question so that each person may ask themselves, "why do I follow Him".

Jesus tells all people, how to find life (6:27-29)

Now Jesus will tell people how to find "eternal life", "zoe life".

John 6:27 Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him."

John 6:28 Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"

John 6:29 Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."

Jesus says Stop Laboring for Material Things / World will Never Satisfy

Jesus says to them stop laboring for the material things of the world. Jesus says to them that you follow me because what you can get from me, you want to fill yourself with all the material things, and you come to me because you want more. Jesus says to them stop laboring, stop working for more and more and more of the material things, but seek me desire me and fill yourself with me. See man continually laborers, and laborers, and laborers for more and more. But it's always more and more as this world will never satisfy. People work for their first \$50,000, and then when they reach it they say that's not enough now I want \$100,000, I want to go to six figures and then I will finally have made it. But once they make six figures they find that that's not enough So they labor, and they labor, and they labor. Jesus is speaking the most basic and simplest principle, don't seek after a world that is short, temporal, and passing away, but seek after the eternal kingdom to come that will have no end.

Working way to Salvation

Verse 28 - What shall we do, that we may work the works of God? Those who questioned Jesus seemed sure that if only Jesus told them what to do, they could please God by their works of God. For these people, as with many people today, salvation is found in the right formula for performing works that will please God.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV) ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Titus 3:4-7 (NKJV) ⁴ But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, ⁵ not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, ⁶ whom He poured out on us

abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Faith is Foundation for Works

Faith is the foundation for works, but works ARE NOT the foundation of faith:

James 2:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

Simplicity of the Gospel - Believe

Here is the simplicity of the Gospel, here is the only work required of us, to believe in Him.

John 3:17 For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

John 3:18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Definition of Believe / The Gospel

What does it mean to believe? It is more than just a statement of I believe. Let me save you 4 years of seminary and boil it down. Believe means to Recognize, Repent, and Receive.

- Recognize – Recognize you sin offends and separates you from the Holy God.
- Repent – being willing to turn from your sin, and turn to follow God.
- Receive – to humble oneself and say Lord I need a Savior, come into my life and save me; Lord I give you my life.

That is believing unto salvation, that is being born again, that is the new beginning. It is not rehabilitation, but regeneration, a washing away of sin and Jesus coming in and taking up residence within you, the kingdom of God is here.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Acts 3:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

Romans 10:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

The Seal / Mark of Ownership – Guarantee of Contents

Verse 27 - God the Father has set His seal on Him: A seal was a mark of ownership and a guarantee of the contents. They should have confidence in Jesus because God the Father has "guaranteed" Him. And, once you are sealed by God when you receive Jesus as Lord and Savior, He places His mark of ownership upon you, and the contents (your soul) is guaranteed for final delivery, heaven.

Ephesians 1:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

Did a Funeral Yesterday of a Believer

I did a memorial service yesterday for a believer, and it was glorious, it was a celebration, because I could get up and proclaim..... the Gospel is true, the resurrection is fact, and heaven is for real for all who will receive Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Jesus calls all people to partake of Him (6:30-40)

Now, Jesus calls people to experience Him, to be one with Him, not just in word, but in action of life.

John 6:30 Therefore they said to Him, “What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do?

John 6:31 Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’ ”

Show me a Sign – Give me More Proof

Verse 30 they asked Jesus what sign will he show to prove that he is who he says that he is. That's laughable, but ridiculous as much so. Jesus has just fed 15,000 people before the these people's very eyes, and we read that they were coming to follow Jesus because he was healing many who were sick and disease. But even after 15,000 people which I can say was never done on a hillside in Israel ever before, they still want more proof, so they say. It's laughable and it's ridiculous. But nothing has changed in 2000 years as people today will say they want more proof of Jesus. It's not enough proof that he has divided time from A.D. to DC. It's not enough proof that every major media outlet agrees that a man named Jesus Christ walked this earth. And it is not enough proof of all the writings that speak of Jesus Christ.

Original manuscripts

Josh McDowell notes. There are presently 5,686 Greek manuscripts in existence today for the New Testament.¹ If we were to compare the number of New Testament manuscripts to other ancient writings, we find that the New Testament manuscripts far outweigh the others in quantity.²

Author	Date Written	Earliest Copy	Approximate Time Span between original & copy	Number of Copies	Accuracy of Copies
Lucretius	died 55 or 53 B.C.		1100 yrs	2	----
Pliny	A.D. 61-113	A.D. 850	750 yrs	7	----
Plato	427-347 B.C.	A.D. 900	1200 yrs	7	----
Demosthenes	4th Cent. B.C.	A.D. 1100	800 yrs	8	----
Herodotus	480-425 B.C.	A.D. 900	1300 yrs	8	----
Suetonius	A.D. 75-160	A.D. 950	800 yrs	8	----
Thucydides	460-400 B.C.	A.D. 900	1300 yrs	8	----
Euripides	480-406 B.C.	A.D. 1100	1300 yrs	9	----
Aristophanes	450-385 B.C.	A.D. 900	1200	10	----
Caesar	100-44 B.C.	A.D. 900	1000	10	----
Livy	59 BC-AD 17	----	???	20	----
Tacitus	circa A.D. 100	A.D. 1100	1000 yrs	20	----
Aristotle	384-322 B.C.	A.D. 1100	1400	49	----
Sophocles	496-406 B.C.	A.D. 1000	1400 yrs	193	----
Homer (Iliad)	900 B.C.	400 B.C.	500 yrs	643	95%
New Testament	1st Cent. A.D. (A.D. 50-100)	2nd Cent. A.D. (c. A.D. 130 f.)	less than 100 years	5600	99.5%

As you can see, there are thousands more New Testament Greek manuscripts than any other ancient writing. The internal consistency of the New Testament documents is about 99.5% textually pure. That is an amazing accuracy. In addition, there are over 19,000 copies in the Syriac, Latin, Coptic, and Aramaic languages. The total supporting New Testament manuscript base is over 24,000.

People want to be Ignorant

The apostle Paul said in the last days people will willingly be ignorant. People want to be ignorant, I'm learned, they want to claim ignorance, so they don't have to answer to the results. Men willingly don't want the answer because with the answer comes a response, and it is a response of a changed life. An acknowledgment of Jesus being who he says that he is, not just God, but Savior, and if he is Savior and the question has to logically be asked to save you for what. He is the Savior from sin, sin separates sinful man from a holy God. Yet many people don't want to even admit that their sinners. Because see the Holy Spirit prompts them and moves them into knowing that their sin is an offense, and that God is requiring repentance. Men will say their sinners, but then when faced with repentance that's when the subject changes greatly. To believe needs to recognize that one is a sinner, and it is a call to repent from their sins, and receive the only way of forgiveness and that's true the blood and sacrifice of Jesus Christ upon the cross.

1 Thessalonians 4:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

John 6:32 Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.

John 6:33 For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

Trying to Manipulate Jesus

Our fathers ate the manna in the desert: Jesus’ questioners are trying to manipulate Him into providing daily bread for them, just as Israel had from God during the Exodus. They even know how to quote Scripture (“He gave them bread from heaven to eat”, Psalm 105:40).

Imagine no Food Bill / Give Thanks

Imagine if you never had to worry again about food. Imagine what you could do with that money. Bigger tents, Nike sandals, Underarmor robes, Cadillac camel. Not to mention all the time we spend having to shop and prepare the food. By the way, just to keep in mind how greatly we have been blessed, the average American spends less than 10% of their income on food. Compare that to Mexico (just across the border) at 25%, Russia/Ukraine at 40%, and Pakistan at 50%. Some nations spend less, because the food is so scarce, famines and droughts, they couldn't buy if they could. We have been so blessed. When you break bread for your meal today, remember to look to heaven and give thanks.

Jesus comes to give Life

Verse 33 the whole purpose Jesus came is to give us life. That's so we live. That's an abundant life, and absolute life, a life beyond this world's life, it's a god life. Is living with God and being with God, it is enjoying the presence of God. It is so far beyond anything that this world can offer, and it is in eternal life. Come that they may have life and that more abundant.

John 6:34 Then they said to Him, “Lord, give us this bread always.”

Missing the Spiritual – Like Woman at well

"Like the woman in John 4 who asked for living water in order that she would no longer have to draw from the well, the crowd failed to understand that Jesus was not speaking in terms of the physical, but of the spiritual; not of the temporal, but of the eternal."

John 6:35 And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

Empathic – there is no Other Bread of Life

Verse 35 Jesus and the verb context is emphatic when he says I am the bread of life he is saying he is the only real life. There is no other bread of life, there is no other red that can bring you life except Jesus Christ only. In John chapter 14 he will say I am the way the truth and the life, and no one comes to the father except through the son. It's emphatic there is only one red that brings everlasting life and it's Jesus Christ and him crucified.

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Narrow way – thank God there is a Way

People say this is a narrow way they say it's exclusive, and I will say it's inclusive. It is inclusive, in that it will include all who will come, as verse 33 says to the world, he gives life to the world. So it is not exclusive it is inclusive to all who will receive him. It's not the amazing thing that there's only one way, the amazing thing is that there is even a way. But God would provide a way for man to be forgiven of their sins and to be forgiven, and to have new life. Exclusive not at all, inclusive totally. Will you be willing to be included in the book of life.

Tolerant

People say this is not tolerant. They say that Christianity is intolerant. I think that is the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard, because it is greatly tolerant, that God of the universe perfect holy and pure, could tolerate any sinful man, that God could tolerate that anyone could blaspheme him, and yet he would steal open his arms and say I still will give you eternal life, I will still include you in my family, I will still include you in my kingdom if you will receive me as your Lord and Savior. Tolerant, oh God is more than tolerant he is greatly tolerant Christianity is the most tolerant statement that has ever been made to mankind, the holy God would include sinful man.

Houston Texas

I don't know you kept up on the news that I want to tell you it's come in, and it's come in at breakneck speed, if you have a read what's happening in Houston Texas. In Houston Texas the mayor of Houston is demanding and has filed a lawsuit, using her power of authority, using subpoenas, demanding and requiring that pastors submit their sermons to the mayor's office for review of hatred and discrimination against the homosexual community (she is an open lesbian). It is no longer religious freedom, there is no tolerance for anyone who will speak against homosexuality, and here we see for the first time in our country pastors being threatened with lawsuits if they preach against sin in our country.

Side Note – World Points

Just throw that in there that it's quite interesting as were watching the world events unfold here in our country. As we watch Ebola start to spread through our country has the potential to kill tens of thousands if not even more. In just a point that I think you should keep an eye on their in Russia Vladimir Putin has put in a nuclear weapon tree in Crimea the land and region that he acquired through military force though he didn't have to fire a shot. Nukes in Crimea changes the whole complex of Europe and the missile defense program there is they try to defend against Russia should they become aggressive. Jesus is coming back soon folks, we need to be ready, we need to be living every day for Jesus, we need to be invested wisely in our time and what were using it for and what were doing with our money, and the things that we are focused on, or distracted by. Jesus is coming real soon.

I won't water Word

I have expected this day to come to the United States as were seeing in Houston. And what's happening in Houston is only the beginning of what will happen in every state in this country. But I will not change what the word of God has to say about sin. It will be considered hate speech to say that there's only one way to heaven and that's true Jesus Christ. It will be considered discrimination and judgmental as him if you say the Christianity is the only religion, the day has come and I will not change the word of God, I don't have the authority to change the word of God, I only have the power to speak the word of God and by God's grace and mercy and power I will preach the gospel of Jesus Christ line upon line 1st upon verse.

I AM Statement – Exodus 3 / Becoming One

Verse 35 Jesus is using the I AM statement. He is making the identification that he is God has spoken of back in Exodus chapter 3. And he is the becoming one, would you know that today he wants to become to you all that you need for whatever you need.

Never Stop Laboring to Know Him More

May we never stop laboring to know him more. Oh I'm not talking about salvation, as Jesus will say salvation is simply believe in him who was sent. May I say for your personal growth may you never become content in your personal relationship with Jesus. And I know that you're not, because here you are a week after week you come here to learn more of him, and then to be like him as you love your neighbor as yourself. I bless you, the Lord bless you, for that. May we be reminded today to never rest, to continue to seek more of him, to never rest in where you are in him, but to keep looking for more of him in our life. The apostle Paul says that he desired to know him more, he said he has not yet attained that which he was attained for. That's interesting for Paul to say that he saw Jesus on the road to Damascus, Jesus appeared to him in a prison cell, a year but here is Paul saying I want to know you more I want to grow in the knowledge of him more. And what a witness in testimony for us may we move on to greater things in deeper things even if the world seems to be fading and fleeting on the things of the Lord, turn away from seeking after him, just content to say that they are saved, may we be a people who want to know him more to go deeper in him and to grow in his likeness, to be conformed into his image.

My Morning Devotions

You want to hear what the of my morning devotion is I read the Bible one chapter. That said one chapter, not 37, just one. And guess what, if I miss a day I don't double up the next day. I don't put that type of pressure on me because I'm not looking to complete looking to meet. I just want to meet with the Lord in fellowship with him so not gonna make it burdensome requirement to keep I just want to have enough to guide me to have me continue on with him. Hey guess what 20 some years walking with the Lord right now read through the Bible seven times at least. So what do you have to lose just one chapter just a couple chapters. When you have to lose by just those few minutes nothing. I'm reminded of worry of name and he thought it too simple to go to get himself in the Jordan River had he not done the simple he would miss the greatness.

John 6:36 But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe.

John 6:37 All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

Will Reject No One

Verse 37 he will cast no one out, all who will come to him he will receive them. And let me tell you this also may be backslidden, maybe you've really blown it, maybe you say I can't believe I did what I did, and you think God's done with you. This word in this verse is not for the one time entry it is a continual emphatic that he will never cash you out that all who come to him he will by no means reject and that's past present and future. He will never reject you so if you've fallen, if you feel that you've done something that's in excusable, know that he still waits and says come out take it cleanse it and I'll forgive it. But you, don't quit don't check out, don't leave him because Satan will have a field day with you. Use today and let him continue what he will do. He who began a good work will be faithful to complete it.

God's Sovereignty – Man's Free Will

Verse 37 we see the place of God's sovereignty, and man's free will. It's a dynamic passage in that we see that God draws, but yet we still see man,. It's beyond my theological depths of understanding all that I know is God calls and yet here man receives. People can get so wrapped up in the sovereignty of God and the responsibility of man. But me I just see beauty, I don't see anything that entangles me or twist of my mind all I see is an amazing God who loves an amazing God who extends the gift of salvation to all who will come, amazing God knows all and is in charge and overall. He is an amazing God and he loves you and you don't know him today he's calling you to come to him and have a personal relationship with him. He knows you he's a sovereign God he knows everything about you down to the last sin that you've committed and yet he still says, I will cover it I love you and I will give you a new life, and I will give you eternal life, and you can have a fresh start in a new beginning today and I will by no

means turn away anyone who comes to me regardless of their past regardless of their present and no matter what they do in the future they will be mine and I showed them.

John 6:38 For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 6:39 This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

John 6:40 And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

7 Statements from Chapter 5

Again, we saw why Jesus did what He did while here on earth, where He received His power, and what moved and motivated Him, and that was His relationship and harmony with the Father in heaven. And, we too will live the abundant life that Jesus lived, by living the same as Jesus lived.

1. The Son is watching the Father (v17-19b)
2. The Son is in Continual Contact with the Father (v19a)
3. The Son has Security in the Father (v20)
4. The Son is in Harmony with the Father (v21-29)
5. The Son is in Submission to the Father (v30)
6. The Son has Validation from the Father (v31-38)
7. The Son Glorifies the Name of the Father (v39-47)

Jesus says some hard sayings (6:41-60)

Some of the things Jesus says to us are hard, but He says don't turn back because they are.

John 6:41 The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven."

John 6:42 And they said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven'?"

Murmuring

"When the manna was given in the wilderness, what did the people do? They murmured (Exodus 17:3). And now they're murmuring once more in response to Jesus' statement that He is the "bread sent from heaven."

Jesus of Nazareth

Verse 42 their saying this is crazy, we know you are Jesus from Nazareth, and here you are saying that that you came down from heaven that's just crazy talk. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? The crowd was, of course, wrong. Jesus wasn't Joseph's son. He's God's Son."

Can't Recognize Him because so Familiar with Him / I grew up Religious

Verse 42 they are so familiar with Jesus they can't even recognize him as God. I grew up in a very religious region of our country and all of us went to church every Sunday no matter what. You can imagine this my played high school football we would do a church service before the football game. Then a priest would come in to the locker room and say a prayer over us before the game. No one ever talked about Jesus, like he was real like I could have a personal and intimate relationship with him, he was always spoken of as something past and something future but never anything present he was always spoken as holy and distant but never as personal as someone that I could not feeling touch right now today and that I can know in the way that you and I know each other. Oh we were familiar with the church of Jesus, just not the Jesus of the church.

John 6:43 Jesus therefore answered and said to them, “Do not murmur among yourselves.

John 6:44 No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

Jews thought they Born in to It

No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him: The Jews thought that they were all chosen by God by virtue of their old birth. Jesus makes it clear that God must draw them before they can come to God. Everyone who responds to the Father will respond to the Son.

Evangelism Freedom

Verse 44 it is the releasing of freedom for all who will evangelize. No one comes to the son unless drawn by the father. Is not up to us of who comes and who doesn't, it's all up on the Lord it's all up to him and there's no pressure on us if he's drawn they're going to come if he's not drawn they're not going to come we simply just put it out there and let the spirit of God move. I believe, many times it is all about the timing, the timing of the person being ready, and the Lord drawing them at that very moment. Whatever the case I just give them the gospel, and trust in God's timing and drawing, and there is no pressure on me fore the result.

John 6:45 It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’ Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.

John 6:46 Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father.

John 6:47 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.

John 6:48 I am the bread of life.

7 “I AM” Statements

The seven “I AM” statements,

1. I AM the Bread of Life (John 6:35)
2. I AM the Light of the World (John 8:12)
3. I Am the Door (John 10:9)
4. I AM the Good Shepherd. (John 10:11)
5. I AM the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25)
6. I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6)
7. I AM the Vine (John 15:5)

John 6:35 (NKJV)

³⁵ And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

John 8:12 (NKJV)

¹² Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

John 10:9 (NKJV)

⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

John 10:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

John 11:25–26 (NKJV)

²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. ²⁶ And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

John 14:6 (NKJV)

⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 15:5 (NKJV)

⁵ “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

John 6:49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

John 6:50 This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die.

John 6:51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."

John 6:52 The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?"

John 6:53 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

John 6:54 Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 6:55 For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.

John 6:56 He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.

John 6:57 As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.

John 6:58 This is the bread which came down from heaven—not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."

John 6:59 These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

John 6:60 Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?"

Eat of Tree of Life

"Here, Jesus says, "You've eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and it led to your fall. Now eat of Me, the Tree of Life."

OT Sacrificial System

In the Old Testament sacrificial system person would come and sacrifice the animal, and then a portion of it be put through the fire and consumed, and then a portion would be taken home and eaten. For the Passover lamb, Jesus was declared to be the Lamb of God would take away the sins of the world, and at the Passover would take the lamb down to the Temple and the priest would sacrifice the lamb, and then the house will take the lamb home and eat it. It was important that they ate the sacrifice, so that they would become one with it. The sacrifice person would lay their hand on the head of the Lamb and transfer their guilt and shame onto the lamb, and then the priest sacrificed a lamb. Here I believe Jesus is making a reference and a connection he is the Lamb of God takes away the sins of the world, and that every man must lay their hands on his head confessed their guilt and shame and Jesus takes their guilt and shame on the cross, the covering of their sin. Then Jesus is making the point that every man must fully partake of him eat of him become one with him, we read in John chapter 15 we are to abide in him.

Must Become One with Me

Jesus saying I am the bread of life, you have to take a bite, you have to eat of it, you have to become one with me to be a part of me. I grew up in a religious system I was empty and hungering for more. I tried to fill it in many different ways, in every way I still ended up feeling empty and hungering for something else.. Law I look like I had a wonderful life and had it all together. But on the inside I knew I was empty and I knew that something was missing in my life even though I played a religious game my whole life. Jesus when it was the right time, when I was ready to receive it, to fully understand it, drew me near to himself, and revealed himself to me. Jesus said I know what you are hungering after and I know it's not religion, it's a personal relationship with your Creator. I know you are longing for he says, and I'm offering myself to you fully. And he would say to me if you will partake of me and not a religious system, not a works relationship, if you just freely come to me I will fill you with all that you are longing for and searching for.

Must Taste – Looking wont Satisfy

He who eats this bread will live forever: Jesus offers us heavenly bread for eternal life, but we must eat it. Faith in Jesus is not compared with tasting or admiring, but with eating. We must dig in! Jesus says that we must have Him within us, and we must partake of Him.

- Seeing a loaf of bread on a plate will not satisfy our hunger.
- Knowing the ingredients in the bread will not satisfy our hunger.

- Taking pictures of the bread will not satisfy our hunger.
- Telling other people about the bread will not satisfy our hunger.
- Nothing will satisfy our hunger and bring us life except actually eating the bread. He who eats this bread will live forever.

Psalm 38

We must partake, and taste for ourselves. Not only does Psalm 38 say taste, but it also says “see” (which means to experience):

Psalm 34:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good; Blessed is the man who trusts in Him!

Jesus says to you today, “don’t turn back” (6:61-71)

John 6:61 When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, “Does this offend you?”

John 6:62 What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?

Spiritual – not Physical

Verse 62 Jesus says I’m not talking about physical things, but spiritual things

Resurrection will be the Proof

Verse 62 to the resurrection and the ascension of it all. And so we live on the other side of the resurrection and the ascension and he proves it all everything that he said is true. The resurrection changes everything. The resurrection is the power of the gospel. Anyone can claim to be God but only God can rise from the dead. Anyone can claim to give new life, they remain in the grave they are dead just like the rest of all who have died. Jesus rose again on the third day and that he has power over sin and death in the grave.

John 6:63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

Have Life 2nd time

Verse 63 – It is the Spirit who gives life – The word used here has “zoe” as it’s root, but interestingly as it is used here, it means “to have life a second time”. So man is born once of the flesh and is dead in trespasses and sin, but the person who receives the Spirit when they receive Jesus as Lord and Savior, has life “a second time”, and this second life will have no end.

John 6:64 But there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him.

John 6:65 And He said, “Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.”

John 6:66 From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.

Jesus doesn’t Chase them

Does this offend you? Jesus didn’t preach just to please His audience. If that was His concern, He would have instantly taken back what was just said, seeing His audience was offended. Jesus didn’t take it back. He challenged and confronted them even more.

Doesn’t Preach Best Life Today

Once Jesus effectively discouraged every fleshly motive for following Him, many stopped following. If we could do the same thing—effectively discourage every fleshly motive for following Jesus—how many would stop following Him in our churches today? Jesus did not preach “Your Best Life Today”.

Walked with Him no More – How Sad

In verse 66 it says that they want with Jesus no more. This is one of the saddest versus in all the Bible as you see people who were so close it ended up being so far away. I went to the stop and consider this a walk with Jesus no more, that means they rejected him and all of his promises, and his declaration that he is the way to heaven. Sadly these people missed heaven, these people that we read about are eternally as they sentence themselves to hell. How said to be so close and walk away from this bread of life is standing before you. There's people today walk away because they believe the sayings of Jesus are too hard to accept, oh it's not talking about his body and drink his blood that's the hot topic buttons are being pushed in our world today that divides people, they say how can a God of love, and they say these things are too hard, and so they walk away and they end up like these people the story is real application for us today

Poor Al Gore

Verse 66 interesting number 666. I feel sorry for poor Al Gore he was trying to play religion and religious voter in his presidential run. He was asked what his beat favored Bible verse and he said John 666. I think he meant to say John 316 of course when you play a religious game you can end up looking foolish. And so many politicians still today they want to act religious when it suits them, then they'll distance themselves from religion and Christians wanted system and the like manner.

John 6:67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?"

John 6:68 But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

John 6:69 Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

John 6:70 Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?"

John 6:71 He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.

Word Requires a Response

The Word of God, the Words from Jesus, always leads to sifting of heart - requires a response - a decision

Peter Obviously Thought About It

Verse 67 Peter obviously thought about this and came to the conclusion there's nowhere else to go once you've tasted and seen that the Lord is good. I considered the same hard being a Christian at first I was so longing to still enjoy the things of the world but in the end I knew there was nowhere else to go. I knew that the world left me empty and hungering, for I already went tasted and eight of the world and saw that there was nothing that satisfied me there. I couldn't I knew that I can no longer enjoy sin because there's too much at Jesus and me. I was sealed, and that always left me convicted because the Holy Spirit would tell me there's no life here in this world only by taking in enough for me. And if you're in that place know it's conviction of the Holy Spirit because you are sealed by the Holy Spirit, you are showing by the conviction that you are guaranteed of the content that's what the ceiling of the Holy Spirit does. I know it's not condemnation but it's conviction and it's a demonstration and proof that the Holy Spirit is living inside of you.

Word Requires a Response

The Word of God, the Words from Jesus, always leads to sifting of heart - requires a response - a decision. So what is your response to all you have heard today.

Chapter 7

John 7:1-36

Let's jump right in to John chapter 7.

John 7:1 After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him.

John 7:2 Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand.

Verse 1, after these things – Jesus is always on the move, He is never resting or relaxing when it comes to you, as he is always on the move for you.

6 Months from Cross

Verse two tells us it is the Feast of Tabernacle, so that means we are six months from the cross. We are at the 2 1/2 year mark of Jesus is public ministry. And just for tracking purposes there was a six month gap between chapter 6 and this verse that we pick up here in chapter 7.

Month of October / 2 Million People

The feast of Tabernacle would happen in the month of September October dependent on the Jewish calendar. This year it was him October 8 through October 16. It was one of the three feast or mandatory attendance if you are 18 years older and a male. The other two are Passover and Pentecost. So, Jerusalem is packed out, probably over 2 million people according to some of the historical writings.

Not Fear – But Perfect Timing

Verse one, Jesus does not walk in Judea not because of the fear of the Jewish religious leaders, but because of perfect timing. Jesus must be crucified at the exact moment as prescribed in the Old Testament. Jesus must be crucified on the 14th of Nissan (Jewish calendar) at twilight, before that he must ride into Jerusalem and be heralded the Messiah on the 10th of Nissan on, which is the day that the Passover lamb was brought into the household of the family during Passover. Jesus must fulfill Daniel chapter 9 verse 26 and 27 exactly, Jesus must fulfill that prophecy to perfection which says from the time that the decree was given to rebuild your Jerusalem, the walls of Jerusalem, the Messiah would come 483 years later. Historical records tell us that in 445 BC the command was given to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and in exactly 483 years later which would be 33 A.D. Jesus Christ rides into Jerusalem. Note, it is based on Babylonian calendar which is 360 days, so the days work out to be 173,880). And Jesus must be killed at the exact same spot as described in Genesis 22, not in the Temple, not on a hillside near a lake, not stoned in the street, but by crucifixion (Psalm 22), on Mount Moriah (which is where Golgotha, the place Jesus was crucified). Genesis 22 is about 2000 years before Christ, and Psalm 22 was about 1,000 years before Christ, and..... about 500 years before crucifixion was invented.

***Exodus 12:1–11 (NKJV)** ¹ Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ² "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. ³ Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. ⁴ And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. ⁷ And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it. ⁸ Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. ⁹ Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire—its head with its legs and its entrails. ¹⁰ You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire. ¹¹ And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD's Passover.*

***Daniel 9:22–27 (NKJV)** ²² And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. ²³ At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision: ²⁴ "Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy. ²⁵ "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. ²⁶ "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined. ²⁷ Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one*

week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.”

Genesis 22:1–14 (NKJV) ¹ Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, “Abraham!” And he said, “Here I am.” ² Then He said, “Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.” ³ So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. ⁴ Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. ⁵ And Abraham said to his young men, “Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you.” ⁶ So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. ⁷ But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, “My father!” And he said, “Here I am, my son.” Then he said, “Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?” ⁸ And Abraham said, “My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering.” So the two of them went together. ⁹ Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. ¹⁰ And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. ¹¹ But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, “Abraham, Abraham!” So he said, “Here I am.” ¹² And He said, “Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.” ¹³ Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son. ¹⁴ And Abraham called the name of the place, The-LORD-Will-Provide; as it is said to this day, “In the Mount of the LORD it shall be provided.”

Psalms 22:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; ¹⁷ I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. ¹⁸ They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.

World leaves me Doubting – Word leaves me Doubtless / He loves You

The world events around me can leave me doubting, but the Word of God always leaves me doubtless, I clearly see that God reigns, and He is in control of all events, and thus very specifically the events of my life and your life personally, because he loves us, he is our Dad. Your life, like Jesus’ life, is in the hands of the Father. Your Father in heaven loves you, knows every detail, and is involved in every detail of your life.

John 7:3 His brothers therefore said to Him, “Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing.

John 7:4 For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world.”

John 7:5 For even His brothers did not believe in Him.

3 Regions

Verse three, there's three regions in Israel at the time of Jesus walking the land. They are Judea (in the south), Samaria (in the middle), and Galilee (in the north). Judea is in the south and that's where Jerusalem is.

Don't be Surprised if Family doesn't see Jesus in You

Verse five, even after two and half years of miracles of Jesus his brothers and sisters don't believe that he's the Messiah. And Christian don't be surprised if it takes you longer than 2 1/2 years to convince your family that you're the real deal in God. We see here Jesus’ own family don't recognize the Messiah physically before them, don't beat yourself that they don't see Jesus the Messiah who hidden inside of you.

His Brothers were in Agreement with the World

At this time his brothers and sisters are not with him but with the world, there are in agreement with the world, and not in agreement with Jesus. When people hate you is not you they hate but Jesus. When people are against Jesus means they are with the world and so we recognize that, understand that, we just live accordingly with that in our thought.

Jesus had Brothers and Sisters / Mary Needs a savior / Study Her Life as Example of godly Woman/Teenage

Verse five, by the way Jesus had brothers and sisters. It has been a part of Catholic dogma that Mary remained a virgin her whole life but we read here in this passage (and Mark 6) that Jesus had brothers and sisters, meaning Mary had sons and daughters. Some want to try to say the word should be cousin, but that is not the same Greek word as used elsewhere for cousin in the New Testament (see Colossians 4:10). So, Mary was not a virgin for life. This verse dispels that dogma. And what is the purpose of that, for I would think that it would best be represented by her remaining a virgin her whole life, but what it does it makes her human, not deity. For Mary to remain a

virgin her whole life would put her on that pedestal the people want to in that dogma and that is to make her perfect, for some they put her a shade away from deity as they call her the Queen of Heaven. Because of this elevation in their dogma, some consider her a co-redeemer, that man can be redeemed through Mary as well as Jesus Christ. This dogma puts her a coequal with Jesus which therefore would put her on that level of deity and the ability to redeem sinful man from their sin. It's not so that's why I believe God did not have her remain a virgin her whole life just to clearly dispel that she was clearly and totally and absolutely human. There is only one mediator between God and man, and that is Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5). Now, she is blessed among women, but she still a woman of the flesh. What does that mean to us personally is that she will feel, she will love, she will have rejoicing, but she will also hurt, and she will know the pain and suffering is that this world has. There is no escaping the emotions of the world, she will need a savior and a comforter just like the rest of us. She will be a person of the Bible we can relate to, learn from, and model in our lives. She is an example of a godly woman, she is an amazing example of a godly teenage girl. You teenagers, study her life, apply her examples to your life, and you will be a godly young woman.

Mark 6:3-4 (NKJV) ³ *Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?" So they were offended at Him. ⁴ But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives, and in his own house."*

Colossians 4:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *Aristarchus my fellow prisoner greets you, with Mark the cousin of Barnabas (about whom you received instructions: if he comes to you, welcome him),*

1 Timothy 2:3-6 (NKJV) ³ *For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time,*

John 7:6 Then Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready.

John 7:7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it that its works are evil.

Reminder why People don't come to Jesus

Again may we be reminded, the reason people don't come to the Lord is because they love their sin and don't want to turn from it. They will use every excuse available such as evolution, or cruel God, or hypocritical Christians, or their upbringing, and they are victims, but John 3:16 says people don't come to the Light because they love the darkness for it hides their sins (so they think).

John 3:16-21 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. ¹⁸ "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."*

I Believe – and the Battle is On

Verse seven, you know today with blogs, twitter, Facebook, and all the social media avenues it is wide open for the world to hate you when you make it statement or a stance on morality. Here is why I think we lose in the eyes of people this argument so often because we say the words "I believe". The world says keep your belief to yourself, even though they get the voice theirs, but anyways they want us to keep our belief to our self.

Now I so often say when people asked me my position and what I believe, I say who cares what I believe, or what my opinion is, I didn't create you, I didn't die for you, nor will it be I you stand before on the day of judgment. The point that I'm making is it's not about what I believe, the person should be concerned with is what does God say.

Sometimes people say that adage, God said it, I believe it, that settles it. But you know what the fact of the matter is, God said it and therefore that settles it, doesn't matter what we believe or don't believe God's word still settles it all.

Well we tell people what we tell them because we love them because we care for them. But when we say we believe, it sets up that it becomes us versus them. Our call is to bring people before Jesus, for them to see Jesus,

and to decide for themselves about Jesus when they come face-to-face with Jesus. Our only calling is to bring them before Jesus.

The “I Believe” in the Bible

It is interesting to me, and I am not making some doctrinal theological position, just making a note of interest, and that is in the New Testament we don't read of people stating “personal positions” on sin (like I believe drunkardness is wrong, or I believe that murder is wrong). What we read is people saying “I believe Jesus is the Christ”, or “I believe the word”. I see two great examples there that we tell people, I believe Jesus is the Christ, and I believe His Word.

Mark 9:23–24 (NKJV) ²³ Jesus said to him, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.” ²⁴ Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!”

John 9:36–38 (NKJV) ³⁶ He answered and said, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?” ³⁷ And Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.” ³⁸ Then he said, “Lord, I believe!” And he worshiped Him.

John 11:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ She said to Him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

Acts 8:37 (NKJV) ³⁷ Then Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” And he answered and said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”

Acts 27:24–26 (NKJV) ²⁴ saying, ‘Do not be afraid, Paul; you must be brought before Caesar; and indeed God has granted you all those who sail with you.’ ²⁵ Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me. ²⁶ However, we must run aground on a certain island.”

2 Corinthians 4:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ And since we have the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, “I believed and therefore I spoke,” we also believe and therefore speak, ¹⁴ knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will also raise us up with Jesus, and will present us with you.

John 7:8 You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come.”

John 7:9 When He had said these things to them, He remained in Galilee.

John 7:10 But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

Jesus not telling half-Truth / Will not Come Publically

Verse 10, it is important to stay in context and so Jesus is not lying or telling half-truths. The brothers want to settle this, they want to all go and settle it once and for all in public, Jesus you're either who you say you are or you are not, so let's go settle this once and for all. Jesus says go do your thing, but for me I don't go to make public declaration at this time. Jesus knows his time is six months from now and he's not going to be put in the position by anyone to miss that moment. For this feast of Tabernacles Jesus will just go in with the 12, not an entourage, not on a donkey, not with palm branches being laid at his feet, just walking in in his sandals to the feast of Tabernacle because his time has not yet come. Jesus isn't saying I'm not going, Jesus is just saying I'm not going the way you want me to with a big public spectacle. The public spectacle will come in six months at the Passover, as He will come and fulfil being, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29).

Matthew 21:6–9 (NKJV) ⁶ So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. ⁷ They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them. ⁸ And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: “Hosanna to the Son of David! ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’ Hosanna in the highest!”

John 7:11 Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, “Where is He?”

Jews = Religious Leaders

Verse 11, when it says Jews as we read through the book of John it's a reference to the religious leaders of Israel.

Where is He? / Still the Question 2000 years Later

Verse 11, they asked where is he. Still today people challenge where is he, who is he, and so we see that nothing has changed in 2000 years. There are so many critics and skeptics, they read books, they read blogs, and they think themselves experts on the answers of who Jesus Christ is, is he real or is he fake. But if you want to find Jesus, you where he said you will find him, in the volume of the book.

Hebrews 10:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Then I said, 'Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God.' "

To Skeptic – Read the Whole Book / Dispel the Prophecies / Disprove the Resurrection

So to any skeptic I would say read the book the whole book. If you don't believe the book then read the book and then go on to disprove the book. You have to read the whole book 1st. You have to disprove the book. You have to disprove the prophecies of Daniel chapter 9, of Psalm 22, of Genesis 22, the book of Revelation where it says in the last days there will be one currency, where Israel will be reborn out of the ashes, and ultimately you must disapprove the resurrection if you're going to disprove the book also.

Imagine Challenge Science Book – Never Read it

But first you must read the book. Imagine me challenging a book on the Iraq war or the Vietnam War and I never read it. Imagine me trying to dispel physics, chemistry, or engineering, without ever reading a book about it. I would be laughed out of the University to try to disprove or dispel anything to do with physics if I never studied physics or read even the basic book on physics. Imagine such statements as we hear today about Jesus, someone saying "I don't believe in Physics, I think it is a manmade science". We would be like "what", what are you basing all this on? Then they would hand us the physics book and say read it, and then let's go from there.

5600 Manuscripts / Why 11 Die for Lie

People want to get into King James Version in 1600, NIV in 1990, crusader periods, inquisitions, and all that just clouds and turns this it into a million point discussion. Remember last study, we said there are 5600 manuscripts that are in 99.5% agreement. All those manuscripts are 2000 years old, they were all written within 100 years of Jesus' resurrection. So really the all the challenges should just focus on the manuscripts, because all the bible is based on them. You have to honestly ask yourself why would the 11 die for a lie, why they 500 hundred who saw him after the resurrection would die for a lie, why all the authors of the New testament would die for a lie, why Paul who was a top man in the Jewish religion would give it all up for a lie?. Of course, I just have to boil it down to this one thing above all things..... Why didn't the Jews or Romans simply produce the body? A dead, lifeless, God..... would have ended this before it ever got started. 5600 fragments, I don't think so. I think it is easy to start with, a man named Jesus Christ walked this earth 2,000 years ago, the evidence is overwhelming, now to each person, is He who He says He is.

I read the Book – Cross-examined It – Struggled that there could be such a Lover

I read the Bible and I cross-examined it and I dug into every argument that could be made to disprove it. Yet every time I kept coming up with no conclusive fax to tear it down to eliminated as factual. When I looked at creation versus Evolution I could not come with a strong argument in case the creation had no basis and that evolution was factual. On the contrary I came to the conclusion that both started and required faith. See my greatest problem that I was struggling with wasn't the Bible, or that God existed, it was easy for me to get to the fact this Bible was written outside of this time domain. It was easy for me to get to the facts that there is a God and he exists, my struggle was I couldn't believe that there was a one who could love like he said that he does. My greatest struggle is that God could love me a sinner, someone like me who would make foolish mistakes day in and day out, and 20 some years later still a foolish man, I struggled that there could be a being that could be that much of a lover. But it's true and he loves you, you are precious in the sight and he loves to the degree that he says that he loves you. You are that precious in his sight and you move his heart, you are the apple of his eye, he is passionately in love with you his bride. Struggle no more that God loves you this Bible was faxed God exist in this God says that he loves you God said as. God said it, that settles it.

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

People will Flip Table – Say Read the Koran

So people will flip the table on me and say will then you should read the whole Koran if you're going to apply this, then you too should then read the whole Koran, or you should read all the writings on Buddhism, or should read all the writing about Krishna and all their practices, you should even read about the book of Satan if you're going to disprove them as you are saying to do about the Bible. To that my answer is hand me a three dollar bill and in a

milli-second I'll tell you it's phony it's counterfeit because you see once you know the original, why would you spend time researching the counterfeit. I don't have to try to spend the three dollar bill, or call the treasury to see if it's real, or search the Internet to see if three dollar bills are valid, I know what a genuine and real currency is so why invest in waste time in the counterfeit.

Read Portions of their Book to Know where Coming From / But defeat Counterfeit with Real Thing

Now I have read large portions of the Koran, the book of Mormon, Jehovah witness, various butchered translations, so I can talk to them and know where they're coming from. When I talked to them I don't spend time trying to counter their counterfeit, I just present them with the original because if I give them in the original and they understand that and they see that and God grips their heart than they will clearly see the counterfeit. So we don't have to attack them in their documents, their writings, but all we have to do is present the original and let it reveal the counterfeits.

John 7:12 And there was much complaining among the people concerning Him. Some said, "He is good"; others said, "No, on the contrary, He deceives the people."

Only God is Good

Verse 12, Jesus isn't good if he isn't God. Jesus is either a lunatic or God. You can't be good if you're not God and God's own words there is none good no not one Romans 3:10, but God!

Matthew 19:16-17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Now behold, one came and said to Him, "Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" ¹⁷ So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

John 7:13 However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews.

John 7:14 Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught.

Section in Temple for Teaching

Verse 14, there was a section in the temple that itinerant pastors skews me rabbis would go teach and that's what Jesus is doing right here.

Feat Tabernacle – Remembering the Exodus

Verse 14, they would build little booths during this time and what the feast of Tabernacle is it's a remembering of the wilderness wandering for 40 years after the triumph in Egypt. They would remember the freedom from slavery, and, they would remember the bondage that they were once in, they would remember and celebrate coming into the Promised Land. They would remember God's great deliverance and that was the purpose of the feast of Tabernacles it was a great celebration of deliverance freedom and victory. You can see the resemblance and the picture that it is for us who are in Christ. I think I can guess what Jesus taught when He was teaching..... freedom!

Tabernacle was like our Thanksgiving

The feast of Tabernacles was a joyous time because the harvest is in, long work is done, and now it's a week of celebration and reason relaxation. The feast of Tabernacle would be equivalent to our Thanksgiving.

Juggling Rabbi's / Little Booths

This was such a festive time there is accounts that have been written about the juggling Rabbi would juggle flaming torches (a symbol of the pillar by day and the fire by night that followed them for 40 years in the wilderness). It just lends itself to how festive the celebration was who has so many names but it was a festival of joy it was called the season of joy. It was called the feast of ingathering because the crops were in people can now relax, is also called the feast of booths, as a reminder to the wilderness wandering is sleeping under the stars and sleeping in tents, it was just a time where people celebrated and had joy. The booths were made out of palm branches in the palm branches were not to be woven so tight that you couldn't see the stars in the sky so you could lay there and have a remembrance of how big God is and yet how he is so intimately involved with this people that he would take care of them and deliver.

Simeon b. Gamaliel danced with eight flaming torches, and not one of them fell to the ground. (Jewish Encyclopedia Sukkah 4:4)

8 days of Praise / We get to do the Same Everyday

It was eight days of praise and worship. A fellow shipping and study in the word of God. Of remembering the freedom of God's deliverance from 40 years of slavery. And how we are blessed as we do that here every Sunday as we come here and we fellowship them we study the Word and we worship and give praise celebrating the season of joy that are God has released us from the bondage is of sin through the blood of the Lamb Jesus Christ. They we always remember that and when you may be on the fence of just stand home remember, here and enjoy the season of joy and you will be lifted up and you will be blessed.

People Feared to Talk Openly about Jesus

Now, Verse 13, lots of people fear to talk openly because of their fear of the Jewish people. Can I tell you, I'm fearful to talk openly about Jesus with people also. I don't know if that helps any of you but I want to be honest with you and it's the truth. I just want to be accepted, I hate confrontation, I just want peace. But if you want to know how to overcome that, how we are to overcome that, just look at these next several verses versus 14 through verses 18 and Jesus unlocks in that verse how we overcome fear of man and speaking openly about Jesus.

John 7:15 And the Jews marveled, saying, "How does this Man know letters, having never studied?"

John 7:16 Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me.

John 7:17 If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority.

John 7:18 He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him.

No One ever Taught with Authority / People Hunger That

Verse 15 point people did teach though they would never teach from their heart they would always just quote someone else there was never anything new that came out of him it was always the repeating of some of the Rabbi because they were always fearful of failing in the presentation of the word of God. But when Jesus would teach he would teach fresh and new, he would teach us somebody who was in the presence of God himself, and when the people heard it they hungered for it and they thirsted for it because they knew this was something fresh and new. And that's what I pray Jesus does to us every week that we gather the study his word.

1 – Studied Under the Father

Verses 14 to 15, we see the Jesus studied under the father. If you study under the Father you can be sure of your doctrine.

Verse 15, Jesus taught with authority down to the letter of the law, I believe down to the letter of the actual original writing in Hebrew.

Verse 15, don't limit yourself and how God will use you or not use you based on your degree, or certificate, there are some greats who have no degree or certificate and I would name a few such as Spurgeon, Moody, Peter, and even Jesus. So if you don't have a degree or certificate don't worry you're still in great company, what you need to do is do what Jesus did spend time in the presence of the Father and the word of the Father will flow through you out to people and they will recognize one thing for sure you've spent time in the presence of the Lord.

IBS

Now we want to teach you what we call the inductive Bible study method, and that's where we observe the text, interpret the text what it means, and then we apply it to our life. We will be teaching that inductive Bible study method coming up here at the beginning of the year. I encourage you to in roll and take the course and make it a priority and I will promise you that you will be blessed.

Pray the Word

Verse 15 the apostles had been with Jesus, and the people recognized it. Spend time in his presence and people recognize it. But here's something I can encourage you don't just read the word but take time and literally pray

over the word that you're reading. Put the Bible in front you get on your knees and just say Lord speak this word into my heart, pray over the word and say Lord make the word become real to me, Lord apply it to my life, Lord make this word one with me, and read it and pray the word at the same time and you will be blessed.

Acts 4:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.

2 – They don't Reject us but Father

Verses 16 to 17, Jesus says it is not my doctrine but the father's, it is not my message it's his message. And so for us we see to reject him, is to reject father's doctrine, so to reject Jesus is not rejecting us. Remember they are rejecting Jesus, they are not rejecting you. And remember John chapter 6 verse 44 no one can come to the Son unless drawn by the father. The pressures not on us at all we are free just to tell people this great love and then to love them and in the pray and pray to God's Spirit will move on them.

John 6:44 (NKJV) ⁴⁴ No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

Jesus knows the Author

Verse 16, Jesus is basically saying I know the author personally. Hey Bible College is great but give me someone who knows him personally any day over anybody with degrees.

Obedience to the Word – Makes us Bible

Verse 17, we see spiritual growth is based on obedience, not on intellect. But we are to do was hear the word then do the word. We are to hear the word and let his doctrine become our doctrine and we do that by obeying it not just by reading it and understanding it. So, if you want to be mighty in the Word, you have to be mighty in obedience.

To Know through Experience

Verse 17, to know means to know by experience. And you will know it's true when you experience it personally for yourself because it will change your life and your life will never be the the same when you experience Jesus Christ personally.

3 – Motivated for his Glory – Not Our Own

Verse 18, Jesus only motive was that the father would be glorified. And we can bring ourselves to our only motive is for God to be glorified and will be free and will have no pressure upon ourselves, we will be moved and motivated by love, not a requirement, not a rule that we have to do this, the release of the Spirit because our heart can't help but to tell people there is a God who loves them. When people saved God is glorified, but he still is glorified even when people reject him because he has demonstrated and shown his love to them by reaching out to them.

Christians Accused of Being Judgmental

We get accused of being judgmental, but is telling people God loves them and has a plan for them is that really being judgmental, absolutely not. Is calling sin sin, being judgmental, absolutely not because God gives his word and call sin sin to protect and provide. To protect people from harm and to protect them from damage in their life. How is that judgmental, it's loving and it's caring.

The Ocean – God's Holiness and Grace

It was interesting to me as I looked at the ocean that I came to the remembrance and the realization that the oceans were formed from the flood. And so what I see in the oceans is both holiness and grace. I see the holiness of God that he will not link it sin, but I see the grace of God that he provided a way out to all who would take it through the ark. And by his grace he became the arc of man that man could come aboard the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and be saved from their sin and the raft that would come against those who break his holy commandments, for all who would come on board the ark of salvation Jesus Christ.

We Judgmental when we Say they can't be Saved

I'll tell you when Christians are judgmental and I think we'll all guilty of it, and that's when we look at some money and we say they'll never come to Jesus, they'll never change, worse when we go they have what's coming to them because they deserve it, so I'll just be quiet, that's when Christians are judgmental.

Interesting what People Quote back to Us

It's always interesting to me how people quote the book they say your God, He is a God of slavery, a God who wipes out nations, the God who allows war, and disaster. Ever notice that never quote the book and say a God of love, who came and died for the sins of man, who says that every person is precious in his sight, the God who says I love you and have a plan for your life. They never quote that, they never throw that in your face, always wanting to bring up those other things and try to show that he is a God of hate and the God of anger. But if you read those things in context you see none of those things are such.

Make Sure we Tell them God Loves Them – And we do Too

By the way when you share with somebody tell them God loves you, we know that it's a sin issue that separates him from the holy God, but make sure that you tell the person God loves you and considers you precious keep expounding the God of love out to the person and may no one ever walk away from us and not know that God loves them and loves them deeply. And, make sure you tell them that you love them too (don't leave them thinking you hate them because of their position on the matter, their personal actions).

Now – V19 start Talking to Religious Leaders

Verse 19, Jesus is speaking to the religious leaders now.

John 7:19 Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?"

John 7:20 The people answered and said, "You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?"

John 7:21 Jesus answered and said to them, "I did one work, and you all marvel.

John 7:22 Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath.

John 7:23 If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath?

Circumcise on Sabbath / Amazing how I can Justify my Situation – but Critical of Others

Verses 19 to 23, they would circumcise on the eighth day in order to keep the law of circumcision, even if the eighth day fell on the Sabbath day. So they would work on the Sabbath day and yet Jesus heals a lame man on the Sabbath day and they're angry and upset them, it is pure hypocrisy. I can see in my own life how easy it is to me to justify my actions, yet see the same actions in others and be critical and judgmental of them. Lord deliver me from self-righteousness.

To Murder was to Break the Commandments

Verse 19, the law said you shall not murder, but here in verse 20 we see Jesus saying that you want to kill me because I so-called broke the law, yet you are willing to break the law by killing me. Interesting paradox.

Exodus 20:13 (NKJV) ¹³ "You shall not murder.

They want to Kill Him – But don't tell the People

Verse 20, Jesus knew they wanted to kill him, we saw the back in chapter 5 verse 18. So Jesus knows they want to kill him, but the religious leaders have not told the crowd that they want to kill him.

John 5:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

They turned Sabbath into Burden

Verse 23,, just a side note, they had turned the Sabbath into of a burden. May we not do the same with the Sabbath; work in family time, work in dinnertime, take some walks the Lord, spend time talking to the Lord, just

relax in the Lord on whatever day you make for the Sabbath. Purpose to slow down, to just spend time with him, because we spend so much time rushing and running that we missed just relaxing in him.

John 7:24 Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.”

John 7:25 Now some of them from Jerusalem said, “Is this not He whom they seek to kill?

John 7:26 But look! He speaks boldly, and they say nothing to Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is truly the Christ?

John 7:27 However, we know where this Man is from; but when the Christ comes, no one knows where He is from.”

John 7:28 Then Jesus cried out, as He taught in the temple, saying, “You both know Me, and you know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know.

John 7:29 But I know Him, for I am from Him, and He sent Me.”

Man-Made Doctrine – Know one Knows where Messiah From / Micah 5

Verse 27, they had a man-made idea that no one would know where the Messiah came from when he came. But that was simply a man-made idea because the Testament clearly declared in Micah chapter 5 verse two that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem.

Micah 5:2 (NKJV) ² “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”*

Priests had to Be there / 446 – 22,000 – 100,000

Verse 28, the feast of the tabernacle according to Josephus said every priestly family must be represented, and all the Levites who tended to them, had to be present at the feast of Tabernacle. So Josephus said there was about 446 priest who were there through the line of Arron, and about 22,000 Levites were there at this feast and so consider all the people who are there for the feast, then there was easily 100,000 people in the temple area. Also, including all those from the Sanhedrin ere to be there. So when Jesus stands up and cries out before them all this is quite the scene. I would say then that Nicodemus is there, Joseph of Arimathea is there, and they're all hearing this word, and we know Nicodemus and Josephus of Arimathea that God is moving in their heart. I wonder and I think quite possibly the apostle Paul may have even been there because he would have been part of the Sanhedrin.

Jesus in their Face / He is the Lion and the Lamb

Verse 28 this is so in your face, and you have to imagine the situation, everyone is listening and Jesus lights up the religious leaders. You know things are not going to go well from their. Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, but make no mistake Jesus is the lion also as he is declared to be. What do you need him to be to you because he can be the gentle lamb but he can also be bold and mighty lion, he's both and he will be both to you. Verse

John 7:30 Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.

Jesus on Divine Time table / So too He has us on a Divine Time Table

Verse 30, there is a divine timetable that Jesus is on it, and so are we. God loves you and has a plan, seek that plan, wait for that plan, and trust in that plan, because God has a divine timetable that you were on and that he is working and it is always for your good and is always for your blessing.

Paul said he Finished His Course / May we Finish the Course He has for Us

Paul said he finished his course, beloved finish your course, finish strong. Glorify him in your every action, glorify him in your every thought, glorify him in and through your life because he is worthy. Don't quit or turn back now Christian, you have come too far to quit.

2 Timothy 4:6–8 (NKJV) ⁶ *For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

John 7:31 And many of the people believed in Him, and said, "When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this Man has done?"

John 7:32 The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him.

Temple Police

Verse 32, they had the temple guard and they send them to take Jesus but they can't touch him.

Lion and the Lamb

Verse 32, Jesus is the lion and nobody can lay a hand on Him and that's our God so mighty to save them.

John 7:33 Then Jesus said to them, "I shall be with you a little while longer, and then I go to Him who sent Me.

John 7:34 You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come."

John 7:35 Then the Jews said among themselves, "Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?

John 7:36 What is this thing that He said, 'You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come'?"

Sad – Can come Day it is Too Late

Verse 34 it sad because there comes a day when it's too late. If Jesus is knocking on your heart declaring himself and revealing himself to you today but today beer day of salvation.

No Facts wanted

Verse 35, they didn't ask him because he didn't want to be confused with the facts.

Untouchable / Goes Thorough His Hands First

Verse 36 the officers with weapons they can't touch him, no one can touch them in the midst of this assembly. No one can touch it Jesus because until his perfect divine course fully played out he was untouchable. And no one can touch you when you're in the midst of God's will ever always remember that. Nothing can get to you, except it firsts goes through Him first. If it goes through Him first, then it means he has felt it first, He knows before you know, His heart is moved before it comes to you. So if it goes through His hands first, they would be the nailed scarred hands that bore the cross, and you can be sure that He knows what He is doing.

You are Untouchable in God's Will /

Verse 36, I told the story of how I went under and was drowning in sheet Lake West Virginia but I had a divine course to God had me on and I could not drowned God put me on the lands it edge and save me because he was not done with what he had planned to do. One time I was preaching down on Orange Blossom Trail in Orlando Florida and this person came to attack me in as they charged me I held up my Bible and said I come in the name of Jesus Christ, is like the person ran into a glass wall before me, and they went bouncing backwards, and it was there again no one can touch me because I was in God's perfect will. But I will say this you have to be led by God and know what his will is, I remember when I was in New Orleans and I said I think I'll just go for a walk and check things out, and I started to walk down towards the French quarter I was staying at a hotel out by the Superdome, and I don't think I want 100 yards and I could sense the presence of evil. It was so thick I literally felt it, and I said to myself I'm just going on a sightseeing tour I really am not going on a mission led by God and called by God, and therefore I don't feel the protection of the Lord upon me, so best I just go back to the hotel and call it a night. And God called me to go preach the word down in the French quarter, I would guarantee you that I would've felt the presence of God and the power of God and the protection of God and I would know that I was in the will of God. I've had so-called guns pulled on me though I didn't see them but they said they were under the shirt, I have knives pulled on me I've had fist thrown at me but no one has ever been able to touch me that when I preach the word of God because I was in his perfect will doing what he called me to do. But you must know this is what God called you to do to have that protection. Just a side story and a funny story one time I was with the police and somebody came up to me and they were standing next to me and they were staring at me then they reached over and they poked me in my chest and there they felt my bulletproof vest which obviously was protruding a little from

underneath my shirt. And the person said to me chaplain where is your faith, and to him I replied right here next to my wisdom. So although were untouchable I believe God gives us wisdom on how to apply and stay safe and under his protection. So don't run out into foolishness and leave the protection of God, but go where God called you to go, and do what God called you to do, and when you're in his perfect will you will be untouchable unless he so chooses to allow anything to come against you for his glory sake.

Closing / Feast Tabernacle – Remembering God's Faithfulness

The feast of Tabernacle the season of joy the whole spiritual celebration was of God's faithfulness how their shoes didn't wear out how they received the manna from heaven, how they receive water from a rock, how there was a pillar of fire at night, in the cloud during the day. The feast always was a reminder of God's faithfulness. That's the testimony of anyone who has been saved any amount of time, that's our testimony and it is a testimony of God's faithfulness. No matter my state, of faithfulness or unfaithfulness, of performing or failing, God's state never changes, He's always faithful. I can talk to him at any time, his Holy Spirit is in me and will never leave me, his promises will never fail, he loves me even when I'm unlovable, he is faithful to the end. And that's your testimony all those who are Christ he is faithful and he will always be faithful to us may we never forget that. Celebrate and live in the light of His faithfulness.

John 7:30-53

Recap

It is the Feast of Tabernacles, and Jesus is about 6 months from the cross. The Feast of Tabernacles was a most joyous time in the Nation Israel.

- It was also called the “Season of Joy” – because it was such a celebration.
- I was also called the “Feast of Ingathering” – because the crops were in from the harvest, and therefore after a long summer of planning and plowing, they are enjoying the fruits of their labors. The bills are paid, food is in the food cellar, and now they are celebrating (it is their equivalent of our Thanksgiving).
- The Feast lasted 8 whole days. It was vacation time with the family, a rest for the body, and a time to give thanks and praise unto the Lord.
- I was also called the “Feast of Booths”, because for those 8 days they would build and live in little booths outside their homes. It was designed and meant to be a reminder of their 40 years in the wilderness after the exodus from Egypt, the slavery, and brutality. They would build the booths out of palm branches and leave gaps in the roof so they could see the stars when they slept. It was a time of remembering God’s faithfulness in the wilderness wandering.
- 40 years of a cloud by day and a fire by night. A cloud over them in the day to keep them cool from the scorching sun, and a fire at night to keep them warm in the fidget temperatures of the night.
- They celebrated and remembered the manna from heaven each day, and the water from the rock that flowed for their whole 40 years in the wilderness. It was a time of remembering God’s faithfulness in the wilderness wandering.
- Just a thought to ponder, some believe that Jesus was born during the Feast of Tabernacles, because He tabernacles, dwells, among His people. Whether He was or wasn’t, one thing we know for sure is that He does dwell among His people. He is here right now, he is walking among us, and He desires to meet with us personally and intimately.

John 1:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Revelation 21:3 (NKJV) ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.

Pray the Feast of Tabernacles

Want a great prayer time, pray the same remembrance yourself, give the Lord thanks for all He has done in your life.

- The Joy of your salvation, the deliverance from the bondage of sin, and the freedom of new life that is eternal.
- The provisions He has provided with your home, food, and clothing.
- And, that God tabernacles among His people.

3 Things to See in our Passage

- God has a Plan for our Lives, and will see it through to the End (32-36).
- God has a Promise for our Lives, and He pours it out upon us to overflowing, it is His Holy Spirit (37-39).
- God has a Power for our Lives, that can’t be found in this world, it is His Word (40-53).

God has a Plan for our Lives, and will see it through to the End (30-36).

John 7:14 Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught.....(the context of verses 30-36)

John 7:30 Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.

John 7:31 And many of the people believed in Him, and said, “When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this Man has done?”

John 7:32 The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things concerning Him, and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take Him.

John 7:33 Then Jesus said to them, “I shall be with you a little while longer, and then I go to Him who sent Me.

John 7:34 You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come.”

John 7:35 Then the Jews said among themselves, “Where does He intend to go that we shall not find Him? Does He intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks?

John 7:36 What is this thing that He said, ‘You will seek Me and not find Me, and where I am you cannot come?’”

Jesus Secure in Father’s Will / So too Are You

Jesus is completely secure in the Father’s will. In the midst of all that hostility, untouchable. And, so are you until your course is complete.

Not even Wheat Germ

When He is done, wheat germ is not going to help ☺

May we Have Great Sense of His keeping

May the Lord draw us to that place, even in the midst of this world, the great sense of His keeping, of His presence and involvement in our lives personally.

Do you Want to be Great in the Faith

Do you want to be great men and woman of faith, I know you do, here is the pinnacle. Lord, not my will, but yours be done. The pinnacle of faith is not to say we will take this land for Jesus, or we will step out in faith and do this or do that, nor even we will go preach to the multitude. The pinnacle of faith, is to say “Lord whatever you bring into my life, I know it is from You, and now may I glorify You in it”.

- Lord I know I just got my layoff notice, but I know you are with me in it.
- Lord she just said we are through, but I know you are with me in it.
- Lord these test results are scary, but I know you are with me in it.
- Lord I am lonely, but I know you are with me.

The pinnacle of faith, is trusting and believing that in every situation of our lives he has allowed it, and He is in it with us.

Luke 22:41–43 (NKJV) ⁴¹ And He was withdrawn from them about a stone’s throw, and He knelt down and prayed, ⁴² saying, “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.” ⁴³ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him.

Jesus Strengthened after Submission

May I point out, notice that it was when Jesus said not my will but your will be done, it was after that He became strengthened. And so too shall you, when you give up your will, place the situation completely into His hands, and it is there that you will find yourself strengthened, empowered over the situation, and nothing will stop you from glorifying God in the situation.

Jesus Secure in Father’s Will / So too Are You

Jesus is completely secure in the Father’s will. In the midst of all that hostility, untouchable. And, so are you until your course is complete.

God has a Promise for our Lives, and He pours it out upon us to overflowing, it is His Holy Spirit (37-39).

John 7:37 On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.

John 7:38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”

John 7:39 But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

The Ceremonies

During the Feast of Tabernacles there were daily ceremonies, in addition to all the animal sacrifices that were performed each day at the temple. There was each night a fire ceremony and each morning a water ceremony.

Night Ceremony of Fire

Each night there would be fire at the Temple, in remembrance of the fire that was over them each night during their 40 years in the wilderness. Historical Jewish writings say, On the evening of the second day of the feast was the Temple Lighting Ceremony. This was a celebration known as Simchat Bet Hasho'ayva ("The rejoicing of the House of Water Drawing"). The people would crowd into the Court of Women; a barrier separating men from women being raised. In the center of the Court of Women stood four huge menorahs to light the courtyard. The wicks for these menorahs were old priest garments. Members of the Sanhedrin performed torch dances while people watched and walked with their oil lamps. Later in the evening the Levitical choir would assemble in the Court of Israelites and proceed through the Nicanor Gate. At the top of the stairs they would begin to sing the Psalms 120 to 134, one Psalm for each of the 15 stairs. The sound of music would then proceed from the trumpets, string instruments, harps and flutes as the Levites sang. This celebration was repeated each night for the next six nights. This was done as a prelude to the Water Libation ceremony in the morning. The Talmud comments on the joy of this event by saying; "He that hath not beheld the joy of the drawing of the water [the Simchat Bet Hasho'ayva celebration] hath never seen joy in his life". (Sukkah 5:1). In one such writing they mention a rabbi who could juggle 8 flaming torches at one time. With the juggling torches, the burning menorahs, and the singing, you can sense the name the Feast of Tabernacles was known for, the "Season of Joy", for what a joyous time this must have been for all.

(Jewish Encyclopedia Sukkah 4:4) Simeon b. Gamaliel danced with eight flaming torches, and not one of them fell to the ground.

(Sukkah 5:1). "He that hath not beheld the joy of the drawing of the water [the Simchat Bet Hasho'ayva celebration] hath never seen joy in his life".

Exodus 13:21–22 (NKJV) ²¹ And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of cloud to lead the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so as to go by day and night. ²² He did not take away the pillar of cloud by day or the pillar of fire by night from before the people.

The Water Ceremony

So each day there would be a water ceremony in celebration of the water that came from the rock for their 40 years in the wilderness (Exodus 17).

Exodus 17:1–7 (NKJV) ¹ Then all the congregation of the children of Israel set out on their journey from the Wilderness of Sin, according to the commandment of the LORD, and camped in Rephidim; but there was no water for the people to drink. ² Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, "Give us water, that we may drink." So Moses said to them, "Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the LORD?" ³ And the people thirsted there for water, and the people complained against Moses, and said, "Why is it you have brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?" ⁴ So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me!" ⁵ And the LORD said to Moses, "Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go. ⁶ Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. ⁷ So he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah, because of the contention of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

Palm Branches & an Apple

So they had this whole ceremony (again according to Jewish historical writings). Every day they would get up before the morning sacrifice and they would head up to the Temple Mount. The people would break up into groups and they would bring myrtle branches. In fact, there was a whole routine wherein the right hand they would bring a palm branch, a myrtle branch, and an olive branch. I think the palm branch had to be in the middle. There was a whole routine. In the other hand they would bring this apple. It wasn't really an apple, it was some kind of persimmon that grew in the Holy Land which they believed was significant of the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. They would take that in their left and they would come up to temple and they would throw the fruit on the ground before they got to the temple and they would all come up with these branches and they would look forward to the harvest, the blessing on the land, of the palm and the myrtle, and God's blessing.

Pool of Siloam – Sent One (also called The Kings Pool)

Every morning one of the priests would go down to the Pool of Siloam. The Pool of Siloam was created when Israel dug through the wall to the Pool of Gihon, from the Gihon Spring, and made a tunnel all the way through the rock to the Pool of Siloam so the water could be in the city and the Pool of Siloam took on the name of "The Sent One." So, by having water flowing directly inside the walls of the city, they would have the water provision should an enemy come and attack the city, they could sustain a long siege because they would not die of thirst. So it was called "sent one" because they carved through the rock and sent the water through. In Nehemiah 2 we also see they called it "The King's Pool" which is so fitting as we will see.

Nehemiah 2:14 (NKJV) ³⁴ Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no room for the animal under me to pass.

Wikipedia - The Siloam Tunnel (Hebrew: השילוח נקבת, *Nikbat HaShiloah*), also known as Hezekiah's Tunnel, is a tunnel that was dug underneath the City of David in Jerusalem in ancient times. Its popular name is due to the most common hypothesis of its origin, namely that it dates from the reign of Hezekiah of Judah (late 8th and early 7th century BCE) and corresponds to the waterworks mentioned in 2 Kings 20:20 in the Bible.[1] According to the Bible, King Hezekiah prepared Jerusalem for an impending siege by the Assyrians, by "blocking the source of the waters of the upper Gihon, and leading them straight down on the west to the City of David" (2 Chronicles 32).

Priest with Golden water Pitcher / Hallel Song / Isaiah 12:3

This priest would take down this golden pitcher that would hold about 2-3 pints of water from The Pool of the Sent One and then he would come back up to the Temple Mount and when he got up to the Temple Mount a group of other priests had gathered branches and they would get all around the altar and form this shield around the altar. As he came they would read from Isaiah chapter 12, verse 3: "Therefore with joy shall we draw water out of wells of salvation." Then they would break into the Hallel Psalms and they would go back and forth. The Levites would sing those with flutes. You imagine these thousands of people singing the Hallel Psalms (Psalms 113-118), how beautiful it was. Want to have a blessed time yourself, just sit one morning/night and read all the hallel songs together. By the way, the word for salvation there in Isaiah 12:3 is the word in Hebrew (*yesuah*), also the word used for Joshua, which is the transliterated word in the Greek "Jesus". Are you starting to get a real good feel for how all this is shaping up in our passage before us?

Isaiah 12:3 (NKJV) ³ Therefore with joy you will draw water From the wells of salvation.

Psalms 113:1-9 (NKJV) ¹ Praise the LORD! Praise, O servants of the LORD, Praise the name of the LORD! ² Blessed be the name of the LORD From this time forth and forevermore! ³ From the rising of the sun to its going down The LORD's name is to be praised. ⁴ The LORD is high above all nations, His glory above the heavens. ⁵ Who is like the LORD our God, Who dwells on high, ⁶ Who humbles Himself to behold The things that are in the heavens and in the earth? ⁷ He raises the poor out of the dust, And lifts the needy out of the ash heap, ⁸ That He may seat him with princes— With the princes of His people. ⁹ He grants the barren woman a home, Like a joyful mother of children. Praise the LORD!

Yeshua (ישוע, with vowel pointing יֵשׁוּעַ: – *yēšūāʿ* in Hebrew)[1] was a common alternative form of the name יהושע ("Yehoshuah" – Joshua) in later books of the Hebrew Bible and among Jews of the Second Temple period. The name corresponds to the Greek spelling *Iesous*, from which, through the Latin *Iesus*, comes the English spelling *Jesus* (Wikipedia).

Isaiah 44:3 / Water = Spirit / Wine = Fruitfulness

They would then go to Isaiah 44, verse 3: "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground. I will pour my spirit upon them and seed and my blessing upon mine offspring." They knew. It says, "The spirit," that the water was typical of the spirit but when they came up, the priest every day, he would go to the west side of the altar. Another priest would meet him when he came through the water gate, the southern gate, which would have a golden pitcher full of wine that spoke of the fruitfulness of the land, and the one priest with the wine would go to the east side of the altar and the priest with the water would go to the west side of the altar. On the east side there was a silver funnel and they would pour the water on one side and the wine in the other would run to the base of the altar and run out on the ground under the altar. It was typical of God's blessing. It was typical of the rock that followed them in the wilderness that Moses struck and water came out and fed the nation. They would thank God for the rain. They would thank God for the provision of water in the wilderness.

Isaiah 44:3 (NKJV) ³ For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring;

Water 7 Wine

How interesting to me it is picture of water and a picture of wine being poured out, for in 6 months Jesus side will be pierced and water and blood will pour forth.

John 19:34 (NKJV) ³⁴ But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.

Day 7 – Higher, Higher

Each day the priests would only circle the altar one time, but on the seventh day they would circle it 7 times. As they would pour out the water the people would yell “higher,higher”, and as the priest poured out the water. You can imagine the culmination and the build up after 6 days, and then this 7th day with 7 laps, all the palm branches waving in the wind, the Levites singing the Hallel songs, what an awesome and exciting build up. But day 8, the last day, the scene and the stage is set.

The Last Day – Great Feast

Verse 37 - On the last day, that great day of the feast - On the last day, the great day ... Some scholars argue back and forth whether the Feast of Tabernacles was a 7 day feast or an eight day feast, and you can see the confusion as it is worded in Leviticus 23. But we get some clarity as far as I am concerned because in Nehemiah 8, when Israel returned from captivity of Babylon and rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, they reinstated and celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles, and we read the eighth day clearly prescribed.

Leviticus 23:33–36 (NKJV) ³³ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ³⁴ “Speak to the children of Israel, saying: ‘The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the Feast of Tabernacles for seven days to the LORD. ³⁵ On the first day there shall be a holy convocation. You shall do no customary work on it. ³⁶ For seven days you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation, and you shall offer an offering made by fire to the LORD. It is a sacred assembly, and you shall do no customary work on it.

Nehemiah 8:13–18 (NKJV) ¹³ Now on the second day the heads of the fathers’ houses of all the people, with the priests and Levites, were gathered to Ezra the scribe, in order to understand the words of the Law. ¹⁴ And they found written in the Law, which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths during the feast of the seventh month, ¹⁵ and that they should announce and proclaim in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, “Go out to the mountain, and bring olive branches, branches of oil trees, myrtle branches, palm branches, and branches of leafy trees, to make booths, as it is written.” ¹⁶ Then the people went out and brought them and made themselves booths, each one on the roof of his house, or in their courtyards or the courts of the house of God, and in the open square of the Water Gate and in the open square of the Gate of Ephraim. ¹⁷ So the whole assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and sat under the booths; for since the days of Joshua the son of Nun until that day the children of Israel had not done so. And there was very great gladness. ¹⁸ Also day by day, from the first day until the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day there was a sacred assembly, according to the prescribed manner.

Day 8 / Empty Picture / Water Rock – their Bodies / But Not Satisfy their Heart

On the great day, the last day of the feast, the priests provided a powerful picture of Israel’s longing for her Messiah. You see, whereas in the previous seven days, the priests had drawn water from the pool of Siloam and poured it out in the temple courtyard as an illustration of God’s provision for the thirst of their bodies, on the last day of the feast, the priests returned from the pool of Siloam with empty pitchers as an illustration of their need for One to satisfy the thirst of their hearts. No doubt it's at that point, and it's a solemn day, it's a silent day, and imagine hundreds of thousands of people there. The last day, the 8th day, they were reminded that they were still under the oppression of the Romans, they still were not free, their deliver, their Messiah still had not come, and it was a solemn day indeed. They are still waiting for these promises of the Messiah to come to pass:

Jeremiah 23:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ “Behold, the days are coming,” says the LORD, “That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth. ⁶ In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell safely; Now this is His name by which He will be called: THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

Isaiah 11:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots. ² The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon Him, The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and might, The Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD.

Isaiah 12 – The Holy One of Israel is in Your Midst

The interesting thing was when they read Isaiah chapter 12, they would read the third verse ... but now lets read all the way to the end, verse 6. "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day shall ye say Praise the Lord, call on his name, declare his doings among the people, make mention that his name is exalted. Sing unto the Lord for he has done excellent things: this is known in all of the earth. Cry and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."

Isaiah 12:3–6 (NKJV) ³ Therefore with joy you will draw water From the wells of salvation. ⁴ And in that day you will say: “Praise the LORD, call upon His name; Declare His deeds among the peoples, Make mention that His name is exalted. ⁵ Sing to the LORD, For He has done excellent things; This is known in all the earth. ⁶ Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion, For great is the Holy One of Israel in your midst!”

Now Jesus Speaks – If any Man Thirsts

Thus, it was at the very moment when the priests held empty pitchers in their hands that Jesus cried out, "If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink." No doubt it's at this moment that Jesus cries out, "Anyone." If any man thirst. And they must of went, "Ohh," and all looked over. There he was, the rock that had followed them in the wilderness. Paul said that rock was Christ, the very thing they're symbolizing now. The Holy One of Israel is standing in the midst as the prophets had said. "If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture has said, out of his belly," his inmost being. In the human frame where thirst and hunger comes from. "Out of his inmost being shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive for the Holy Ghost was not yet given because that Jesus was not yet glorified."

1 Corinthians 10:1-4 (NKJV) ¹ Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, ² all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.

Imagine the Scene / Prerequisite – To Thirst

Imagine the scene. The whole temple precinct coming to a screeching halt as he's crying this out. Everybody looking. The priest with the golden pitcher. Just Christ crying out offering himself to the nation. Offering himself to any man. There's a prerequisite, and by the way, I believe he still does the same thing, the prerequisite is this: if any man thirst. John says he's not talking about physical thirst, he's talking about spiritual thirst. "If any man thirst," and men thirst.

Drugs – Money – Sex – Power / Satan knows People Thirst / World can't Satisfy

That's why drugs is a huge business in this nation because Satan knows men are thirsting. Not physical thirst, the void. In Latin it was the vacuum of the soul, the God shaped void in every man that God left there. That could never be satisfied with this world. For some people it's money or it's sex or it's power. Or it's one thing or another and they bow down to it and they try to fill that gnawing inside. It may temporarily anesthetize someone but then they're left again with that gnawing.

Jesus says If Any Man Thirsts / Same Today – Come / Freely = Undeservedly (Rev 22) / Works = Rags

Jesus is crying out, "If anybody thirsts." The Bible says he's the same yesterday, today, and forever. "If any man thirsts let him come to me and drink freely." It says in the book of Revelation, as the book of Revelation ends, as the Bible ends, "If anybody thirsts let him come and drink of the water of life freely." That Greek word is undeservedly. The only way you can drink from Jesus is undeservedly. People want to be religious, they want to deserve it. They want to earn their religious stars to put on the refrigerator. The Bible says that all of our righteousness is like filthy rags. There ain't nothing you can do to impress God but you can come and drink of the water of life undeservedly. He would pour it out into our inmost being. We know religion doesn't work because these Jews are religious and they are empty and dry, they still thirst.

Revelation 22:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely (undeservedly).

Isaiah 64:6 (NKJV) ⁶ But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away.

Moses Struck the Rock / Jesus was Struck

It's interesting as we look at that because the Bible says that that rock that they are memorializing here, that followed them, that gave them water in the desert, was Christ, 1 Corinthians 10. Isn't it interesting that Moses, it says he stood on the rock and he struck it. It says, "The Angel of the Lord stood before him there." Jesus stood before him and he struck right through Christ and hit the rock and the water gushed forth. Jesus had to be struck, there upon the cross, for the forgiveness of our sin. If you have not asked Jesus to be your Lord and Savior, then today, come to the Rock.

Exodus 17:5-6 (NKJV) ⁵ And the LORD said to Moses, "Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go. ⁶ Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

1 Corinthians 10:1-5 (NKJV) ¹ Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, ² all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, ³ all ate the same spiritual food, ⁴ and all drank the same spiritual drink. For

they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ. ⁵ But with most of them God was not well pleased, for their bodies were scattered in the wilderness.

John 19:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

Revelation 21:6 (NKJV) ⁶ And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.

So Close – to Take up Residence

Jesus said out of his heart will flow rivers of living waters. Verse 39 says the water He is talking about is the Holy Spirit, the 3rd person of the Trinity, God Himself. Jesus is saying, the God you are waiting for, whose presence you desire, will be so close, that He will be in you. And He will then flow through your life, overflowing you because God can't be contained, and He will flow through your life unto the world you life. That is the abundant life, that is the "zoe life" we have been talking about, that is the "God life", the life beyond this life of this world.

1 Corinthians 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Acts 1:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Isaiah 44:3 (NKJV) ³ For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring;

Moses struck Rock a 2nd Time – Ruined the Type

Jesus only needed to be struck once for the forgiveness of sins, and for promise of the Holy Spirit to be given, We see that point made real clear with Moses forty years later in the book of Numbers, chapter 20, there God said to Moses, "Moses, speak unto the rock." Forty years in the desert, you're tired. Its 40 years on the backside of the desert watching sheep. Now he's 40 years leading two million sheep, this is a big flock, and this flock just gives him a hard time. In fact, the old generation has all died off and there's a whole new generation bored but they're all little chips off the old blocks and they've learned to complain from experts so they're all complaining. Moses is tired of it. He thought when the old ones all died and the new ones came it would be better. They're acting just like the other ones. It says Moses gets Aaron's rod which has almonds and flowers and everything on it by now and he goes up to the rock and he says, "You rebels." And he takes it and he starts hitting the rock and flowers and almonds are flying off it. He hit the rock twice in fact there, screaming at them. It says, "The water came forth." God never punishes his people for the mistakes of his servants. They drank. God said to Moses, "Because you've done this and you have not sanctified me in the hearts of the Nation of Israel you will not enter into the Promised Land." Because he ruined the type.

Numbers 20:2–12 (NKJV) ² Now there was no water for the congregation; so they gathered together against Moses and Aaron. ³ And the people contended with Moses and spoke, saying: "If only we had died when our brethren died before the LORD! ⁴ Why have you brought up the assembly of the LORD into this wilderness, that we and our animals should die here? ⁵ And why have you made us come up out of Egypt, to bring us to this evil place? It is not a place of grain or figs or vines or pomegranates; nor is there any water to drink." ⁶ So Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the door of the tabernacle of meeting, and they fell on their faces. And the glory of the LORD appeared to them. ⁷ Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ⁸ "Take the rod; you and your brother Aaron gather the congregation together. Speak to the rock before their eyes, and it will yield its water; thus you shall bring water for them out of the rock, and give drink to the congregation and their animals." ⁹ So Moses took the rod from before the LORD as He commanded him. ¹⁰ And Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly together before the rock; and he said to them, "Hear now, you rebels! Must we bring water for you out of this rock?" ¹¹ Then Moses lifted his hand and struck the rock twice with his rod; and water came out abundantly, and the congregation and their animals drank. ¹² Then the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not believe Me, to hallow Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this assembly into the land which I have given them."

Jesus loves us Freely – Simply Speak to the Rock /

Jesus wants to be sanctified in our hearts. That is, set aside from every other personality we have ever encountered because when you see free anything you think, okay, what's the gimmick? Free this, free that, coupons, this is free, that's free. You know it ain't free. This is bait. They're sucking us in. They're going to get their hooks into us. Something's going on. Unlike that, Jesus loves us freely. He loves us and we don't deserve to be loved. There ain't anything in us lovable in regards to holy love and he loves us anyway. He willingly gave his life for

us and he only had to be struck once and we continue on our journey. Then what do we do when we're thirsty? This is not the new believer, this is you and I. We speak to the rock. It's not to be struck again, speak for He is ever present with you. Folks, because the Rock of Ages, Jesus Christ, was smitten when He died for our sins, when you are thirsty, when you are aware you need empowering—you don't need to work something up emotionally or expend a lot of energy physically. You don't need to lash out in frustration as Moses did. All you need to do is speak to the Rock. Say, "Lord, I'm thirsty. My life is not flowing. Nothing's happening. Have mercy."

Sing to the Rock

In Numbers 21 it says when the children of Israel wanted water to drink, they simply sang a song, and the water flowed. What should we do, it says in Ephesians chapter 5: "Don't be drunk with wine wherein is excess." Don't be intoxicated with the things of this world. "But be ye being filled with the Holy Spirit singing to yourselves in hymns and spiritual songs, making melody to the Lord in your heart."

Numbers 21:16–18 (NKJV) ¹⁶ From there they went to Beer, which is the well where the LORD said to Moses, "Gather the people together, and I will give them water." ¹⁷ Then Israel sang this song: "Spring up, O well! All of you sing to it— ¹⁸ The well the leaders sank, Dug by the nation's nobles, By the lawgiver, with their staves." And from the wilderness they went to Mattanah,

Ephesians 5:17–20 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Just Come to the Rock

Why do we gather together on Sundays? Because something happens when people come together to sing praise and to speak to each other in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Something happens at the Lord's table when we realize the Rock has already been smitten. Something happens in the place of prayer when we simply talk to the Rock. Something happens when we begin to sing. Something begins to bubble up and overflow. How do you get filled with the Holy Ghost? How do you experience the coming upon of the Spirit? Not by incantations, gyrations, or manipulation, but simply by coming to the Rock given to us, speaking to the Rock smitten for us, and singing to the Rock present within us.

God has a Power for our Lives, that can't be found in this world, it is His Word (40-53).

John 7:40 Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying, said, "Truly this is the Prophet."

John 7:41 Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Will the Christ come out of Galilee?"

John 7:42 Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?"

John 7:43 So there was a division among the people because of Him.

Jesus will Cause Division

When the topic of Jesus comes up, there will be division. Any time His Word goes forth, it will divide.

Matthew 10:34–39 (NKJV) ³⁴ "Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law'; ³⁶ and 'a man's enemies will be those of his own household.' ³⁷ He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁸ And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁹ He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

Hebrews 4:12–13 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. ¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

John 7:44 Now some of them wanted to take Him, but no one laid hands on Him.

Untouchable!

John 7:45 Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why have you not brought Him?"

John 7:46 The officers answered, "No man ever spoke like this Man!"

Jesus has Words of Life

When other people thought they would never teach from their heart they would always just quote someone else, there was never anything new that came out of them, it was always the repeating of some of the Rabbi because they were always fearful of failing in the presentation of the word of God. But when Jesus would teach he would teach fresh and new, he would teach as somebody who was in the presence of God himself, and when the people heard it they hungered for it and they thirsted for it because they knew this was something fresh and new.

John 7:47 Then the Pharisees answered them, "Are you also deceived?"

John 7:48 Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him?

John 7:49 But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed."

John 7:50 Nicodemus (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them,

John 7:51 "Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?"

John 7:52 They answered and said to him, "Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee."

John 7:53 And everyone went to his own house.

Nicodemus

In John 3, as Nicodemus first came to Jesus, he was in the midnight hour of his soul. Here in John 7, not yet sure who Jesus is, he is in the twilight of transition as he pleads for fairness on the part of his fellow Pharisees. In John 19, we'll see Nicodemus in the daylight of salvation. When did the sun finally rise on Nicodemus' understanding? At the Cross (John 19:39). Folks, as you talk with people about the Lord, don't get tangled up in evolution, philosophy, or existential mind games. Keep focused on what Jesus Christ did on the Cross and how He rose from the dead. That's where people see the Light. Turn every conversation, every debate, and every discussion back to the Cross. "Jesus died, rose again, and wants to be your Savior, King, and Friend. What are you going to do with Him?"

Ephesians 1:19–21 (NKJV) ¹⁹ and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

End of Study

Chapter 8

John 8:1-11

John 8:1–11 (NKJV) ¹ But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ² Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them. ³ Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, ⁴ they said to Him, “Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. ⁵ Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?” ⁶ This they said, testing Him, that they might have *something* of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with *His* finger, as though He did not hear. ⁷ So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, “He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.” ⁸ And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground. ⁹ Then those who heard *it*, being convicted by *their* conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest *even* to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. ¹⁰ When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, “Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?” ¹¹ She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.”

Zoe Life

We are in chapter eight, and come to a most powerful passage of scripture, the woman caught in adultery. The theme of the Book is, zoe life, the abundant life, the life God intended for us, a life beyond anything this world could offer us.

- If you feel you are under condemnation, you will hear the Lord say to you “neither do I condemn you”,
- if you feel you past will never let you go, you will the Lord say “woman where are thy accusers”,
- and if you want a fresh start and a new beginning, you will hear the Lord say “go and sin no more”.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Prayer

Father that you would open your Word to us, speak to our hearts, give us the hope that comes with your calling, give us the peace which passes all understanding, and use Your Word today to bring us into this zoe life you have promised us. In Your Name, Amen.

John 8:1 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

Odd Chapter Break

It is an odd chapter break, as verse 53 of chapter 7 says “and everyone went to his own home”. You would think it verse 53 and 1 would be one verse.

Textual Question

Well, here in our verses before us is one of passages of the men who assembled our Bible struggled with.

- Many of the oldest Greek manuscripts omit this section
- Many later manuscripts mark this section with asterisks
- One group of manuscripts inserts it after Luke 21:38
- A few have this section after John 21:24, and one has it after John 7:36

What this shows me is that that ancient scribes were not clear of its exact position, but were anxious to retain it in the gospel records. They knew it belonged, but they didn’t exactly know where.

Just a reminder, the Scriptures are what is inspired, not the manuscripts. They are just man rewriting from another man’s document.

Augustine & Ambros

Some of the early church fathers (like Augustine and Ambrose) omitted this story, not so much because of the textual evidence, but because they thought it made Jesus appear to condone sexual immorality.

Early Writers Include 100 AD

At the same time, the character of the story makes it seem obvious that it is genuine, and most scholars note that it is historical and factual. Early Christian writers mention this event as soon as the early second century (A.D. 100). We have every reason to believe that this actually happened, and that John really wrote this.

The Character of Story reflects Jesus's Heart / Not License to Sin but to Live the Zoe Life

The story reflects the heart of Jesus we see all throughout the scriptures. I think there are many who would like to cast this story out because it is too forgiving, and they fear the license to sin, but that is the farthest from the truth, it is not a license to sin but to live the zoe life God desires for all of us.

Jesus went to Mount of Olives / When other People go Home – You go to the Mount

We are told in Luke's gospel that the Mount of Olives was Jesus' prayer closet. It was there that He spent time with the Father in prayer, worship, and fellowship. It was there that Jesus found peace from yesterday, and power for that day. The word "accustomed" means "customary way of operation", it is what He did every day, it was His way of life, and that was to find a mountain top and make connection to the Father. Christian, what is your "way of life" regarding connecting to the Father? Do you want more power, do you want peace from the cares of the world, do you want strength for today, model the life of Jesus and get yourself a prayer closet on a mountain, and watch the "zoe life" happen in your life personally. Oh that we would be men and woman of prayer, oh that would get up on the mount, that we would slow down to hear Him. He isn't condemning you or I for our lack prayer, "neither do I condemn you", rather it is always a call to intimacy with us, a longing to be with us, not a list, not a checkbox, but listen..... a person, the person of God who loves you and say come away with me, be with me, I want to tell you my heart for you, my love, my passion for you, come away my bride. For us we need to be careful that prayer isn't a "practice", but a "person", the practice will eventually drain us, the person will always sustain us. I encourage you to do that this week, purpose in your heart, that when other people go, you go to the mount.

Luke 22:39 (NKJV) ³⁹ *Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him.*

John 8:2 Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them.

Early in the Morning

Verse 2 it says Jesus early in the morning, and that word means "before dawn". People are coming to a bible study before dawn! Back in chapter 7 the religious leaders sent their temple "police" armed swords and shields to seize Jesus, but they came back empty handed. Not because Jesus breathed on them and they fall backwards, not because He blinded their eyes, but they came back because they said 'we never heard anyone speak like Him". See the power of God's Word, it will stop you dead in your tracks of going the wrong way and doing the wrong thing. And know this people, this Word is still as powerful today as it was 2,000 years ago. You are living testimony of that. But remember and know this, that you can still share this word with people today, and despite what appears like no one cares, I can assure you there are still people wandering aimlessly, be told what to do and following along with it, that when they hear this Word they will say.....wow I never heard a man speak like this. Keep giving the Word, keep living the Word, and there will those that say.....wow!

John 7:45-46 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ *Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why have you not brought Him?"* ⁴⁶ *The officers answered, "No man ever spoke like this Man!"*

John 8:3 Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst,

John 8:4 they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act.

How do you get Caught in the Act

How do you get caught in the act of adultery, really? I don't want to get detailed, but these are some slimy men here. This obviously was a total set-up, clearly by us not seeing that the man was brought also. Where is he? He is on his way, he played puppet like Judas will, he was part of the scheme, part of the plot, what was his reward and payoff I wonder, was it as much as Judas' lousy 30 pieces of silver? Amazing what a person we sell ourselves for.

Everyone in this story had choices this day, to attend Jesus' Bible study, or slip into the darkness, betray their spouse, sell themselves out for a few bucks, or to peep through the door key. Two choices, everyone has their choice.

This Woman / Reality never Live up to Fantasy

This woman thought she was going to live her fantasy, and here she is probably with a sheet wrapped around her, naked, laying on the ground in front of hundreds, maybe some who knew her from work, and here she lies in shame. I will tell you this, hear me, reality will never live up to fantasy. And hear this, Satan will love nothing more than to drag you into the town square and expose all you sin, all you shame, before your friends and neighbors. He would love nothing more than to memorial your life as one of shame. Reality will never live up to fantasy. Don't be a part of Satan's little play, don't be part of his cast.

John 8:5 Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?"

The Scripture is Clear

The scripture is clear in Mosaic Law, adulterers were to be stoned. God is serious about the sanctity of marriage, He is dead serious. Augustine and some of the early church fathers may have feared this passage because they feared it might condone sexual immorality, but you will not find that by any means. In Revelation 22 it says the sexually immoral will not enter into the gates of heaven.

Leviticus 20:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *The man who commits adultery with another man's wife, he who commits adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death.*

Revelation 22:14-16 (NKJV) ¹⁴ *Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.* ¹⁵ *But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.* ¹⁶ *"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star."*

Rarely Carried Out

While Leviticus 20 and Deuteronomy 22 both declare adultery to be a capital offense punishable by death, due to the severity of the sentence, there were safeguards to protect the innocent. That is, there could be no doubt about any of the details. The evidence had to be conclusive and unmistakable. In fact, there had to be a number of witnesses to the actual act of immorality. And their stories had to collaborate perfectly. History tells us that one couple was set free simply because the witnesses who observed their adulterous act couldn't name the tree under which it took place. Consequently, the Jewish historian Josephus tells us adultery would be punished on the average of only once every seven years.

BTW

By the way, they ask Jesus (we know what the word says, but what do you say). Again, don't fall for that trap as the world wants to trap us and say what do you say, and as we say "I believe", and then the trap is set and they call us hate mongers, critical and judgmental. Simply answer, here is what God says, what do "you" say about that (but of course in love and kindness). And, we don't need ourselves to worry about or care what the world thinks, what the world says, as so many Christians are becoming like warm milk, not standing for anything because they are worried and wondering what the world thinks of something. God said it, that settles it. People like to say, God said it, I believe it, that settles it. It doesn't matter what we believe, or anyone else, God said, that settles it.

John 8:6 This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear.

The Trap

They set a trap for Jesus. If Jesus says, "Let her go," then it seems that He breaks the Mosaic Law. If he says, "Execute her for the crime of adultery," then Jesus seems harsh and He breaks Roman law, because the Romans had taken away the right of Jews to officially execute people for religious offenses. If Jesus said, "Stone her," He would jeopardize His position as Friend of Sinners. Prostitutes and publicans, tax collectors and street people

would no longer feel comfortable around Him, knowing He had sentenced one of their own to death. If, on the other hand, He said, “Let her go,” He would be dishonoring the very Word of God He had come to fulfill *Matthew 5:17 (NKJV)* ¹⁷ “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

John 8:7 So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, “He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first.”

Kept Asking Him / Simmer to a Boil

Verse 7, they continually kept asking Him. If you can catch the scene Jesus it appears is doodling in the dust, and so they kept volleying the question, no doubt getting louder and louder, heating water from a simmer to a full boil.

Bring your Own Stone / Ready to Rock

I wonder who they wanted to cast the stone at more, this woman or Jesus, and I would have to say Jesus. By the way, they are on the Temple Mount, the Mount is spotless, it is meticulous, it is built by huge blocks of stone each as big as a car; the point, there were no stones on the temple mount to pick up and stone her with. If you wanted to stone her you had to bring your own stones. So here they are, they got their stones, and they are ready to rock (no pun intended).

How about Us – Always Plenty of Rocks on Hand

But how about us, could that be a picture of us, always have plenty of rocks on hand, pockets full of them? I am talking about in the church, amongst the brethren. Well did you hear what so-and-so did? Hey, who does he think he is? Seriously? How sad it is, Christians can get together, and have a rock party, hey let’s talk about so-and-so, you know what I don’t like is when they say this (zing as the rock flies), and then another says and how about this (zing as the rock flies), and this (zing as the rock flies), and the rock party continues on. People get together and talk about how critical someone else is, all the while believing they are not (splinter and beam), yep..... I would say their love is “rock solid”. Sadly, they never seem to run out of rocks, they have a rock quarry in their backyard (which is really their heart). Can we ask ourselves, have we been casting some rocks this week? Are our pockets weighed down even as we speak? Empty your pocket Christian, and do what Jesus did, get out of your chair and stoop down, even if it means into the filth of the world, and start ministering to them, and in the end eventually left them up so that they may go live the “zoe, abundant, life” that God intended for them.

John 8:8 And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.

What did He Write?

What did He write, we are not told, but we easily are always able to see Jesus in the Old Testament, and I think of the times that the finger of God wrote on this earth, and that was the 10 Commandments. Maybe that was what He first wrote (you shall have no other God, you shall not lie, shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, you shall not covet your neighbors wife). And then like the second time in the OT he wrote what He wrote in Daniel 5 before King Belshazzar, you have been weighed in the balance, and found wanting (which means deficient). Whatever he wrote, it left every one of them convicted we will see.

Exodus 31:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God.

Daniel 5:24–27 (NKJV) ²⁴ Then the fingers of the hand were sent from Him, and this writing was written. ²⁵ “And this is the inscription that was written: MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN ²⁶ This is the interpretation of each word. MENE: God has numbered your kingdom, and finished it; ²⁷ TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting;

John 8:9 Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

Oldest to Last

I am reminded of the little boy who was walking through the house trying to whistle and snap his fingers at the same time. His dad said what ya doing son, and he said well dad I learned how to tie my shoes this week, so I figure if I can get this whistling and finger snapping down, I will have all the big stuff out of the way and the rest of

life will be a breeze. Oh how I thought that 20+ years ago, if I can just get these big sins under control, the rest of my walk will be a breeze. Now 20 years later those things are faint memories, but now I downcast when I waste or miss my morning time on the mount. I feel like such louse when I say something that offends someone. One of the beauty of age in the Lord is how sensitive you become to your own failings.

Time Gap / Has He spoken to You – have you Responded

But did you notice, verse 9 says ‘then those who heard it’. That takes us back to verse 7 that Jesus said who among you is without sin, cast the first stone. Between that word spoken and the last rock that was left as they departed, we know not the time. How long did Jesus write in verse 8, until they departed in verse 9? You see there is always of period between hearing, and doing. The key to the zoe life, the abundant life, the God life, is to make that time between shorter and shorter as you grow in Him. Has the Lord spoken something to you recently, told you something to do, and have you responded? If you haven’t, how about today, how about right now, how about while the Spirit of God is moving in His Word in this place, and is moving in your heart?

Here is Sadness

Here is sadness that we don’t realize, and that is that these men all left. They didn’t stay around to hear how the story ends, they didn’t get to hear those words, “nor do I condemn you”, for had they stayed and repented, the words spoken to this woman, would have been the same words spoken to them. So for you today, stay even if the Lord has convicted you, don’t dump and run, stay repent, and you will hear those words of power and freedom, “nor do I condemn you”.

Just Jesus, her, and the Crowd

Verse 9 - And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst – The accusers are gone, and now it is Jesus, this woman, with all the crowd who had come for the Bible study watching in no doubt silence. What will He do, will he rebuke her, will He release her, will He turn His back on this harlot, or will He actually receive her?

John 8:10 When Jesus had raised Himself up and saw no one but the woman, He said to her, “Woman, where are those accusers of yours? Has no one condemned you?”

John 8:11 She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said to her, “Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.”

Jesus Can’t Condemn Her

Funny thing, according to the Mosaic Law Jesus couldn’t condemn her because the eyewitness accusers had to cast the first stones, and then everyone else joined in after. There was no one to cast the first stone, by the Law Jesus couldn’t.

Deuteronomy 17:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ Whoever is deserving of death shall be put to death on the testimony of two or three witnesses; he shall not be put to death on the testimony of one witness. ⁷ The hands of the witnesses shall be the first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hands of all the people. So you shall put away the evil from among you.

Doesn’t Say Forgive / Colossians – Nailed IT!

But you will notice that Jesus says nor do I condemn you, but He doesn’t you are forgiven. The means of forgiveness will come in six months when Jesus goes to the cross for her sin of adultery, lying, stealing, dishonoring her parents, coveting, disregarding the Sabbath, having idols, and having other gods. Jesus will go to the cross for her sins specifically, and then she will have her choice rather to receive His forgiveness or reject it. The Word says in Colossians that all those laws (10 Commandments), the handwriting of requirements that was against us, were NAILED TO THE CROSS, through the blood and body of Jesus Christ.

Colossians 2:13–15 (NKJV) ¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

Have you Asked

Have you received, have you asked to receive, the forgiveness of your sin, the release of the requirements that were written against you, then today come to the cross and ask Jesus to save you from your sins.

Woman

And in closing, How different a word spoken can change the whole situation, the person's heart. They call her woman in verse 4, and it is same Greek word used here in verse 10. But you know their tone, their hostility, they used the word but it was as an insult, an accusation, hey this so-called respected woman was found cheating on her husband. But you know, we can sense the scene, Jesus calls her woman with respect, He lifts her up from the dirt of her sin, and restores her as a person. He treats her with respect, He shows she is valued and respected.

John 8:4 (NKJV) ⁴ they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act.

When you Understand you Value – Zoe Life will Explode

And when you know, when you understand the precious value you are, and what He thinks of you, that is when "zoe life", the God life will explode in you, because you say oh no, I much too valuable and precious in His sight to get entangled in this, or live this life style, I don't want to sin no more.

Feeling Condemned

Are you feeling condemned over something, He doesn't condemn you. Is you past trying to haunt you, he says where are our accusers. Want a fresh start, He says "go" sin no more, the handwriting that is against is now wiped out, go live like you are, precious and priceless to me.

Oh Give Thanks to the Lord!

End of Study

John 8:12-59

Recap / Intro

We pick up here in verse 12, as we just finished Jesus telling the woman caught in adultery, “neither do I condemn you, go and sin no more”. Well, the religious leader are not much on grace, they are not much on love, and now they come to battle the God of love and the God of grace. Jesus was teaching at the Temple early in the morning we saw in verse 1, and then they interrupted Him by bringing this woman

Black Backdrop

How I love the serenity and tranquility of our Lord. He never was and never is uptight. He had every reason to object to the rude intrusion of the keyhole-peeping, sin-sniffing, self-righteous Pharisees (verse 1). But He didn't. He simply used their interruption as an illustration. And just as a jeweler most effectively displays the radiance of his gems against a background of black, so the next statement Jesus would make would be seen all the more vividly when placed against the backdrop of the blackness and darkness of what had preceded it.

Jesus Speaks of His Light

John 8:12 Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

Let there be Light

In the beginning.....and then God said let there be light, and the light pierced through the darkness, the light divided, the radiated, now His creation will see. Just as on that day of creation, Jesus speaks and says let there be light, and now all men will see.

Genesis 1:1–5 (NKJV) ¹ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. ³ Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. ⁴ And God saw the light, that it was good; and God divided the light from the darkness. ⁵ God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

Feast Tabernacles now Over / 4 Huge Menorahs

The Feast of Tabernacles is over now, this it appears is the morning after the eight day Feast. During the Feast, each night they lite 4 huge menorahs, whose wicks were made out of worn out priest robes, and historical writings say you could see the glow from miles and miles away. Well the wicks are snuffed out, the menorahs no longer burn, like the Christmas tree on December 26th (bummer Christmas is over), but no doubt there they stand, maybe they are even taking them down to put them away until next Tabernacles, and Jesus stands in the midst of them, and says.....”I am the Light of the world.

Do you Ever Feel Burned Out? / Take Heart for Jesus Walks in Our Midst

Do you ever feel that way, burned out, bummed out, because the light has seemed to fade? Well take heart, for as then, so it is today, Jesus walks in the midst of His lampstands. In Revelation 1 we see Jesus walking in the midst of seven lampstands and those lampstands represent His church, and Jesus sending clear message that He walks among His church. Jesus is here right now, He is walking among us. In fact we are told that as we were worshipping just a few moments ago that He was worshipping in our midst, in fact he was leading the worship (Hebrews 2:11-12).

Revelation 1:12–16 (NKJV) ¹² Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴ His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵ His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; ¹⁶ He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.

Hebrews 2:11–12 (NKJV) ¹¹ For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, ¹² saying: “I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.”

Jesus is Light

Jesus is light, and the light for all men to see, the light to draw men and woman to the throne.

Jesus Speaks of His Witness

John 8:13 The Pharisees therefore said to Him, “You bear witness of Yourself; Your witness is not true.”

John 8:14 Jesus answered and said to them, “Even if I bear witness of Myself, My witness is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going; but you do not know where I come from and where I am going.

John 8:15 You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one.

Judge – based on Limited Facts / Seek Spiritual Realm before Responding in Earthly Realm

For these religious leaders they are making judgment on Jesus on their limited information, aka only what they can see, they can't see into the spiritual realm and see Jesus is sent of the Father. You see there is only one way to see into the spiritual realm and that is to get out of the flesh, and that only comes by going to the Mount (see last study verse 1) and getting on our knees before God. It is there were the Lord show us things, reveal things, separates us from our fleshly conclusions and bring us into heavenly understanding. I have many of times had people come to say unloving (many times cruel) things about this ministry, or say something about someone else, or say something about me, and my response is most always the same, I say, “can I ask you something, how long did you spend in prayer, and I mean prayer on your knees locked away in a prayer closet, how long did you spend in devoted prayer on this matter before you came to say what you said?”. See I already know the answer, because I, you, them, will never come with that attitude if we had spent time in the presence of the Lord, because the Lord would have softened the heart before He would have allowed them to be so unloving and so unkind. So for yourself, seek the spiritual realm before you respond in the earthly realm. As for these religious leaders, Jesus makes it clear, you only judge according to what you know in the flesh, and hence these 48 verses are going to be a long day for these religious leaders.

1 Corinthians 2:13–16 (NKJV) ¹³ *These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.* ¹⁴ *But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* ¹⁵ *But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one.* ¹⁶ *For “who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?” But we have the mind of Christ.*

John 8:16 And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent Me.

John 8:17 It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true.

John 8:18 I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me.”

John 8:19 Then they said to Him, “Where is Your Father?” Jesus answered, “You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.”

John 8:20 These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come.

Whole Goal – Separate Jesus from the Father / Sets-up Truth will set You Free

These religious leaders whole goal is to separate Jesus from the Father. They want to get Jesus to say He is not of the Father and sent by the Father, for if He says that then His whole claim of who He is, and His whole purpose of coming (to lead people to the Father) will be washed away, and so will His following. Great logic by the religious leaders, if true it would have worked, but it was true, and thus they actually set-up for Jesus His great statement “the Truth will set you free”.

So Satan tries Today – Separate you from the Father

So the Devil today, tries with you, he tries to separate you from the Father. If he can get you to believe, even slightly waiver on, that you are not one with the Father, that you are doing your own thing, he will wipe out your whole ministry (in the church, marriage, children, neighborhood), and he will nullify you into a merger existence on this earth, a life with no power and no truth. BUT!, the isn't the truth, and the truth will set you free, you are one with Him, you are known by Him, you are now sent by Him, and above all..... you are His. Live life like you are.

Treasury – Court of the Woman

The location of the treasury was in the Court of Woman. This is where the menorahs would have been set-up, in the Court of the Woman.

Jesus Speaks of His Departure

John 8:21 Then Jesus said to them again, “I am going away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin. Where I go you cannot come.”

John 8:22 So the Jews said, “Will He kill Himself, because He says, ‘Where I go you cannot come?’”

John 8:23 And He said to them, “You are from beneath; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world.

John 8:24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”

Sin Singular – Blaspheme of Holy Spirit

Verse 21, the verb is singular, mean sin, not sins. The sin they will die in is the rejection of Jesus taking away their sin against God. It is called the blaspheme of the Holy Spirit, which is the rejection of the Holy Spirit testifying to a person that they have broken God’s Holy Commandments, and that their sin must be judged (just as breaking man’s law today requires), but Jesus offers to take that punishment (which is death). Blaspheme of the Holy Spirit is rejecting the witness of the Holy Spirit and say, I don’t need a Savior, I am ok, or my works will cover, to which God says “not so”, Jesus Christ Him crucified, the only way to be forgiven. So it isn’t the sins of (adultery, fornication, stealing, murder) that judges a person to hell, it is the rejecting of Jesus as Lord and Savior that does. All roads do not lead to heaven, only one way, through Jesus Christ and Him crucified for your sin.

Matthew 12:31–32 (NKJV) ³¹ “Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. ³² Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

Mark 3:28–30 (NKJV) ²⁸ “Assuredly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the sons of men, and whatever blasphemies they may utter; ²⁹ but he who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is subject to eternal condemnation” —³⁰ because they said, “He has an unclean spirit.”

Sins don’t Send you to Hell – Prove you need A Savior

Verse 24 (sins – plural), sins plural are the acts of sin (stealing, lying, fornication, etc), they don’t send you to hell, but you will die in them if you don’t call upon Jesus Christ and Him crucified as the Spirit is testifying to you, as the Spirit shows you your sins and how they offend and separate you from the Holy God, and the need to have them forgiven and wiped away from your record before God. So if you think your sins are so bad that God can never forgive you, see the error of that thinking, as God says there is only one that is “unpardonable”, and that the rejection of the Holy Spirit testifying that Jesus is the Savior, and a person rejecting the prompting of the Holy Spirit to receive Jesus as Lord and Savior.

Bad News – But Worse News (will die in Sin)

So there is bad news (cancer, wars, poverty, fired, dumped), but worse news that actually makes those things pale in comparison, and that is that you will die in your sin if you don’t repent (turn from the way you are going, and follow Jesus), asking Him for the forgiveness of your sin.

Verse 24 (I Am)

Verse 24 – I Am – here again is the “I AM” statement and it is the statement the Jesus is God. If you notice in you bible “He” is in italics, that means it was put there by translators to help make the sentence flow, but it is really is not here in the original manuscripts. So it really should read, “If you do not believe that “I Am”, you will die in your sins.

Exodus 3:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ Then Moses said to God, “Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?” ¹⁴ And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

Verse 28 – When see God Lifted Up / Resurrection changes Everything

Building up to verse 28, that will use the “I Am” which is saying (for the He isn’t there either), when you see God lifted up on the cross, and then rise from the dead, then you will know. The resurrection changes everything! Anyone can speak, anyone can make claims, but only one could rise from the dead. I’m reminded of my friend preaching on the boardwalk in Ocean City, and telling people Jesus loves them, and this young man got in his face

and said “yea well talk is cheap”, to with my friend replied, “He died on the cross for your sin, and then rose again on the 3rd day”, to which that young man put his head down and walked away. Talk is cheap, unless it is God of the universe talking, who will back up His words with actions!

John 8:25 Then they said to Him, “Who are You?” And Jesus said to them, “Just what I have been saying to you from the beginning.

John 8:26 I have many things to say and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him.”

John 8:27 They did not understand that He spoke to them of the Father.

John 8:28 Then Jesus said to them, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father taught Me, I speak these things.

John 8:29 And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him.”

Verse 28 – Lifted Up / Everything Changes at the Cross

Everything changes at the cross, when people see Jesus lifted up, they will see all that He is summed up in one statement, “I love you, so much that I will die for you”. God loves you, you are precious in His sight.

Verse 26 – the World

In verse 26 Jesus says He is speaking to the world (cosmos), and His gospel is to the whole world, not a just a select few, or as some say, some “elect” few.

Gone for 2,000 Years – Prepares a Place for You

He has been gone for 2,000 years and as He said He has gone to prepare a place for you. Not some mansion of brick and mortar, but of spirit and fire. For 2,000 years He has been preparing a place of you, and you know what that place is? A place of holiness, of purity, of sanctification, of beauty, and of peace (to name a few).

John 14:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

When He Walks in Our Midst – We Take on Him

When I walk in the midst of you, when you invite Me in, you will take on my nature, my character, my attributes.

- White as Snow
- Flame of Fire
- Fine Brass
- Sound of Many Waters

Verse 29 – All he does / No one Disputed This / They sent Intel people to try to Find

Notice something here, in that Jesus says “for I always do those things which please the Him (Father)”, and notice not one person disputes that. Here are these religious leaders looking to destroy Him and tear Him down, but they have no rebuttal to this statement. Jesus is the Light of the World, and Jesus lived in the light. They will try to attack His lineage, but not His character, for His character was spotless. Jesus lived a transparent life (as light must), and there was nothing that anyone could bring up and say “yes but how about that time when you did this, or you did that”. Hey it is 90 miles away, but they know the story of Jesus Immaculate Conception, and like today's politicians try to run their negative campaign against him. You can be sure like today's politicians, they sent reporters up there to interview people, to try to find the dirt on Him so as to have something to accuse Him of, but here they have nothing.

If People Talk Negative – Let them have to Make It Up

As I say, if people are going to talk negative about you, then make them have to make it up. Take a verse like this verse 29 and say this is what I want to make my whole life, my whole purpose, my whole being, that in all that I do, “I always do those things that please the Father”.

Billy Graham

but I heard a story of Amy Graham, Billy Graham's daughter, and they said, "What's it like being Billy's daughter?" She said it was wonderful. She goes, "But he, every moment, is a constant reminder of someone who just lives everything for Jesus, someone who's so dedicated and focused on Jesus." She goes, "He, in his life and his way, he wants to know how can I please God walking from the living room to the kitchen to get a soda and bring it back. That's the level of detail that, Lord, in all that I do, even the smallest things. How can I be pleasing to you? That just kind of challenged me beyond more than I can imagine of, do I live in that consciousness of God? I know it can sound extreme, "... from the kitchen to the living room," but can I just consider it? How about from the office to the meeting? How about from the pulpit to the coffee area? How about the walk around the neighborhood? In all that I do, Lord, to be pleasing to you in everything, my thoughts, my words, my eyes, my hands and what I do with them.

Jesus Speaks of How to be Free

John 8:30 As He spoke these words, many believed in Him.

Many Believed – Based on His Life

Many believed, and that ties back to verse 29, they knew he was for real. May the world see us, and believe the same, as we now get to be the "Light of the World". May we purpose that, may that be our whole being of what we live for.

Matthew 5:14–16 (NKJV) ¹⁴ "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Parents Many Believed because His Word – Keep Teaching your Kids

Parents, notice that many believed because Jesus just kept bringing the Word. Parents keep bringing the Word to your kids. Keep fighting the fight against the world, keep counter the world on their delusion, never quit, and they too will come to believe. Raise them up.....

Proverbs 22:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.

Men's Retreat

I was blessed with the opportunity to teach on of the sessions yesterday at a Men's Retreat. Afterwards a man came up to me who I had met a few years back. He was part of an architecture firm that we used to help evaluate property. Well there a piece of property we looked at that was great, but upon further review we found that the paperwork was "shady", some of the codes had been skirted. Many people said, if you just ignore it nobody will know, and you will be fine, to which I said that is not even a possibility in the thought process, we must be subject to the governing authorities. And we walked away, trusting God would provide, even though we were down to our last couple months before we were to no longer be allowed to use the school. Well that man was part of that architecture firm, and he watched everything transpire. He said to me after my teaching, Pastor I received everything you said today and it spoke to me, and I want you to know that the reason I could receive what you said, is because I knew you were real, I watched how you handled that situation 2 years ago in integrity. Saints, you never know how God will use the seeds of integrity you plant.

John 8:31 Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.

John 8:32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

Notice what Truth Based On

The truth will set you free, the world loves to quote that saying, but make note on what the truth is based on, verse 31 and that is "the Word". If you abide (to tarry, to continue, to live) His Word (that which is in your hand – the Bible, the Word of God).

2 Timothy 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Never underestimate Power of the Word

Never underestimate the power of the Word of God

- It breaks chains, and strongholds
- It opens tombs
- It resurrects things that are dead

Hebrews 4:11–13 (NKJV) ¹¹ Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. ¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

Remind You / Seek the Spirit in your Study

May I add to, remind you, encourage you, when you come to this word, come before the Spirit too. Read the word “prayerfully”, ask the Spirit to open it up to you, to make the heart of it know to you, and then to enable and empower you to live out what you just read. Before Jesus ascended, he told us (as a promise), He will send us the Holy Spirit to lead us and guide us in all truths, and the truth we just read, is found here in His Word.

John 16:12–15 (NKJV) ¹² “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.

Gnosis – to know by Experience

And, may I add one more powerful word here, and that is you will “know” the truth and the truth will set you free. That word “know” is the greek word “ginosko” and it means to know by experience. See, knowledge of the Word is not enough, you need to experience the Word. You need to not just have facts about the Bible, but you must experience it personally, it must be a conversation between you and God, and it must be something that you go live out, and live out all of it, not just the parts you are comfortable with.

John 8:33 They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants, and have never been in bondage to anyone. How can You say, ‘You will be made free?’”

Funny / Losing Argument / Antonio Fortress

That is a funny statement, you can tell they are losing the argument here as they start excluding facts. They had been in slavery to Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Greece, and now they are under Roman occupation. Right over top of them where this all is happening is “Antonio Fortress” which was a Roman Army lookout and outpost over the Temple Mount to make sure peace and order is maintained.

John 8:34 Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.

John 8:35 And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever.

John 8:36 Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

Sin Fun for a Season / Amazing how we Can Think we Are Free

Verse 32, Yes sin is fun for a season, but then it became a cruel taskmaster. Like verse 32, it is amazing how we can view our lives, and think we are free, when really we are in total bondage.

Hebrews 11:24–26 (NKJV) ²⁴ By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, ²⁵ choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, ²⁶ esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.

Sin is Cruel Taskmaster

I am reminded of the story of the evil king, and he called the blacksmith before his throne and said make me a chain, the finest in all the land. So the blacksmith labored hard and came back several days later to present his work. The king said it is not long enough, make it longer, make it thicker, make it stronger, make it heavier, and he did, with the same results –make it longer, thicker, stronger, heavier. Then finally the blacksmith returned and the evil king said you have made the perfect chain – then the evil king said now shackle it to your ankle and drag it with you for the rest of your life. Men today are making chains, heavy and long, never realizing that one day it will be fastened to their ankle and they will be a slave to it for life.

I remember Looking Into Mirror

I can remember looking into the mirror in my early 20's, I remember a specific night like it was yesterday, the world had told me that I had it all, life was a big party and I was living it to the fullest right there in Daytona Beach Florida the Spring Break capital of the world, and I remember looking into the mirror saying if this is life at its fullest, it is a life most pitiable. I was empty, even in the midst of all the world was pouring out, I was lonely even in the midst of the crowd. If that is where you are at today, and how you feel, here these words.....

John 8:35 And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever.

God's Not Dead Scene

Do you remember that scene in the movie God is not dead where the son goes to visit the mother who has Alzheimer's disease? And she preaches that beautiful word, that sin is like a plush prison cell that is comfortable and enjoyable, and the door is always open to leave but you never want to because it is so comfortable and plush, but then one day you realize you need to leave, but when you go to leave you find the door has been shut and you are trapped in your cell for life, to never see the free world again. Powerful scene, powerful and right on word regarding the pleasures of sin for a season.

Son Versus Slave

Verse 35, written at time of Rome, but also in context of Jewish practice, and a slave had many privileges as a slave in the Jewish land (slaves were never to be mistreated by the way under Jewish law), but although they had great privileges, they were limited, you had to be a son, or adopted in as a son, to receive all the blessings and privileges of the family.

The Son Sets Free

Who the Son sets free is free indeed, just ask the woman at the well who has had 5 husbands and the one she is living with is she is not married to, and just moments ago (most likely) is the woman who was caught in adultery. Who the Son sets free is free indeed. Are you free? If not, here is an invitation. If so, live like a freed slave!

Jesus Speaks of the Heavenly Father

John 8:37 "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.

John 8:38 I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father."

John 8:39 They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham.

Can be Physical Seed but not Spiritual

Paul will develop on this also by stating that physical descendant does not translate into spiritual offspring's. And so the same is true for all of us, as being born in a Christian home, having (or not having) Christian parents, or being born in the USA, does not make us spiritual offspring's, but only by having a personal relationship with Jesus does.

Romans 9:6-9 (NKJV) ⁶ But it is not that the word of God has taken no effect. For they are not all Israel who are of Israel, ⁷ nor are they all children because they are the seed of Abraham; but, "In Isaac your seed shall be called." ⁸ That is, those who are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted as the seed. ⁹ For this is the word of promise: "At this time I will come and Sarah shall have a son."

John 8:40 But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this.

John 8:41 You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God."

Fornication Attack / Virgin Birth Challenge / Is He big Enough to Create Universe

This is a slam of the whispers that Mary had an affair while betrothed to Joseph. Jesus was born a virgin birth just as the scriptures said He would be, but obviously that was too great for many to believe. To that I always answer,

if God is powerful enough to create the heavens and earth, He is powerful enough for a virgin birth. If He can't speak the heavens into existence with a word, then the virgin birth would be equally impossible as well. You either have the power or you don't.

Isaiah 7:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ *Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.*

Jewish Encyclopedia

The Jewish legends in regard to Jesus are found in three sources, each independent of the others—(1) in New Testament apocrypha and Christian polemical works, (2) in the Talmud and the Midrash, and (3) in the life of Jesus ("Toledot Yesu") that originated in the Middle Ages. It is the tendency of all these sources to be little the person of Jesus by ascribing to him illegitimate birth, magic, and a shameful death.

Singer, I. (Ed.). (1901–1906). In The Jewish Encyclopedia: A Descriptive Record of the History, Religion, Literature, and Customs of the Jewish People from the Earliest Times to the Present Day, 12 Volumes (Vol. 7, p. 170). New York; London: Funk & Wagnalls.

Illegitimate Stigma

The Talmud says Jesus is the illegitimate son of Mary. That is what they thought of Jesus. So here it is Jesus is 33 years old approximately at this time, and so for 33 years He has lived (as well as Mary) under the stigma of being illegitimate. Imagine as a youth the cruelty of the other children, imagine the stares and whispers at the market. And here all the way from Nazareth to Jerusalem, (about 90 miles) the stigma precedes Him. If that is you, if there is some stigma that the world have stuck on you, know where you can flee to, whom you can flee to, as He can relate to you in this area.

Who does he Look Like

A true story from way back. A man grew up as the son of the town prostitute. The town joke was him; they would say, "who does he look like? They would not allow him in the stores or on the walkway. He started to go to church, and he met the Pastor. The Pastor said, "you know who you look like? And the man thought to himself, the last person I expected it from was the Pastor. Pastor said, "you look like the son of God, go claim your inheritance." He was two times elected governor of his state.

Know who You Are in Christ

Christian, know who you are in Christ, and go live like it.

John 8:42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me.

John 8:43 Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.

John 8:44 You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

John 8:45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.

John 8:46 Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me?

John 8:47 He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."

Gloves are Off

So Jesus is calling them sons of the devil, and closes out that string with "you are not of God", meaning you don't know God. The gloves are off!

Jesus Speaks on being the "Becoming One"

John 8:48 Then the Jews answered and said to Him, "Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?"

You Know You Are Losing

You know you are losing the argument when you have to dig down for mudslinging. Well we weren't born in fornication, and now this one, you are a Samaritan. Jesus lived in Nazareth, which is part of Galilee, and not

Samaria. If you recall from our John 4 study, the Jews hated the Samaritans and considered them the scum of the earth. So to call Jesus a Samaritan is their mudslinging upon Him. You know you are losing the argument when you are no longer debating logically, but stooping to sling mud.

Probably not Recorded / Mother wears Army Boots

It was probably said, just not recorded, they said and.....

- Your mother wears army boots
- I'm rubber your glue, it bounce off of me and sticks to you.
- I know you are, but what I am

John 8:49 Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me.

John 8:50 And I do not seek My own glory; there is One who seeks and judges.

John 8:51 Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death."

John 8:52 Then the Jews said to Him, "Now we know that You have a demon! Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and You say, 'If anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death.'

You will Never See Death

For those who do believe and keep His word, they shall never see death. The Jews missed the heart of what Jesus was saying so sadly, but they summed up this whole argument so nicely, You say "if anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death". I pray if you don't know Christ that you will drop the arguments and the bantering, and see what Jesus is saying to you, I pray His light is illuminating your eyes, and you can clearly see the promise and the invitation that is before you, "if anyone keeps My word he shall never taste death"

John 8:53 Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Who do You make Yourself out to be?"

That would be God

They ask who do you make yourself out to be, and that would be God if you haven't figure that out yet

John 8:54 Jesus answered, "If I honor Myself, My honor is nothing. It is My Father who honors Me, of whom you say that He is your God.

John 8:55 Yet you have not known Him, but I know Him. And if I say, 'I do not know Him,' I shall be a liar like you; but I do know Him and keep His word.

Whole Goal – For Jesus to Say not of the Father

Now, they will gladly stone Jesus for claiming to be God, but ultimately they want Jesus to publically say it before the people, I am not of the Father, I have not been sent by the Father. That will carry more weight among the people than killing Him, although they hate Him enough they are going to kill Him regardless. But say I am not from the Father would end His ministry right there on the spot. Of course Jesus won't, because He is sent, and He takes the moment to poke them once again in the eye by saying if he did deny He was sent by Father, He would be lying, just like them (ouch).

John 8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad."

When did Abraham see Jesus / Genesis 14 (Melchizedek)

I believe that actually happened back in Genesis 14 after Abraham went and rescued his nephew Lot who was taken captive. Abram is met by a mysterious, marvelous monarch named Melchizedek, King of Salem. Melchizedek meaning "King of Righteousness," and Salem meaning "Peace," this is most likely a Christophany—an Old Testament appearance of Christ. Two thousand years before Christ came to die for our sin, Melchizedek brings a symbol of His death—bread and wine, the elements of Communion. Just as we are saved by looking back to

Christ's death on the Cross, Old Testament saints were saved by looking ahead to Christ's death on the Cross—of which their sacrifices were a picture. When we partake of Communion it is in remembrance of Jesus. Abram partook of Melchizedek's bread and wine in anticipation of Jesus.

Genesis 14:18–20 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Then Melchizedek king of Salem brought out bread and wine; he was the priest of God Most High. ¹⁹ And he blessed him and said: "Blessed be Abram of God Most High, Possessor of heaven and earth; ²⁰ And blessed be God Most High, Who has delivered your enemies into your hand." And he gave him a tithe of all.

Hebrews 6:19–7:3 (NKJV) ¹⁹ This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, ²⁰ where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. ¹ For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, ² to whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all, first being translated "king of righteousness," and then also king of Salem, meaning "king of peace," ³ without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like the Son of God, remains a priest continually.

John 8:57 Then the Jews said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"

John 8:58 Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM."

John 8:59 Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

I Am / JW's & Mormons

So here again (verse 12, 24, 28) Jesus uses the "I Am", the identifier that He is God. It is funny the Jews clearly understand that Jesus is saying He is God, but the Jehovah Witnesses and the Mormons don't agree that Jesus ever identified Himself as God.

I AM – the Becoming One

The name "I Am" means the Becoming One, and beloved of God, Jesus (God) wants to become to you all that you need. He wants to become your lover, your best friend, your confident, your Savior, and..... you God.

Free

There is no freedom like the freedom where God is your master. You are free to know that you are His, and He is yours. You are free to hear (neither do I condemn you), GO..... and live!

ZOE

I have come that they may have life, and that more abundant. The Zoe life, the God life, the life God want you to have and live, the life that is beyond the life this world has to offer.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

End of Study

Chapter 9

John 9:1-41

John 9:1–7 (NKJV) ¹ Now as *Jesus* passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. ² And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?” ³ *Jesus* answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. ⁴ I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; *the* night is coming when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” ⁶ When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. ⁷ And He said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

Zoe Life

The theme of this marvelous book is “zoe life”, the whole purpose of the Gospel, so that you might have zoe life, which means “abundant life, a life beyond this life, the God Life, the life God desires for you to live, the life that Jesus lived.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly *Jesus* did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that *Jesus* is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life (zoe) in His name.

Light of World / Jesus shines Light on what was Misunderstood - Confused

In chapter 8 Jesus made the great statement, “I am the Light of the World”. Light shines so man can see, light shines to illuminate and make something known that previously was not. Chapter 9 builds off that statement, and in our study today we see Jesus shining his light on something that is confusing, something that has been misunderstood, and it is “why do bad things happen to people in this world today?” Jesus will come and shine the light on the confusion, He will bring the truth of the word to make it clear and understandable. Maybe that’s you here today, maybe some of you need light shined on something that you're confused by, something you're wondering where the Lord is, maybe you have an illness in your life, maybe there is a relational problem that you wonder why this is happening in your life, maybe you have some bills that are mounting, a job that is pressing and seems to be collapsing on you. One of the most asked questions in the world today, why was my child, why was I born handicapped. Where was God, did God do this, did God allow it.

John 8:12 (NKJV) ¹² Then *Jesus* spoke to them again, saying, “I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.”

High-Water Mark / Truth will set you Free / Need Light to Know Truth

A high-water mark was delivered to us in the last chapter, and that was that the truth will set you free. That truth we see in the context, is based on the truth of His Word, and hence why we study it so we might know it, and be set free. We need Light, to know Truth. Jesus is both Light and Truth.

John 8:31–32 (NKJV) ³¹ Then *Jesus* said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

Simple Outline Chapter 9

- Physical Blindness (9:1-38)
- Spiritual Blindness (9:39-41)

Jesus will use a physical miracle to reveal a spiritual truth. Jesus will heal a man who was blind from birth, to reveal to all men everywhere, that we are spiritually blind, and need our eyes opened to the truth, and that truth can only be revealed by the Light of the World touching us.

Physical Blindness (9:1-38)

John 9:1 Now as *Jesus* passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth.

Context @ Temple / Woman caught Adultery / Light of World / Stone Him

The context is that Jesus has just left a confrontation with the religious leaders up on the Temple mount, He has just released the woman caught in adultery, Jesus has declared Himself the Light of the World, he clearly has said

that He is God (as He used the “I Am” statement several times in chapter 8), and the encounter was so heated that the religious leaders have picked up stones to stone Him. And now verse 1, Jesus doesn’t make it far, because He sees this blind man. Notice.....”He saw” a man who was blind.

Doesn’t make it far – Saw a Man / A man No one Else sees for who he is – A Precious Soul

Jesus has thugs loaded with rocks, seeking to stone Him, hot on His trial no doubt, but He stops for a blind man, one blind man that we will see no one else sees (and I mean sees for who He is, a precious soul), so who really is the blind one. But Jesus sees Him, and Jesus stops for Him, even with thugs in pursuit.

Can We Start Today – God Sees You / World Might Not – He Does / Stopping for You

Can we start our study today with that fact, the heart of God, who sees you even when maybe no one else does, that even Satan and Hell on the warpath, He stops for you, he sees you, and regardless what all in the world is pressing, Jesus will always stop for you, and He is stopping right now to minister and “touch” you. He loves you, so much He loves you.

We Know Nothing About this Man / Nondescript / But Jesus knows Everything About You

So we look at this man and we know nothing about him and that we don't know his name we don't know his age we don't know who his family is, we don't know what his lineage is in Israel which is big, we don't know where his father works, where his mother works, we don't know how deep in the religious world they are, we do not know anything about him for this man is nondescript and yet Jesus knows them Jesus stops and Jesus recognizes him. And I want to say to you today every one of you, no one in this room is nondescript to Jesus. Everything about you Jesus knows and everything about you Jesus wants to connect with and touch and minister to know that you're special and loved in the eyes of the Lord.

John 9:2 And His disciples asked Him, saying, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

Disciples Ask Why Suffering / 2 possible Reasons / Jacob & Esau / Exodus 20

The disciples voice the foundational question of all suffering: “Why?”—and then proceed to give Jesus two possible answers.

- The blindness is either the result of the blind man’s sin, they reason, or it is the result of his parents’ sin. If his blindness was a result of his own sin, when did he sin? He was, after all, born blind. Based on the story of Jacob and Esau in Genesis 25, the rabbis taught man could sin in the womb. That’s the way they explained birth defects.
- If his blindness was the result of his parents’ sin, however, on the basis of Exodus 20:5, the rabbis taught that his mother’s, father’s grandparent’s or great-grandparent’s sin could have repercussions in him. Is this what God means when He says He is a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation? No—that’s the godfather, not Father God. Exodus 20:5 simply means that God doesn’t change the rules. He continues to visit, deal with, convict, and judge generation after generation. Regardless of what society says; the fact remains that sin is always sin because God is consistent in His heart and in His ways. He isn’t a mafia crime boss, He isn’t the God whose going to put cement boots on you, He is not the godfather, but God the Father, and like any dad in this room, I am not going to punish my child for life, for a mistake they have made, but as a Father I am going to forgive them, teach them, lead them, and..... love them with all my heart, mind, soul, with all my being because I love them. Your Father in Heaven loves you, and He only wants the best for you.

Genesis 25:23 (NKJV) ²³ And the LORD said to her: “Two nations are in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; One people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger.”

Exodus 20:4–6 (NKJV) ⁴ “You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; ⁵ you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, ⁶ but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

All Deformity – Is Result of Sin / Adam’s Sin

All deformity is the result of sin, and it is Adam’s sin. When sin entered into the world, the entered in with it. The world was perfect, the Garden was perfect, not until the fall of man, did the world fall.

Romans 5:12 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

Cancer – Hurricanes Fallen World / Remove the Fallen from the Fall

Maybe you wonder and you go, “Why doesn't he intervene right now? Why doesn't he stop the world? Why doesn't he stop this cancer? Why doesn't he stop Ebola? Why doesn't he stop starvation?” Because all those things are an outcome of the fallen world. They're part of sin that's in the world. For Jesus to overcome all those, to wipe all those out, he has to remove sin from the world. I think you're following where I'm going. For him to remove the sin from the world means he has to remove the sinners from the world. Once he removes the sinners from the world there is no world. That's why he doesn't wipe out all these things, because then he would have to remove all from the world. In order to bring the world back to perfection, back to how it was before Adam fell, that perfect state where there was no hurricanes, no cancer, no disease, no war, no hatred, to restore the world back to that state of perfection God would have to remove the fallen out of the fall..... That is you, that is me, that is every person who has not received Jesus, that would mean final judgment. There will come a day when God will do that, where He will make a new heaven and a new earth, perfect again just as back in the Garden was, but right now it is what is called the age of grace where man can come and freely receive Jesus based on His finished work at the cross, and not based on man’s work, which all fall short before a perfect and holy God.

Romans 5:12 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned—

Romans 5:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,

Revelation 21:1–8 (NKJV) ¹ Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. ² Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” ⁵ Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.” ⁶ And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. ⁷ He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. ⁸ But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

Why Doesn’t God Intervene? / He Did – he sent His Only Begotten Son

The question always comes up, why doesn’t God intervene in this world’s mess? The answer is that He did, He left His throne, left all the glory of heaven, became a man, then took on the filth of mans’ sin, died upon the cross, and rose again on the third day..... So that He can take man out of the fallen world, and give man new life in heaven. God has intervened.

Reap & Sow

Yes there is the law of reaping and sowing, and there are consequences of sin, but the consequences are self-inflicted punishment, not God induced punishment. Drink yourself drunk, and get liver disease, that isn’t God’s fault. Steal and get arrested and go to jail, isn’t God’s doing, but the thief’s.

Galatians 6:7–8 (NKJV) ⁷ Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. ⁸ For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.

John 9:3 Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him.

Sentence Structure – Result versus Purpose

The sentence structure is important here, because some people say that God creates people handicapped, or gave them cancer, or made them blind, so he might show Himself strong and mighty when He touches them. They quote this passage here. I don’t believe that is a correction interpretation of this passage. Again I go back to the sentence structure, and in verse 2 the question is asked who is the result (that – hina), and Jesus says neither. The

word “hina” can mean purpose or result, but we see that they are asking what is the result, who caused this, and Jesus said neither. Then in verse 3 we read “but that” and the word for “that” is the same word “hina”, and I see this as Jesus saying the “result” of his blindness will bring opportunity for the world to see the mighty work of God as Jesus heals them.

Errant Teaching Propagates

Jesus says neither, both guesses are wrong. Can you see how errant teaching can propagate itself through centuries of peoples, and millions of people? Even still today, thus why “abide in His Word” and “truth will set you free”.

John 8:31–32 (NKJV) ³¹ Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

Works of God – Jesus declaring He is God

Just a side-note, as Jesus says “works of God should be revealed”, and He is the one who does the work, he is declaring he is God.

John 9:4 I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work.

Unsolved Riddle – Not Suffering Person (object of Mercy) / Easy to Debate Theology then Stoop Down

The disciples regarded this man as an unsolved riddle; but Jesus regarded him as a suffering person needing relief. The disciples did not look at the man as an object of mercy but rather as a subject for a theological discussion. It is much easier to discuss an abstract subject like “sin” than it is to minister to a concrete need in the life of a person. It is always easier to debate theology than it is to stoop down and minister to the need. Easier to debate theology than it is to evangelize. The disciples were sure that the man’s congenital blindness was caused by sin, either his own or his parents’, but Jesus disagreed with them.

Man Never Saw (face of Mother, Sunrise-Sunset, the smile of a child, a baby’s face, Mountain or Streams)

Here was a man, born blind, never saw his mother’s face, never saw his father’s face, never saw the Temple that millions of people passed by him to see (one of the great beautiful wonders of the world at that time), never saw a sunrise, not sunset, never saw the face of a child, the smile of a child, the cuteness of a baby, he never saw the beauty of a woman (he being a man would still have his desire for a mate), and never saw his brothers or sisters. He does not know what red is, nor blue, a mountain or a stream, winter, spring, summer, or fall. He has never saw a flower, or hills and the valleys.

Man Thinks in Pictures – his Thoughts Empty / Not a Riddle – but Person Suffering

When I say to you the word car, what comes into your mind, a picture of a car. When I say child, what comes in you mind, the face of a child. As man thinks in pictures, he can only think in words, he has no pictures to think because he has seen none. This man is empty (in pictures), his life is darkness, and now he sees. He is not an unsolved riddle, but a suffering person needing relief.

There is a Limited Time to Work the Works of God / to be the Light of the World

Verse 4 - I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work. -

There is a limited amount of time, to work the work of God. There is a limited amount of time, to be the “light of the world”.

Jesus saw him / Yet how Many Walked By / People so Busy (way to Temple – Work – Market) / We so Busy

And Jesus saw the man, the man didn't see Jesus of course but Jesus saw the man. I wonder how many people had passed by the man not even see in the man and not even recognizing the man. People so busy on their way to work to the market to the Temple, and they just passing by and no one sees him at all. Jesus sees them Jesus stops to minister to him. And there we see calling in an example for a life it is true what would Jesus do in, and we see Jesus sees the people, he sees the one that's overlooked, he sees the one that's hurting, he sees the one that the world is passing by, and Jesus stops. I know were busy were so busy, there's a place and just slowing down and trying to be like Jesus and see the world around us. Maybe it's that girl at the grocery store doing the checkout,

and when you actually look at her you can see her into her eyes and see that she's empty and that she's knows that something's missing. Maybe it's that person at work that although their high-tech, and well-off, but when you really look and see them you can see right into their soul and see that they are empty and some things lacking in their life. And all we can do is just pray Lord that you would open up and give me a moment that they can see that I see them and that my heart is extended to them and you never know what God will do.

What Opportunity to be Like Jesus / Want to be Like Jesus / Chris Leading Worship – Hi Jesus

What an opportunity for us to be like Jesus, I want to be more like Jesus we say, I want to have the heart of Jesus we say, and here Jesus gives us the easiest and simplest example just see people and stop and minister to them and you'll be just like Jesus. It was funny story last week a family was visiting and they had a young child by two or three years old and as Chris was plan warship he said to his mom and dad is that Jesus leading worship. And then when Chris got up to go back in to lead worship after the teaching was over as he started to walk by the little boy waved to him and says bye-bye Jesus. All that the world look upon us and see us as Jesus in the flesh, someone who represents Jesus, and someone that they want to connect to.

Jesus' Day began Up on Mount of Olives / Cambodia Mission Team – how about You Tomorrow

We must be reminded, we must go all the way back to the beginning of the is day, and for Jesus is began up on the Mount of prayer (Mount of Olives). We must be likeminded. In a few weeks we will have missionaries on the ground in Cambodia, and each morning they will come together in prayer to pray for the day's ministry, they will ask the Lord to anoint them, to prepare them and the people they will come in contact with, and for God to reach the heart of the people, and for God to be glorified. Of course they will, for they are in the mission field, they have to be prayed up. May I say to us, each day is our mission field, we must work while it is still daylight, and we too should start our day off as missionaries in the mission field, whether your mission field is in your home to your children, at the workplace, the school campus, or in the church ministries. Start your day off as a missionary, and you will find yourself living your day as a missionary, and you will be ready for anything God brings your way.

John 8:1 (NKJV) ¹ But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.

Luke 22:39 (NKJV) ³⁹ Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him.

John 9:6 When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.

John 9:7 And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

Soil – Same Elements contained in Human Body / Mud in Darwin Eye

Here the Creator, is creating again, just like back in the Garden when He created Adam, He scoops dirt and starts to work again. Interestingly enough, all the elements you find in the human body, you find in the soil of the earth, and of course you would expect that because God created man out of the dust of the ground. I also find this enjoyable, as it is mud-in-you-eye Charles Darwin the father of evolution, for he himself said that the thought the human eye could evolve is absurd.

Genesis 2:7 (NKJV) ⁷ And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

To suppose that the eye, with all its inimitable contrivances for adjusting the focus to different distances, for admitting different amounts of light, and for the correction of spherical and chromatic aberration, could have been formed by natural selection, seems, I freely confess, absurd in the highest possible degree. (Darwin 1872)

Bring Your Own Dirt

The scientist approached God and said, "Listen, we've decided we no longer need you. Nowadays, we can extract stem cells, clone people, transplant hearts, and all kinds of things that were once considered miraculous."

God patiently heard him out, and then said, "All right. To see whether or not you still need me, why don't we have a little man-making contest!"

"Okay, great!" the scientist said.

"Now, we're going to do this just like I did back in the old days with Adam," God said.

"That's fine," replied the scientist and he bent down to scoop up a handful of dirt.

"Whoa!" God said, shaking his head in disapproval. "Not so fast, pal. You get your own dirt."

Same Pool of Siloam (Sent One – King's Pool)

This is the same pool of Siloam we discussed back in John 7 where they would go and the water that was poured out during the daily water ceremony of the Feast of Tabernacles. Remember back in our study of chapter 7 that we say this pool was also called the "Kings Pool" because the water was supplied by the tunnel that King Hezekiah had dug to prepare for the siege of the Assyrian army. So Jesus the King, the Sent One, touches him and says go wash in the King's Pool, the Sent One, and you will be healed.

Nehemiah 2:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Then I went on to the Fountain Gate and to the King's Pool, but there was no room for the animal under me to pass.

Very Unorthodox / Never Healed Same way Twice / Thus no Pattern

Very unorthodox to say the least but Jesus never heals the same way twice else we call that a pattern and try to imitate the pattern rather than the person.

No Prosperity Teacher Going to Get Dirty / God has No Problem Getting Dirty for You

Have you ever seen one of those prosperity teacher do this, spit and dirt, ball of mud, and then smear it on a persons eyes? No. You would think they would jump all over this one, they would have the people eating it up. No, you wont see it because they don't want to get their hands dirty, they don't want to get their bright white suits dirty, they don't want to stoop down and get dirty for anyone. Jesus has no problem getting His hands dirty for you, He has no problem stooping down into the mud and filth for you. He got His hands dirty for the woman caught in adultery, and now He gets His hands dirty for this blind man. God has no problem leaving His throne and getting dirty for the person in need. He will come to you in whatever you need is, He gladly will get dirty for you. And so, I then have to ask myself, who will I be more like when I see the person in need, the white suit prosperity teacher, of Jesus Christ.

May we be Like Jesus – get Dirty for Them

May we be like Jesus, and be willing to stoop down, get dirty, so the blind will see, and the lame will walk, and they can be made spiritually whole before the Lord. That we may be the hands and feet of Jesus, while it is still daylight, and we have the opportunity to do so.

Unorthodox & Radical / Don't wait for Ordinary Logic of World – Gospel is Radical

Unorthodox yes, radical indeed! Do you see that in your life you need something unorthodox, something radical, to change your spiritual condition. Jesus will close this study out on make an analogy of physical blindness and spiritual blindness. You need something radical, something unorthodox, to change your heart and your life. Don't wait, don't limit, don't trap God in a box that you will be changed by some ordinary worldly logical way, but by an orthodox, radical way. Jesus Christ is radical, He is unorthodox, and so is His gospel.

How are You Going to Live / Ordinary or Radical

And now we can choose, how are we going to live; in a world-logical way, going with the flow, or are we going to live unorthodox, radical lives. A life that spits in mud and puts it in people's eyes, hey here is mud in your eye. Yea not literally, but a life that lives apart from this world, so different, so radical!

If you Don't Know Jesus – Gospel beneath You

There is another picture here too, and that is for anyone who believes the Gospel is beneath them, too simple, too humbling. Imagine this man walking down (being led) to the Pool of Siloam, people laughing, pointing, oh how cruel somebody would crank this blind man, the humiliation before people with mud in his eye. It would be humiliating if it was anyone other than Jesus. The man wanted healing, and he was willing to be laughed at and mocked by other people in order to see and walk anew. So too, many people won't come to Jesus because they feel the Gospel is humiliating, beneath them, for them to have to admit they are a sinner, they have mud in their eye, that they are not alright, and they need help, they need a Savior. People don't come to Jesus because they love their sin, and one of the greatest sin is pride, the unwillingness to admit they need a Savior. They refuse to go

wash in the Pool of Siloam (the Sent One), because they consider it beneath them. All I can say if that is you today, ask the “blind man”, it is worth it, you will finally be free.

John 3:16–21 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. ¹⁸ “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”

My RK Surgery / Wow – How much I had been Missing

I remember after I had Lasik surgery on my eyes. I was 20/2000 – really. The next morning when I awoke, took off the bandages, to see the alarm clock for the first time in my life, I bicycled over to the park and saw ducks for what seemed like the first time as I could count the feathers in them. The sky was a blue I had never seen, the grass a green I never realized. It was like a new day to me, I realized how much life I was missing because of my sight. So it was with this blind man, wow..... So this is life, wow how much I have missed. And I will say, that is how I felt when I gave my life to Jesus, I realized just how much of life I was missing, and I would never go back for anything. If you don't know Jesus, you have no idea how much life you are missing.

John 9:8 Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, “Is not this he who sat and begged?”

John 9:9 Some said, “This is he.” Others said, “He is like him.” He said, “I am he.”

John 9:10 Therefore they said to him, “How were your eyes opened?”

John 9:11 He answered and said, “A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed, and I received sight.”

Chapter 8 – Main Point Jesus sent from God

So here we see in this story how it reinforces chapter 8 main theme as they keep questioning Jesus about where He is from, and who sent Him, and Jesus makes it clear, I have been sent by the Father. Hence, Jesus has the man was in the pool that means “sent one”.

John 8:42 (NKJV) ⁴² Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me.

A Gradual Development (a Man – Prophet – Jesus – I Believe)

The main body of the story (verses 8–34) shows the gradual development of faith in this blind man, a faith which grows under the pressure of interrogation.

- When first questioned about the one who has healed him of his blindness, he refers to him simply as the man called Jesus (verse 11).
- Then, when the Pharisees ask the man what he has to say about the one who has healed him, he says He is a prophet (verse 17).
- Not satisfied with the answers the man gives them, the Pharisees call him back a second time, and this time the man says of Jesus, ... this man came from God ... (verse 33).
- Finally, after the religious leaders have thrown him out of the synagogue and Jesus finds him, he confesses, I believe, Lord! (verse 38).

BTW – Salvation that Simple

Again, this is how simple salvation is, wash and receive your sight. Touched by Jesus, washed by the Sent One, washed in the Kings Pool (which is the precious blood of Jesus shed on the cross for your sin).

Verse 9 – Can't be him But Someone Like Him

I love verse 9, as people say that can't be him, it has to be someone else. The guy can finally see, and know people don't recognize him. Sound familiar to you, after you were touched and washed and healed by Jesus, people are like who are you?

Class Reunion

I remember I went to my 10 year class reunion, and as soon as I got out of my car my friend Steve came running up and said, wow we heard about your conversion, I told my wife you would be the last one I ever thought would get saved. I remember standing there having conversations, with a Pepsi in my hand, and the head cheerleader saying, "I miss the old Ray". We can all relate to this blind man, as Jesus touches us, makes us a new person, and people go....."who are you". Praise the Lord! Thank you Jesus!

John 9:12 Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know."

John 9:13 They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees.

John 9:14 Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes.

Want to Kill for Healing on Sabbath / Sabbath made for Man – to Rest

The religious leaders wanted to kill Jesus for this, for healing on the Sabbath. Jesus will say that man wasn't made for the Sabbath, but the Sabbath for man.... Aka, that the Sabbath was so man had a day of rest from his labors. Jesus would also make know to us that He would be our rest, and we could rest from trying to work our way into His graces, but we received grace through His work on the cross.

Jesus puts Mud in their Eye for healing on Sabbath / Plowing – Harvesting - 613

Not sure where that saying came from, "here's mud in your eye", but Jesus is putting mud in the eye of the religious leaders by making mud on the Sabbath. According to their interpretation of the Law of Moses, if you spit in dirt on the Sabbath, and the spit rolled and formed mud, then you were working on the Sabbath, because rolling mud would be considered plowing on the Sabbath. A woman was not permitted to look in the mirror on the Sabbath because if she saw a grey hair and plucked it, that would be harvesting. They had 613 laws regarding the 10 Commandments, and something like 39 specific laws regarding the Sabbath. So this is the choking and suffocating level these religious leaders turned the Law of Moses into. So Jesus making mud and healing on the Sabbath, was mud in their eye. I think the ultimate mud to them was that Jesus is dismantling their religion, that He had the power to spit and heal, but all their religion couldn't bring life, couldn't bring hope, and couldn't bring freedom from sin, but Jesus can spit and change a life.

We need to be careful we Don't make a Sabbath

However, I think we need be careful as Christians that we don't be like these Pharisees who revered the Sabbath day beyond its design, and I mean that we as Christians can turn our Sabbath day (Sunday), into the High Holy Day, that it is our premier day, and sadly our only day that we celebrate Him. Every day, is a good day.

John 9:15 Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see."

John 9:16 Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them.

Progression of Blindness (Miracle Performed – Doubt Born blind – Accuse of born in sin (out of Synagogue))

The story also shows the increasing spiritual blindness of the Pharisees.

- In their first interrogation they are willing to accept the fact that a miracle has been performed, though some are not willing to admit that the one who performed it came from God. However, there is at least a suggestion that a few of them have come close to believing (verses 13–16).
- But in their second interrogation they even express doubt that the man was born blind, and so they call in his parents and question them (verses 17–23).
- Finally, when there can be no doubt regarding his cure, they accuse him of having been born and raised in sin, and so they throw him out of the synagogue (verses 24–34).

John 9:17 They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet."

John 9:18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight.

John 9:19 And they asked them, saying, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?”

Legalism has no heart for Others / No celebration for the Man healed

Do you see the depth of legalism, a resentment, of the desire to be recognized and esteemed by others; here you see it in its fullness, and that is they have no care of this blind man, or the parents of him. They don't say oh we are so happy for you, that your son has seen your face for the first time mom, and dad he now sees the voice he heard for all these years. What a joyful and wonderful time it is for you, let us celebrate and rejoice with you. But not these guys, no joy, no celebration for others.

No Celebration of Miracle / Remember me at Church Doors

How sad, I am reminded when I got saved in my bedroom in Cocoa Beach by reading the Bible from Genesis all the way through Revelation. I remember going to church, walking on a cloud. I remember walking up to the door of the church, I was about 5 minutes late, I was wearing surfer/beach clothing (as I spent lots of time on the beach). As I approached these two woman gave me glare of disgust, and they waited until I was next to them and they turned to each other and spoke loud enough so I could hear, “can you imagine the nerve and disrespect of some people to come to God's house dressed like that, and late”. I wanted to turn to them and say if you knew the rock God pulled me out from, you would be saying God is amazing.

May we Rejoice in Other's Blessings

Rejoice and celebrate when others are being blessed, even when you may not be filled with all you are desiring. Rejoice with someone, and you will find they will weep with you, because they see your heart and how you love them.

Pool of Siloam – Not Waterpot

I find it interesting, that Jesus told the blind man to go wash in Pool of Siloam, and not just any water. See they are up right outside the Temple, the Pool of Siloam was close to half-mile away. There was all kinds of water pictures at the Temple, they were there for ceremonial washing, and priest would use them to be ceremonially clean. Jesus could have said go use one of those, but He didn't, because Jesus was separating salvation from a ceremony, from some religious exercise, but turning it into faith (go and wash), and pointing that there is only one way to be washed of our sins, and that is by the King in the Kings Pool.

John 9:20 His parents answered them and said, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; John 9:21 but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself.”
John 9:22 His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue.
John 9:23 Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

People Put – Lose of Community and Livelihood

Being put out of the synagogue meant one lost his ability to pray to God or to be blessed by God. It meant that his family was to treat him as though he were dead and that his business would be absolutely off-limits to all Jews. Thus, to be put out of the synagogue was a serious matter

Nothing Changes Today / Lose Reputation, Maybe even Livelihood

Hey nothing changes today, all of us feel the pressure of the worry that our taking a stand for Jesus may cost us in our livelihood and reputation. To that I will say, stand for Jesus, and he will come and stand next to you. we read the man standing for Jesus, and Jesus coming to him, but we wont read Jesus coming to the parents who take no stand with Him.

Matthew 10:32–33 (NKJV) ³² “Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. ³³ But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

Don't Blame Parents

May I remind you, who sinned this man or his parents, and Jesus said "neither". Before moving on, parents, no parent is perfect, and don't beat yourself up wondering and wishing you may have done something different. The same God that reached you, can reach them, and they can make their own decision on whether to follow Him. And, maybe you here today had less than perfect parents, God is bigger than them, and he is able to touch you and heal you, where they were not able. Don't let your past keep you in darkness. This blind man could have said, I will not go wash, I deserve this mud in my eyes, it was my sin, or I deserve to wallow in the mud because of my past relationship with my parents. Or, like the man, you can get up and go wash in the Pool of the King, receive the touching and healing of the Sent One, and live and walk in light, and now be the light of the world.

John 9:24 So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, "Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner."

John 9:25 He answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner or not I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see."

Verse 24 – An Oath (give God the Glory)

Verse 24, they say give God the glory, means to take an oath. Kind of like our old court system when a person was told to put their hand on the bible and swear to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

Key to seeing - Go

Here is the key to seeing, when Jesus says "go" you go. Come to Jesus today, do what he called you to do, today.

John 9:7 (NKJV) ⁷ And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

2 Corinthians 6:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ² For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

How Simple Salvation (Touched and Washed)

This is how simple salvation is, wash and receive your sight. Touched by Jesus, washed by the Sent One, washed in the Kings Pool (which is the precious blood of Jesus shed on the cross for your sin). Go..... Today!

Has God Given you Something to do – GO!

And, may I never miss the opportunity to say to you, if God has given you something to do, to stop this, to do that, and you have been waiting, you have yet to do it, then today hear the Word of the Lord as He says....."Go".

If you Under Interrogation by Smart People – Just Tell your Testimony

And, should you find yourself under interrogation by the smart people, the ones with all their logic, can quote the bible better in you, but quote it in twisted ways, don't worry about it, don't feel overwhelmed or threatened by their super intellect, just tell them this..... I don't know all that, but what I do know is that once I was blind and now I see. Tell them about the God who loves you, and the God you love, share God's heart with them, not God's intellect, and share your story of how He touched you, received you, washed you, and how your life has never been the same. If they want just an intellectual argument, you waste your time, but if they are true seekers, then they are seeking exactly what you have found, and that is what they are really after, to know that there is a God who loves them, will receive them just as they are, receive them unconditionally, and have a personal relationship with them. Share your story, the story of a God that was willing to stoop down and get dirty for you.

John 9:26 Then they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?"

John 9:27 He answered them, "I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become His disciples?"

Want to be Disciples – Fired them Up / Instructions for Fire Work

Oh boy, imagine these religious leaders hearing that, oh you want to be His disciples too. Fire Work instructions, light fuse, and stand back:

■ **ROMAN CANDLES:** Candles should always be buried up to half of their length in sand or dirt. Never hold them in your hand. Never aim them at a person, animal or object. The fuse of a Roman Candle is at the top of the item. Remove the covering tape from the fuse prior to ignition. Light and stand back.

BARRAGES: Barrages have their wicks at the top, usually taped down. To ignite: plant the firework halfway into the ground, remove the tape and flip the wick up. As with Roman Candles, tear away some of the paper around the wick for easier ignition if applicable. Light and stand back.

Orange Blossom Trail

Speaking of being disciples, Hehe, I remember when I use to do street ministry out on Orange Blossom Trail in Orland Florida. It was a place loaded with drugs, prostitution, and strip clubs. I remember one time I was out in front of a strip club and these 3 guys get out of their car and they have crosses dangling from their necks. I say hey I see your crosses, are you Christians too, me too, I love Jesus, isn't he wonderful. They kinda of froze they don't know what to do, so they got in their car and drove away.

John 9:28 Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples.

John 9:29 We know that God spoke to Moses; as for this fellow, we do not know where He is from."

John 9:30 The man answered and said to them, "Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes!

John 9:31 Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him.

John 9:32 Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind.

John 9:33 If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing."

Isaiah Prophesied the Messiah would Heal the Blind

Isaiah prophesied three times that when Messiah came, He would open blind eyes (29:18; 35:5; 42:7). Here, the blind man, now six minutes old in his faith, says, "The One who opened my eyes is of God. How else do you explain what happened to me? It's never happened in all of history. You're professing to be authorities, yet you can't answer this simple question?"

Isaiah 29:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ In that day the deaf shall hear the words of the book, And the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity and out of darkness.

Isaiah 35:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, And the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Isaiah 42:7-8 (NKJV) ⁷ To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit in darkness from the prison house. ⁸ I am the LORD, that is My name; And My glory I will not give to another, Nor My praise to carved images.

Jesus said He would at beginning of His Ministry

Jesus declared He would give sight to the blind when He began His public ministry. But Jesus was talking more than physical blindness but spiritual blindness also.

Luke 4:16-19 (NKJV) ¹⁶ So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. ¹⁷ And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: ¹⁸ "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

John 9:34 They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they cast him out.

Destroy the Evidence / Same with you Today – And our County

They cast him out of the Temple, they are destroying the evidence, because a blind man who know sees who can quote scriptures is bad for business. So the world today wants to silence all you blind men and woman who can quote scripture. They want to do the same in USA, take Jesus out of the public schools, out of our government, and now even out of Christmas.

World wants You to Change Your Story

They wanted him to change his story, say it was God, but not Jesus. The world will endure “god”, but not Jesus. The world will let you talk about God, as long as your god is not specific. But when you say “Jesus” everything changes, because that name come with power, so powerful demons tremble.

James 2:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

Don't be Intimidated by Them

Don't be intimidated by them, don't change your story, don't water your story down to make it palatable. Can I say this, today there are many gods, and people have all kinds of idea who God is. But when you speak, when you say God, include the name of Jesus, so everyone is clear who you say God is, and who the God is that changed your life, and who the God is you worship. Say, something along the lines of:

- The Lord God Jesus..... has been so good to me.
- And God, Jesus Christ..... touched me

John 9:35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, “Do you believe in the Son of God?”

When Religious System Threw him Out – That's when Jesus Found him

The Religion System threw him out, and Jesus found him. That is when I was found, when religion didn't reach my heart, left me empty, and that is when Jesus found me.

John 9:36 He answered and said, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?”

John 9:37 And Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.”

Blind Man's 1st Time Seeing Jesus

The man may recognize the voice, but he has yet to see Jesus. This is his first time actually seeing Jesus.

John 9:38 Then he said, “Lord, I believe!” And he worshiped Him.

A Gradual Development (a Man – Prophet – Jesus – I Believe)

The main body of the story (verses 8–34) shows the gradual development of faith in this blind man, a faith which grows under the pressure of interrogation.

- When first questioned about the one who has healed him of his blindness, he refers to him simply as the man called Jesus (verse 11).
- Then, when the Pharisees ask the man what he has to say about the one who has healed him, he says He is a prophet (verse 17).
- Not satisfied with the answers the man gives them, the Pharisees call him back a second time, and this time the man says of Jesus, ... this man came from God ... (verse 33).
- Finally, after the religious leaders have thrown him out of the synagogue and Jesus finds him, he confesses, I believe, Lord! (verse 38).

Where did this Man Hear this Theology

Back in verse 31-32, Where did this man hear this theology and doctrine? He heard it through the whispers of the people, like the disciples, this man must be a sinner, or his parents are, thus why he is judged. And, God does not hear sinners, only worshippers. Oh the pain of those words ringing in his blind eyes all his life, but God is coming for him

Man's Perception God Judged him – Now God stands in Front of Him

So here was this mindset that all handicap was the result of sin, and God's judgment of it. Imagine this man's whole life and his perception of God, that God is against him, that God judged him. Day after day and over a lifetime millions of people go to the Temple to worship God, yet he is outside the Temple begging, and knowing he is not welcomed in the Temple because he has been told that he is what he is because of sin. But he goes from if there is a God, he is a million miles away from me, to..... God is standing before me, and God loves me.

Do You Remember the Day God Stood in Front of You

Do you remember that day, the day your eyes were opened to see Him, to see His glory, His radiance and His love. Are you still living in that thrill, are you still in awe of what you first saw? If not, why not, was there something that separated you from that thrill and awe, did you find yourself going back to stream of the world, getting in line and sync with the bland world, rituals and the routines of the world, and I am not even referring sin, just the rituals and routines, the ways of the world, that you no longer look at Jesus with the same wonder that you once did, you first did. Then why not return to that place,

How do You Return

How do you return, take the example of the blind man. Tell people your testimony, remember back to the day Jesus touched you, and enter into worship of Him.

Spiritual Sight – Spiritual Blindness (9:39-41)

John 9:39 And Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.”

John 9:40 Then some of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, “Are we blind also?”

John 9:41 Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, ‘We see.’ Therefore your sin remains.

Jesus uses Miracle to Reveal a Truth / Setup

Jesus is taking this miracle, to reveal a spiritual truth. The illustration of physical blindness, He now applies to spiritual blindness and spiritual sight. As the religious leaders try to set-up Jesus with the dilemma of the woman caught in adultery, God now sets them up, with the spiritual truth behind the physical miracle of the healing of blindness. Jesus has them have to decide, are they spiritually blinded to their sin, or do they see the need for a Savior to save them from their sin that separates them from the Holy God. They have to answer the question put before them, “do you want to become His disciples also”.

Verse 41 – They know enough – They are Sinners

In verse 41, Jesus is saying if you didn't know you were a sinner, you would still be blind. But, you know you are sinners, therefore you see.

To Know Truth – Need Light

To know truth, you need light. One of the greatest compliments that I received as a Bible teacher is when unrepentant sinners say they hate my Bible studies and my Bible teaching. I say praise the Lord because the light is doing what it was designed to do illuminate Jesus Christ and Him crucified before the person. And Titus were told that the preaching of the word is made manifest through the preaching of the word. God illuminates his word whether it's through preaching or whether it's through Bible reading or whether it's through use speaking the truth but as the word is spoken light is illuminated and people see the light and therefore their deeds are exposed and therefore they have to make a decision what do I do with this truth that is illuminated in my life. The greatest thing you can do when the light of the word is illuminated in your heart is to respond to it immediately then and now, because God will never leave you short for coming into the truth and living in the truth.

Titus 1:1-3 (NKJV) ¹ Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, ² in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, ³ but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior;

A Point where Person Says I am Tired / See World for What it IS / Has to be More

However, there is a point in a person's life where they say Lord I am blind, open my eyes, there is no reality in my life, my life is empty, something is missing, I have everyone else fooled that all is well, but I am not fooling myself, I know there is more to this life than this life, I know something is missing, I wonder why am I here, what is the purpose of life, I try to fill it with this and fill it with that, but I still feel empty. I have tried sex, alcohol, drugs, money, power, possessions, family, and fame, but still come away empty. Lord, I am tired, I am worn-out. Some

maybe even thinking about suicide, just want to escape. This world can blind us, but then God comes and touches us, speaks to us, and offers for us to see something beyond this world, outside of this world, He offers us Himself. He changes us from looking at life from physical sight, to spiritual sight, to see. He says if you are willing to admit that you are blind, that your sin separates you from Him, then He will give you new sight, new life, and it all starts with a person seeing the need for a Savior.

Thank God – For “Neither” / Now Live as Such

Thank God the word “neither” was used, for we can now live as such. You are free, free to live under the gift of forgiveness..... NOW GO!

End of Study

Chapter 10

John 10:1-21

John 10:1–10 (NKJV) ¹ “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. ² But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. ³ To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. ⁴ And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. ⁵ Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” ⁶ Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them. ⁷ Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who *ever* came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

Recap – Flowing from Chapter 9 / Blind Man Kicked Out – Won’t Change Story / Jesus Good Shepherd

No chapter breaks when this was written, and so the flow from chapter 9 keeps us in context; we closed out that chapter with a blind man from birth being healed by Jesus on the Sabbath. The religious leaders are incensed because Jesus violated their sacred cow, the Sabbath, their great day of religious self-righteousness. After being upset with Jesus, they turn their anger and resentment towards the blind man because he thinks Jesus is great and awesome (hmm the things people get excited about, who would have thought he would think Jesus was so great after being blind his whole life). So, because the blind man won’t change his story or water it down, they kick him out, excommunicate him, from being part of their reindeer games (aka the Jewish Religion). But, Jesus finds him, receives him, and the man worships Jesus. So the religious system kicks him out, but Jesus picks him up (as He does you also). And now Jesus goes into this great statement, about being the shepherd, who loves His sheep, every last one of them.

Makes Statement – He is Part of My Flock / All These are Part of My Flock / You are part of His Flock

Jesus takes all these people he healed and he is touched (see below) and He is making the statement you are part of my family, you are part of my flock, I will lead you, I will shepherd you, and I will guide you. And that may you personally hear today, your part of His flock, you are His sheep, He's the shepherd and He leads you and guides you and He loves you.

- The Woman at the Well (John 4)
- Healing the Nobleman’s Son – Nobleman hated by Jews (John 4:43-54).
- The Healing of Lame Man at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5:1-9)
- The Woman Caught in Adultery (John 8)
- The Healing The Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41).

John 10:1 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

John 10:2 But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

The Sheepfold / Out in Field – In Town / Lions & Bears & Thieves / Only 1 Door

Sheepfold – in the evening time, in the dark hours of the day, the shepherd would gather all his sheep into this sheepfold. If it was in pasture that was his he would build it out of rocks a few feet high, and he would put thorns on top of it to not keep the sheep from jumping out (as sheep are not a very agile animal), but to keep the agile animals out (such as lions, tigers, and bears, oh my). If he was shepherding in a field he was passing through, he would build the walls out thorns and bushes, or find a cave. When he was bring a flock into a town, there was already a walled sheepfold built that several feet high, it too would have thorns or broken pottery on the top to detour not so much animals, but sheep stealers. In all these sheepfolds, they had one thing in common, and that was that there was only one opening, and thus one way in. The door didn’t sit on hinges, but on hips, as the shepherd would lay his body across the opening of the door. The sheep could not get out, and thieves could not get in, unless.....as Jesus just said, they try to climb over the wall.

John 10:3 To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

John 10:4 And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

John 10:5 Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”

Western Shepherds Drive / Eastern Shepherds Lead

Western shepherds usually drive their sheep, often using a sheep dog. Their Near Eastern counterparts, on the other hand, both now and in Jesus’ day, lead their flocks by beckoning them on with their voice

Lead by Voice / My Sheep Hear My Voice

The beautiful words for us, “my sheep hear my voice”, and He will say it again in verse 27 of this chapter.

John 10:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

The Shared Sheepfold / They Spoke – or Sang a Song

Now when the shepherds were grazing in a shared pasture, or when they came into the town, they would share the sheepfold. They would take turns spending the night sleeping at the door, and if not your turn at the door you would go home to your family and stay there. And unlike today’s livestock raising, the sheep did not have markings on their ears like a tag or a piercing. So how did the shepherds separate their flocks, make sure they came in with 100 and left with 100? They simply spoke. Each shepherd’s voice was unique from the others, and when they spoke (called forth their sheep), their sheep would follow them, leave the sheepfold, because they followed the voice of the shepherd. I have read that some shepherds would sing a song, start to sing as they walked, and the sheep would follow their song. That is easy for me to see and relate to because I read it in the Song of Solomon.

Song of Solomon / Allegory of Christ and His Love / Some say too Sensual / It is Passionate

The Song of Solomon is written by a shepherd to his love. It is an allegory of Christ and you His Bride. It is beautiful word pictures of His great love for you. Some people in certain religious sects wish that it wasn’t in the Bible, lobby for its removal from the Bible, because they feel it is too sensual, too intimate, too graphical for the Bible. But it is in here, and God deemed it to be so. It starts with the woman saying (1:2-4) which is a call to intimacy. In (2:4-6), we see a beautiful and loving kiss. God is passionate about you.

Song of Solomon 1:2–4 (NKJV) ² Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth— For your love is better than wine. ³ Because of the fragrance of your good ointments, Your name is ointment poured forth; Therefore the virgins love you. ⁴ Draw me away! We will run after you. The king has brought me into his chambers. We will be glad and rejoice in you. We will remember your love more than wine. Rightly do they love you.

Song of Solomon 2:4–6 (NKJV) ⁴ He brought me to the banqueting house, And his banner over me was love. ⁵ Sustain me with cakes of raisins, Refresh me with apples, For I am lovesick. ⁶ His left hand is under my head, And his right hand embraces me.

Woman tells how Shepherd calls Her – Come Away

And then we read the woman telling of her love (the shepherd), calling unto her with his voice, coming unto her, saying come away with me, to which she responds (I am lovesick). This relationship with the shepherd and the woman is intimate and passionate. This Gospel, given by our Shepherd Jesus, is intimate and passionate, not rules and regulations, but intimacy and passion. May you hear His voice today speaking to you His love, come away with Me.

Song of Solomon 2:8–10 (NKJV) ⁸ The voice of my beloved! Behold, he comes Leaping upon the mountains, Skipping upon the hills. ⁹ My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. Behold, he stands behind our wall; He is looking through the windows, Gazing through the lattice. ¹⁰ My beloved spoke, and said to me: “Rise up, my love, my fair one, And come away.

Shepherd in WW1 – Simply Called

I read a story of a shepherd who had his sheep out in an open field during World War I, and some Turkish soldiers tried to steal a flock of sheep from a hillside near Jerusalem. The shepherd, who had been sleeping, awoke to find his flock being driven off. He couldn’t recapture them by force, so he called out to his flock with his distinctive call.

The sheep listened, and returned to their rightful owner. The soldiers couldn't stop the sheep from returning to their shepherd's voice. So too we know the voice of our Shepherd and come running to Him.

John 10:6 Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them.

Parable – Cast Truth Alongside of Story

The NKJV version says "Jesus used this illustration", but the OKJV says the word parable instead of illustration. It means to cast a truth along with a story.

Religious couldn't Understand – Not His Sheep / Ever Feel that Way?

Verse 6 – but they did not understand – See, they couldn't understand because they weren't His sheep, they didn't know His voice, so His words were like a foreign language to them. Ever feel that way when you talk to someone about the Lord? You speak beautiful poetic words, words about love and forgiveness, opening of blind eyes, the warmth of the S-O-N, the heart of the Savior, and they just stare at you. That stare you get, is the stare Jesus is getting right here in this story. By the way beloved of God, don't ever stop speaking of that intimacy, regardless the stare you get, for we will read in the next verses that Jesus didn't stop..... and I think because He couldn't stop, because His love for the Father and the Bride was always overflowing from Him, and couldn't be contained. Don't let the world quench that passion in you.

1 Corinthians 2:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ *But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

John 10:7 Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.

John 10:8 All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.

John 10:9 I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

Jesus is "Only Door"

Jesus says I am the Door, and the sentence structure (definite article) is such that He is saying, I am the only door.

Then like Now – Plenty come to Say I am the Way / Thieves & Robbers (stealth or force)

Verse 8 – all who ever came before Me – Then, like now, many came, many will come, and say my way is the way to heaven, to spirituality, to a prosperous life, follow me. Jesus said all who came before were thieves and robbers. What is the difference between a thief and a robber? One steals by stealth, the steals by force, but in the end the result is the same, you have been plundered, empty, taken. But, the sheep of God sees through them, and will not follow them.

Jesus is "Only Door"

Jesus says I am the Door, and the sentence structure is such that He is saying, I am the only door.

Only 1 Door – Thank God for "a" Door / World says that is Intolerant – It is! / God intolerant of Sin – Sin Die!

There is only one door, and thank God there is even a door. The world may say that is intolerant, and they are correct. God is intolerant about sin, people are confused if they think God winks at sin. God is so intolerant about sin, that sinners have to die for it, sin must be punished. The grace part is that He said I will trade places with the sinner, and take their punishment if they want to see their sin punished and consumed. But make no mistake what God thinks of sin, somebody will die for it, He is that intolerant of it.

But – this is an Invitation to Intimacy / Come to Me – Enter into Me – I've been Waiting for you

Jesus is also making an invitation, He is inviting people to come over, to come in, to have intimacy with Him. I am the door, come on in and lets enjoy each other. We may not feel comfortable knocking on just any door, but oh how we enjoy knocking on the door of friends and family, and the door opening and warm greetings, hugs, joy and a great welcome. Come on in, we are so glad you are here. That is the heart of Jesus, and loves that we came. And for anyone here today who has never come to Jesus, entered into the personal relationship, He says come..... I have been waiting for you all your life to come, and I am so glad you are. And, He says that any that will come to Him, He will be no means cast away.

John 6:37 (NKJV) ³⁷ All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

Intolerant of Sin – but Not Sinners

Let it be known and clear, God is intolerant of sin, but not sinners. All who will come, I will by no means cast out.

John 6:37 (NKJV) ³⁷ All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

Jesus is Making Indictment Against any other Way (starting with Judaism)

Jesus is making an indictment against the Jewish leaders here, and His words stand 2,000 years later also, no matter the religion, there is only one way to salvation, and that is through Jesus Christ, the “door” the only way into the fold. Jesus is saying your religious ways cannot save. Judaism with the animal sacrifices cannot save Jesus is saying. Keeping the Sabbath cannot save Jesus would say to them then, and to any today who believe the Sabbath saves. Baptism cannot save. Sacraments cannot save. Verse-by-verse Bible studying cannot save. Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Mormonism, Jehovah Witness, cannot save. It is only thorough Me Jesus says, and as He builds on that statement in this discourse, He will make it clear, only by His death, His sacrifice, which is why He came, to do what He must do, to become the “Lamb of God” who will take away the sins of the world.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

Abundant Life is God Life

The abundant life is a life where God is your shepherd, leading you, guiding you. The word for life here is the Greek word “zoe”, it is the God life, the life God desires for you, the life beyond anything this world could offer you, the life that Jesus lived when He walked this earth. That is the Zoe Life.

Psalm 23 / Lord is Shepherd – I shall not Want / All things are in Him

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. When the Lord Jesus is your shepherd, when He is leading and guide you, when His staff and His rod comfort you, when He restores your soul, leads you on paths of righteousness, when your cup runs over, when goodness and mercy follow you all the day of your life, when you dwell in the house of the Lord..... forever, that is the zoe life, that is the life that is the life this world cannot offer, that is the peace that this world cannot give, that is the love you will never find on this earth.

Psalm 23 (NKJV) A Psalm of David. ¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. ² He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. ³ He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. ⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. ⁵ You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. ⁶ Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the LORD Forever.

Attributes of a good Shepherd

Here are the attributes of a good shepherd (as I read interviews with shpherds)

- He must know the sheep. Without being aware of their capabilities and limitations, he could easily destroy the flock through overdriving them (Gen. 33:13).
- He knows the number of sheep under his care and check on that number constantly. For if a sheep or goat should wander away for any length of time, it might die of starvation in the desert or be devoured by a wild animal.
- The practical attribute of dependability is always necessary. Shepherding is a 24-hour commitment.
- He knows where the green pasture and the water can be found, and leads the sheep there.
- He protects the flock. From thieves and wolves.
- He knows how to lead the flock through treacherous grounds.

Attributes of a great Shepherd

In an interview with shepherds, it was constantly mentioned that the best shepherds, genuinely love their sheep. Jesus is both the good shepherd, and the great shepherd.

John 10:11 “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

I Am statement / Shepherds regarded as Vulgar – Lower Class

Here Jesus makes another “I Am” statement, and we trace that back to Exodus chapter 3, and have studied that Jesus is making the clear statement that He is God. Now this statement about being a shepherd, we don’t really grasp this statement as they would have in the day Jesus said it. In Jesus’ day, shepherds were regarded as vulgar and members of the lower class*. But Jesus willingly stepped down to become a shepherd, then become a lamb, so that we might become His people. No coincidence that when Christ was born, the first people to hear the news, were shepherds in the field. He loves you.

Exodus 3:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ Then Moses said to God, “Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?” ¹⁴ And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’”

**Arnold, C. E. (2002). Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: John, Acts. (Vol. 2, p. 98). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.*

Luke 2:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.

Prophecy

One thing these religious scholars missed was, the Messiah would be a Shepherd:

Isaiah 40:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Behold, the Lord GOD shall come with a strong hand, And His arm shall rule for Him; Behold, His reward is with Him, And His work before Him. ¹¹ He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm, And carry them in His bosom, And gently lead those who are with young.

John 10:12 But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them.

John 10:13 The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep.

The Hireling Scatters – causes Division / Wants to Steal People / Satan wants to Scatter you – Pick You Off

The hireling scatters the sheep, the hireling is one who causes division. You will always know a hireling because they want to try to steal people away from another fold into their fold, usually by stealth, talking down about the flock the person is in. Satan always wants to scatter you so he can easily pick you off while you are alone. I find it so interesting that Jesus is called the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, but Satan walks around like a roaring lion. Jesus is through the tribe of Judah which symbolized as the lion. Satan always wants to try to imitate Jesus, but never can because he has such evil intents in his heart, and so do these hirelings, as they only scatter the flock, draw the flock away from God, not gather and grow the flock. Listen, if you find yourself being disgruntled about the church you belong, be careful and be wise, for Satan may be trying to get you out there all alone so he can pick you off. Yes God does move his people, but when He does it is never done in carnal ways.

Revelation 5:4–5 (NKJV) ⁴ So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. ⁵ But one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.”

1 Peter 5:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Hireling always Worried Bottom Line (Money, Applause, Recognition)

The hireling is always worried about the bottom line, his paycheck. The hireling will never go to war, the hireling will never say anything that could drive people away because then that would hurt the bottom line. Some of the hirelings their bottom line is as respects adoration admiration, for people to say wow aren't you something. Other hirelings it's about the money how much money can I make off of these people. So the hireling will never do is offend the people, the hireling won't say things that people need to hear, because by doing that you walk away and that will hurt the bottom line, whether that be his pride, whether that be his pocketbook, it's what he is in it for and therefore he won't risk it.

John 10:14 I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.

Knows Everything About You - Still Loves you

He knows His sheep, He knows everything about you, and He still loves you. You are free to live in that freedom, in that knowing, that He knows all about you, and still loves you.

There is Freedom in Being a Sheep / Sheep Helpless / Freedom in Casting self on Shepherd / Self-Reliant

There is freedom in becoming a sheep. I know it's not anything that we would like to think and consider, there's true freedom and simply becoming a sheep in the fold of Jesus Christ. We see a sheep they are one of, if not the most helpless animals on the planet hence why Jesus calls us sheep. The sheep can't fight, the sheep can't defend itself, they don't have claws, sheep can't run, if the sheep falls on its side, it totally needs the help of the shepherd to get back up or it will die in its place right there because of stomach muscles are so weak. It's not what I want to consider my life, for I'm so strong and self-willed, I want to be able to figure things out on my own, want to be able to do things on my own without anyone help. And so often in my life I just make a mess of it. When I stop and I just become the sheep that God calls me to be and I cry out to him and say Lord just lead me, just guide me, Lord would you do what you need to do in my life to bring these things to pass before me, and I find how much life works so much better. It's so easy for us to fall back on our natural intelligence are natural gifts, our education, our employment, our friends, the connections that we have in this world, and we can find ourselves being so self-reliant that we don't even look to the Lord. And I know you're like me and you say but God doesn't want weaklings, God doesn't want people who can't fend for themselves and are totally helpless. What is for evaluation in each of our lives is the comparison of self-sufficiency and pride versus reliance and humility. I can be so self-reliant that I become prideful, and say look at what I've done. And the Lord looks upon that and he finds no favor, and no pleasure. The Bible says God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble. So there we see the place where we come Lord I know you've given me gifts, I know you've given me special talents, now I lay them down at your feet, I am laying myself down at your feet and am asking you Lord to pick me up as a tool and to use me for your pleasure Lord where you receive the glory.

James 4:6 (NKJV) ⁶ But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble."

Easiest Sheep to Lead – Dumb Ones / Hardest is the Stubborn One

Shepherds say the easy sheep to lead are the dumbest ones, and the hardest ones to lead are the stubborn ones.

John 10:15 As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

John 10:16 And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.

Jews and Gentiles will be 1 Body

These "other sheep" are Gentile believers, not of the fold of Israel.

Ephesians 3:1–7 (NKJV) ¹ For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—² if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, ³ how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, ⁴ by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), ⁵ which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: ⁶ that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, ⁷ of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power.

John 10:17 "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.

John 10:18 No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."

11-15-17-18 / Lay His Life Down

We see, verse 11, 15, 17, and 18 Jesus reiterating the one main point of the Gospel, I have come to die for my flock; I love them that much, that I fight for them, and I die for them.

WW1 Soldier – Gave (not lost)

I read a story of a soldier in World War 1 who was wounded greatly in battle. They had to amputate one arm, and one leg. In an interview they said what sacrifice you made as you lost an arm and a leg in the war; to which he replied I did not lose an arm and a leg, I gave an arm and a leg for my country.

Jesus for the Joy – For You / Hebrews 12:1-2

Jesus for the joy that was set before Him, that would be you, gave Himself for you:

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

No Man or Govt Could Take – Jesus Gave

No man could take Jesus life, all of Rome couldn't take, all of Israel, all of hell could not take it..... He gave it, for you and for me.

Verse 17 – Jesus and Father are in Unity / Jesus sent of Father

Verse 17 – the Father loves Me because I lay My life down – Jesus continually ties together that He is sent of the Father, that Him and the Father are One, and working in unity on the redemption of man. The religious leader would call it game-set-match, if they could get Jesus to say He was doing this on His own accord, because that would mean he was not sent by the Father. Hence, the end of the movement, a movement that would die within weeks; but Jesus would not, because He could not, because He and the Father are One, and He was sent by the Father, and thus why 2,000 years later this Gospel still stands.

John 8:16-19 (NKJV) ¹⁶ And yet if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone, but I am with the Father who sent Me. ¹⁷ It is also written in your law that the testimony of two men is true. ¹⁸ I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me.” ¹⁹ Then they said to Him, “Where is Your Father?” Jesus answered, “You know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.”

Today we take Communion / Red is Color of Communion / The Christmas Tree – The Cross / Martin Luther

Today we will take communion together, and we are two weeks from Christmas. May I say to you, communion is the color of Christmas, red is the color of Christmas. When you bite into the communion element, that you do it in remembrance of him and his goodness and his mercy and his love endures forever. This communion that we take, is in remembrance that he paid the price, that he came and died for us, he freely and willingly gave His blood and body for us. Many will be putting up Christmas trees in their homes. There is a pagan tradition of the Christmas tree, but let me share where my research followed our modern tradition of the Christmas tree and that was with Martin Luther, as he was on his way home one night walking through a forest of evergreen during the Christmas holiday, and he looked up and saw the stars through the trees and was blown away by God's power and His artistic hand in creation. So he went home, hung candles in the Christmas tree they had already put up, so he could communicate to his family what he had just saw. The tradition carried on, even to today as we put lights in the tree. But, here is one for you to consider this Christmas as you look at you Christmas tree, consider the cross, may we remember that there was the tree, a wooden tree, the wooden cross that was lifted up with the Savior of the world on it on a hill in Palestine 2000 years ago. A Savior willing to do it for us. When you take communion today, know it is done, you are forgiven and your sins have been wiped away and you can enjoy the birth and the celebration of this Christmas season.

John 10:19 Therefore there was a division again among the Jews because of these sayings.

John 10:20 And many of them said, “He has a demon and is mad. Why do you listen to Him?”

John 10:21 Others said, “These are not the words of one who has a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”

Jesus always Causes Division

There will always be a division. So, remember that when people get offended by Him, that means their conscience has been pricked. Praise the Lord.

If Jesus Shepherd – We Sheep

In closing, I would like you to consider this. If Jesus is the Shepherd, then that does make us sheep. So what were sheep's primary role in this Middle Eastern culture? Here are a few for us to consider today:

- Warmth (wool). Can you warm someone's life today?
- Milk (goat milk). Can you nourish someone today with the milk of God's Word (1 Peter 2:2)?
- Sacrifice (at the Temple). Thousands upon thousands of lambs, sheep, goats, were sacrificed at the Temple. Romans 12:1-2.

Romans 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

Story to Close

So here are two stories to close with before we take communion, and may they prepare our hearts for communion.

Story 1

There was a man in Chicago called Easy Eddie. At that time, Al Capone virtually owned the city. Capone wasn't famous for anything heroic. His exploits were anything but praiseworthy. He was, however, notorious for enmeshing the city of Chicago in everything from bootlegged booze and prostitution to murder. Easy Eddie was Capone's lawyer and for a good reason. He was very good! In fact, his skill at legal maneuvering kept Big Al out of jail for a long time. To show his appreciation, Capone paid him very well. Not only was the money big; Eddie got special dividends. For instance, he and his family occupied a fenced-in mansion with live-in help and all of the conveniences of the day. The estate was so large that it filled an entire Chicago city block. Yes, Eddie lived the high life of the Chicago mob and gave little consideration to the atrocity that went on around him. Eddie did have one soft spot, however. He had a son that he loved dearly. Eddie saw to it that his young son had the best of everything; clothes, cars, and a good education. Nothing was withheld. Price was no object. And, despite his involvement with organized crime, Eddie even tried to teach him right from wrong. Yes, Eddie tried to teach his son to rise above his own sordid life. He wanted him to be a better man than he was. Yet, with all his wealth and influence, there were two things that Eddie couldn't give his son. Two things that Eddie sacrificed to the Capone mob that he could not pass on to his beloved son: a good name and a good example. One day, Easy Eddie reached a difficult decision. Offering his son a good name was far more important than all the riches he could lavish on him. He had to rectify all the wrong that he had done. He would go to the authorities and tell the truth about Scar-face Al Capone. He would try to clean up his tarnished name and offer his son some semblance of integrity. To do this he must testify against The Mob, and he knew that the cost would be great. But more than anything, he wanted to be an example to his son. He wanted to do his best to make restoration and hopefully have a good name to leave his son. So, he testified. Within the year, Easy Eddie's life ended in a blaze of gunfire on a lonely Chicago street. He had given his son the greatest gift he had to offer at the greatest price he would ever pay.

Story 2

Lieutenant Commander Butch O'Hare. He was a fighter pilot assigned to an aircraft carrier Lexington in the South Pacific. One day his entire squadron was sent on a mission. After he was airborne, he looked at his fuel gauge and realized that someone had forgotten to top off his fuel tank. He would not have enough fuel to complete his mission and get back to his ship. His flight leader told him to return to the carrier. Reluctantly he dropped out of formation and headed back to the fleet. As he was returning to the mothership, he saw something that turned his blood cold. A squadron of Japanese bombers were speeding their way toward the American fleet. The American fighters were gone on a sortie and the fleet was all but defenseless. He couldn't reach his squadron and bring them back in time to save the fleet. Nor, could he warn the fleet of the approaching danger. There was only one thing to do. He must somehow divert them from the fleet. Laying aside all thoughts of personal safety, he dove into the formation of Japanese planes. Wing-mounted 50 caliber's blazed as he charged in, attacking one surprised enemy plane and then another. Butch weaved in and out of the now broken formation and fired at as many planes as possible until finally all his ammunition was spent. Undaunted, he continued the assault. He dove at the planes, trying to at least clip off a wing or tail, in hopes of damaging as many enemy planes as possible and rendering them unfit to fly. He was desperate to do anything he could to keep them from reaching the American ships. Finally, the

exasperated Japanese squadron took off in another direction. Deeply relieved, Butch O'Hare and his tattered fighter limped back to the carrier. Upon arrival he reported in and related the event surrounding his return. The film from the camera mounted on his plane told the tale. It showed the extent of Butch's daring attempt to protect his fleet. He had destroyed five enemy bombers. That was on February 20, 1942, and for that action he became the Navy's first Ace of WWII and the first Naval Aviator to win the Congressional Medal of Honor. A year later he was killed in aerial combat at the age of 29. His home town would not allow the memory of that heroic action to die. And today, O'Hare Airport in Chicago is named in tribute to the courage of this great man. So the next time you're in O'Hare visit his memorial with his statue and Medal of Honor. It is located between terminal 1 and 2.

I Know what Thinking

I know what you're thinking, what do these two stories have to do with one another? Well, you see, Butch O'Hare was Easy Eddie's son, Easy Eddie O'Hare.

It is Never Too late

It's never too late to change. It's never too late to change your life and leave a name for your children. It is never too late to walk away from that sin. It's never too late to become a sacrifice unto God. Today become that living sacrifice, today set yourself apart, today may we purpose to live our lives wholly dedicated unto the Lord, our Great Shepherd.

End of Study

John 10:22-42

Recap 10:1-22 / Good Shepherd

We pick up here in chapter 10, verse 22. In our last study Jesus declared He is the good shepherd, He is the door (only door) into heaven, and anyone who enters in by Him will be saved. If you are desiring the perfect gift for Christmas this year, give your life to Jesus, and you will find all that want in Him (Psalm 23:1):

Psalm 23:1 (NKJV) ¹ The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 Peter 1:2-4 (NKJV) ² Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, ³ as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, ⁴ by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

John 10:9 (NKJV) ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

John 10:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

John 10:22 Now it was the Feast of Dedication in Jerusalem, and it was winter.

2 Months from Verse 21

Two months has elapsed between verse 21 and verse 22. The Feast of Tabernacles, what we have been studying in the last few chapters is in the fall, and the Feast of Dedication is in the winter (right around our Christmas time).

4 Months from Cross / Wow we have Learned So Much Haven't We

We are about four months from the cross. All who have been here for the last 6 months going verse-by-verse, we have covered a lot of ground. We have seen amazing things, learned great things about the heart of our God, and His love for us. I think we all have become better students of the Word of God. So let's continue on Amen.

Feast of Dedication / Hanukkah

The Feast of Dedication took place on the 25th day of the Jewish month of Chislev, the same month as our December. So this event took place on our Christmas. The Feast of Dedication was the newest of feasts. In fact, some of those there had heard stories from their great-great-grandfathers, who had heard them from their great-great-grandfathers about how in 175 B.C. a madman named Antiochus Epiphanes came to rule over the area and attempted to mix Hebrew and Greek culture. In doing so, he desecrated the temple, forced pork down the priests' throats, turned the chambers of the temple into a brothel, and converted the altar meant for burnt offerings into an altar for Zeus! But those were also the great days of Judas Maccabaeus, who fought against Antiochus and defeated him. There came a great day when Maccabaeus cleansed the temple and consecrated it. We read his own words in the non-canonical book First Maccabees:

... that every year at that season the days of the dedication of the altar should be observed with gladness and joy for eight days, beginning with the 25th day of the month of Chislev. (4:5)

In keeping with these words, every house in Jerusalem had eight candles in the window on the 25th of Chislev. It was, in modern terms, Hanukkah.

Rededication of the Temple / Non-Historical

Now as the story goes, and this part is Jewish traditions and writings (it may be historical, it may not be), is that when they went in to clean the temple and set it up for worship again, when they went to light the Menorah, they found that they only had enough oil to burn for one day. For the menorah to be lit, and then go out would be terrible. The oil that was to be used for the temple menorah had to go through an eight day ceremonial preparation before it could be used. Now as the story goes, it did not go out on day one, nor two, nor three, but it lasted the whole eight days until the fresh batch was prepared properly. Today the celebration is known as Hanukkah, and they light one candle a day.

Your Personal Convictions Regarding Holidays / But for Me – I see Jesus Showing Up at Holiday

Now, there is plenty of historical writings to support the account of Judas Maccabaeus defeating Antiochus Epiphanes. The writings get much slimmer regarding the miracle of the oil lasting eight days. Some Jewish writings even challenge it simply as “legend”. What we know today is that the celebration is 8 days long, and it goes all the way back before the time of Jesus. I have to tie the ‘eight’ to the miracle of the “eight” days of oil. Did the miracle actually happen, I do not know. Is Jesus’ presence at this Feast validate the miracle, I do not know. This passage today is the only record of Jesus attending this Feast, so no mention that He came to it the years before. What do I gather, and why do I spend time making this point, because it is a verse that I hold to in the day and culture that I live. Everyone had their own personal “conscience and convictions” on the holidays of their culture. I appreciate them and am by no means trying to sway anyone from changing their personal convictions. Some people don’t want to celebrate Christmas because it has pagan roots, and worldly trappings. Some feel the same way about Easter, Halloween, and the likes, and I say I totally support you on that. But as for me, here is what I see in this passage and that is that Jesus came to the Feast of Dedication, and He used it to point to the sure truth, the sure need, that He is the Christ, sent by the Father, to give eternal life to all who will come to Him.

I use Every Holiday to Point to Jesus

So that is what I do for every holiday of our culture, I use them to point back to Jesus Christ. I use Christmas, Easter, Thanksgiving, yes even Halloween, to meet people I normally wouldn’t, be with people I use don’t, use the subject to somehow get on the subject of the goodness of God, a light to counter what the world celebrates, the opportunity to show someone how empty and/or fleeting the holiday is, but how lasting and wonderful our Savior is. That is me personally, and I by no means say this to counter anyone’s personal convictions, I respect them and support you 100% in them.

Jacob (Bethel – El Bethel)

But for all of us today, I am reminded of the story of Jacob back in Genesis. Jacob has his problems indeed. Jacob has all kinds of baggage without question. But through it all, he was always growing because when he comes to Bethel the second time, he no longer calls it Bethel, “the house of God,” but El-Bethel or, “The God of the House of God.” This shows monumental maturity, for Jacob understands that it’s not the house of God that is important, but the God who dwells therein. So, too, it’s not worship that’s important, but the God whom we worship. It’s not the Bible that’s important, but the God of the Bible. You see, the Word is not an end in itself. The goal of Bible study is not to try and gain more intellectual or theological understanding. It’s much more than that. The Word of God is simply a door I go through many times a day to meet the God of the Word. “That’s obvious,” you say. Not really. A lot of people initially delight in church or Bible study or worship. But eventually they lose interest in church and Bible study and worship because those things are not God. We will in the next few months begin a radio ministry, have been considering it for years, and for years I had always thought the name of the radio ministry would be “Light of the Word”, but the more I pray about it, the more I feel led to call it “The Heart of God”. Yes this Bible is the Word of God, it is a lamp/light unto our feet, but more so to me, it is the words of the heart of God, the heart He has for me, the passion He has for us, and when I teach this Word from week to week, my main goal is that all who hear, will hear and feel the heart of God as we go through this Word. Regarding Christmas, I would say to all of us as we enter into the holiday season, it is not the “Christmas of God”, but the “God of Christmas”. Not a looking back (which is ok), but the present, God is here now, He is here in this Christmas today, He is walking among us, He is touching us as we celebrate Him, He is speaking to us His Words of love this Christmas, He is not of Christmas of old, but Christmas today. He walks among His church, and He is walking among us today, and He will be in your homes and your travels this Christmas season. So invite Him in, lift up His name, let Him be the center of your Christmas.

Genesis 28:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously.

Genesis 31:13 (NKJV) ¹³ I am the God of Bethel, where you anointed the pillar and where you made a vow to Me. Now arise, get out of this land, and return to the land of your family.’ ”

Genesis 35:7 (NKJV) ⁷ And he built an altar there and called the place El Bethel, because there God appeared to him when he fled from the face of his brother.

John 10:23 And Jesus walked in the temple, in Solomon's porch.

4 Months From Cross / 6 months from Peter Preaching / Remember - 4X said "I will Lay down My Life"

So we are four months from the cross, and about six months from Peter preaching here at this same spot, after healing the lame man, and 5,000 people will get saved.

Acts 3:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ Now as the lame man who was healed held on to Peter and John, all the people ran together to them in the porch which is called Solomon's, greatly amazed.

Overview Solomon's Porch

Solomon's porch was a beautiful walkway lined with evenly spaced columns that was located on the east side of the temple area. It was supposedly built by Solomon on an artificial embankment overlooking the Kidron Valley (1Ki 6:3 and 1Ch 28:11).

Solomon's temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 587 B.C. but rebuilt from 537 to 515 B.C. and called Zerubbabel's temple. About 19 B.C., Herod the Great began rebuilding Zerubbabel's temple on an even larger scale than Solomon's original temple. The area called Solomon's porch was considered a remnant of Solomon's original temple. It covered a huge area--approximately 900 feet long and 100 feet wide (or 90,000 sq. ft.)--but part of that area was covered by two rows of huge columns stretching the length of that side of the temple area. There was enough room if needed, however, to accommodate literally thousands of people on this porch.

Acts 5:12 mentions the apostles as "all with one accord in Solomon's porch." Acts 3:11 mentions that "all the people ran together unto them [Peter and John] in the porch that is called Solomon's" (brackets mine). Although not stated in Scripture, it is likely that when the "multitude came together" (Ac 2:6) after the initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the "house where they [the 120 or so disciples] were sitting" (Ac 2:2, brackets mine), the multitude probably came to Solomon's porch. Ac 2:41 says that about 3,000 souls "were added unto them" on the Day of Pentecost, and they certainly couldn't have fit into the house of Ac 2:2. Solomon's porch would have been a natural meeting or gathering area because (1) both Jews and Gentiles were allowed there and (2) the gate called Beautiful (Ac 3:2) led to the only road going east out of Jerusalem. Since Solomon's porch had to be crossed anytime Jesus and His disciples went to the Mount of Olives or Bethany, it was likely a place where they spent a lot of time, especially in the last few months of Jesus' earthly ministry. According to Ac 3:11 and 5:12, it certainly was a place the apostles and disciples frequented in the early days of the church.

John 10:24 Then the Jews surrounded Him and said to Him, "How long do You keep us in doubt? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly."

John 10:25 Jesus answered them, "I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me."

I love Picture – Jesus standing Among the Pillars / Light of World / Miracle they Desire / Leader like Maccabeus

When Solomon built this portion of the Temple, we are told in the scriptures that there were two main pillars called Jachin and Boaz. Jachin literally means "He will establish, and Boaz literally means "In It is Strength". I love the picture as I see it in my mind Jesus is standing between these two pillars, he's the center of this picture, and as they would have the menorah in their homes, here Jesus with these columns and Jesus is the bright burning light of the Feast of Dedication (for he is the Light of the World). He is the miracle, He is what they're hoping for. They need a miracle, they're desperately desiring a miracle of someone like Judas Maccabeus to come again and to overthrow Antioch Epiphanies (who this time is Roman Empire), to overthrow the Roman empire that occupies their land, who rules over them, to set them free. They're looking for someone to be a miracle and hence they celebrate that great victory the Judas of Maccabeus brought to the nation. What a proud moment and what a moment that they would glory in year after year remembering it. But Jesus is even stating something greater there's a greater victory that you need and it's the victory over sin, it is the victory over the judgment that comes from sin against the Holy God, and the victory not only over the penalty of sin, but the power of sin that it has over a person. And Jesus is standing in the midst of these pillars, being in the light of the world, making a clear picture again that He's the bright and burning light that they're looking for, He is the miracle that they're looking for, He is the victory that will deliver them, He is the strength to do it, and He will establish it. And for us here today, He's

our victor that will deliver us and bring us victory through this world and into the next, in Him is the strength, and he shall establish all things in our life.

2 Chronicles 3:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Then he set up the pillars before the temple, one on the right hand and the other on the left; he called the name of the one on the right hand Jachin, and the name of the one on the left Boaz.

John 8:12 (NKJV) ¹² Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

They Surrounded Him – that is Intense Confrontation / Shepherd Ready to Fight for Flock

It says they surrounded him. Now when you're in a confrontation with somebody it's pretty intense when you're face-to-face with them, but then bring several people and have them all surround you, their intent is pure intimidation. Because now you have a 360° of perimeter that you're trying to protect and defend rather than just the 90° or 180° perimeter when they are standing in front of you. This is intimidation at its finest and they're trying to bring this intimidation upon Jesus to make Him fear, but He has no fear because He's the great shepherd and He's ready to fight anyone that comes to try to take his sheep and attack his flock, even to the point of death. And, in our next verses Jesus is going to say they're in my hands, and the father's hands, and it is a picture of the father got Jesus is back, Jesus and the father has your back, and you can rest in that fact, and then you can trust that in your day when you feel anyone/everyone comes against you, and when you feel the world pressing in from all angles, from 360° degrees closing in, just know the Lord has your back. Not only that, the Lord has your future, and the Lord has your past. He's the good Shepherd and though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death we fear no evil..... it's just a shadow it's not a real thing is just a shadow.

John 10:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep.

John 10:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.

John 10:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.

John 10:17–18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ "Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. ¹⁸ No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father."

American Military – Heart of Volunteer / Jesus volunteered for You

You know the American military is so great? Is it because of the great training, yes that helps? Is it because the great weaponry, yes that helps. But here is the main reason, and it is because it is an all-volunteer army. Not a compulsion, but a volunteer. There is no greater heart, then a heart of a volunteer. They fight, because they have volunteered to fight, not been forced to fight, they fight because they believe in the cause. Jesus fights for you, to the point of death, and He gladly does so, it is not a compulsion, but a joy that was set before Him. He volunteered for the assignment, and you can't beat the heart of a volunteer. Jesus and the Father got your back, you are in good hands.

Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

John 10:26 But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you.

Jesus doesn't Change Approach

Jesus will begin to speak about me and the good Shepherd again. I point out to you that it's two months later from when he had said this before. Although this is one chapter, this chapter has a two-month break in it. And so I point out to you when I point out to myself Jesus comes back and says the same thing again regarding the Shepherd and the sheep. Why this is important to us is that so many times people ask is things about the Lord ask us a way of salvation, ask how to get their life in order, and we share Christ with them and they don't receive it. Then they come back later maybe two months later and they asked the same question again, and the point for us to see is the answer is still the same. I have many people come for counseling and I give them counseling and they don't like it so they ignore it and then they come back weeks or months later and asked for counseling again, and I tell them I have no new counsel for you the counsel of the past is the same counsel that is still needed to apply today. So when a friend or someone comes to you don't change the counsel, don't change the gospel, and don't change a different approach, just keep given on Jesus and their need for Jesus.

John 10:27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

John 10:28 And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

John 10:29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand.

John 10:30 I and My Father are one."

Are You Secure in your Salvation?

Are you secure in your salvation? If not, hear these words, no one can snatch you out of His hands. No one!

The Great Question – Can Lose Salvation / I Lose my Car Keys – To Lose is an Accident

The question has been asked to me more times than I can count, and that is can you lose your salvation. To my answer, I lose my car keys occasionally, I lose my glasses, I even lose my bible sometimes..... and I lose them because I don't know what I did with them. I lose my keys and glasses by accident, for if I knowingly placed them somewhere, then it wouldn't be an accident, and obviously I would know where they are. To lose is an accident, and Jesus is making it clear no one can accidentally lose their salvation because they are in the protection of the Shepherd.

Today I will settle the Debate – NOT!

People have been arguing and debating over such things as once-saved-always-saved, or you-can-lose-your salvation, for 2000 years; good news, today I am once and for all going to settle the debate, and clearly prove one point over the other.....NOT.

What I believe – Scriptures Written so that we Might be Sure we are Sure / Deathbed to Unrepentant

Here is what I absolutely do believe, 100% whole-heartedly, and that is God writes and leaves us these scriptures, so that we might be sure, that we are sure. He writes in such a way that the backslider, the person whose been away from the Lord for days, weeks, months, years, decades, even on a deathbed can hear them and be reminded God's arms are open to them and say come to Me and I will give you rest, I will by no means cast you out, your in my hands and no one can snatch you out, you are Mine. They are also written in such a way that a person who is thinking about, or living in, unrepentant sin will hear words and be reminded, "do not be deceived" people who run with the devil on earth will not walk with the Lord in heaven.

John 6:35–40 (NKJV) ³⁵ And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. ³⁶ But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. ³⁷ All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. ⁴⁰ And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

1 Corinthians 6:7–11 (NKJV) ⁷ Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated? ⁸ No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and you do these things to your brethren! ⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

Book of Hebrews Warnings – Lose Salvation / 2 Minute Warning in Football

People like to quote passages out of the Book of Hebrews that can definitely fuel the position that a person can walk away from the Lord, and be lost, even if they once professed Christ as Lord and Savior. I have met a few people personally who said they once believed as I now do, but not only do they not follow Jesus anymore, they don't even believe He exists. To that my response is, I do not know, those are eternal things that only God knows. But regarding the warnings that are in the Book of Hebrews, they are warnings, and the book is written to believers, and like all warnings there is time to correct. A warning is given so you have time to do something about it. The two-minute warning in football means you still have two minutes to play, but you only have two minutes to play. We get warnings in our lives so we can examine ourselves and say how I am doing in terms of that warning. Am I safe from the danger, or am I close to problems.

Hebrews 6:4–8 (NKJV) ⁴ For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame. ⁷ For the earth which drinks in the rain that often comes upon it, and bears herbs useful for those by whom it is cultivated, receives blessing from God; ⁸ but if it bears thorns and briers, it is rejected and near to being cursed, whose end is to be burned.

Hear – Follow / Know – Known / Matthew 7 (Lawless – Practice – Habitual)

Here is the key to the whole discussion, Jesus says “My Sheep Follow Me”. Those challenging Him, these religious leaders, Jesus said you don’t believe because you are not one of my sheep. My sheep hear My voice, and they follow Me (verse 4 & 27). Jesus said in verse 14 I know My sheep, and am known by My own. But in Matthew 7, we read that freighting account of people who thought they knew Him, and He knew them, they even did great things like cast out demons, perform many wonders, (Ray adds) teach Sunday school, tithe, quote scriptures, saw all the Left Behind Movies, had Christians T-shirts, and went to church every Sunday, and Jesus said “depart from Me I never knew you”. The key is the last part of the sentence, “you who practice lawlessness”, means to be without the law, to not be subject to the law, and in God’s economy it means to break God’s Holy Law.

John 10:4 (NKJV) ⁴ And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.

John 10:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

John 10:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own.

Matthew 7:21–23 (NKJV) ²¹ “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

Habitual Sin – Reveals Lordship hasn’t been Settled / Practice – Something Habitual

The key is the last part of the sentence, “you who practice lawlessness”. Now, the unrepentant habitual sin does send the person to hell; it only reveals the person hasn’t settled the lordship of Jesus Christ in their life. Again, the unrepentant habitual sin does send the person to hell; it only reveals the person hasn’t settled the lordship of Jesus Christ in their life. Are we not all sinners and lawbreakers, yes; but notice again a key word “practice”. The word practice is something you do over and over, it is a way of life, and it is habitual. When I played football we practiced, and practiced, and practiced. We practiced every day, except Sunday; and there are some people who practice their sin every day except Sunday because that is church day.

Follow Me – Repentance means to Turn and Follow

Jesus says My sheep “follow Me”. Repentance means to turn and follow. Jesus says My sheep follow Me. The first words of Jesus’ public ministry was repent, Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost was repent. Without repentance (the turning and following Jesus), there is no forgiveness of sin. My sheep “follow me”, and “I know them”.

Matthew 3:2 (NKJV) ² and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”

Matthew 4:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Luke 13:3 (NKJV) ³ I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.

Acts 2:37–39 (NKJV) ³⁷ Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do?” ³⁸ Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.”

Acts 3:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

Spurgeon Quote

As Charles Spurgeon put it, “you and your sins must be separate, or you and your God will never come together”

You who Struggle – He is Working / You just Keep Following

You who follow but are struggling, you say what Paul said, the things I wish not to do I do, ohhhhh help me Jesus; God is working in you, and He will complete the work, it is called growing and maturing. You keep following Jesus, and He will conform you into His image.

Romans 7:13–25 (NKJV) ¹³ Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful. ¹⁴ For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin. ¹⁵ For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. ¹⁶ If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. ¹⁷ But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. ¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. ¹⁹ For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. ²⁰ Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. ²¹ I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. ²² For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. ²³ But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. ²⁴ O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) ⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

Hard Stories of the Bible

You know there are some hard stories in the Bible to teach. Remember story of Judah having sex with his daughter-in-law Tamar, yea that is a tough one. The great Samson with Delilah is one thing, but then the stories of the harlots he had relations with. Oh the Great King David, with Bathsheba, and then having her husband killed to cover up the story. Moses the murder. Now speaking of Samson, David, and Moses, so you know what they all have in common? They are all listed in Hebrews 11 which is called the “Hall of Faith”, yes, they were considered men of faith. You see, I am thankful that God tells the stories of failure, of foolish actions and moments, God tells it like it is so I (we) can read these stories, and see that God isn’t looking for sinless perfection, that God will take sinners, save them, and change them, and conform them into His image. So if you are struggling, you keep saying oh the things I wish not to do I do, take comfort and courage in that God is working in you, and He has by no means cast you off or given up on you, said you have blown it and I am done with you.

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) ⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

Do You Know Jesus – Do you Follow Him

So the question is, do you know Him? How can you tell? You hear His voice, and you follow Him. If you are not following Him (repenting and turning towards Him), then make evaluation today, and make today the day you turned and followed Him. But if you refuse to turn and follow, I have no words of assurance for you today, because Matthew 7 are words in red, spoken by Jesus Himself.

Matthew 7:21–23 (NKJV) ²¹ “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

You who are His – You are In His and the Father’s Hand

And if you are His, and He is yours, He will see you through, no one can snatch you out of His hands. And, as we see, you are in the Father’s hand too. Like a little child crossing the street, holding Mommy and Daddy’s hands—on one hand, we have the Father, on the other we have our Lord Jesus Christ. We are eternally secure because we are secure in the Eternal One.

John 10:25–30 (NKJV) ²⁵ Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father’s name, they bear witness of Me. ²⁶ But you do not believe, because you are not of My sheep, as I said to you. ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand. ³⁰ I and My Father are one.”

Shepherd gave Account for Every Last Sheep

And, you are His sheep, and we are not familiar with the culture as they were who heard this, but listen to this. In that culture, and elsewhere, it was customary for annual agreements to be drawn up between flock-owners and shepherds. At the end of each year, the shepherd would have to give an account of all the sheep under his care. He, of course, was not held responsible for the animals which died naturally during the year. It was customary for a

shepherd to skin those animals and then present their skins, with the wool and probably also some of the tendons, as proof to their owner that the animals had not been sold or lost through negligence.

- 1 If a shepherd lost a sheep and, therefore, was unable to produce the skin, he was obliged to replace it with another animal.
- 2 According to Exodus 22:12, if an animal was stolen from him, he was required to make restitution to the owner—which might be payment or the replacement of the animal. This was also the requirement specified in the law code of Hammurabi which was a written law in the land of Babylon.

To the shepherd, every sheep was precious and he knew he would give an account for every last one of them. The night he was betrayed, Jesus said all you have given me, “I HAVE LOST NONE”. He wil not lose you, He cant!

John 18:9 (NKJV) ⁹ that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, “Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.”

John 6:35–40 (NKJV) ³⁵ And Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. ³⁶ But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. ³⁷ All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out. ³⁸ For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. ⁴⁰ And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

Isaiah 49:16 – Engraved in His Hands

He wont lose you, because we are told you are written on Hands.

Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me. Isaiah 49:16

Behold My Hands

“Behold My hands,” said Jesus to Thomas (John 20:27), for in those hands, love was engraved. When Jesus was pinned to the Cross for you and me, He nailed down our eternal state. The price was paid for any sin and every sin—whatever it was, is, or will be. That’s why He was able to say, “Your name is permanently engraved in the palms of My hands, and no man shall pluck you out.” That’s eternal life assurance, gang. Don’t let the Enemy tell you you’re not saved or that you’ve blown it once too often. Don’t let the Enemy say your salvation is in jeopardy. Don’t let him produce in you a feeling of insecurity. Instead, marvel at what Jesus said when He declared, “You’re in the Father’s hand and you’re in My hand. Therefore, you’re not only in good hands—You’re in the best hands.”

No One Can Snatch you Out of His Hands

All who are His, no one can snatch them out of His hand. All who know Him, and are known by Him, are His and no one can snatch you out of His hand. Those hands that have your name engraved on them.

Know This today

To the world you are one, but to the One, you are the World. He laid His life down for you

John 10:31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him.

People Ask Questions because want to Argue

Sometimes people ask questions not because they want to know the answer, but because they want to argue. Such was the case here. The Jews didn’t want to know the answer. They just wanted to hear Jesus give it again in order that they might have reason to stone Him.

Jews Afraid to Lose Position

In john 11 we will see why they feared Jesus, because if Jesus was followed, these religious leaders would lose their position. They loved the praises of man, and the best seats in the house, and they didn’t want to sit behind Jesus.

John 11:45–48 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. ⁴⁶ But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. ⁴⁷ Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, “What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. ⁴⁸ If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.”

John 10:32 Jesus answered them, “Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?”

John 10:33 The Jews answered Him, saying, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.”

Rocks prove they Understood Jesus Claiming to be God

The fact that the Jews picked up stones to throw at Jesus proved they understood His claim to deity. The fact that they were unable to throw them shows they experienced the proof of His deity. The deity of Jesus Christ. There's plenty of people who want to argue that Jesus really never said that he was God, that he was the son of God but not God himself. And they say that Jesus is not God that's their doctrinal position on their heretical religion. Want nobody knew the language better than these religious leaders no one knew what Jesus was referring to better than these religious leaders, and they pick up rocks and they want to kill them because they clearly understand she is making himself one with God, and that he is God.

John 10:34 Jesus answered them, “Is it not written in your law, ‘I said, “You are gods” ’?”

John 10:35 If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken),

John 10:36 do you say of Him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’?”

Quoting psalm 82

Quoting Psalm 82:6, Jesus refers to the Old Testament, wherein judges were called gods because they held the power of life and death in their hands. “Doesn’t Scripture say you are gods?” asked Jesus. “Why, then, are you so upset when I say I am the Son of God?” He throws them a curve ball—and they have a tough time hitting it.

Psalm 82:6 (NKJV) ⁶ I said, “You are gods, And all of you are children of the Most High.

My summary of this Discourse

I myself struggle on this one too, I’m like Lord what exactly are you saying. But, here is a my summary of this: *You guys don’t have any problem claiming scriptures for yourself, but here I am claiming scriptures that are clearly about Me, and you have all kinds of problems with that.*

Ever Have that Happen to you – Everyone Gets to Claim Scripture but You

Every have that in your life with people, they love to claim scriptures for themselves, but not for you. They get forgiveness but you don’t. They get second chances but you make one mistake you are a horrible person. They claim grace, but give you none. Or, they don’t have to live by the scriptures but you do; as they come and judge you saying all the things you are doing wrong (and you call yourself a Christian), but if you say one thing ever to them, they cry foul.... You are judging me.

Verse 35 – Scriptures Cannot be Broken

Verse 35 – the scriptures cannot be broken - The Scriptures cannot be broken that is a fact. That is a statement that is being made by Jesus to the whole world. The Scriptures cannot be broken, that means he will sanctify you he will glorify you he will complete you. No one can snatch His out of His and the Father hands.

John 10:37 If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me;

John 10:38 but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.”

John 10:39 Therefore they sought again to seize Him, but He escaped out of their hand.

John 10:40 And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at first, and there He stayed.

John 10:41 Then many came to Him and said, “John performed no sign, but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true.”

John 10:42 And many believed in Him there.

John Baptist Greatest Prophet – but no Miracle

Jesus said John the Baptist was the greatest prophet who ever preached. John was the greatest even though he performed no miracles, because of his message, his message was behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Do you want to be a great prophet you wish you could be great like John the Baptist and take your finger in point and say to the world behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

Luke 7:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

No Miracles is not Lack of Faith on your Part

John performed no miracles, do you think that John wanted to see miracles? I do, like everyone he probably wanted to see Rome overthrown. His heart was probably ripped to see disease and hardship, and desired to see miracles as much as we do today. John would want to see miracles as much as you and I, and he saw no miracles and performed no miracles. It's not lack of faith if you don't see miracles happen in your life, these miracle teachers are full of themselves when they try to say it's your faith, it's not your faith it's their pocketbook there trying to feel not your faith for faith.

Also – Maybe God isn't doing All you Expect Him to – Take Example of John the Baptist

John wanted to see Jesus do great things, but when Jesus didn't do it according to what John expected, he sent his disciples to ask Jesus if He was the messiah predicted, or is there yet another to come. This spoken by the man who pointed and said, behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. So maybe Jesus isn't doing everything you expect Him to do, you wonder where the miracle is, you're wondering why he's working in the way He is. John the Baptist is another great example for even John would be like are you the one? He is asking the question because Jesus didn't do what John thought he would do, he thought it was going to be overthrow of Rome, the kingdom would come now, John didn't have the full picture and understanding what Jesus was doing. John knew Behold the Lamb of God it would take away the sins of the world, but he didn't know everything else about Jesus, and the plan that the father and the Son had for that time and that season. And that's where it is for us, there's a time and a season and we're not fully knowledgeable of everything that God's doing, and sometimes we think He's not working, and is not moving. Jesus was moving in a great and mighty way, John just couldn't fully see it because he couldn't fully understand what the whole plan was. And neither do we, so we just have to keep pointing to the Lamb, and we just have to keep following the Lamb, and trusting the Lamb that the Lamb knows what he's doing in our life and in this world.

Luke 7:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ When the men had come to Him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to You, saying, 'Are You the Coming One, or do we look for another?' "

Every one of You is Able Minister of the Gospel / Time is Short

Every one of you in this room is an able (and enabled) minister of the gospel Jesus Christ. As you have the truth and you have the message, and all we have to do is speak the same message John the Baptist did, and may we speak the truth and the whole truth of Jesus Christ. We are all able ministers, so let's go out and fulfill the calling. Let's go because there's not much time, and we got a lot to do in such a short time.

End of Study

Chapter 11

John 11:1-27

Recap / Chp10 Heart of the Shepherd – He who Holds Sheep in His Hand

We pick up our study here in chapter 11, we have just finished reading and absorbing the heart of Jesus, our Shepherd, a Good Shepherd, who He said lays His life down for His sheep, who holds His sheep in His hand, and no one can snatch you out of His hand.

Written so We Might Believe / Zoe Life / More Know – Trust – Obey – Abide - Fruitful

Written so we might believe, and by believing we will have Zoe (abundant, absolute, God Life, a life more than this life). And how we have that Zoe life is by believing, and how we believe is by reading about Jesus and His life, and as we do Jesus does get bigger for He is always His awesomeness, but it is us who grow in our understanding of just how big He is.

- The more we get to know Him, the more we will trust Him,
- and the more we trust Him the more we will obey Him,
- and the more you obey the more you have that abiding relationship with Him,
- and the more you have that abiding relationship with Him, the more fruit you will produce because you are attached to Him. How much fruit we bear is all dependent on how well we know Him.

*John 20:30–31 (NKJV)*³⁰ *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*

*Romans 10:16–17 (NKJV)*¹⁶ *But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “LORD, who has believed our report?” ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

*John 15:5 (NKJV)*⁵ *“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.*

*Galatians 5:22–23 (NKJV)*²² *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.*

Zoe Life – Vines Dictionary

Definition of Life in Vines Dictionary (Zoe in the Greek) as used in the NT “of life as a principle, life in the absolute sense, life as God has it, that which the Father has in Himself, and which He gave to the Incarnate Son to have in Himself, John 5:26, and which the Son manifested in the world, 1 John 1:2.

Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W., Jr. (1996). Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words. Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.

Zoe Life – More Definition

The richness of the word “zoe”

- God Life (for it is the life that comes from God and is God’s Life)
- More than this Life (John 10:10 – that we might have life and that more abundant)

Greek Words

Here are how the different Greek words are used throughout the Scriptures.

- Bios – living life, livelihood, manner of living
- Psyche – life as in breathing, “existence”, contrasted to being dead, and not breathing
- Zoe – A God Life, Absolute Life, More than this Life (Bios & Psyche)

Zoe Life – Summarized

Life emanating (coming forth) from God, manifested (made known) by Christ.

John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

7 Miracles

7 Miracles in Gospel of John:

- Miracle 1, Water Into Wine (John 2:1-11)
- Miracle 2, Healing the Official’s Son (John 4:43-54).

- Miracle 3, The Healing at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5:1-9)
- Miracle 4, The Feeding of the 5000 (John 6:1-5).
- Miracle 5, Walking on the Water (John 6:16-25).
- Miracle 6, Healing The Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41).
- Miracle 7, Raising Lazarus from the Dead (John 11:1-44).

Importance of this Miracle – Regarding Zoe Life

So we today study the seventh miracle of Jesus, the raising of Lazarus from the dead. The importance for us in this study is to clearly see Jesus has power over the grave, that when He says “come forth”, the dead rise and come forth. To live a zoe life, an abundant life, we must have full confidence and assurance that our lives are in His hands, that death is just a passage, not an end. To have a zoe life, an abundant life, we have to see the heart that God has for us, when we suffer, when tragedy strikes our lives (and it will, it is inevitable), and we need to know (and God wants us to know), what He is feeling when we hurt. We will see that His heart groans for us, He weeps for us, and..... He is coming for us. A zoe life, an abundant life, must know where God is, what He feels, when we are in the midst of hardship, tragedy, and suffering.

John 11:1 Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

John 11:2 It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.

4 Months before the Cross

It appears to me, based on the last verse of chapter 11, that this event took place shortly after John 10 (and not right before chapter 12 – which begins the last week of the Life of Jesus), and about 4 months before the crucifixion. I say that because we read that He removed Himself from public ministry in the area of Jerusalem, and he does not come out again until the final week of His life. Many teachers, including myself, see a period of anywhere from 2-4 months where Jesus is out of public view (for the most part). It is during this period He is pouring Himself into His disciples, preparing them for the task that is ahead of them, the leaders of His Church, that He will die for.

John 11:53–57 (NKJV) ⁵³ Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death. ⁵⁴ Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples. ⁵⁵ And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. ⁵⁶ Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, “What do you think—that He will not come to the feast?” ⁵⁷ Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him.

John writing 70 Years after – Hence why Verse 2 told Here

Verse 2 - John in the twelfth chapter will tell us about the anointing with ointment. John is writing years later (about 70 to 80 years later) and so as he is identifying her, he says, it’s that one who anointed Jesus with this costly perfume. Matthew’s gospel tells about it in the twenty-sixth chapter and how that Jesus said she had anointed Him for His burial. But we’ll get that in chapter twelve, the first part. The fact that John could write this verse here, but not go into the details until the next chapter, tells us how well known the story of Mary anointing Jesus with oil was to the Christian world; just as it says in Matthew 26, it would be a memorial, remembered by all about her.

Matthew 26:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.”

Jesus in Jordon – 20 miles from Bethany

Our last account in John 10 says that Jesus went to an area beyond the Jordon where John the Baptist had done his ministry. Where Jesus is in the Jordon, to Bethany where Lazarus is, is about 20 miles. An average days travel in that region was about 10 miles a day, but if you really push it, you could make it in a day. So hold that information in your mind as we read on.

John 11:3 Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, “Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.”

John 11:4 When Jesus heard that, He said, “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”

Notice Illness/Death in Same Phrase with Love / Part of Fallen World

Notice first and foremost, that we can read that death, illness, hardship can be mentioned in the same phrase with God's love. Hardship and handicap, are not God's judgment upon us. It is not our lack of faith, but they are part of this fallen world. Please refer to our study back in John 9 where we see that God doesn't create the "illness, tragedy", but that they come from living in a fallen world; God works in the midst of the tragedies of this fallen world, to reveal Himself to His creation, and show them this world is fading, it is empty, it is a vapor at best, but that He has a world beyond this world that is perfect, free of the fall, and free of sin. And the Gospel, that man enters into this perfect world through the "door" Jesus Christ, who removes the sin from us, so we can enter into the place (heaven) that is without sin. Can't enter heaven with our sin, it has to be washed clean from us, and that can only be done through Jesus and His sacrifice upon the cross to wash us and make us white as snow. Justified, Just-If-I-Never-Sinned.

John 10:9 (NKJV) ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

Isaiah 1:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

Romans 8:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Pain entered in with Sin / Depart when Sin Departs

Pain entered this world when sin enter this world through the fall of Adam. And, pain will depart from this world, when sin departs. That won't happen until God says enough, and wipes all sin from the world, which means all sinners too, and creates a new heaven and a new earth. He allows the pain to continue, because once He rids sin from the world (then the sinners too), it means the opportunity/offer to come to Him is over. Had He done that 23 years and 10 months ago, and a week, I would have missed that opportunity. Glad He didn't draw the line at 24 years, I would have missed heaven by 2 months. Glad it wasn't 10 years ago, or 5, or even a year, because some here today would have missed it too. But there will come a day we know not when, that He will. So today, if haven't settled the issue of sin that separates you from the Holy God, and the Lordship of Jesus Christ in your life, then today, for we know not what tomorrow may bring. Let Lazarus be an example, death did not come announced.

2 Corinthians 6:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ² For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Sickness not Unto Death – God will have a Purpose in It / Jeremiah 29

Verse 4 - This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

Jesus is saying (in verse 4) that death is not going to be the final issue. In reality, Lazarus was already dead. It is a day's journey, that is, if you really are moving from the area of the Jordan River on up to Jerusalem. Usually they took it in two days. They usually figured ten miles as a good day's journey. It's a little over twenty miles from the Jordan River up to Jerusalem. So if it took a day for the messenger to come down, Jesus waited two days before He began to go to Bethany, then a day for Jesus to get there..... this means that Lazarus was already dead. So, Jesus is saying, "This sickness is not unto death," meaning that death is not going to be the final issue. But there is a purpose in this. God has a purpose in this sickness. And the purpose is that God might be glorified and that the Son of God might be glorified through the sickness. God has a purpose for the things that happen in our lives. He doesn't operate apart from a purpose and a plan that He has for us. And God said through the prophet, "I know my thoughts concerning you. They are good, not evil, to bring you to an expected or desirable end" (Jeremiah 29:11). So Jesus is saying, there's a purpose for this.

Jeremiah 29:11–13 (NKJV) ¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. ¹² Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. ¹³ And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.

We Can't be Immune from the Fallen World

As much as we wish it to be so, we are not and cannot be immune from the fallen world because we are saved. As long as we are in this world, even though not of the world, we will suffer the ills of the fallen world. But,

remember, the rest of the world is not immune from it either, so then who is there for God to make the Light of the World, to the Lost and Dying world, other than you and me.

John 17:14–19 (NKJV) ¹⁴ I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. ¹⁸ As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

John 11:5 Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

Key to Whole Story – God Loved Lazarus / When in Doubt – Come to What you Know

The key to this whole story is verse five..... and Jesus loved Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. This will be the key to our whole story in that when we wonder what's he is doing, come back to what we know is the truth, he loves us, and he is doing something in our lives and in this world. We may not understand what he's doing, we may wonder why he seems so far away, but all the while it is on his heart and all the while he has a plan of what he's going to do, he just hasn't told us what is going to do at this point. Don't be surprised when God doesn't tell you the whole story, the whole plan and its purpose, and you feel that your left out of knowing everything that's going on.

Verse 3 Phileo / Jesus would stay with Them

The word for love in verse 3 that the sisters speak is the word “phileo”, it is the word for brotherly love. So, the word “lovest” there is the Greek word “phileo”. It's actually more of an emotional kind of a love that you have. Jesus loved him. He loved the family. It was a place where Jesus often would stay. He didn't have His own home. He didn't have His own bed but there was always the welcome mat out at the house of Martha and her sister, Mary and brother, Lazarus. And Jesus often when in Jerusalem would stay there with them.

Is Jesus Comfortable in Your Home

How comfortable is Jesus in your home? Do you make your house a home for Jesus to come and stay, fellowship, and feel at home?

Verse 5 Agape – Compared to – Verse 3 Phileo

But I want you to see something here and that is the word that is used for love in verse 5 is the word “agape” and it means unconditional love, love that is had regardless of the other person's response or action. Agape love is the love that Jesus has for Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. But the word sent to Jesus in verse 3 is brotherly love. As much time as Jesus spent with this family, they still hadn't recognized or understood, that yes Jesus loved the brotherly love aspect, He loved being with them, He felt at home with them (big statement considering heaven was His real home), but Jesus had more than brotherly love for them, He loved them unconditionally, regardless of anything they did. My point is that many people think Jesus is just friendly to them, He likes them, but they miss and don't recognize that He loves them “agape”, unconditionally, apart from anything they do, or don't do; apart from doing good, or not good, God loves you unconditionally. But, on the other side, many people know God doctrinally and theologically, yes He loves me unconditionally, even when I am not doing what I should, even when I am at my yuckiest, because “God is love”; but many people miss the “phileo” part, and that is that God not only loves you, He likes you, He likes being with you, He enjoys your company, He wants to be around you. God loves you, and God likes you. Go for walks with Him this week, sit and drink coffee with Him, talk to Him as a friend, a best friend, and as a lover, you when He said “I Do”, took you as His Bride, He meant all that comes with marriage (better – worse, sickness-health, good times – and bad, and the beauty of this marriage as we studied last week (in His hand), there is no “till death do us part”, as we will read conclusively in our passage today just like last chapter: *John 10:27–28 (NKJV)* ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

John 11:25–26 (NKJV) ²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. ²⁶ And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

John 11:6 So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was.

John 11:7 Then after this He said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.”

Lazarus Dead at this Point

Again, just doing the math, Lazarus is dead at this point.

John 11:8 The disciples said to Him, “Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?”

John 11:9 Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world.

John 11:10 But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.”

Jesus being Obedient / Not so – Lord

They say hey Jesus they want to kill you, are you sure we should be doing this. I believe Jesus is saying, no darkness can overtake me because I am in the will of the Father. Jesus did nothing apart from the Father as we have study, they are one in purpose and one in being, and Jesus waited two days because that was the plan between He and the Father. Jesus is obedient to the Father's will and what the Father would have him to do. He is fully submitted to the Father, and fully confident that the Father is in charge of His life. And so is the example for us as followers. In the OKJV, they say to Jesus, “Master”, They said master you can go down there they want to stone you. And how often we do that, we call him master which means Lord, which means above us, that He's all knowing and in control, and then we tell Him what he can and can't do. As Peter would say “not so Lord far be it Lord”, Jesus would say, “get behind thee”. You can't say to Jesus not so, and call him Lord. He's Lord and its yes and amen to all that he would say to us.

John 11:8 (KJV 1900) ⁸ His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

Matthew 16:22–23 (KJV 1900) ²² Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee. ²³ But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

Don't Live in Fear / Jesus is Invincible – So are You / Most Dangerous Place – Outside God's Will

Jesus is invincible until God says otherwise. And so too are you, until God says otherwise. I don't mean that to say to do foolish things, unless God told you to do the foolish things in accordance to what the world would think. But to not live knowing that we are in his hands as we studied it in chapter 10, and is to live in fear to question the actions that we take that are outside of a comfort zone. We are in his hands until he calls us home. I will say this is the safest place in the world is in God's will, and I would also say even the most comfortable place within the borders of the United States with great jobs and for security, could be the most dangerous place to live it's outside the will that God has called you to live.

Rick Deam

I love to tell the story about my friend Rick Deam, we went to Bible College together. Rick met Wes Bently who heads Far Reaching Ministries, and they train up and equip Chaplains who serve the army there in the Sudan. The Sudan you may or may not know has been in a civil war since 1983. There is an attempt for “ethnic cleansing” and many Christians are targeted, widows and orphans too. Wes tells the story of how he goes from church to church in the States and invite men to come and serve short-term there teaching the Chaplains the Bible. Wes said Rick and another man accepted his offer and came to the Sudan for short-term trip. Wes said on night one, as everyone bunked down in their tents, and then the evening gunfire began in the near distant. This is a war zone, they are only few miles from the front, and the gunfire begins, and some of it even draws very near to their camp site. Wes says he looks out and see the one man, with total fear and anxiety peaking from his tenting with his head ducked down. Wes said he knows that look well, “what did I get myself into”. Wes says he looks over at Rick's tent, and there he can see Rick laying there in his tent, gunfire going off, and there is Rick just laying there with his feet crossed, all relaxed, reading his Bible. Rick knew whose hands he was in, and He knew he was invincible until God said “mission accomplished”. Rick was an amazing brother, we will see him in heaven, as he went home to be with the Lord two years ago. Rick needed a liver transplant, due to a disease he had developed years before he gave his life to the Lord. When Rick's name came up for the transplant, he turned it down, he felt in his heart that the person behind him didn't know Jesus, and that person needed more time to live to meet Jesus, and Rick died shortly thereafter. He left behind a wife and son; he met his wife there in the Sudan. We as a church on a regular basis send a love offering to them as they continue on in the mission and ministry there in the Sudan.

Zoe life – When you Trust the Lord

You will live the zoe life, the abundant life, when you know and trust your life is in the Lord's hand. You will not be afraid to respond to His calling, His directing, when you know He holds your hand.

John 11:11 These things He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up."

John 11:12 Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well."

John 11:13 However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep.

John 11:14 Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead."

Why Risk – If Already Dead / How many Times we Think Something is Dead

Verse 14 why are we going if he's already dead they ask, why go and put your head out on the chopping block if he's already dead. How many times I always question the Lord that things already dead, why would I go and spend time investing in it, expending energy on it, when we already know that it's dead. Things that look dead to us are not always so. You go wherever God tells you to go even if that situation looks like it's dead, even if that marriage is so-called over, or that person has made a decision to walk away from Jesus, and said leave me alone. If God says go you go. Even something that looks dead beyond resurrection, you go because you never know what the Lord is going to do.

John 11:15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him."

John 11:16 Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him."

Gutsy Thomas

People like to always call Thomas doubting Thomas because he said he wouldn't believe Jesus rose from the dead unless he saw the nail prints; but Thomas expresses what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. He is willing to go with Jesus, even if it means dying with Him. How gutsy! Thomas may not have understood it at the time, but we can know today that if we die with Him we will surely be raised and be glorified with Him.

Church Tradition

Thomas, who is called the Twin: Church tradition says that Thomas was called "The Twin" because he looked like Jesus, putting him at special risk. If any among the disciples of Jesus were potential targets of persecution, it would be the one who looked like Jesus.

Who do You Look Like

Hey now, who do you look like? You remind people of Jesus, so don't be surprised when people are hostile or aggressive towards you.

John 11:17 So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days.

4 days

He had already been in the tomb four days: Why did He wait four days? Jesus did this in light of the Jewish superstition of that day that said a soul stays near the grave for three days, hoping to return to the body. Therefore, it was accepted that after four days there was absolutely no hope of resuscitation.

John 11:18 Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away.

John 11:19 And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

John 11:20 Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house.

John 11:21 Now Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

John 11:22 But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.”

Martha Comes

So it appears that Martha had heard Jesus was near, but Mary was in the house and had not yet heard.

Martha makes Statement of Faith

Some will say that Martha is upset, disappointed in Jesus for not being there in time to save her brother. I really don't see that because the next statement is basically (verse 22), “not thy will, but your will be done”. She says, but even not whatever You ask, it will be done! That is a statement of faith.

Greatest Statement of Faith – Let Your Will be Done

The greatest statement of faith we will ever make, is “Lord, let you will be done”. Even if that will isn't our will and hope.

I still believe – Even Though brother is Dead

Martha is saying to the Lord, “I still believe in You”, even in the midst of this pain.

May we Still Believe – Even in Pain

And may we like Martha, like many others before us, may we still believe even in the midst of pain and heartbreak. And, we can still believe, because this Gospel of John is true, and our Shepherd loves us, and holds us, and we know it is true, because He says it here in His Word, and the Scriptures cannot be broken we read last week:

John 10:35 (NKJV)³⁵ If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken),

And..... take comfort in verses 23-25

John 11:23 Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”

John 11:24 Martha said to Him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.

Our Theology Shape Our Lives

Our theology shapes our lives. Theo – God, ology – study, our study of God shapes our lives. A simple summation:

- Who is God?
- What does He think of me?
- What is His purpose for me on this earth?

All these questions are found right here in the book you hold in your hand. And the more you understand Who He is (the God who speaks and the world came into existence), the God who can't stop thinking about you, He agapes you and He phileo you, and He has a very specific purpose for your life, nothing is by chance. When you know and continually reinforce, remember, live out and experience these things, it will shape and direct your whole life, and it will be a zoe life.

Story of Bombing in Boston

From “The Deeper Life: Satisfying the 8 Vital Longings of Your Soul (by Daniel Henderson)

Tragedy has a way of testing the heart. It also has a way of revealing the truth. Because it's in the chaos of life's tragedies, and how you react to them, that you learn the truth about yourself: what you believe about God, what you believe about yourself, what really matters . . . life's deepest questions.

On a spectacular spring afternoon, Greg Haroutunian, his wife, and their three children stood along the finish line of the 2013 Boston Marathon, cheering on a friend who was racing to raise money for cancer research. Eagerly awaiting their friend's approach, they first heard what they thought was a cannon shot celebrating someone crossing the finish line. Seconds later, just fifteen yards away, directly across Boylston Street, a second bomb that had been placed in a pressure cooker exploded and sent the entire city, and country, into panic. In the minutes that followed, Greg's family witnessed front-row carnage, including the tragic death of an eight-year-old boy.

After the fire trucks and rescue teams arrived, the family made its way to the Boston subway. Rounding a corner, Greg spied a trash can on the street and understandably thought that it too could contain a bomb. Shielding his family as they passed by, he was suddenly overwhelmed with the assurance that their lives were in God's hands. The hours and days to follow were extremely tense for Greg and his family. We spoke on the phone one afternoon while their neighborhood was on lockdown as police went door to door looking for the remaining suspect who had orchestrated the crime.

Thankfully, in the months preceding this tragic experience, Greg had been part of a pastors' group I was leading through a process of clarifying some of the core questions of the soul. He had taken the time to write out his own personal theology statement. Reviewing the Scriptures he had memorized from his days with The Navigators and some of his favorite books on the character of God, Greg had written and memorized his answers to life's greatest questions.

And, on the afternoon after the bombing, Greg leaned heavily on these declarations, affirming himself again and again with what he had written:

- God is unchanging, good, faithful, holy, sovereign, almighty, gracious, condescending, merciful, loving, righteous, kind, the Father, the Lord, communicative, and worthy.
- Therefore, He will care for me, keep His promises, reveal himself, accomplish His desires, guard me, allow difficulties and trials, never give me more than I can bear, mold me into Christ's likeness.
- So, I will rest, trust, sacrifice, live with abandon, full tilt, be unashamed, confident, not self-conscious, cling to hope, embrace my humanity/weaknesses, care for others, never stop learning, growing, seeking to know more and express more of our awesome God to anyone who will listen.

Today, Greg recounts, "Having these realities memorized made the truth accessible. I was refreshed, rejuvenated, and lifted. The world literally blew up right in front of my face. But God did not blow up. . . . This very concrete, practical engagement with God's character through this process assured me that I was absolutely invincible until the Lord calls me home."

Greg has also articulated a biblical identity statement along with his written life purpose statement. He meditates on these truths each evening as he falls asleep and each morning as he awakens. "This whole process has been so empowering. It anchors me as I fade into sleep and gives me deep enthusiasm to start the day. I am able to find purpose in the midst of the chaos.

"Had I not gone through this exercise, it would have all been too big for me in the moment—too hard to try and gather some truth to hold onto. But it was immediately available when I needed it. Moments like these will come for all of us. For most people, it probably will not be a bomb. But in some way, we will all face times when we need God's truth close at hand."

[Henderson, D. \(2014\). *Deeper life, the: satisfying the 8 vital longings of your soul*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.](#)

7 "I AM" Statements

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1. I AM the Bread of Life (John 6:35)
2. I AM the Light of the World (John 8:12)
3. I Am the Door (John 10:9)
4. I AM the Good Shepherd. (John 10:11)
5. I AM the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25)
6. I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6)
7. I AM the Vine (John 15:5)

Exodus 3:13 / No Present Tense – No Past Tense – Existence Tense / The Becoming One

I am was a name for God in the Old Testament. God would come ... Remember, when Moses, the Lord met with him in the burning bush and Moses, and he commissions him and go to the children of Israel. Moses said, "What's your name?" Who should I say sent me? The Lord said, "I am that I am. I've always been, I am now, I always will be. In fact, there is no past tense, present tense with me. I am the self-existent one. I always live in the present tense." That's who sent you. Have fun explaining it to them. But it's the name for God, and Jesus seven times, through this Gospel He says, "I am. I am the way, the truth and the life. I am the good shepherd. I am the door" over and over again. What is He communicating? He is communicating, clearly understood by the Jewish mind, that He's divine, that He's to be understood as being divine.

In the Hebrew language, the words “I AM” can be translated to mean, “Becoming One”. God, Jesus, is saying I am the “Becoming One”, and I desire to become to you all that you need. I want to become to you your salvation, your peace, your truth, your life, your leading, your protector, your love, I want to, and I can, become all things you need. Beloved of God, what do you need Him to be to you today? He will be that to you, He has the ability to be that to you because He is God! Jesus is God, the Eternal One, who knows you by name and loves you! What do you need? Let Him become that to you today.

Exodus 3:13–15 (NKJV) ¹³ Then Moses said to God, “Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they say to me, ‘What is His name?’ what shall I say to them?” ¹⁴ And God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.” And He said, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, ‘I AM has sent me to you.’” ¹⁵ Moreover God said to Moses, “Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: ‘The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.’”

7 “I AM” Statements

So, my theology, I look to these seven statements as a continual reminder of who He is, what I mean to Him, and how I can live (and am to live), for any given situation in my life.

1. I AM the Bread of Life (John 6:35) – **when the world fails me, I am not moved by that because the world cannot and will not satisfy me.**
2. I AM the Light of the World (John 8:12) – **when I sit in darkness, depression, sadness, I know there is a Light that overcomes the darkness and when I flee to Him, think on Him, the darkness is overcome.**
3. I Am the Door (John 10:9) – **I can come in and I can go out in green pastures, I know which way to go because I go through Jesus.**
4. I AM the Good Shepherd. (John 10:11) – **I take continual comfort in knowing, The Good Shepherd loves me, and I am in His hands.**
5. I AM the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25) – **I have a solid bedrock to stand on when faced with tragedy.**
6. I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6) – **no confusion, no wondering about all the world’s challenges on how to get to God; it is real clear, and the case is settled, it is through the Great I AM who came to die for me.**
7. I AM the Vine (John 15:5) – **I can be fruitful, I need not evaluate myself and wonder if I have the abilities, I simply remember who I am attached to, and because of that I will produce much fruit.**

John 11:26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

John 11:27 She said to Him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

If you believe this yourself today, you can have eternal life.

Not Believe as in Exists

Jesus isn’t asking her do believe that I exist; that is obvious because He is standing right there in front of her. Martha knows exactly what He means when He asks this, because she says “yes I believe you are the Christ, the Son of God”. The word CHRIST—means anointed, the Greek translation of the Hebrew word rendered “Messiah”. The One who would come and save man from his sin that separates him from the holy God. What does it mean to believe? It is more than just a statement of I believe. Let me save you 4 years of seminary and boil it down. Believe means to Recognize, Repent, and Receive.

- Recognize – Recognize you sin offends and separates you from the Holy God.
- Repent – being willing to turn from your sin, and turn to follow God.
- Receive – to humble oneself and say Lord I need a Savior, come into my life and save me; Lord I give you my life.

*And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”
(John 11:26)*

End of Study

John 11:28-57

Recap Last Study

Today we are finishing up chapter 11, and then next week we beginning the final week of the life of Jesus. It has been an amazing journey for us, we have gleaned and learned so much of the heart of our Heavenly Father. For context of where we are in our passage, it is 4 months before the cross, Jesus is up in the Jordon area with His disciples and word of Lazarus (his friend) comes to Him that Lazarus is very sick, a sickness so severe it can kill, and as we see today it does. Jesus stayed two more days where He was at before coming, Lazarus died during this time, Jesus was met by Martha on His way, and now we pick it up here in verse 28 as the other sister (Mary) comes to Jesus.

The Zoe Life

What we continue to build on in our study today, and in our past 20+ studies, is God wants us to live an abundant life, and that isn't a prosperity doctrine. But a life that is beyond the life this world offers, a life that is a God-Life, the life God intends for us to live. When you live the life God intends for you to live, you will find it affect and abound every area of your life. Your marriage will be abundant, because you are living it as God intended it to be, not selfishly or worldly, your job will experience abundance (and I don't mean paychecks and promotions – although they may) but purpose and meaning as you see God has placed you there for a reason, your childrearing will be filled with abundance and joy as God leads and guide you. Every area of your life will be experience the “zoe life”, the abundant life, the life God intended us to live while here, because we are doing it God's way, and not our way. This whole book is written so that we may have eternal life (through Jesus) when we take our last breathe here on earth, and live a God life (through Jesus) while breathing on this earth.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Can't Live Zoe Life – If Fear Death and Tragedy

The importance of our passage today is, you and I will never live the zoe life, if we live in the shadow and fear of death and tragedies. God inserts this miracle not just to show He was God to the world, but that we might live free from the fear of death, tragedies, and hardships, so that we might know that He holds our lives in His hand, that every day of our life has a purpose in it, and even in death and hardship, He is working something glorious through it.

John 11:4 (NKJV) ⁴ When Jesus heard that, He said, “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”

Let's get a running start of where we left off last week.

John 11:20 Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house.

John 11:21 Now Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.

John 11:22 But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.”

Great Statement of Faith

What a great statement of faith, Lord even now whatever you choose to do, it shall be done. Martha not telling Jesus what to do, but rests in whatever He decides to do. As we said last week, the greatest statement of faith we can make as believers is to say, “not my will, but yours be done”.

John 11:23 Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”

John 11:24 Martha said to Him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.

John 11:26 And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

John 11:27 She said to Him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

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Now picking up where we left off in our last study.

John 11:28 And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, “The Teacher has come and is calling for you.”

John 11:29 As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to Him.

John 11:30 Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him.

John 11:31 Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, “She is going to the tomb to weep there.”

Mary was still in House

So Mary didn't know Jesus was in town. Martha got word first and ran out to Jesus. Now Mary is getting word via Martha. Mary wasn't sulking and mad at Jesus, thus why she was in the house, she just had not heard that Jesus had come.

Jews will believe – Following Mary

Notice, the Jews follow her. We will read later than many of them that followed her will become believers in Jesus [*John 11:45 \(NKJV\)*](#) ⁴⁵ *Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him.*

They followed Mary – Not Jesus

These people who were at the house mourning with Mary, were not friends of Jesus at this point, they did not believe Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God at this time, but in a few verses after Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead, we read they became believers. Here is what we want to see here in this passage, and that is that these people didn't go out to meet Jesus, to follow Jesus who was in town, they find Jesus when they followed Mary. They didn't seek Jesus, they followed Mary. Do you see how that works, in that many people in our lives don't set out to seek Jesus, they “happen if you will” to find Jesus as they follow you though your life. A hardship, a death, an illness, comes upon you and they come to comfort and be with, and then somewhere along the line God reveals Himself to them, through your tragedy that opens their eyes up to who He is.

[*John 11:4 \(NKJV\)*](#) ⁴ *When Jesus heard that, He said, “This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”*

Russ Sterger Mother

I remember a dear brother in Bible College whose mother was dying of a cruel cancer, a cancer so harsh she had to live out her final months in a hospital bed. But filled with the Holy Spirit this godly woman was, embracing the hardship through tremendous pain, every person who came to her room she would say, if you have come to see me you have come to see my Jesus, and before she went home to be with the Lord she lead 10 staffers to the Lord.

John 11:32 Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

Mary always at Feet of Jesus

Each time we see Mary in the scriptures, she is at the feet of Jesus. Mary loves being at Jesus feet, the place of comfort and acceptance. How she would have longed to sit at His feet, leaning against the warmth of His body, feeling the touch of His hand upon her shoulder, during this time of suffering.

Luke 10:38–39 (NKJV) ³⁸ Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. ³⁹ And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.

John 12:3 (NKJV) ³ Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

Thors Walden Sculpture

I once read about a life-sized granite sculpture of Jesus by a Danish artist named Thors Walden. Walden sculpted the body of Christ in such a way that you can't see His face from a standing position. Next to the statue, however, is a sign that reads, "If you want to see the face of Jesus, you must sit at His feet." Sure enough, if you get down at the foot of the statue, you can look up and clearly see the face of Jesus. There is a great spiritual truth here. If you want to see the face of Jesus, you must sit at His feet.

Same Words as Her Sister

Verse 32 - "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." – We have heard these exact words only a few verses ago, as Martha said these exact words. The sister had been talking, and they both believed the same thing. They have been talking, it was a conversation they had had together no doubt. I think there is great power in us speaking the same words about the Lord to each other in our hard times, and good times, as we remind ourselves of how mighty our God is. Parents speak your word continually in your home among your children, don't wait until family devotional, but as often as the Lord leads and opens the door to do so, for the Word will not return void.

John 11:20–22 (NKJV) ²⁰ Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. ²¹ Now Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. ²² But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You."

Isaiah 55:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from heaven, And do not return there, But water the earth, And make it bring forth and bud, That it may give seed to the sower And bread to the eater, ¹¹ So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, But it shall accomplish what I please, And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

Speak Word in Hard Time / Larry Taylor

May we speak the words, the remembrance of His might and love, when hard times fall. Not quoting for information, but inspiration, as the Word becomes the very touch of Jesus. I am reminded of my friend Larry Taylor, after he lost his son at an early age in a sudden death. He told me he and his wife that night after they came home from the hospital, they had nothing left in them, every ounce was drained from their bodies, and they hit the wall in their bedroom, slide down to the ground, and laid there with their heart ripped out of them. Then one of them, quoted a Psalm, and then the other would quote another Psalm, and he said they did that all through the night, until morning break, hours of quoting the promises of God's love and acceptance, and then they got up off the floor, and faced the day. Speak the word to each other when hard times fall, not as information, but inspiration, as the Word becomes the very touch of God in the midst of your hard time.

Surround Yourself with People who Speak same Words of Faith

Also it is just good application for ourselves to surround ourselves with people who speak the same words of faith as we do. I have chosen, as much as possible, to establish relationships with people who speak words of faith, who rejoice in the Lord, who give thanks in everything because that's the language I want to speak. I don't want to be one who is cynical, one who doubts, one who complains, murmurs, or is grumpy. This doesn't mean we shouldn't minister to those people and bear their burdens. But in establishing long-lasting relationships, I encourage you to be with those who speak faith, who love God, who trust the Lord. Spend time with people who will take you a

notch higher, because if you don't—if your closest friends are those who are always questioning and doubting and grumbling—their language will sooner or later flow from your lips as well.

John 11:33 Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled.

John 11:34 And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see."

John 11:35 Jesus wept.

If Ever Wonder Where He Is – He is Weeping & Groaning / In Every Miracle – Jesus Teaches

Jesus weeps and groans. If you ever wonder where Jesus is when you are going through hardship, tragedies, this passage gives us insight into where He is, He is weeping and groaning for you and the situation. In every miracle, Jesus uses it as an illustration to teach us a spiritual truth, and in this case He wants you to know that when you hurt, He is hurting. Look at the emotions pouring forth from the heart of God, weeping and groaning.

Groan – to Snort / Lots of Emotions Going On in this Story

This word 'groan' means to "snort like a horse", and some say Jesus was mad at them for their unbelief. No, that is out of context, for we see that Jesus groaned in the spirit, not outwardly physically. And, Jesus was weeping. To weep and be mad, well that is just an odd pairing, so not sure where they come up with that Jesus is mad. What is happening here, regardless the position one takes on the meaning of the word groan, is a deep-deep emotional response to Jesus seeing all the people weeping and wailing for Lazarus. The word for weeping in verse 33 that Mary was doing literally means "to bawl". There is much emotion going on in this scene. Verse 35, Jesus wept. It isn't the loud bawling that Mary was weeping, but it a softer cry, but it is clearly a crying with tears.

If Jesus is Angry – It is at Sin / Look at Today's Newspaper – Come Jesus / Looking at Holiday – Glad Another Day

If Jesus is groaning in anger, then I would say based on the whole picture of the scene, it is the anger and heartache that the fallen world produces; and Jesus' heart is troubled to watch His loved ones suffer in it. When I watch what is going on as crazed gunman kill 140 children in Pakistan, my heart becomes troubled, even to anger. When I see people lose it all in earthquakes, even to point of death, I groan. When I read of the 4 year old autistic boy who wandered away from his grandma's house Christmas Eve, and was found the next day in the pond, my heart groans, I become angered at this fallen world, I want to see Jesus come back today. But then as I come into the holiday season, and see so many people who don't know Him, are caught up in one thing, themselves, my heart grieves and I am thankful that there was another day given to tell them there is One who loves you, died for your sin, and is offering you forgiveness of sin and eternity with Him if you will receive Him as Lord and Savior. My heart is torn, and I am still in this sinful body, I can't imagine what a Holy God feels!

Not Fiery Prophet – But God who Hurts for the Hurting

Not a fiery prophet, a doom and gloom God, but a God who weeps and hurts when His loved ones hurt. When you hurt, God is hurting. He is the God that catches every one of our tears and puts them in a bottle, and He records them in a book. Every tear gets recorded; I think it is His prayer journal. He catches them, for He is continually thinking of us (Psalm 139), we are not some number, some distant far off thought, but personal and intimate to Him. And when we pray to Him, Lord our brother is sick, that is captured and stored in heaven also, and burned before Him as incense, the smell always being a reminder to Him, those who you love are hurting. You are never alone in your suffering, in your hurting, in your pain. God loves you, and you are dear to His heart. If you hurt today, you are not alone, God is with you.

Psalm 56:8 (NKJV) ⁸ You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?

Psalm 139:17–18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! ¹⁸ If I should count them, they would be more in number than the sand; When I awake, I am still with You.

Revelation 8:4 (NKJV) ⁴ And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand.

Where is He

Where is He when you hurt? He is groaning, and He is weeping.

John 11:36 Then the Jews said, “See how He loved him!”

John 11:37 And some of them said, “Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?”

My Interpretation – If He is a God of Love, Why did He allow This

My interpretation of these two verses, the people are saying, if He is a God of love then why did He allow this to happen to Lazarus”. If Lazarus is so special to Him, if they are so friendly together, as Lazarus and his family serve Jesus, witness about Jesus, then why did Jesus allow this? As we have studied, we live in a fallen world.

Remember Verse 5 – Jesus Loved him

Remember verse 5 that Jesus loved Lazarus; know that love and sickness can coincide together, love and handicap, love and suffering, all can coincide together. God loves you, and your sickness, your suffering, your hardship is not because He is distant, uncaring, or judging you. Your hardship is the result of living in fallen world.

John 11:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.

Greg Laurie

Pastor Greg Laurie of Harvest Christian Fellowship, and Harvest Crusades, has preached to over 2 million people. Has dedicated and sacrificed for the sake of the gospel. His oldest son (Christopher – only 33 years old), out of the blue, died in a car wreck on the way to the church one morning. Devastating heartbreak to all. You would think, Greg has been so faithful, 40 years of ministry, some 20,000 people a week come to the church he pastors, the boldness to stand before hundreds of thousands and preach a pure and un-watered down Gospel; you would think God would not allow such pains into Greg’s life, but He did. And I remember Greg’s first sermon he preached after the death of his son, he said “I still believe!”

Preach to Hurting

But I remember his other words, and I keep them close to my heart and mind:

Preach to the hurting, you will never lack an audience – Greg Laurie.

John 11:38 Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it.

It was a Cave – Not a Box / Jesus buried in the Same

So we can clearly see Lazarus was buried in a cave, not placed in a box. Jesus will be buried in a cave. These tombs were made by chiseling out the stone on hillside. They were pretty much only for the wealthy. These tombs would be the burial tomb for a family, from generation to generation. After about 2 years, the body would decompose down to just bones, and then from there they would place the bones into a small box or jar. You have several generations in one tomb. Jesus was buried in a tomb just as this, but it was Joseph of Arimathea’s family tomb (which was new and never used before Jesus). When they asked Joseph why he would give up his tomb to a non-family member, he said it’s no problem, it’s only for 3 day.

Matthew 27:59–60 (NKJV) ⁵⁹ When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰ and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed.

Beethoven’s Grave

I heard recently they uncovered Beethoven’s grave, and when they entered it there he was in there with all his sheet music and an eraser, and he was erasing all his music. They said Beethoven what are you doing, and he said “decomposing”. Anyhoo.

Cave – Stone Rolled Over It

So after the tomb was carved out, they would roll a huge stone over the entrance to close it, and to keep animals from going into it.

John 11:39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days."

OKJV – Stinkth

I like the OKJV, it reads "he stinketh". Sometimes you just can't beat the OKJV translations.

John 11:39 (KJV 1900) ³⁹ Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.

Jesus waited 4 Days

Jesus had waited 4 days, because in the Jewish culture, they believed that the spirit would hover over the body for 3 days before departing to its eternal destination.

4 days – Body is Dead

So, four days in an airless tomb, the person is dead, even if they were put in there alive. Same after 3 days!

John 11:40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?"

Jesus Reminds Martha of His Words / But..... Prerequisite is – Roll Away the Stone

Jesus reminds Martha of the words that He had spoken to her previously, you will see the glory of God!. We need to be reminded of God's word, His promises he gives us, else we would so often just quit. No doubt in that hot climate, the body of Lazarus took on a distinct odor. That is why Martha said, "Lord, just let it be. Don't ask me to roll away the stone. It stinks." The same is true of you and me. The Lord wants to do something in our lives. But before He does, oftentimes He'll say, "Roll away the stone. Expose the problem. Let Me have total access to the situation." "Oh, Lord, not that," we say. "Do we have to deal with that? I'm embarrassed about it. I'm ashamed of it. It stinks." The Lord said, "I gave you a promise, Martha. But here's the prerequisite: Roll away the stone." Do you think Jesus could have rolled away the stone Himself? Later on, He did—His own stone. But here He says to Martha, just as He says to me, "The promise is given, but here's the prerequisite: Roll away the stone. Even though what's inside stinks, let Me deal with it."

John 11:41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.

John 11:42 And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me."

Prays for the People Sake

Jesus is going to pray publically, not for His sake, but for the people's sake, so they can hear what He and the Father are going to do together. One of the greatest attacks the religious leaders want to tear down is that Jesus and the Father are not one, and that Jesus acted on His on behalf, and was not tied to the Father, not in one with the Father, and ultimately therefore was not sent by the Father. By Jesus praying to the Father and then the miracle happening, is proof and confirmation that Jesus and the Father are one, and were in unity on all that was done..... and ultimately that would include the cross.

Same True for You Today

And, the same is still true today, as the Father and the Son are in perfect accord together, and their heart is to bring us home into their arms.

John 11:43 Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!”

Lazarus by Name

Jesus had to address Lazarus by name lest everyone in the cemetery came forth. And, for everyone who says what Martha said, He will call you by name and when you breathe your last here on earth, you will take your first breath in heaven before Him.

John 11:23–27 (NKJV) ²³ Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” ²⁴ Martha said to Him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” ²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. ²⁶ And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” ²⁷ She said to Him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

Take Note – Lazarus is Dead, but Still Exist

Important for all to take note of, especially if you have not settled in your heart who Jesus is, and that is that Lazarus is dead, but he still exist, he still answers to his name. Lazarus is separated from his body, but his soul/spirit still exists and responds to his name. Death of the body is not the end, as the soul/spirit goes on into the eternal realm.

Jesus calls Lazarus back into his Body

When Jesus calls Lazarus, He isn't just calling his body, but first He calls the spirit back into the body, and then the body responds after.

John 11:44 And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with graveclothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, “Loose him, and let him go.”

4 days Body is a Mess

Article (by Katherine Butler – Feb 25, 2013): Nature isn't kind to the human body after death. Thankfully, the days of natural decomposition have been replaced by decidedly modern rituals of death. We can choose to delay the decomposition process by being embalmed, where our bodily fluids are replaced with preservatives. Or we can be cremated, where we are cooked at temperatures as high as 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit for several hours while we turn to ash. While our modern disposal rituals might not sound appealing, the process of nature composting us back into the Earth is even less so.

So what happens during decomposition? Here are five weird ways our bodies deconstruct after death.

1. *Your cells burst open.* The process in which the human body decomposes starts just minutes after death. When the heart stops beating, we experience algor mortis, or the “death chill,” when the temperature of the body falls about 1.5 degrees Fahrenheit an hour until it reaches room temperature. Almost immediately, the blood becomes more acidic as carbon dioxide builds up. This causes cells to split open, emptying enzymes into the tissues, which start to digest themselves from within.
2. *You turn white — and purple.* Gravity makes its mark on the human body in the first moments after death. While the rest of your body turns deathly pale, heavy red blood cells move to the parts of your body that are closest to the ground. This is because circulation has stopped. The results are purple splotches over your lower parts known as livor mortis. In fact, it is by studying the markings of livor mortis that the coroner can tell exactly what time you died.
3. *Calcium makes your muscles contract.* We've all heard of rigor mortis, in which a dead body becomes stiff and hard to move. Rigor mortis generally sets in about three to four hours after death, peaks at 12 hours, and dissipates after 48 hours. Why does it happen? There are pumps in the membranes of our muscle cells that regulate calcium. When the pumps stop working in death, calcium floods the cells, causing the muscles to contract and stiffen. Thus, there is rigor mortis.
4. *Your organs will digest themselves.* Putrefaction, or when our bodies start to look like extras in a zombie movie, follows rigor mortis. This phase is delayed by the embalming process, but eventually the body will succumb. Enzymes in the pancreas make the organ begin to digest itself. Microbes will tag-team these enzymes, turning the body green from the belly onwards. As Caroline Williams writes in NewScientist, “the main beneficiaries are among the 100 trillion bacteria that have spent their lives living in harmony

with us in our guts.” As this bacterium breaks us down, it releases putrescine and cadaverine, which are the compounds which make the human body smell in death.

5. *You may be covered in a wax.* After putrefaction, decay moves quickly to turn the body into a skeleton. However, some bodies take an interesting turn on the way. If a body comes into contact with cold soil or water, it may develop adipocere, a fatty, waxy material formed from the bacteria breaking down tissue. Adipocere works as a natural preservative on the inner organs. It can mislead investigators into thinking a body died much sooner than it actually did, as was the case of a 300-year-old adipocere corpse recently found in Switzerland.

In the end, we all return to the Earth: it’s just a matter of how. But whether it’s by composting or the fires of cremation, we all turn to dust and ash — and in some cases, wax.

Read more: <http://www.mnn.com/health/fitness-well-being/stories/5-weird-things-that-happen-after-you-die#ixzz3N6SGagsO>

Jesus gives us New Life the Moment we Respond to the Call / Zoe Life

What is my point of this gory detail besides making the point Lazarus is dead? I see the miracle of when the Son sets us free. The instant Jesus calls us, touches us, are dead sinful bodies are regenerated. He gives us “new life”, He takes a spiritually dead body, and gives us new life.....zoe life, an abundant life, a life beyond anything this world has to offer, a God life as we life with God on this earth.

Son Sets Free – Restore Years Locust have Eaten

For who the Son sets free, is free indeed. God has promised us to restore the years the locust has eaten. What He means by that is that even all the years that we may have wasted and been destroyed by sin, God can restore and give you a glorious future. Your last days, regardless of time span, can be greater than all the days combined before now.

John 8:36 (NKJV) ³⁶ *Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.*

Joel 2:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ *“So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, The crawling locust, The consuming locust, And the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you.*

Roll Away the Stone and Live

Listen precious person, if Jesus has touched you, you are now free to live beyond the grave, the old life. Don’t stay in your tomb, come out like Lazarus did. Lazarus didn’t wave from the grave, saying yes indeed it is true, I am alive, but now I am just going to stay in. Lazarus walked out of the grave, and lived again. Precious saint, you have heard the calling of Jesus, now roll away the stone and live! You are not bound to that old life, that dead life, you are a new creation, a new man, and the old man is dead, so go live like it. Nothing that once entombed you need hold you ever again! You are free because the Son has set you free, so roll away the stone and live.

Romans 6:5–11 (NKJV) ⁵ *For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,* ⁶ *knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.* ⁷ *For he who has died has been freed from sin.* ⁸ *Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,* ⁹ *knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.* ¹⁰ *For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.* ¹¹ *Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Stone Rolled to See in – Jesus is not there

The stone on the tomb of Jesus was not rolled away so He could get out, He can walk through walls we see in the scripture, the stone was rolled away so we (man) could look in and see that He was not there. He had overcome death, which therefore means He had overcome sin because that is what sent Him to the grave in the first place. Jesus overcame sin and death, and the empty tomb says come in and see it and believe it. I have new life, and so too will you! So for us, wherever you are at today in your walk, roll away the stone and live! Walk out of the tomb you are in, leave the old grave clothes behind, and walk fully in the newness of life.

John 11:45 Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him.

Believe because followed Mary

They believed because they followed Mary out to the grave, and it was there they saw the glory of God. Through Mary’s tragedy, they were brought to see the glory of God. So too God may do the same through your life.

John 11:46 But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did.

John 11:47 Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, “What shall we do? For this Man works many signs.

John 11:48 If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.”

Reason they won't Follow – Because Lose their Position

Here is a summation, of why the religious leaders want to see Jesus dead, and that is because if everyone follows Him, they will lose their position of honor that so love. They love the praises of men, they love people esteeming them as so holy and righteous, so religious. But here Jesus is bringing a message that blows them up, and that is that all can be righteous and favored of the Lord, by simply believing the way Martha did (Recognize – Repent – Receive). Not religious piety, but by yield their life to Jesus.

People won't believe Today

People won't believe today for the same reason. They don't want to lose their position, whatever that may look like in their lives.

- Some think it is weakness to say I need Jesus.
- Some it is appalling that they would be a sinner just like any other person, they feel too proud to associate themselves with other sinners. They say yes I am a sinner, but nothing life so-and-so over there, wow they are offensive. But see, God doesn't rank sin, He is so holy that every sin is an offense to Him. So if you think you are a less sinner than the next guy, you deceive yourself.
- And, for all, they just love their sin, whether it is a sin of the skin that they physically participate in, or the sin under the skin like pride, they love their sin and don't want to give it up.

John 3:16–21 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. ¹⁸ “He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”

John 11:49 And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all,

John 11:50 nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish.”

John 11:51 Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation,

John 11:52 and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.

God Honors His Word

So wealthy did Annas, the high priest, become from the money-making schemes that surrounded the temple, to avoid a conflict of interest, he appointed his son-in-law, Caiaphas, to serve as high priest. From his office of high priest, Caiaphas spoke more profoundly than he could possibly have known when he said, “It's prudent that one man dies in order that the whole nation might live.” Little did Caiaphas know that what he said was inspired by the Spirit. This shows me something about our Lord. God can use anyone to speak His heart, to reveal His truth. Caiaphas was a loser, a charlatan, a fleecer. Yet the Spirit still inspired him at this moment to speak truth. Just as Caiaphas prophesied, one Man did indeed die—not only for the nation, but for the sins of all men. God can use a Caiaphas; God can use a donkey (Numbers 22), a neighbor, a professor, or any other voice He chooses to speak truth. Be wary of the mind-set that thinks if a person isn't born-again, he cannot speak truth. God can use anyone.

John 11:53 Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death.

John 11:54 Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples.

John 11:55 And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves.

John 11:56 Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, "What do you think—that He will not come to the feast?"

John 11:57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him.

Plot and Scheme

Verse 53 – from this day forward – they will plot and scheme.

We enter the Final Week

Verse 55 – the Passover of the Jews was near – we have jumped about 4 months from verse 53 to 55, and we enter into the final week of the life of Jesus. The final week, that He would live for us.

Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

We Pick up here Next Week

So we will pick it up here next week, the final week of Jesus, as we start our march towards the cross. My how He loves us.

Miracle – Even when all Seems Hopeless / Words to Stand On in Hard Times

This miracle, these miracles, this Gospel, is written so that we might believe..... even when all seems lost, all seems hopeless. We are given these words so we might commit these truths into our heart, and have words to stand on when the hard times comes.

Billy Graham and Albert Einstein

Let me close with this story. In January, 2000, leaders in Charlotte, North Carolina, invited their favorite son, Billy Graham, to a luncheon in his honor. Billy initially hesitated to accept the invitation because of his struggle with Parkinson's disease - he was 86-years old. But the Charlotte civic leaders replied, "We don't expect a major address. Just come and let us honor you." So he agreed. After wonderful things were said about him, Dr. Graham stepped to the rostrum, looked at the crowd and said, "I'm reminded today of Albert Einstein, the great physicist, who, this month has been honored by Time magazine as the Man of the Century." "Einstein was once traveling from Princeton on a train, when the conductor came down the aisle, punching the tickets of each passenger. When he came to Einstein's row, Einstein reached into his vest pocket. He couldn't find his ticket, so he reached into other pockets. It wasn't in any of them, so he looked into his briefcase, but could not find it. Then he searched the empty seat next to him. He could not find the ticket." "The conductor said, 'Dr. Einstein, I know who you are. We all know who you are. I'm certain you bought a ticket. Don't worry about it.' Einstein nodded appreciatively. The conductor continued down the aisle punching tickets. As he was ready to move to the next car, he turned around and saw that the great physicist was down on his hands and knees, looking under his seat for the ticket." The conductor rushed back and said, 'Dr. Einstein, Dr. Einstein, don't worry, I know who you are. No problem. You don't need a ticket. I'm sure you bought one.'" "Einstein looked at him and said, 'Young man, I too, know who I am. What I don't know is where I'm going.'" "Having said that, Billy Graham continued, 'See the suit I'm wearing? It's a brand new suit. My wife, my children and my grandchildren were telling me I've gotten a little slovenly in my old age. I used to be a bit more fastidious. So I went out and bought a new suit for this luncheon and one more occasion. You know what that occasion is? This is the suit in which I'll be buried.'" "But when you hear I'm dead, I don't want you to immediately remember the suit I'm wearing. I want you to remember this: I not only know who I am, I also know where I'm going.

New Year – Where will you Go

Next week is the New Year, great opportunity to draw a line and say “new start”, and so the question is where will you be going in the New Year? If you are His, then how about absolute Zoe Life? If you have not settled who Jesus is, then how about today make that decision final, and then leave the grave and go live a Zoe Life.

The Center of this Story is this – Do you Believe?

The center of this chapter is pretty much right in the middle, and it is the question for you, do you believe this?

John 11:23–27 (NKJV) ²³ Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.” ²⁴ Martha said to Him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” ²⁵ Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. ²⁶ And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?” ²⁷ She said to Him, “Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world.”

Jesus isn't asking her do believe that I exist; that is obvious because He is standing right there in front of her. Martha knows exactly what He means when He asks this, because she says “yes I believe you are the Christ, the Son of God”. The word CHRIST—means anointed, the Greek translation of the Hebrew word rendered “Messiah”. The One who would come and save man from his sin that separates him from the holy God. What does it mean to believe? It is more than just a statement of I believe. Let me save you 4 years of seminary and boil it down. Believe means to Recognize, Repent, and Receive.

- Recognize – Recognize you sin offends and separates you from the Holy God.
- Repent – being willing to turn from your sin, and turn to follow God.
- Receive – to humble oneself and say Lord I need a Savior, come into my life and save me; Lord I give you my life.

So.....do you believe this?

End of Study

Chapter 12

John 12:1-2

Starts with “Then”

Today, we start the chapter off with the word “then” (Then, six days before the Passover). The word “then”, meaning “these things being so”. All that we have read over the last 6 months, (and may I commend you for being such good students of the word), all these things being so, all the miracles, all the teachings, all the acts of love, all the truths told, all the things Jesus had done, now it is time for what He ultimately came to do, what we read way back at the beginning, to be the “Lamb of God” who would take away the sins of the world. We are in the final week in the life of Jesus on earth.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*

Great Demonstration of Worship

Today we read, quite possibly, the great demonstration of worship ever seen in the Bible, and let’s allow the Lord to speak to us and show us great and mighty things that we have never seen before.

John 12:1–11 (NKJV) ¹ Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. ² There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. ³ Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. ⁴ But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, who would betray Him, said, ⁵ “Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?” ⁶ This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it. ⁷ But Jesus said, “Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. ⁸ For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always.” ⁹ Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus’ sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, ¹¹ because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

Bible Cross-Reference

This account is also found in:

- Matthew 26:6-13
- Mark 14:3-9

Please be reminded, that Mark’s and Matthew’s gospel is not in chronological order. If you forget that, or someone challenges you about contradiction, you could find yourself tripped up. You will find this account in them, but they are not in chronological order, they are inserted to develop the reason why Judas will betray Jesus, and one of the reasons is because he is money-hungry, as we see in this story.

Matthew 26:6–13 (NKJV) ⁶ *And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, ⁷ a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. ⁸ But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, “Why this waste? ⁹ For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor.” ¹⁰ But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, “Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. ¹¹ For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always. ¹² For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did it for My burial. ¹³ Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.”*

Mark 14:3–9 (NKJV) ³ *And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head. ⁴ But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, “Why was this fragrant oil wasted? ⁵ For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor.” And they criticized her sharply. ⁶ But Jesus said, “Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. ⁷ For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always. ⁸ She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. ⁹ Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.”*

Not to be Confused with Luke 7 (Sinful woman Kissing Jesus’ Feet)

Now this is not to be confused with the anointing of Jesus by the sinful woman when He was at the house of a Pharisee whose name was Simon. The woman came up and she stood at His feet and her tears falling upon His feet, she wiped them with her hair and then she anointed His feet with perfume. You remember Simon the

Pharisee said, If this man were really a prophet, He would have done something about that because the woman is a sinner. He wouldn't let her touch Him. But Jesus, demonstrating to Simon His knowledge of her, and yet His willingness to let her touch Him, He said, Simon, I have something to ask of you. He said, Go ahead. And Jesus said, There was a certain man that had two servants. One owed him a thousand dollars, the other owed him fifty dollars. He forgave both of them their debts. Which one loved him the more? Oh I suppose the one he forgave the more. Jesus said, That's right. Then He started to rebuke him. He said, But I came to your house, you didn't kiss Me, which was the custom, the oriental greeting. You didn't wash My feet. But this woman has kissed My feet. She has washed them with her tears. She has put the perfume on them. Now I say to you, Her sins which are many are forgiven (Luke 7:36-47). So this is not that Mary. This is a different, we don't know that woman's name. But this is the Mary who just before the crucifixion of Jesus, just a short while before, anointed His feet. And then she, of course, poured the perfume on His head and wiped His feet with her hair. John identifies her, we'll get that in the twelfth chapter. Part of the confusion comes because in Matthew and Mark's account (that we read here in John 12), Mary is simply called "a woman"; the reason being is that John wrote his account anywhere from 50-70 years later. Mark and Matthew was written much earlier, and there was great persecution against the church at this time, and thus they would have left Mary's name out to protect her from being attacked by the Jews.

Luke 7:36-39 (NKJV) ³⁶ Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. ³⁷ And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, ³⁸ and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. ³⁹ Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."

John 12:1 Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead.

Then,

Then - These Things Being So

Then, these things being so, for the joy that was set before Him..... begins His final march towards the cross, for you, and for me. Beloved, how about we do this, this New Year, let's rest in that He is for us, that He loves us to the point that He would go to the cross for us (and count it joy). Let's settle that, and rest in that, and know that, that nothing can separate us from the love of the Lord, and so we are free to live abundantly, live this God life, this zoe life, this life beyond what this world has to offer, and lets lay aside these things that ensnare, trip us, weigh us down, and lets put the sails up and catch the wind of His Holy Spirit, and live this year full on for Him.

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

six days before the Passover,

Passover on the 14th of Nissan

In the Jewish calendar, the Passover is on the 14th of Nissan. So six days before would make it the 9th of Nissan.

Exodus 12:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

Jesus' 3rd Passover (chp 2 – 6 – 12) / 3.5 years Public Ministry / Key Pieces for Daniel Prophecy / 600 Yrs Prior

This is Jesus' third Passover. In the 2nd chapter of John's Gospel and in the 6th chapter of John's Gospel and now in the 12th chapter of John's Gospel, John has spoken to us about this Passover. Passover was this annual celebration of the Jewish people celebrating their deliverance from Egypt. And what that tells us is that Jesus' public ministry, according to John, went through three successive Passovers, and that's how we know that Jesus' ministry lasted three years, because of these three annual feasts that sort of mark each of the three years of his particular work. These little inserts have even a greater meaning when we study the prophecy of Daniel 9, which gives the exact day that day when the Messiah would come to the Nation Israel. Daniel 9 was written about 600 years before Jesus would come. We will cover that in a future study.

It is Saturday the 9th of Nissan / 3 Nights in the Tomb

The day we read of here is Saturday, it is the 9th of Nissan on the Jewish calendar. For Jesus spend three days and three nights in the tomb he had to be buried on Thursday. I don't want to start a church split over it, as Good Friday has become so accepted in our culture, but so has Christmas being December 25, which has no biblical backing. But 3 nights (Thursday night, Friday night, and Saturday night) equals 3 nights. We will explain that more when we cover the prophecy of Daniel 9 in a future study.

Matthew 12:40 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Jesus came to Bethany,

Bethany 2 Miles Away from Jerusalem / Where they Plot to Kill Him

Bethany is two miles away from Jerusalem. So here Jesus is in Bethany having dinner with friends and those who loved Him, and just two miles away in Jerusalem a group plotting on how they will kill Him (as we read in chapter 11 last week).

John 11:53–57 (NKJV) ⁵³ Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death. ⁵⁴ Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples. ⁵⁵ And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. ⁵⁶ Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, "What do you think—that He will not come to the feast?" ⁵⁷ Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him.

Home of Simon the Leper / Lepers Homes Destroyed – God is able to Restore

This was the home of Simon the Leper we read in other accounts. It is powerful to note that when a person was diagnosed with leprosy, his home would be demolished so no one else would live in it. Here Simon has a home again, and we see that God is able to restore what the locust have eaten,

Mark 14:3 (NKJV) ³ And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head.

Joel 2:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ "So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, The crawling locust, The consuming locust, And the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you.

Simon Leper not a Slur / Testimony of God's Miracle

Now, leprosy was a dreadful disease, and people at that time thought it was a result of a person's sin (be it there sin or their parents sin), but we know that is not the case. So referencing the leprosy to Simon is not a continually reminder of a past sin, but the testimony of God's miracle in his life. And so really we see two amazing miracles sitting here at this supper, Simon and Lazarus). God is so good, His loving is amazing, and back to the wiping away of sin, God doesn't record our sin, have it as part of our life forever, it is wiped away and buried in the ocean with a "no fishing" sign next to it. I am thankful for that, else people would be saying, yea I had dinner over Ray's house last night, you know "Ray the liar", or after church we are going bicycling with "Bob the drunkard". It is now, Ray the Redeemed, and Bob whose been Born-again. So Simon who had been a leper and Lazarus who had been dead.

where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead.

Someday the Same will be said of Us

Someday, for all you who have received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, it will be said of you, he/she who had been dead, whom He/Jesus raised from the dead. That is what we are living to, the resurrection and new life.

John 12:2 There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him.

There they made Him a supper;

Supper was for Him / Today we will take Communion

Notice the capital "H", for Him, as this supper is for Jesus. We will have supper with Him today to start off the New Year, and that supper will be "communion".

and Martha served,

Martha serves with Love / She Pouring herself out – Just like Mary will

Little problem here in that six days before the Passover would've been Saturday, therefore it was a Sabbath day, the Martha served. It could be challenged that Martha is breaking the Sabbath, and Jesus is allowing it. But see this is not work for Martha, this is a labor of love. People like to attack Martha say she worked when she should've been sitting, and there's definitely a truth there, but when there's a labor of love and when a person loves to pour themselves out on to others, it's not work at all, it's a joy there's no sweat, it's nothing but sweet fragrance of love. Mary will pour out a fragrance upon Jesus but let it not be overlooked Martha was pouring out of fragrance of love to as she serves her Lord.

We See (Serving – Fellowship – Worship)

We will see in our passage three responses, three places, and three hearts of love towards Jesus through this family. Serving, Fellowship, and Worship. Martha serving, Lazarus fellowshiping, and Mary worshipping. It is not that you are one of these or the other, but you are one of these at any given time, but within any given day you have done all of these.

Martha Serves – Martha Grow (not like Luke 10)

So here we see Martha serving, it is what she likes to do. When you read the last time she served, she was gripping and complain, but here this there is no mention of that as she is serving freely and joyfully. Last time she served with the wrong heart, this time she serves with the right heart. Martha grew in her spiritual maturity, and so too do we.

Luke 10:38–42 (NKJV) ³⁸ Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. ³⁹ And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to serve alone? Therefore tell her to help me." ⁴¹ And Jesus answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. ⁴² But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her."

This is Martha's act of Worship - Serving

Serving has to be a part of our Christian walk; it gives us an outlet of what is in our heart, and that is the love of Christ, and not only that but Christ Himself is in you looking to pour Himself out on a world in need. I pray you seek the Lord and ask Him where you can serve, so you can have that outlet of His love. As you serve, the love of Christ flows through you, and you experience Him in a wonderful way. We are saved to serve, not to be served. The Christians who only seek to be served, are always shallow and critical, because everything is always about them. Ask the Lord, where do you want me to serve You this New Year? And serve like Martha did, with all your heart, seeking to see other people blessed.

Parents

Parents, it is important that you don't only serve you kids, because then all they will see is that it was always about them. Teach them by showing them, to reach out to others.

What does Serving Look Like – Matthew 25 / Insert your Name where Martha is

What does serving look like, where and how do you serve, I think we see a beautiful picture of that in Matthew 25 (please read below). Now let's not get all wrapped up in the eschatology and theology of Matthew 25, let's just look at it at its base principle; serve people and God says it is as you are doing it to Me personally. So when I serve someone, I can read John 12 and insert myself serving Jesus, I can replace Martha's name and insert mine, "and Ray served".

Matthew 25:37–40 (NKJV) ³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? ³⁸ When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? ³⁹ Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' ⁴⁰ And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

Calling is Where the Need Is

Can I say something that may shock you, “Our calling is where the need is, not our gifting is”. I think one of our greatest mistakes is that we feel our calling is our greatest gift, but I would say our calling is where the greatest need is, to do it on to the “least of these”. See Matthew 25 doesn’t say those who had the gifting for the feeding ministry, or the prison ministry, or clothing ministry, or hospitality ministry; but simply those who saw the need, and responded to it. You ask God where is the need, and I can guarantee you that He will show you.

but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him.

Lazarus Fellowshiping

So we see Martha serving, and now we see Lazarus fellowshiping. Lazarus is simply hanging out with Jesus and the disciples. You can just picture the sweetness of the fellowship. I define “fellowship” as “sharing life”.

Acts 2:42

Our ministry philosophy here at CCAAC is based on Acts 2:42. The study of the Word (apostles’ doctrine), fellowship (sharing life together), breaking of bread (that’s communion), and prayer (hence why we put such an emphasis on Corporate Prayer here (which is on Tuesday nights)).

Acts 2:42 (NKJV) ⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Our Fellowship Here / Russia 1993

I love the fellowship we have here, I thank God for our couch area, our café area, He has been so good to us. I love the times we sit and simply enjoy one another, share life, love on one another. I am reminded of a wonderful time I had in Russia in 1993. We taught the Inductive Bible Study Method in Russia and it was 4 days long, people would take off the whole week to participate, and these were people who had little money to start with. I remember us singing Psalm 133 together, us in English and they in Russian, oh the beauty as it ascended into heaven. Our hearts were knit together instantly, and oh the sorrow of having to leave at the end of 4 days. I remember the night, the train station was an hour away, and in Russia that was no small feat to get to. We had a late train, about 6 hours after the conference was over, close to midnight. I’ll never forget when we pulled in, there standing on the platform was every participant, close 100 people, waiting to see us off, they were so grateful for our coming. I remember just spontaneously we gathered in a circle holding hands, and we prayed, and sang. I remember the Russian hockey was coming to board the train, and out of great respect, they didn’t march through us but formed a single file line, with what little room was left on that platform, hockey gear and all as they silently passed next to us and boarded the train. Then the hockey team, the other passengers, put their windows down on the train and just watched in reverence silence. And as we prayed and sang, I snow began to fall, so beautiful through the dim lights of the night, and then we boarded. Behold how good and pleasant it is, for brethren to dwell together. Fellowship is a gift from God, it is precious, and it grows us together with one another..... for life. I thank God for each of you, and gift you are to me.

Psalm 133 (NKJV) A Song of Ascents. Of David. ¹ Behold, how good and how pleasant it is For brethren to dwell together in unity! ² It is like the precious oil upon the head, Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron, Running down on the edge of his garments. ³ It is like the dew of Hermon, Descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the LORD commanded the blessing— Life forevermore.

sat at the table with Him

Sat – To Recline

The word here “sat” means to recline. We know from history and culture that they didn’t sit at tables like we do on chairs (as chairs would be pretty expensive too boot), but the table was about a foot or so off the ground, and they were surrounded by pillows, and you would recline on the pillows along the table and eat together. It was very intimate. I love this idea and think we should adapt it into our culture, for how many times after I stuff myself (especially this Christmas week), I would love to just roll over on my back and go to sleep from my food coma. So anyways they reclined at the table, and we need this picture to see verse 3 in clarity.

John 12:2-11

Starts with “Then”

Today, we start the chapter off with the word “then” (Then, six days before the Passover). The word “then”, meaning “these things being so”. All that we have read over the last 6 months, (and may I commend you for being such good students of the word), all these things being so, all the miracles, all the teachings, all the acts of love, all the truths told, all the things Jesus had done, now it is time for what He ultimately came to do, what we read way back at the beginning, to be the “Lamb of God” who would take away the sins of the world. We are in the final week in the life of Jesus on earth.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*

Great Demonstration of Worship

Today we read, quite possibly, the great demonstration of worship ever seen in the Bible, and let’s allow the Lord to speak to us and show us great and mighty things that we have never seen before.

John 12:1–11 (NKJV) ¹ Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead. ² There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him. ³ Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil. ⁴ But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, who would betray Him, said, ⁵ “Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?” ⁶ This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it. ⁷ But Jesus said, “Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. ⁸ For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always.” ⁹ Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus’ sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. ¹⁰ But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also, ¹¹ because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

Bible Cross-Reference

This account is also found in:

- Matthew 26:6-13
- Mark 14:3-9

Please be reminded, that Mark’s and Matthew’s gospel is not in chronological order. If you forget that, or someone challenges you about contradiction, you could find yourself tripped up. You will find this account in them, but they are not in chronological order, they are inserted to develop the reason why Judas will betray Jesus, and one of the reasons is because he is money-hungry, as we see in this story.

Matthew 26:6–13 (NKJV) ⁶ *And when Jesus was in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, ⁷ a woman came to Him having an alabaster flask of very costly fragrant oil, and she poured it on His head as He sat at the table. ⁸ But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, “Why this waste? ⁹ For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor.” ¹⁰ But when Jesus was aware of it, He said to them, “Why do you trouble the woman? For she has done a good work for Me. ¹¹ For you have the poor with you always, but Me you do not have always. ¹² For in pouring this fragrant oil on My body, she did it for My burial. ¹³ Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.”*

Mark 14:3–9 (NKJV) ³ *And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head. ⁴ But there were some who were indignant among themselves, and said, “Why was this fragrant oil wasted? ⁵ For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and given to the poor.” And they criticized her sharply. ⁶ But Jesus said, “Let her alone. Why do you trouble her? She has done a good work for Me. ⁷ For you have the poor with you always, and whenever you wish you may do them good; but Me you do not have always. ⁸ She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. ⁹ Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her.”*

Not to be Confused with Luke 7 (Sinful woman Kissing Jesus’ Feet)

Now this is not to be confused with the anointing of Jesus by the sinful woman when He was at the house of a Pharisee whose name was Simon. The woman came up and she stood at His feet and her tears falling upon His

feet, she wiped them with her hair and then she anointed His feet with perfume. You remember Simon the Pharisee said, If this man were really a prophet, He would have done something about that because the woman is a sinner. He wouldn't let her touch Him. But Jesus, demonstrating to Simon His knowledge of her, and yet His willingness to let her touch Him, He said, Simon, I have something to ask of you. He said, Go ahead. And Jesus said, There was a certain man that had two servants. One owed him a thousand dollars, the other owed him fifty dollars. He forgave both of them their debts. Which one loved him the more? Oh I suppose the one he forgave the more. Jesus said, That's right. Then He started to rebuke him. He said, But I came to your house, you didn't kiss Me, which was the custom, the oriental greeting. You didn't wash My feet. But this woman has kissed My feet. She has washed them with her tears. She has put the perfume on them. Now I say to you, Her sins which are many are forgiven (Luke 7:36-47). So this is not that Mary. This is a different, we don't know that woman's name. But this is the Mary who just before the crucifixion of Jesus, just a short while before, anointed His feet. And then she, of course, poured the perfume on His head and wiped His feet with her hair. John identifies her, we'll get that in the twelfth chapter. Part of the confusion comes because in Matthew and Mark's account (that we read here in John 12), Mary is simply called "a woman"; the reason being is that John wrote his account anywhere from 50-70 years later. Mark and Matthew was written much earlier, and there was great persecution against the church at this time, and thus they would have left Mary's name out to protect her from being attacked by the Jews.

Luke 7:36–39 (NKJV) ³⁶ Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. ³⁷ And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, ³⁸ and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil. ³⁹ Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman this is who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."

John 12:1 Then, six days before the Passover, Jesus came to Bethany, where Lazarus was who had been dead, whom He had raised from the dead.

John 12:2 There they made Him a supper; and Martha served, but Lazarus was one of those who sat at the table with Him.

Recap from Last Study / Simon & Lazarus Next to Him / 2 miles Away the Plot to Kill / Jesus is Welcome Here

So it is Saturday, the 9th of Nissan, Jesus will be crucified in 6 days (as Passover lamb is sacrificed on the 14th of Nissan). He is at the home of Simon who was once a leper, and Lazarus who was once dead is sitting next to Him (some amazing testimonies – Amen). They are in the town of Bethany, which is 2 miles away from Jerusalem, and so here Jesus is having supper with those who love Him, and 2 miles away there is a group of men plotting on how to kill Him. As we said last study, Jesus you are always welcome here for supper, we love You, we praise You, we adore You, and we thank You from all that we are for cleansing us like you did Simon, and raising us like you did Lazarus.

John 11:53–57 (NKJV) ⁵³ Then, from that day on, they plotted to put Him to death. ⁵⁴ Therefore Jesus no longer walked openly among the Jews, but went from there into the country near the wilderness, to a city called Ephraim, and there remained with His disciples. ⁵⁵ And the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went from the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves. ⁵⁶ Then they sought Jesus, and spoke among themselves as they stood in the temple, "What do you think—that He will not come to the feast?" ⁵⁷ Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a command, that if anyone knew where He was, he should report it, that they might seize Him.

We See (Serving – Fellowship – Worship)

We will see (have seen) in our passage three responses, three places, and three hearts of love towards Jesus through this family. Serving, Fellowship, and Worship. Martha serving, Lazarus fellowshiping, and Mary worshipping. It is not that you are one of these or the other, but you are one of these at any given time, but within any given day you have done all of these.

Beloved – Find an Outlet to Serve, Stay/Get in Fellowship / Dull Swords – Dull Christian Walk

Beloved of God, seek the Lord and ask Him where He wants you to serve this year, establish that in your schedule, make time, and dedicate the time to do so, and I promise you that you will be blessed, for as you serve others, you will experience Jesus flowing through you and saying to you, when you have done it unto the least of these, you have done it unto Me. Stay in fellowship, get in fellowship, surround yourself with like-minded believers, and as iron sharpens iron, you will stay sharp in the Lord. I find that one of the greatest reasons that a Christian walk becomes dull is because a person drops out of or is very light in their fellowship.

Matthew 25:40 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

Proverbs 27:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ As iron sharpens iron, So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.

Sat – To Recline

sat at the table with Him - The word here “sat” means to recline. We know from history and culture that they didn't sit at tables like we do on chairs (as chairs would be pretty expensive too boot), but the table was about a foot or so off the ground, and they were surrounded by pillows, and you would recline on the pillows along the table and eat together. It was very intimate. I love this idea and think we should adapt it into our culture, for how many times after I stuff myself (especially this Christmas week), I would love to just roll over on my back and go to sleep from my food coma. So anyways they reclined at the table, and we need this picture to see verse 3 in clarity.

John 12:3 Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

Then

Then – She can't Contain Herself

So here is that word “then” again, and I just sense (based on the whole story), Mary has reached a point in her heart that she can't contain herself, words are not enough, she has to express her love for Jesus beyond words. So here before us a tremendous act of worship.

Can we Learn to be Worshippers – Or is it a Heart Condition

The question begs to be asked, and that is can we learn to be worshippers, or is worship something that is in the heart or it is not? I would say, both. There are clearly things in my life, in your life, that get in the way of worship, and they most often are distractions of the world, caring what the world thinks of us, being calculating (meaning thinking with our minds and not our hearts); so yes we can learn what prevents us from fully entering into worship, we can adjust our lifestyles and our mindset, and thus open the floodgates into deep and heart-experienced worship. So let's read on and see what we can glean from this story that was preserved for us, so we can apply and partake for our lives personally today and all the tomorrows of our lives.

Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard,

Spikenard from India

This spikenard (most researchers) say came from India. We see it in writings all the way back to Egypt, and we see historically that it was always considered very valuable. Mary has a pound of it, 16 ounces, that is a lot.

Judas has Done the Math for Us / 1 Year Salary

Judas has already done the math for us in that this pound of oil is worth about 300 denarii. A denarii was about one day's wage. So if you worked 6 days a week, taking Sabbath off, and say 2 weeks to attend a Feast, that equals about 300 days of work. Thus, 300 denarii is about 1 years' salary. The average annual income in the US varies by person, but let's just say it is somewhere around 40,000 to 50,000 a year. Imagine your personal salary, and imagine you pouring that out on Jesus.

Very Costly – 70 Years Later John still in Awe

I can read into this line and get a sense that John, who is an eyewitness of this account, was at the supper, and now writing some 70 years later, is still in amazement of what he witnessed. The cost, the extravagant act of love, the smell of the room, this act of extravagant love blew him away. As well it should, for it blows me away, it makes me want to get past all these things that distract me, all the time I waste on meaningless things, all the times I am worrying when I could be worshipping, all the times I am lazy when I could be pouring, all the times I am sitting at the table watching when I could be at His feet. John is blown away, as am I. Oh Lord, make us worshippers.

Probably Mary's Dowry

Now we don't know for sure what this was to Mary. It could have been her investment, as spikenard oil could be used to buy, sell, trade or trade with. It might have been her dowry that was left to her by her father. A dowry was something that a woman/bride would bring into the marriage. Depending on the situation, the dowry money may have been used to help establish the newlyweds, or it may have been money that was to be kept in the event the husband died or divorced the wife, and the wife (and children) would have money to live on. But in this culture, at this time, it was the responsibility of the bride (usually the father of the bride) to bring the dowry into the marriage. Note, this is different from is known as the "bride's price", which we see in this culture also, which the groom would give to the father to purchase the woman, for she was considered highly above other women (maybe because of physical features, or family lineage, or family position).

Mary Pours it all Out / Extravagant Love

If this is Mary's dowry or 401K, she is pouring it all out. We are witnessing extravagant love. She is saying, Jesus you are my future, you are my husband, as I pour this out upon you, let it be a picture of me pouring myself out upon You.

Extravagant Love Does Not

Extravagant Love:

- Extravagant Love does not count the cost, and then determine if it will do it.
- Extravagant Love doesn't look at the watch and see if there is enough time,
- Extravagant Love – does not look at the calendar to determine what day and time is good to worship but it simply responds to the opportunity to worship,
- Extravagant Love does not look around to see what others think.
- Extravagant Love does not consider its reputation. Nor is prideful.
- Extravagant Love knows no boundary, it doesn't care about anything else except the moment of worship.

Didn't use it on her Brother / She knew Resurrection True – She knew Whose Hands she was In

Here is something interesting, and that is that Mary did not use this ointment to anoint the body of her brother Lazarus. Spikenard was commonly used to anoint the body of the dead. It was her brother who died, and she never used it. Here she is now pouring it all out upon Jesus. Because you know what I think, I think even though as much as she loved Jesus, as much as she believed the resurrection and the life, when she saw it first hand in her life, she knew it was absolutely positively true. She knew that she would experience resurrection and the life, she knew that her life was in the hands of Jesus, and in those hands she had nothing to fear nothing to worry about her future, because she was His sheep and He was her Shepherd. She knew whose hands she was in.

Mary saw/realized Zoe Life

Mary realized and was released to live freely the "zoe life", the absolute life, the God life, the life beyond this life the world has to offer us. Mary believed in the future resurrection, she said that to Jesus, but here we see that she sees the abundant Christian life isn't something that happens in the future after we die, but something we can experience today.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

When you Trust those Hands – You will Worship Freely

When you know whose hands you are in, when you come to that place of fully trusting whose hands you are in, you will freely worship as Mary did. You won't care what other people think, you won't be calculating the cost and holding back, you will know that He has you, and He won't let anything happen to you that would draw you away from Him. You will live the abundant Christian life God has for us today, not tomorrow when we die.

Don't Save up for the Future

Mary did not use this fragrance on her brother Lazarus when he died. And you know I think sometimes were always saving up for a future date, and I love what I see in Mary as you know the time to be extravagant is today and let's trust the Lord that he will provide for us to be extravagant tomorrow. We need not save up for our future

extravagant moments and miss the extravagant moments that are before us right now that we can enjoy and fully partake in. The abundant life is today..... and tomorrow!

anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair.

How Important your Hair

How important to you is your hair? Really, besides our teenage boys here today, who didn't think of their hair, who didn't spend time on their hair? Even if you are bald you still thought about your hair, the hair you didn't have. I read somewhere the average American woman spends 49 minutes a day on grooming, and of course a large portion of that is on their hair. Hair was as important then, as it is today, especially for a woman. And here, Mary uses her hair to wipe Jesus' feet.

Immodest for Women to Let hair Down / Saved for her Husband

It was considered immodest for a Jewish woman to let her hair down in public, her hair was only to be let down in front of her husband. The wife would let her hair down, let it flow over her body, it signified I am giving myself full to you, something that is only for you, no other man. Mary is not concerned with what the culture said was right, what someone's rule book said, or what people would say about her, all she cared about was pouring her heart out upon the Lord. For Mary to let her hair down, she is saying to Jesus I give myself fully to you. But let this not be confused with the perversion the world tries to say in that Jesus had relationships with women when He walked the earth, that is just twisted and perverted minds. Mary, in beauty and purity, pours all she is and has out upon Jesus.

Spikenard is Made by Steaming and Squeezing

Spikenard is drawn from the root of the plant. They steam it, and press it to release the oil from the root.

Spikenard mention in Song Solomon

Spikenard is mentioned in The Song of Solomon, which is written by a shepherd to his love. It is an allegory of Christ and you His Bride. It is beautiful word pictures of His great love for you. Some people in certain religious sects wish that it wasn't in the Bible, lobby for its removal from the Bible, because they feel it is too sensual, too intimate, too graphical for the Bible. But it is in here, and God deemed it to be so. In chapter one the woman said that as she sat at the table with the king (this would be Solomon), that her spikenard sent forth its fragrance. It is a beautiful picture of the radiance and emanating of love from the woman to the king. The woman is adorned with the perfume to send the scent of her along with her presence. I put some spikenard on my body, and I noticed that after I exercise the aroma was even greater upon me, so that tell me that this oil (like so many others) is heat activated. So as I read Song of Solomon, I read that as her heart beat for the king, as her passion for him increased, so did the intensity of the scent coming from her.

Song of Solomon 1:12 (NKJV) ¹² While the king is at his table, My spikenard sends forth its fragrance.

Spikenard and Uninteresting Shrub

The spikenard itself is a small uninteresting shrub, not likely to attract the attention of any which are fond of plants, for there is no beauty in it; yet the smell and fragrancy of it is said by some to be unequalled. So a picture of us, not something that attracts attention, no great form or beauty, but when touched by Him, when in His presence, produces a beautiful fragrance that He is enraptured with. So amazing, you, we, take His breath away. He is so in love with you. Amazing, and an amazing God, that He is enraptured by our love for Him.

And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

Extravagant Love will Fill your Home with Sweet Fragrance

Extravagant acts of love and worship, will fill your home with a sweet fragrance.

I Bought a Bottle of Spikenard

I bought a bottle of spikenard, and let me tell you it is powerful. I placed 3 drops on a piece of paper and it filled my whole office with the fragrance. I put one drop on my wrist to smell it, and I went to bed, and the next morning I could still smell it. It is potent. I placed several drops on my wrist, exercised, showered, went for a long walk that caused me to sweat, went to sleep, and when I awoke I could still smell it.

How Long did the Fragrance Last

One thing I wonder because this is such a heavy oil and it was so greatly poured out upon Jesus, I wonder how long the smell lasted upon Jesus. They didn't bath like we do once or twice a day. Jesus probably never bathed before the cross, and here this deep rich thick fragrant oil is in his hair and his beard because were told in another accounted she anointed his head so this oil would've covered his whole face and His beard. No doubt running down upon His garments. I have to believe if 1 drop emanated from me 12 hours later, how much a pound, 16 ounces, would have emanated from Jesus for a whole week. Everywhere Jesus would go in the next week,

- such as the next day the Triumphal entry into Jerusalem,
- the Olivet's Discourse with His disciples
- the final supper, the Garden of Gethemne,
- His arrest,
- His mock trial,
- and even when nailed upon the cross,

Everyone would smell this fragrance upon Him. How interesting this spikenard has a woody and earthy aroma to it. Woody for a Messiah nailed to a cross of wood, earthy as the King of the world goes into the grave.

Everywhere Jesus would go, the this aroma would be upon Him.

Mark 14:3 (NKJV) ³ And being in Bethany at the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at the table, a woman came having an alabaster flask of very costly oil of spikenard. Then she broke the flask and poured it on His head.

The Memory of Smell

I am sure you yourself have experience it, how a smell brings back a memory to you. Maybe a smell of cinnamon reminds you of your childhood Christmas', the smell of fresh bread reminds you of family dinners, the smell of autumn reminds you of football; smells trigger memories, and no doubt for all who smelled this fragrance upon Jesus, each time they would smell spikenard again, they would remember back to Jesus.

Jesus tells Us – It was Anointing for his Burial

Jesus tells us that this anointing was for His burial. Thus, everyone that came into contact would see and smell, and the aroma was a reminder, I have come to die. "Then", (verse 1), My whole purpose was to come and die for you, for your sin, so that you might have fellowship with the Father, so your sin may be removed and forgiven as far as the east is from the west.

John 12:7-8 (NKJV) ⁷ But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. ⁸ For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always."

Psalms 103:12 (NKJV) ¹² As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Mary Carried the Aroma Also / We are the Fragrance of World

You know who else smelled good Mary. Mary had the aroma of Christ now on her. Mary how many times she would grab that long hair up to her nose and smell Christ again the remembrance of him, how long did the fragrance of Christ stay on her hair she would remember that moment over and over every time she smell. And, may we always be reminded, as we live and radiate and emanate His love, that we now carry a fragrance. Imagine us having the ability to put a fragrance upon Christ, and we do because we are the fragrance the life of Christ to those around us that they can smell you know there's a sacrifice it's been made.

2 Corinthians 2:14-16 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. ¹⁵ For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. ¹⁶ To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things?

So – the 3 Responses

So we see three responses, in these three people (Mary – Martha – Lazarus) to those who have come into a personal relationship with Jesus. Serving, Fellowship, and Worship. Serving as we look at Martha, Fellowship as we look at Lazarus, and Worship as we look at Mary.

John 12:4 But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said,

Simon's Son

This verse pierces me every time I read it. This is a father's legacy, this is the legacy of the father Simon. It reads Judas Iscariot, Simon's son. What a brokenhearted father, my son was the one to betray Jesus. May we all invest our last breath into our children, so not a one of them betrays Jesus. If you have wayward children, Tuesday night prayer is a place to be as we every week beseech the Lord to bring them back into a personal and holy relationship with the Lord.

John 12:5 "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?"

John 12:6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.

John 12:7 But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial.

1st Recorded Words of Judas

These are the first recorded words of Judas.

Contrast Mary versus Judas

We see a contrast in our story, a worshipping heart like Mary, and a critical heart like Judas.

Judas Criticized – Others Chimed In / Criticism is Contagious

The other account say that once Judas said this, the other apostles chimed in and were in agreement that it was a waste. Isn't that how criticism works, nobody is thinking it's there's a problem until somebody brings it up and tries to make a point that it's a promise, a problem, and then everybody else's yet what's wrong with that outcome this or how come that. Criticism is a poison that just seeps and seeps and goes deep, be careful about being critical, be careful about being with people who are critical.

Matthew 26:8–9 (NKJV) ⁸ But when His disciples saw it, they were indignant, saying, "Why this waste? ⁹ For this fragrant oil might have been sold for much and given to the poor."

All 3 Times Mary Misunderstood

Three times we see Mary in the Scriptures and all three time she is at the feet of Jesus, and all three times she is being misunderstood.

1. In Luke 10 she is sitting at the feet of Jesus just taking in all that he has to say, and she is misunderstood by her family, particularly her sister San why doesn't she get up and serve.
2. Then in John chapter 11 when Lazarus has died, she hears Jesus is here and she runs and falls at his feet. But when she leaves the house and takes off her friends misunderstand her thinking that she's running to the tomb to weep, they don't understand that she's running to see Jesus and be received by Jesus.
3. Here in John chapter 12 we see her at the feet of Jesus pouring out this expensive oil wiping it with her hair, and she is now being misunderstood by the apostles, who of all people should have understood what she was doing, they themselves should have seen Jesus was on His way to the cross in 6 days.

Some will Never understand You or Your Worship

Don't be surprised when people don't understand your extravagant love and worship. They may come across sounding so wise and spiritual, but they have no idea, just like Judas. They criticize you, but they have no idea because.....they have no idea.

How did Mary Know – She was at His Feet

How did Mary know Jesus was going to the cross, and the disciples didn't? The answer is found where we always find Mary, at the feet of Jesus. All three mentions of her in the scripture, we find her at the same place, at His feet. Be a worshiper of God, sitting at his feet, make worship part of your daily life make it part of your very being, and you will be like Mary I promise you, as you'll get insight into things that no one else sees you'll be shown things by the Lord himself that you'll know are straight from His heart.

Luke 10:38–39 (NKJV) ³⁸ Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. ³⁹ And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.

John 11:32 (NKJV) ³² Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

John 12:3 (NKJV) ³ Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.

Hear what Jesus says – Let her Alone

People will criticize your love, service, worship, fellowship with the Lord. They will make strong unloving comments about it. But may you hear the word of God for what He says about their comments, and that is "let her alone", "let him alone", for they have done what they can.

John 12:7 (NKJV) ⁷ But Jesus said, "Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial."

Done what She Could

Often you hear a criticism and you say I wish I could do more, I wish I was more than who I am, I wish I had more time, I wish I more intelligence, I wish I had more energy, I wish, I wish..... and God would say to you, "you have done all you can", it is ok I am well pleased with you. You did something, at least you did something, at least you didn't do nothing.

Mark 14:8 (NKJV) ⁸ She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial.

A Look at Judas

Judas – Means waste

How interesting that Judas calls this a waste, it is very name means waste, as son of perdition means to waste. Judas was wasting his life on the material things of the world, the physical things of the world, the things that only brought a temporary pleasure, and then once taken and used they would be nothing again. Judas wasted his life. May we not be a people who waste our life may we live in give everything that we have for Jesus let nothing go to waste. Let me tell you this anything you do on behalf of Jesus and the name of Jesus and with the heart of Jesus is never a waste.

Story of Judas

Historically there is no record of Leonardo using the same model for both Christ and Judas. However, according to author Robert Wallace who wrote "The World Of Leonardo 1452-1519," Leonardo did use live models and did look among local prisoners for someone to portray Judas, but there is no record of the following story;

The Last Supper was painted by Leonardo Da Vinci, a noted Italian artist; and the time engaged for its completion was seven years.

The figures representing the twelve Apostles and Christ himself were painted from living persons. The life-model for the painting of the figure of Jesus was chosen first.

When it was decided that Da Vinci would paint this great picture, hundreds and hundreds of young men were carefully viewed in an endeavor to find a face and personality exhibiting innocence and beauty, free from the scars and signs of dissipation caused by sin.

Finally, after weeks of laborious searching, a young man nineteen years of age was selected as a model for the portrayal of Christ. For six months, Da Vinci worked on the production of this leading character of his famous painting. During the next six years, Da Vinci continued his labors on this sublime work of art. One by one fitting persons were chosen to represent each of the eleven Apostles; space being left for the painting of the figure representing Judas Iscariot as the final task of this masterpiece. This was the Apostle, you remember, who betrayed his Lord for thirty pieces of silver, worth in our present day, currency of \$16.96.

For weeks, Da Vinci searched for a man with a hard callous face, with a countenance marked by scars of avarice, deceit, hypocrisy, and crime; a face that would delineate a character who would betray his best friend.

After many discouraging experiences in searching for the type of person required to represent Judas, word came to Da Vinci that a man whose appearance fully met his requirements had been found in a dungeon in Rome, sentenced to die for a life of crime and murder.

Da Vinci made the trip to Rome at once, and this man was brought out from his imprisonment in the dungeon and led out into the light of the sun. There Da Vinci saw before him a dark, swarthy man; his long, shaggy and unkempt hair sprawled over his face, which betrayed a character of viciousness and complete ruin. At last, the famous painter had found the person he wanted to represent the character of Judas in his painting.

By special permission from the king, this prisoner was carried to Milan where the picture was being painted; and for months he sat before Da Vinci at appointed hours each day as the gifted artist diligently continued his task of transmitting to his painting this base character in the picture representing the traitor and betrayer of our savior. As he finished his last stroke, he turned to the guards and said, "I have finished. You may take the prisoner away."

As the guards were leading their prisoner away, he suddenly broke loose from their control and rushed up to Da Vinci, crying as he did so, "O, Da Vinci, look at me! Do you not know who I am?"

Da Vinci, with the trained eyes of a great character student, carefully scrutinized the man upon whose face he had constantly gazed for six months and replied, "No, I have never seen you in my life until you were brought before me out of the dungeon in Rome."

Then, lifting his eyes toward heaven, the prisoner said, "Oh, God, have I fallen so low?" Then turning his face to the painter he cried, "Leonardo Da Vinci! Look at me again for I am the same man you painted just seven years ago as the figure of Christ."

Truth or Fiction I do not Know / But Scars of Sin I do

Whether the story be truth or fiction we cannot know for sure, but none the less it serves a good illustration of the ravages of sin, and how it destroy, how it takes away beauty and innocence in exchange for darkness and ruin.

A New Year Challenge – Evaluate Life Today / Children of Israel progression in Egypt / Bitter Lettuce

A word for the New Year, a word of exhortation to consider oneself. To evaluate, to look inward, to consider what is the life you are living, and who are you serving. I am reminded of the story of Israel, and I see such a fitting picture of the progression into the world. There was a famine in the land, Israel leaves Caanan, and moves all Israel into Egypt. What we read is that when they first go in, they are favored and greatly accepted into the land by the people. Then, "time happens", and they prosper and settle into the land, they become established. But then, in a moment, literally overnight, a new king (pharaoh) comes into power, and in one decree makes them slaves, places cruel taskmasters over them, and they are trapped without a way out. So it is the way the world works for any person, first they are accepted, find favor, feel they are in the right place. Then, "time happens" and they become settled in, established, comfortable where they are. Then, literally it can seem overnight, they find themselves enslaved, a slave to a cruel taskmaster, and they are trapped. A rabbi in the Talmud commenting on Israel's enslavement said, it was like lettuce, at first sweet, but as lettuce sits in the field to long, it becomes bitter.

Everyone Serves Somewhere and Someone

Every man/woman serves someone, something, somewhere. Where and who do you?

John 12:8 For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always."

The Challenge of Waste in Mission Field

So many times people accuse the giving to the church is waste goal a waste to waste it on given away to those in need, to the poor, those who should get a job they say, because they have no heart for those people. You can be sure every time we invest in missions that there will be no lack of people who were gathering the sake what a waste spending all that money to fly to the mission field, into give it to the people of Cambodia. God is more than able to provide over an abundant anything that we could ask for in any time that we do anything in his name for his heart and for his glory shall never return void initial never be waste.

Missions about the Cross

Always remember the ultimate purpose, the main purpose of missions..... "The Cross". If it was about feeding, we would just send money. If it was about clothing, we would send boxes filled with them. But it is about God's declaration and demonstration of love, His offer to set people free, His invitation to personal intimacy with them. We have experienced it, now we go to show it and share it. Tell them about the God who so loved the

world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever should believe in Him shall not perish but have everlasting (zoe) life. If they are saved, celebrate it with them again and again so they never forget. If they are not saved, tell them like it is “good news”.

Mary was a Memorial forever

Was a memorial onto her here we are reading the 2000 years later. So again no devotion is ever wasted upon the Lord, and it is remembered by him forever and ever, and we never know how far devotion goes and how far it means to the Lord but we know he never forgets it.

John 12:9 Now a great many of the Jews knew that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead.

John 12:10 But the chief priests plotted to put Lazarus to death also,

John 12:11 because on account of him many of the Jews went away and believed in Jesus.

No recorded Word of Lazarus / His Life was Testimony / Protect your Testimony

Have you ever noticed that there is not one recorded word of Lazarus in the scriptures? You would think that we would have at least something recorded for testimony; but not so. Why, because his changed life was testimony enough, a body that once stinketh now is alive. So too for each of you, don't put a big pressure on yourself about having to speak (in terms of witnessing), remember first your changed life is your greatest testimony, and thus how important for us to maintain that changed life. How sad would the story be if in this story before Lazarus wasn't in it, he was absent, because he was at the local pub getting drunk, or was spending the night at his girlfriend's house, would rather be at the football game even though Jesus was in town. Christian, you have a witness of being raised from the dead, protect that witness, it is greater than anything you will ever say.

Recap how to be Worshipper

How do I become a worshipper like Mary? I think the 3 accounts of Mary do a great unlocking for us. We see a key, and that is each time we read of Mary she is at the feet of Jesus. There is where we begin. In Luke 10, she sits to hear the “Word”, for it is in the Word that we know who God is, what He thinks of us, and what He wants us to do. We also saw, Jesus saying about her sister Martha, “you are much distracted with serving”. So the warning of being distracted by things that take us away from sitting at His feet and hearing His Word. In John 11 when her brother dies she pours her heart out to Jesus, “oh if you had only been here my brother would not have died”. So we see the key of just sharing our heart with Him, telling Him all, and as we do, our heart connects to His heart. And then thirdly, here in John 12, we see that Mary knows fully whose hands she is in, and she can let go and fully trust in Him, not worry about tomorrow, but fully giving herself to Jesus today.

***Luke 10:38–39 (NKJV)** ³⁸ Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. ³⁹ And she had a sister called Mary, who also sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word.*

***John 11:32 (NKJV)** ³² Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.”*

***John 12:3 (NKJV)** ³ Then Mary took a pound of very costly oil of spikenard, anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped His feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the oil.*

End of Study

John 12:12-16

John 12:12 The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

John 12:13 took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' The King of Israel!"

John 12:14 Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written:

John 12:15 "Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt."

John 12:16 His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him.

Today's Study

Today we come to what is called the "Triumphal Entry" of Jesus into Jerusalem. On this day the people will herald Him as the King, but it will be short-lived as in just five days this same crowd will yell "crucify Him", and so He will.

The Day is Sunday / 10th of Nissan

The day of the week is Sunday, and the day on the Jewish calendar is the 10th of Nissan. The 10th of Nissan was the day prescribed by the Law handed down to Moses that the Passover lamb was to be brought into the home and kept there until the 14th of Nissan when all the Passover lambs were to be slain.

OT Prophecies

Today we will see for the first time allowing and receiving from the people Him being deemed the Messiah. All the other times they tried to herald Him the Messiah, He slipped away, or said "the time is not now", but today Jesus allows and receives the people declaring Him the Messiah. During the times of Jesus, Kings would ride into town on a donkey (In the ancient Middle Eastern world, leaders rode horses if they rode to war, but donkeys if they came in peace. First Kings 1:33 mentions Solomon riding a donkey on the day he was recognized as the new king of Israel. Other instances of leaders riding donkeys are Judges 5:10; 10:4; 12:14; and 2 Samuel 16:2.). When people were quoting the OT scriptures regarding the Messiah, the other accounts state that the rabbis were saying to Jesus to tell them to shout up, because they rabbis knew these passages were references to the Messiah.

Luke 19:39–40 (NKJV) ³⁹ And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." ⁴⁰ But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

Psalms 118:25–26 (NKJV) ²⁵ Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. ²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.

Zechariah 9:9 (NKJV) ⁹ "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.

Jesus fulfills Prophecy Perfectly

Here in our study today will study and rejoice in the amazing fulfillment of prophecy that Jesus fulfilled. We will see that only one person in the history of mankind could be the Messiah, and we will see it in our amazing study of scripture today.

Some Scriptures to shape our Study

So let's review some scriptures that shape our study today, and let's start in the book of Exodus.

(Exodus 12:2 NKJV) "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.

Jewish Calendar

They made their months according to the lunar calendar. And so, the Passover is related to the third new moon after, or the third full moon after the winter equinox, and thus, differs from ours from year to year. That's why the Jewish Passover isn't always related to our Easter. Sometimes, they come about the same time, but they are calculated on a different basis than we calculate Easter Sunday.

So Important – New Calendar / 1445 Years Later – Divides Time / God set the Clock

The Lord says this is so important, that you are to make a new calendar based off of it. This event (the Passover) will be the beginning, first month of the new calendar. 1445 years later, the same thing will happen, when the Final Passover Lamb is birthed, all of mankind will live to a new calendar. Jesus Christ divided time, BC – AD. Whether man realizes it or not, every hour, every day, every month, every year they live, they live in light of Jesus Christ. No matter how much they refuse to recognize and accept Him, each day they live on this earth is calculated from His birth. God set the clock for all of mankind, so they know where they should be investing their time, from which point is the starting point for all man. Man needs to be checking the clock; it's been 2014 years, 18 days, 10 hours, and 30 minutes (1/18/15 730am) since He left the throne and became the God-man so that He might show us the way, and that He still is the way – a person only need look at the calendar. All of man is living on God's Time.

(Exodus 12:3 NKJV) "Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.

Very Specific / Deviate brought Death / Can't deviate Day or Sacrifice / No Debate

The instructions for this sacrifice were very specific. Very detailed, and very direct and failure to follow them exactly of to deviate from them resulted in death. Just as then, so too now, there is only one way for death to pass over man, and that way is God's way, and that way is only through the Lamb. These people could not choose a cow, a bull, a chicken, only the lamb/goat. They couldn't do it on the 13th, or the 15th, but the 14th only. There would be no council of men to decide if this was acceptable, or if these really were the words of God, or is that really what God meant when He said it, there would be no debate what to call it – Passover or Feel good Feast.

1 Way Only / Yes Narrow – Thankful there is a Way

There was this 1 way only, exactly as God said to do it. Some people say Christianity is too narrow, I say I am glad that there is "even a way"; that a Holy and Awesome God would allow a sinner like me to come before Him, blows me away. Forget how narrow; rejoice that there is a way at all.

(Exodus 12:4 NKJV) 'And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb.

(Exodus 12:5 NKJV) 'Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

Spotless – Picture of Jesus

The lamb must have been spotless, without blemish, a type a picture that the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world and allow death to Passover all who were covered by His blood, He too would be spotless, without sin.

(Luke 23:3 NKJV) Then Pilate asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" He answered him and said, "It is as you say."

(Luke 23:4 NKJV) So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, "I find no fault in this Man."

(Exodus 12:6 NKJV) 'Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

Jewish Calendar – Night to Night / Blue & Black Thread

The lamb was slain at twilight on the 14th day of that month. In the Jewish calendar the day begins at sundown (when you cannot tell the difference between a blue thread and black thread). So the lamb must have been slain between sundown to sundown.

2 Specific Purposes – Protection & Prophecy / 10th Nissan – 14th Nissan / Jesus fulfills Passover

This Passover was given for 2 very specific purposes (just to name a few), for Protection, and for Prophecy. Protection, to provide the way for death to Passover all who would apply the blood to their homes. And secondly, for prophecy for these dates (the 10th and the 14th) would be the exact dates that Jesus would ride into Jerusalem

(10th of Nissan) and allow for the first time to be heralded publicly that He was the Messiah (the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15). And then, the 14th of Nissan, He would be crucified there upon the cross. Jesus would fulfill the Passover completely and perfectly.

To Get there – Look at Daniel 9

To get there, to know that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on the 10th of Nissan, and was crucified on the 14th of Nissan, we must go to Daniel chapter 9. “Daniel’s prophecy of the seventy ‘sevens’ (weeks) (vv.24 -27) provides the chronological frame for Messianic prediction from Daniel to the establishment of the kingdom on earth and also a key to its interpretation.”

(Daniel 9:20 NKJV) Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God,

(Daniel 9:21 NKJV) yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.

(Daniel 9:22 NKJV) And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, “O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand.

(Daniel 9:23 NKJV) “At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision:

(Daniel 9:24 NKJV) “Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy.

(Daniel 9:25 NKJV) “Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.

(Daniel 9:26 NKJV) “And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

(Daniel 9:27 NKJV) Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.”

Written 530 BC / Septuagint 300 BC

Because much of Daniel’s prophecies have already been fulfilled, his book confounds the critics. Around the year A.D. 300, a theory was introduced that the reason Daniel was so accurate was because, although he declares he wrote his book in 600 B.C., it wasn’t actually written until A.D. 50. In other words, it’s a fake. This heresy is often repeated by “higher” critics still today. Thus, in his own day, Daniel was placed in the lion’s den—but today he’s in the liar’s den. Either these men are incredibly ignorant or downright fraudulent, for all one has to do is look at the Septuagint. The Septuagint, written in 285 B.C. was the Greek translation of the Old Testament. What book is right there in the Septuagint? Daniel. So how could it have been written in A.D. 50 when it was in the Septuagint in 285 B.C.?

Weeks – Shabua – Unit Measure / Daniel reading Jeremiah / 490 years

Now, back to Daniel 9. The Hebrew word for “weeks” used here is shabua meaning “a unit of measure.” “So here, Seventy Weeks means seventy sevens. It could be seventy sevens of anything. It could be units of days or months or years. In the context of this verse it is plain that Daniel had been reading in Jeremiah about years, seventy years. Jeremiah had been preaching and writing that the captivity would be for seventy years). So then seventy sevens would be 70 times 7, equaling 490 years. But we have the blessings of all the Scriptures and all the history books that we know this is talking about years.

24a / Holy City is Jerusalem

Verse 24a – Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city: *We know that Daniel was a Jew, and we know the holy city is a reference to Jerusalem. So this prophecy deals with the nation Israel and God’s prophetic timetable.*

24b / All Verses deal with Jesus / To Finish the Transgression / It is Finished

Verse 24b – *To finish the transgression:* All the verses in verse 24 deal specifically with Jesus Christ. For as we will see only Jesus Christ could fulfill them. *To finish the transgression:* John 19:30 *When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. “As Jesus hung on the cross He took the wrath of God for our sins. After He completely paid the price for our transgression, He dismissed His Spirit.”*

(John 19:30 NKJV) So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

24c / Make end of Sin / Only Jesus Could and Did / Reconciled to God

Verse 24c – And to make an end of sins... *Jesus made an end of sin for all those who believe. God says in Hebrews 8:12 For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. Jesus put an end to sin once and for all, no one else could have done this. The verse goes on to say, and to make reconciliation for iniquity: Reconciliation means to be made right. Isaiah 59:1-2 Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear. It is because of man's sin that man is separated from God. And to be separated from God is to be not right with God, but God has provided a way for every man to be right with Him through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.*

24d / Everlasting Righteousness / End of 490 – Kingdom Established

Verse 24d – and to bring in everlasting righteousness: *“Everlasting righteousness refers to the return of Christ at the end of the 490 years to establish the kingdom.” It is obvious that we do not have everlasting righteousness right now because evil is still in the world. But the day is coming when God's grace is over, and God will put an end to all evil. After the millennial kingdom, when God sends Satan and all unbelievers to the Lake of Fire, then will the everlasting Kingdom be established.*

24e / Seal up Prophecy / All will be Fulfilled – including this One

Verse 24e – And to seal up the vision and prophecy: *“This means that all that is said here will be fulfilled, as well as all other prophecies in Scripture.” We must remember that at the time Daniel wrote all this it was several hundred years before the prophecy was fulfilled. This prophecy indeed was fulfilled, which is encouraging to me for I know that all will be fulfilled. I am especially encouraged to know that means that Jesus will be coming back to establish His kingdom.*

24f / Jesus the Anointed One

Verse 24f – and to anoint the most Holy. – *This is a reference to Jesus Christ Himself because in verse 26 there is a reference to the Messiah (called anointed) which is clearly Jesus Christ.*

Dan 9:25 / Decree to Rebuild Jerusalem

The 70 “sevens” would begin Gabriel said, with the issuing of the decree to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem.

[\(Daniel 9:25 NKJV\)](#) *“Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.*

The Years Calculated / Babylonian Calendar – 360 days / Julian 365.25 = 476 yrs

Here in verse 25 we see a total of 69 seven year periods (7 + 62 = 69) (69 x 7 = 483 years) (173,880 days) before the Messiah would come. The first 7 (49 yrs) is believed to the end of the prophets, the end of the OT which does line up with the 400 years between the OT and the NT. The last 7-year period will be talked about in verse 27, which deals with the antichrist making a 7 year peace pact with the nation of Israel in what we call the Tribulation period (Rev 6-19). Now these years are based on the Babylonian calendar, which is 360 days in a year. Using the Julian calendar, 365.25/yr, that equals 476 years (also note that 1BC to 1 AD is one year, not 2). Note the Julian calendar was the calendar at the time of Jesus implemented in 45 BC by Julius Caesar – today we use the Gregorian calendar which is a modification of the Julian calendar).

4 Decrees – Persian Rulers / Artaxerxes – March 14, 445BC

This decree was the fourth of four decrees made by Persian rulers in reference to the Jews:

- The first was Cyrus' decree in 538 B.C. (2 Chron 36:22—23, Ezra 1:1—4, 5:13).
- The second was the decree of Darius 1 (522—486) in 520 B.C. (Ezra 6:1,6—12). This decree actually was a confirmation of the first decree.
- The third was a decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus (465-424) in 458 B.C. (Ezra 7:11—26). The first two decrees pertain to the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem and the third relates to the finances for animal sacrifices at the temple. They say nothing about the rebuilding of the city itself. Since an un-walled

city was no threat to a military power, a religious temple could be rebuilt without jeopardizing the military authority of those granting permission to rebuild it.”

- “The fourth decree was also by Artaxerxes Longimanus, issued on **March 14, 445 B.C.** (Neh 2:1-8). On that occasion Artaxerxes granted the Jews permission to rebuild Jerusalem’s city walls. This decree is the one referred to in Daniel 9:25.”

Notes on 14 March 445BC

We can derive the year 445 because history supports that he began his reign in 465BC, and Neh 2.1 says in the 20th year – so 445BC (Nisan being March).

(Nehemiah 2:1 NKJV) And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before.

Nehemiah 2:1–10 (NKJV) ¹ And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before. ² Therefore the king said to me, “Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This is nothing but sorrow of heart.” So I became dreadfully afraid, ³ and said to the king, “May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers’ tombs, lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire?” ⁴ Then the king said to me, “What do you request?” So I prayed to the God of heaven. ⁵ And I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers’ tombs, that I may rebuild it.” ⁶ Then the king said to me (the queen also sitting beside him), “How long will your journey be? And when will you return?” So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time. ⁷ Furthermore I said to the king, “If it pleases the king, let letters be given to me for the governors of the region beyond the River, that they must permit me to pass through till I come to Judah, ⁸ and a letter to Asaph the keeper of the king’s forest, that he must give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel which pertains to the temple, for the city wall, and for the house that I will occupy.” And the king granted them to me according to the good hand of my God upon me. ⁹ Then I went to the governors in the region beyond the River, and gave them the king’s letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me. ¹⁰ When Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah the Ammonite official heard of it, they were deeply disturbed that a man had come to seek the well-being of the children of Israel.

Here is an excerpt from the 1911 Encyclopedia Britannica:

ARTAXERXES I., surnamed Macrocheir, Longimanus, Longad, because his right hand was longer than his left (Plut. ~ax.i.). He was the younger son of Xerxes, and was raised to throne in 465 by the vizier Artabanus

Now, the March 14th is not actually recorded, in all cases in my research it just records March 445 BC. March 445 BC in the Julian calendar was the month Nisan in the Jewish. So simply take the 1st day of the month of Nisan, do the mathematical calculation (Jewish calendar to Julian), and it comes out on the Julian calendar to March 14, 445 BC. If I was to attack this prophecy, this is where I would attack; however the best you are going to be off is 14 days, and 14 days divided by 173,880 days is so minute, that in probability and statistics you would consider the variance – a non factor. However prophecy must be exact, but I would hate to miss the Messiah by 14 days. 1% error would be 1,700 days, ½ % 850 days, ¼ % is 425 days, a 1/10 of 1 percent is 17 days. So that is quite a gamble to cast off this prophecy.

History Tells Date / Countdown Begins – 483/476

“So history tells us the order was given on 14 March 445 BC in our calendar we use today. So the countdown began, and 483 Babylonian years / 476 years using our current calendar, from that day the Messiah would come.

Golden Nugget / Tiberius Caesar – Luke 3 / 15 there for Us / Written by God

Now here is a golden nugget in the Scriptures, which at first reading means little to us, but when we place it in the big picture, it becomes golden, The Baptism of Jesus. The baptism of Jesus Christ happened in the 15 year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar. The Lord intentionally placed the “15” there for our sake – this book is so amazing, if one would just study it, they could only come to one conclusion, written by God, all about God, the God who loves us so deeply that He would trade places with us. I’ll become sin, so you can become a son.

(Luke 3:1 NKJV) Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene,

(Luke 3:21 NKJV) When all the people were baptized, it came to pass that Jesus also was baptized; and while He prayed, the heaven was opened.

Romans Impeccable Account / 19 August 14AD

Tiberius Caesar was a Roman Emperor and the Romans kept impeccable historical accounts of their empire. We use their secular history writings to tell us that Tiberius began his reign 19 August 14AD. So Jesus began His public ministry (baptism) between 19 August 28AD and 18 August 29AD, and we need this nugget to unlock this prophecy. I believe it was sometime after April 29AD, because the timeline fits more properly when we see Scriptures relating to the Passovers that Jesus celebrated. The fact that Jesus’ public ministry was 3 and half years, does line up with a 29 AD assumption. Here would be a place of challenge for the skeptic, but if Jesus wasn’t the Messiah, then someone who was crucified a year earlier would have to be the Messiah, and.....not a bone would be broken, born a virgin birth, born in Bethlehem, from the lineage of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and King David, betrayed for 30 pieces of silver, along with the other 300 prophecies the Jesus fulfilled.

Tiberius (/ˈtɪərɪˈbeəriəs/; Latin: Tiberius Caesar Divi Augusti Filius Augustus;^{[1][2]} 16 November 42 BC – 16 March 37 AD) was Roman Emperor from 14 AD to 37 AD. Born Tiberius Claudius Nero, a Claudian, Tiberius was the son of Tiberius Claudius Nero and Livia Drusilla. His mother divorced Nero and married Augustus in 39 BC, making him a step-son of Octavian. (Exert from Wikipedia)

14th of Month – The Passovers

The Jewish Passover was always celebrated on the 14th day of the first month, that month is called Nissian which falls in our March/April calendar.

(Exodus 12:6 NKJV) ‘Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

(Leviticus 23:5 NKJV) ‘On the fourteenth day of the first month at twilight is the Lord’s Passover.

Jesus Celebrated 3 Passovers / Based on Baptism 29AD / First 30AD

Jesus celebrated 3 Passovers: John 2:23, John 6:4, John 11:55. Based on His baptism in 29AD (15th year of Tiberius Caesar), Jesus first Passover would have been in 30AD, second in 31AD, and His final Passover would have been 32AD.

32AD – Jesus rides Donkey into Jerusalem

In that year 32 AD Jesus went up to Jerusalem for the Passover, He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey on the first day of the week, that day was the 10th of Nisan, for our Julian calendar that comes out to April 6, 32 AD. And on that very day Jesus rode into Jerusalem and was heralded the Messiah.”” Thus also fulfilling:

(Psalms 118:24 NKJV) This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it.

(Psalms 118:25 NKJV) Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.

(Psalms 118:26 NKJV) Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.

Jesus never Received Public Worship / Luke 19:39-40 / Lamb brought into the Home

“Prior to this day Jesus had never allowed public worship of Himself. Every time they tried to make Him King He would slip away from them, but the day He rode into Jerusalem on the donkey He actually promoted it.” The Lamb is being brought into the home, on the 10th of Nisan, just as required.

(Luke 19:39 NKJV) And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.”

(Luke 19:40 NKJV) But He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.”

Exactly 173,880 Days

How many days was it from March 14, 445 BC, to April 6, 32AD – **173,880**.

476 years X 365 days..... = 173,740 days
14 March to 06 April (both inclusive).....= 24 days
Add for Leap Years.....= 116 days
173, 880 days

*Note on Leap years: if one were to divide 476 by 4 they would get 119 days. That would throw this calculation of 3 days. However, calculating leap years is much deeper than a divided by 4. The following is an extract from Wikipedia Encyclopedia on the Julian calendar in respect to leap years – The [Revised Julian calendar](#) adds an extra day to February in years divisible by 4, except for years divisible by 100 that do not leave a remainder of 200 or 600 when divided by 900. In easier to understand, 3 days must be subtracted from 119 because centennial years are

not leap years, though every 4000th year is a leap year. So 116 is what the mathematicians have calculated would have been the number of leap years over this period.

Messiah Cutoff

“For seventy years Daniel had longed for the restoration of the city and temple of God. Now that it was about to take place his attention was directed to a more distant and loftier peak in the history of redemption. Even a new temple in a rebuilt city made by human hands could be destroyed; Daniel’s eyes were therefore to be fixed on a temple (John 2:19), on one that could not be destroyed (Rev 21:22-27) Daniel was receiving the prophecy of the coming Messiah. But verse 26 starts off with that He would be cut off. “Jesus was crucified that week and rejected by man. Jesus did not receive the kingdom at that time.

(Daniel 9:26 NKJV) “And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined.

Prince to Come – Destroys Temple 70AD

The prophecy continues with a description of the judgment that would come on the generation that rejected the Messiah. “The prince to come refers to 70 AD when Titus and the Roman army destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the temple. Just as Jesus prophesied in Luke 19:43-44.

Jews Dispersed – But Kept Nationality / May 14th 1948

“The Jewish people were then dispersed throughout the world. But Israel is the only nation who kept a nationality without a homeland, for almost 2,000 years they had no place to call home. But May 14, 1948 the Jews were gathered back together into their homeland.” This is a miracle, and God has a reason for it; and that is for final prophetic events leading up to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

To the Day / As Sure Came First Time – Will Come Second Time

It would be a mistake to read the Bible as dry history and miss all that God has for us. Reading this prophecy gives me a deep desire to share the gospel with the lost. As I study prophecy it becomes clearer and clearer that the return of Christ is soon. To the day, to the day He came, and what does that mean to you? As sure as the Prince of Peace came the first time, He will come again the second time.

3 Days in Grave

Now, to see this all the way through; Jesus had to spend three days in the grave:

(Matthew 12:40 NKJV) “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

He Rose on the 17th

So Jesus would have rose again on the 17th.

Timeline – Jewish Calendar

10th (Nissan) – Sunday – First Day of Week

- Jesus Rides into Jerusalem

11th – Monday

12th – Tuesday

13th – Wednesday

14th – Thursday – Passover Sacrifice – Jesus on the Cross

- 14th/after sunset – Jesus eats with the disciples
- 14th/ after sunset – Jesus in garden and arrested
- 14th/before 9am – Jesus sentenced to crucifixion
- 14th/9am to 3pm – Jesus hangs on the cross
- 14th/3pm He dies. (Matt 27:45)
- New day begins at sunset, Jesus put in the grave before sunset (around 6pm).

15th – Friday – Unleavened Celebration

- 15th/6pm to 6am = 1 night in grave (Feast of Unleavened all day)

16th – Saturday – Sabbath

- 16th/6pm to 6am = 2 nights in the grave (Sabbath Day)

17th – Sunday – First Day of week – Resurrection – Feast of First Fruits

- 17th/6pm to 6am = 3 nights in the grave
- 17th/ early morning Mary sees Jesus at the Garden Tomb
- The Feast of Firstfruits all day.

Same Day Ark Rested – 17th of Month

The same day the Ark rested, symbolizing in advance that Christ would be our rest, and our escape from judgment of God, our ark of salvation, our new beginning. The 7th month, would become the first month right here after God says this month is now the first month.

(Genesis 8:4 NKJV) Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.

Protection & Prophecy

What a wonderful, glorious study of His Word. You can be sure of His Word, every last word of it will come to pass. My, my how Awesome He is – Give Him glory for He is worthy of all Praise and Glory.

Jesus written of in the OT / 300 Times

In verse 45, grab that. Philip says, "We found him whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote." Jesus was prophesied over 300 times in the Old Testament. The chances of that prophesy of just 8 of them is staggering. The proof of Jesus being God is in the Old Testament scriptures. That's where he's proven out and that's where the faith can be found in the prophecies of Jesus Christ. It's not blind faith, there is enough prophecies that you have to look and go, "This is undeniable."

Top 8

His Birth & Lineage

- 1.) The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. Micah 5:2a / Matthew 2:1-2
- 2.) The Messiah would be a descendant of David. Isaiah 9:7 / Matthew 1:1

His Environment & the World Setting

- 3.) The Messiah would be announced to his people 483 years, to the exact day, after the decree to rebuild the city of Jerusalem. Daniel 9:25 / John 12:12-13
- 4.) The Messiah would be killed before the destruction of the temple. Daniel 9:26c / Matthew 27:50-51
- 5.) The Jew's authority to administer capital punishment would be gone when the Messiah arrived. Genesis 49:10c / John 18:31

His Death

- 6.) The Messiah would be sacrificed on the same mountain where God tested Abraham. Genesis 22:14 / Luke 23:33
- 7.) The Messiah's back would be whipped. Isaiah 53:5c Matthew 27:26
- 8.) The Messiah's hands and feet would be pierced. Psalm 22:16c Matthew 27:38

All facts that can be backed up by historical writings

The Law of Compound Probability / The Quarter – 10 to 17th / Blindfold

The following probabilities (The Law of Compound Probability) are taken from Peter Stoner in Science Speaks (Moody Press, 1963) to show that coincidence is ruled out by the science of probability. Stoner says that by using the modern science of probability in reference to eight prophecies, 'we find that the chance that any man might have lived down to the present time and fulfilled all eight prophecies is 1 in 10 to the 17th.' That would be 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000. That is more than the number of stars in our galaxy. In order to help us comprehend this staggering probability, Stoner illustrates it by supposing that "we take 10 to the 17th silver dollars and lay them on the face of Texas (which is about 270,000 square miles) It took me 16 hours to drive across the State from

border to border, and I still had to get a hotel room in El Paso. They will cover all of the state two feet deep. "Now mark one of these silver dollars and stir the whole mass thoroughly, all over the state. Blindfold a man and tell him that he can travel as far as he wishes, but he must pick up one silver dollar and say that this is the right one. What chance would he have of getting the right one? Just the same chance that the prophets would have had of writing these eight prophecies and having them all come true in any one man."

We can Trust the Scriptures

Can you trust in these scriptures? Absolutely! Can you believe that Jesus is God and that He saves? Absolutely! Can you trust that He knows and is involved in every detail of your life? Absolutely! Trust Him, follow Him, live for Him, and celebrate Him.

John 12:12-18

Recap

We pick up here in verse 12 today. The day will be Sunday, the first day of the week, and verses 1-11 was Saturday and Jesus was at the home of Simon the leper with his disciples and Lazarus who He had raised from the dead, Martha was serving, and Mary came and poured out 16 ounces of spikenard oil upon Jesus' head and feet. An amazing act of worship. And now, we pick it up in verse 12.

John 12:12–18 (NKJV) ¹² The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, ¹³ took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is *He who comes in the name of the LORD!*' The King of Israel!" ¹⁴ Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: ¹⁵ "*Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt.*" ¹⁶ His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and *that* they had done these things to Him. ¹⁷ Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. ¹⁸ For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign.

The Journey Getting There

Today will look at God arranging the whole world to His time schedule, moving and orchestrating every detail, down to the day, down to the donkey, and we see our awesome God, His awesome love, and we gain more confidence that as He controls the details of the world, He is involved in every detail of our lives too. We can take comfort in that today, He is in the details. May we know that Jesus didn't come only to lead us to heaven, but lead us every day of our lives.

Salvation is more than the destination, it is also the journey getting there.

Salvation, it is the Zoe Life, the abundant life the God life, the life beyond what this world has to offer, and we can live it every day of our life.

John 12:12 The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

The next day

It is Sunday – 10th Nisan (06 April 32AD)

The day is Sunday the 10th of Nisan in the Jewish calendar, which translates into April 6th. From our last study we saw that the exact day is April 6th, 32AD. We saw that it was exactly 173,880 days from the command to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem as given in Nehemiah 2. Jesus to the day fulfills the prophecy of Messiah the Prince coming into Jerusalem and being heralded the Messiah. Jesus was right on time, to the day, to the hour, to the minute (and so too will be on the 14th of Nisan when He dies as the Passover Sacrifice), Jesus was right on time, and will be right on time.

(Nehemiah 2:1 NKJV) And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before.

Daniel 9:24–27 (NKJV) ²⁴ "Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy. ²⁵ "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. ²⁶ "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined. ²⁷ Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."

Jesus will Always be Right on Time for You / Maybe you Feel He is Late – Know He will be Right on Time

And Jesus will be right on time in your life, Jesus knows the day, the hour, the minute of every need in your life, and He will be right on time for you. Maybe you feel He is late, tarrying to long, has totally missed it, but know with full-assurance (as illustrated here) that Jesus knows the exact moment He needs to show up for your need. Why do I say this illustration, because your first need and greatest need, as is mine, was salvation, the forgiveness of sin, and Jesus ‘nailed it’ (literally) to the day, the hour, and the minute..... and He will do so for every moment of every need in your life.

a great multitude that had come to the feast

Josephus – 2.5 Million

Josephus the Jewish historian would put the number of people in Jerusalem for the Passover at around 2.5 million people based on the number of Passover lambs being slain. Passover, Pentecost, and Feast of Tabernacles were the three mandatory Feasts that all males over the age of 18 were to attend. I read one Jewish historian that said that King Agrippa had wanted to know how many people were in Jerusalem during the Passover, and told priest to save the kidney from every Passover lamb so they could get an estimate, and the number came to 600 thousand, times 2, so 1.2 million. Probably some number inflating, but we can gather it was a lot. Please note, although a couple million in Jerusalem at this time, doesn’t mean that all couple million came out to greet Jesus’ entry. But the number is large we know that as we read on.

“King Agrippa, desirous to know how great a multitude was at Jerusalem at the Passover, commanded the priests, saying, ‘Lay me aside one kidney of every lamb.’ They laid him aside six hundred thousand pair of kidneys: double the number to those that went out of Egypt. Now there was not any paschal lamb but was divided among more than ten persons. R. Chaija saith, ‘Forty, nay fifty persons.’ One time they went into the Mountain of the Temple, and it could not contain them. But there was a certain old man amongst them whom they trod under their feet. Wherefore they called that Passover the Crowded Passover.”

*Lightfoot, J. (2010). A Commentary on the New Testament from the Talmud and Hebraica, Matthew-1 Corinthians, Luke-John (Vol. 3, p. 378). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

John 12:13 took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: “Hosanna! ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’ The King of Israel!”

took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him

Why Palm Branches / 200 Years Prior – Judas Maccabee (Syrian King – Antiochus Epiphanes) / Pig Sacrifice

Why palm branches? Because the palm branches were the symbol of Israel’s national identity. Still today they have coins with palm branches inscribed on them. The waving of palm branches and crying of Hosanna was a tradition that began two hundred years earlier, following the reign of a bloodthirsty Syrian king named Antiochus Epiphanes. A man so blasphemous that he slaughtered a pig in the Holy of Holies and made the priests drink its blood, Epiphanes bludgeoned the Jews into submission, killing thousands upon thousands of them. After several years of this, however, a man named Judas Maccabee, whose name meant “hammer,” and his brothers decided to nail Antiochus Epiphanes by launching a guerrilla war against him. Approximately nine years later, when Maccabee and his band of renegades miraculously overcame the Assyrian army and drove Epiphanes from Jerusalem, the people spontaneously celebrated by waving palm branches. And from that time on, the back of Jewish coinage depicted a palm branch as a symbol of deliverance from oppression. Here in John’s account, two hundred years after Maccabee, the Jews find themselves oppressed again, not by the Syrians, but by the Romans. Consequently, what the people were essentially saying when they cried Hosanna and waved palm branches as Jesus rode into Jerusalem, was, “Be Judas Maccabee. Deliver us from the Romans.” But when they realized Jesus had a different agenda than a political one, a different agenda than a national one, a different agenda than a material one—their cry changed from “Hosanna” to “Crucify him.”

They Didn’t Understand what Jesus was Doing / Better Life – More Comfortable Life / Greatest Need 1st

They didn’t understand what Jesus had come for, they thought it was for political reason, to overthrow Rome, to make their life better, more comfortable, and more respectful. They totally did not see that Jesus was coming for their greatest need first, salvation, to deal a death blow to sin that is the death blow to man.

Maybe you Don't Understand what Jesus is Doing

Maybe you don't understand what Jesus is doing, maybe you think He should be doing something else in your life, working in a different way than He is. I think we all have felt that way at some time in our life, sometime in our week, or month, and maybe you feel that way at this very moment; the Lord would say to you, look at this moment, and understand and know that I know what you need more than you do, and I am working out your need in your best interest.

Sometimes it Just Comes down to Obedience

Sometimes in the wait, in the misunderstanding, we say I can't stay faithful anymore. Maybe you are saying right now to the Lord, please take this burden off of me, please just remove this sin I am tempted and struggle with; listen beloved, sometimes it just comes down to going to your knees in prayer and saying, Lord I choose to obey that this is not your will, and regardless of how I may justify, it doesn't align with Your Word, therefore in obedience and faith, I say no to it. Sometimes folks, it just comes down to obedience, and you saying "no", and you trusting that the Lord knows what He is doing, and will do what needs to be done, in His perfect timing.

BTW – Stand on the Word

By the way, it is easy for our emotions to have the best of us, to lead and guide us, but may we all not let emotions shape our theology, but this Word of God that we hold in our hand. This Word is sure, it true, and He (the Word) will do everything He said He would do in our life. I will tell you why I have not moved off my faith in close to 20 25 years, it is this the more sure word of the prophecy, I know that I know that this book is true and I know that my Redeemer lives and I will see him on that day. Today I will live for him, tomorrow I will live for him, and every day thereafter as I'm sure this word is sure. Emotions don't move me, nor the circumstances, this word is my bedrock foundation of my faith, and may we all make it our bedrock. Consider Peter, he walked with Jesus and was with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, yet even he will say as great as that was, nothing is more sure than the prophetic word recorded for us.

2 Peter 1:16–21 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of His majesty. ¹⁷ For He received from God the Father honor and glory when such a voice came to Him from the Excellent Glory: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." ¹⁸ And we heard this voice which came from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain. ¹⁹ And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; ²⁰ knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, ²¹ for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

and cried out: "Hosanna! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' The King of Israel!"

Messianic Psalm / Jesus receives Public Worship

As we studied last week, this is Psalm 118, it is a Messianic psalm. Here for the first time, Jesus allows and receives public heralding and proclamation of Him being the Messiah, the King of Israel. We know full well that the Jesus leaders knew what Psalm 118 meant, that is referred to the Messiah, because in Luke's account they tell Jesus to tell the people to stop it, to which Jesus answered if they stopped then the rocks would cry out.

Luke 19:39–40 (NKJV) ³⁹ And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." ⁴⁰ But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

Psalm 118:25–26 (NKJV) ²⁵ Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. ²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.

Read On in Psalm 118

As we read the whole context of Psalm 118, we read the stone which the builders rejected. Jesus quotes this passage in Matthew 21:42 as a reference to Himself. Tradition says that when the temple was being constructed in Solomon's day with massive stones that were quarried away from the temple mount, a stone was initially thrown into the Kidron Valley below. At the end of the project, the capstone, or cornerstone, was missing—until someone remembered the stone that had been thrown away. Jesus was clear He is the chief cornerstone, He would be the one rejected, but those who would receive Him as Messiah would be saved and bear much fruit. Although we like to quote Psalm 118:24 on beautiful days, the verse specifically is referencing this very day, this Triumphant Entry.

Psalm 118:22–26 (NKJV) ²² The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. ²³ This was the LORD's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes. ²⁴ This is the day the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. ²⁵ Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. ²⁶ Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.

Matthew 21:42–44 (NKJV) ⁴² Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. This was the LORD's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes?'" ⁴³ "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. ⁴⁴ And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."

Hosanna – Save Now / The Great Hosanna

Remember our study a few chapters back regarding the Feast of Tabernacles and how they poured the water out at the altar in the Temple. Remember how the priest would take down this golden pitcher that would hold about 2-3 pints of water from The Pool of the Sent One and then he would come back up to the Temple Mount and when he got up to the Temple Mount a group of other priests had gathered branches and they would get all around the altar and form this shield around the altar. As he came they would read from Isaiah chapter 12, verse 3: "Therefore with joy shall we draw water out of wells of salvation." Then they would break into the Hallel Psalms and they would go back and forth. The Levites would sing those with flutes. You imagine these thousands of people singing the Hallel Psalms (Psalms 113-118), how beautiful it was. Remember Jesus on the last day cried out, all who are thirsty come.

John 7:37–38 (NKJV) ³⁷ On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

Well check this out, read this commentary

Blessed (εὐλογημένος). A different word from the blessed of Matt. 5:3 (μακάριος). This is the perfect participle of the verb εὐλογέω, to speak well of, praise, hence our eulogy. Matthew's word applies to character; this to repute. The ascription of praise here is from Ps. 118:25, 26. This Psalm, according to Perowne, was composed originally for the first celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles after the completion of the sacred temple. The words of the twenty-fifth verse were sung during that feast, when the altar of burnt-offering was solemnly compassed; that is, once on each of the first six days of the feast, and seven times on the seventh day. This seventh day was called "the Great Hosanna," and not only the prayers for the feast, but even the branches of trees, including the myrtles which were attached to the palm-branch, were called "Hosannas."

*Vincent, M. R. (1887). *Word studies in the New Testament* (Vol. 2, pp. 216–217). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Save Now – today – Right Now / The Great Hosanna

See now, that the save now, is now. They cry Jesus save now, right this moment, not tomorrow, but now. And you too can cry that to the Lord any time, any moment, any "now", Oh Lord save now, I need you right now! Oh Great Hosanna, great save now, please save now!

Want to Bless People – Come in the Name of the Lord / Live each Day as if Sent by the Lord

By the way, want to bless people, want to be a blessing everywhere you go and everything you do? Then "come in the name of the Lord".

- Come as an ambassador for Christ,
- Come not into the room of "here I am", but come in with "there you are", how may I bless this person in the Lord?
- Live as if you were sent by the Lord (which you are).

People love to know they are "elected" for salvation, and you are, but know also you are elected, chosen, to be His hands and feet, heart and love, to every person you come in contact with.

John 12:14 Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written:

John 12:15 "Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey's colt."

Quoting Zechariah 9 / Jesus Comes in Peace

During the times of Jesus, Kings would ride into town on a donkey (In the ancient Middle Eastern world, leaders rode horses if they rode to war, but donkeys if they came in peace. First Kings 1:33 mentions Solomon riding a donkey on the day he was recognized as the new king of Israel. Other instances of leaders riding donkeys are Judges 5:10; 10:4; 12:14; and 2 Samuel 16:2.).

Zechariah 9:9 (NKJV) ⁹ "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.

Jesus says Come to Me / I come In Peace – not War

Jesus says come to Me, I extend My hands of peace to you, and you have no fear that I will turn you away. If you have not come to Jesus, and maybe you wonder if He will receive you even after all you have done, the sins that you are guilt ridden over, sins you think have cut you off from Him..... He says to you today, see me riding on the colt, not a war horse, I come in peace, and you can come to Me, and I will receive you.

A Donkey & A Colt / Matthew's Account

Hey, check this out. Each gospel account writer gives their account of how they saw the event, and they write under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Just like a car accident, people all see things from different angles, and from perspectives that were most memorable for them. Different accounts are not contradictions, but different views. All the Gospel accounts record Jesus riding in on a donkey, but Matthew's account gives a detail that is exact, as it says Jesus rode in with both a donkey and a colt/foal (which is an offspring of a donkey, one that is not fully mature donkey yet). I don't know the specifics of how that may be; maybe he rode one for a period, then rode the other for another period. Maybe He sat on the donkey, and rested His feet on the smaller colt, but whatever the case, Jesus rode both a donkey and a colt. When you read the original language of Zechariah, the language means plural (donkey and colt), and when you read Matthews and they say "them", it is plural, and it is not referring to the clothing, but the animals. What is my point, it makes Zechariah prophecy even more amazing as the Messiah had to ride in with both a donkey and a colt, small detail, but it is the details that make these prophecies even more amazing.

Matthew 21:4-9 (NKJV) ⁴ All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: ⁵ "Tell the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.' " ⁶ So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. ⁷ They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them. ⁸ And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' Hosanna in the highest!"

Every Detail – Your Life Too

And, if you haven't caught the continual theme in our passage today, Jesus is into the details, even the tiniest details, and that isn't just on the world stage, but every last detail of your life. Jesus isn't just interested in the big picture of your life, but every last detail, and he will work those details, fine-tune those details, in your life. God loves you, every last detail of you.

John 12:16 His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and that they had done these things to Him.

Maybe you Don't Understand All these Things – just Keep seeing Jesus Glorified in your Life

When He was glorified refers to Jesus raising from the dead and ascending into heaven to be seated at the right hand of the Father. Hey maybe you don't understand all these things you read about Jesus, get confused with some prophecy, bewildered this doctrine, or that theology; hey don't beat yourself up or get down upon yourself, just remember these disciples spent 3 years with Jesus, and yet they still didn't get all these things either, so you are in good company. The key is to just keep seeing Jesus glorified, lifted up, exulted in your life, and the more you see His glory, the clearer and clearer things become.

Put them in a Folder – They will Come to Understanding Eventually

Just take those passages you don't understand them in the folder hold till further notice information, keep walking with the Lord and they will come to light and revelation through the work of the Holy Spirit.

John 12:17 Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness.

John 12:18 For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign.

Witness of Word – Witness of Worshipper

So we have seen amazing prophecies, Daniel 9, Psalm 118, Zechariah 9, and thus we have the witness of the Word, these Scriptures we hold, sure and true. They witnessed of Jesus riding into on this very day. And here in verses

17 and 18, we have the witness of the worshippers. Here are the people who witnessed His great works of raising Lazarus from the dead, they are in this procession and they are telling all the people who they are passing, hey this is the Jesus you heard about, the One who raises the dead. And upon hearing their witness, they come to the roadside, they begin to follow.

Oh the Power of the Witness / Witness doesn't have to Be Word Only

Oh the power of the witness, the personal witness. Here is one of the earliest "street witnessing" in the church. When we share Christ, that is all we are doing, telling people hey hear is the amazing God, who does great and mighty things, He raised Lazarus from the dead, and we get to tell people "He called me, raised me, gave me new life free from the grips of sin and someday death, He is amazing. You can put yourself in the picture here, it is pure energy, extreme joy and excitement, it is a powerful moment. The last thing I told the mission team before they left for Cambodia was go tell people the "good news" like it is good news. Be excited about, testify to His greatness. Sometimes we can find ourselves (because we are Calvary Chapel – students of the Word) sharing the Gospel as a string of Scriptures, the witness of the Word, and leaving out our witness of the worshipper. Tell them the Good News, like it really is..... IT IS GOOD NEWS!

Celebrate Communion Today

After such a warm and loving passage, reading this Triumphal Entry, no rocks are going to sing out in here today, we are going to celebrate Him and remember Him with communion.

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

Next Study

Jesus' greatest calling unto Zoe Life, and what He calls us to do, in order that we might have and live the Zoe Life.

End of Study

John 12:19 – 26

John 12:12–27 (NKJV) ¹² The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, ¹³ took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out: “Hosanna! ‘Blessed is *He who comes in the name of the LORD!*’ The King of Israel!” ¹⁴ Then Jesus, when He had found a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written: ¹⁵ “*Fear not, daughter of Zion; Behold, your King is coming, Sitting on a donkey’s colt.*” ¹⁶ His disciples did not understand these things at first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written about Him and *that* they had done these things to Him. ¹⁷ Therefore the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of his tomb and raised him from the dead, bore witness. ¹⁸ For this reason the people also met Him, because they heard that He had done this sign. ¹⁹ The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, “You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!” ²⁰ Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast. ²¹ Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.” ²² Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus. ²³ But Jesus answered them, saying, “The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. ²⁴ Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. ²⁵ He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. ²⁶ If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor. ²⁷ “Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour.

Opening Prayer

It is Sunday / The Triumphal Entry

It is Sunday, the 10th of Nisan on the Jewish calendar. Jesus’ triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Estimates are close to 2 million plus people in Jerusalem, no doubt tens of thousands if not hundreds of thousands along the roadway for this triumphal entry. Let’s pick up where we left off, verse 19.

John 12:19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, “You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him!”

After 3 Years of Trying – They still Can’t Silence Jesus / World & Nation Trying same Today / But Here we Sit

You accomplish nothing the Pharisees (the religious leaders of the day) say among themselves. After 3 plus years of trying to quiet Jesus, trying to discredit Jesus, after all their efforts, in the end they fail. So too today many people of the world try to quiet the voice of God, discredit God, and tear Him down, so people won’t follow Him. We live in a Nation, that now calls for separation of government from God. A Nation that continually tries to remove God from the history books. A Nation that teaches evolution in the public schools over a universe created by the hand of God. But all the attempts..... fail, as here we sit today, along with hundreds of thousands of other churches, all worshipping and celebrating the God who has come.

The Rocks would Cry Out / Man will Never Silence God / God is Awesome – Your God Rules!

I believe this verse is also a reference to the Pharisees telling Jesus to tell the people to shut-up, to stop proclaiming Him the Messiah, the King of Israel, to which Jesus said if they to remain silent these very rocks would cry out. Man will never silence God, as much as he may try. God is mighty, God is awesome, He reigns! Listen Christian ...your God rules! We don’t have a weak-kneed God, we don’t have a God that is usurped by a political party, or who controls the Madison avenue marketing, or the Hollywood entertainment, or the Wall Street economy, we have a God who comes at the moment He sets (and the whole world pieces are moved according to Him so that it is so), and the voice of the world and world religions are drowned out by His presence when He shows up.

Luke 19:40–41 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ But He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.” ⁴¹ Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it,

Nothing can Silence God – On this Earth & in Your Life / Ask God to Speak into Your Life – and He Will

Nothing can silence God on this earth, and nothing in your life! God rules, He reigns, He is awesome, and He is mighty..... Nothing can silence God, nothing in this world, nothing in your life, and when you say Lord speak, your servant hears, you can be sure He will speak to His servants.

John 12:20 Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast.

John 12:21 Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”

See (Perceive and Understand) / Summation of Theology

Verse 20 word for ‘see’ means to perceive and understand. The summation of theology is”

- Who is God?
- What does He think of Me?
- What does He want me to do?

Greeks with all Polytheism (form of godliness) & Philosophy – Still knew it was Empty / Sin is a Grind

So here we have the Greeks who had polytheism with multiple gods to choose from, but these Greeks knew it was empty and in vain. Man can justify sin, a man can say to themselves I do these things because of my environment, or upbringing. Some say I do what I do because that is the way I am made, and God understand that and He accepts that, so you can stop judging me. But for many of us here today we can testify to this, and that is that sin is a grind, and it just wears you down, and leaves you empty. You know all the philosophies of the world, all the watered-down religions who give a form of godliness but has no power, just doesn't fill the void, and we want to rid that sin that robes us and keeps empty and void. Sin is a grind, and through the grace of God a man or woman can say (like we see these Greeks) there has to be more, what I am doing leaves me empty, Sir I wish to see Jesus **2 Timothy 3:1-5 (NKJV)** ¹ But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: ² For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, ³ unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, ⁴ traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

See (Perceive and Understand) / Summation of Theology

Verse 20 word for ‘see’ means to perceive and understand. The summation of theology is”

- Who is God?
- What does He think of Me?
- What does He want me to do?

Sunday School Teachers – Just show them Jesus / Start with Presupposition – People want to See Jesus

Teaching Sunday school, preaching on the street, sharing with your kids in family devotions, here's a key to it all shown them Jesus. We wish to see Jesus; put that on the pulpit, always be in your mind, that people want to see Jesus. When you minister start with the position, the presupposition that people want to see Jesus. Take them to Jesus so they can perceive him and understand Him, who He is, what He thinks of them (which is great love), and what He wants them to do (and that is give their heart and lives to Him and follow Him fully, as we will see these next verses).

They came to Phillip / No Go-between Needed / Jesus is Tired – His Feet Hurt / He will Receive You

Why did they come to Phillip out of all the disciples (12)? Well first of all it appears these Greek didn't think they could approach Jesus directly, they appear to think they need a go-between, because they were Greeks, and Jesus was a Jew. They were Greeks and had come to partake in a Jewish Feast (Passover). First let me say to anyone one listening, you do not need a go-between to come to Jesus, we are told in 1 Timothy there is only one mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus. You can boldly come before the throne of grace. You need no priest, no Mary, no “you are closer to God than me” person, you can freely approach Jesus, you need no go-between. And see this, we ourselves know physical exhaustion, Jesus is tired, His feet hurt, He has had a full day, yet He will receive these men, He has time for them. Jesus will always have time for you, He will always be ready to meet with you, He is never too tired or busy too not meet with you.

1 Timothy 2:5 (NKJV) ⁵ For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus,

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Greek Name – Relatable

Why come to Phillip? I think because although he was a Jew, he had a Greek name, quite possible one of his parents had some Greek lineage in them. So these Grecians maybe thought Phillip was relatable to them, and thus he would be the best person to approach because they had something in common, they had something they both could relate to. See that in your life, that your name, your testimony, your job, your childrearing, your hair, or lack thereof, your eyes, your personality, your past, your present, your clothing style (suit & tie, baggy pants and flip-flops), your hobby, your car, all the things that make up you, are all things that make you relatable to that person who is “wanting to see Jesus”, can you take me to Jesus?

John 12:22 Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

Andrew – Always Bring people to Jesus / Never had Answer – but Always had Solution / Bring them to Jesus

What an example for us, Andrew when we read of him in the scriptures, is always bringing people to Jesus. He brings his brother Peter (John 1:41), he brings the little boy with the loaves and the fish (John 6), and here he brings Phillip and what would lead to these Greeks men. What I like about Andrew is, in all the cases he never had the answer to the question or the need, but he always had the solution, just bring them to Jesus. Someone have marriage problem, bring them to Jesus. Someone has an addiction problem, bring them to Jesus. Someone depressed, bring them to Jesus. Someone seeking the meaning of life, bring them to Jesus.

John 12:23 But Jesus answered them, saying, “The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.

Not just talking to Andrew & Phillip

Some commentators get confused and say Jesus is only talking to Phillip and Andrew, but that is not so. Jesus answers “them” plural, and the sentence structures does not lend itself that Jesus is only answering Phillip and Andrew. The Greek word used for “but” is the same word that means (and, now, then, yet, moreover). Jesus answers them, because Jesus always has time for your questions.

Son of Man / Every Nation & Tongue

Jesus identifies Himself as the “Son of Man”. This is a fascinating and wonderful study I would encourage you to take in. But for our purposes today, Jesus is identifying Himself as God, but also the God-Man, who came into the world. And, a key here for these Greeks, that “all people, nations, and languages” can come to Him (Daniel 7). Fascinating study “Son of Man”, and we see it throughout Bible, and into Revelation, as we see Jesus (the Son of Man) walking among His church.

Daniel 7:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ “I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. ¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

Revelation 1:12–13 (NKJV) ¹² Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.

Full Circle – East & West

I find it interesting that the Greek nation was to the west of Israel, and thus these men came from the West here at the time of His death, and the magi came from the East at the time of His birth. Our sins will be removed as far as the east is from the west, but the offer of forgiveness goes out all the way to the east and the west. Also, here we see the world come around full-circle, from the east to the west. Maybe things in your life right seem as if they are heading in one direction, and that direction is the wrong direction, but just rest in the Lord that he will bring all things around in full-circle, and He will move and arrange the whole world, just for you, to come and meet your need.

Psalms 103:12 (NKJV) ¹² As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.

John 12:23 But Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.
John 12:24 Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.

How Interesting – Amazing God – Considers Humility of Cross Glory

How interesting to me, that Jesus says it is time to be glorified. Glorified means to be "clothed in splendor", exalted, esteemed, to cause the dignity and worth of some person or thing to become manifest and acknowledged. Dignity? He will be stripped naked, spit upon, humiliated and mocked, hung upon a cross, and he calls that glory!, Clothed in Splendor, to.....to cause the dignity and worth of some person or thing to become manifest and acknowledged! He certainly does, because for the joy set before Him, He despised the shame, endured the cross, and now sits at the right hand throne of God. What an amazing God that he considers the cross "glory", but so true that it is, because through the cross, through death, life is produced.

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Counter to Our Live for Self Culture – Jesus says Glory comes through Death

So counter to our culture (a culture of self and serve self), Jesus says glory comes through death, and death produces life, and multiplies and propagates itself just like grain of wheat does. This is mind-blowing words in 32 AD Israel, just as mind-blowing words in 2015 in Maryland.

Jesus is talking about His Death / Still Smelling like Spikenard / 250,000 Sheep Bleating

Jesus is talking about His death, and then ours, and mind you, Jesus was still smelling like spikenard from the day before when Mary anointed Him with 16 ounces of this extremely potent fragrance, a fragrance that was used to anoint the dead before placed in the tomb (grave). And mind you on this day hundreds of thousands of sheep are everywhere reading like sheep do because they have to have to be examined. Imagine the scene Jesus comes in and their sheep sounds of sheep everywhere. And the spikenard. The smell and sound of death is the background to Jesus' statement, unless a grain of wheat dies and goes into the ground.

I am reminded of a story I once heard.

BLOOD FLOWS IN THE BOMOKANDE

In November 1964, anarchy broke out in the Belgian Congo. Assemblies of God missionary J. W. Tucker knew he was at risk, but he stayed where God had placed him. One day, a mob attacked and killed him with sticks, clubs, fists, and broken bottles. They took his body, threw it in the back of a truck, drove a good distance, and then tossed his corpse to the crocodiles in the Bomokande River in what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

J. W. Tucker had risked everything, yet he seemingly had nothing to show for it. But 30 years later, John Weidman, a close friend of Tucker's, was in the country (by then known as Zaire) and learned how God used that missionary's sacrifice.

The Bomokande River flows through the middle of the Mangbeto tribe, a people virtually without the gospel. During a time of civil war, the Mangbeto king became distressed with the violence and appealed to the central government in Kinshasa for help. The central government responded by sending a man called the Brigadier, a well-known policeman of strong stature and reputation who came from the region of Isiro. J. W. Tucker had won the Brigadier to the Lord just two months before he was killed.

The Brigadier determined to reach the Mangbetos with the gospel, the only way to peace. Being a relatively new Christian, he did his best to witness, but he was met with no response. Then one day he heard of a Mangbeto tradition that said: "If the blood of any man flows in the Bomokande River, you must listen to his message." This saying had been with the Mangbetos for as long as anyone could remember.

The Brigadier called for the king and all the village elders. They gathered in full assembly to hear his address. "Some time ago a man was killed, and his body was thrown into your Bomokande River," the Brigadier began. "The crocodiles in this river ate him up. His blood flowed in your river. But before he died, he left me a message.

"This message concerns God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who came to this world to save people who were sinners. He died for the sins of the world; He died for my sins. I received this message, and it changed my life." As the Brigadier preached, the Spirit of God descended and people began to fall on their knees and cry out to the Lord. Many were converted that day.

And since that day, thousands of Mangbetos have come to Christ and dozens of churches have started, all because of a message from a man whose blood flowed in the Bomokande River.

Jesus' Story / Becomes our Story

In our passage today we read of Jesus' story, a grain of wheat falling into the ground producing much more grain; and then we read that His story, becomes our story, when we like Him fall into the ground, and die to self.

John 12:25 He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

John 12:26 If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.

Psyche – Physical Life / Seat of Emotions (wants & desires)

In verse 25, the word for "life" is the Greek word "psyche", and it is the word used for "being alive, breathing, the breath of life". So in context through various places in the Scripture, it can mean to live or die physically, and it is used to mean to take of one's life physically such as clothing, food, shelter, and "the seat of emotions", where a man's wants and desires are. I want this "thing" in my life", I desire to aspire, I want to give my body this thing because it will please me and my body.

John 12:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ He who loves his life (psyche) will lose it, and he who hates his life (psyche) in this world will keep it for eternal life (zoe).

Quite Different from ZOE / God Life – Abundant Life / Purpose of this Book

Quite a different word from the Greek word "zoe", which we see as a central theme of the Book of John, and very much the whole purpose of Jesus coming to save and redeem man, so they can have the "zoe" life, which is the God life, a life beyond this life, a life beyond anything this world could offer, it is the life Jesus lived when He walked on this earth, as He had intimacy with the Father in heaven, and walked in unity, communion, and one accord with the Father's will.

John 20:30-31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life (zoe) in His name.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life (zoe), and that they may have it more abundantly.

Verse 25 – Pour into Psyche (render your life useless)

Jesus is saying, pour your life focus into the "psyche" life, the living and breathing, pleasing the body life, and you will lose it. Lose it means not perish eternally, but also "to render useless". So you can receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior, but still "render your life useless" as you walk this earth.

John 12:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ He who loves his life (psyche) will lose it, and he who hates his life (psyche) in this world will keep it for eternal life (zoe).

How do I have ZOE / 21 Chapter Summation here in Verse 26 / Follow Him

So how do I have this "zoe" life, this abundant life? Verse 26 is a pretty good summation of these 21 chapters about having "zoe" life, the God life, the life beyond this life. If serve Me, "let Him follow Me". Repentance means to turn and follow, and so first thing is to turn from sin and follow Jesus where He is going. Anyone who thinks they can live in unrepentant habitual sin, fools themselves into thinking they are His. But for those who have turned, here is the pathway to "zoe" life, and that is to follow Him. Wherever you find Jesus, zoe life will be there, for where Jesus is, is where the Father is, and if you are with them, you will be right in the middle, the heart, of zoe life.

John 12:26 (NKJV) ²⁶ If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.

God Life Example of Jesus & then Disciples / How – Ask where are You Going Today Lord / Not Here what I doing

Follow Him, do you want the "zoe" life, the abundant life that Jesus lived and experience and showed is available to us, just as He showed it to those early disciples, then to have it, we follow. How do we follow, it is simple, every day we ask Him "where are you going today, that you want me to follow". And so we see the difference of how

are lives so often are, Lord here is what I am doing today please bless it. Whereas the zoe life says, Lord where are you going, that you want me to follow.

How Hard that is / We get into Daily Life – and Never Ask / Work – Childrearing – Missions / STOP - REST

My oh my, how hard this can be living (psyche) in the world we live today. We can just get into our daily life, and forget that we need to stop and ask, where are You going today Lord, where should I follow You today? But we thing that because we work, that isn't for discussion of the day, we think because we child rear that isn't for discussion, it is just what we do. But the Lord would say, yes we are going to work today, but here is where I am going at your workplace, and this is what I want you to do. Yes, we are child rearing today the Lord would say, but here is where I want to go with your kids today, and this is where I want you to follow Me. Sometimes it could even be something we think is so honorable, like a mission trip, or some type of service unto the Lord, but the Lord could be saying "no not today, I'm doing something else today, and I want you to follow Me there". There will be days where God totally replans "our" day, and says not today, today I just want you and I to walk and talk, to have coffee together, I want you to slow down and relax today, so follow me to the couch, put the remote and the mouse down, and just come sit for awhile.

Reflect back on My Life / Some Paths I didn't Want – Walked in Obedience / Israel Wandering / BURY ENEMY

And as I reflect on this, as I look back on my life, there are places the Lord has lead me to where I did not want to go. As we said last week, sometimes it simply comes down to obedience, and we go and do what He says, even though the emotions don't follow, and we do what He asks and says, simply and totally out of obedience. And, I have experienced, I am sure you have to when you look back, that God did lead us to a place or situation that we did not want to go, but oh what a work He did while we were there. Children of Israel, it was a 10 day journey from Egypt to Canaan (the Promised Land), but it says God did not take them the shortest way lest they get scared of the war that would immediately if they went through immediately, so God takes them the long way, shows them His glory, and grows them in faith. They see Manna from heaven, and water from the Rock, they have a cloud for shade in the day, and a fire at night for warmth. He grew them in faith taking them the long way, the way they would not have chosen. Maybe you feel He is taking you the long way, well here is what He is doing. And, consider this, it was the long way, on the long way, that God buried and destroyed their greatest enemy, their greatest threat, the Egyptian Army (the greatest and mightiest on the face of the earth at that time). So too God does for you on the long way. Precious saint, don't jump the path, don't choose your own path, for God is working on the very path you are on today, so stay on it, as it is all part of His "zoe" life plan for you, the God life, a life beyond this life, a life greater than anything this world's life (psyche) could ever offer you.

Key to ZOE – Ask Lord Where He is Going Today

The key is to follow, each day asking Lord where are you going, and where should I follow! That is the path to the ZOE LIFE.

End of Study

John 12:27

We Pick Up

We pick up our verse-by-verse study today here in verse 27. The context is that Jesus' 3.5 years of public ministry has been completed. He did many signs, wonders, and teachings about the Kingdom of God. The day is Sunday, the 10th of Nisan on the Jewish calendar, Jesus has just had His triumphal entry into Jerusalem and been heralded the Messiah, the King of Israel. It is now late in the day, maybe even after sunset (which would mean it is the next day Monday according to how the Nation Israel reckons time), and some Greek (non-Jewish) men have come to see Jesus. We pick up the conversation here in verse 27.

His hour has come.

John 12:27 "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour.

The Hour has Come – Repeatedly Said

We have repeatedly seen the statement being made regarding "the hour".

John 2:4 (NKJV) ⁴ Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."

John 4:21 (NKJV) ²¹ Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.

John 5:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice

John 7:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.

John 8:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come.

John 12:23 (NKJV) ²³ But Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.

Grand Picture – Specific Moment / Exodus 12

We know in the grand picture this is a reference to Jesus going to the cross, predetermined before the foundations of the world, to take on the sins of man so that a man/woman can have their sins blotted out, so they may come into the presence of the Holy God. But, there is more than this general statement, there is a specific hour, a specific day, a very specific picture of what this hour is referring to today. We find the specifics in Exodus chapter 12.

Exodus 12 – 1st Passover / Jesus the Final Passover

Let's turn to Exodus 12, and in this look at this amazing chapter we will study the first Passover (which was instituted their final night in the slavery and bondage of Egypt), and we see it all is a picture of the final Passover, the one in which Jesus will be the Passover Lamb.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Instruction for the Passover – 12:1-20

(Exodus 12:1 NKJV) Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying,

(Exodus 12:2 NKJV) "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.

New Year

God is changing the calendar, making this event the New Year. God saying I am going to do something so spectacular and wonderful, that each year will start your year off by remembering your deliverance out of the land of bondage.

When we Born-Again / BC

How about us, isn't it a New Year for us? How we look at our life, as before we were saved, and now that we are saved, born-again. We look back at how empty and void our lives were BC (before Christ), and we celebrate our new beginning.

Anti-christ Change Calendar

I think it important to note, in this day that we live where they are trying to remove the name of Christ from Christmas, Army Chaplain can't pray in His name, that all these are predecessors leading up to the Anti-christ, for he will seek to change the calendar himself, wipe out the reference of Jesus Christ. I believe he is going to try to institute a brand new calendar, one that has no reference to Jesus. In the book of Daniel it speaks of him wanting to change the times, I believe he will try maybe even succeed in changing the calendar. What we see today is just the spirit of the anti-christ already at work, preparing the way:

(Daniel 7:25 NKJV) He shall speak pompous words against the Most High, Shall persecute the saints of the Most High, And shall intend to change times and law. Then the saints shall be given into his hand For a time and times and half a time.

This is the Hour Christ is talking about!

(Exodus 12:3 NKJV) "Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth day of this month every man shall take for himself **a lamb**, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household.

(Exodus 12:4 NKJV) 'And if the household is too small for **the lamb**, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb.

(Exodus 12:5 NKJV) '**Your lamb** shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

(Exodus 12:6 NKJV) 'Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

Notice Progression / A – The – Your Lamb / Singular Form – It is Personal / Not pick up Pint – But Bring Home

Notice the progression; verse 3 it's "a lamb", verse 4, "the lamb", and then verse 5, "your lamb". The lamb is personal, it's your lamb. Based on that there were 600,000 men who would leave Egypt, we probably had then 500,000 lambs that would be slain on this day, yet all through the chapter when the word lamb is used, it is in singular form – lamb. It's your lamb, its personal. They weren't to go to some meeting point and pick up a pint of blood and take it home and apply it to the door, it was so personal that they were to get a lamb, and take it home and let it live amongst them for 4 days. When I meet someone who said yea I made a decision for Christ years ago, I'm saved, I not into going to church or anything like that, but I did pray that prayer.....doesn't sound very personal to me, I'd myself why isn't it.

Perfect Lamb / Pilate – Judas – Thief

Jesus the perfect spotless Lamb; He was inspected by Pilate who said I find no fault in this man. Judas would say I have betrayed innocent blood. The thief on the cross would say we're criminals, we deserve to be here, but this man is innocent. Jesus was and is the perfect spotless Lamb.

Brought into the Home / the Pet / Father have to Explain – Sin Kills

Put yourself back in the Passover. The lamb was brought into the home, and for 4 days it was part of the family. It would sleep in the home, it would walk among the kids, it would eat table scraps from the table, it would be like a pet, a cute cuddly pet. Imagine after 4 days of becoming attached to the lamb, and then you would have to take a knife and slit its throat. Imagine the children in the home saying why do you have to kill it, why can't we keep it. The father would have to explain it is the only way for death to Passover. It is the only way, and sin is personal, sin is emotional. Sin kills.

This is the Hour Christ is talking about!

(Exodus 12:7 NKJV) ‘And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.

The Doorpost and the Caph / the Nile River / The Door

It’s interesting; sprinkle the blood on the lentils and the doorpost. It would mean the blood was sprinkled in the shape of a cross on the doors of the houses. And God said when I see that, I will Passover the house. They were told to slaughter the lamb at the threshold of the door. The remarkable thing here is that for the Egyptian homes, they had a trench in front of the door called the “caph”. Pronounced “saf”; in its original sense meaning: containing; a vestibule (as a limit); also a dish (for holding blood or wine):--basin, bowl, cup, door (post), gate, post, threshold. As the Nile river would rise and flood the ground, the waters would flow into the caph and away from the houses. So the Jewish people were told to slay the lamb in caph in the front of the door. Then take the blood that was puddle there and spread it over doorposts and crossbars. The blood would make the sign of two crosses, with a lamb slain in the middle. It was a picture of Calvary. And no wonder that Jesus said I am the door:

(John 10:9 NKJV) “I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

Not Participants of the Other 9 Plagues / By Faith they Applied the Blood

By faith they kept the Passover. The Hebrews never participated in any of the other 9 plagues, but this final plague, they participated, and it was by faith they would have to believe the word that if they applied the blood over the door, that death would Passover. They had no assurance, they never had to do this before, but by faith they applied the blood:

(Hebrews 11:28 NKJV) By faith he kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, lest he who destroyed the firstborn should touch them.

Nothing about their Character

I might add, it was nothing to do with anything about them. There was no consideration what type of Jew they had been, what their moral character was, nothing about their past, it was all about whether they had the faith to apply the blood. The forgiveness of your sin, has nothing to do with you, but everything to do with the Lamb, and you apply the Lamb, not yourself for forgiveness of sin.

This is the Hour Christ is talking about!

(Exodus 12:8 NKJV) ‘Then they shall eat the flesh on that night; roasted in fire, with unleavened bread and with bitter herbs they shall eat it.

Bitter Herbs / Make Part of Devotional

Reminds them of the bitter bondage of slavery. Make it part of your devotional on a regular basis to remember just where God pulled you from, where you were heading, and the bondage sin was in your life. Remember the bitterness of that life, and it will make whatever you may be going through now, to pale in comparison to that bitterness. It will sweeten your day. Sometimes it is good to go back and remember the BC, so the taste of AD is ever so sweet.

Picture Perfect

All of this, everything we read here in chapter 12 is a perfect picture of Jesus.

This is the Hour Christ is talking about!

(Exodus 12:9 NKJV) ‘Do not eat it raw, nor boiled at all with water, but roasted in fire; its head with its legs and its entrails.

(Exodus 12:10 NKJV) ‘You shall let none of it remain until morning, and what remains of it until morning you shall burn with fire.

Full Wrath / Would not drink the Pain Killer / Jesus took Ever Last Drop

The whole lamb was to be roasted in the fire, again picture perfect, for Jesus took the full fire, the full wrath of God's fury for sin, He allowed nothing to water it down. In fact when they offered Him wine there upon the cross to numb the pain, He refused to water down the pain. He took it all for us, every last drop!

(Hebrews 12:2 NKJV) looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

(Matthew 27:34 NKJV) they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink.

This is the Hour Christ is talking about!

No Left Over / No need for it Tomorrow

There were to be no leftovers. Jesus said from the cross, it is finished, totally complete. There is no tomorrow to worry about. You won't need any tomorrow for the angel of death will have already passed, and the one lamb would have covered it. Same too for us, there is nothing we have to worry about today and tomorrow, for the Lamb of God has covered it all, all my sin, past – present – and future.

(Exodus 12:11 NKJV) 'And thus you shall eat it: with a belt on your waist, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. So you shall eat it in haste. It is the Lord's Passover.

Be Ready for New Life

Eat it with your sandals on and your staff in hand, in other words, be ready to move out. Be ready for a new life. The Lord would say to us that the old things have passed away, behold I make all things new:

(2 Corinthians 5:17 NKJV) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

When Deliverance Comes / Staff in Hand – Journey of Faith / the Great Adventure

When deliverance comes to you Christian, get moving, don't linger in Egypt, the world any longer, start putting distance between you and the world. They have no idea where they are going really, and how they will get there, all they know is they are leaving Egypt. Their journey will be a journey of faith, and that makes life a Great Adventure.

Go Out and Live the Adventure

Christian go out and live the adventure; the purpose of life is not arriving at heaven safely. Go out and live the abundant life, the God life, the life beyond the life this world has to offer. Take chances, be bold, go big, gird up your belt, strap on the sandals, and grab the staff and go see what seas God will part, what cities you can take with God, what lands you can bring the glory of God to.

This is the Hour Christ is talking about!

(Exodus 12:12 NKJV) 'For I will pass through the land of Egypt on that night, and will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD.

(Exodus 12:13 NKJV) 'Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy you when I strike the land of Egypt.

The Lord sees us Covered / Rom 6:23 / He no Longer see the Wages of Sin – but the Gift of God

When the Lord sees the blood of the Lamb applied to us, he no longer sees the wages of sin, but the gift of God: *(Romans 6:23 NKJV) For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Death Passes – Adoption Sealed / Hidden

Not only does death pass over, but adoption into the family as sons and daughters is sealed, hidden in Christ:

(John 1:12 NKJV) But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

(Colossians 3:3 NKJV) For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Angel of Death / Pesch – Spread Wings

I love the root of this word Passover, it is “Pesch” and it doesn’t just mean to pass over, but the root means, “spreading of the wings”. The beautiful picture is that of the Lord spreading His wings of protection over the home, so the angel of death would move on. We see this beautiful picture throughout the Scriptures. Jesus would say of Jerusalem how I would have loved to gather you to myself, and a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. We will see another picture of the spreading of the wings when the Ark of the Covenant is made, and the 2 Cherubim will spread their wings over the mercy seat, where the blood will be sprinkled on the Day of Atonement for the covering of man’s sin for one more year.

(Matthew 23:37 NKJV) “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!”

(Exodus 25:20 NKJV) “And the cherubim shall stretch out their wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and they shall face one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be toward the mercy seat.”

(Ruth 2:12 NKJV) “The LORD repay your work, and a full reward be given you by the LORD God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge.”

(Psalms 17:8 NKJV) Keep me as the apple of Your eye; Hide me under the shadow of Your wings,

(Psalms 36:7 NKJV) How precious is Your lovingkindness, O God! Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of Your wings.

(Psalms 57:1 NKJV) Be merciful to me, O God, be merciful to me! For my soul trusts in You; And in the shadow of Your wings I will make my refuge, Until these calamities have passed by.

(Psalms 61:4 NKJV) I will abide in Your tabernacle forever; I will trust in the shelter of Your wings. Selah

Mother Hen in a barn Fire

I read a story about a farmer who had a fire and lost all his livestock. In the morning he was walking the burnt area and came across his hen. He said he kicked the hen with his foot, and out came from underneath her outstretched wings, all her little chicks. How many times the Lord Jesus says to us, “Just come in under My wings.”

This is the Hour Christ is talking about!

(Exodus 12:14 NKJV) ‘So this day shall be to you a memorial; and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD throughout your generations. You shall keep it as a feast by an everlasting ordinance.

(Exodus 12:15 NKJV) ‘Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses. For whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that person shall be cut off from Israel.

(Exodus 12:16 NKJV) ‘On the first day there shall be a holy convocation, and on the seventh day there shall be a holy convocation for you. No manner of work shall be done on them; but that which everyone must eat; that only may be prepared by you.

(Exodus 12:17 NKJV) ‘So you shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread, for on this same day I will have brought your armies out of the land of Egypt. Therefore you shall observe this day throughout your generations as an everlasting ordinance.

(Exodus 12:18 NKJV) ‘In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month at evening, you shall eat unleavened bread, until the twenty-first day of the month at evening.

(Exodus 12:19 NKJV) ‘For seven days no leaven shall be found in your houses, since whoever eats what is leavened, that same person shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he is a stranger or a native of the land.

(Exodus 12:20 NKJV) ‘You shall eat nothing leavened; in all your dwellings you shall eat unleavened bread.’”

Matzah Wafer

We are all so familiar with this unleavened bread, it is our communion wafer. It has a very distinctive look to it, and no doubt as designed by the Lord. After the baking it has little heat marks, looking like bruises. They pierce the matzah with little holes so the flames can pass through. How fascinating again is the bread of the Seder, called

matzah, which we can clearly see is the perfect picture of the trinity, the crucifixion, and the resurrection. So this unleavened bread was to be eaten for 7 days over the Passover.

Check this Out – Jewish Passover Celebration

Now here is an interstrung tid-bit, and is part of the modern day ceremonies that Jewish people celebrate during the Passover meal. There are 3 matzahs on the table during the Passover meal. One of the three matzahs on the table is broken. Part is returned to the pile, the other part is set aside, usually wrapped in a napkin and hidden away in the house. It is called the “afikomen”. The piece of matzah set aside earlier is eaten as "dessert," the last food of the meal. Different families have different traditions relating to the afikomen. Some have the children hide it, while the parents have to either find it or ransom it back. Others have the parents hide it, and then the children go find it. But then the family eats it together. So we see, whose body does the matzah look like, whose body was pierced, and whose body was hidden away in the tomb for 3 days? What an amazing picture of Jesus, and yet the Jewish people can't even see it. But may we never miss out what we see, and may we rejoice and celebrate communion as God called and instituted for us.

Afikomen – I Came

By the way, “afikomen” is the only Greek word that is part of the Jewish Passover celebration. And the word in Greek means, “I have come, or it means I am coming”. Simply amazing.

Leaven – Sin / Air Bubble Rise Bread – Permeates whole Loaf

Leaven in the Scriptures is picture of sin. They weren't to have any leaven. Leaven is a process by which the bread rises through putrefaction; as it rots (decays), the air comes in. The air bubbles as it rots (decays), and it causes it to rise; not to have any rotteness/decay in it. Leaven became an interesting type of sin, because you put just a little bit of starter in a batch of dough, and it permeates through the whole batch. A little leaven leavens the whole lump. The Hebrew word for leaven is “hametz”, and it literally means “sour”.

Sin Tolerated / Cut-off from Israel

A little sin tolerated in your life, it begins to permeate until it fills your whole life. And so, it was to be unleavened bread during this time. We may say, its just a little sin, I'm just going to take a little peek, just a little indulgence, I only get drunk a couple times a year. There was to be no leaven. We are told in the Scriptures that everyone who calls on the name of Christ, is to depart from sin. In verse 15 we see the Lord is so serious about this picture of sin, that anyone who partakes in leaven, was to be cut-off from the nation. I think, too many Christians abuse the grace of God, and use it as a license for sin. I think that is dangerous ground to be on, for the Bible says that we know that we know Him, because we keep His commandments:

(2 Timothy 2:19 NKJV) Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

(1 Corinthians 5:6 NKJV) Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?

(1 Corinthians 5:7 NKJV) Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

(1 Corinthians 5:8 NKJV) Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

(Romans 6:1 NKJV) What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

(Romans 6:2 NKJV) Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

Keep the Passover / Jesus the Passover / Clean Leaven out of Home

We are to keep the Passover (Jesus do this in remembrance of Me), for Jesus is the Passover, and part of the Passover is to clear the leaven out of our homes, these temples:

Feast of Unleavened Bread

So here another feast that goes along with Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread; this feast is still celebrated today. The application in terms of the Final Lamb, is that Jesus was spotless, without sin, and it was proven when He went to the grave. Had His body had any sin, then the sacrifice would have been rejected by God the Father,

and Jesus would have been left to rot in the grave. In Psalm 16, King David said prophetically speaking of the Messiah, that God would not leave His soul in hell to rot/decay:

(Psalms 16:8 NKJV) I have set the LORD always before me; Because He is at my right hand I shall not be moved.

(Psalms 16:9 NKJV) Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoices; My flesh also will rest in hope.

(Psalms 16:10 NKJV) For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

(Psalms 16:11 NKJV) You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Jesus' Burial

I point out to you something interesting, although Jesus was crucified with thieves, He did not get buried with them. Thieves did not receive burials, they were simply taken outside the city, to the garbage dump, and dumped, but Jesus would be buried in the tomb of a rich man, Joseph of Arimathea. How beautifully this aligns with the prophecy of Isaiah:

(Matthew 27:57 NKJV) Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus.

(Isaiah 53:10 NKJV) Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand.

(Isaiah 53:11 NKJV) He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities.

(Isaiah 53:12 NKJV) Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

Feast of First Fruits

God did not reject the sacrifice; Jesus did resurrect on the 3rd day, and then ascended into heaven to the right hand of God. Thus we will read in Leviticus 23 about the 3rd Feast that goes along with Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and that is the Feast of Firstfruits (Levt 23:9-14). The Feast of Firstfruits was to be celebrated 3 days after Passover, and it was the celebration of the first crops of that spring, that were planted in the previous fall. Jesus is the first to rise from the dead, and to never die again, just as our souls will not see corruption, but put on incorruption:

Leviticus 23:9-14 (NKJV) ⁹ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰ "Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. ¹¹ He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it. ¹² And you shall offer on that day, when you wave the sheaf, a male lamb of the first year, without blemish, as a burnt offering to the LORD. ¹³ Its grain offering shall be two-tenths of an ephah of fine flour mixed with oil, an offering made by fire to the LORD, for a sweet aroma; and its drink offering shall be of wine, one-fourth of a hin. ¹⁴ You shall eat neither bread nor parched grain nor fresh grain until the same day that you have brought an offering to your God; it shall be a statute forever throughout your generations in all your dwellings.

(1 Corinthians 15:42 NKJV) So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.

Ceremonial Cleansing of Leaven / Picture for Us

As the Jewish people celebrate the Feast of Unleavened Bread each year, they take great pain and detail in cleaning the house of leaven – bread crumbs. Some will spend 2 weeks cleaning the house, even painting the walls to make it leaven free. And the night before the Feast starts, the mother will take some bread crumbs, go through the house and sprinkle leaven in some nooks and cranny (all under the observation of the father). Then the father will call on the whole family, the kids included, and armed with a wooden spoon, a feather, and a candle, he goes looking for the leaven. He sweeps it unto the spoon under the illumination of the candle, and then after all is gathered, he pours it into a napkin, ties it with a thread, and walks it outside to the fire and burns it, and then he declares the house leaven free, and they start the celebration. May this be a picture for us, with the candle of God's Word, may we search every nook and cranny of our heart, sweep all the sin out of our lives, take it to the fire, and declare this house is leaven free, let the celebration begin.

This is the Hour Christ is talking about!

Participation in the Passover – 12:21-28

To be covered by the Passover lamb, you had to be a personal participant in the Passover. The Passover is a picture still today, you must participate in the Passover, you can't just say I believe that, but must personally be involved, you must live it.

(Exodus 12:21 NKJV) Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, “Pick out and take lambs for yourselves according to your families, and kill the Passover lamb.

You Killed the Passover Lamb

Beloved, let that sink in, you killed the Passover. It was my sin, it was my guilt, it was my shame that nailed Him to the cross:

This is the Hour Christ is talking about!

(Exodus 12:22 NKJV) “And you shall take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and strike the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood that is in the basin. And none of you shall go out of the door of his house until morning.

(Exodus 12:23 NKJV) “For the LORD will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the LORD will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you.

(Exodus 12:24 NKJV) “And you shall observe this thing as an ordinance for you and your sons forever.

(Exodus 12:25 NKJV) “It will come to pass when you come to the land which the LORD will give you, just as He promised, that you shall keep this service.

(Exodus 12:26 NKJV) “And it shall be, when your children say to you, ‘What do you mean by this service?’

(Exodus 12:27 NKJV) “that you shall say, ‘It is the Passover sacrifice of the LORD, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt when He struck the Egyptians and delivered our households.’ “ So the people bowed their heads and worshiped.

Children not just Hear – but Observe

It is not just for our children to hear these things, but to see them observed. When we speak them but don't live them, we don't just send a confusing message, but truly they are smart enough to see the difference, in what we say, and what we live.

Live in such a Way / More caught than Taught

Live in such a way that they see us observing and demonstrating why the blood makes a difference in our lives. More is caught than is taught. How important to pass this on to the next generation.

Not Satisfied with Just Saved

Let me tell you, I am not going to just be satisfied just because my child is saved. I want to see my child saved, serving, and living it. I want to see the King be the center of their lives, in all that they do, whether they serve in the ministry or work in the secular field. I want them to live a life, that people see, this Jesus is the why they are the way they are, that is the difference in their lives.

This is the Hour Christ is talking about!

(Exodus 12:28 NKJV) Then the children of Israel went away and did so; just as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

There is no Other Way

They did just as the Lord had commanded, for their was no other way. Jesus would say:

(John 14:6 NKJV) Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

This is the Hour Christ is talking about!

Redemption through the Passover – 12:29-36

(Exodus 12:29 NKJV) And it came to pass at midnight that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of livestock.

(Exodus 12:30 NKJV) So Pharaoh rose in the night, he, all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead.

Imagine the Cry

Cecil B Demills, did a wonderful job in the movie. You could feel the fear and the anxiety of the night as you would hear the screams moving through Egypt, softer at first, but then louder and louder as they would approach the homes of the Hebrews, but then silence as the angel of death would move over the land of Goshen where the Hebrews dwelled.

This is the Hour Christ is talking about!

(Exodus 12:31 NKJV) Then he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, “Rise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel. And go, serve the LORD as you have said.

(Exodus 12:32 NKJV) “Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also.”

Bless Me Also / Short Lived

Pharaoh is humbled after this final plague, He says bless me also, I need it, but unfortunately his humbleness is short lived as we will see him come looking for revenge.

(Exodus 12:33 NKJV) And the Egyptians urged the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste. For they said, “We shall all be dead.”

We are not the Problem

So many people like to say that we Christians are the problem, that we are the source of all the ills in the world. It will be even much worse in the last days, especially during the Tribulation. But, the problem for the Egyptian people were not the Jews, but their hard-hearts, their stiff necks, their unwillingness to bow their knee to the Only True God. They refused to turn from their idols, unto the true God, and He had given them many opportunities to repent and turn, and He demonstrated His power to them in many ways through the plagues, it didn't have to come down to death, they brought it upon themselves. So too it is today.

(Exodus 12:34 NKJV) So the people took their dough before it was leavened, having their kneading bowls bound up in their clothes on their shoulders.

(Exodus 12:35 NKJV) Now the children of Israel had done according to the word of Moses, and they had asked from the Egyptians articles of silver, articles of gold, and clothing.

(Exodus 12:36 NKJV) And the LORD had given the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they granted them what they requested. Thus they plundered the Egyptians.

Back Wages

As we have said before, this is just back wages for 400 years of slavery.

Freedom because of the Passover – 12:37-51

(Exodus 12:37 NKJV) Then the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides children.

(Exodus 12:38 NKJV) A mixed multitude went up with them also, and flocks and herds; a great deal of livestock.

(Exodus 12:39 NKJV) And they baked unleavened cakes of the dough which they had brought out of Egypt; for it was not leavened, because they were driven out of Egypt and could not wait, nor had they prepared provisions for themselves.

(Exodus 12:40 NKJV) Now the sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt was four hundred and thirty years.

(Exodus 12:41 NKJV) And it came to pass at the end of the four hundred and thirty years; on that very same day; it came to pass that all the armies of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt.

600K / 2-3 Million

If there were 600,000 men, not counting woman and children, it would be easy to get to 2-3 million total if you considered woman and children.

Mixed Multitude

Look here, Egyptians and other non-Jews are leaving with them. Many Egyptians see and believe in the God of the Jews, they see that their 1 God was mightier than all 3,000 of theirs put together.

70 Came – 3 Million Left

70 came into the land as we saw in Genesis, and now 3 million will leave. They will leave as an army. Egypt was God's incubator, to birth a nation. There is no way they would have survived on their own; had they remained out on their own, once surrounding nations would have seen them grow, they would have said we must conquer them before they become a threat. So here God takes 400 years and grows them into a nation, and now they are ready to take the Promised Land, and no Army will be able to stand against them. If you ever wonder why God has you where He does, think back to this story, maybe He is making you into an Army of 1, one that will go to war and have victories in His Name.

Not 1 Feeble

It is an amazing thing, that when they left Egypt, that not 1 person was feeble, too weak to make the journey. We are told this in Psalm 105:

(Psalms 105:36 NKJV) He also destroyed all the firstborn in their land, The first of all their strength.

(Psalms 105:37 NKJV) He also brought them out with silver and gold, And there was none feeble among His tribes.

Communion

We see again the Scripture that in the days of King Hezekiah, after the Passover Celebration was reinstated and observed, that not one person was ill. The Passover is a picture of our communion. The Apostle Paul said that there are some unnecessarily sick among you, for you fail to partake in communion. You know there is just something wonderful and spiritual that happens when we come to the Lords table, and break the bread, and drink the cup. I am not saying it is a cure all, for Paul himself took communion but he was buffeted in the flesh by Satan (2 Cor 12:7-9). But you know, the Lord says come to the table, are you sick, maybe tired, discouraged, depressed, come, come and eat, let Me refresh you. Take communion at home, come here to the church, call a friend over for communion, and be refreshed by the Lord. We always invite people over for dinner or coffee, hey it is ok to invite them over for communion too:

(2 Chronicles 30:2 NKJV) For the king and his leaders and all the assembly in Jerusalem had agreed to keep the Passover in the second month.

(2 Chronicles 30:20 NKJV) And the LORD listened to Hezekiah and healed the people.

(1 Corinthians 11:28 NKJV) But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

(1 Corinthians 11:29 NKJV) For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

(1 Corinthians 11:30 NKJV) For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.

(2 Corinthians 12:7 NKJV) And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

(2 Corinthians 12:8 NKJV) Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me.

(2 Corinthians 12:9 NKJV) And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

This is the Hour Christ is talking about!

(Exodus 12:42 NKJV) It is a night of solemn observance to the LORD for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. This is that night of the LORD, a solemn observance for all the children of Israel throughout their generations.

(Exodus 12:43 NKJV) And the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "This is the ordinance of the Passover: No foreigner shall eat it.

(Exodus 12:44 NKJV) “But every man’s servant who is bought for money, when you have circumcised him, then he may eat it.

(Exodus 12:45 NKJV) “A sojourner and a hired servant shall not eat it.

(Exodus 12:46 NKJV) “In one house it shall be eaten; you shall not carry any of the flesh outside the house, nor shall you break one of its bones.

No Bone Broken

Now, also later on in the Psalms, in a prophecy concerning the death of Jesus Christ, it said, “Not a bone of Him shall be broken;” and you remember, when the bodies were hanging there on the crosses, and they were saying, “Hey, the Sabbath day is about to begin. Break their legs so that they won’t be, they’ll die quicker (people die of asphyxiation because need legs to push up and get a breath of air, for the weight of the body on the lungs left them gasping for air) ; they won’t be hanging here on the Sabbath day.” And so the Roman soldiers broke the legs of the other two prisoners who were crucified at the time of Jesus, but when they came to Jesus, they saw that He was already dead, so they didn’t break His legs, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, “Not a bone of Him shall be broken.” So that came back to the Passover. As the Passover Lamb, He couldn’t have a broken bone. So the soldier instead just took his spear and plunged it into Jesus’ heart. When he pulled the spear back, there came out water and blood; but there were no bones broken. He was just making sure that Jesus was dead.

Jesus Released Spirit / Not allow Prophecy Violated

There was no need to break Jesus legs, because He was dead. The roman soldier pierced His side because he couldn’t believe He had died already. Jesus decided when He was going to release His Spirit, for He said no man takes my life, but I freely give it. Jesus would not allow them to break His bones for it would have violated the prophecy of no broken bones:

(John 10:17 NKJV) “Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again.

(John 10:18 NKJV) “No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.”

This is the Hour Christ is talking about!

(Exodus 12:47 NKJV) “All the congregation of Israel shall keep it.

(Exodus 12:48 NKJV) “And when a stranger dwells with you and wants to keep the Passover to the LORD, let all his males be circumcised, and then let him come near and keep it; and he shall be as a native of the land. For no uncircumcised person shall eat it.

(Exodus 12:49 NKJV) “One law shall be for the native-born and for the stranger who dwells among you.”

Circumcision

Circumcision is the symbolic picture of cutting-off of the flesh, to no longer live for the flesh, but after the Spirit. Circumcision is repentance, a turning from the flesh to the Spirit, and the Lord says that without repentance, there can be no partaking of the Passover. And that is the truth of the gospel, without a willingness to repent of our sin, to turn away from the works of the flesh, then there is no partaking of the final Passover, Jesus Christ. It is “your Lamb”, and it is personal. There is no salvation without repentance.

(Luke 3:3 NKJV) And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins,

(Acts 3:19 NKJV) “Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

(Acts 3:20 NKJV) “and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before,

This is the Hour Christ is talking about!

(Exodus 12:50 NKJV) Thus all the children of Israel did; as the LORD commanded Moses and Aaron, so they did.

(Exodus 12:51 NKJV) And it came to pass, on that very same day, that the LORD brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt according to their armies.

Not Just Lead Out – But Into

We will see in chapters 13 and on, that the children of Israel are not just being lead out of something, but that they are being brought into something. They will have a new and deeper relationship with the Lord, and that is always what the Passover Lamb will do in every person's life.

So – this is What the Hour is ALL About

So, now we have a more in-depth and intimate knowledge of what this “hour” means, and what a glorious hour it is.

John 12:27 “Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose I came to this hour.

This is the Hour Christ is talking about!

Communion Service

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

John 12:27-50

Picking Up in Verse 27

So we pick up here today in verse 27, and we will finish the chapter today. This chapter, these final verses are the ending of Jesus' public ministry. For 3.5 years He has preached and taught the heart of God, displayed the heart of God because He is God, and now after 3.5 years gives these final words. For us it has been over 7 months of studying together, and now Jesus gives these final words. If you knew you were ending your public ministry, what words would you leave, what final impressions would you want left? We know what Jesus' last words are, final impressions, because here they are. So let's ask the Lord to open His word to us, and open our hearts to Him, to receive this Word.

John 12:27 "Now My soul is troubled, and what shall I say? 'Father, save Me from this hour'? But for this purpose I came to this hour.

Jesus is Troubled / Separated from the Father

Jesus is troubled, is it because of the brutality of cross, who wouldn't be, He was fully flesh even while fully God. Was it the shame and humility He would endure in His public humility, again who wouldn't be? But above all that, Jesus' greatest heartache, was that for the first time in all eternity, He would be separated from the Father.

Matthew 27:46 (NKJV) ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Could I give my son for Another Person

Can I come to fully grasp this act of love? Could I give my son for another person?

Can we Grasp the Depth of what is Being Said / I love my Camden / To have the Power to Stop

Jesus is troubled, and in a few sentences (v32), he will speak of the Son of Man shall be lifted up; can we grasp the depths of that statement? You know my heart for my son (just as your love for your children), I love him more than my life, he is the apple of my eye, he is the joy of my life, I can sit there and just stare at him hours upon hours and just be amazed at his beauty. I can't kiss him enough, hug him enough, and I can't get enough of his hugs and kisses in my life. And for me to think what it would be like to give my only son to be spit upon, to be stripped naked, and then nailed to the cross for something that he didn't do, Then to hear people hurl insults and accusations upon him, to be accused of being a murder, a rapist, a thief, a liar, and to say he deserves what he gets. and then have all the power and authority to do something about it, can we fathom what God the Father who gave his only begotten Son has done for us. It was our sin, it is what we studied in Exodus chapter 12 last study, we killed the Passover, and the Passover willingly sacrificed himself. What an amazing love and amazing God.

John 12:32-33 (NKJV) ³² And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself." ³³ This He said, signifying by what death He would die.

To Hear him Say – Where are You?

And then to hear my son say dad why are you forsaken me. My heart was ripped out this week just because of I told him after work we are going to go to Golden Corral for dinner, but then I worked until midnight. The next morning Camden says I sure did miss not having dinner with you at Golden corral last night, and my heart was just ripped because of that is I letting down by not taking them to dinner. Can I imagine him hanging on a cross saying daddy where are you? Dad why are you turning your back on me. Yet God turn his back from his Son so that we might not have to face the wrath deserved for breaking His Holy commandments, breaking His law.

Matthew 27:46 (NKJV) ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Can we Grasp? / That is the Context of our Passage – Jesus is Troubled

Can we fully grasp what God the Father and Son did for us. That is the context of our passage, Jesus is troubled, He knows what is to come, and here in these last words of His public ministry, He will plead with "all" men to believe, to come to Him, to receive Him for the forgiveness of sin. If you are here today, and have not received Him as Lord and Savior for the forgiveness of sin, may you hear His heart pleading with you today to "come". For all who have

received Him, may we hear His heart today, “follow’, separate yourself from this world and follow Me with all your heart, mind, and soul.

John 12:28 Father, glorify Your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, saying, “I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.”

John 12:29 Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to Him.”

John 12:30 Jesus answered and said, “This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake.

Spoke so all Heard – There is no Other Way

Verse 30, the voice spoke audibly for our sake, for their sake, so all could hear very clearly what was being said. Jesus said oh if there be any other way, and the Father speaks and says there is no other way. There is only one way for the forgiveness of sin, and that is Jesus and the cross.

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

You can be Completely Honest in Your Prayer

Christian take note of this, In complete honesty, Jesus asks, “Can I get out of this, Father? Can You save Me from this hour?” Did you know you can be totally honest with God? Jesus was.

Express Feelings in Time of Prayer – things become Perfectly Honest

“Father, can I get out? But wait,” says Jesus. “This is why I came.” Haven’t you found that often it is in your own time of prayer, even as you’re expressing your hurt or fear, that you’re reminded of your calling. And everything becomes crystal clear once again.

God Still Speaks

God speaks to his people. Therefore, at some point in the last several months should be able to say I heard him speak. And if you can’t say that, then you should examine and ask yourself why not? Is it self-reliance and no need for God, is it the speed of life and no time to hear? I would say if you haven’t heard God speak to you in the last several months, probably time to do some inventory of life and find out why.

BTW – I have Purposed

By the way, I have purposed in my life, that God will not have to speak from heaven, for people to hear of the glory of Jesus. And, when the world curses Him and uses His name in vain, when I am anywhere I hear someone curse Him, I immediately say to the Lord from in my heart, although they curse you and damn you, I give you praise. It keeps me from becoming dull and desensitized to a world that is deaf and blind to His glory.

John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

Satan thought he victor / Haha to Genesis 3

Satan could think he was victor that he triumphed there on the cross. He probably was lifted up saying Genesis 3 has been defeated, you did not crush my head like You said you would.

Genesis 3:15–16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.” ¹⁶ To the woman He said: “I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you.”

You may Say – he Doesn’t Seem Defeated / His is Defeated – but the game isn’t Over yet

You may say Satan sure doesn’t seem defeated to me. Well, let me give you this analogy that see in our life today. Several years ago I was coaching peewee football. The year before I was the bottom rung of the assistant coach org chart. We were 9-2, and made it to semi-finals of the championship series. I had little to do with that success. The following years all the coaches got “promoted’ if you will to the next level, and they should have they were football genius’. So I became co-head coach. So I tell all the parents, last year we were 9-2 and almost won the whole thing, and that was great, my only problem is that this is peewee football and the purpose is play and learn the game, and last year lots of your kids didn’t play because we had to play to win. So this year I want you to

know, I don't care if we lose 40-0 every game, everyone plays, and everyone plays equally. Well, we lost the first game 40-0, the second 44-0, and the third 38-0. I was a prophet. Funny thing, when we were 9-2 we continually had parents complaining to us, but the year we were getting whipped not parent complained, all they cared about was their child was playing. But here is my point about Satan, yes we were losing 40-0 by the end of the first half, we were already defeated it was over, we still had another half to play, but you know what, we were still in the game. These kids never quit, they played all the way to end, even though there was no way to win. We might not win, but we might actually score, we might actually get a pickoff, demolish a running back, sack the quarterback. We were already defeated, but we were still in the game. Satan is defeated, but still in the game, no chance of winning, but still hopes of sacking someone, pulling off a big play here or there.

Satan's progression to Final Destruction

Satan was defeated at the cross, and we will watch a continually progression of his destruction, until it is absolute, until God says "time is up", game over (if you would – as the souls of men is not game that God is playing).

- Revelation chapter 12 he's kicked out of heaven,
- Revelation 20 he thrown into the bottomless pit for 1,000 years,
- Revelation 20 finally into the lake of fire.

Satan's progression is in stages. Satan's future continual spiral. As his life is a continual spiral of destruction, misery loves company, and so he desires and attempts to do the same for your life.

Satan defeated – But Time still Left in Game

Jesus says let not your heart be troubled, I have taken care of Satan. You have won, but everyone is still in the game until the final whistle.

Control your 3 Feet

And just a little football analogy, my summation to the kids was always this, all you have to do is control your 3 feet. You don't need to worry about what everybody else is doing, you just take care of your 3 feet. If you are an offensive lineman, you need only care about that man right before you, if you control him, the running back will get through, if you are on defense, and you control the lineman in front of you, the running back can't get through. Same for every position you played. And as for us, we need to control the 3 feet around us, not worried about what everyone else is doing, but take care of our 3 feet and we will have victory. When sin enters my 3 foot space, I control it, and not it controlling me, then I will have victory over sin. When God brings a ministry opportunity into my little sphere, and I seize the opportunity, then a ministry blessing will occur. God puts your spouse, your kids, in your sphere you bless them with all you have and there will be victory. Listen to you coach Jesus and he will tell you how to handle that 3 foot space, He speaks today, still, listen and you will hear. Yes, if He has your ear, you will hear Him say run when you should run, and pass when you should pass (sorry could resist that for you Seattle Seahawk fans, I still can't get over that play selection in the Super Bowl on the goal line)

John 12:32 And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself."

John 12:33 This He said, signifying by what death He would die.

Still Smelling like Spikenard

Mind you, Jesus was still smelling like spikenard from the day before when Mary anointed Him with 16 ounces of this extremely potent fragrance. Jesus is speaking of His death, and how he will die, and it will be through the brutal and rugged Roman cross.

All – Not Some / Don't have to be Culturally Relevant

Jesus says "all" not some. That means Jew and Gentile, rich and poor, top of the world, down and out, young and old, male and female, skater and scholar. Do you want to reach a generation? Do you have a heart for the elderly, maybe the youth? Maybe the skater, maybe the homeless, the rich, the poor? It is simple, be "cross-generational". The cross of Christ will speak to any culture, and demographic, any language. We need not worry about being "relatable", because the cross reaches over, reaches into, any and "all". The church today feels they

have to be relatable, they have to have programs to reach people, they have to “change” to meet the changing times, to which I say,

And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself.”

John 12:34 The people answered Him, “We have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever; and how can You say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’? Who is this Son of Man?”

John 12:35 Then Jesus said to them, “A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going.

John 12:36 While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.” These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.

They Confused how can Messiah Die / Jesus said Figure it Out While have Chance

They are confused how the Son of Man must be lifted, which means to die, and then how the Messiah can live forever. Jesus is saying the opportunity window is very narrow you must make this decision while you are alive, living. Jesus is saying that if you don’t understand these things, that doesn’t mean you just wait around for some further revelation and understanding. You are to go seek it out, search it out, make it your whole life’s purpose, who is Jesus, why did He die, and what and how am I to respond to this information.

Time Now – Not After

The time to search and understand is today,

- not after high school,
- not after living in the world and indulging in all it has to offer,
- not after you get married,
- not after you have kids,
- not after you establish your career,
- but today, right now.

2 Corinthians 6:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ² For He says: “In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you.” Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

John 12:37 But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him,

Theme Believe – Last Words of Public Ministry

The theme from verse 36 to the end of this chapter is “believe”. These are the last words of Jesus’ public ministry, and they are believe.

John 12:36 (NKJV) ³⁶ While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.” These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.

John 12:37 (NKJV) ³⁷ But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him,

John 12:38 (NKJV) ³⁸ that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: “Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?”

John 12:39 (NKJV) ³⁹ Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again:

John 12:42 (NKJV) ⁴² Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue;

John 12:46 (NKJV) ⁴⁶ I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.

John 12:47 (NKJV) ⁴⁷ And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.

Verse 37 – Must be Read in Context to Understand Isaiah Prophecy

Verse 37 he believed not, there's why they don't receive Jesus, it is because they choose not to believe, and that is the predecessor for the following verses that we read that Isaiah will say that God has blinded their eyes.

John 12:38 that the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spoke: “Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?”

John 12:39 Therefore they could not believe, because Isaiah said again:

John 12:40 “He has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, Lest they should see with their eyes, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.”

John 12:41 These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him.

Isaiah Quote Inserted here – Because Jesus isn’t Surprised

The quote from Isaiah is prophetic, and it means that Jesus is not “surprised” that people will not believe.

Isaiah 53:1–12 (NKJV) ¹ Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ² For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him. ³ He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. ⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. ⁸ He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. ⁹ And they made His grave with the wicked— But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth. ¹⁰ Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. ¹¹ He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

Isaiah 6:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ And He said, “Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’ ¹⁰ “Make the heart of this people dull, And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed.”

Haftarah

It is interesting to me, regarding Isaiah 53, that in what the Jewish religion calls the “Haftarah”, which is the reading of the prophets that goes along with the reading of the Torah (the first 5 books of the Bible), which is read on every Sabbath for the 52 weeks of the year, that they “NEVER” read Isaiah 53. They read most of Isaiah, but always skip chapter 53.

Taken from Wikipedia - The haftarah or (in Ashkenazic pronunciation) haftorah (alt. haphtara, Hebrew: הפטרה; "parting," "taking leave",[1] plural haftarot or haftoros—despite resemblances it is not related to the word Torah) is a series of selections from the books of Nevi'im ("Prophets") of the Hebrew Bible (Tanach) that is publicly read in synagogue as part of Jewish religious practice. The Haftarah reading follows the Torah reading on each Sabbath and on Jewish festivals and fast days. Typically, the haftarah is thematically linked to the parasha (Torah portion) that precedes it.[2] The haftarah is sung in a chant (known as "trop" in Yiddish or "Cantillation" in English). Related blessings precede and follow the Haftarah reading. The longest Haftarah is in the parashat of Beshalach. It is 52 verses. This year (2015) it is the 31st of January

The origin of haftarah reading is lost to history, and several theories have been proposed to explain its role in Jewish practice, suggesting it arose in response to the persecution of the Jews under Antiochus Epiphanes which preceded the Maccabean revolt, wherein Torah reading was prohibited,[3][4] or that it was "instituted against the Samaritans, who denied the canonicity of the Prophets (except for Joshua), and later against the Sadducees." [3] The Talmud mentions that a haftarah was read in the presence of Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, who lived c. 70 CE,[5] and that by the time of Rabbanah (the 3rd century) there was a "Scroll of Haftarot", which is not further described,[6] and in the Christian New Testament several references suggest this Jewish custom was in place during that era.[7]

Skip Passages that Make us Uncomfortable

How continually prophetic today of the passage before us. But let me not turn this into some dig on the Jewish people, but bring it into our personal application. How many people today still skip the passages of scriptures that make them uncomfortable, convict them of their sin and unrighteousness. So what do they do, that makes me uncomfortable, I don’t like what it says, so I just want read it. For some they skip the whole bible. But even we as believers can be in this place, where we “skip” certain passages because I don’t like what it says. I don’t want to repent, so skip those verses, giving, skip, serving, skip, witnessing, skip, loving my neighbor, skip. We ourselves need to be cautious else we are as guilty as those we read of today.

V37 reason v39 / God Ratifies a Persons Decision

Those who would not believe in verse 37 could not believe in verse 39. Since they didn't want to believe, they weren't able to believe because God hardened their hearts. Why? To ratify their choice. You see, had not God blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, Jesus' teachings would have been so powerful, so persuasive, and so overwhelming that they would have believed against their will. The same is true today. To those who don't want to believe, to those who continually stand in the posture of unbelief, there will come a time when they cannot believe (Matthew 12:31).

Matthew 12:31–32 (NKJV) ³¹ "Therefore I say to you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven men. ³² Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.

Saying – None so Blind as he who Refuses to See

There is a saying and that is there is none so blind as he who refuses to see. And there is none so deaf who refuses to hear.

See the Story in Exodus

We see this story in the book of Exodus with Pharaoh, he hardened his heart, then again he hardens his heart, then again he hardens his heart, and then we read God hardens Pharaoh's heart.

Exodus 8:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ But when Pharaoh saw that there was relief, he hardened his heart and did not heed them, as the LORD had said.

Exodus 8:32 (NKJV) ³² But Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also; neither would he let the people go.

Exodus 9:12 (NKJV) ¹² But the LORD hardened the heart of Pharaoh; and he did not heed them, just as the LORD had spoken to Moses.

Exodus 3 – God Already Knew

Chapters prior to your read God saying go tell Pharaoh he's not going to receive he's not going to listen. See got already knew that he was going to reject God still gave him the offer to receive, then in the end it was God who hardened his heart because God's Spirit lifted off and was no longer prompting Pharaoh. God hardens a man's heart when God no longer just pricking at a man's heart through the Holy Spirit come on the Jesus and have your life changed.

Exodus 3:18–20 (NKJV) ¹⁸ Then they will heed your voice; and you shall come, you and the elders of Israel, to the king of Egypt; and you shall say to him, 'The LORD God of the Hebrews has met with us; and now, please, let us go three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the LORD our God.' ¹⁹ But I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, no, not even by a mighty hand. ²⁰ So I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My wonders which I will do in its midst; and after that he will let you go.

Christian – God will Never Harden Your Heart – But don't you become Hardened

You know Christian God will never harden your heart, he will never stop speaking to you, and his spirit will always be moving upon you. But, we can become blind yourself and have hardness of heart ourselves because we are not listening and heeding his voice and his word. May we all be careful that we don't let sin become common, that we don't let some disobedience become common, that we don't get lazy and lackadaisical in our Christian walk that we are not hearing God because all those things will be our fault, they will be producing a hardened heart, blind eyes, and ears to do not hear. May we always be sensitive and open to the leading of the Lord. May we have a time of prayer were we say "Lord is there something that you are speaking but I'm not hearing", and to do that it is gonna take just sitting in silence and listening to his voice and being tuned into what He has to say.

John 12:42 Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue;

John 12:43 for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

The Cost to Follow

The cost to follow Jesus publically was great, they would lose it all. They would lose their position and security, and pride and praises. So be it.

I wonder if Nicodemus one of Secret

I wonder if one of the secret believers is Nicodemus. Remember he came in John 3, at night, under the cloak of darkness, where the shadows can cover him. Nicodemus will eventually step forth and cast himself all in for Jesus.

Maybe You Are in the Shadows

Are you in the shadows? Man worries about what people think of them, but here is the thing, they aren't thinking about you, they are thinking of themselves. How they look at you is only in regards to what you mean to them, who they can't stop thinking about. And the moment you die, you won't care about what anyone thinks of you, but only what God thinks. Save yourself the struggle of the worries of what man thinks of you, and focus your thoughts on what God thinks of you. The cost to follow Jesus publically was great, they would lose it all. They would lose their position and security, and pride and praises. So be it, in the end, it will be the end, and we will stand before the Lord, and then more than ever we will care what He thinks of us.

John 12:44 Then Jesus cried out and said, "He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me.

John 12:45 And he who sees Me sees Him who sent Me.

John 12:46 I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.

John 12:47 And if anyone hears My words and does not believe, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world.

Closing Words

These are the closing words of Jesus in His public ministry after 3.5 years

Father says Listen to My Son regarding Way of Salvation

In verse 28, God the Father in essence is saying, this is My Son, listen to Him. Listen to Him regarding the way of salvation, and then listen to Him on the way to follow Him. Beloved, listen to Him.

If I am Devil – I will make Battlefield right Here – Against the WORD

Now if I am the Devil, I am going to attack here, I am going to make my battle front, my number one attack point, is the attack of the Word of God. I will attack at the flesh, I will attack with the world, but they would all be minor skirmishes compared to what I will unleash in the barrage of full-on assault against the Word of God. Wow, I know I feel the attacks of my flesh and the world are intense, but to realize they are only small skirmishes as compared to the attack of the word, wow.

Turn People off the Word – Make it seem Boring / How interesting the Relationship Strong and in Word is

So if am Satan, I am going to do all I can to turn people off of the Word of God, try to make it boring or irrelevant. How interesting I find that the strongest most on-fire Christians I know, are the ones who are steeped and enveloped in the Word of God; but the ones I find weak and feeble, are the ones who have little fire and passion for the Word.

Get Scholars / Criticize / Find Pastor who Love Praises of Men

So if I am Satan I am going to raise up a bunch of 'scholars' who will argue over and criticize the Bible, rather than read and apply it. I am going to raise up pastors who will refer to it, but not teach it. Those men and woman will make it entertaining, but not entering into it. Yep, if I am Satan that is what I am going to do.

Jesus is God's Word to you

Jesus is God's Word to you.

Hebrews 1:1-2 (NKJV) ¹ God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

John 12:48 He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.

John 12:49 For I have not spoken on My own authority; but the Father who sent Me gave Me a command, what I should say and what I should speak.

John 12:50 And I know that His command is everlasting life. Therefore, whatever I speak, just as the Father has told Me, so I speak.”

Jesus & Cross only Way

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 – the gospel in simplicity. Jesus said in the beginning of our study, confirmed by the Father, this is the only way to salvation, through Jesus, His death for your sin, and His resurrection which is proof God accepted the trading of places, your sin and cross, for His acceptance before the Father.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 (NKJV) ³ For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,

Tie v31 with v48

I want to tie verse 31 and 48 together here for us, lets read them again together.

John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.

John 12:48 He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.

Judgment Done – Sentencing Next

First see this, judgment has already taken place; when a person stands before the Lord they will not stand to be judged whether guilty or innocent, that is determined at the cross, what the person has chosen to do with the sacrifice Jesus has made. What is next is the sentencing. The person who rejected Jesus as their Lord and Savior, what is next is the sentencing of where they will spend eternity. Have you receive Jesus or not?

God will honor Choice – Just like Pharaoh

God will honor every man/woman’s choice, just like He honored pharaoh’s choice.

Hell – the Place where Live with what Love Most - Self

A person who refuses the love of Christ because they chose to indulge their flesh, to satisfy every need and want of themselves, to live according to their own will and way, to be the king and god of their own life, God will not force them into heaven to be with Him and to be under His reign and to be in His continual presence because that's not what they want. Their whole life they rejected him, literally told him they're not interested in him, God would surely never make them have to spend all eternity with them. So God will give them what they want, He will give them a place where they live with what they love the most, and that is themselves, because all their life that's who they've love the most is themselves, and so that's where they'll be, in a place with her just it's just them. Now that is hell.

2nd – The Word Judges not Jesus

Secondly we see the tie between verse 31 and 48 in that it is not Jesus that judges, but the word that was spoken by Jesus. God came in love, and spoke the word in love, and “all” decide what they will do with the word spoken.

Separate – not Distant

God is separate, but not distant. God is separate in that He is holy (pure and cannot look upon sin), but is not distant in that He sent His only Son to take the punishment for sin, for the breaking of God’s holy law.

Habakkuk 1:13 (NKJV) ¹³ You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Illustration of a Vaccine

If we had a vaccine for cancer, or Ebola, the world would line up for it. But, if the person didn’t take the vaccine, it wasn’t the vaccine that judged them, it was them judging themselves by not taking the vaccine

Jesus is Word – Speaks the Word – Says Walk in Light while still Time

Jesus is the Word. He speaks the Words of God. He says I did not come to judge you, but to die for you. Jesus said walk in the light while there is still time to walk in the light, before the darkness comes upon your life.

Let Word Judge People – Not ourselves

Let the word of God judge people, but not you be the judge. There are times and places that I meet people that I really just don't like, they mistreat me, or their arrogant, or crude, some someone that I just don't care to be around. And I find myself not wanting to speak about Christ, because I don't want to, and really what I'm doing is I'm being the judge of their salvation because I am deciding whether they have the right to hear this word or not. Let us not be the judge of someone to salvation, let us just share the word this good news this gospel, and then let them judge themselves. Let them judge themselves they need a Savior, or let them judge themselves into the sentencing of the rejection of God's son. Let us not be the judge and determine who gets to hear the gospel, and who doesn't.

Word must Go Out – Any Means Possible

God's Word must go out, while there is still time. We are sending God's Word out with ever means possible.

- Church Service
- Internet
- Radio
- Live Streaming
- Street Ministry
- Harvest America
- You with your voice

We take ever Mean Possible

We need to take ever means possible to send forth this Word.

Simple Gospel

1 Corinthians 15:3-4, that is how easy the Gospel is to preach.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 (NKJV) ³ For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,

Have you Received this Simple Gospel? / Prayer Room

How about you, have you received this Gospel? Prayer room is available, call the church..... today is the day of salvation, don't wait.

Last Words – Now Chapter 13-17 Final Words to Disciples who will Change the World

These are the last words of Jesus' public ministry after 3.5 years, and how direct and powerful they are. Now for chapters 13-17, Jesus will be alone with His disciples giving final one-on-one instruction. He will be going to the cross in 4 days. He knows they will scatter, deny, be fearful, but then see Him in His glory and go turn the world right-side up. What would you say to people, to your family, your friends, those closest to you if you knew you were going to die in 4 days? What last impression would you leave on them? We get to find out in our future studies through chapter 13-17.

End of Study

Chapter 13

John 13:1-17

John 13:1–17 (NKJV) ¹ Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. ² And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, ⁴ rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. ⁵ After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel with which He was girded. ⁶ Then He came to Simon Peter. And *Peter* said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?" ⁷ Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this." ⁸ Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." ⁹ Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also *my hands and my head!*" ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash *his* feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." ¹¹ For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean." ¹² So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³ You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, *your* Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

Last Words & Impressions (Intro)

Last Night of His Life / What Impression you want to Leave

Although I cannot be 100% dogmatic, but I think (along with many scholars – notice I didn't say "other" scholars haha) that we have jumped 3 days from where we left off in chapter 12, and it is now the night of His betrayal, hours before He will be falsely arrested, beaten, scourged, and then nailed to a tree. If you knew you had only hours to live, what words, what final impressions would you want to leave upon those you loved? Here is what Jesus does, he grabs a towel, and SERVES.

Note: John does not say which supper is referred to here—whether the Passover, the Lord's Supper, or an ordinary meal. Also, important to note that there is not a mention that Jesus and His disciples had lamb with their meal, thus Jesus could have had Passover meal early on Passover because they did not eat lamb with the meal that would be slain at twilight on the 14th of Nisan. Also, the Jews had two different methods of reckoning days. Ancient Jewish sources suggest that Jews from the northern part of Israel (including Galilee, where Jesus and most of the Twelve were from) counted days from sunrise to sunrise. Most of the Pharisees apparently also used that method. On the other hand, the Jews in the southern region of Israel counted days from sunset to sunset.

If you Knew had all Authority – What do? / What Lasting Impression you want to Leave

Verse 3 - If you knew that all things were given to you. All authority, all power, all understanding, was given to you what would you do with such knowledge? What does Jesus do, he grabs a towel and a washbasin.

Lord of the Towel – People of the Towel

Jesus is the Lord of the Towel; Jesus is calling each and every one of us to a "People of the Towel". Jesus served, and He calls us to Serve.

Zoe Life

We have been studying for 12 chapters how to have the Zoe Life, the God Life, the Life beyond this life. It is the abundant life. It is the whole reason this epistle was written and preserved for us, so that we might have eternal life with Christ when we die, and have abundant life today as we journey on to the eternal destination. We can have the Zoe Life, the God Life, the Life that Jesus lived, by serving.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

3 Reasons why Serving is a Privilege

Present Blessings – Future Rewards – Real Needs

In 1 Timothy 1:12, Paul says, “I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who hath enabled me in that he counteth me faithful putting me into the ministry.” Like Paul, I am amazed at the goodness and grace of God that He would include me in this glorious privilege called ministry.

- First, Ministry is a privilege because of the present blessings. “With what measure ye mete out, it shall be measured to you,” Jesus said (Mark 4:24). That is, what we give out, we’ll get back. And I have found that to be oh, so true.
 - When I pray for others, I get blessed.
 - When I share with others, I am confirmed in the truth of the Scriptures.
 - When I witness to others, my own faith grows deeper, stronger, more powerful.This should not be surprising. After all, Jesus promised we would receive power to become His witnesses (Acts 1:8). And the word He used for power was translated *dunamis*, from which we get our word “dynamite.” This dynamic experience, this power is like an electrical charge. Therefore, like electricity, it will only enter that from which it can exit. The power, the electricity, the anointing of the Spirit is given to you that it might flow through you to others. The one who wants to be used by the Lord in the lives of others is the one who will experience the electric, dynamic power of the Spirit. That’s why I love being in the ministry.
- Secondly, I enjoy being in the ministry because of future rewards. What we do in ministry—even as simple as giving a cup of cold water in Jesus’ name—will be rewarded by the Lord and will impact us eternally (Matthew 10). When we choose to do something no matter how simple in the name of the Lord, for His glory, in order that people will be drawn to Him, impressed with Him, refreshed by Him, we’ll have rewards in heaven. You might think you don’t care about rewards. But you will then. When we get to heaven and rewards are given, you’ll say, “I wish I would have taken more seriously the admonitions to strive to run the race, to win the prize, to gain the crown” (Philippians 3:14). Let’s live to look forward, to hearing those words, well done good and faithful servant (Matthew 25).
- Thirdly, I love the ministry because of real needs. People all around us are lost. Wandering around like sheep without a shepherd, they don’t know what to do. They’re depressed, discouraged, and, worst of all, without Jesus, they’re headed for hell. They don’t know that God sent His Son not to condemn them, but to save them, to die in place of them that they might be forgiven of their sins and might spend eternity in heaven (John 3:17). So I say, “Lord, thank You for allowing me to be in the ministry because I see people all around me who are confused and You’ve given such simple and significant answers for me to share with them.”

And He’s given the same opportunity to you—for, although you might earn a living as a schoolteacher, a carpenter, or an electrician, you are in the ministry every bit as much as I am. The division between the clergy and the laity is a man-made distinction completely without biblical basis, for Jesus said, “You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain...” (John 15:16).

1 Timothy 1:12 (NKJV) ¹² And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting *me* into the ministry,

Mark 4:24 (NKJV) ²⁴ Then He said to them, “Take heed what you hear. With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you; and to you who hear, more will be given.

Acts 1:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Philippians 3:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

Matthew 25:23 (NKJV) ²³ His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

John 3:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

John 15:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

Jesus Models Serving in Passage Today

Jesus will model for us both of these very clearly in our studies before us, here in chapter 13 He will model the servant as He washed the feet of the disciples, and in chapter 17 He will model intercessory prayer.

Jesus Loves You to the End (v.1)

John 13:1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

Jesus Loved them to the End / He loves You the Same / Embrace that and Believe That

Jesus loved his own to the end. How long and how far did Jesus love them? And therefore how far and how long will Jesus love you? Let that be settled, but that be determined, Jesus will love you to the end, and his and has no end because the is eternal in his love for you is eternal. Enjoy that Christian embrace that Christian live that truth Christian.

Living to Make Intercession

And guess what Jesus is doing now during this all. Of your life here on earth? He is living to make intercession for you. He's praying for you he's interceding for you, and I think you can be sure that he'll see you through it to the end. Jesus lives to make intercession for evermore, that means all the way through to the end. What is your place in all of this? Abide, simply abide in Him, stay in and with Him and He will see you through to the end.

Romans 8:31–39 (NKJV)³¹ *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? ³³ Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." ³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

John 15:5 (NKJV) ⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

Satan Casts – People choose if they Catch (v.2)

John 13:2 And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him,

Satan Throws – People Catch

The Greek word for "put" is the word "ballo", and fitting as it looks and sounds just like the English word "ball". The word means to throw, to cast. So we see it is a simple formula, Satan throws and casts his lies and deception, and people decide if they are going to catch them, or let them fall to the ground. If you don't put your glove up, it simply falls to the ground.

Ephesians – prince & power of the Air

We read in Ephesians that Satan is called the prince and power of the air. I liken that to the radio waves that are flowing through this room right now. First we need an antenna to receive them, and then we have to dial into the station to receive them clearly. Satan has a radio station and it is 66.6, and anyone who dials into his station will receive his message very clear. Real simple, tune into Jesus and His Word, do His will and His Ways, and won't find yourself playing catch with the Devil. Dial into the Devil's signals, his continual allurements, temptations, the pipeline of trash he sends over the airways of internet, television, carnal people, and you won't even realize that glove that is in your hand, and all the stuff you have caught that he threw at you. Sell out for Jesus people, don't see how close you can get to the world, but how far away you can be from it. Time is short, and Jesus is right in front of you wanting to dine with you, walk with you, do great things with you, but a person can totally miss it if they are playing catch with the Devil.

Ephesians 2:2 (NKJV) ² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,

Servants Must Know who They are in God (v.3)

John 13:3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God,

Speaks primarily of Cross / But see what Jesus has in His Hand – A Towel

Yes this is speaking primarily of the cross, the plan of salvation, the victory over sin and death, and all who would follow Him; but catch this thought, The Father had put all things into the Son's hands, and Jesus picked up a towel and a basin! His humility was not born of poverty, but of riches. He was rich, yet He became poor (2 Cor. 8:9).

2 Corinthians 8:9 (NKJV) ⁹ For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

Jesus knew Who He was – thus He could Serve / If you Know Who You Are – Serving will be No Problem

It was the consciousness of who He was, and of His mission and destiny, that enabled Him to stoop down and wash the disciples' feet. Rising from supper, the Lord laid aside His long outer garments. Then He put a towel around Himself as an apron, taking the place of a slave. We might have expected this incident to be in the Gospel of Mark, the Gospel of the Perfect Servant. But the fact that it is in the Gospel of the Son of God makes it all the more remarkable, as John continually draws out the deity of Christ. Beloved when you know who you are in God, and what He calls you to do, what He thinks of you; then you will have no problem being His servant.

CS Lewis

CS Lewis said – true humility is not thinking less of yourself, it is thinking of yourself less.

You will Know how Much Servant You Are

You will know how much of a servant you are, when someone treats you like one. When there is no praise, no acknowledgment, and when it is something they expect of you. Did you notice two words missing from this passage, the words "thank you". Not one of the 12 said thank you. You have to know who you are in Christ, and that you are serving Him, else you will quit at some point in the ministry of service, because you feel you are serving people, rather than God. Let's look further at that in verse 4.

Service is Unto the Lord – Exodus 28 (v.4)

John 13:4 rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself.

Hebrews – Jesus is our High Priest / So too are we Called to the Priesthood

Jesus we are told is our High Priest; and we are told we are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people.

Hebrews 4:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

1 Peter 2:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

Reminded of Exodus 28

I immediately am reminded of Exodus, when God establishes the priesthood, and we see a foreshadow of Jesus our High Priest, and foreshadow of our calling in a royal priesthood.

Exodus 28:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ "Now take Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister to Me as priest, Aaron and Aaron's sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. ² And you shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and for beauty. ³ So you shall speak to all who are gifted artisans, whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, that they may make Aaron's garments, to consecrate him, that he may minister to Me as priest. ⁴ And these are the garments which they shall make: a breastplate, an ephod, a robe, a skillfully woven tunic, a turban, and a sash. So they shall make holy garments for Aaron your brother and his sons, that he may minister to Me as priest.

Exodus 28:1 – Minister to God / God to People – People to God

Do you, do we, really grasp the fact that we can minister to the Lord. How do we do that, is 1.) Representing God to the people, and 2.) Representing the people to God. We represent God to the people by showing them the heart of God, we are His human agents on earth. We represent God to the people by interceding before on God on behalf of people, and we do that through intercessory prayer (whether it be for an individual, a group such as a church or mission organization, or even a whole Nation).

Exodus 28:1 (NKJV) ¹ *“Now take Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister to Me as priest, Aaron and Aaron’s sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.*

Exodus 28 – The High Priest’s Garments / Same Material as the Tabernacle

As we read through Exodus 28, we see a whole chapter on the garments the High Priest wore, and we will see one such piece of garment was a cloth wrapped (girded) around his waist. The high priest’s garments were of the same materials as the tabernacle because there is a direct linkage between the high priest and the tabernacle, the place of worship. Sometimes people will say, “I love Jesus, but the church is so full of problems that I have no use for it.” In Hebrews, we see Jesus singing praises to His Father in the midst of His church. Yes, we’re flawed. Yes, we have failed. But of us, Jesus says, “I’m in the midst of them; I’m not ashamed of them; I’m one with them. I’m proud of them” (Hebrews 2:11, 12). Therefore, never let the enemy whisper in your ear that you can separate Jesus, the Great High Priest from His church.

Ephod

First unique piece of the High priest’s outfit was what was called the Ephod. It was fastened to each shoulder, and had one precious gem on each shoulder, and each stone each had 6 of the names of the tribes of Israel engraved on it. It is an illustration and reminder for the High Priest that He was to continually bear the burdens of the people upon Himself. So it is that Jesus does, so it should be that we do.

Exodus 28:9–12 (NKJV) ⁹ *“Then you shall take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel: ¹⁰ six of their names on one stone and six names on the other stone, in order of their birth. ¹¹ With the work of an engraver in stone, like the engravings of a signet, you shall engrave the two stones with the names of the sons of Israel. You shall set them in settings of gold. ¹² And you shall put the two stones on the shoulders of the ephod as memorial stones for the sons of Israel. So Aaron shall bear their names before the LORD on his two shoulders as a memorial.*

Breastplate

Next was the breastplate and it was a plate that has 12 precious stones on it, and each stone had one of the names of the tribes of Israel on it. It is an illustration and reminder to always have the people on the heart of the High Priest. So it is that Jesus does, so it should be that we do.

Exodus 28:15–21 (NKJV) ¹⁵ *“You shall make the breastplate of judgment. Artistically woven according to the workmanship of the ephod you shall make it: of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen, you shall make it. ¹⁶ It shall be doubled into a square: a span shall be its length, and a span shall be its width. ¹⁷ And you shall put settings of stones in it, four rows of stones: The first row shall be a sardius, a topaz, and an emerald; this shall be the first row; ¹⁸ the second row shall be a turquoise, a sapphire, and a diamond; ¹⁹ the third row, a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; ²⁰ and the fourth row, a beryl, an onyx, and a jasper. They shall be set in gold settings. ²¹ And the stones shall have the names of the sons of Israel, twelve according to their names, like the engravings of a signet, each one with its own name; they shall be according to the twelve tribes.*

Exodus 28:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ *“So Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel on the breastplate of judgment over his heart, when he goes into the holy place, as a memorial before the LORD continually.*

Like a Nursing mother – Jesus never Forgets You / You are Engraved on His Hands

“Can a mother forget her nursing child?” God asks. “Neither will I forget you because you are engraved in the palms of My hands” (Isaiah 49:15, 16). Indeed, the nail that pierced my Savior’s palms had my name on it, for it should have been mine. Our names are on the Lord’s heart. They’re not penciled in—they’re indelibly, unalterably, permanently engraved.

Isaiah 49:15–16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ *“Can a woman forget her nursing child, And not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, Yet I will not forget you. ¹⁶ See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me.*

Exodus 28:29-30 A Memorial Forever / You are Precious Gems to Him

Here we see Christ the Loving One. Where does He carry His people, His children? On His heart. He sees everyone as a priceless gem. And there is not one person that Jesus Christ loves on the face of the earth or in all of history more than He loves you.

Exodus 28:29–30 (NKJV) ²⁹ “So Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel on the breastplate of judgment over his heart, when he goes into the holy place, as a memorial before the LORD continually. ³⁰ And you shall put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim, and they shall be over Aaron’s heart when he goes in before the LORD. So Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel over his heart before the LORD continually.

A key for You – Everyone is a Precious Gem / Infinite Worth

A key to being able to minister to everyone, is seeing everyone as the precious gem they are. Different, distinct, and of infinite worth, so much so that God would give His only Son for them.

The Wrap – Girdle / Jesus puts on His Sash and Serves

Then there is the “girdle, the wrap”. Exodus 28 calls it the “curious” or “embroidered” girdle. Again it was the sash worn around the waist. In John 13, Jesus in the Upper Room girded Himself with a towel in order that He could wash the disciples’ feet. Thus, the girdle speaks of Christ, the Serving One. Just as the ephod and girdle were made of the same material, true authority is always linked to a servant mentality.

Exodus 28:7–8 (KJV 1900) ⁷ It shall have the two shoulderpieces thereof joined at the two edges thereof; and so it shall be joined together. ⁸ And the curious girdle of the ephod, which is upon it, shall be of the same, according to the work thereof; even of gold, of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen.

Exodus 28:8 (NKJV) ⁸ And the intricately woven band of the ephod, which is on it, shall be of the same workmanship, made of gold, blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine woven linen.

The waistband Held it All Together

Quite interesting is that the when you read all through Exodus 28, you see that this waistband, this sash, this girdle, held all the other pieces together. So we see a message from God to us; in my tabernacle (which is my body, my church) serving of others holds it all together.

The Deafening Silence of the Water (v.5)

John 13:5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.

Jesus laid Down Glory to Come to Earth – Lays it Down Here to Serve

Just as Jesus laid aside His earthly garments, Philippians 2 says He laid aside His garments of glory to come and dwell among us

Philippians 2:5–11 (NKJV) ⁵ Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷ but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. ⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Common Practice to Wash Feet when Came to House / Usually relegated to the Slave if there was One

Now, regarding this foot washing, in eastern lands, the use of open sandals made it necessary to wash one’s feet frequently. It was common courtesy for a host to arrange to have a slave wash the feet of his guests. Here the divine Host became the slave and performed this lowly service. “Jesus at the feet of the traitor—what a picture! What lessons for us!”

Catch the Scene / Triclinium – U-shaped

So catch the scene, they are all laying around eating. The disciples would eat a formal meal like this at a table known as a triclinium. This was a low (coffee-table height), U-shaped table. The guests would sit, and their status at the meal was reflected by how close they were seated to the host or leader of the meal. Because the table was low, they didn’t sit on chairs. They leaned on pillows, with their feet behind them. This meant that dirty feet could be unpleasantly close to the table during the meal. So the unwashed feet were conspicuous.

Not One of 12 Chose to do This

Isn't it amazing that not one of the 12 chose to do this? It didn't even occur to them, wash another's feet. So here they all are being fed, relaxing on the cushions, laughing and relaxing, and then Jesus stands up and puts on the towel, and then starts to pour water into the basin, and the sound of the water would have been deafening. Everyone will realize, wow why didn't I do that, why did I look past it, and now leave it to Jesus to do. But I will tell you what I think, and you can piece it together from the other Gospel's, it was during this meal that the disciples started to debate who was going to be the greatest in the Kingdom. I can easily see that as they are having their debate, Jesus takes off His garments, girds the towel, and the water begins to pour, and how that room must have grown deafening silent, as Jesus begins to wash feet, and speaks of who is the greatest in the Kingdom. How after this great act and demonstration, they must have been left and in awe.

Luke 22:24–27 (NKJV) ²⁴ Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. ²⁵ And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.' ²⁶ But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. ²⁷ For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.

Want to be Great – not Repent, but Serve

"Don't be like the Gentiles who seek to lord it over others," Jesus said. "If you want to be great in the kingdom, you must be the servant of all" (see Matthew 20:25, 26). Notice that Jesus didn't say, "If you want to be great, repent," but rather, "If you want to be great, here's how: Be the servant of all."

Not One of 12 Chose to do This / The Danger of 'the Chosen'

Isn't it amazing that not one of the 12 chose to do this? It didn't even occur to them, wash another's feet, after all they were the 12 they were the inner circle they were the chosen ones. How careful we need to be we can think that were the chosen ones, whether that be we're chosen by Christ therefore we don't serve the world around us. We're in some leadership position in the ministry, or in the workplace, forget the very base things in the home of being a servant to the family to the wife to the children. We forget in the workplace there we're still servants because that's what Jesus taught us to be his servants. I think it's such a great danger for us in the workplace to forget they we're servants, and we can reach a leadership position in the workplace, and no longer serve the people because we forget what were called to be and do. May we always just look at the Jesus model and the servant of all.

Want to Lose Servant Heart – Look at Other People / Become Critical and Resentful

By the way, if you want to lose your servant heart, take your eyes off that you are ministering unto the Lord, and start looking at the people, and you will surely find yourself critical and resentful for being treated like a servant.

Exodus 28:1 (NKJV) ¹ "Now take Aaron your brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister to Me as priest, Aaron and Aaron's sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

Cleansed Positional & Relational (v.6-10)

John 13:6 Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?"

John 13:7 Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."

John 13:8 Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."

John 13:9 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!"

John 13:10 Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you."

Peter Confused – Jesus uses the Illustration to teach a Spiritual Truth

13:6 Peter was shocked to think of the Lord's washing his feet, and he expressed his disapproval that One so great as the Lord should condescend to one so unworthy as he. "The sight of God in the role of a servant is disturbing."

13:7 Jesus now taught Peter that there was a spiritual meaning to what He was doing. Foot-washing was a picture of a certain type of spiritual washing. Peter knew that the Lord was performing the physical act, but he did not

understand the spiritual significance. He would know it soon, however, because the Lord explained it. And he would know it by experience when later he was restored to the Lord after having denied Him.

People Clean after Bath – but Feet Get Dirty Walking

So people would take a bath, but it was impossible to not get dirty feet walking in such a dry arid climate wearing sandals. So although your body was clean, you continually picked up dirt upon your feet as you walked through the world.

Position – Relation / To Agree With / Continually Need to be Washed

So Jesus makes the illustration for Peter. We are clean positional, the cross is the entry into the Kingdom as sons and daughters. But what we have to do daily is be cleaned relationally. We are always God's children's, nothing can change that or take away from that; but there is that place where when we in disobedience, rebellion, just a plain ole bad choice, that we have to come back to the Lord and make things right, say to Him Lord I know what I have done is wrong, and I know this hurt you, I know this offended you, and I want to confess that I was wrong. The word confess means to "agree with". So when we confess, it isn't to get saved again, but to agree with Him. Lord your Word is right, it is true, it is perfect and holy, and I chose to go against it.

1 John 3:1 (NKJV) ¹ Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him.

1 John 1:9 (NKJV) ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

How Scary to do Jesus Thing and Not be Saved (v.11)

John 13:11 For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean."

Scary – Walk Jesus and Not be Saved

Wow, how scary that a person could be hanging out with Jesus all that time, going to church, bumper stickers on the car, talking the Christian language, playing the role so convincing that others would never even suspect it, but in the end they were never one of God's. Are you sure that you are His? If you have any doubts, then lets settle it today.

Luke 22:21–23 (NKJV) ²¹ But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table. ²² And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!" ²³ Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing.

What Does Service Look Like (v.12-17)

John 13:12 So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you?"

John 13:13 You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am.

John 13:14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

John 13:15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

John 13:16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.

John 13:17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

We Call Him King of Universe – He washes Feet / Servant Lives to make Others Life Better

We call him Savior, King of the universe, Mighty God, Prince of Peace, the One who will come again in power, but here He is the foot washing Messiah. A Servant! A servant lives to improve the quality of life for another, and that is why Christ lived (temporarily and eternally).

V14 – Ought – Obligated/Indebted/to Owe / a Duty

Verse 14 - The word "ought" means to be obligated to, indebted to, to owe, as a duty. If the King of the Universe says He is obliged, indebted, to owe, expected duty, to serve others..... then how could we expect to not have the same duty, obligation, indebtedness, expectation?

Jesus all About Serving the People – He sets the Example

Jesus was all about people, all about serving, He sets the example for us.

What does Ministry Look Like to your Spouse

What does a ministry of service to my wife look like?

- Ephod - That is should bear her burdens. Husbands we are not in a 50/50 relationship, we are to bear the load. Our wives need to know that they do not bear the load alone, that we are bearing the load with them.
- Breastplate - That is should keep her upon my heart.
- Towel – Serve her. I like what Pastor Joe Fotch always says, it takes more Holy Spirit to do the dishes, then it does to preach a sermon.

What does Ministry Look Like to Others in the Church

What does a ministry of service to my wife look like?

- Ephod – bear their burdens in prayer. Ask them what can I pray for you this week, what is heavy burden you are carrying at this time, a wayward child, finances, rest, relationship, unsaved family.
- Breastplate – Start carrying their burdens and they will be upon your heart, you will find a deep love for them, it just happens by default.
- Towel – and ask the Lord where do you want me to serve the body? What can I do to make their life better.

If You Know – You will Do

Verse 17 - *If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.* - This principle is universal in every thought and action of a Christian, what you know, you are to do. That goes way beyond just serving, but all the way down to obeying, to the last word of God.

And – you will be Blessed / Happy

Blessed are you if you do them. Blessed, means “happy”. Do the things of God, down to the last jot and tittle, and you will be happy. Are you unhappy? Then the question is, is there something He has required of me, but you have not responded to it?

World System says Serve Self – God says Serve Others to be Happy

We live in a world system that says the pursuit of happiness, yet why is the US so unhappy, why is the US so depressed? This world system of serving self, satisfying self, indulging self, contrary to the system and principals of the Kingdom of God. When you give yourself unselfishly to others, when you think of yourself less, and others more, you experience what Jesus experience..... the Zoe Life.

We hold these truths to be sacred & undeniable; that all men are created equal & independent, that from that equal creation they derive rights inherent & inalienable, among which are the preservation of life, & liberty, & the pursuit of happiness; ... (United States Declaration of Independence)

1 Corinthians 13 – Pinnacle of Love / Must have Humilty to Love like 1 Corinthians 13

The Bible’s teaching about love reaches its pinnacle in 1 Corinthians 13:4–8, the most magnificent description of love ever penned. To love like that requires above all else humility, for only humble people can put the interests of others ahead of their own (Phil. 2:3–4). Thus Paul exhorted the Ephesians to act “with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love” (Eph. 4:2). Jesus taught that those who humbly love others will be exalted, not those who promote themselves (Luke 14:11; 18:14;); humility, not pride, is the mark of true greatness (Matt. 18:4; 20:26; 23:11) and brings God’s blessing (Ps. 25:9; Prov. 3:34 [NKJV]; 22:4; Isa. 57:15; 66:2; 1 Peter 5:5).

1 Corinthians 13:4–8 (NKJV) ⁴ Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; ⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; ⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.

Jesus is showing us the way to Zoe Life

This is the Zoe Life, the God Life, the Life beyond this life. It is the abundant life. It is the whole reason this epistle was written and preserved for us, so that we might have eternal life with Christ when we die, and have abundant life today as we journey on to the eternal destination.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

End of Study

John 13:18-38

Chuck Swindoll Story

"On Sunday, believers arrived at a house church in the Soviet Union in small groups throughout the day so not to arouse the suspicion of KGB informers. They began by singing a hymn quietly. Suddenly, in walked two soldiers with loaded weapons at the ready. One shouted, "If you wish to renounce your commitment to Jesus Christ, leave now!" Two or three quickly left, then another. After a few more seconds, two more. "This is your last chance. Either turn against your faith in Christ," he ordered, "or stay and suffer the consequences." Two more slipped out into the night. No one else moved. Parents with children trembling beside them looked down reassuringly, fully expecting to be gunned down or imprisoned. The other soldier closed the door, looked back at those who stood against the wall and said, "Keep your hands up--but this time in praise to our Lord Jesus Christ. We, too, are Christians. We were sent to another house church several weeks ago to arrest a group of believers." The other soldier interrupted, "But, instead, we were converted! We have learned by experience, however, that unless people are willing to die for their faith, they cannot be fully trusted." (From "Living Above the Level of Mediocrity," by Chuck Swindoll).

Final Night of Life of Jesus / ¼ of Entire Gospel / First Jesus has to Clear the Room of unbelievers

We have covered 3.5 years of the ministry of Jesus Christ, chapters 1-12. Now, we are 12-18 hours away from the cross, and chapters 13-17 (that's 25% of the entire Gospel) is devoted to the last night of Jesus life on earth before the cross. Chapters 14-17 simply put, are the deepest and richest words of Christ He gives to believers; but before He does, He has to clear the room of the unbeliever, so He can pour His heart out, and into, these 11 who will stay, regardless of the cost, and they will all pay the highest price for staying, as they will all lay down their life (except John who will be brutally punished for his faith as church history says he was placed in a cauldron of boiling oil but not die, then banished to a remote island and not die, but would not deny the faith). Jesus has to clear the room of the unbeliever before the depth of the teaching we will read about in the studies to come about the resurrection, abiding, Holy Spirit, and prayer), all deep things, all foundational things. But first He has to clear the room.

Finish 13 / Clear the Room / Not a Pleasant Chapter – Judas chooses Hell / To Be Honest

But today, we finish chapter 13, the clearing of the room, the betrayal of Judas. Let me just say up front, it is not a pleasant chapter, we will read about a betrayal of our Lord, but as unpleasant and troubling, is we read about a person, a human being, who chooses hell, he walks out of Jesus into the darkness, never to return into the light. To share with you, I really struggled with this passage yesterday, and I really didn't know why. I have been reading and studying it all week, had pieces of paper with notes all over the place, sat down yesterday had my morning devotion and enjoyed time with the Lord, and then came time to piece all the pieces into a message, and I just felt like exhaustion come over me, I felt like the Lord turned off the switch, and I felt all on my own. I went on again off again throughout the day, trying to get some resemblances of a message out of my notes, but at 10pm I just went to bed exhausted from the struggle, but not feeling like I had a message to share with you. Then first thing this morning I saw it, I was reading and studying a passage about a man who was going to hell for eternity, and I was looking at it like it was common, it's the story of Judas betrayal, its common as we know the story like the back of our hands, but it is a story about someone walking into darkness, hell, where there is weeping and gnashing of the teeth, for eternity. There is nothing common about that, it should trouble me, it shouldn't be common, and all the people around me every day, all the people around you every day, perishing, choosing to say no to Jesus, entering into eternity of hell, may it never be "common" to us. May we be like Jesus, troubled!

John 13:18–22 (NKJV) ¹⁸ "I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.' ¹⁹ Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He. ²⁰ Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me." ²¹ When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me." ²² Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke.

So let's pick up our passage in verse 18.

If you Knew had all Authority – What do? / What Lasting Impression you want to Leave

Verse 3, says Jesus knowing that all things were given into His hands.... - If you knew that all things were given to you. All authority, all power, all understanding, was given to you what would you do with such knowledge? What does Jesus do, he grabs a towel and a washbasin.

John 13:3 (NKJV) ³ *Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God,*

Lord of the Towel – People of the Towel

Jesus is the Lord of the Towel; Jesus is calling each and every one of us to a “People of the Towel”. Jesus served, and He calls us to serve.

John 13:3–5 (NKJV) ³ *Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God,* ⁴ *rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself.* ⁵ *After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.*

Zoe Life

We have been studying for 12 chapters how to have the Zoe Life, the God Life, the Life beyond this life. It is the abundant life. It is the whole reason this epistle was written and preserved for us, so that we might have eternal life with Christ when we die, and have abundant life today as we journey on to the eternal destination. We can have the Zoe Life, the God Life, the Life that Jesus lived, by serving.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ *And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;* ³¹ *but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.*

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

John 13:18–38 (NKJV) ¹⁸ “I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, ‘*He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.*’ ¹⁹ Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am *He.*” ²⁰ Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.” ²¹ When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me.” ²² Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke. ²³ Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. ²⁴ Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke. ²⁵ Then, leaning back on Jesus’ breast, he said to Him, “Lord, who is it?” ²⁶ Jesus answered, “It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped *it.*” And having dipped the bread, He gave *it* to Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon. ²⁷ Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.” ²⁸ But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him. ²⁹ For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, “Buy *those things* we need for the feast,” or that he should give something to the poor. ³⁰ Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night. ³¹ So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. ³² If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately. ³³ Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come,’ so now I say to you. ³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” ³⁶ Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, where are You going?” Jesus answered him, “Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward.” ³⁷ Peter said to Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake.” ³⁸ Jesus answered him, “Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.

Betrayal – Cut it Down and Forget It

John 13:18 “I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, ‘*He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.*’

Jesus quotes Psalm 41 – Ahithophel / Hangs Self

Explaining that there was one in their midst who needed more than just his feet washed, Jesus quotes Psalm 41:9, where the reference is to David’s betrayal by a man named Ahithophel. You recall the story. When David’s son,

Absalom, launched a rebellion against him, Ahithophel, David's key advisor, defected and joined Absalom. "He who ate bread with me—the guy who sat at my table, the one who shared with me—has kicked me," a crushed David lamented. What happened to David, though, was simply a picture of what would happen to the Son of David, Jesus Christ, as Jesus would be betrayed by one who ate bread with Him, one who traveled alongside of Him, one who had his feet washed by Him. And Ahithophel was a picture of what would happen to Judas, for, like Judas, he too eventually hanged himself because of guilt (2 Samuel 17:23).

Psalm 41:9 (NKJV) ⁹ *Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.*

Ever been Betrayed?

Have you ever been betrayed? Jesus knows what it is like, you can speak to Him about it.

Jesus Betrayed – But kept Moving On

I know this is a simple statement, but Jesus was betrayed, but He kept moving forward. Probably not a person in this room who hasn't been betrayed at some point in their life by someone they loved and were close to, and that betrayal hurts deeply. But we see an application for us all, and that even in the greatest betrayal, Jesus kept moving on.

Have You Been Hurt or Betrayed?

Maybe you have been betrayed by a loved one, someone you gave yourself for completely. Maybe you gave so much to someone, bailed them out, rescued them from certain destruction, stuck by them when no one else did, and now they are healed, on top, they have turned against you. A simple word, through a tremendous example, let it go and move on. Don't relieve the situation over and over, don't chew on the root of bitterness, let it go on to do, and move on.

I can't Forget – Judas is Recorded for 2000 Years

I can't forget about you may say. Hey, Judas has been recorded for 2,000 years. God hasn't forgotten. Not sure who came up with that advice to forget about it, because I'm not sure it is possible to forget. Paul the apostle would say in Philippians speaking of his past life, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward calling of God in Christ Jesus. Put another way, Paul is saying I putting the past behind me, I am dismissing it, not living in it, and I am moving on to what God has before me.

Philippians 3:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ *Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead,* ¹⁴ *I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*

Robert E Lee – Cut it Down / Peterson US Ambassador – Left it at the Gates in 1972

Here are two stories to ponder. One comes from the Civil War, the other from the Vietnam War.

1. In Charles Bracelen Flood's book *Lee: The Last Years*, he tells of a time after the Civil War when Robert E. Lee visited a woman who took him to the remains of a grand old tree in front of her home. There she cried bitterly that its limbs and trunk had been destroyed by Union artillery fire. She waited for Lee to condemn the North or at least sympathize with her loss. Lee paused, and then said, "Cut it down, my dear madam, and then forget it." Good advice from a man who knew the horrors of war and suffered the pain of defeat.
2. The second story comes from an interview with Pete Peterson, the former U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam. Mr. Peterson's appointment was ironic because he served six years as a prisoner of war in the dreaded Hanoi Hilton. As an ambassador, he went back to the land where he was held captive—not for revenge, but to represent the United States. When asked how he could do such a thing after years of starvation, torture and inhuman brutality, he replied, "I'm not angry. I left that at the gates of the prison when I walked out in 1972. That may sound simplistic to some people, but it's the truth. I just left it behind me and decided to move forward with my life."

Holocaust Survivors

Some who survived the Holocaust though they were alive, never lived again. They survived, but the horror left them unable to live again. But there were those who went on to live very happy and prosperous lives. When asked how, nearly all of them said the same thing, "I choose to move on".

Move On – Don't let it Stop you from what God called you To.

Move on beloved, don't let the betrayal stop you from what God has for you. When you need to talk about, when the struggle gets hard, you can talk to Jesus, He fully knows what it is like. But He will say to you, do what I did, move on, keep going towards the upward calling of God. See, I don't think we see the magnitude of this, and how great the heart of God is towards us. He poured Himself into Judas, gave so much of Himself to Judas, loved Him to the end, and this is what Judas gives Him in return. There is a tendency when you have been hurt to such a degree, to say I will never love again, trust again, I will not allow myself to become vulnerable again, and a person distance themselves from others. Jesus, not so, Judas won't be the last to betray me, but I still chose to keep on loving, keep on fully giving Myself to others, for it is the upward calling of God to do so.

God Knows Your Day at the beginning of It

John 13:19 Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He.

Don't be Surprised When it Happens – the Cross in 12 hours

Jesus is saying to them, don't be surprised when it happens, when I am betrayed, don't think for a moment that it was out of My control He says. Catch this, Jesus is about 12 hours from the cross, and in the Jewish reckoning of the day it is the beginning of the day, as they start the new day at sunset, and goes until sunset. Jesus already knew what the day was going to bring, as the new day began. When will I get that, Lord you know the day before me already, it is 6am but you know all that is going to happen along the way until I put my head down on the pillow again. How wise and well I would do if I continually would always remind myself of that at the beginning of the day. Lord you know my day already, prepare me for it, remind me along the way of the day You know the day, nothing will happen will surprise You, so why should I be surprised, upset, angered, fearful, frustrated, stressed by it. How often anxiety overcomes me, anger, when something happens and I feel my day is not out-of-control, stress overcomes because I feel my plans have been hijacked or ruined, all the while forgetting that God knew the day at 6am, the only one surprised here by all this is me, surely not You. Whereas if I start the day, knowing He knows the day, I can talk to Him before it begins, and all along the way, and I will find my stress level diminished greatly when I do.

- The Lord knows who will come against you that day (just as He knew Judas would), ask Him to prepare you for it should it happen, and to calm you when it does.
- When the day gets what seems to be hijacked, may we sit back and rest in the Lord and say Lord you are in control of my day, no one controls my day except You.

God in Control – Every Step / March to Cross began back in Bethlehem – Via Delarosa

God the Father is in control of every step of the cross. The march to the cross began well before the Via Delarosa, it began back in Bethlehem, through Nazareth, through 40 days in the wilderness, and All the way back when Jesus prayed all night before selecting the twelve (which included Judas).

God is in Control of every Detail of Your Life

God has controlled every detail. Personally you can apply that to your life personally, God is in control of every detail, every step, from your birth, through your wilderness, to your today, right now, this very moment, and as we have read, He has loved you through it all, and to the end.

Romans – Jews – Did not Kill Jesus / You Did – I Did

But secondly, may the world see, Judas did not kill Jesus, the Romans did not kill Jesus, nor did the Jews kill Jesus, you did, I did, it was my sin and your sin that killed Him, and it was His plan before the foundation of the world that He would come and redeem us back from our sin that separated us from Him the holy God. It wasn't the Jews, it wasn't the Romans, it was you, it was me!

John 13:1 (NKJV) ¹ Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

It's a Choice / Jesus was Troubled

John 13:20 Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

John 13:21 When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me."

John 13:22 Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke.

Choice is Two-Way / Jesus Troubled because Judas not Receiving the Father

Verse 20, what does all this mean? It means it is a choice. The choice is two-way. First God chooses every person, just like He chose Judas, and then each person has a choice to make if they want to choose Jesus. It is a marriage offer, Jesus is asking a person to become His Bride, and just like my wife Renee had a choice, so does every person. Jesus is troubled, because Judas is not receiving the Father who sent the Son.

Jesus Troubled – Because God Loves People

Jesus is troubled, His heart is ripped open, because God loves people, but to be love He must allow them their free-will to choose.

People try to Soften Up – But better if Not Born – Judas is In Hell

People try to soften the account up, say that Judas was misguided, taken advantage of, was trying to force Jesus to declare Himself King and overthrow Rome, there are many who try to soften this up because the alternate position is hard – that Judas went to hell. Here is the hard fact, and it is why Jesus was troubled, because Judas died and went to hell. Judas made His choice. Jesus said it would have been better had Judas never been born. Well Jesus would not have said that if Judas went to heaven. Jesus said it because hell is for eternity.

Matthew 26:22–25 (NKJV) ²² And they were exceedingly sorrowful, and each of them began to say to Him, "Lord, is it I?" ²³ He answered and said, "He who dipped his hand with Me in the dish will betray Me. ²⁴ The Son of Man indeed goes just as it is written of Him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been good for that man if he had not been born." ²⁵ Then Judas, who was betraying Him, answered and said, "Rabbi, is it I?" He said to him, "You have said it."

Jesus is Troubled – Like He was when Lazarus Died

People going to hell trouble Jesus' heart. We read another place where His heart was troubled and it was when Lazarus was in the grave and Mary was heartbroken. This is the heart that Jesus has for the lost. Jesus loves Judas, but cant and wont force him into a relationship with He and the Father who sent Him, and His heart is ripped open.

John 11:33–36 (NKJV) ³³ Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. ³⁴ And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." ³⁵ Jesus wept. ³⁶ Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!"

Lord Give us the Same Heart

I ask the Lord to give us the same heart, that we would be troubled for every lost and dying person that we meet. That we can't just keep walking, we can't just go on as if all is well, that our hearts would be troubled, the spirit within us would stir us, that we would give ourselves to them all the way to the end as we will see Jesus do in just a few verses. Oh Lord break our hearts of the things that break yours.

John Knows His Love – All are Invited to Lean on His Chest and Hear His Heartbeat

John 13:23 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.

John 13:24 Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke.

John 13:25 Then, leaning back on Jesus' breast, he said to Him, "Lord, who is it?"

John

We can deduce that this is the Apostle John who is leaning upon the chest of Jesus; John is the author of this Gospel. John is writing it about 70 years after the event, and is probably in late teen years, maybe early adulthood.

U-Table / Who is It / Traitor within All of Us

As was customary, the disciples were reclining around a U-shaped table, propping themselves up on one arm while eating with the other. So Peter is across the table and motioning to John, they ask Jesus who it is. We read in Luke's account that they all questioned within if it was them. There is a traitor with all of us, and we know it, and the best place to be to is where John is, leaning on the chest of Jesus listening to his heart, hearing His voice *Luke 22:21–23 (NKJV)* ²¹ *But behold, the hand of My betrayer is with Me on the table.* ²² *And truly the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom He is betrayed!* ²³ *Then they began to question among themselves, which of them it was who would do this thing.*

John – Whom Jesus Loved

Do you want to know beautiful place to be, in the place for John is in, knowing in the full security you are the one that Jesus loves. John knew it, he experienced it, he was sure about it. And I want to tell you can be sure about it, 100% sure about it, Jesus loves you and that settles it. I believe John is leaning on the chest of Jesus, because he is sure of the love of Jesus for him.

Judas Means Waste

John 13:26 Jesus answered, “It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it.” And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.

John 13:27 Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.”

John 13:28 But no one at the table knew for what reason He said this to him.

John 13:29 For some thought, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus had said to him, “Buy those things we need for the feast,” or that he should give something to the poor.

John 13:30 Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night.

To Dip was to Honor as a Friend

In this culture to dip and hand food to another was considered to honor that person, and to honor as a friend, and so we see Jesus loving Judas to the end.

People Hang With Jesus – Do Good Things – But don't Know Him

So we can see from Judas example, people can hang out with Jesus, do the church thing and religious thing, do good works like building orphanages and deeding the poor, but still actually not know Him.

And it was Night

As we saw in the first Passover, everyone was to stay inside the house once night came, they needed to be under the covering of the lamb (the blood applied over the door); here we see Judas leaving the covering of the Lamb, and once a person does, darkness is what covers them.

Judas – Means waste

How interesting that Judas called the worship of Mary with the expensive spikenard a waste, for Judas' very name means waste, as “son of perdition” means to waste. Judas was wasting his life on the material things of the world, the physical things of the world, the things that only brought a temporary pleasure, and then once taken and used they would be nothing again. Judas wasted his life. May we not be a people who waste our life may we live in give everything that we have for Jesus let nothing go to waste. Let me tell you this anything you do on behalf of Jesus and the name of Jesus and with the heart of Jesus is never a waste.

John 17:12 (NKJV) ¹² *While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.*

30 Lousy pieces of Silver

What was Judas' thing, I believe it was the love of money. I don't think it was ambition, I surely don't think he was trying to force Jesus into claiming the Kingdom, I think it was pure simple greed. He was a thief from the money

bag we saw, and he betrays Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. What a waste! We can't be exactly sure how much these 30 pieces of silver were worth at the time of Jesus, but coins found from that area on the average were weighing a half an ounce (14 grams), so today (08March15) silver closed at 16/ounce. So 30 times .5, times 16, equals 240 dollars. If a denarii was a day's wage, and it weighed about 3 grams (1/10th of an ounce), then Judas had about 150 days of wages, about 6 months of wages. What a waste

John 12:4–6 (NKJV) ⁴ But one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, who would betray Him, said, ⁵ "Why was this fragrant oil not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" ⁶ This he said, not that he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and had the money box; and he used to take what was put in it.

Matthew 26:14–16 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests ¹⁵ and said, "What are you willing to give me if I deliver Him to you?" And they counted out to him thirty pieces of silver. ¹⁶ So from that time he sought opportunity to betray Him.

Story of Judas

Historically there is no record of Leonardo using the same model for both Christ and Judas. However, according to author Robert Wallace who wrote "The World Of Leonardo 1452-1519," Leonardo did use live models and did look among local prisoners for someone to portray Judas, but there is no record of the following story;

The Last Supper was painted by Leonardo Da Vinci, a noted Italian artist; and the time engaged for its completion was seven years.

The figures representing the twelve Apostles and Christ himself were painted from living persons. The life-model for the painting of the figure of Jesus was chosen first.

When it was decided that Da Vinci would paint this great picture, hundreds and hundreds of young men were carefully viewed in an endeavor to find a face and personality exhibiting innocence and beauty, free from the scars and signs of dissipation caused by sin.

Finally, after weeks of laborious searching, a young man nineteen years of age was selected as a model for the portrayal of Christ. For six months, Da Vinci worked on the production of this leading character of his famous painting. During the next six years, Da Vinci continued his labors on this sublime work of art. One by one fitting persons were chosen to represent each of the eleven Apostles; space being left for the painting of the figure representing Judas Iscariot as the final task of this masterpiece. This was the Apostle, you remember, who betrayed his Lord for thirty pieces of silver, worth in our present day, currency of \$16.96.

For weeks, Da Vinci searched for a man with a hard callous face, with a countenance marked by scars of avarice, deceit, hypocrisy, and crime; a face that would delineate a character who would betray his best friend.

After many discouraging experiences in searching for the type of person required to represent Judas, word came to Da Vinci that a man whose appearance fully met his requirements had been found in a dungeon in Rome, sentenced to die for a life of crime and murder.

Da Vinci made the trip to Rome at once, and this man was brought out from his imprisonment in the dungeon and led out into the light of the sun. There Da Vinci saw before him a dark, swarthy man; his long, shaggy and unkempt hair sprawled over his face, which betrayed a character of viciousness and complete ruin. At last, the famous painter had found the person he wanted to represent the character of Judas in his painting.

By special permission from the king, this prisoner was carried to Milan where the picture was being painted; and for months he sat before Da Vinci at appointed hours each day as the gifted artist diligently continued his task of transmitting to his painting this base character in the picture representing the traitor and betrayer of our savior. As he finished his last stroke, he turned to the guards and said, "I have finished. You may take the prisoner away."

As the guards were leading their prisoner away, he suddenly broke loose from their control and rushed up to Da Vinci, crying as he did so, "O, Da Vinci, look at me! Do you not know who I am?"

Da Vinci, with the trained eyes of a great character student, carefully scrutinized the man upon whose face he had constantly gazed for six months and replied, "No, I have never seen you in my life until you were brought before me out of the dungeon in Rome."

Then, lifting his eyes toward heaven, the prisoner said, "Oh, God, have I fallen so low?" Then turning his face to the painter he cried, "Leonardo Da Vinci! Look at me again for I am the same man you painted just seven years ago as the figure of Christ."

Truth or Fiction I do not Know / But Scars of Sin I do

Whether the story be truth or fiction we cannot know for sure, but none the less it serves a good illustration of the ravages of sin, and how it destroys, how it takes away beauty and innocence in exchange for darkness and ruin.

A New Year Challenge – Evaluate Life Today / Children of Israel progression in Egypt / Bitter Lettuce

A word for the New Year, a word of exhortation to consider oneself. To evaluate, to look inward, to consider what is the life you are living, and who are you serving. I am reminded of the story of Israel, and I see such a fitting

picture of the progression into the world. There was a famine in the land, Israel leaves Caanan, and moves all Israel into Egypt. What we read is that when they first go in, they are favored and greatly accepted into the land by the people. Then, "time happens", and they prosper and settle into the land, they become established. But then, in a moment, literally overnight, a new king (pharaoh) comes into power, and in one decree makes them slaves, places cruel taskmasters over them, and they are trapped without a way out. So it is the way the world works for any person, first they are accepted, find favor, feel they are in the right place. Then, "time happens" and they become settled in, established, comfortable where they are. Then, literally it can seem overnight, they find themselves enslaved, a slave to a cruel taskmaster, and they are trapped. A rabbi in the Talmud commenting on Israel's enslavement said, it was like lettuce, at first sweet, but as lettuce sits in the field too long, it becomes bitter.

Everyone Serves Somewhere and Someone

Every man/woman serves someone, something, somewhere. Where and who do you?

It is a New Degree of Love – By the Example Set By Jesus

John 13:31 So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him.

John 13:32 If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately.

Only God

What an amazing God; One who considers betrayal, mocking, crucifixion, to be glory. But it is to Him, because it is through that path that He redeems man from sin. God loves you..... He considers you His glory.

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Only See God's Glory in/through Jesus

God's glory is only seen through Jesus Christ. If you look for it anywhere else, you will not see it or find it.

John 13:33 Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,' so now I say to you.

John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

John 13:35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Smelling Like Spikenard

Mind you, Jesus is still smelling like spikenard from Mary anointing Him with a pound, 16 ounces of it, just 4 days earlier.

Not New Command – But New Degree – the Example of Jesus

Notice the context of where I go you cannot come, and then he comes in to love one another. Where Jesus is right now we're not there, but we will be there someday, but in the interim we are to love one another. Love one another is not a new command it's from the Old Testament, but it's a new command in the degree of love, as they have now seen the love of God in action and played out in real life through the life of Jesus Christ. What is love in action Jesus Christ exemplified it and then Paul put it down on a piece of paper called first Corinthians chapter 13.

Jesus all About Serving the People – He sets the Example

Jesus was all about people, all about serving, He sets the example for us.

What does Ministry Look Like to your Spouse

What does a ministry of service to my wife look like?

- Ephod - That is should bear her burdens. Husbands we are not in a 50/50 relationship, we are to bear the load. Our wives need to know that they do not bear the load alone, that we are bearing the load with them.
- Breastplate - That is should keep her upon my heart.

- Towel – Serve her. I like what Pastor Joe Fotch always says, it takes more Holy Spirit to do the dishes, then it does to preach a sermon.

What does Ministry Look Like to Others in the Church

What does a ministry of service to my wife look like?

- Ephod – bear their burdens in prayer. Ask them what can I pray for you this week, what is heavy burden you are carrying at this time, a wayward child, finances, rest, relationship, unsaved family.
- Breastplate – Start carrying their burdens and they will be upon your heart, you will find a deep love for them, it just happens by default.
- Towel – and ask the Lord where do you want me to serve the body? What can I do to make their life better.

Let not Your Heart be Troubled

John 13:36 Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, where are You going?” Jesus answered him, “Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward.”

John 13:37 Peter said to Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake.”

John 13:38 Jesus answered him, “Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.

No Chapter Break

Remember there is no chapter break, and Jesus after he tells Peter you deny me, says let not your heart be troubled.

John 14:1 (NKJV) ¹ “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

Two Denials – 1 Table

In our passage we see two denials, Judas and Peter. The difference of the outcome is very simple, one stayed at the table with Christ, the other left. Beloved, stay at the table, stay in the light, and God will see you through to the end, simply abide, and He will do the rest.

End of Study

Chapter 14

John 14:1-7

Upper Room Discourse

We are in what is known as the upper-room discourse. The 11 are there, it is the scene of the final supper together before the cross, Jesus has washed the feet of all, Judas has just departed to sell Him out, and Jesus will get into the deepest teaching of His whole ministry on this final night of His life. We are somewhere around 12 hours from the cross. Let's pick it up in verse one of chapter 14.

John 14:1-7 (NKJV) ¹ "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And where I go you know, and the way you know." ⁵ Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?" ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. ⁷ "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."

John 14:1 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

Jesus Ascribes Deity / Mormons & Jews / Context is for His Children

Jesus ascribes Himself as God by saying this, as He makes Himself equal with God by saying if you believe in God, believe in Me. We have a clear statement, so let the Jehovah witnesses and Mormons argue that as they will, but the point for us today is, the way to overcome a troubled heart, is through Jesus who is God, who has the power to overcome whatever troubles us.

For Context – John 13:30-38 / You can't Come – Peter will Fail Him

There are no chapter breaks, so let's read the end of chapter 13 for context. The disciples have walked with Him for 3 years, they have given up all to follow, they are in love with Him, being with Him is their security blanket, and now Jesus blows them away by saying, I am leaving you now, and where I go you cannot be. Imagine saying that to your child, imagine the troubled heart they will immediately have. And then, add to this context for Peter, you are going to fail Me, regardless how strong your words are, how confident you are in yourself, you are going to deny me, fail Me, and I will not be around because where I go you cannot come.

John 13:30-38 (NKJV) ³⁰ Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night. ³¹ So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. ³² If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately. ³³ Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,' so now I say to you. ³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." ³⁶ Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward." ³⁷ Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake." ³⁸ Jesus answered him, "Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.

Jesus knows Heart Troubled – But Gives Cure / Trust All Things to Me

Jesus knows their heart and how troubled it will be based on all these things. But He gives them the cure for the troubled heart is to believe in Jesus, believe in God. Believe who He is, God, and all that He is and can do because He is God. Believe, means to trust, have faith, and the directing of that believing and faith, is Himself. When you are troubled, here is what you are to do, trust yourself to Me, all things, trust I can and will work in your marriage, in your financial struggle, in that situation, in that circumstance, in that wayward child, in that habit, in that addiction, in each and in all, trust it to Me. And when you release it to Me, you will find peace. He ends this chapter with that promise:

John 14:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Step back see God's Heart – 12hrs from Cross – Caring for Disciples Worries

May we step back and look at "your God", and see His heart here for His children. Jesus is 12 hours away from the cross, from the scourging, from the beating, from the humiliation, from the mocking, from the false accusation that will shame His family name, 12 hours from being separated from His Father whom He has never been separated from all eternity, and His concern is how His children are doing, and how they will be troubled. Beloved,

you are always on God's heart, He is troubled when you are troubled, and He is always wanting to calm your troubled heart. Going to the cross in 12 hours, but caring for the hearts of the children, and so too it is today for you, as God loves you, He is coming to you, He is there for every tear, every fall, and every sorrow.

Trust Me – Still Smelling Like Spikenard

Jesus says put all trust in Me, cast it on Me, roll it unto Me, for I care for you deeply and greatly. Mind you, Jesus is still smelling like spikenard after Mary just five days ago poured a whole pound out upon Him, 16 thick highly fragrant ounces of the oil that was used to anoint the dead. Jesus saying you can trust how much I care for you, and it will be proven and demonstrated clearly when I go to the cross and die for you sins.

1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV) ⁷ casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

Cures for the Troubled Heart – Outline chapter 14 (5 Things)

Chapter 14 will give us the cure for the troubled heart for the world we live in:

- **Place (14:1-4)** – Jesus prepares a place for us, a home in heaven.
- **Picture (14:5-11)** – Jesus expounds on the heart of the Father, a picture of the Father is seen in the Son.
- **Prayer (14:12-15)** – Jesus tells us that we can pray and be heard!
- **Power (14:16-26)** – Jesus says we will not be left orphans while on earth, and promises us the Holy Spirit, to have power to overcome in this world.
- **Peace (14:27-31)** – Jesus leave us His peace, which is literal, something we can receive, and something the world cannot give to us or anyone.

First Up

First up, I go prepare a place for you! But before that, read below.....

Let's Clear this Up – God will still Use You

Let's clear this up, let's be real clear about this, and that is if you have failed Jesus, have denied Him, have gone your own way instead of His way, and you now think you can't ever be used by the Lord again, absorb this verse to all that it has and says to you, like it said to Peter! Peter you are going to fail Me, but don't be troubled, I not can, but I will use you again. You can never have gone too far that the Lord won't use you again..... You believe in God, believe also in Me.....trust all things to Me, cast all things upon me, and I will see it through. Beloved, get back into the serving of the Lord, time is short, we need to be all about the Father's business right now

John 14:2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

Heaven is about a Person / A Wonderful Person

Heaven not about a place so much as it is about a person, the person of Jesus Christ, our wonderful Lord and Savior. Isaiah chapter 9 says that He is wonderful; something wonderful is it's always more than you expect. When we have something, receive something, we say "isn't this wonderful", because it was more than we ever expected or imagined. It has been said by many, why doesn't God give more description about heaven in the Bible, so little is written to describe heaven; to which I say not true, heaven is described in great detail, because heaven is more about the person of God, than it is about the place. If 99% of the Bible is written about the heart of God, and 1% about the place of heaven, I think that is a good ratio, because when we get to heaven we will be more in awe of the person than the place, even the place is going to be awesome. But, the person is going to be wonderful. So imagine every day with someone who's wonderful, every day would be something wonderful. I will say this the kingdom has come here on earth, and where Jesus is, is where the kingdom is. And God is amongst us today, He walks amongst us and He lives amongst us, and He lives inside of us (for those that have received Him as their Lord and Savior). And we can experience wonderful even in the midst of a fallen and TROUBLD world, but the ultimate won't be until were in heaven and apart from this fallen world in this fallen bodies.

Isaiah 9:6-7 (NKJV) ⁶ For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no

end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Mansions – better Translation Rooms / Glad it is Rooms in Father’s House – Wake up to Coffee in Kitchen

The use of the word “mansions” is probably not the best translation here. It’s usage originated from when William Tyndale made his bible translation. The word used here means “rooms, dwelling place”. When you just look at it in full context, to the use the word “rooms” makes more sense because the context is in the Father’s house. So houses have rooms, not mansions within them. We have romanticized mansions in heaven, but the text really doesn’t lend to that. To be honest, I am glad that it is rooms, and not mansions. See, I want to live at God’s house, I want to wake up (if you would) and go down to the kitchen and have my morning coffee with Jesus. I want to have breakfast with Him and discuss the day. I want to relax in the living room with Him, I want to go outside and work in the garden with Him, I want to hug Him and have Him pray for me before I go to bed. I want to live with Jesus

When Family Comes to Town

So, what do you do when family or friends is coming to town? Throw them in a corner, point them to a bedroom with junk and dirty sheets? Here is the bathroom you will use, sorry it has mold and mildew, don’t worry the cockroaches don’t bite. No, we clean the room up, get clean sheets, soft comforter, and plush pillows. Renee makes up a basket for them that when they come in the room, there in the basket are fresh clean towels, travel size soaps and shampoos, and even chocolates. We have a bookshelf with devotional books and the Word. I even turn on the heat, yea if you can believe that from me Mr. Thrifty. We want the people to find our house a place of rest, comfort, and refuge from the world. We want them to have a place to rest and refresh from their travels. In the morning we have special coffees, and pastries. I am making, or Renee is making or signature dishes (Gumbo, Smoked BBQ Chicken, Beef Brisket, Thai Chicken), something that is from our hearts. We want our home to say welcome, rest, we have been waiting for you, looking forward to your visit, and spending time with you as family. Beloved, Jesus is preparing a place for you, so looking forward to you coming home, resting, finding refuge, and having coffee with you in the morning, and just sharing His heart with you, and your heart with Him. He loves you.

Jewish Culture Espousal Period / Little Mansion

Now, it gets even better, for in the Jewish culture, in the time of Jesus, when the Bride and Groom were engaged (called espousal), it was during this time that the man would build a room off the main home of the father. It was not until the room was done that he would go and get his bride and bring home. In the Jewish culture families owned land together, and it was passed down from family to family. Generations would live on the same plot of land where they had their homes, their food gardens, pens for the cattle, etc. They didn’t go and buy a house and yard across town like we do, but dwelled on the same land together. Most often also, was their livelihood was a family affair. If dad was a carpenter, the son was a carpenter. If dad was a farmer, the son was a farmer. If dad had a fishing business, then son became part of the fishing business.

Jesus is in the Family Business – Getting a Room Ready for His Bride

So the Son, Jesus, part of the family business, is building rooms unto His Father’s house, for you His Bride.

When me and Renee got Engaged

I remember when Renee and I became engaged, and we decided that we were going to live at my townhouse here in Pasadena. I cleaned that house, I cleared out all “stuff”, I so made my house ready for her, I couldn’t wait for my Bride to come home.

One Last Thing – New Bodies

Oh, let me not forget to mention another added bonus, we get new bodies too. Praise the Lord, for I have just about worn this one out I think. Spent this weekend doing spring cleaning, we are up to about 5 truckloads, and this body is feeling it today. But a new body is waiting for me in heaven, perfect. Free of sin, free of the ills of sin, a new body made by God Himself.

2 Corinthians 5:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ For we know that if our earthly house, *this* tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. ² For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven,

Hey – Let not your heart be troubled, I go prepare a place for you, and where I go there you will be also.

John 14:4 And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

John 14:5 Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?”

Knew way – Didn’t know they Knew / Way standing right in Front of Them / Things we Know – don’t Realize

They knew the way, but they didn’t know they knew. The “way” was standing right before them. There are many things we know, but we don’t realize that we do. God in His goodness and wisdom, knows how to bring those things into clarity for us.

Great Commendation to Thomas for Asking / The others Didn’t Know – Afraid to Ask – to be Considered Lesser

I give great commendation to Thomas for asking the question. Now you can be sure none of the other disciples knew either, but Thomas has the courage to ask the question in front of the others, and take the risk of being considered lesser than the others because he asks. Many people don’t ask questions because they are fearful that they will be considered lesser than others because they demonstrate by asking a lack of knowledge.

Look what Question Produced – Greatest Bible Verses / Glad Nicodemus Asked

Well first let me say you can just about be sure that if you are in a group, you are not the only one who doesn’t know. But secondly, look at what this question produces? It produces one of the greatest Bible verses in the whole Bible, John 14:6, I am the way, the truth, and the life. Imagine if Thomas hadn’t asked, wow we would be missing this most powerful verse. Where did John 3:16 come from? It came from John 3:9, of Nicodemus asking Jesus, “how can these things be?”, and verse 10 we read, “Jesus answered and said to him”. Glad Nicodemus asked the question, glad Thomas asked the question, because my life has been blessed beyond measure because they did.

John 3:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ Nicodemus answered and said to Him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰ Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?”

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Key to Christian Growth – Never stop Asking Questions / God’s Depth so Vast – How could we stop Asking

I think a key to Christian growth, is to never stop asking questions, and I believe the depth of God is so vast, how can we ever reach a place where we don’t keep asking?

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 14:7 “If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.”

To Be All Things – Jesus must be God

To be all these things, to be the one who can calm the troubled heart, and to be the way to heaven, Jesus has to be God, and here He clearly makes that clear, by using the “I Am’ statement in verse 6. In the Greek this is known as the “ego eimi” statement.

7 “I AM” Statements

This is the 6th, I AM statement of the Book of John. In total there are 7 “I AM” statements,

1. I AM the Bread of Life (John 6:35)
2. I AM the Light of the World (John 8:12)
3. I Am the Door (John 10:9)
4. I AM the Good Shepherd. (John 10:11)
5. I AM the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25)
6. I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6)
7. I AM the Vine (John 15:5)

Exodus 3:13 / No Present Tense – No Past Tense – Existence Tense / The Becoming One

I am was a name for God in the Old Testament. God would come ... Remember, when Moses, the Lord met with him in the burning bush and Moses, and he commissions him and go to the children of Israel. Moses said, "What's your name?" Who should I say sent me? The Lord said, "I am that I am. I've always been, I am now, I always will be. In fact, there is no past tense, present tense with me. I am the self-existent one. I always live in the present tense." That's who sent you. Have fun explaining it to them. But it's the name for God, and Jesus seven times, through this Gospel He says, "I am. I am the way, the truth and the life. I am the good shepherd. I am the door" over and over again. What is He communicating? He is communicating, clearly understood by the Jewish mind, that He's divine, that He's to be understood as being divine.

In the Hebrew language, the words "I AM" can be translated to mean, "Becoming One". God, Jesus, is saying I am the "Becoming One", and I desire to become to you all that you need. I want to become to you your salvation, your peace, your truth, your life, your leading, your protector, your love, I want to, and I can, become all things you. Beloved of God, what do you need Him to be to you today? He will be that to you, He has the ability to be that to you because He is God! Jesus is God, the Eternal One, who knows you by name and loves you! What do you? Let Him become that to you today.

Exodus 3:13–15 (NKJV) ¹³ Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?" ¹⁴ And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.'" ¹⁵ Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.'

I will Become to You the Way – Become to you the Truth – Become to you the Life

So Jesus is saying I will become to the way, I will become to you the truth, and I will become to you the life!

I Am the Way that Reveals Truth & Life

In the present context Jesus as "the way" is the primary focus, and "truth" and "life" are somehow related to Jesus as "the way." Thus there are two possible interpretations:

- (1) The emphasis may be on the goal to which the way leads (note GeCL). If this exegesis is followed, one may translate "I am the way that leads to the truth and to life"; or, expressed more fully, "I am the way that leads to the truth (about God) and to the life (that God gives)."
- (2) However, the emphasis may be on the way itself. If this exegesis is followed, "truth" and "life" must be taken as qualifiers of "way," which is primary in the context. One may then render "I am the true way, the way that gives people life." Or, more fully, "I am the way that reveals the truth (about God) and gives life (to people)."

In effect, the two possible interpretations are close in meaning, and it is difficult to argue for one against the other. However, the context would seem to favor the second.

Newman, B. M., & Nida, E. A. (1993). A handbook on the Gospel of John (p. 457). New York: United Bible Societies.

Jesus is Only Way – Exclusive / All who Come - Inclusive

Verse 6 - No one comes to the Father except through Me. - Jesus is saying I am the "only" way to heaven, I am the only way to the Father (which heaven and Father are synonymous as the Father is in heaven and heaven is where the Father is – and if you are not right with the Father you will never be right for heaven); Jesus says follow Me and I will get you there, and I can bring you before the Father in right standing. The statement is "exclusive" that no one can get to the Father, get to heaven, except thorough Jesus. But the statement is also "inclusive" that anyone who comes to Him, can come to heaven, for "where I am, there you may be also (v3).

Only 1 Road – All others are Dead Ends!

All roads do not lead to heaven, in fact all roads other than through Jesus Christ are dead ends.

I have No Problem with Only Way – Glad there is One / Even I can't miss the Exit Sign / No Wrong Turn

I have absolutely no problem with there being only one way, because I need a way, because I can't make it there in my own. I am thankful also that there is only one way, because even someone as simple as me won't get confused. There it is, see that road sign, take that exit, it is the only one that says heaven! The others say Cincinnati, that one says San Diego, over there says carpool lane (HOV) Monday through Friday, that one says Baltimore Annapolis (BA 648) but I just crossed over that a mile back so I don't know how I can be coming up on it again. Just give me one road, one exit sign, and even I can figure it. Jesus is giving directions to heaven. When I go to Washington DC, when I go to Chicago, I always get directions in how to get to my destination, because I need directions, I can't find it on my own, and how much more so on the way to heaven. I/we can't afford to make a wrong turn, because not all roads lead to heaven, in fact there is only one road to heaven, and the salvation highway runs through the cross at Calvary, through Jesus Christ.

Jesus Prayed in Garden if there be Any Other Way

Jesus will pray if there any other way let this cup pass from Me, but it didn't because there isn't. There is only one way, through Jesus and the cross:

Matthew 26:39 (NKJV) ³⁹ He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."

Why are People Upset only 1 Way

Do you ever question why people are upset, become angry, when it is stated that Jesus is only way to heaven and no other way? Well it is because spiritual truth is always considered intolerant because it is always narrow. People want broadness so they can do what they want, as they want, when they want, where they want, with whomever they want. Truth narrows all those "wants", eliminates many of the "wants", and thus people when they lose their "wants", become upset and angry. I am glad for the narrowness of truths, for I can now see how the narrowness of the truth is so much more fulfilling than my wants. I find God's way so much more abundant and abounding. I can look back and see, when I lived according to my wants, I felt emptiness, many times depression, but living in the narrowness of God's truth, I can honestly say I am living and experiencing "zoe" life, the abundant life, the life beyond this life. And when I get to the end of my life, I will look back and say it was a life well-lived, and it was a life that mattered. I am glad for the narrowness of the truth.

Glad others are Narrow

I am glad there are others in this world who are narrow:

- I am glad that my pharmacist is narrow, and he doesn't just say any pill will do.
- Glad when I had surgery the surgeon was narrow and only took what polyps and not the whole colon.
- I am grateful that when I landed in Chicago last month that the Air Traffic Controller was real narrow, and told us to land on runway 5, and not to pick whichever one the pilot felt like.

We live in a very narrow world, but people want to change that when it comes to the spiritual things, that have to do with repentance and confession.

Jesus either God or Lunatic

Some will say (many major religions such as Islam, Jehovah Witnesses, Mormons) Jesus was a great teacher, a great role model, a great moral example, and a good man. But they will also say, He isn't the only way to heaven, that there are many other ways, and that all religions and philosophies lead to heaven. That is an extreme contradiction, for you see Jesus is declaring Himself God here, and He is saying He is the only way to heaven and the Father. So if He is not God, and not the only way to heaven and the Father, then He can't be a good man, a good role model, nor a good moral example. He is either God, or He was a lunatic, for only a crazy man would make those statements, unless of course, He is God. He can't be good if He isn't God.

Christian Don't Apologize

Christian don't allow yourself to apologize for there being only way; in fact when challenged, simply say praise the Lord that He has provided a way for my sin to be cleansed and forgiven, and then go right into the heart of the matter, and that is the heart!

Broad is the Way

Jesus said broad is the way that leads to destruction and narrow is the way that leads to salvation. There is nothing to apologize for about that. That truly is good news, that there is a way!

Matthew 7:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ *“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. ¹⁴ Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.*

Glad there is a Way – For Sermon on Mount brought me to a Dead End

I am glad there is a way! Jesus lays the expectation of what is expected of us in the Sermon on the Mount, and it is perfection. We see we are far from it, and like a mirror, we see what are flaws are, and we see how far from perfect we are, and thus we are lost and have no way to get to heaven on our own works and goodness, we need a way to heaven, we need directions in how to get there. Jesus says I am the way!

Matthew 5:48 (NKJV) ⁴⁸ *Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect.*

Romans 3:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ *Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. ²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

Why 3? / What did Adam Lose in the Garden?

Let’s ask the question, why these three, way-truth-life, why did Jesus say these three? Think about what Adam had lost when he fell in the garden in sin?

- He had communion (oneness) with his maker in the cool of the garden every day,
- he knew Him God) in truth,
- and he possessed spiritual life.

What he lost when he sinned?

- He lost communion and oneness with his maker,
- the truth (Adam became afraid of God (afraid because I was naked)
- and the spiritual life.

He needed to be reconciled to the Father to come back into the way, he needed an illumination of God because he no longer knew the truth of God (as he said I was naked and afraid, I hid myself, because I didn’t understand you any more, my understanding was darkened by sin). So Adam needed reconciliation to come back to the way, he need illumination about God (the truth), and needed regeneration (a new life spiritually). So each one of these things Jesus said “I Am”, I am your way to reconciliation, I am the truth of God, and I am the spiritual life you need.

Genesis 3:6–10 (NKJV) ⁶ *So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. ⁸ And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, “Where are you?” ¹⁰ So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.”*

Prepare the Way

What are we to do with all that we have heard today? We have studied Jesus is the way, we have studied broad is the way, and so our response can be found in Matthew 3.....”prepare the way”. We are to prepare our hearts, prepare our lives, prepare our minds, we are to prepare every aspect of our lives for the Lord to come in and have His way with us. In Roman times when a king or high ranging dignitary was coming into a city for a visit, the city would “prepare the way” for no less than 1 mile outside the city limits they would fill in the potholes, straighten the road, beautify scenery along the side of the road. They prepared the way for the arrival of the king. So our response, every day, prepare the way of the Lord, make our hearts ready for Him, put away and put aside those things that keep us from having and being all God wants us to be, and living fully for the Lord.

Matthew 3:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ *In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ² and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” ³ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.’”*

Summation Questions

As we say

- Who is God? He is the only way to heaven, He is the truth of all things in comparison to the worlds fallacy, and He is the only giver of eternal life.
- What does He think of Me? – the truth, we see the truth in Jesus, God loves me, in spite of my sin, He loves me all the way to death, and He offers a marriage to Him, and to come live with Him, the mansion, of heaven.
- What does He want me to do? To follow Him, the way. To believe His truths, the answer to a troubled heart, and to have life, an abundant life. By know you know what this word for life is going to mean when Jesus uses it regarding us, it is the “zoe” life, the abundant life, the God life, the life beyond this life this world can offer us.

End of Study

John 14

John 14:7-31

Upper Room Discourse / 11 there – Judas Gone / Supper is Over – Foot Washing Done / 12hrs from Cross

We are in what is known as the upper-room discourse. The 11 are there, it is the scene of the final supper together before the cross, Jesus has washed the feet of all, Judas has just departed to sell Him out, and Jesus will get into the deepest teaching of His whole ministry on this final night of His life. We are somewhere around 12 hours from the cross. Let's pick it up in verse one of chapter 14.

For Context – John 13:30-38 / You can't Come – Peter will Fail Him

There are no chapter breaks, so let's read the end of chapter 13 for context. The disciples have walked with Him for 3 years, they have given up all to follow, they are in love with Him, being with Him is their security blanket, and now Jesus blows them away by saying, I am leaving you now, and where I go you cannot be. Imagine saying that to your child, imagine the troubled heart they will immediately have. And then, add to this context for Peter, you are going to fail Me, regardless how strong your words are, how confident you are in yourself, you are going to deny me, fail Me, and I will not be around because where I go you cannot come.

John 13:30-38 (NKJV) ³⁰ Having received the piece of bread, he then went out immediately. And it was night. ³¹ So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him. ³² If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him immediately. ³³ Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,' so now I say to you. ³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another." ³⁶ Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, where are You going?" Jesus answered him, "Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward." ³⁷ Peter said to Him, "Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake." ³⁸ Jesus answered him, "Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.

Jesus knows Heart Troubled – But Gives Cure / Trust All Things to Me

Jesus knows their heart and how troubled it will be based on all these things. But He gives them the cure for the troubled heart is to believe in Jesus, believe in God. Believe who He is, God, and all that He is and can do because He is God. Believe, means to trust, have faith, and the directing of that believing and faith, is Himself. When you are troubled, here is what you are to do, trust yourself to Me, all things, trust I can and will work in your marriage, in your financial struggle, in that situation, in that circumstance, in that wayward child, in that habit, in that addiction, in each and in all, trust it to Me. And when you release it to Me, you will find peace. He ends this chapter with that promise:

John 14:1 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

John 14:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Step back see God's Heart – 12hrs from Cross – Caring for Disciples Worries

May we step back and look at "your God", and see His heart here for His children. Jesus is 12 hours away from the cross, from the scourging, from the beating, from the humiliation, from the mocking, from the false accusation that will shame His family name, 12 hours from being separated from His Father whom He has never been separated from all eternity, and His concern is how His children are doing, and how they will be troubled. Beloved, you are always on God's heart, He is troubled when you are troubled, and He is always wanting to calm your troubled heart. Going to the cross in 12 hours, but caring for the hearts of the children, and so too it is today for you, as God loves you, He is coming to you, He is there for every tear, every fall, and every sorrow.

Trust Me – Still Smelling Like Spikenard

Jesus says put all trust in Me, cast it on Me, roll it unto Me, for I care for you deeply and greatly. Mind you, Jesus is still smelling like spikenard after Mary just five days ago poured a whole pound out upon Him, 16 thick highly fragrant ounces of the oil that was used to anoint the dead. Jesus saying you can trust how much I care for you, and it will be proven and demonstrated clearly when I go to the cross and die for you sins.

1 Peter 5:7 (NKJV) ⁷ casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.

Cures for the Troubled Heart – Outline chapter 14 (5 Things)

Chapter 14 will give us the cure for the troubled heart for the world we live in:

- **Place (14:1-4)** – Jesus prepares a place for us, a home in heaven.
- **Picture (14:5-11)** – Jesus expounds on the heart of the Father, a picture of the Father is seen in the Son.
- **Prayer (14:12-15)** – Jesus tells us that we can pray and be heard!
- **Power (14:16-26)** – Jesus says we will not be left orphans while on earth, and promises us the Holy Spirit, to have power to overcome in this world.
- **Peace (14:27-31)** – Jesus leave us His peace, which is literal, something we can receive, and something the world cannot give to us or anyone.

Place (14:1-4) – Jesus prepares a place for us, a home in heaven.

John 14:1 “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

John 14:2 In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

John 14:4 And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

Someday we will be In Heaven / Room at the Father’s House

Jesus gives us a cure for the troubled heart by telling us that we have a place, a room in the Father’s house, and there will be a day where we will be with Him. Heaven will be wonderful because Jesus is wonderful, He loves us, died for us, can’t stop thinking about us, and someday we will be with Him in heaven free of this fallen world. Heaven is more about the person (Jesus Christ) than it is about the actual place (but that will be wonderful too).

Escapist

Many times people say Christians are escapist, wanting to escape this world, and to which I say “guilty as charged”. My heart is so troubled, more so today than any day in my life on this earth. ISIS and their evil troubles my heart. USA and the world negotiating with IRAN allowing them to produce nuclear material, a country that says they want to wipe the US and Israel off the face of the earth, that troubles me. Russian and North Korea will meet this week, two power hungry world leaders. Russia continues it aggression into the Ukraine, while the world does nothing. And, it troubles my heart that the USA is trying to force Israel into a 2-State solution; it troubles me because God in this Bible clearly says the land is Israel’s, so why does the USA think they can usurp God’s Word and try to meddle in God’s business (USA remember Genesis 12!). Yes I am troubled, yes I so look forward to heaven, with my wife and children, and with you, and if that is being an escapist then guilty as charged. But, let it also be noted, I am not idly standing by as I wait, I am living a life to take as many people with me as I can, and it is a large purpose why this church exists. Not to get to heaven safely, but to fight the fight here, to take the battle to the enemy, to the very gates of hell, and to set the captives free just as commanded by our Lord.

Genesis 12:2–3 (NKJV) ² I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Picture (14:5-11) – Jesus expounds on the heart of the Father, a picture of the Father is seen in the Son.

John 14:5 Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?”

John 14:6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

There is Only 1 Way

As we studied last week, we see the heart of the Father, as He gave His only Begotten Son to set the captives free. There is no other way by which man can be saved except through Jesus Christ. No good works, no well-intentions, but by the finished work of Jesus on the cross. Have you done that today?

Not Just Love – But Holiness / Never talk too Much About the Blood – Peter Marshall

Jesus showed the Father, demonstrated the Love of the Father in every action in His life on earth. The Father demonstrated His love for us by giving His only Begotten Son for our sins, but let it be recognized that not only did both show the great love, but they also showed the holiness of God. A God so holy that He cannot look upon, God so holy that He doesn't wink at sin, a God so holy that sin must be judged, and a God so loving that said I will trade places with you, I will take your judgement, your punishment, so you can be forgiven of your sin and become a son and daughter to Me. When Peter Marshall, Chaplain of the United States Senate in the 1940s, first arrived in Washington DC to pastor the New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, an elderly lady greeted him, saying, "I do so hope you won't talk too much about the blood as our previous pastor did." "I promise I won't talk too much about the blood," the young Scotsman assured her, "because it is impossible to talk too much about the blood." Peter Marshall nailed it perfectly. It is impossible to talk too much about the blood of Jesus Christ. Why? Because this book is soaked in blood, saturated with blood. Ours is a bloody religion indeed. And there's a reason for that. The Book of Hebrews tells us that without the shedding of blood there can be no remission of sin (Hebrews 9:22). Therefore, man's greatest need being forgiveness, it only stands to reason that blood would be spoken of freely and consistently throughout the Word.

John 14:7 "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him."

John 14:8 Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us."

Show Us Father – It will Suffice / What are you Seeking in Your Life Today

Philip said all that I want, all that would be enough for me, is to see the father. What is it that you say in your life would be enough? What is it that you are seeking in your life today? Philip says just show me the father and that will be enough for me.

Matthew 6:33 (NKJV) ³³ *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

Most have Society in History – Most Depressed Too / Hole in Heart

Show us the father and it will suffice. We are the most "have" society nation in the history of mankind, yet we are the most dissatisfied people in the history of mankind. We live in a society gotta have, got a need, must change, yet you know how good we got it we have it so good compared to the rest of the world. But the dissatisfaction is because there's a hole in our heart, a longing in our heart, a void that was created by God put in our heart that we might seek him. Phillips question is how God created every man, show us the father and it will be enough. That God shaped void, that hole in your heart, you know something's missing and you know that all of this world has to offer you and has given you, yet still doesn't fill the void, you say I know there's more.

Others Who Asked – Someday You will see His Glory

I am reminded of others who asked the same, or saw the same. Moses said show me your glory. Isaiah saw his glory. John on the island of Patmos saw his glory. And someday you Christian to see his glory. You will get to see the glory of God because of what Jesus Christ has done. You will get to come into the presence of God because of what Jesus Christ has done. Don't know what you might be thinking about your today, but because of Jesus Christ's someday you will see the glory of God. Someday, we will see the King of Glory!

Exodus 33:17–23 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *So the LORD said to Moses, "I will also do this thing that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name."* ¹⁸ *And he said, "Please, show me Your glory."* ¹⁹ *Then He said, "I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."* ²⁰ *But He said, "You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me, and live."* ²¹ *And the LORD said, "Here is a place by Me, and you shall stand on the rock."* ²² *So it shall be, while My glory passes by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock, and will cover you with My hand while I pass by.* ²³ *Then I will take away My hand, and you shall see My back; but My face shall not be seen."*

Isaiah 6:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ *In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.* ² *Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.* ³ *And one cried to another and said: "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!"*

Revelation 1:12–18 (NKJV) ¹² *Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, ¹³ and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. ¹⁴ His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; ¹⁵ His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; ¹⁶ He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword,*

and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. ¹⁷ And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸ I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death.

John 14:9 Jesus said to him, "Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"

Jesus Declared (Unfolded – Laid Out) the Father / Exegesis – His Whole Life / That what we do a Bible Teachers

Jesus declared God (John 1:18). The word for declared in the Greek is "exegesis", which simply means to unfold to reveal to lay out. That's what Jesus did he unfolded and declared laid out to revealed that God is. And Jesus did that through himself by his life here on earth. When we teach the Bible that's what we're doing we are unfolding revealing and laying out the heart of God. We are illuminating the heart of God. And that's how all Bible studies should be, they shouldn't be stories about this and that, it should be about God and unveiling and revealing him.

John 1:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

Jesus Showed Father – In Easy to Understand / Want to Know what God Thinks – Look through Scriptures

Jesus laid out, unfolded, displayed God in a way that you could easily understand him, without being confused. The cure for the trouble heart is to see a picture of the Father. Want to know what God thinks poverty? See Jesus and how his heart was moved to those who are hurting. What does God think of disease just look at Jesus and you'll see him healing and touching. What does God think of the depressed we see Jesus ministering to them. What does God think of children just look to Jesus and you know as He says let the little ones come unto Me.

The Cure for the Troubled Heart – Open these Pages and See the Heart of the Father

The cure for the trouble heart is to open these pages and find the heart of God because there unfolding before us every time we open them and we see what he thinks about the hardest of situations in the most troubling situations.

John 14:10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.

John 14:11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

Father been with Jesus the Whole Time

The Father has been with Jesus the whole time, because the Father is in Jesus. The Trinity is beyond my little brain. Augustine said trying to explain the Trinity is like trying to pour the Ocean into a bucket.

All the Works – Had to Come from God

All the miracles were to give proof that Jesus came from and had the authority of God the Father.

- Miracle 1, Water Into Wine (John 2:1-11)
- Miracle 2, Healing the Official's Son (John 4:43-54).
- Miracle 3, The Healing at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5:1-9)
- Miracle 4, The Feeding of the 5000 (John 6:1-5).
- Miracle 5, Walking on the Water (John 6:16-25).
- Miracle 6, Healing The Man Born Blind (John 9:1-41).
- Miracle 7, Raising Lazarus From The Dead (John 11:1-44).

Prayer (14:12-15) – Jesus tells us that we can pray and be heard!

John 14:12 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

Miracles Prove He Sent of God / Greater Work – Reveal (unfold) the Father /

Greater works? Jesus's work was to unfold and reveal the Father. The miracles they just proved that he was God, for only God could do them. The work, was the work of the father, and that was to bring people into repentance

and salvation. The greater works will come because the Holy Spirit will be given to people who will then be vessels of God, and for God, and they will go forth and reveal the Father just as the Son did.

Jesus Physically Limited / Billions being Light of World – God Forgives – Has a Room Prepared for Them

Greater works Jesus was limited to one place now he is himself into the hearts of His believers and hundreds of millions, no actually billions, now are going forth and being in the light of the world and telling people there is a God in heaven who will receive them and forgive them of their sins and invite them into his house and has a room prepared for them. Greater works because Jesus now is going to go back to the Father and send the Holy Spirit.

Greater works through CCAAC

Let me share with you greater work, in the first three months alone of this year we have made an impact through our love, the love of Christ, it is in us supporting missions and missionaries in Cambodia, Kenya, remote parts of Africa, Sudan, Nicaragua, Anne Arundel County, Global Media Outreach, and Mercy Ships that went around the world to minister to the hurting. We have a lot of love, and it is just as Jesus said greater works we are able to do, as we send the love of Christ throughout the whole world and we are we just a small group of people meeting in a business park back in the corner. And imagine how the gospel goes forth today through all the Christians witnessing, through Crusades, through radio and internet. Today, 22March15 – 730am, Global Media Outreach has already had 125,000 visits to the website, and over 12,000 people indicated decisions to give their life to Christ. We have been involved for 3 years now, and we have sponsored over 80,000 visits to the website of those seeking the question of eternal life. Greater works!

John 14:13 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

John 14:14 If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

John 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.

Literally – In My Place

Verse 13 literal translation is in my place. So it is as if you were standing in the place of Jesus before the father saying Lord do this. Now what would Jesus ask for if he was standing before the father? Would he ask for selfish things? We see Jesus all the way back in the temptation in the wilderness what did he asked for selfishly? The answer nothing. Satan tried to get Him to ask for self and He wouldn't. Satan offered Jesus the kingdom, the power, and the glory, to all which Jesus said no to. To each answer Jesus only cared of glorifying the Father.

Matthew 4:1–11 (NKJV) ¹ Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And when He had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward He was hungry. ³ Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." ⁴ But He answered and said, "It is written, '*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*'" ⁵ Then the devil took Him up into the holy city, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, ⁶ and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down. For it is written: '*He shall give His angels charge over you,*' and, '*In their hands they shall bear you up, Lest you dash your foot against a stone.*'" ⁷ Jesus said to him, "It is written again, '*You shall not tempt the LORD your God.*'" ⁸ Again, the devil took Him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. ⁹ And he said to Him, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! For it is written, '*You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.*'" ¹¹ Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

Ultimate Goal of Prayer – God be Glorified

Verse 13 the ultimate goal of prayer that the father might be glorified in the son

Faith Teachers Skip / Repentance is Denying of Self / Name it Claim – Claim for Self

Ask in my name and I will do it; well the faith teachers love to quote verses 13-14, but of course they miss the verse about if you keep my commandments. Faith teaching is all washed up, it holds no water when you get down to it, because people don't want to repent, because if people would repent the first and foremost of repentance is the denying of self. Name it and claim it is anything about denying oneself, it's all about what can I get out of God, the magic genie in the bottle God, and there's where the faith teaching fails is before name in it and claiming it for themselves and not for the kingdom of God. I have never heard a faith teacher yet say Lord I claim in your name that you send me to Syria, Iran, Iraq, and stand in front of the ISIS soldiers and preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified. No, they claim riches, they claim comfort, they claim 2,00 dollar suits, and crazy hair waves, and

excessive makeup, but never do they claim to be martyrs, or to give all they have to the poor, or to be mocked and ridiculed by the world.

Ultimate Goal of Prayer – God be Glorified

Verse 13 the ultimate goal of prayer that the father might be glorified in the Son

Prayer Doesn't Change God – It Changes Me / Look at Prayers of Jesus / Prayer brings Glory of God on this Earth

How does prayer cure the troubled heart, by bringing us into a place to hear the heart of God, the God who loves us and goes and prepares a place for us, all through the sacrifice of His only Begotten Son. Prayer doesn't change God, it changes me.

- Look at Jesus' prayer to the father his prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane His desire was to have the strength to do the will of the father and to bring him glory. Not my will but your will be done, Lord if there be any other way nevertheless let thy will be done (Matthew 26).
- When Jesus prayed in the wilderness temptation he prayed that he might glorify the father as he didn't want to succumb to the temptation of the devil.

Prayer doesn't change God, Jesus still endured the wilderness. Prayer doesn't change God, Jesus still endured the cross. Prayer doesn't change God, it changes us, and Jesus exemplifies that it demonstrates that truth. Prayer is for us to bring the glory of God onto this earth. His kingdom has come, we are ambassadors of the King for the king and to the king, and our lives are to bring him glory.

Counter ease Life / But no Greater Day – then When I see Glory of God / It Zoe Life – Abundant / Rich Depressed

Yeah that doesn't fly well in the face of the name of claim-it. But to be honest with you it doesn't fly well with many Christian doctrines and theology of American Christianity of ease of life. For the purpose of life is that to get to heaven safely and comfortably. It doesn't fly well in the heart of me, because even I don't like hardship, confrontations, difficulties, and trials. But I'll tell you a day that's like no other day, and that's when somehow somehow through my life and something that I've done for the will and the purpose of God, brings him glory and I see his glory like no other way. There is no day greater than my life there's nothing you could give me they would bring me such joy. And when I see the glory of God even in the midst of a trial and hardship, I can still carry on and go forth because it strengthens me and it fuels me to move on and continue on. It's just like Jesus. When we pray in the will of the father, that he would be glorified, there is no life greater than that it is as though we life, it is the abundant life, it is the life that is beyond this life, it is the life that this world cannot offer us. Why is it that so many rich people are so depressed, why is it that so many well-off people with money in their pocket and a roof over their head, friends beside them, and food in their belly and yet they still meander through life depressed? Because they haven't gleamed this piece of Zoe life and that is praying in the will of the father, for the glory of God.

[Matthew 26:39 \(NKJV\)](#) ³⁹ He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."

Henry Ironside Illustration of the Check

It has to be in the name, in accordance, with Jesus. I like the illustration that Henry Ironside gives. He says you can find a check for a million dollars, but you can't cash it unless your name is on it. But, if you go to the bank with the person whose name is on it, and that person endorses it to you, then all the money is yours to spend. When we pray in Jesus name, in accordance with His will, to do things that bring the Father glory, then the check is endorsed to us to spend freely.

Boldly Come Before Throne of Grace

The Book of Hebrews declares, "Let us come boldly unto the throne of grace that we might find grace and mercy to help in time of need" (4:16). Because the work of atonement has been accomplished completely and perfectly, God invites us specifically and personally to come in to the Holy of Holies, to come before His throne. The question is, Will we take advantage of the invitation?

[Hebrews 4:16 \(NKJV\)](#) ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

The story is told of a telegraph company in the 1800s seeking to hire a telegraph operator. The salary offered being quite substantial, only the most qualified were encouraged to apply. On the day of the invitation, seven men

showed up. As they sat outside the boss' office waiting for their interview, listening to the telegraph operators working in the background, suddenly, the last one to arrive stood up and went into the boss' office without being asked. The boss emerged a few minutes later and said, "Gentlemen, thank you for coming. But there will be no need for an interview. I've hired this man for the position."

"Wait a minute," one of the remaining six protested, "that's not fair. This man was the last to arrive. We should have had our chance to be interviewed for this position."

"You did," the boss said. "While you were sitting here, one of the operators was tapping out a message saying, 'If you receive this message, come into my office immediately. The job is yours.' "

All of the men were trained. All were qualified. All had knowledge of Morse Code—but only one of the seven was tuned in to the message being tapped out right then.

I can't help but wonder today if there is one in seven who has really heard the message being tapped out which says, "Come boldly to My throne. Talk with Me. Cast your care upon Me. Receive from Me help, strength, instruction." Have you heard the message, Mom—the tap, tap, tap of the Morse Code of the Master saying, "Come and talk to Me about your son or daughter. This is the moment"?

Have You Heard the Message Husband – Where go to College – Struggling Physically / COME ON IN

Have you heard the message, husband? Do you hear the tapping of the Master, saying, "Come boldly to the throne of grace that you might find help for your marriage which is presently unraveling"? If you're wondering if you should go to college, take the job, more away; if you're struggling with physical affliction or fighting depression, I wonder if there is one in seven who hears the Lord saying, "The stone is rolled away. The veil is rent. The way is open. Come on in!"

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

A-S-K

Jesus said, ask, seek, and knock

Matthew 7:7 (NKJV) ⁷ *"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.*

POWER OF PRAYER – Author Unknown

I got up early one morning and rushed into the day;
I had so much to accomplish that I didn't have time to pray.

Problems just tumbled about me, and heavier came each task.
"Why doesn't God help me?" I wondered. He answered, "You didn't ask."

I wanted to see joy and beauty, but the day toiled on, gray and bleak;
I wondered why God didn't show me. He said, "But you didn't seek."

I tried to come into God's presence; I used all my keys at the lock.
God gently and lovingly chided, "My child, you didn't knock."

I woke up early this morning, and paused before entering the day;
I had so much to accomplish that I had to take time to pray.

Prayer Quotes

Oswald Chambers penned, "Prayer does not fit us for the greater work, prayer is the greater work." Prayer is the sweet communion with God that we need & the trail to faithful dependency upon the Sovereign.

Power (14:16-26) – Jesus says we will not be left orphans while on earth, and promises us the Holy Spirit, to have power to overcome in this world.

John 14:16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

Another Helper / Come Alongside of

Other translation use for the word “helper”, such as “comforter, counselor, advocate” and all are good translations as they all mean the same thing in that God is not going to leave us on our own, He is going to see send another helper. Another comforter is that Jesus he's been comforting them because the word in the original language means to come alongside of. Jesus has come alongside them, and the Holy Spirit comes alongside of them.

Forever!

Notice that it says and he shall be with you forever. Not just what you're doing well, not until you mess up, not until you blow it big time, but forever.

Cure for the Troubled Heart

Jesus gives another cure for the troubled heart, and that is that He will send a comforter to us.

John 14:17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

World Cannot Receive Him

The world cannot receive, because the world has no receiver. If you give your life to Jesus Christ you've become a receiver and you've received him one has to receive in order to be born again. It's like the radio waves, there are radio waves flowing through this room right now, but you need a receiver to receive them; so it is with God as he sends His invitation to communion and fellowship with Him through the finished works of His Son, but a person has to be willing to become a receiver, and receive Him as Lord and Savior.

John 14:18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

John 14:19 “A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.

John 14:20 At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

Not Orphans

I will never leave you nor forsake you, forever

Hebrews 13:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

Much Confusion – People then Miss Out / Need to Understand the 3 Relationships

There is so much confusion today about the baptism in the Spirit. People get hung up and miss out because they don't understand there are three relationships Jesus talked about that a person can and should have with the Holy Spirit (also called Holy Ghost – which I don't care for that translation personally).

1.) With Us “para” / John 14:17 / God will use Vessels like John Baptist /

He is with us (the Greek preposition “para” which means alongside of). The Holy Spirit comes alongside of a person and God's Spirit moves across the earth witnessing to a person their need for a Savior for their sin separates them from the Holy God (John 14:17). God will often time use vessels such as a John the Baptist to proclaim His message. You never would have been born again unless the Holy Spirit had been with you, whispering, “God loves you. You're a sinner, but Jesus died in your place.” Speaking the message of sin, separation, repentance, and restoration. Whether it was through a meeting at church, or at a Billy Graham crusade, whether it was over the radio, or through a friend, it was the Holy Spirit with you who began to tug on the strings of your heart, drawing you to salvation. If the Holy Spirit had not been with you, you could not have been born again. “There is none that seeketh after God,” wrote Paul (Romans 3:11). “We are born again not of the will of man, but

of God” (see John 1:13). A person can’t, on his own, say, “Hmm. I think I’ll be born again.” The only way someone can be born again is for God to sovereignly choose to send His Holy Spirit to work with him. God the Holy Spirit comes alongside a person and says, “Hello, I love you, let Me open your eyes to see it”.

John 14:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

Romans 3:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.

John 1:12-13 (NKJV) ¹²But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Warning – The Spirit will not always Strive with Man – Genesis 6:3

Before moving on, let me clearly give warning, the Spirit of God will not always strive with man, so if you haven’t received Him yet, be warned that there may come a day where He is no longer knocking on the door of your heart (Genesis 6:3).

Genesis 6:3 (NKJV) ³And the Lord said, “My Spirit shall not strive^e with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.”

2.) In – En / Comes in and Dwells / We can Cry Out – Abba Father

After coming alongside of us, The Holy Spirit then comes in us the moment we open our heart to the Savior (John 20:22), after hearing the message proclaimed through a vessel chosen by God, or just God speaking to us in His own way; The Greek preposition for in, is “en”. When you opened your heart to Jesus, the Holy Spirit came into you. He indwelt you. You were born again. You were regenerated. The baptism of John spoken of by Christ is the washing away and forgiveness of sin. It is then because the sin and separation has been dealt with, that God takes us residence, the indwelling, it is then we can cry out Abba Father! And the Holy Spirit begins to teach and lead a person in the way to walk.

John 20:21-22 (NKJV) ²¹So Jesus said to them again, “Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” ²²And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:15-17 (NKJV) ¹⁵For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, “Abba, Father.” ¹⁶The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

John 16:13 (NKJV) ¹³ However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

3.) Comes Upon – Heppi / Comes to Empower Us for Service

Then there is the third, as Jesus said John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit when He comes upon you (the Greek preposition is “heppi”) when He empowers us for service (Acts 1:5). The Spirit of God is available not only to work with you to become a Christian, or to come into your life once you open your heart to Him, but He is now available to come upon your life and to empower you to see your own world turned upside down and made right-side up. In the Old Testament, when the Holy Ghost came upon men like Moses and David, Gideon and Ezekiel, Samson and Bezaleel, it was to empower them for service. So, too, Jesus said to His disciples, “The Spirit is in you, but when the Spirit comes upon you, you will be empowered for unique ministry and service, and then you will be My witnesses” (see Acts 1:4–8).

(Acts 1:5 NKJV) “for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

(Acts 1:8 NKJV) “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Interesting – Way, Truth, and Life

I find it interesting as I look at the 3 prepositions of the Holy Spirit I see John 14:6, the way, the truth, and the life.

- The Spirit is with (para) a person convicting and convincing that Jesus is the Only Way to salvation.
- The Spirit is in (en) a person when they receive Him and speaks and shows them the truth about how to live for God. And, gives the person the power to overcome the world and live for God.
- The Spirit is upon (heppi) a person, and empowers them for service unto the King, and that is not just storing treasures up in heaven, but enjoying and experiencing the “zoe” life.

Before Moving On – Notice You are Completely Enveloped in God

Before moving on, did you notice these verses

John 14:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.

John 14:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

John 14:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

1 John 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

So, the Father is in Jesus (v10), Jesus is in you, therefore the Father is in you (v20), and the Spirit is in you (v17) – which all means you are completely enveloped in God. How precious you are to God, how intimate is God to you, what does God think of you. He loves you so much He completely envelopes you, and He desires intimacy with you so much that He lives in you. God loves you!!!!!!!!!!!!!! You are priceless to Him, each and every one of you. Don't go out this door today and live some beaten life, so mediocre life, some half-in, half-out life. Go live the Zoe Life, the abundant life in every aspect and every moment of your life.

John 14:21 He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

John 14:22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?"

John 14:23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.

John 14:24 He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

We Obey because we Love Him / We Trust Him

Some people obey, at least try to obey, because they're afraid to go to hell. That is called religion. Why do we obey the Lord? Because we love him. We trust him, the cure for the troubled heart is the trust him.

Another Level – In All Things "Lord Your Will" / Seeing You – Seeing Your Glory

I wanted to give a more level sees real easy for us just to go and keep the commandments is a list of dues and here's a list of don'ts, doom and don't am okay. I find it challenging to find a commandment that says go to fast for 40 days in the wilderness, about a commandment that says go die on the cross, now there is no commandment for that now is that? Jesus did those things because he love the father, it was what the father asked him to do. So what I am saying to you is that all things, come before him we say Lord what would you have me to do? So often we just go well I didn't say no so I can go out and say don't so I will and there's a whole different level of intimacy and communion in oneness with the Lord we actually look at things and say to the Lord what would you want me to do regarding this. So we can ask ourselves such things as the there is no law against drinking alcohol only being a drunkard, how about a place where you say Lord what is your will for me in my life? Or how about my dress are you okay with this outfit that I'm wearing, there's no sin against wearing this but what your will for me? Take that to all things, your speech, your hobbies, your television, your clicking, your jokes, your spare time. And you can ask yourself continually for these type of questions where you're like Lord I just want to please you because when I'm one with you I see you, and when I see you that will suffice, that's all I want, that's good enough for me in this life I just seeing you being one with you, knowing that you're pleased with me. Asking the questions, ask him questions, not just because they're allowable because God has asked you to do or not to do.

All Things Permissible

All things are all things are permissible but not all things are beneficial.

1 Corinthians 6:12 (NKJV) ¹² All things are lawful for me, but all things are not helpful. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.

You can have All God you Want – Not 1 Drop More / So How much do you Want

As a summation for you and listen to this one statement you can have all of God you want, not one drop more. So how much of God do you want?

John 14:25 “These things I have spoken to you while being present with you.

John 14:26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

Peace (14:27-31) – Jesus leave us His peace, which is literal, something we can receive, and something the world cannot give to us or anyone.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

John 14:28 You have heard Me say to you, ‘I am going away and coming back to you.’ If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, ‘I am going to the Father,’ for My Father is greater than I.

John 14:29 “And now I have told you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe.

John 14:30 I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.

John 14:31 But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.

Devil wants to Cut this Truth Short

The devil was come, and he wants to come here and cut short this truth devil he wants to cut short the truth of Jesus Christ in this love and the cure for the troubled heart it may be Friday Sundays come in.

But Jesus Leaves Peace

But Jesus promises us peace, it isnt something lofty and poetic wording, it is actual, something that can be experienced and sensed. Jesus gives this peace through the things we have studied here in chapter 14, and thus chapter 14 needs to be a chapter we come back regularly to be reminded, and to reapply.

Cures for the Troubled Heart – Outline chapter 14 (5 Things)

Chapter 14 will give us the cure for the troubled heart for the world we live in:

- **Place (14:1-4)** – Jesus prepares a place for us, a home in heaven.
- **Picture (14:5-11)** – Jesus expounds on the heart of the Father, a picture of the Father is seen in the Son.
- **Prayer (14:12-15)** – Jesus tells us that we can pray and be heard!
- **Power (14:16-26)** – Jesus says we will not be left orphans while on earth, and promises us the Holy Spirit, to have power to overcome in this world.
- **Peace (14:27-31)** – Jesus leave us His peace, which is literal, something we can receive, and something the world cannot give to us or anyone.

The Source

The Source of Peace, must be greater than the robber of peace, in order to bring peace. Jesus can bring peace into our troubled hearts in the midst of the troubled world, because He is the Prince of Peace, who has overcome the world. Christian, go live in Peace.

Isaiah 9:6 (NKJV) ⁶ For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

John 16:31–33 (NKJV) ³¹ Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe? ³² Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. ³³ These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

End of Study

Chapter 15

John 15:1-11

John 15:1–11 (NKJV) ¹ “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. ⁵ “I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷ If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. ⁸ By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. ⁹ “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. ¹⁰ If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love. ¹¹ “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full.

Introduction

We ended our last study with Jesus saying to the 11, “arise let us go from here”. The Last Supper has ended, it is night, Jesus and the disciples will now start walking to the Garden of Gethsemane, and then to betrayal, then to the beating and scourging, then to 6 brutal hours upon the cross. Jesus is less than 12 hours from the cross, less than 18 hours from His last breath, Jesus will be dead and in the grave before the day is over. Twelve hours from the cross, 18 hours from death, what would you say to those whom you love, what would you say in the last hours? So we study not just any words, not just common conversation, but the very Words of God, in His last hours upon the earth.

John 14:31 (NKJV) ³¹ *But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father gave Me commandment, so I do. Arise, let us go from here.*

John 18:1 (NKJV) ¹ *When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered.*

Can I tell the End before the Beginning? – What God wants for you – is to Bear Much Fruit

Can I tell you the end before the beginning? Can I tell you in our passage today what His goal in your life is today, last words of life He leaves for you, He wants you to bear “much” fruit. He wants our life to be a harvest, a bounty, full of abundance. I know that is what you want, I know that is why you come here, I know you want more of God, I know you don’t want to just live a meager Christian life but one that is full, one that is fulfilling, one that pleases your Lord. These disciples want the same, Jesus knows that, and Jesus tells them how it will come about in this passage today, and how we can have the abundant, fruit producing, Christian Life.

Maybe you Always Feel Defeated / It’s Night – Grab your Torch

But I know some, if not all, of you have your periods where you say “I am anything but fruitful, in fact I feel like a failure, I feel like I am always a disappointment to the Lord, and in fact I doubt thing will ever change”. Maybe you feel like how you are is how you will finish. God says don’t believe it for a minute, arise let us go from here, grab your torch I want to show you something. So we tune in, we walk along with Jesus on His way, It’s night, but it is a full moon because it is Spring in Israel. The pathway is narrow, we have our torches, they are flickering, we are with the One who loves us, and He wants to show us something so He is going to take us the way of the vineyard, and we are going to stop there and He is going to show us some of the secrets of the vine.

John 15:1 “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.

Temple Huge Golden Vine / Vine is Picture of Israel and Judaism / Jesus is Vine – Judaism is Not

Josephus the historian tells us that above the gate of the Temple were golden vines and grape-clusters as large as a man (“Ant.” xv. 11, § 3; “B. J.” v. 5, § 4). Maybe at this point here in verse 1 they are passing the Temple Mount on the way to the Garden, or maybe because of the full moon they can see the Temple entrance and the golden vines illuminated by the full moon, and Jesus begins His our verse 1. Now, the vine through the OT is a picture of the Nation Israel and Judaism (the religion of the Jews), Isaiah 5, Ezekiel 19, Psalm 80 are some scripture references you can study through regarding Israel being the vine. But now Jesus says, He is the “true vine”. Thus meaning, is Israel, Judaism, are not.

7th “I Am” Statement / True Vine – Jesus knows What is Next for Them / They will be Kicked out of All Knew

In His seventh “Ego Eimi” or “I AM” statement, Jesus says, “I am the True Vine.” I find this intriguing. Why would He use the word “true” at this time? Perhaps it is because as we go through this chapter into the next, we’ll see that Jesus knew His disciples would soon be kicked out of temple worship, barred from the synagogue, ostracized from the glory, tradition, and beauty of Judaism. Thus, I believe it is in this reference that Jesus declared, “I am the true Vine,” as if to say, “Don’t be deceived. It’s not Judaism. It’s not religion. It’s Me.” Imagine with me for a moment what it will be like for these followers of Christ.

- There was such beauty and pageantry in Judaism, the Temple was glorious, covered with gold, glistened in the sunlight.
- The Feasts they celebrated were unlike anything the world had ever experienced, as millions would come from afar, spend days of fellowship, eating, worshipping, and listening to the scriptures being read. The ceremonies we have studied in the past of the Water Ceremony, the Light Ceremony (during Feast of Tabernacles), the Passover Celebration of all the Lambs being sacrificed, and if you listen close enough in this passage today you can hear the hundreds of thousands of them bleating, and the excitement that would be in the air during this time.
- It’s spring, it’s warm, it’s sunny, this is their spring vacation of rest from putting the crops in the ground, and now a time to rest and wait for the first fruit.

Judaism is all these men knew, they celebrated it with Jesus, and now Jesus is saying to them, Judaism is over, because of Me, but equally so, they will be kicking you out of the Temple, synagogues (church for us), out of fellowship, you will not be invited or welcomed to any of the celebrations from this day on. It would be equivalent of you being denied fellowship at every church in your city, you being turned away at the door of Easter and Christmas dinners, no more men’s/woman’s fellowships, you are on your own.

7 “I AM” statements,

1. I AM the Bread of Life (John 6:35)
2. I AM the Light of the World (John 8:12)
3. I Am the Door (John 10:9)
4. I AM the Good Shepherd. (John 10:11)
5. I AM the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25)
6. I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6)
7. I AM the Vine (John 15:5)

They are Going to be All Alone / Before Sun sets – Jesus will be Dead – Nothing go back To / Maybe that You

They are going to be all alone, all alone in the midst of a sea of people, all they once knew will be taken away from them. How these words will mean lie to them, to come back to over and over again, I Am the True Vine. Before the sun sets on this day, Jesus will be dead, and these men will be scattered, and they will have nothing to go back to. Maybe you can relate to this in some way, maybe when you gave your life to Christ, you realized Christmas wasn’t the same anymore, you sensed you weren’t welcomed as you once were because now they think you are overly religious. You don’t get the invites over to the friend’s house anymore because, you just aren’t “as fun” as you once were, you have changed they say. And maybe you were raised, and lived in a religious system, you have your rituals and routines, and they were something you enjoyed, but now you see they had no life in them because they were never attached to the “true vine” where life is in Jesus Christ. Jesus knows your place, He knows separation, He knows all your experiencing, and in and through it all, He is giving you an invitation, a promise, a plan, stay attached to Me and you will have life beyond the life you ever knew or experienced, but He knows it will be hard leaving the old way, and living in the new.

God is Starting Something New / Doing something New in You

Verse 1b – the Father is the vinedresser - And that now you, the church, the disciples, you will now become God’s vineyard. You will become the branches. You will become that which will bear the fruit that the Father is seeking. So “I am the true vine. My Father is the husbandman.” It’s been taken away from those who He had given it to, and now the Father takes the responsibility of developing the vineyard. God is doing something new, and He is doing something new in you. It will be glorious, it will be wonderful, and here is how He is going to do it, verse 2.

John 15:2 Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.

John 15:3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

I Love Theology – Great Debate Verses / But Context is King in Bible Study – How to be Fruitful

Now, I love doctrine and theology, and I love to study the depth of them. And here is a passage that is hotly debated for 2,000 years and that is can a person once who gave their life to Christ, be cast out from Him because they are not being fruitful, maybe because they turned their back on Him, maybe because they went back into the world, maybe because they quit going to church, quit fellowshiping, quit serving? I love doctrine and theology, but here is what the context is, and doctrine and theology must always be studied in the context of the passage, context is always king in Bible Study, and here Jesus is on His way to the cross, He is telling these eleven, how to bear fruit, how to have a fruitful and abundant life. He isn't talking about who is saved and who isn't, He is telling them how to have a fruitful life.

Now Walking through the Vineyard

We see many places Jesus using physical examples to bring forth spiritual truths. Feeding of 5,000 he uses to illustrate He is the Bread of Life. The Water Ceremony during Feast of Tabernacles that He is the Living Water that if any man thirst to come drink of Him. I can see this picture here in verses 2&3, they are on a narrow path walking through a vineyard, the grapes are starting to grow (the harvest comes in June-August in Israel for fruits), and by-the-way they didn't grow vineyards on poles but just along the ground, and they have a few flickering torches, and Jesus stops to carry on from verse 1.

Read 2&3 Together – Why say “Already Clean” / Airo – Lift Up (not away) – Kathairo – Clean (not prune)

Verses 2 and 3 have to be read together, because the context is deepened even more, and you see in verse 3 Jesus said “you are already clean”? Well where did Jesus say anything about cleaning? He is talking about pruning not cleaning. The word translated “takes away” in verse 2 is airo—a word in which three of the four definitions deal with lifting up, raising up, or pulling up. Yes, the fourth definition in the Greek lexicon is “take away.” But there are three that precede it. Airo is used in John 11:41, where Jesus lifts up His eyes toward the heavens—and again in Luke 17 when the people lifted their voices. Thus, the idea here is not “take away” but “lift up.” The word translated “purge” is kathairo from which we get our word “catharsis,” referring to a cleansing process. Kathairo is used in John 13 when Jesus cleansed the feet of His disciples. In fact, in virtually every case in New Testament language, kathairo being translated not “purge” but “cleanse,” I believe the use of “purge” here in John 15 is a mistranslation. If you put these thoughts together, you get an understanding of what Jesus is really saying—and it's wonderful. It's not terrorizing; it's terrific. It doesn't cause consternation, but rather comfort, for He says, “Every branch in Me that bears not fruit, I lift up. And every branch that bears fruit, I cleanse that it might bring forth more fruit.” You see, in vineyards, it is not uncommon for branches to become so heavy with fruit that they sag to the ground—leaving them vulnerable to the mud from the rainy season sure to follow. Consequently, the vinedresser, seeing a branch in the mud, lifts it up and braces it. And if there is fruit on it, he washes the mud off the fruit—lovingly, carefully, and tenderly. Thus, Jesus paints a picture not of the Lord lopping you off, but of Him lifting you up; not of Him cutting you, but of Him cleansing you. How do I know this with certainty? Look at the next verse, verse 3, you are already cleaned.

Jesus lifts downtrodden – Jesus cleans through the Word

In following this analogy, in keeping with the flow logically, what Jesus is saying is, “I lift the downtrodden branch; I wash the contaminated fruit. How? Through the Word.” You're clean through the Word. Gang, how do you bear more fruit? Not by the Lord butchering you or bloodying you, but by being in the Word. How do we get our lives cleaned up? How does more fruit come? Fruit comes by a commitment to the Word, a receptivity to the Word, and by staying in the Word. The psalmist said the same thing in Psalm 119 when he said “How shall a young man cleanse his way? How does a young man walk in a clean way? By taking heed thereto according to thy Word.” And Paul picks up the same analogy in Ephesians 5 where, talking about husbands and wives, he says that the bride is washed by the water of the Word. Jesus gives us an important, absolutely essential exhortation when He says, “I am the True Vine. You're the branches. When you're downcast or dirty, the Father will come and pick you up and

wash you off via the Word through your morning devotions, Wednesday evening Bible study, home groups.” Being in the place where the Word is taught, where we are basing our beliefs on what Jesus said, has a cleansing effect upon our lives.

*John 15:3 (NKJV)*³ *You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.*

*Psalm 119:9–16 (NKJV)*⁹ *How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.*¹⁰ *With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!*¹¹ *Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.*¹² *Blessed are You, O LORD! Teach me Your statutes.*¹³ *With my lips I have declared All the judgments of Your mouth.*¹⁴ *I have rejoiced in the way of Your testimonies, As much as in all riches.*¹⁵ *I will meditate on Your precepts, And contemplate Your ways.*¹⁶ *I will delight myself in Your statutes; I will not forget Your word.*

*Ephesians 5:25–27 (NKJV)*²⁵ *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,*²⁶ *that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,*²⁷ *that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.*

Can you Picture It / Jesus Stops and Stoops for You / Gentle and Loving Touch

Here these guys are going to be all alone in just a few hours, Peter is going to deny Him, they are all going to scatter, they will know what downtrodden is, and how these words and this example will come flooding back to them, and I hope any of you today. I can picture Jesus stooping down (amazing God that would be willing to stoop down for sinful man), and lifting up a branch or cluster that was laying in the dirt, maybe there is a bucket of water left from the vineyard worker, and Jesus begins to gently and lovingly brush the dirt off the fruit, then pours water over the fruit just like He did their feet a little while ago, and He talks about lifting and cleansing to these disciples. The Lord speaks to them, as He speaks to us, you won't be fruitful when you are covered in dirt, a picture of the world and sin, as those things will choke you out, but I don't come and lop you off, I don't move on to the next branch and cluster, but every branch and every cluster is important to Me, and He stoops down (yes God stoops down for you), he gently lifts you up, and then He washes you (yes God willing to get dirty for you); imagine God as He is washing you now today with His Word, imagine His loving touch upon you, how precious you are in the midst of billions, He stops for you today, He stoops down to you, He is gently and lovingly washing you. I hope, I pray, you never read this passage again thinking God is angry and upset with you, that He is walking away from you, but rather you see He is coming to wash you, even if you have picked up or been living in the world.

Sometimes Washing Feels like Pruning

I can easily see why translators used the word pruning over washing, because to be quite honest sometimes the washing of the Word feels like pruning because I simply don't want to obey, to change, I want to keep doing my thing, and when I turn from that thing because I hear or read God's Word, it hurts. But, once I am free of it, I feel "lifted up", I feel clean, I feel refreshed, I am exhilarated and excited that God is doing a work in my life, and I begin to move in more power, more love, and I am become way more fruitful than I once was.

*Hebrews 12:3–11 (NKJV)*³ *For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.*⁴ *You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin.*⁵ *And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him;"*⁶ *For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives."*⁷ *If you endure chastening, God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom a father does not chasten?*⁸ *But if you are without chastening, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate and not sons.*⁹ *Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?*¹⁰ *For they indeed for a few days chastened us as seemed best to them, but He for our profit, that we may be partakers of His holiness.*¹¹ *Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.*

John 13 – already Clean / Position Secure because Jesus Finished Work

And, what did Jesus say to them back in chapter 13, you are already clean. You are clean because of the finished work of the cross, your position in Him is secure, now He works in you so you will bear much fruit.

*John 13:7–11 (NKJV)*⁷ *Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."*⁸ *Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."*⁹ *Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!"*¹⁰ *Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you."*¹¹ *For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean."*

What do we Do – What is Our Role?

So what do I do? What is my role and your role in all this. Do I have 12 points to make to you, all starting with the same letter if I was really being fancy? Now, Jesus makes it simple, He makes it real clear, verse 4 He simply and clearly says..... Abide in Me.

John 15:4 Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

Abide – Stay Close – Cling to Me / What is Fruit we Produce?

“Stay close to Me,” Jesus is saying. “Abide in Me. Cling to Me because if you don’t, there won’t be any fruit coming forth from your life.” What is fruit? Fruit is vital to spiritual life presently and will affect you eternally. What is fruit? The Scriptures specify 7 types of fruit.

1. Hebrews 12:11 says that Righteousness is a fruit:
2. Hebrews 13:15 names Praises as a fruit.
3. Roman 1:13 says that Soul-winning is a fruit:
4. Romans 6:22 says that Holiness is a fruit:
5. Romans 15 calls Financial Giving a fruit:
6. Colossians 1:10 labels Good Works a fruit:
7. Galatians 5 describes the fruit of the Spirit

Hebrews 12:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.

Hebrews 13:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.

Romans 1:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ Now I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that I often planned to come to you (but was hindered until now), that I might have some fruit among you also, just as among the other Gentiles. ¹⁴ I am a debtor both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to wise and to unwise.

Romans 6:22 (NKJV) ²² But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life.

Romans 15:26–27 (NKJV) ²⁶ For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. ²⁷ It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things.

Colossians 1:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

Galatians 5:22–23 (NKJV) ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

The Life of Fruit

So we see; a life that is these 7 things, it is the things we enjoy in the fruitful abundant life:

1. Hebrews 12:11 says that Righteousness is a fruit – is right before Him
2. Hebrews 13:15 names Praises as a fruit – that is worshipful because of how good He is
3. Roman 1:13 says that Soul-winning is a fruit – His goodness will lead us to talk of His goodness that will draw others to Him
4. Romans 6:22 says that Holiness is a fruit – this cleansing process sets us apart from the world and unto Him. It is a cycle, He lifts, He cleanses, we bear fruit, He does it again we bear more fruit, it never ends, as each day and each wash cycle we become more like Him, and less like our old sinful self.
5. Romans 15 calls Financial Giving a fruit – our hearts are moved to trust He will provide, and we will want to give unto Him out of love, and to see His vineyard sustained and grow.
6. Colossians 1:10 labels Good Works a fruit – as we become more like Him, we will be like Him, doing the Fathers work.
7. Galatians 5 describes the fruit of the Spirit – the fruit of the Spirit is love, and love will become the dominating nature and characteristic of our life.

Love is the Ultimate Fruit – the Rest are Definitions of What Love Is

Love is the ultimate fruit. What about joy, peace, and longsuffering; gentleness, goodness, and faith; meekness and self-control? Doesn't Galatians list them as fruit? Yes, but the fruit (not fruits) of the Spirit being singular, those are definitions of what love is.

Filled with Love – Giving, Praising, Witnessing, Living Holy – That is the Fruitful Life

So, when your life is filled with love, when you're giving financially, when you're praising the Lord verbally, when you're doing good things practically, when you're witnessing to the lost boldly, when you're joyful, peaceful, and patient—all of these constitute fruit.

Galatians 5, Fruit Not Something we Produce or Perform in Flesh / But simply by Abiding

Galatians 5 is declaring again that the fruit that God wants from our life is not something that we can produce ourselves. I think that many times we feel sort of an obligation to do, to perform, to bring forth works unto God that we might be pleasing unto Him as the result of our efforts and our works. It's interesting that in Galatians 5 as Paul is writing to the Galatians, he contrasts work with fruit. "Now the works of the flesh are these," and he gives you that long list of the works of the flesh. But then he says, "But [in contrast to the works] the fruit of the Spirit." So the fruit is contrasted with works. Now God isn't interested in works, our works of righteousness. God is interested that we bear fruit and fruit comes from a relationship. Abiding in Christ, Christ abiding in me, the natural result of that is going to be my life is going to bring forth the fruit that the Father desires. It comes automatically by abiding in Christ.

Galatians 5:19–26 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹ envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. ²⁴ And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Picture It

Picture it, Jesus holding the fruit in His hand, still immature and growing, as He speaks these words. Abide, and you will bear much fruit.

John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."

Apart from Jesus – Nothing we Can do that is Pleasing

Verse 5 – for without Me you can do nothing - Apart from Christ, there's not one thing that you can do that is pleasing or acceptable unto the Father. You can do nothing to please God apart from Christ. "Apart from Me you can do nothing."— Oh we can do lots of things, even things that the world looks on and says are good thing, but the things that are going to last, and have lasting fruit, can only be done through Christ. If you're not abiding in Christ, whatever you're doing is a huge waste. It's nothing. Zip. Zilch. Zero. It's worth nothing. It will not count. It will not be there in eternity. "Oh, but I'm a Kiwanan, or a Rotarian, or I work for the Red Cross." If it's not done as you're abiding in Christ, for the glory of Christ, because you were led by Christ, it is for nothing. Period. Why, then, do people donate time to the Red Cross? Why do they join service organizations? Why do they perform good deeds? Perhaps to appease a guilty conscience, to be part of a fraternity, to strike up business deals, for camaraderie—for lots of reasons which have nothing to do with absolute goodness. Only what you do in Christ and for Christ and because of Christ will count in the ages to come. That's why Jesus says, "If I'm not in the center of it, it's worth nothing."

Secret of the Vine - Abide

Again the secret is abiding in Christ and Christ abiding in you. You will begin to bring forth much fruit.

No Fruit – Some Fruit – More Fruit – Much Fruit

I like this! In the beginning of verse 2, there was no fruit. In the middle of verse 2, there was fruit. At the end of verse 2 there was more fruit. And here in verse 5, there is much fruit! How is “much fruit” produced?

Regarding Service – Exhausted I know I am not Abiding / Tapped to the Power Source

Now regarding our Christian work, our serving to the Lord, how do we know if what we are doing sometimes is us doing it with Him, or us doing it alone? I quick check is, are you tired? Does the thought of doing it pour exhaustion over your body? You will know pretty much that you are doing it in your own strength, or God simple did not call you to do it, because you just won't have the energy to do it. But when we abide, are tapped into the vine, we are tapped into the life giving flow, and like the nutrients that come from the vine, so comes to us the spirit that energizes us to do the things God wants us to do. Psalm 37 says delight they self in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart, and with that desire will come the energy and excitement to do it.

Psalm 37:4–5 (NKJV) ⁴ Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. ⁵ Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.

John 15:6 If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.

Israel did Not Abide / Israel will be Toppled & Temple Destroyed in less than 40 Years

In the Old Testament, God had planted the vine, the nation of Israel in a goodly field. Did everything necessary that it would bring forth fruit. Nurtured it, took care of it, watched over it. But it only brought forth wild grapes. Now Jesus is declaring, “I am the vine, you are the branches.” And so the responsibility of bringing the fruit that God wants is now upon us, the branches. The nation of Israel did not bring forth the fruit. The prophet Isaiah spoke of them as the vine, he said, was burned. But he said, it's not really good for even burning. What can you do with the wood of a grape? He said you can't make a peg out of it. It's brittle, it's only good for the fire and it's not even good in the fire. It sort of burns like a punk. He said it's just of no value. In less than 40 years from this statement, Israel will be utterly destroyed by the Roman Army, and history will tell us the Temple (including those golden vines at the gate) will be burned. But the True Vine, Jesus Christ, His Kingdom has no end.

Isaiah 5:1–7 (NKJV) ¹ Now let me sing to my Well-beloved A song of my Beloved regarding His vineyard: My Well-beloved has a vineyard On a very fruitful hill. ² He dug it up and cleared out its stones, And planted it with the choicest vine. He built a tower in its midst, And also made a winepress in it; So He expected it to bring forth good grapes, But it brought forth wild grapes. ³ “And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge, please, between Me and My vineyard. ⁴ What more could have been done to My vineyard That I have not done in it? Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, Did it bring forth wild grapes? ⁵ And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. ⁶ I will lay it waste; It shall not be pruned or dug, But there shall come up briers and thorns. I will also command the clouds That they rain no rain on it.” ⁷ For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant. He looked for justice, but behold, oppression; For righteousness, but behold, a cry for help.

John 15:7 If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

If = Since

The word “if” can also be translated “since”. Jesus is talking to the 11 who follow, who are “in Him”, so the better translation is “since you abide in Me”.

Ever have Challenge – Read 3 Chapters and Call Me in the Morning / Word & Fruit are Tied Together

Have you ever heard the challenge, oh you Christians your answer to all life's troubles are to “just read more Bible”. That is like a doctor saying “take two aspirins and call me in the morning”, well you Christians say read 3 chapters and call me in the morning. They say life is more complicated, more complex than just read the Bible. To which I say, just read these verses – they are the tie between bearing fruit, and having the abundant life. So once again, I am guilty as charged.

John 15:3 (NKJV) ³ You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

John 15:7 (NKJV) ⁷ If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.

Prayer chp 14 – Broad / Now Limitations – Must Abide – Abide in His Word

So, here in the final discourse that Jesus has with His disciples, He's giving to them some extremely broad promises concerning prayer. Back in the fourteenth chapter, verse thirteen, He said, "And whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My name, that will I do." That "whatsoever," that's pretty broad. "Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My name, that will I do, that the Father might be glorified in the Son. If you shall ask any thing." Any thing is pretty broad term. "If you ask any thing in My name, I will do it" (John 14:13,14). Now He's giving some limitations. "If you abide in Me, and My word abides in you, you can ask what you will and it shall be done unto you." There are those who take these broad promises of Jesus concerning prayer and they twist them and they teach that you can have anything you want. They are speaking now generally in a fleshly kind of carnal way. That is, you can have any kind of carnal desire that you might have for a sports car or for a big bank account or for a yacht, any of these things to consume on your own lust. And that's not what Jesus is saying. "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, then you can ask whatever you will." But it follows that what I ask will be in harmony with Him and His will. Because to be a disciple of Jesus, the first thing I have to do is deny self. So these promises, these broad promises that Jesus makes concerning prayer is not opening the door for prayer to be a means of accomplishing selfish ends. But they are doors open to accomplish the purposes of God that now become the chief desire of my heart.

Psalm 37 – Misinterpreted – Not Fleshly Desires

The psalmist said, "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He will give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4). That's been misinterpreted or misquoted in a way. If you delight yourself in the Lord, the psalmist isn't saying, He's going to give you the fleshly desires of your heart. But He will give you the desires of your heart. That is, He will put His desire in your heart. If you delight yourself in the Lord, He then plants His desires in your heart. God said to Jeremiah, "The day is coming, saith the Lord, when I will no longer write my law "on the tables of stone but I will write them in the fleshly tablets of the heart" (2 Corinthians 3:3). So God inscribes His law, His will, His purpose in my heart. He makes that my longing, my desire. That's why doing the will of the Lord is such a pleasurable, exciting thing. Because He has first of all worked in me, planting His desire in my heart, making that the longing of my heart. Oh I wish I can live in Hawaii. Where did that desire come from? Be careful now, this one's tough. But you don't know. You see, it could be that God has put that desire in there because He's calling you to Hawaii. So be open, but be careful. Make sure you really have discernment on this one. I would have to confess it would be very hard for me to have discernment. But it's wonderful how God does work and prepare our hearts for that which He wants for us to do.

Psalm 37:4-5 (NKJV) ⁴ Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart. ⁵ Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, And He shall bring it to pass.

God's Will not Awful – Not Jungle /

People oftentimes have a very false sense of the will of God as though God's will is something that is awful, terrifying. And so I've heard say, Be careful, if you say anywhere, God, you just might find yourself in some jungle filled with all kinds of poisonous reptiles, parasites and everything else. So you've got to be careful when you say, Lord, Your will be done. As though God is going to then make you do some horrible terrifying thing that is going to just put your life in total terror, living in fear and terror. If God is going to call you to say, Irian Jaya or New Guinea to work among the native people there, you can be sure that He will, first of all, give you a desire and a longing and an intense interest in bugs. Pastor Chuck tells the story of when he and his son Jeff were in Irian Jaya and they met a couple of young men there.

- We flew into the mission station of this one young fellow, good looking fellow, had two small children, brilliant fellow, college degree. He's a hundred and twenty miles from the closest road so we had to fly in. And the pilot buzzed the field once to see what direction the wind socket was because you can only land one direction. If the wind socket isn't for you, you just have to come on out. But the wind socket was coming downhill so we were able to land. But the fact that we have buzzed the field once. By the time we landed, both sides of the runway were lined with the naked natives who, when the plane stopped, came rushing up to the plane and they greeted us very warmly. They later showed us around the village. Beautiful spot up in this canyon. There are two streams that converge, beautiful, crystal clear water. And he showed us the little water system that he had developed for his house where he piped it from upstream where he had the gravity flow of this crystal clear water into his house. He turned to us and his face was just beaming. And he says, Tell me, tell me, look what happens when you yield yourself to the

will of God. He puts you in the most beautiful spot in the whole world to raise kids. He said, This place is fabulous. He was absolutely in love with it. And that's what God does. He plants His desires in your heart. So with Jesus you can say, "I delight to do Thy will, O Lord" (Psalm 40:8).

- Another fellow that we met at that same conference is thirty-five miles from the nearest road. When he wants to go to the store, he has to walk thirty-five miles to get a new lightbulb. But they don't have lights out there. To get a can of tuna or whatever. This fellow was from this area, Garden Grove. Loved to surf, Huntington Beach. And walking from his village to the nearest town, he has to walk along the beach thirty-five miles. He said the most gorgeous surf in the world. And so he said, I have my little walkman, I put on the Maranatha praise tapes, and he said, It is just heaven walking along the beautiful beach, seeing the beautiful surf, and just praising God and listening to the praise music. He said, I'm in the closest place to heaven as you can get.

God Puts Things in Your Heart

You see, God puts these things in your heart. And then when He places you there, you think, This can't be the will of God, this is too nice. This is too good. But that's because Satan has given this false concept concerning God's will, that the will of God is the most miserable place in the world. That's not so. The will of God is the most blessed place in the world. Walking in the will of God is glorious. And so, Jesus is talking to His disciples and He is telling them, You can ask whatever you will. But the thing is, your will is now His will. He has planted His will in your heart and thus, when you ask according to His will, as John later says in his epistle, He hears us and if He hears us, we have received that which we have asked of Him.

John 15:8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

Much Fruit

I like this! In the beginning of verse 2, there was no fruit. In the middle of verse 2, there was fruit. At the end of verse 2 there was more fruit. And here in verse 5, there is much fruit!

How? – Abide / 10 Times in Our Passage

How is "much fruit" produced? Abide, spoken of 10 times here in our passage today. Not 10 things to do to bear much fruit, just one thing 10 times, ABIDE!

John 15:1–11 (NKJV) ¹ "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴ *Abide* in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it *abides* in the vine, neither can you, unless you *abide* in Me. ⁵ "I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who *abides* in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not *abide* in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned. ⁷ If you *abide* in Me, and My words *abide* in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. ⁸ By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples. ⁹ "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; *abide* in My love. ¹⁰ If you keep My commandments, you will *abide* in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and *abide* in His love. ¹¹ "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and *that* your joy may be full.

John 15:9 "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.

John 15:10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love.

John 15:11 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.

Only Place find Fullness & Joy – Is in His Presence

The only place in the scriptures where you will read both "fullness" and "joy" together, all are in the context of being in God's presence. Do you want fullness of joy? You will only find it in the Lord; you will not find it in your wealth, your career, your spouse, your children, your possessions, not anywhere, except in the presence of the Lord.

Psalm 16:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Close with This – Father is Vinedresser

I close with this, verse 1, the Father is the vinedresser, the gardener. The vinedresser loves the garden, He tends it with loving care, He tends it with purpose. The Father tends to the lilies in the field, but says you are more

precious to Him they are, and look at their beauty. It is what the Lord wants to do in your life, He is making a beautiful garden.

Matthew 6:28–29 (NKJV) ²⁸ *“So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; ²⁹ and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*

End of Study

John 15:9-14 (Easter Message 2015)

John 15:9 “As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love.

John 15:10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.

John 15:11 “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.

John 15:12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.

John 15:14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.

Background – Day of the Crucifixion / My Sin & Yours / Supper over – on way to Garden to Drops

It is the day of the crucifixion, the death of Jesus for your sin and mine. Judas is out setting the betrayal in full motion, the Last Supper is over, the feet have been washed, Jesus and the eleven have left the Upper Room and under the moon-lit night over the skies of Jerusalem are heading over the Brook Kidron up to the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus will sweat drops of blood. Jesus is about 12 hours from the cross, the cross that should have been mine and yours for the penalty of sin before the Holy God.

Verse 9 – I Love You, Let there be NO Doubt Today

Jesus lets there be no doubt (v9), I love you. The word of God today to you..... I love you!

When you Doubt – Think He is Distant/You are Distant – Remember “No Greater Love”

And when you doubt, maybe because you think I am distant from you, maybe you doubt because it is you who is distant from me because you are choosing your own path, maybe you doubt My love because of circumstances of life, hardships, failings, the list is as deep as it is wide, remember..... no greater love has no one than this, to lay down one’s life for his friends. And verse 14, Jesus says I call you friends.

Not Just Love – but Considers You a Friend / Agape & Philos

He doesn’t just love you, he considers you friend. I think I can accept that He loves me easier than I can accept that He considers me friend. Oh you are family, which is why I love you. The word for love throughout these verses is the Greek word “agape”, the unconditional love, no strings attached, love you “period”, not because. But a friend, Greek word philos”, it means to be fond of, know well, regard with affection, to trust. Wow, to think that is what the Lord thinks of our relationship, He calls me friend, He calls you friend.

Our Friend is Going to Die / Your Worth is Worth It / 3yrs of Friendship – These Words Hurt

Our friend is going to die for us. My love, your worth, is so much to Me he says, that I will lay down my life for you. And to end the story there, would be a beautiful story as is, but God always has more than we can ever think or imagine. For these disciples after 3 years of friendship, these words would hurt. Oh Lord we can’t bear the thought of You dying, but Jesus in a few minutes (John 16) will bring clarity..... but I will be back, for you! Our friendship and love will last a lifetime and an eternity. We will live in love and friendship, for time without end.

I Will Die (v13) / A Few Minutes Later (chp 16) – I will be Back

Jesus says He will die, but just a few minutes later He lets them know, He will be back with them and for them.

John 16:16–22 (NKJV) ¹⁶ “A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me, because I go to the Father.” ¹⁷ Then some of His disciples said among themselves, “What is this that He says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me’; and, ‘because I go to the Father?’” ¹⁸ They said therefore, “What is this that He says, ‘A little while’? We do not know what He is saying.” ¹⁹ Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, “Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me’?” ²⁰ Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. ²¹ A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. ²² Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.

Why Believe the Resurrection / Christianity Hinges on It / Just another Religion / Res Proof Accepted

Why should we believe in the resurrection? All Christianity rests on one basis, the resurrection. If Jesus did not raise from the dead, then Christianity is just another one of the world religions (with a dead Buddha, dead Muhammad, dead Krishna). Why is the resurrection so vital to the Gospel? Because the resurrection is proof, confirmation, that God accepted the sacrifice, and the substitution. In the Old Testament the sacrificial, substitution, system was established. When a person sinned against God, broke one of His Holy Commandments, they were to go to the Temple and bring an animal as a sacrifice with them. In Leviticus chapters 1-5, we read how they were to lay their hands on the head of the sacrifice (let's say a lamb), and confess their sin, and then the priest would slit the animals throat and it would bleed out and die under the hands of the person who had offended God by breaking His Commandments. The sacrificial system, death and blood, shows how serious God is about sin (Hebrews 9:22, says that without shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin). The laying on of the hands were symbolic of transferring the person's guilt on to the innocent sacrificial animal (which had to be perfect – without spot or blemish), the animal was a substitute, the animal took the penalty for breaking God's Law, and the guilty person's sin was covered. Notice I said covered, as they were only covered until they sinned again, and then back to the temple with another sacrifice. All this was symbolic of the final sacrifice that would come (as John the Baptist would say, Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world), once and for all, to not just cover sin, but completely wipe it away. The words John used were "to lift off, to carry away". Why is proof of the resurrection vital to Christianity? Because it proves, it confirms, that God accepted the sacrifice (that is was perfect – without spot or blemish), and the substitute (Jesus trading places with you and with me). Had Jesus not rose from the dead, then it would have proven that God did not accept the trade, and we would still be guilty before God, would still be dead in our trespasses and sin.

Hebrews 9:22 (NKJV) ²² And according to the law almost all things are purified with blood, and without shedding of blood there is no remission.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Ephesians 2:1–10 (NKJV) ¹ And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, ² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, ³ among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. ⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Is the Resurrection True?

Is the Resurrection True? Did Jesus raise again from the dead? Can we be sure that our sins are forgiven?

7 Reasons why the Resurrection is True / 7 Reasons Why it Matters to You

Today on this Resurrection Sunday, I want to give you "7 Reasons why the Resurrection is True", and "7 Reasons why it Matters to You".

7 Reasons why the Resurrection is True

1. Jesus said He would
2. The Tomb was Empty
3. The Disciples Turned the World Upside Down
4. 500 Witnesses Confirmed It
5. Nero Burned Rome
6. Apostle Paul's Radical Transformation
7. Your Testimony

1.. Jesus said He would

The first reason the resurrection is true, is because Jesus said He would.

Matthew 20:17–19 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Now Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples aside on the road and said to them, ¹⁸ "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death, ¹⁹ and deliver Him to the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify. And the third day He will rise again."

John 2:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

Matthew 12:39–40 (NKJV) ³⁹ But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. ⁴⁰ For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

John 11:25–26 (NKJV) ²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. ²⁶ And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

(Cross-References; Mark 8:31, Matthew 17:22, Luke 9:22, John 2:19, mark 14:58, Matthew 26:61, Matthew 12:39, Matthew 16:4)

Why is that Important to You?

Why is that Important to You? Because it is clear, Jesus' death was no accident, no happen-chance, it was planned and it was purposed. It was planned; this is the 14th of Nissan in the Jewish calendar, and it is the exact day that the Passover lambs were to be sacrificed. Jesus knew the exact day He would die, and He knew the exact day he would rise again. This was no happen-chance but exactly as planned, because the plan had a purpose, and that was to buy man back from his/her sin. The empty tomb, the resurrected Christ, says to each of us today that God has a purpose for you (Jer 29:11), you are His purpose for coming. From the foundations of the world he had a divine date set (Eph 1:4), because you are worth it to Him. It was His joy, to go to the cross, for you (Heb 12:2).

Exodus 12:1–7 (NKJV) ¹ Now the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, ² "This month shall be your beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. ³ Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. ⁴ And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. ⁷ And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.

Jeremiah 29:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.

Ephesians 1:4 (NKJV) ⁴ just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,

Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV) ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Resurrection is True – Perfectly Prophesied

The Resurrection is True, because Jesus said it would be, perfectly prophesied. And His perfect words matter to us because He also says no greater love has He than this, to lay down one's life for a friend, you are My friends. The creator of the universe knows you by name, He loves you, and he calls you friend, and He is right now preparing a place for you in heaven:

John 15:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.

John 14:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And where I go you know, and the way you know."

2.. The Tomb was Empty

The second reason the resurrection is true, is because the tomb was empty. Produce a body, and Christianity is over.

3 Theories

The 3 theories of the world to refute the claims of the resurrection (His disciples stole His body, His enemy's stole His body, Jesus didn't die but was only unconscious).

1. **His disciples stole His body** – Well let's imagine that, these 11 eleven and a few woman. First of all it was what the enemy's thought could happen (Matt 27) so they received a detachment of Roman guards to guard the tomb. A Roman guard was made up of four to sixteen soldiers. In combat, they would form a

square, and were able to hold off a much larger force. So here comes Peter and company with fishing nets, the woman got their cooking utensils, and they are going to overcome the 16 trained soldiers of the greatest trained army the world had ever seen at that time. I don't think so.

2. **His enemy's' stole His body** - If they did (and they never claimed to have done so), they surely would have produced the body to stop the successful spread of the Christian faith in the very city where the crucifixion occurred. But they could not produce it. If you can produce the body, then Christianity is over, and everyone goes back to Judaism.
3. **Jesus didn't die but was only unconscious** – this is known as the “swoon theory”, Jesus was not dead, but only unconscious when they laid him in the tomb. He awoke, removed the stone, overcame the soldiers, and vanished from history after a few meetings with his disciples in which he convinced them he was risen from the dead. Even the foes of Jesus did not try this line. He was obviously dead. The Romans saw to that. The stone could not be moved by one man from within who had just been stabbed in the side by a spear and spent six hours nailed to a cross.

Matthew 27:62–66 (NKJV) ⁶² On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, ⁶³ saying, “Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise.’ ⁶⁴ Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, ‘He has risen from the dead.’ So the last deception will be worse than the first.” ⁶⁵ Pilate said to them, “You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how.” ⁶⁶ So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.

Letter to Editor

A humorous letter to the editor to a Christian magazine accurately evaluated the “Swoon Theory”:

Dear Eutyclus: *Our preacher said, on Easter, that Jesus just swooned on the cross and that the disciples nursed Him back to health. What do you think? Sincerely, Bewildered*

Dear Bewildered: *Beat your preacher with a cat-of-nine-tails with 39 heavy strokes, nail him to a cross; hang him in the sun for 6 hours; run a spear through his heart; embalm him; put him in an airless tomb for 72 hours and see what happens. Sincerely, Eutyclus*

Why is that Important to You?

Why is the empty tomb important to you, yes it proves the resurrection is true, but I want you to see the tomb was empty! The empty tomb, the resurrected Christ, says to each of us today that no records were left behind, no evidence, no file cabinets with a folder with your name on it, it was empty. When Jesus went to the grave, He took all the records that were written against you with Him. Oh beloved, may you enjoy the empty tomb and the resurrected Savior this Easter day, may you know that your sins, your failings, your fallings, your rebellions, have all be wiped away, cleared out, the files have been deleted, the hard-drive wiped clean. There is no record of your guilt. Now, roll away the stone and live!

Colossians 2:11–15 (NKJV) ¹¹ In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. ¹³ And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, ¹⁴ having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. ¹⁵ Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.

2,000 Years Ago – A Man Named Jesus walked this Earth / FACT / Where is His Body

2,000 years ago a Man named Jesus Christ walked this earth, that is fact, no one denies that He existed. Even today's liberal news media agree that He existed, they just don't agree that He is God. To them I ask, where is His body? To them I answer, He has risen, and He has ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father.

3.. The Disciples Turned the World Upside Down

The third reason the resurrection is true, because these 11 men went out and turned the world upside down. That is the exact accusation that came against the early church, they turned the world upside down. To which I say they actually turned the world right side up, because it is the world that is upside down. On day of Pentecost Peter preached the “resurrected Christ” and 3,000 people got saved that day. A short time later Jesus is preaching outside the Temple the “resurrected Christ” and 5,000 people got saved. Could anyone preach in power the

resurrection if they didn't believe it? More so, all eleven apostles we are told by church history were brutalized and all but John were killed for their faith. You would think at least one would have recanted their story if it was a lie, but not one did, they took death because they knew their Redeemer lived. As for John, they tried to kill him, church history says they tried to boil him in a cauldron of boiling oil (hence the 1st friar), but he didn't die. Imagine the pain of being dipped in boiling oil, have you ever had grease splatter on you from cooking, it hurts. Now me, it would only be about the tippy-toe that I would be saying, ok get the French fries out, no need to waste this fine oil on a lie. Not one recanted. It had to be the truth.

Acts 17:6 (NKJV) ⁶ But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, "These who have turned the world upside down have come here too."

Acts 2:22–24 (NKJV) ²² "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know—²³ Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death; ²⁴ whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it."

Acts 2:40–41 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." ⁴¹ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

Acts 4:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ Now as they spoke to the people, the priests, the captain of the temple, and the Sadducees came upon them, ² being greatly disturbed that they taught the people and preached in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. ³ And they laid hands on them, and put them in custody until the next day, for it was already evening. ⁴ However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

Why is that Important to You?

Why is that Important to You? Because the same resurrection power that was made available to them, is made available to you today, and that is the Holy Spirit which Jesus promised would come to all believers after His resurrection (John 16). They went from cowering behind closed doors to shouting it from the rooftops, all because they saw the resurrected Christ. The empty tomb, the resurrected Christ, says to each of us today, for we are told in Ephesians that the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is available for us today. The power that raised Jesus from the dead, the power that enabled the disciples to endure all they did, to turn the world right-side up, is available to you today. Look inside that empty tomb, and see that it is empty, and see the promise of power in its emptiness. Do you need to turn your marriage right-side up? Is there some habit, addiction, vice that you feel you can't overcome, look inside the empty tomb. Do you want to be more like Jesus, look inside the tomb, and believe the resurrection power is real. When you believe the power of the resurrection, you will live in the power of the resurrection.

John 16:1–15 (NKJV) ¹ "These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. ² They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service. ³ And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me. ⁴ But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. "And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you. ⁵ "But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?' ⁶ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. ⁷ Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. ⁸ And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ⁹ of sin, because they do not believe in Me; ¹⁰ of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; ¹¹ of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged. ¹² "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³ However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. ¹⁴ He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵ All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you."

Ephesians 1:19–21 (NKJV) ¹⁹ and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

4.. 500 Witnesses Confirmed It

The fourth reason the resurrection is true, is because 500 witnesses confirmed it was true. Dispelling the 11 disciples is one thing, but now you have 500 firsthand accounts. A little research would have dispelled this if it was a lie, but as the eyewitness kept telling others, others believed it was true, and spark has now turned into fire that is moving through the whole region, eventually the whole world.

1 Corinthians 15:1–8 (NKJV) ¹ Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. ⁶ After that He was seen by over five hundred

brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. ⁷ After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. ⁸ Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

Why is that Important to You?

Why is that Important to You? The empty tomb, the resurrected Christ, says to each of us today that this gospel is meant to spread, and now we have been given the commission to go tell the world. Ever consider why Jesus only appeared to 500 and not 500,000? Our math says appear to 500,000 and the flame will spread faster. Well the fact is that the flame spread just fast and fine with the 500. So we see, God is saying and demonstrating, we don't need the masses to spread a flame across our part of the world, there were only 120 in the upper room on day of Pentecost and 3,000 were saved. The resurrection power is that powerful, it isn't based on mass number, but on mass power, the power of One Mighty God. And, why it is important to you is that when you share the resurrection, every time you speak it, its power flows up from within you, and you will find yourself living in the resurrection power, because it is flowing through you like electricity, and you are tapped to the power source, Jesus Christ the resurrected Savior. You are the branches, I Am the Vine (John 15:5)

Matthew 28:18–20 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

John 15:5 (NKJV) ⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

5.. Nero Burned Rome

The fifth reason the resurrection is true, is because Nero burned Rome. History tells us that Nero burned Rome (about 64 AD, 30 years after the resurrection), and then blamed it on the Christians, and then Christian persecution would burn like the wildfire through the Roman Empire. Interestingly enough, the more the church was persecuted, the greater and faster it spread through the world. What is my point of why Nero burning Rome is proof of the resurrection? Like the point above, the passion and witness of the early church, fueled by the eyewitnesses, and filled with the Holy Spirit, spread through all of Rome, to the point that even the great emperor was threatened by Christianity. The great Rome Empire controlled everything in its empire, but couldn't stop the spread of Christianity that said Jesus was King and God, not Caesar.

Why is that Important to You?

Why is that Important to You? The empty tomb, the resurrected Christ, says to each of us today that no man, government, or program, or agenda, or movement, will stop the work and move of God. I know we are living in a time in our Country where we are being misunderstood, we are being accused of hatred and intolerance, and there is a move to silence our voice, to quell the movement, but no man, government, or program, or agenda, or movement, will stop the work and move of God. Where is Rome? So too should the Lord the Lord tarry it can be asked where are the great nations that came against Christianity, as they will follow the history of all other great nations and disappear, but God and His resurrection will still be standing, even after they are long gone. Keep your witness Christian, keep living the resurrected life.

6.. Apostle Paul's Radical Transformation

The sixth reason the resurrection is true, is because of the Apostle's Paul radical transformation. Paul saw the resurrected Christ and was radically changed. Paul was the top religious man in Judaism, he was on a mission to wipe out Christians and Christianity, he was going town-to-town, door-to-door, dragging them out of their homes, giving them tow choice, denounce or die. Paul was a widow maker, and orphan maker, he was ruthless and relentless against Christians. But then, something changed, and Paul goes from being Christianity's greatest foe, to greatest apostle, he pens more pages than any other writer, he preaches far and wider than any other apostle, he even gets an audience with a king, and to Caesar Nero himself (Acts 27:24). What could change a man like that? He saw the resurrected Christ (on the way to Damascus), received His forgiven, was enveloped in His love

Acts 9:1–6 (NKJV) ¹ Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ² and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³ As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. ⁴ Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" ⁵ And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" Then the Lord said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads." ⁶ So he, trembling and astonished, said, "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Then the Lord said to him, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

1 Corinthians 15:1–8 (NKJV) ¹ Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received and in which you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, ⁵ and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. ⁶ After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. ⁷ After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. ⁸ Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.

Why is that Important to You?

Why is that Important to You? The resurrection revealed to Paul, is a statement from God to all, it matters not what you have done, regardless of how low, God’s love will receive you. The empty tomb, the resurrected Christ, says to each of us today that the resurrected Christ seeks from the clubhouse to the crack house, from the boardroom to the cellblock, God is showing nail scarred hands to all, say come unto Me and I will receive you. If you are here today and you have told yourself that God would not receive you, that what you have done is too far, too gone, that he could never forgive you and receive you, then see here the life of Paul, who the resurrected Christ made personal appearance to, and he makes personal appearance to you in your heart right here and right now saying come! So come, see the empty tomb, come and give your life to Him and make Him your Lord and Savior today.

How to Come to Jesus:

Recognize, that you are a sinner, and that your sin separates you from the HOLY God.

Repent, turn from your sin, that is what repentance means, it means to turn and follow.

Receive, and ask Jesus to come into your life and forgive your sin. Humble yourself and say there is no other way that I can be saved except by what Jesus did on the cross for me.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Acts 3:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

Romans 10:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

7.. Your Testimony

The seventh reason the resurrection is true, because of every believer in this room today. We know the resurrection is true, because He changed our lives.

Why is that Important to You?

Why is that Important to You? Need I say more, other than let’s praise Him and celebrate Him today this resurrection remembrance and celebration?

Matthew 28:5–7 (NKJV) ⁵ But the angel answered and said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. ⁷ And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.”

John 11:25 / The Power of the Gospel

Jesus said I am the resurrection and the life (John 11:25) - and for there is the power of the gospel, Jesus rose from the dead, and that is a demonstration and promise that these seven things are all true.

An Easter Story

As we prepare for Communion, I would like to share an Easter story with you.

His name was Jeremy Forrester, he was born with a twisted body and a slow mind. At the age of 12 he was still in second grade, seemingly unable to learn. His teacher, Doris Miller, often became exasperated with him. He would squirm in his seat, drool, and make grunting noises. At other times, he spoke clearly and distinctly, as if a spot of light had penetrated the darkness of his brain. Most of the time, however, Jeremy just irritated his teacher.

One day she called his parents and asked them to come in for a consultation. As the Forrester's entered the empty classroom, Doris said to them, "Jeremy really belongs in a special school. It isn't fair to him to be with younger children who don't have learning problems. Why, there is a five year gap between his age and that of the other students." Mrs. Forrester cried softly into a tissue, while her husband spoke. "Miss Miller," he said, "there is no school of that kind nearby. It would be a terrible shock for Jeremy if we had to take him out of this school. We know he really likes it here."

Doris sat for a long time after they had left, staring at the snow outside the window. Its coldness seemed to seep into her soul. She wanted to sympathize with the Forrester's. After all, their only child had a terminal illness. But it wasn't fair to keep him in her class. She had 18 other youngsters to teach, and Jeremy was a distraction. Furthermore, he would never learn to read and write. Why waste any more time trying?

As she pondered the situation, guilt washed over her. Here I am complaining when my problems are nothing compared to that poor family, she thought. Lord, please help me to be more patient with Jeremy. From that day on, she tried hard to ignore Jeremy's noises and his blank stares. Then one day, he limped to her desk, dragging his bad leg behind him. "I love you, Miss Miller," he exclaimed, loud enough for the whole class to hear. The other students snickered, and Doris' face turned red. She stammered, "Wh-why that's very nice, Jeremy. N-now please take your seat."

Spring came, and the children talked excitedly about the coming of Easter. Doris told them the story of Jesus, and then to emphasize the idea of new life springing forth, she gave each of the children a large plastic egg. "Now," she said to them, "I want you to take this home and bring it back tomorrow with something inside that shows new life. Do you understand?" "Yes, Miss Miller," the children responded enthusiastically, all except for Jeremy. He listened intently; his eyes never left her face. He did not even make his usual noises. Had he understood what she had said about Jesus' death and resurrection? Did he understand the assignment? Perhaps she should call his parents and explain the project to them.

That evening, Doris' kitchen sink stopped up. She called the landlord and waited an hour for him to come by and unclog it. After that, she still had to shop for groceries, iron a blouse, and prepare a vocabulary test for the next day. She completely forgot about phoning Jeremy's parents. The next morning, 19 children came to school, laughing and talking as they placed their eggs in the large wicker basket on Miss Miller's desk. After they completed their math lesson, it was time to open the eggs. In the first egg, Doris found a flower. "Oh yes, a flower is certainly a sign of new life," she said. "When plants peek through the ground, we know that spring is here." A small girl in the first row waved her arm. "That's my egg, Miss Miller," she called out.

The next egg contained a plastic butterfly, which looked very real. Doris held it up. "We all know that a caterpillar changes and grows into a beautiful butterfly. Yes, that's new life, too." Little Judy smiled proudly and said, "Miss Miller, that one is mine." Next, Doris found a rock with moss on it. She explained that moss, too, showed life. Billy spoke up from the back of the classroom, "My daddy helped me," he beamed. Then Doris opened the fourth egg. She gasped. The egg was empty. Surely it must be Jeremy's she thought, and of course, he did not understand her instructions. If only she had not forgotten to phone his parents. Because she did not want to embarrass him, she quietly set the egg aside and reached for another.

Suddenly, Jeremy spoke up. "Miss Miller, aren't you going to talk about my egg?" Flustered, Doris replied, "But Jeremy, your egg is empty." He looked into her eyes and said softly, "Yes, but Jesus' tomb was empty, too." Time stopped. When she could speak again, Doris asked him, "Do you know why the tomb was empty?" "Oh, yes," Jeremy said, "Jesus was killed and put in there. Then His Father raised Him up." The recess bell rang. While the children excitedly ran out to the schoolyard, Doris cried. The cold inside her melted completely away.

Three months later, Jeremy died. Those who paid their respects at the mortuary were surprised to see 19 eggs on top of his casket, all of them empty.

John 11:25

John 11:25–26 (NKJV) ²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. ²⁶ And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

Communion

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

End of Study

John 15:12-27

Background – Day of the Crucifixion / My Sin & Yours / Supper over – on way to Garden to Drops

It is the day of the crucifixion, the death of Jesus for your sin and mine. Judas is out setting the betrayal in full motion, the Last Supper is over, the feet have been washed, Jesus and the eleven have left the Upper Room and under the moon-lit night over the skies of Jerusalem are heading over the Brook Kidron up to the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus will sweat drops of blood. Jesus is about 12 hours from the cross, the cross that should have been mine and yours for the penalty of sin before the Holy God.

Relationship (to the Vine – to other Believers – to the World)

All of chapter 15 is concerned with the believer's relationships.

- Verses 1–11 have to do with the relationship between the vine and the branches, between Christ and believers,
- Verses 12–17 with the relationship of branch to branch, or believer to believer,
- Verses 18–27 with the relationship of the vine and the branches to the world.

Verses 12–17 with the relationship of branch to branch, or believer to believer,

John 15:12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

Doesn't Matter How Much Know / Love is a Choice – Emotions will Follow

"Speaking of abiding in My Word," Jesus says, "My Word to you is that as I have loved you, so I want you to love one another. It doesn't matter how much theology you know, or how much wisdom you claim to have. If you don't love Me and the person sitting beside you, nothing else matters." Notice it's a commandment—which means love is not a matter of emotion, but of decision. It's a choice. Jesus doesn't ever command us to feel something. He commands us to do something. "Help the world to see I am alive," the Lord says. "They pinned Me to a Cross. They thought they did Me in. But I'm alive. And how will they know I'm alive? By your love one for another." Again, in the context of Jesus' teaching, love is not so much an emotion as a decision. And the beautiful thing is, oftentimes when you implement the action, the emotion will follow. Guys, maybe you've lost the feeling for your wife. Treat her like a treasure, and your emotions will follow because Jesus taught that where our treasure is, there will our heart be also (Luke 12:34). Our culture has lost the meaning of what real love is. Consequently, husbands and wives are saying, "I don't have feelings for him or her anymore, so I'm leaving." But feelings aren't the issue. Love is not an emotion or a feeling. It's a decision. It's an action. "My commandment," Jesus said, "is that you make the decision to love." You will come across people tomorrow who might initially seem to be an interruption to your schedule. But if you say, "Wait a minute. Here's an opportunity for me to love," you know what will happen? As you make that decision, there will be a change in your emotions. The Lord will meet you in that place. I guarantee it.

Say no to Busyness, distractions / Begin to Communicate Again / Make Spouse #1 thing

Beloved, say no to busyness, say no to the distractions, say no to the things that are depleting your energy, slow down, and begin to communicate again, make your spouse your focus, who cares about the "things" but make your spouse you number one "thing", and love will be rekindled, burning fires will be stoked, and hot fires will stay hot. The key to loving is "abiding". Abide means to remain, not to depart, to dwell; and that is how we draw on the love of God, to simply remain, walk, hang out and hang on to Him..... so it is for marriages and relationships, to hang out with, hang on to. Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the Church.

John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

Give me Scotland – Die First

An entire nation was revived when John Knox (1514-1572) prayed, "Lord, give me Scotland, or I die." But what many people don't know is what Knox wrote concerning the answer to that prayer. The Lord responded in his heart, saying, "First die, then I'll give you Scotland."

“Make this relationship work, or I’m going to die,” we pray.
“Die first,” the Lord says.

Lay Down Life (Wife or Friend) is not Only Proof, But Pathway / Die to Self

Lay down your life for your wife, your neighbor, your friend. That is not only the proof of your love, but the pathway to love, because love is not some feeling you hope returns, not some kind of elusive mystical emotion. It’s the decision to die to your dreams, your desires, your needs, and your wants and instead lay down your life for your friend, your husband, your neighbor, or your kids.

John 15:14 You are My friends if you do whatever I command you.

Obedience Allows God to Pour Out blessings – Disobedience Cuts off Flow

Obedience allows God to pour out all His blessings, whereas disobedience cuts off the blessings of God. No different than how we deal with our children. We want to pour all blessings out upon them, but when they are in disobedience, it cuts the flow of blessings off because we have to deal with disobedience when we could have been dealing out blessings.

Most Fruitful Christians – Those who Have Settled the Word is the Word

He wants His followers to produce fruit. Do you know who are the Christians that I have seen, bar none, who produce fruit? Bar none, it is the one who the Word of God has been and is settled in their life. The word of God is settled in their heart, deeply seated, the single most influential thing in their life. The Words of God are non-negotiable. Can you today say that is you? If not, why?

John 15:15 No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.

Jesus considers You Friend (enjoys Us) / We put Smile on His Face

Jesus considers me His friend. That’s amazing. I’m flaky, fickle, and foolish. But the Lord looks at us and calls us His friends. This means He doesn’t love us because He has to, but because He chooses to. He likes us. He gets a kick out of us. We’re a delight to His heart. We bring a smile to His face.

Because Friends – Shares things with Us (Like He did with Abraham)

Amazing! And because we’re His friends, He wants us to know what He’s doing. “Shall I hide from Abraham this thing which I do?” asked the Lord in Genesis 18:17. “No,” He answered. So God did, indeed, tell the man singularly called the Friend of God (James 2:23) He was about to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. As He did to Abraham historically, God will whisper in your heart concerning what He’s doing presently. You’ll know things about which the world is unaware because He calls you His friend.

James 2:23 (NKJV) ²³ And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.” And he was called the friend of God.

In Your Witness – Tell about the Friend Part

In your witness, don’t forget to tell people they can have a friendship with God. We are so often quick to tell them we can be forgiven, even loved, but leave out a person can have a personal friendship with God. We say “relationship”, but for the unbeliever, they don’t know what that means, describe it to them, and let them know the friendship part.

John 15:16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

We Ordained in His Ministry

“Not only does Jesus tell us what’s going on and what’s coming down eventually, but He ordains us to be involved in ministry presently. Whether or not you’ve been credentialed by some ordination council is irrelevant, for on the basis of this passage, you are ordained just as much as Billy Graham. What, then, is the purpose of formal

ordination—when we put the title Reverend in front of someone’s name? It’s simply a legal ratification that confirms a man has, indeed, been keeping the commands of Jesus, thereby allowing him to move through the legal processes of marrying and burying. But there’s really not a whole lot to it because nowhere in the Scripture do you see councils and tests and examinations for ministry. Jesus said, “I’ve ordained you.” That’s all you need.

Napoleon’s new Captain

The story is told that as Napoleon was talking to a group of his high-ranking officers, his horse, standing nearby, spooked and bolted. A quick-thinking private, observing the scene, pursued the runaway on his own steed, and was able to return Napoleon’s horse safely.

“Well done, Captain,” said Napoleon upon his return.

The private, with eyes as big as saucers, saluted smartly and said, “Yes, sir.”

Then he went immediately to the supply tent, got himself a captain’s uniform, and moved into officer’s quarters. He never said, “I don’t deserve it. I should have worked my way up through the ranks. I need to earn this.” No, he just said, “Yes, sir.”

Likewise, the Lord calls us “Friend,” “Ordained Minister”—and all that’s left for us to say is, “Yes, Sir!”

Be Careful not to Make a Work Relationship

Now, may I say and remind us all, be careful not to turn your relationship with Him into a working relationship, one that all you do is ministry, but never spend time just enjoying Him as a loving Father, or personal friend. Yes we are “bondslaves”, but that doesn’t mean work, work, work. What was a bondservant as spoken of in the scriptures at time of Jesus? The word “servant” is *doulos*, meaning “bondslave.” Exodus 21:2 sheds light on what this means: In Israel, a slave was required to serve only six years before he was set free. If, however, at the end of six years, he said, “I like it here. I want to become a bondslave,” the master would drive a nail through his right earlobe and place an earring in it, signifying he was a *doulos*, a slave by choice. It’s a wise decision to give yourself fully to the Lord as His bondslave because He takes excellent care of those committed to Him. Their lives are filled with purpose and focus; their hearts with peace and joy.

Philippians 1:1 (NKJV) ¹ Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons:

Bondslave joins the Master Work – But if you Feel Burdened – It is not From the Lord

A bondslave joins the master’s work, the father’s business, but if you are feeling stressed about the work, it is you and not Him, because He says His yoke is easy and His burden is light. If you are yoked to Him then you can move mountains, if you are in your own strength, then a stone will be a burden to you.

Matthew 11:28–30 (NKJV) ²⁸ Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”

But Some Don’t want to Serve – Go to John 13 and Ask why you are Excluded

But, there are some of you don’t do anything, you say it is not your calling, or you are too busy or tired. You need to go back to that Upper Room, and sit for awhile, and seek the Lord and ask why John 13 doesn’t apply to you, why you are exempt for the calling to serve your brothers and sisters.

John 13:14–17 (NKJV) ¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

Ask – PTL, it is not based on My Performance

Verse 16 - *You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.* – Whatever you ask in My name! Praise the Lord, what Jesus has done, Jesus’ performance, not mine. My request isn’t based upon how many devotions I’ve had this week, how many folks I’ve witnessed to this month, how many hours I’ve spent in prayer today. No, that’s all irrelevant. I draw from the bank of heaven based solely upon the riches of Jesus Christ, who gave me His Name to use. How free your prayer life will be when you understand what it means to use Jesus’ name with the Father.

Why Say that Here – we Need Help to Love

Why say that here? Why say ask in My name and I will give it to you? Because He wants us to ask Him for the power to love and serve each other.

- Lord help me, show me, how to love that person.
- Lord you have ordained me, now please equip me.
- Lord show me what You are doing, as a friend, reveal to me what You are doing so that I might come alongside your work, not mine.

God wants us Producing Fruit – Being Fruit / Apple Harvest in Pennsylvania

God wants you to produce much fruit. Man I remember apple harvest in Western Pennsylvania growing up. I remember going out to the apple trees that grew around us, and I remember grabbing a big red apple, biting into it, and the juices that came forth, the crunch and the crispness, the freshness, oh those apples picked right off the branch were amazing, nothing you will ever find as it hits your grocer 2 weeks later. God wants us to be like that for others, that branch with that fruit that people can partake in and say amazing. I can't wait to come around them again, because they are so refreshing to be around. Hey, ask and it will be given, guarantee because God wants to bless the people you come in contact with. Ask for the fruit of the Spirit so that other can partake and enjoy it.

[Galatians 5:22–23 \(NKJV\)](#) ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Husbands do you Bring Fruit to Your Wife

Husbands, are you bringing fruit to your wife?

- Love – does she know you love her, or you said it on wedding day and if anything changes you will let her know?
- Joy – does she know that she is your joy?
- Peace – are you bringing peace, or is there continual tension? Husbands, wives, let the little things go, choose your battles wisely, you don't need confrontation on every little thing that isn't perfect.
- Patience – that is a fruit we all need, as we aren't perfect, we need people to be patient with us as we grow in the Lord.
- Kindness - the quality of being warmhearted, considerate, humane, gentle, and sympathetic
- Goodness – means “moral excellence”
- Faithfulness - trustful
- Gentleness – mild mannered, even tempered
- Self-control – are you respecting her by guarding your eyes?

John 15:17 These things I command you, that you love one another.

Look at the Bookends (v12 and v17)

Look at the bookends of verse 12 and 17, and thus we know that everything in-between is centered on loving one another.

In 12 Hours won't Look like

In 12 hours Jesus will not even look like a human being, yet this is what He wants to talk about? What are we to make out of that other than we should make all out of it, we should say ok Lord I get, now help me to do it.

Verses 18–27 with the relationship of the vine and the branches to the world.

John 15:18 “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.

John 15:19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

Heading into One Tough Life in 12 Hours / Don't be Surprised when it Happens

These guys are heading into one tough life, and it all start for them in 12 hours. God says when it happens, remember this moment when I told you that it would, so don't be surprised. Nor should we be surprised when the world hates us for our witness.

We Shouldn't be Surprised – But I am every Time

Don't be surprised he says to us today, but I am still surprised every time. I go evaluate that maybe I am being misunderstood, maybe they didn't hear me correctly, they don't realize how much I care for them, and love them. But eventually I get it, oh you hate me because you hate Jesus, ok now I see.

Warning – If World Loves You

If the world loves you, watch out—you're in hot water. Paul told his protigi, Timothy, that all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution (2 Timothy 3:12). That's a fact. If you are living godly, you're not going to make it into the Who's Who of the world's system. It just won't work that way

2 Timothy 3:12 (NKJV) ¹² Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

John 15:20 Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

I can Live Like Jesus – And Still be Hated / Jesus lived like Jesus and Was Killed

If I live life just like Jesus, there will be people who hate me. Jesus lived lie just like Jesus, and they killed Him.

Why we Need to Love One Another – Because we are all We Have

Christian, one of the reasons Jesus says for us to love one another, is because we only have each other.

John 15:21 But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me.

John 15:22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.

World System Does Not want to Be attached to Vine – Way too Close / Fruit Needs Light – They hate the Light

The world system does not want the condition of being attached to the vine, that is way too close for them. Fruit needs light to grow, and the world system hates the light, because it does not want the exposure, they want to live in darkness, else their deeds be exposed.

John 3:16–21 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. ¹⁸ "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

African Chief and the Mirror

Once an African chief, in this case a woman, happened to visit a mission station. Hanging outside the missionary's cabin, on a tree, was a little mirror. The chief happened to look into the mirror and saw her reflection, with its hideous paint and evil features. She gazed at her own terrifying countenance and jumped back in horror exclaiming, "Who is that horrible-looking person inside that tree?" "Oh," the missionary said, "it is not in the tree. The glass is reflecting your own face." The African would not believe it until she held the mirror in her hand. She said, "I must have the glass. How much will you sell it for?" "Oh," the missionary said, "I don't want to sell it." But she begged until he capitulated. She took the mirror. Exclaiming, "I will never have it making faces at me again," she threw it down and broke it to pieces. People want to smash the mirror, but it doesn't matter, the face is still the face, the sin is still the sin.

3 Strikes – Bonus Round

What is the gospel? All have sinned, and people don't want to hear they are sinners. Repent, turn from sin to Jesus, and people don't want to hear that because they don't want to change. The wages, payback for unrepentant sin is death, which is a spiritual death, a separation from God, Hell.... And people don't want to hear that. That is 3 strikes, we are heading into the bonus round. But God provide a way, through Jesus and the cross, just one way, praise God there is even a way, but people don't want to hear that because they say that is narrow. He is a holy God, He does not wink at sin, sin is so offensive to Him that He reigned wrath down upon it; but God is love, and He stepped in front of that wrath through His Son, that whoever would Recognize, Repent, and Receive Him, will receive the gift of eternal life. Have you don't that today?

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Acts 3:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

World System doesn't Make Sense – Look what they Give Up – Fruit of the Spirit

The world system makes no sense, what is it that they are giving up? Fruit! What fruit? Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Galatians 5:22–23 (NKJV) ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

Fair Warning

Just a fair warning Christian, the middle-east may have extremist hating Christians, and literally killing them. But we are promised that in the last days many will depart from the faith, and even so-called believers will come against you and hate you, because you stand firm on the Word of God, you call sin, sin, you call hell, hell, and you not only speak repentance, you live repentance (a changed life), and they will hate it. They will call you narrow. Don't be surprised when it happens.

1 Timothy 4:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, ² speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron,

John 15:23 He who hates Me hates My Father also.

Hate Jesus – Hate God / Cant be into God if not Into Jesus

There are lots of people who are into God, but not Jesus. Jesus makes it real clear in John 14:6 and here, that you don't love God, if you don't love Him. Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism, Judaism, no matter how "well meaning" they may seem, if they reject Jesus, they are rejecting God the Father also. Interesting how all those religions say Jesus is a good person, but not God Himself. Jesus considers that hatred towards Him.

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 15:24 If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father.

John 15:25 But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'

People Hating Jesus fulfills Prophecy / What Could you Hate Him For?

People hating Jesus, people hating you, is fulfillment of prophecy. They hated Jesus without a cause; really what is it that Jesus did that people hate so bad? Die for their sin, love them, to offer them eternal life?

We need Each Other Beloved!

Christian, one of the reasons Jesus says for us to love one another, is because we only have each other.

Next Verses begin Discourse on Holy Spirit

The next verses begin the discourse on the Holy Spirit, which we will need to love one another, and to love the world, yet stay separate from it. But we will pick that up in our next study.

John 15:26 “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.

John 15:27 And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

Jesus is 12 Hours from the Cross – Pouring out What is Most Important.

Jesus is 12 hours from the cross, and He is pouring His heart out to these 11 that He loves. He is telling them how to live the God-filled life, the Zoe life, the abundant life, the life that is beyond the life this world can offer.

Obedience Allows God to Pour Out blessings – Disobedience Cuts off Flow

May I close with this challenge to your soul today, as we have seen obedience allows God to pour out all His blessings, whereas disobedience cuts off the blessings of God. No different than how we deal with our children. We want to pour all blessings out upon them, but when they are in disobedience, it cuts the flow of blessings off because we have to deal with disobedience when we could have been dealing out blessings.

Most Fruitful Christians – Those who Have Settled the Word is the Word

He wants His followers to produce fruit. Do you know who are the Christians that I have seen, bar none, who produce fruit? Bar none, it is the one who the Word of God has been and is settled in their life. The word of God is settled in their heart, deeply seated, the single most influential thing in their life. The Words of God are non-negotiable. Can you today say that is you? If not, why?

End of Study

Chapter 16

John 16:1-15

Background – Day of the Crucifixion / My Sin & Yours / Supper over – on way to Garden to Drops

It is the day of the crucifixion, the death of Jesus for your sin and mine. Judas is out setting the betrayal in full motion, the Last Supper is over, the feet have been washed, Jesus and the eleven have left the Upper Room and under the moon-lit night over the skies of Jerusalem are heading over the Brook Kidron up to the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus will sweat drops of blood. Jesus is about 12 hours from the cross, the cross that should have been mine and yours for the penalty of sin before the Holy God.

30 pieces of Silver

This is still called by the scholars the upper room discourse, but we can see they are on the move, they are on the way by foot at this point to the Mount of Olives. It is just the 11 because Judas is out to collect his 30 pieces of silver. Amazing to me what a person is willing to sell Jesus out for. People trading the cheap rewards of earth, the pleasures for a moment, compared to the rewards of eternity, a life spent with Him.

Unfortunate Chapter break

Chapter breaks are unfortunate in some cases and this is one of them were still flowing from chapter 15 hears words that Jesus said about what the world will think of the branches that are attached to the vine and he says some pretty deep things and now is developing on those principles and points that he made back in what we call chapter 15.

- World hates us because hated Him first (15:18)
- A servant is not greater than his Master (15:20)
- If persecute Me will persecute you (15:20)
- The world knows sin because I have spoken it, so they have no excuse (15:22)
- He who hates Me hates the Father also (15:23-24)
- They hated me without a cause (15:25)

John 15:18–25 (NKJV) ¹⁸ “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. ²⁰ Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also. ²¹ But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know Him who sent Me. ²² If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. ²³ He who hates Me hates My Father also. ²⁴ If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. ²⁵ But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, ‘They hated Me without a cause.’

He does not leave us Alone in this Predicament

And Jesus promises not to leave us alone in this predicament, and promises to send us the Helper, the Holy Spirit, to be with us through this all.

John 15:26 “But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me.

John 15:27 And you also will bear witness, because you have been with Me from the beginning.

Now lets pick up our study in verse one of chapter 16.

John 16:1 “These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble.

John 16:2 They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.

To be Excommunicated – Cost you Everything / These Verses mean more 10,000 Miles Away

To be excommunicated not only to be kicked out of the synagogue but no one would do business with you, no one would have trade with you, your whole financial livelihood would be gone. They were not even there you when you died to bury you if you were excommunicated from the synagogue. These guys have wife and kids, imagine that, imagine all they will lose, to follow Jesus. I think of our brothers and sisters in some of these countries in the middle-east, follow Jesus and you will lose everything, your kids will be killed before your eyes, your wife and

daughters raped, and then death to you. Let's be honest American church, these verses mean a whole lot more to Christians 10,000 miles away than they do to us today.

Yet God is Sensitive to Us – Says I know It is Hard Living your Christian Life Out Loud

Yet God, so sensitive to us today, still says to us today here in America, I know it is hard for you living for Me, living your Christian life and witness out loud for the whole world to see and hear, I know it is hard and I want to speak words of preparation and comfort to you.

When Light Went On – I Thought Everyone Wanted to Hear / Put out of Churches and Family Reunions

"They will put you out of the synagogues." When the light went on I thought everybody wanted to know, but oh how wrong I was. It says in verse 2 that Jesus tells them they will be put out of the synagogue and the translation in today's term in they'd be put out of the church, put out of your family reunion, you will be left off the Christmas invite because they really don't want to hear about Jesus at their Christmas celebration. It's supposed to be a time of joy and they don't want you there because they'll say, "Can't we have a day where we can just get together as family? Have a few drinks? Have a dinner, watch a movie and just enjoy a time together? You come and you got to come with all your Jesus stuff, come on its Christmas."

Put out Synagogue – Place to Hear about God / Last Week on Vacation – went to Nice Church

They will be put out of the synagogue, the place that they should be able to hear about the God of their nation, but these apostles, Jesus is telling you, won't be allowed there anymore because as we've studied, because the world hates Jesus. Last week when I was out of town on vacation I went to a very nice church. Those people when you came in, they were so nice, and the message was so nice. The gospel was so nice. Everything was very nice because no one spoke anything that would offend anyone. The people go into the church and they feel nice. They go in and they're dressed nice. The pastor gives a nice message. The people leave and do nice works and the people feel nice. In fact I noticed all their teeth were nice too. I was so welcomed by them because they were so nice. I wonder how nice they would remain if I spent any time with them and began to speak such words as we read last week in John chapter 15, or anything that is the gospel that says a man in his sin is an offence to the Holy God. If I spoke the words that Jesus spoke, that Peter spoke, that Paul spoke, that says, "Repent for the kingdom of God is near," how nice would they remain? How nice would they remain if I actually spoke and said there is a hell to come, there is a judgement to come? Would they still be as nice to me and as welcoming to me or would they then show what's truly in them and tell me that I have to leave because the words that I speak are not nice?

You can't bring Church down to World's Level

Listen Christian, you can't bring the church down to the worlds level, so don't even bother trying.

Don't be Surprised Jesus says to Them – And to you / People will Tell You – Go!

Jesus is saying here to these apostles, don't be surprised when they throw you out of the synagogue. Don't be made to stumble, verse 1, thinking that you did something wrong and that you're doing something wrong. Jesus is saying you'll speak the truth, and as we read in John 15 they're not going to like the truth and they're going to tell you you've got to go. The day isn't coming, the day has long been here, where the so-called church is going to tell you to go, to call you bigoted, hateful, legalistic, and spirit quencher. Jesus says don't be stumbled by it.

V2 – Kill you Think doing service to God / William Tyndale – I expected Nothing Less

Verse 2 - yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service - Some will even think that by killing and persecuting Christians that they are doing God a service. Since Christ's followers are not of the world system, they can expect to experience enmity from time to time, as Jesus pointed out in the opening verses of John 16. The martyr William Tyndale, who gave us the English Bible, said regarding his persecution, "I never expected anything else." Amazing, translating the Bible so the common people could understand it, and yet he was killed for it. Why? People hate the mirror, the Word, that shows them their sin before God. The more authentic our walk, the more likely we will face some form of persecution.

In 1535, Tyndale was arrested and jailed in the castle of Vilvoorde (Filford) outside Brussels for over a year. In 1536 he was convicted of heresy and executed by strangulation, after which his body was burnt at the stake. His dying prayer that the King of England's eyes would be opened seemed to find its fulfillment just two years later with Henry's authorization of The Great Bible for the Church of England—which was largely

Tyndale's own work. Hence, the Tyndale Bible, as it was known, continued to play a key role in spreading Reformation ideas across the English-speaking world and, eventually, to the British Empire.

In 1611, the 54 scholars who produced the King James Bible drew significantly from Tyndale, as well as from translations that descended from his. One estimate suggests the New Testament in the King James Version is 83% Tyndale's and the Old Testament 76%. With his translation of the Bible the first to be printed in English, and a model for subsequent English translations, in 2002, Tyndale was placed at number 26 in the BBC's poll of the 100 Greatest Britons.

John 16:3 And these things they will do to you because they have not known the Father nor Me.

John 16:4 But these things I have told you, that when the time comes, you may remember that I told you of them. "And these things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.

You get all the Time – All the Killing in Name of God

You get it all the time, that challenge, of God causing all these wars in the name of religion; and here Jesus makes it real clear, "they don't know the Father or Me". People killing in the name of Jesus, or God, are not of God, they don't even know Him. Now, in Romans 13, we see where God does use agents such as police and military to keep order, and protect the innocent.

Don't be Surprised – But we Always Are / We do It for their Sake – Not Ours / To save from Hell & Empty Life

Now back to our text, Verses 3 and 4. Jesus again, He's saying don't be surprised, but we still will be. We can't help but be surprised when people get upset with us because we think we're the nice guy and we are, because here we are. We're trying to tell people the truth of the gospel that saves them from a separation from God, which means a separation into eternity from Him. That means a place called hell. Here on earth we're trying to save them from the pains and the suffering that sin can bring. We're trying to bring them a life as God explained it to be, an abundant life, a life full of joy because it's a life with Him. We're trying to save them from the empty life that this world has to offer because it can't offer anything of substance. We still get surprised when people reject that and actually get angry at us and actually throw us out of the synagogue if you will. Throw us out of their circle. Throw us out of being invited to be with them.

Ch 14 – Heart not be Trouble / Chp 15 – Abide / Comfort & Connection

In chapter 14 Jesus said, "Let not your heart be troubled," He was speaking words to bring us comfort. In chapter 15 He spoke of abiding, that's connection. He's telling us that we are to be connected to Him, the vine as we are the branches. We as branches are to be connected with one another and to have this relationship with one another. In chapter 14 He speaks of comfort. In chapter 15 He speaks of connection and now here in chapter 16 He's bringing connection and comfort together and comfort by being connected to Him through the Holy Spirit.

Jesus doesn't Tell All – they not Ready / Like our Kids Birds and Bees – Our Death

Verse 4. Jesus said, "You're just not ready for these things. I can't tell you all these things." Sometimes we don't tell our kids everything because we know they're just not ready. If we told them everything it would blow their mind. They're not ready for the birds and the bees at age 4. Several years later we would be wrong to not prepare them for that, to not tell them about these things. When they're ready we tell them, but when they're not ready, we don't. We don't tell them about the birds and the bees at such a young age. How many here when your child is just an infant, toddler, little one and you speak about your death? We just don't do that, but what we do when they get older we have to tell them here's what needs to be done when I die.

Parents Side-Note / Make Sure your Will is in Place

Parents, can I just throw out there on a side bar for you, prepare your home for your death. Yes, make sure they're ready to meet the Lord when they die should they die prematurely. Should life follow its usual cycle and you go home before them, make sure that you have them ready for a life on earth without you. Have a contingency plan for their provisions should you and your spouse both die at the same time. Make sure that your will is in place, that there's no battles over your assets, set it up that they can have and be taken care of.

Parents – Regarding timing of Birds and Bees – Tell them Before the World Does

Back to such things as the birds and the bees, tell them when they're ready. Don't let the world be the one that tells them. Tell them about these things when they're ready in the context of God's purpose and God's plan and God's beauty so they don't get twisted and perverted by what the world presents it to be. Let them see what God intended it to be and how He wants it to be for them. If you missed it, there is still time to tell them nonetheless, and counter this culture.

Corrie Ten Boom

Corrie Ten Boom's Father on Sexual Sin

The book The Hiding Place has many memorable passages. One that I particularly like is Corrie Ten Boom's account of her father's response when she, at about ten years old, asked him what sex-sin was:

"I asked Father about a poem we had read at school the winter before. One line had described 'a young man whose face was not shadowed by sex-sin.' I had been far too shy to ask the teacher what it meant, and Mama had blushed scarlet when I consulted her. In those days just after the turn of the century sex was never discussed, even at home.

So the line had stuck in my head. 'Sex,' I was pretty sure, meant whether you were a boy or a girl, and 'sin' made Tante (Aunt) Jans very angry, but what the two together meant I could not imagine. And so, seated next to Father in the train compartment, I suddenly asked, 'Father, what is sex-sin?'

He turned to look at me, as he always did when answering a question, but to my surprise he said nothing. At last he stood up, lifted his traveling case from the rack over our heads, and set it on the floor.

'Will you carry it off the train, Corrie?' he said.

I stood up and tugged at it. It was crammed with the watches and spare parts he had purchased that morning.

'It's too heavy,' I said.

'Yes,' he said. 'And it would be a pretty poor father who would ask his little girl to carry such a load. It's the same way, Corrie, with knowledge. Some knowledge is too heavy for children. When you are older and stronger you can bear it. For now you must trust me to carry it for you.'

And I was satisfied. More than satisfied—wonderfully at peace. There were answers to this and all my hard questions—for now I was content to leave them in my father's keeping."

God Tells Us – at the Right Time

God tells us things at the right time, when we are ready, and He is telling these disciples, for it is the right time. And He is telling us today, because it is the right time.

John 16:5 "But now I go away to Him who sent Me, and none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?'

Jesus asks – so to Stir – so we Think on and Consider / He Asks – When has Undivided Attention

In verse 5 Jesus says, "None of you asked me where I'm going?" Jesus likes to stir us, ask us, prompts us so we think on and consider things that we normally would not. Jesus stirs this up so they start to consider yeah, where is He going? What is He talking about? I want you to see this. Jesus is asking them this question for their consideration to prompt them and to stir them, notice when He has their undivided attention. They are in front of Jesus. There's not a crowd around them. It's just them and Jesus having a deep conversation. This is when Jesus asked a deep question of them to stir them and to prompt them.

Question – Does God have a Time of Your Undivided Attention? / Car Prayers great – But not Undivided

Question for you, Christian. Does God have a time when He has your undivided attention? It is then when He can stir up and bring to the front things He wants to talk about with you and to stir your thought process. We need a time where God has our undivided attention, where God can speak to us deep things that make us ponder and then respond and ask Him further details. Hey, I think it's great you people pray in your car. That's great. I think you should pray in your car especially in this crazy metro DC traffic that we live, but I want to tell you it will never be undivided prayer time. You have to parse your mind where part of it is focusing on the ride and the other is then in your prayer or listening to a study and it's a great way to hear the Word of God, the greatest university on wheels is your car. There needs to be a time of undivided attention between you and the Lord that He can speak to

you and stir things up in you. Then you would then go, "I know you want to take me deeper, so here I am Lord. Speak, your servant listens."

John 16:6 But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.

He knows these Words Bring Sorrow – He knows Your Heart / So then Just be Honest with Him

Verse 6. Jesus said, "I know what I've said brings you sorrow." He knows your heart, Christian, so be honest with Him. Share your whole heart with Him. Tell Him, "Lord, there is something that troubles me. Lord I have this resentment because of this situation. Lord, I am struggling. I just have to be honest with You and say I am struggling."

Funny Thing – When you Finally Honest – You will Find he Prompted It / Only Person Fooled is You

Funny thing when you, you will find, you think you're finally coming clean with the Lord only to find out in verse 5, He started and stirred that whole question in you that stirred you to come and be honest with Him and say, "Man, my heart's troubled. I need to speak to You about these things." Verse 6, He knew it and He wanted to talk to you about it, to set you free, to comfort you and to strengthen you. That's what He's doing with these disciples. That's what He wants to do with you. Hey Christian, just be honest with the Lord. To not be honest that you struggle with something, the only person that is fooled by it is you.

Lord knows Everything About You - And Still Loves You / BTW – God is Ok with You being Sad & Sorrowful

The Lord knows everything about you and He still loves you, but here He is. He wants to stir up your heart even if it means that it causes you sorrow and you're sad. God's okay with you not being happy all the time. Contrary to popular teaching in this country today, God's okay with you being sad and sorrowful because you know what? We live in a fallen world. He wants to stir it up and meet you where you're at so that you would say, "Lord, these things are hurting me. They're really a burden to me." He says, "Let's talk about them so that I might minister to you in them."

John 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.

Greatest Sign of Maturity – When you Want the Truth / Even if Truth Uncomfortable

Verse 7, Jesus says, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth." You know the greatest sign of maturity in your life is when you want the truth. When you say, "Lord, I'll take the truth even if I don't like what I have to do about it. I'll take the truth Lord even when the truth hurts me, even when the truth reveals I'm not everything that I think I am. You know what you'll find in the truth when you come to a place that you're ready for the truth regardless of what it means? You'll find a place of power.

Place of Peace and Power / Abundant Zoe Life

You'll find a place where you will be set free because the truth will always set you free and the freedom in Christ brings peace, it brings power and it brings a great provisioning of the Lord, that He can flow His Holy Spirit through you. That's what He's working here. He wants to bring a place where His power and peace can flow into your life. It can only happen through the Holy Spirit. It's the abundant life that He wants for you. It's the God life that Jesus lives on this earth and desires and gives to all that we would have this God life and abundant life. A life beyond anything this world would have to offer us. A life of power and that's a power of freedom from sin, freedom from the ills of the world. Just a place where we have this perfect relationship with Him.

John 8:32 (NKJV) ³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

V13 – Holy Spirit will guide in All Truth / Remember when First Saved – I could hear the Prompting

Speaking of truth, verse 13 Jesus said the Helper, the Holy Spirit, will guide you in all truth. I can remember when I first got saved. I could hear and sense that voice in the back of my mind. That thing in the back of my mind. There

was this feeling that something, the things that I was doing was wrong. You know what? I didn't want to sit down and talk about it with the Lord because I was afraid what He might say. I would just let it stay back there, but all the while He just kept prompting me and prompting me.

IF Truth is not prompting – Need to Evaluate if Holy Spirit is In You / He says to Stir you Up – to Consider

Hey, you know what? If you don't have the prompting of the Holy Spirit, you could be living in habitual sin, then you need to evaluate whether the Holy Spirit is in you because as we're going to read through and see today in our passage, the Holy Spirit will convict us of sin. He'll say what you're doing is wrong. If you don't hear that and feel that conviction then it brings to bear the question has to be asked, "Am I really saved? Do I really know Him?" Because if He is in me and His job is to convict me of sin and righteousness, He's going to convict me and prompt me and go, "What you're doing is wrong." The Lord stirs these things up. He wants to talk to us. He wants to bring the truth to us. It's still the same today. Usually with my marriage I don't want to talk about it because I know, Lord, I know if I talk to you about this thing that's bothering me then I know You're going to say what I don't want to hear. You're going to say forgive her, go reconcile with her or those horrible words that I hate to hear, repent.

I know in my Marriage – Spirit of Truth Continually Wears me Down / Yielding at Train Tracks

Now I'm just saying this for you sake. I really don't have any problems. I'm a perfect person and a wonderful husband. Just ask my wife. All joking aside, eventually the spirit of truth, it wears me down. I know there it's a great downer in yielding and I know He's right. I know I will prosper. I know if I will yield to that prompting and I go do whatever it is forgive or reconcile or repent, I know my marriage is going to be blessed. I'll tell you, I have no problem yielding at intersections or train tracks because I am fully convinced that my life will be better when I do. Rather than running the red light or swinging around the gate of a train track thinking what's the big deal, I know yielding will make my life prosperous, better. So too it is with God's prompting when He prompts us by His Holy Spirit.

Your Advantage I go Away / Cross First – then Heaven

Verse 7. Jesus says, "I have to go away." He's not just speaking about going to Heaven, but He's speaking about the cross first. He has to go away via the cross. Death is dealt with, sin is dealt with. Then when sin is covered through the blood of the lamb, the Holy Spirit can come up and take residence within us. Because He says in Habakkuk 1:13 He's too holy. God is too holy to look upon sin. The sin issue must be dealt with and so God can't come and dwell within a person if the sin issue hasn't been covered. Jesus says, "I've got to go away, first to the cross, then to Heaven, so then I can send the Holy Spirit so that He can take up residence within you."

Habakkuk 1:13 (NKJV) ¹³ You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?

Want to Hear Something Amazing – God in You Greater than God Physically Here

Want to hear an amazing concept that is God in you is greater than God with you in physical form. My mind has a hard time grasping that as I would just love to have Jesus here right now but he says it was better that I go so that I God they become in the to get hold of that one.

Street Witnessing in California / Not Distant God – but Intimate God / Dusty Fairground – but do Same Today

Remember doing street witnessing in California, and met this young man, and he listened he was rather uninterested as I talked about sin and separation, but the offer of forgiveness. But when I came to the part that after God forgives us, God comes in and take residence within us.....wow, if you could have seen his eyes perk up and his face turned to look me straight in the eye, and he said "are you serious". He immediately saw, not a distant God, not a "your just a number to me God", but an intimate and personal God who wants such a close relationship with His loved ones, that He wants to live inside them. Yea, He prayed to receive Jesus as Lord and Savior that night outside some fairground in some city I can't even remember, but God took up residence within a person, right there on that dusty fairground dirt. And, He will take up residence within anyone here today, who wants to ask Him into their lives, for forgiveness of sin, and eternal life with Him. We will explain how in these next 4 verses.

**John 16:8 And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:
John 16:9 of sin, because they do not believe in Me;
John 16:10 of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more;
John 16:11 of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.**

Before Develop 8-12 / Like to Share a Story

Before I develop these verses (8-12), I would like to share a story about a little boy named Stevie, who was quiet and shy, moved to a new neighborhood. One day he came home from school and said, "You know, Mom, Valentine's Day is coming, and I want to make a valentine for everyone in my class. I want them to know that I love them." His mother's heart sank at the prospect of her son's rejection. Every afternoon she watched the children coming home from school, laughing and hanging on to one another—all except Stevie who always walked behind them. But at the same time she did not want to discourage her well-intentioned son. So she purchased glue and paper and crayons, and for three weeks Stevie painstakingly made thirty-five valentines. When the big day came, he stacked the valentines under his arm and ran out the door. His mother thought, "This is going to be a tough day for Stevie. I'll bake some cookies and have some milk ready for him when he comes home from school. Maybe that will ease the pain of not getting many valentines." That afternoon she had the warm cookies and milk out on the table. She went over to the window, scratched a little of the frost off the glass, and looked out. Sure enough, here came all the children, laughing, valentines tucked under their arms. And there was her Stevie. Though walking behind the children, he was walking faster than usual, and she thought, "Bless his heart. He's ready to break into tears." His arms were empty. He was not carrying any valentines. Stevie came into the house, and his mother said, "Sweetheart, Mom has some warm cookies and milk for you, just sit down." But Stevie's face was all aglow, and as he marched right by her, all he could say was, "Not a one, not a single one. I didn't forget one. They all know I love them."

These Verses are Words of Love – must be Remembered in Context of Christ's Love

Figuratively speaking, Christ did not get a valentine, but he did not forget a single person.

3 works of Holy Spirit / But See First – He is a Person not a Force

Verse 8-11. We see the three works of the Holy Spirit. Before we go there, who is the Holy Spirit? The Holy Spirit is a person. He is the third person of the trinity. Not that there is an order per se, but its Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He's the third person of the trinity. This verb tense here is in masculine meaning He is a person. Look through this passage and you will see Jesus continually refer to Him, as He. Why is that important is He's not an energy or a force which people like to make Him an energy or a force and rather than a person. Because a person you have a relationship with, but a force is just something that you encounter through life.

People Like Holy Spirit Goosebumps – but that is Only Skin Deep / I need something Deeper – Like "In Me"

People like to say they've got the Holy Spirit goose bumps. They went into a service and they could feel goosebumps or their hair tingling in the back of their neck. Hey, I'm all for Holy Spirit goosebumps, but you know what? That's only skin deep. I, we need someone that goes deeper to the depths of our soul so they can change us from the inside out. Not just some surface experience. The Holy Spirit is a person. That person is God Himself and so here is the promise that God Himself will come and take residence within you. with that residence comes pure power.

3 Things Holy Spirit does in this World

Three things verses 8-11 that the Holy Spirit's going to do.

1. He is going to convict the world of sin. What that means is He's going to convince the world, a person that you need a Savior. Sin, must be dealt with so that they may be covered, washed away by the blood of the lamb and that the person no longer has that disconnect with the Holy God. Jesus said they do not believe in me. Now that doesn't mean that they did believe that he existed, for He was always standing right in front of them. It means today believe what he says to them about their sin. Their sin separates them from God and that He provides a way, and that he's the only way. Some people don't believe that He's the only way don't believe him. Theologically the word believe means to (recognize repent and receive);
 - a. recognize that our sin separates us from God because we transgressed his law,

- b. the call to repent to turn from sin because sin is an offense to God he's not here for easy believism, as He is here to wash us and give us new life, and you can't that if you are not willing to turn and follow.
 - c. And , receive as Jesus say that there is only one way and it's through Jesus Christ as we confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead and then you too shall be saved. That's what the Holy Spirit is out to convict and convince people of their need and the provision.
2. Of righteousness which means that He shows the person you don't have a right standing before the Holy God because of your sin. The Holy Spirit convinces us that our own righteousness does not come close to Jesus' righteousness. Jesus going to the Father shows and proves only the righteous (as Jesus was) can walk into heaven. But He who knew no sin, became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God (2 Cor 5;21)
 3. And third, judgement. Convicting and convincing the world that there is a judgement to come. The Holy Spirit convinces the world that there is such a thing as judgment. The judgment of Satan and the breaking of his power at the cross is proof of that.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Acts 3:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 14:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Let it be Known – Only 1 Sin that Separates – Not Believing in Jesus

There is only one sin that separates a person from God, and that is rejecting Jesus work on the cross. Not our sins, but "sin" singular, the one and only sin, not believing in Jesus (Recognize, Repent, Receive) that He is the only way for the forgiveness of sin.

Church gets too much on Agendas – Sins they Hate

The church is getting so single-tracked, in that they like to camp out on one sin or another, they have some make it their cause and their agenda, and as biblically correct they may be on that sin, they miss the single damning sin, the rejection of Jesus. The other sins are symptom of the sin disease, but the cure isn't cleaning up your act, no longer doing this or doing that, but giving your life to Jesus.

Churches trying to Get People into Heaven w/out Conviction of Sin / Gospel – not Make Good - Better

Lots of people trying to get people into heaven without conviction of guilt, and that's just ridiculous. Why would I see a need for a Savior that I didn't see a need for someone to save me from my guilt. The work of the Holy Spirit is to convince, and it's a legal term to convince someone to prove them out to be guilty. Today lots of people want to tell the world that the gospel is about making good people better. It's anything but that is about taking sinners and cleansing them of their sins and making them white as snow.

Sin is Missing the Mark – God's Perfect Standard / God doesn't Grade on Curve

What is sin, is to miss the mark. God lays a standard out his standard is perfection. And to transgress to miss one mark makes one guilty before a holy God he doesn't grade on a curve either it's zero 100 and no man can hit the 100% mark we've all sinned and fall short of the glory of God's holy standard.

*James 2:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one *point*, he is guilty of all.*

Only Holy Spirit can bring Spiritual things to Understanding

Apart from the Holy Spirit, human beings do not understand spiritual realities. The Holy Spirit's ministry is to bring to the world's consciousness three things—a correct perception of sin, a correct perception of righteousness, and a correct perception of judgment.

3 things I Pray for Unbelievers

These are the 3 things that I pray for the unbeliever that I love.

1. Convict them of Sin
2. Of Righteousness
3. Of Judgement to Come

RA Torrey Story

R. A. Torrey in his book *The Holy Spirit* tells how, when he was pastor of Moody Church, the church had a twenty-five-member committee of elders and deacons. They met every Friday night for supper and to go over the church rolls to see which people needed attention. At one meeting, an elder expressed a concern:

“Brethren, I am not at all satisfied with the way things are going in our church. We are having many professed conversions, and we are having many accessions to the Church, but I do not see the conviction of sin that I would like to see. I propose that, instead of discussing business matters any further tonight, we spend the time in prayer, and that we meet on other nights also, to cry to God to send his Holy Spirit among us in convicting power.”

Everyone consented, and they spent not only the rest of that evening in prayer, but a number of the following nights, asking for the Spirit’s convicting power. Not long after that first meeting, as Dr. Torrey rose one Sunday night to preach, he saw seated to his left a professional gambler. As he preached, he saw that the man’s eyes were riveted upon him. After the meeting one of the church leaders brought the gambler to Dr. Torrey. The man’s opening words were, “Oh ... I don’t know what’s the matter with me. I feel awful.” He revealed how that afternoon he had been out walking and saw an open-air meeting. Among the participants was a man with whom he had formerly associated in his sin. He stopped in to listen, was not much impressed, and went his way. But after he had walked several blocks, he felt moved to return. After the meeting he was invited to church. “Oh, I don’t know what’s the matter with me. I never felt like this before. I feel awful.” He trembled like a leaf and groaned again. Torrey said, “I’ll tell you what’s the matter with you. The Holy Spirit is convicting you of sin.” That powerful man, trembling with deep emotion, that gambler who had never been in a Protestant service before, knelt and cried out to God for mercy. He left shortly afterwards with the joyous realization that his sins were all forgiven.

Want a Curveball – Will Send to You / You will be My Witnessing Agents

Back to verses 8-11, you want a curve ball? Verse 7 feeds verse 8-11. Notice clearly it says at the end of verse 7, "I will send Him to you," speaking of the Holy Spirit. When you tie that together, "I will send Him to you," then it flows in, "When He comes, He will convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgement of sin." See if you can follow that through. Jesus is saying it's the Holy Spirit that comes upon you and through your life and through your witness will convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgement.

Jesus could Only be 1 Place – Now in a Billion

Jesus had to leave because He could only be in one place at a time. He was limited in His physical body. Now He's in Heaven and He's multiplied Himself a million times over as He sends the Holy Spirit, God Himself to us and now here we are. God Himself in physical form if you would, in every corner and continent of the world.

Jesus our Friend – Tells us What He is Doing

Jesus our friend tells us what he's going to do, and that is why he's telling us about the Holy Spirit what God the Holy Spirit is going to do so that we may cooperate with him and be part of his plan.

John 15:15-16 (NKJV) ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

How to Respond – Undivided Attention / Live it Out Loud – Regardless the Cost

How do I respond to this knowledge? God needs your undivided attention for you to clearly hear this and understand this. Maybe it's been poking at you in the recesses of your mind, but you don't want to talk about it because you're afraid of what it means. As we have studied, God knows what you need for an abundant, powerful life. John 10:10, "I've come that they may have life in that more abundant." A life that the Spirit will flow through. When I know I am a vessel and a witness, my whole life changes. I know that I am being used by God for a specific purpose and now my life has a specific purpose. My response, because I know the world is watching, I know that God is using me to be that witness to convict the world of sin and righteousness. The first thing is I live it out. He's calling us to live it out, not to compromise. That's the greatest witness is somebody who just lives, not compromise. As we studied last week, obedience is the pipeline of God's blessing to flow. Disobedience is the blockage that prevents it from flowing. God knows what He's doing when He's like, "I want you to be a witness because when you're being a witness you're going to go and you're going to live a life that's reflective of Me." If I could live in a shell and never speak of my faith, then I could live any way I want because I don't worry what people think about me saying I'm a Christian.

John 16:12 "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

John 16:13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

Holy Spirit Testimonies of Jesus / There are no Holy Spirit Meetings – Only Jesus Meetings

Verses 12-13 says He will testify of me. When people say they had a Holy Spirit meeting, they did not because the Holy Spirit doesn't have a meeting that draws attention to Himself. The Holy Spirit comes and points to Jesus. He only goes, the Holy Spirit, He only goes to Jesus meeting. He never attends anything about Himself.

Lake Charles

Boy I was in a church in Louisiana and it was a powerful preacher. Man, he could teach. I go in. It was wonderful worship. The teacher starts to preach and it was amazing. I was envious of the ability to teach with such power and precision, but then after it was over it was like someone threw a switch and they start waiting as they would say, for the Holy Spirit to come. They were calling on the Holy Spirit they would say. Boy, they started running around. They started screaming. I hear people squealing like an eagle. That's because they say the book of Isaiah, "You'll mount up on wings of eagles." People were convulsing. The pastor just kept whipping them up more and more. I sat there saying to myself, this is not what Jesus said the Holy Spirit would do. I believe the Holy Spirit was there for the teaching about Jesus, but then whatever that was at the end, I said this is just a group of people in their flesh. Interesting, the pastor says, "There's somebody here who you think this is foolishness. You think this is crazy talk." He says, "You need to leave." So I took that as my personal cue to leave because I wasn't into whatever was going down there.

Holy Spirit doesn't Draw Attention to Self – But Jesus / Not a Force but a Person

There again, from the example, Holy Spirit, come and show yourself. Come and be the center of attention. The Lake Charles experience problem with that is people want to treat the Holy Spirit like he some force and therefore they don't respect him as a person. You can't grieve a force, but you can grieve a person, and you can grieve the Holy Spirit and when we begin to continually look at him as a person, the third person of the Godhead, we will have a whole new respect for him. Today there so many groups which there's no respect for the Holy Spirit, and they turn into a circus, their grieving him because he's a person, and not some circus show. The Holy Spirit as Jesus has just told us, He doesn't come and make Himself the center of attention. He comes and points to Jesus. The Holy Spirit always points to Jesus, always glorifies Jesus and always points us to Jesus and the Father.

V12 – Still Many things to say / That is Understanding of all 31,102 Verses

Verse 12. Jesus said, "I still have many things." He's sharing with them the main things at that point. He got pretty deep right there, but He said, "I've still got a whole bunch more that I want to share with you." What are these many more things? Have you ever wondered that? What else is it that He would want to say? What I want to tell you is it's the 31,102 things in the Bible, in all the words of the Bible. If God dumped all 31,102 verses upon me my mind would be blown, but God is so gracious He reveals it slowly over time. What's He doing as He does? He's

revealing His nature in all that He is. If I saw all of God's holiness I would be, I couldn't handle it because my sinfulness would make me run from Him. He gradually revealed it to me and more and more each day I see the depths of His holiness which reveals the depths of His love. He reveals all these things gradually to me just as He says in Philippians 1:6, "He who began a good work will be faithful to complete it." God's got so much more work that He wants to do in us and hence why. It's not over at salvation, but every day I want to take you deeper.

The apostle Paul tells us, "When I was a child I spoke as a child, but now that I am mature I put away childish things." This is what God wants to do. He wants to mature us. He's going to mature these men, these 11 more and more every day.

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) ⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

1 Corinthians 13:8–12 (NKJV) ⁸ Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. ⁹ For we know in part and we prophesy in part. ¹⁰ But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. ¹¹ When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. ¹² For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known.

John 16:14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.

John 16:15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.

Spirit our teacher – Because our Friend Shows us Things

Verse 13-15. "The spirit of truth will be our teacher," because things that a friend does, as Jesus calls us friend, they enjoy each other and they share with one another. The spirit of truth will share with us the heart of God.

Spirit Keeps Moving – as He declares / And that Keeps us Spiritually Alive

Verse 15. God tells us and uses us because the witness we are to do keeps us strong. It continually solidifies our faith. It reminds us what we've been saved from. It continually keeps the Spirit of God flowing through us and moving through us. That keeps our spiritual life alive. Sometimes when things don't move it's because they're either dead or dying for life continually moves. Here God, He puts in these places and these positions so that the Spirit keeps moving through us, so that we keep living and we're alive in Him.

The Glory of God – Seen in Jesus

Verse 14 and 15. It says, "They will glorify me," because the truth of Jesus is glorious. You want to see the glory of God every day? You will see it in Jesus. God wants to declare it you, the glory of God and He'll reveal it through Jesus. Here we are as we study the life of Jesus, the words of Jesus, the heart of the Father, the goodness of God.

End of study

John 16

John 16:12-33

They going to hate you - But be of Good Cheer

Jesus in our chapter is telling the disciples that the world is going to hate them, that the world is going to persecute them, and that he is going to leave them. Now, these men have given up everything to follow Him, they have cast their whole lot into Him, believed fully that He is the Messiah, and now in this moonlit night only hours away from the cross, Jesus lays this on them. Imagine those worlds, the world will hate you, they will cast you out of the synagogue, people will rise up to kill you and think they are doing God a favor, and by the way guys I am leaving you. Drop a pallet of bricks on me, for I am crushed I was one of the eleven. And then Jesus said, but be of good cheer. In fact in these last two chapters (15&16), He uses the word “joy” here 6 times. So joy and cheer, in the midst of they will hate you and cast you out, some even killed.

John 16:33 (NKJV) ³³ These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

Disciples Confused – But Spirit of Truth is Promised

It is no wonder they will be saying, Lord we really don’t understand what you are saying to us, could you speak more clearly to us? And He will, and he does to us as he has promised us that the Spirit of truth will lead us in all truths. Truths about who God is, what He thinks of us, and what He desires us to do.

I get Confused – I see much Grief, not Much Joy

So I am often confused, and I am often asking the Lord, please explain and clarify because I am very confused right now. I hear you speaking of joy, I hear you saying be of good cheer, but Lord I am watching my city burn (Baltimore riots April 2015), Lord I am concerned about that upcoming doctors visit, Lord I am hearing rumblings of layoffs at work, Lord I hear about people having all kinds of joy but I feel all alone and depressed, there are many in this room who are glad Christmas is over because to you it isn’t the most wonderful time of the year.

The Thread: Grief – Joy - Love

This passage today we are going to see a thread that Jesus is going to walk the disciples through, and it is for our sake too, and the thread is “Grief – Joy – Love”, but yes we will see that the thread starts and grief. But I also see and like, that it doesn’t end at joy, but love, as love is always the ultimate, and love is always the height that God wants to bring us to.

Let’s pick up in verse 12.

John 16:12 “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.

John 16:13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

OUR GUIDE

Steven Simala Grant tells this story:

I remember Christmas, 1980, when I was 9. My mom, who was a secretary in a small 3-person company, got a Christmas bonus – a trip for her and my brother and me to Disneyland. Plane and hotel, all covered – and even some cash. Her boss was not a Christian, but wow did they have a spirit of generosity.

We got off the plane in Los Angeles, and immediately felt scared, overwhelmed, and more than a little lost. A single mom on her first trip outside Canada, second time on a plane, a 9yr old and a 12yr old... And there, right where we came through customs, was a man holding a sign that said, “Grants.” My mom joked as she walked past him, “That’s my name but I’m sure you aren’t looking for a mom and two kids.” “Wendy?” He asked. “Yup, it’s you I’m looking for. I’m here to guide you through the airport, help you find your motel, and make sure you have everything you need.”

Three Canadians feeling lost and overwhelmed in the middle of the LA airport, until the guide steps forward and says, “follow me. I’ll lead you.” He took us to find our luggage, then to the bus that would take us to Anaheim, and told us exactly where to get off.

In the same way, the Holy Spirit is our guide into all truth

Christian, You don't have to Figure it Out on Your Own

Christian, you don't have to figure this all out on your own, God gives us His Spirit to lead us and guide. You are His child, He loves you, and He wants to see you make and make it through in truth. Guide in truth? Truth means, what is true, fact, reality pertaining to God. For you see there is only one truth, one fact, one reality, and that is what God says it is, for He is the superior and supreme being who knows all, and above, and His ways are perfect, because His ways are design by His love for us, and what is best for us.

John 16:13 However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

John 16:14 He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you.

John 16:15 All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.

Lots we can't Bear – Unless the Truth Reveals

There are many things we can't bear, and somewhat amazing that Jesus said they are going to hate you, kick you out of synagogue, kill believers, and yet He says I still have other things to say but you can't bear them all. Hey Jesus, I really can't bear all the stuff you just told me, if there is more than what you just said, you are right I really don't think I can bear to hear it.

But, what Jesus is saying is that until the Holy Spirit comes upon you and into you, none of these things will make sense to you, and you will always be troubled, but when the Spirit reveals them, then you will be able to handle them because you will see:

- Who God is (His holiness and His purposes)
- What He thinks of you (He loves you with a depth beyond measure, you are precious in His sight and He cares for you)
- And what He wants us to do (which only makes sense when we understand the first 2)

Miss the Magnitude of Scripture and Prayer

I will tell you one of the things I think we Christians totally miss it in that we take way too lightly the magnitude of the words that God speaks to us through the scriptures and prayer. We can approach it so casually, that the parting of the Red Sea is a minor miracle compared to God's truth breaking through to us to speak to us. Oh may we be a people who seek the Lord in spirit and in truth, that we set apart ourselves and a time and say Lord speak to me, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and reveal to us the things we don't understand so we understand what it is you are doing in this world, in my church, in my family, and in me.

John 4:21–23 (NKJV) ²¹ Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. ²² You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. ²³ But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

John 16:16 "A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me, because I go to the Father."

Cross – Tomb – Resurrection - Heaven

Jesus referring to that shortly He will die, go to the grave, raise again and see them, and then ultimately He will ascend into heaven to the Father, and the disciples will see Him when they take their last breath on earth, and their first breath in heaven.

John 16:17 Then some of His disciples said among themselves, "What is this that He says to us, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'; and, 'because I go to the Father'?"

John 16:18 They said therefore, "What is this that He says, 'A little while'? We do not know what He is saying."

John 16:19 Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, "Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again a little while, and you will see Me'?"

Discussing Among Selves – Even though Jesus is Among them

Here the disciples are discussing things about Jesus, while He is in the room with them. They were talking about Him when they should have been talking to Him. How often that's true of you and me as well. "What's going on?" we say. "What does this mean?" or "Why did that happen?" we one another rather than talking directly to the Lord. I'm always amazed at how ready I am to talk to another person—when it is the Lord alone who knows the solution.

John 16:20 Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy.

World United on Wanting Jesus Dead / Disciples caused to Go into Deep Grief

One of the only things you'll see in all of human history that the Greeks, Romans, and Jews, all with competing interests, could agree upon is they wanted Jesus dead, and they celebrated his death. They were glad to be rid of him, and, so, as they all celebrated his death, the disciples, Jesus said, would be filled with a deep and a profound grief. They would go into a mourning season, shedding of tears, and a deep sense of loss from losing the Lord.

Model Laid Down – Jesus' Death should lead us to Profound Grief

And that is the model that is laid down for us, whereby, as God's children, every time we think of Jesus' death, it should lead us to this place of profound grief. It should be for us this deep well of sorrow and of angst and of concern and of pain. It should be a difficult place for us to go.

His Death should Bring Questions why Jesus Died? / Perfect & Sinless / Punished in Our Place

The reason being is as we see Christ's death, as we see him crucified and murdered, we start to ask certain questions that lead us into the place of grief.

- The first of which is the most obvious, and that is: why did Jesus die?
- Why did God come down and then experience murder at the hands of his own creation?
- Why in the world would God subject himself to that, and the issue is pertaining to our sin.

It is because of our sin. The Scripture says that we have, in a sense, very much killed and participated in the murder of the Lord Jesus. That Jesus died because of our sin, not because of any sin that he has committed, and our sins were placed upon him, and he was punished in our place. And the wage for sin is death, and so he was murdered because of the sins of his people, and that should lead us to this place of profound grief.

Every time we Sin – Spirit does His Work of Convicting Us / We come into Awareness of Darkness of our Soul

Where every time we sin and the Spirit does his Work of convicting, as John has just written for us, we come to greater awareness of how dark our soul is; of how wicked we are; of how evil we are, and some of you resist that. You don't like to hear that. You say, "Well, that's negative. That gives you low self-esteem. That gives you bad self-image." As soon as you become really depressed and discouraged by analyzing yourself, you're just starting to brooch an area of honesty. You are much worse than you anticipate. You are so bad that you think that you're good, and that's evidence that you're bad beyond belief.

Total Depravity

People ask, the Calvinist, do you believe in total depravity? Total depravity meaning that man is sinful, and man doesn't and wouldn't know they need a Savior unless God revealed it to them, and man has no way to redeem himself apart from God. The answer is yes, but we believe in more than total depravity. We believe that total depravity is for optimists. We believe that we are so sinful that we don't even know how sinful we are," and you have to begin there, and that honesty leads you to a place of grief

World we See – People living out their Total Depravity

The world is what the world is, because people are living out their sinful nature. I have to laugh (though I am not laughing), everyone wants to watch CNN and cast their judgment upon the rioters in Baltimore. To which first of all they are simply living out their sinful nature before the cameras and the whole world to see. But man, many Christians, are there to cast their judgement upon them, all the while totally missing their total depravity, their

sinful nature. There becomes these levels of sinfulness. Hear this, you are no less depraved than they are, but the good news is, you are no more depraved than they are, for we are all depraved sinners when the light shines upon our hearts in the presence of the Holy God. Sins before the camera are the worst ones, but my little sins are not that bad, for in general I am a pretty nice person. Capture this, how seeing Jesus hanging on the cross before these disciples must have shocked them out of their sandals, for what wretched sin were they guilty, what repulsive sin were they engaged in, after all they have walked and served alongside of Jesus for 3 years now, but when they saw Jesus on the cross, their hearts would be grieved and sorrowful, for they will see it was their sin that put their friend on the cross, that Jesus didn't die for the sins of the world, but for their sin personally. Let me say this, the only difference of me (and you) and the rioters is that their sin is on the camera, and mine (and yours) are more private, they won't make the evening news. But regardless of public or private, every last one of us have offended the Holy God, it was our sins personally that nailed Him to the cross, and when we look at that cross, when we look at our sin (regardless of how you rank it – for doesn't rank sin, He says in James 2:10 that He considers the murder as guilty as the thief, the adultery, the blasphemer), and when we look at the cross and our sin, we should be moved to grief and sorrow.

James 2:8–13 (NKJV) ⁸ If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well; ⁹ but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. ¹¹ For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹² So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty. ¹³ For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.

You miss it – If you Join in the Judging

I tell you what Christian, if you are joining in the comments about the rioters, if you are joining in the jury to bring justice, you are missing the opportunity to bring the true change that this world needs. I agree with protest to bring change, to bring to light, to be a voice; but I know the other 90% is at the water cooler, on social media, and in the coffee shop; I can join in and say how terrible, or I can say words that will send a shockwave through the world, "is my sin any less offense before the God". How many times do we really get such an opportunity to shine a light into another man/woman's heart, and show them, 'you are not as good as you think you are'. Surely these disciples after 3 years must have been feeling good about themselves, they even argued over who would be the greatest (not the worst), but that changes after seeing Jesus on the cross, for when He raises we never hear again the argument of who is the greatest. Christian don't miss the opportunity that is before you, and..... don't forget that your sin is no less offensive before the Holy God than anyone else in this world. Jesus is our only hope, every person needs Jesus, we need Jesus to heal our Nation.

Romans 3:10–18 (NKJV) ¹⁰ As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. ¹² They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one." ¹³ "Their throat is an open tomb; With their tongues they have practiced deceit"; "The poison of asps is under their lips"; ¹⁴ "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." ¹⁵ "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ¹⁶ Destruction and misery are in their ways; ¹⁷ And the way of peace they have not known." ¹⁸ "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

But Some Never Come out of Grief – Not Seeing it is Place of Beginning – Not End

So Jesus is saying seeing Me on the cross, because of sin, we be sorrowful and grieve your heart, but joy is coming. Some of us go into that place of deep grief and mourning and we never come out. We get stuck there with this obsession in our sin, this naval-gazing, not realizing that that grief and that conviction point is not our abiding and our resting place, but it's a place of beginning that is then intended to kick-start us on with some other things that Jesus then continues to refer to. He says, "You will grieve," —Verse 20—"But your grief will turn to joy." That that grief of repentance, recognition of sin, the death of Christ should then lead us out of that into a place of joy, where God's people are happy.

A MOTHER'S MARRED HANDS

There was a teenager who didn't want to be seen in public with her mother, because her mother's arms were terribly disfigured. One day when her mother took her shopping and reached out her hand, a clerk looked horrified. Later, crying, the girl told her how embarrassed she was. Understandably hurt, the mother waited an hour before going to her daughter's room to tell her, for the first time, what happened.

"When you were a baby, I woke up to a burning house. Your room was an inferno. Flames were everywhere. I could have gotten out the front door, but I decided I'd rather die with you than leave you to die alone. I ran through the fire and wrapped my arms around you. Then I went back through the flames, my arms on fire. When I got outside on the lawn, the pain was agonizing but when I looked at you, all I could do was rejoice that the flames hadn't touched you."

Stunned, the girl looked at her mother through new eyes. Weeping in shame and gratitude, she kissed her mother's marred hands and arms.

Looking at the marred hands of Jesus, turns shame into gratitude and joy.

John 16:21 A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.

John 16:22 Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you.

Jesus uses Illustration of Childbirth / Genesis 3

Jesus uses the illustration of child birthing to draw the stark comparison between grief and joy, how grief is but for a moment, and then joy comes through the resurrection and Jesus has conquered sin and death. How fitting that He uses child birthing as His illustration, as we go back to the "fall", when Adam sinned, and sinned entered the world, that God said as part of the fall, women will suffer pain in child bearing.

Genesis 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire shall be for your husband, And he shall rule over you."

Jesus says Woman has Pain in Birth – Joy After / He says to Us we will have Grief – But Joy After

He tells us, "A woman giving birth to a child has pain, because her time has come, but when her baby is born, she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into this world. So it is with you. Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again, and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy." You'll begin in grief, convicted of your sin, a murderer of Christ, and that will subsequently end up in joy. A joy that no one can take from you, and he uses this analogy: it's like a woman who gives birth. If you wanna see an unhappy woman, see a woman in labor.

Men think They are Tough – Men are Wimps / Man just drives Home

Men think they're tough. No, no. Men are not tough. Men are not tough. Men think they're tough because they can eat a whole steak, that's not tough. Men think they are tough because they can score 10,000 on Madden Football. Ever see a man when they have the flu? Oh what babies. If men had to carry child the world's population would be at least half because men would be one-and-done. So, when men say things like, "We're having a baby." No, you're not. She's having a baby and you're just driving her home

You Don't see Joy During Birth – But After everything is Joy

Jesus says, "You know what? You see a woman who's in labor and she is going through intense, excruciating pain." You don't see any semblance of joy, unless she has a very good anesthesiologist, and then she appears to have joy. He says, "But after she gives birth, then she has joy, because then this new life has come into the world," and you'll see a woman shortly after giving birth happy, glad, joyous, holding her baby. Everything's fine. She's totally satisfied and has this deep and abiding joy that no one could take away.

So for Us – Pain as Think on Sin – But Joy of the Resurrection

Jesus says, "That's the way that it is." That, you know, when you think about his death, and you think about your sin, it is just pain, anguish, struggle, toil, strife, grief, but then when you realize, as he's saying here, "In a little while I'll see you again." What Jesus' referring to here is his resurrection. He is going to die and he's going to rise from the dead.

Notice – Not Substitution but Transformation

I want you to notice something else in this illustration the Lord gives us. Know this Jesus is declaring and teaching, the object of your pain presently will produce great joy eventually. When you go through pain, the Lord does not take away that which caused the pain and replace it with something else to bring joy. It is not substitution, but transformation as He produces joy with the very thing that once caused pain.

Joseph was thrown into a pit by his envious older brothers. But, picked up by some merchants in a passing caravan, he ended up in Egypt. Sold as a slave into the house of Potiphar, he worked his way up in Potiphar's household until suddenly things turned sour when Potiphar's wife wrongly accused him of sexual assault. Cast into prison, Joseph languished there day after month after year until God miraculously worked through a series of incredible events to release him from prison and elevate him to the position of Prime Minister of Egypt. Joseph went from the pit to the prison to the prime minister. Thus, the very things that produced the pain—rejection by his brothers, the pit, the prison—were transformed not only to work out for his own good, but to save his entire family in the day of famine (Genesis 50:20). So maybe you are going through something extremely painful in your life today, joy seems forever away, you feel like life's the pits, you feel like you imprisoned, may you watch and wait and you will see the very thing that cause you pain God can turn to joy in your life.

Genesis 50:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive.

Death (grief) to Resurrection (joy) to Session

When you're starting to think about his resurrection, now you transition from the person who's feeling like they're in labor and in pain and torment to this person who has deep and abiding joy that no one can ever take from you, and so Jesus' death produces grief, but his resurrection should produce joy. God's people should be happy that sin is not the final word; that death is not the final word; that grave does not contain the grace of God, but that he has risen from the dead to conquer all of our enemies, and, so, he transitions then that what is to happen after this is his ascension. Jesus says, "I'm going to die, but you'll see me again very shortly," and then he talks about his return to the Father. He does that down in beginning of Verse 23.

John 16:23 "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.

John 16:24 Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

John 16:25 "These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; but the time is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but I will tell you plainly about the Father.

John 16:26 In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you;

John 16:27 for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me, and have believed that I came forth from God.

John 16:28 I came forth from the Father and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world and go to the Father."

I came Because Father who Loves You sent Me

So from grief to joy and now to love, as Jesus says the whole reason I came was because My Father loves you , and sent me for you, so I can bring you, into His presence cleansed and forgiven. I came because the Father loves you, and sent Me for you.

Out of this Love – Conversation (Prayer) will Develop

And out of this love, Jesus says that, "personal conversation (prayer) will develop. He tells us that beginning in Verse 23. "In that day,"—after his Work is completely done—"You will no longer ask me anything. I tell you the truth. My Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. Up until now, you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you'll receive and your joy will be complete."

Jesus gives us – Power to Plug into / Authority & Conformity

Jesus gives His disciples a power to plug in to. The power to transform that which produces sorrow into that which provides joy is the power of prayer. "You've asked nothing in My name," Jesus says. "Ask and you shall receive that

your joy might be made full.” Notice Jesus says we must ask in His name. What does this mean? Two things: authority and conformity.

Authority

Jesus says to them and to us, because of your relationship with Me, you have direct access to the Father, you can approach Him based on Me, you have the authority to do so because of Me, and because I have provided direct access for you to the Father because I have removed your guilt before Him by taking your sin and guilt there upon the cross. So boldly come! You have the authority because what Jesus has done, and not what you have done, it is not that you have read 3 chapters, witnessed to 12 people, have logged 15 days street of morning devotions, but He receives you simply because you are His love. Renee is funny, in that our dog only gets a doggy treat if he earns it. She puts it down and he has to sit, drool, stare, and then after 5 minutes she says ok. Then I come walking in, grab a doggy treat, and says here boy and flip it to him. She says, aren’t you going to make him earn it, and I say no, I good father, he just gets it because he is my son. To be honest though, I really don’t have the time and energy for a dog, I really don’t like cleaning up the yard, spending money at the vet, and getting down to pick up all the stuffed animals, plates, and Tupperware bowls he has destroyed – but he has found special favor in my heart, because the way he loves and treats my son, how he brings joy to my son, how he sleeps next to my son, how he makes my son happy. I see that in the heavenly Father, I love you because I do, but you so move My heart when I look at how you love my Son, treat My Son, and bring such joy to My Son.

Hebrews 4:14–16 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵ For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶ Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Conformity

When we ask in the name of Jesus, we must do so not only in His authority, but in conformity to His nature. Oftentimes, we ask for things that are out of harmony with the nature of our Lord—and we wonder why our prayers aren’t answered. That’s why, for me, a real secret in prevailing prayer is to be in the Word constantly, studying the life of Christ specifically, so that the things I pray for are in conformity with His character.

James 4:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? ² You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. ³ You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

John 16:29 His disciples said to Him, “See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech!

John 16:30 Now we are sure that You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from God.”

John 16:31 Jesus answered them, “Do you now believe?”

They act Like they Get It – they Don’t / The Dummy Whisperer

They act like they get, but they don’t get it, so Jesus says do you really get? He knows they don’t so He expounds more for their understanding. You ever do that, act you get it, because you don’t want to look stupid? At work I know aircraft, that is my thing, but sometime you get assigned to non-aircraft work because they need someone. When I go to those things, they start talking about stuff I have no idea of (say environment, electronics, etc), and I am like what in the world are they talking about. Then they say Ray you see where all this is going right? And I just shake my head, sure, when I have no idea but don’t want to look stupid. Some time I have to grab this one engineer after the meeting, and they call him the “dummy whisper” and ask him to explain. Usually I get it after he explains, but you know you are in real trouble when you still don’t get it after the “dummy whisper” is finished. Well that is the disciples here, so Jesus has to expound some more for them. I will be the first to admit, in my life, many times the Lord has to be my “dummy whisper” hahaha.

John 16:32 Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.

John 16:33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

David Livingston – the Easiest Road

David Livingstone went to darkest Africa as a lone missionary. After some time his missions committee wrote to him saying, "Some people would like to join you. What's the easiest road to get where you are?" He replied, "If they're looking for the easiest road, tell them to stay in England. I want people who will come, even if there's no road at all!" Sometimes the pathway of the Christian life appears to change from a smooth-surfaced road to a stony track or peter out altogether.

Christian Race – Starts at Finish Line

The Christian race is the only race in the world that begins at the finish line. We don't fight for victory. We fight from victory. The battle's already won. Jesus has already overcome. No wonder He says, "Be of good cheer."

Satan is Defeated

Satan is defeated, all he can do is nip at your heel, he cannot overcome you when you secure yourself in the Father. We see a path of victory in our lives personally, remembering sin, and letting it grieve our hearts for what it is, but moving on to the resurrection and the joy sin is not the end of story, but the end of sin, as Jesus defeated sin and death through the cross, and the resurrection opens the door to the Father who loves you.

Key to Life – Live Life Backwards

And Christian remember this, even in the midst of you tribulation and trials, we have heaven to look forward. A key to life is living life backwards, knowing heaven is our final destination, and this earth is something we are passing through. I have to keep my eye on the prize, because when get too focused on this world and all its ills, it is hard for me to see the joy.

Numbers 15 – the Tassles

I am reminded of the children of Israel in their wilderness wandering, and because of their lack of faith for not being willing to take the promise land, but rather complain against God for taking them out of Egypt, any Israelite over the age of twenty would not enter the Promised Land because, although there is forgiveness of sin, there are also repercussions; although God forgives and forgets, the scars remain. Such is the message of Numbers 15, the first of ten chapters which will chronicle God's dealings with a group of people who had not only failed miserably, but who would continue to do so over the next forty years. And yet at the end of this chapter, God says this: "Here's what will make the wilderness wandering which you've brought upon yourselves bearable: Around your garments make a border of blue." Blue in Scripture is the color of heaven. Therefore, God was essentially saying, "Never forget that you're on your way to heaven." "Let not your heart be troubled," Jesus would echo centuries later, "Believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions" (John 14:1, 2). My heart can be troubled. So can yours. But because Jesus will never ask us to do that which He doesn't empower us to do, I don't have to let my heart be troubled. What's the key? heaven—to think about heaven, to be focused on heaven, to be constantly aware that heaven is close at hand. The children of Israel were to have borders of blue on their hems so that when they looked down at their feet as they trudged through the wilderness, they would see a dusty border of blue, reminding them of their higher calling, their grand destination. The same is true today. When I get dressed each morning until the time I undress each night, I am to see the border of blue. That is, I'm to remember that I'm headed for heaven—where all those things I wish I could redo, where all the opportunities I missed and mistakes I made, will be set right. If you remove the border of blue from your garments, if you remove heaven from the equation, you'll be depressed in the wilderness, for the key to being happy and joyful on earth is to live for heaven.

Numbers 15:37–41 (NKJV) ³⁷ Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ³⁸ "Speak to the children of Israel: Tell them to make tassels on the corners of their garments throughout their generations, and to put a blue thread in the tassels of the corners. ³⁹ And you shall have the tassel, that you may look upon it and remember all the commandments of the LORD and do them, and that you may not follow the harlotry to which your own heart and your own eyes are inclined, ⁴⁰ and that you may remember and do all My commandments, and be holy for your God. ⁴¹ I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: I am the LORD your God."

John 14:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And where I go you know, and the way you know."

SOMETHING BETTER DOWN THE ROAD

A football game was being played in Badger Stadium in 1982 in Madison, Wisconsin with more than 60,000 fans in attendance. The home team was losing. But out of the blue during time outs, when play was at stop, the fans would jump up and roar with excitement. Why? Many of those in the stadiums were listening to a game being broadcast on the radio from 70 miles down the road. What they were listening to was the Milwaukee Brewers beating the St. Louis Cardinals in game three of the 1982 World Series. Their team on the field was losing, but they were turned into something better down the road. The Christian life is like that for us today. Our circumstances are bad at times but we must be tuned into something better down the road. We must place our hopes not in this world but in heaven.

I Believe God is Alive

I believe that God is alive. That he did get out of his grave and he did conquer enemies of Satan, sin and death, and that he is present and active and that he does hear and answer prayer, and he intends for us to have joy, and the Father really does love us as his children, in spite of our sin, because Jesus has already taken care of that. And his desire for us is to have peace, though, in this world, there will be trouble, so don't be surprised. There will be trouble, but, in Christ, there's peace for you there. There's a resting place in him, and I believe that what we are to do as God's people is to testify to this. We had been told previously in John's Gospel that "The Spirit will indwell in God's children and that they will testify." They will tell the story of what God has done.

End of Study

Chapter 17

John 17:1-11

Intro / Holy of Holies – the Heart of Jesus

John 17 is one of the greatest chapters in the Bible, and certainly one of the most treasured. Some refer to it as the “Holy of Holies of Sacred Scripture,” the revelation of the inner sanctum of Christ’s heart as he bared his soul in a final public prayer to the Father before he stepped out into the night and onto the cross. Philip Melanchthon, who along with Martin Luther was the towering intellect of the early Reformation, said:

There is no voice which has ever been heard, either in heaven or in earth, more exalted, more holy, more fruitful, more sublime, than the prayer offered up by the Son of God himself.

This chapter was read to the Scottish reformer John Knox every day during his final illness and in his final moments. John Knox, great Scottish reformer of the sixteenth century, called John chapter 17 the “Holy of Holies in the Temple of Scripture.” So much did Knox love this chapter, that as he lay on his deathbed, he had it read to him over and over again.

Jesus gives a Final Report to the Father of Life’s Work

I believe John Knox’s choice was a good one, for in John 17, we see Jesus approaching His own death. About to be crucified, He pauses to talk things over with His Father, giving a report concerning what He did in the three years He was here on earth in public ministry. And in His evaluation,

Word “have” 30 Times in 17 Verses

Jesus uses the word have, 30 times over these 26 verses; He is summarizing the life He lived, and the work He accomplished.

Jesus Identifies the Areas of Foundation of Success

We will see Jesus saying “I have”, and thus we see Jesus identifying the foundations of His success. The world names money, power, and prestige as foundational. Jesus shows us an entirely different way of evaluating life and ministry....

- I have Glorified You on the Earth (v.4)
- I have Finished the Work You have given Me to do (v.4)
- I have Manifested Your name (v.6)
- I have given them the Word (v.8)
- I pray for those You have given Me (v.9)

Word “have” 30 Times in 17 Verses

Jesus uses the word have, 30 times in 17 verses; He is summarizing the life He lived, and the work He accomplished. How much like Jesus do I want to be, how much of my life I want to be like His? What we find is that Jesus names the things that we are all able to do ourselves, things don’t require miracles, but things that only require desire and connection to the Father in heaven; all things we can do, all things we can accomplish, thus all things when we listen in to the heart of Jesus between He and His Father, that we too can say Lord we want the same heart.

What does Jesus Pray for You

If we announced that we were having a special service at the church and Jesus was coming to lay hands on people, and if you wonder what would he pray for you, here it is. We read that he lives to make intercession for us now that he is ascended and seated at the right hand of the Father; and what does He pray, we know he is praying this, because He has given us an insight of what is important to Him, regarding us, and He is the same yesterday, today, and forever:

Romans 8:32–35 (NKJV) ³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? ³³ Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Hebrews 13:8 (NKJV) ⁸ *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.*

Night of Death – No Fear/No Regret

Jesus is 12 hours away from the cross, and what we will read is Him with total peace and total tranquility. We will see Him with no fear of death, and..... no regret of life. I so pray that for myself, and for you, that when life is coming to its final days here on earth, that we will not look back on it and have regrets, wishing things we could have done but were too busy to do, or too fearful to try, but we can look back and have no regrets.

John 17:1 Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You,

The Hour has Come / John 16 – I have Overcome / John 17 – Jesus speaks to Father, not Disciples

From the first part of John’s gospel, Jesus was aware of the hour that was coming.

- When at the beginning of His ministry, He was in Cana of Galilee at the wedding feast and it ran out of wine and His mother suggested by the statement, They’re run out of wine, that He may correct the situation, He answered and said, Woman, what have I to do with thee? My hour is not yet come (John 2:1-4). Premature.
- In the seventh chapter, the thirtieth verse, it said, “They sought to take Him: but no man laid hands on Him, because His hour was not yet come” (John 7:30).
- The eighth chapter verse twenty, “These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as He taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on Him; for His hour was not yet come” (John 8:20).
- John 12:23, “And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.” Of course, this was at the passover meal with His disciples there on the same evening. John 12:27, “Now is My soul troubled; what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.”
- John 13:1, “Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of the world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end,” or to the uttermost.

And now in John 17, “These words spake Jesus, as He lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come.” Jesus has had His final words with His disciples prior to the cross. He finished those words in the sixteenth chapter of John as John in the last verse makes mention. “These things have I spoken unto you, that in Me you might have peace. In the world you will have tribulation: be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). That was His final words. They were words of comfort. They were words of peace. They were words of encouragement, “Be of good cheer.” They were words of victory, “I have overcome the world.” Now He no longer talks to His disciples but now He is talking to the Father. “These words spake Jesus, as He lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come.”

John 2:4 (NKJV) ⁴ *Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.”*

John 7:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ *Therefore they sought to take Him; but no one laid a hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.*

John 8:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ *These words Jesus spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one laid hands on Him, for His hour had not yet come.*

John 12:23 (NKJV) ²³ *But Jesus answered them, saying, “The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.*

John 13:1 (NKJV) ¹ *Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.*

John 16:32 (NKJV) ³² *Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone. And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.*

Glory – through the Cross

Verse 1 - Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You – Glory, means to recognize, praise, esteem one’s character – nature – or attributes). Jesus was and is the expressed nature of all God is. This prayer of Jesus that the Father would glorify the Son is really a prayer that He might go to the cross. It isn’t praying that He might

receive the glory that He had before the world ever existed. He will pray for that shortly. But in this first petition, He is praying about the cross. It is through the cross of Jesus Christ that God's love is to be manifested to the world.

- "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10).
- "For God has commended His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans 5:8). And God will be glorified through the cross because there is God's manifestation of the extent of His love for you.
- "If God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all" (Romans 8:32).

So in the cross of Christ Thy glory. Paul said, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Jesus Christ" (Galatians 6:14). Jesus is praying now concerning the cross. "Father, glorify Thy Son," through the death upon the cross so that "Thy Son also may glorify Thee." In verse four, He said, "I have glorified Thee on the earth" (17:4). And now He is praying for this that He might glorify Him.

Prayer is to get God's Will on Earth

Prayer is not the way to get God to do our will in heaven. Prayer is the way to get man to do God's will on earth. Once this is understood, you will find yourself praying in an entirely different manner. And that's what Jesus is doing here. "Glorify Me," He prays, "so that You might be glorified—even if that means that I will be pinned to the Cross of Calvary." "That sounds sadistic," you say. But it isn't because on the other side of the Cross is a crown—joy unspeakable, full of great glory. We only see five months or ten years down the road. But God sees the next ten zillion years. You see, Jesus' allowing the Father to be glorified through Him ultimately bought a bride for Him for all eternity. It's so radical when a believer finally gets the big picture and stops saying, "God do it my way." But sees He's the King of kings, and He sees what is going to be absolutely best in the long run.

Name it and Claim It

Oh we like to lay it on the name it and claim it folks, how they take a scripture and twist it to their likening, to make God the genie in the bottle to give them wealth, pleasure and comfort here on earth; but I need to carefully examine myself, and see if my prayers, maybe not as lavish as theirs, are still equally selfish, seeking my comfort, my pleasure, my self-focus, my self-wants, rather than the glory of God.

Lifted Eyes to heaven

Verse 1 - lifted up His eyes to heaven – want to be lifted out of your circumstances of today? Lift your eyes to heaven, lift them beyond this world, lift them to the final destination, the guarantee that has been given to us, I go prepare a place for you.

But – God still loves to Bless His Kids

But, I don't want to overcompensate, that if you ask for things for yourself that God is not pleased. God loves you, He does want to bless you, He is your Father, you are His child, and there are times He does just simply want to bless you. He will use those special blessings to commune and fellowship with you, to have intimacy with you, just to simply enjoy seeing your face when He blesses you. Camden came in my office while I was studying yesterday, we had already planned that we were going to the movies together in the afternoon, and he says daddy can I have a Klondike Bar? But if I do, can I still get a soda at the movies? He knows we have a sugar/calorie limit for each day. Then he goes, oh yea, that's right it is a Bolla's Rule that we always get soda and popcorn at the movies. See that is my rule, and it does supersede Renee's calorie count, because I say you can't go to the movies without getting soda and popcorn, that is part of the experience. So Camden remembers my "Bolla's rule", and he enjoys the "Bolla's Rule" to its fullest. I want to have special times with Camden, I want him to enjoy our special times, for there are plenty of times we are about things that are not about us, but for others, but there are times where it is all about the fellowship. So too the Lord with you. So I don't want to go too far and make this verse sound as if God doesn't care about your popcorn and Klondike Bars, he does, but just in their proper perspective.

John 17:2 as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him.

John 17:3 And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.

Jesus' Authority – Determines Ultimate Destiny of Every Man

Jesus claims awesome authority, “authority to determine the ultimate destiny of men.” (Takser)

Permanent Life

The words and structure of this verse means, “permanently have given”. It is yours to keep, nothing can take it.

What is eternal Life?

What is eternal life? It is knowing the Father and the Son.

To Know – by Experience

The word here to “know” is the Greek word “ginosko” which means “to know by experience”. Not just to know “about”, somewhat “familiar”, but to know personally. I know about the President of the USA, but I don’t know him by experience. But, I don’t just know about the Creator of the Universe, I know Him by experience. And like John who authored this Gospel and his 3 Epistles, we can say we have seen and touched Him because we have a personal experience with Him.

1 John 1:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life—² the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—³ that which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ. ⁴ And these things we write to you that your joy may be full.

Is that You – Do you Know Him Personally

Is that you today? If you say I know about Him, but I can’t say I know Him personally and intimately, it begins with receiving Him as your Lord and Savior.

- “Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10).
- “For God has commended His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly” (Romans 5:8). And God will be glorified through the cross because there is God’s manifestation of the extent of His love for you.
- “If God spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all” (Romans 8:32).

It is all Jesus and His work upon the cross, for you, there is no human sweat or effort by receiving Him and following Him. When Jesus called His disciples, He simply would say, follow Me, and that is what a disciple does, they follow Him, they turn from the way they were going, doing their own thing, and turn to follow Him and as they walk with Him, they begin to know Him more and more, by experience, not just a head knowledge.

Luke 9:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ Then He said to them all, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. ²⁴ For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. ²⁵ For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? ²⁶ For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His own glory, and in His Father’s, and of the holy angels.

Follow Him

God has done all the work, there is nothing man can add to it, man simply receives. No work on man’s behalf can save us, only Jesus’ work on the cross. God has done all the work, man’s role in salvation is whether he chooses to receive the free gift. Secondly, man’s role in salvation is whether he will “follow Jesus”. Many can wrestle with all the theology of the word “repentance” but it simply means “to turn”, it is to turn away from something, and turn to something, and in the case of the Gospel, it is turning away from sin (that offends God), and turning to God.

When Jesus says follow Me, He is saying turn from what you were doing, that self-life, and follow Him.

Repentance is not works of salvation, it is simply the indicator that a person has decided to receive the gift and follow Jesus.

Ephesians 2:8–9 (NKJV) ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

God is Just and the Justifier

God is just (as he judges sin) but also the justifier, as He provides a way for man to be forgiven of the guilt that is upon him for breaking God's holy law:

Romans 3:26 (NKJV) ²⁶ to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

I have Glorified You on the Earth (v.4)

John 17:4 I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.

I Have Glorified You on the Earth / First Point of Life of Success of Jesus – Gave all Glory to God

"I have glorified You on the earth." This is the first point in determining how successful in life you are. I think it's sometimes good for us to say, "How am I doing, Father? Who has received the glory?" Maybe you're an excellent mother, a gifted musician, a deep Bible teacher, a wonderful neighbor, a hard worker. But who has received the glory? Jesus had a way of working where, without exception, every time He showed power, Scripture says the people saw it and glorified God in heaven.

How About You – Who Receives the Glory

How about you? Jesus said, "Let your light so shine among men that they might see your good works and glorify the Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). Are you getting the glory, or is God? God chooses to use the foolish things of the world (1 Corinthians 1:27) because then people say, "Wow! God is good to use a foolish weakling like him."

We had Great Witness on Baltimore

We had a great outreach on Friday in the city, and it was so freeing to know that it had nothing to do with me..... before it began! That I could just go and say Lord it is all you, and I am just here to be a channel for you to flow through. Then in the end, just to glory in His glory, and say wow you are amazing.

Most Powerfully

And most powerfully for us, that we say at the beginning of each day, Lord may my life today bring you glory, may people see You in me, may I reflect your nature, your character, may they see Christ in me. Oh yes they will still see you/me, God made us unique, but may they see God has changed us, that we are different, we have His nature and attributes, and we live a changed life in this world.

His Glory – the Cross

Again his ultimate glory was the cross, as it showed the glory of the Father, His heart for the lost to buy man back from their sin. The ultimate giver (the Father) the ultimate sacrifice (the Son) - for God so loved.....

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

I have Finished the Work You have given Me to do (v.4)

Didn't say started – but Finished / Roads scattered with broken Commitments / Noah - Finished

Jesus didn't say, "I started the work," or, "I thought about the work," or, "I was going to get to the work." He said, "I have finished the work." The roads from Bible studies and Bible conferences are strewn with the broken commitments of men and women who began but never finished what God told them to do. I'm sure glad that after Noah finished the frame on the ark, he didn't say, "Close enough. We don't need a roof." No, he finished the work. He completed the task. If he hadn't, we would all be sunk. What about you? If you knew you only had a few hours to live, could you say, "Father, I finished the work You gave me to do"? Or would you have to say, "I know you put this on my heart last year and I meant to get to it, but ..."?

What Work has God called You to? / Homeschool – Teach -

What work has the Lord given you to do? Then finish it. Has He called you to teach the kids, then sign up and show up, and finish the work. Has He called you to homeschool, then do it with all your heart. Has He called you to the Gospel, then get your tract pack and carry them with you. Has He called you to love you wife, your husband, then finish that work until He calls you home. Has He called you to raise your kids in the ways of the Lord, yes, then finish that work, regardless how old they are. Finish the work Christian, finish the work, just like Jesus did.

Finish off that Sin Too!

Have you finished the work? Saul didn't. "Let not one Amalekite remain," Samuel told Saul (1 Samuel 15:3). And Saul killed almost every one—but he decided to keep Agag, king of the Amalekites as a trophy. Twenty-five years later, wounded in battle, rather than being captured by the enemy, Saul turns to a young man on the field and says, "Kill me." And the young man—an Amalekite—did just that. Where did he come from? Somewhere along the way, Agag fathered a son. "Don't leave a single Amalekite alive," Samuel said. "I gave it a pretty good shot," said Saul. "Ninety-nine point nine percent isn't bad." But the one he didn't finish was the one who did him in. What has God called you to do? What has He spoken to your heart about? Maybe it's a certain sin that's got to go, and you think, Well, I've got it pretty much taken care of. I know the Lord's told me not to do this, but I've cut way back. "Have you finished it?" "No, but I've got it under control." Watch out. Agag is out to get you.

Jesus Finished It – It is Done

"It is Finished," cried Jesus from the Cross. I'm so glad He didn't say, "I almost did it, but I'm going to come down now"—because if He came down from the Cross, we would go down to hell. He paid the price. He finished the work.

Only Work God has Given You – Not someone Else

Verse 4 - which You have given Me to do - "The whole city wants You," Jesus was told in Mark 1:37. Having spent the morning in prayer, however, He knew that the directive of His Father was for Him to minister in the backwoods region of Galilee. Thus, He went in the opposite direction of the clamor of the crowd. I believe this is why you never see Jesus accused of being busy. His enemies accused Him of being a winebibber, a glutton, demon-possessed, and crazy—but never busy. Jesus moved with a paced peace and an ordered steadiness because He knew the heart of the Father. People's burdens will give you an ulcer. People's expectations will drive you crazy. Whenever the burden's not light, I know I'm not doing the will of the Father. But when He directs me morning by morning, I find His yoke easy (Matthew 11:30).

Matthew 11:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ *For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."*

Night of Death – No Fear/No Regret

Jesus is 12 hours away from the cross, and what we will read is Him with total peace and total tranquility. We will see Him with no fear of death, and..... no regret of life. I so pray that for myself, and for you, that when life is coming to its final days here on earth, that we will not look back on it and have regrets, wishing things we could have done but were too busy to do, or too fearful to try, but we can look back and have no regrets.

John 17:5 And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

In Garden – Jesus was Homesick

In the Garden of Gethsemane it says that Jesus was full of sorrow and heavy – and the meaning is "to be away from home", Jesus was longing for home, He was homesick

Heaven was in View

Something was in view, and it was heaven, home, and Jesus no doubt also seeing the parade of people he would lead into heaven

CS Lewis

We have no idea the separation. We can only dimly perceive what Christ's glory was like "before the world began." We know he was the Creator of a universe so large it would take a person at least fifty octillion years traveling at the speed of light to visit every star. We know he enjoyed perfect intimacy with the rest of the Godhead, that there was always a joyous coming together of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit. Beyond this we know very little. We do know that he "made himself nothing" (Philippians 2:7), that he set aside the exercise of his glorious existence of deity in order to plunge so low that he became a feeble creature on a floating sphere in a backwash of space, there to die at the hands of creatures whose resemblance he bore. CS Lewis likened his plunge to that of a man diving from a great height into a dark pool. *As the diver is suspended in the air, he forms a colorful figure, but as he parts the waters, he rushes down through green and warm water to black and cold water, down through increasing pressure into the death-like region of ooze and slim and old decay; then up again, back to colour and light.* That is an inadequate but suggestive analogy of our Lord's plunge from and return to glory. The Lord's return to Heaven is a ravishing and a sanctifying thought.

The Glory He Departed From

We can only imagine the glory that was His from the beginning. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:1-4,14). We are told in Colossians that "He is before all things, and by Him were all things created, and for him: [the object of creation] And by Him all things are held together" (Colossians 1:16,17). We are told in Philippians that He was "in the form of God, and thought it not something to be grasped to be equal with God." The glory that He had with the Father before the world ever was. He's asking now for a return to that place. "Being in the form of God, thinking it not robbery or something to be grasped to be equal with God: He humbled Himself, or emptied Himself, and He took on the form of man: became a servant, obedient unto the Father, obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore then God hath also highly exalted him" (Philippians 2:6-9). He's praying now that He might again have that glory that was once His that He left to come to this earth, to be despised and rejected, to give His life as a ransom for sin. And now Father, allow Me to return to that place of glory. And we read that "God has highly exalted Him, given Him a name above all names: That at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:9-11). So God's glory, the Son's glory, that's what it's all about. Give Him glory, all ye people.

Only 1 Time Jesus doesn't Call Him Father – On the Cross

In the Gospel of John alone we see Jesus make reference to the Father 111 times, and 6 of those times are right here in this prayer., He continually refers to Him as His Father, declaring His intimacy and unique relationship that He has with God the Father. But there was a very clear time that He doesn't call Him Father, and it was the final hour, the 9th hour, when darkness covered the land, and Jesus cries out "My God My God, why have you forsaken Me. Jesus couldn't call Him Father, for it was at that moment, that He was us, had traded places with us, who could never call Him Father because of sin separating us from Him, the most man can ever call Him is God, until the sin issue is dealt with, and then we can (because of the Finished Work) call Him Father.

Matthew 27:45–46 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

I have Manifested Your name (v.6)

John 17:6 "I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.

Manifest – to Shine Forth

"I have manifested Thy name." The word translated "manifest" is phaneroo, which means "to shine forth." It doesn't mean so much declaration as it does illustration. When Jesus said, "I have manifested Your name," He wasn't saying, "I have preached about it verbally," but rather, "I have lived it out observably." "Great is the mystery," Paul would later say, "that God was manifest in the flesh," (see 1 Timothy 3:16). Truly, the Word became

flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14). Jesus said, “This is what I’ve done Father—I have fleshed out, lived out Your Name and Your Nature before these men You’ve entrusted to Me. They have seen You by seeing Me.”

As Law Came Down – Moses Glowed

As the law came down from Mount Sinai, it read, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not covet.” It was heavy—but the people received it because it was delivered to them by a man whose face glowed (Exodus 34:29). So, too, if you come down on your friends, colleagues, or kids, and you’re growling instead of glowing, they’ll resent you and reject the law you bring. Your kids will rebel; your friends will leave; your employees will quit because they’ll resent what you share. But if, like Moses and like Jesus, you’re spending time with the Father, you will be able to correctly manifest Him.

I have given them the Word (v.8)

John 17:7 Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You.

John 17:8 For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.

Disciples beginning to See – What Belongs to Father belongs to Jesus

The disciples began to realize this relationship between the Father and the Son. Whatever belongs to the Father belongs to the Son. Whatever belongs to the Son belongs to the Father. They’ve come to know that whatever has been given to Jesus really belongs to the Father. We all belong to Him.

Jesus will go beyond Words – to Demonstration

Jesus will go beyond just words, as he will display and demonstrate the true heart of prayer as he seeks to father and says not that I will but let your will be done.

Jesus’ View of these Disciples

They have kept Your word: When we think of all the failures and disappointments from the disciples, this is a kind assessment of Jesus. He generously judges His disciples. And same as He views you – so gracious and generous, not recounting all the failures and disappointments, but that you know Him, are His Bride, His love, accepted His marriage offer.

I pray for those You have given Me (v.9)

John 17:9 “I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.

John 17:10 And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them.

John 17:11 Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.

Jesus has Committed to the Cross – As if Already Done

He’s already committed to the cross. And so He talks of the cross as though it were a past fact. He speaks of it as “I have finished the work.” He’s committed and He speaks of it as though it was already done because He knows He’s going to do it. “I am no more in this world.”

Pray by Name

This is the prayer of the High Priest for His loved ones. It is an intimate prayer, it is a prayer that He prays for each of us. You can read this prayer and insert your name, and may you grasp a sense of His heart for you.

John 17:1–19 (NKJV) ¹ Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: “Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, ² as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. ³ And this is eternal life, that ~~they~~ (RAY) may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. ⁴ I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the

work which You have given Me to do. ⁵ And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. ⁶ "I have manifested Your name to ~~the men~~ (RAY) whom You have given Me out of the world. ~~They~~ (RAY is) ~~were~~ Yours, You gave ~~them~~ (RAY) to Me, and ~~they~~ (RAY has) ~~have~~ kept Your word. ⁷ ~~Now they~~ (RAY now knows) ~~have known~~ that all things which You have given Me are from You. ⁸ For I have given to ~~them~~ (RAY) the words which You have given Me; and ~~they~~ (RAY has) ~~have~~ received *them*, and (has) ~~have~~ known surely that I came forth from You; and ~~they~~ (RAY has) ~~have~~ believed that You sent Me. ⁹ "I pray for ~~them~~ (RAY). I do not pray for the world but for ~~those~~ (RAY) whom You have given Me, for ~~they~~ (RAY is) ~~are~~ Yours. ¹⁰ ~~And all Mine~~ (My Ray) ~~are~~ (is) Yours, and ~~Yours~~ (Your RAY) ~~are~~ (is) Mine, and I am glorified in ~~them~~ (RAY). ¹¹ Now I am no longer in the world, but ~~these~~ (RAY is) ~~are~~ in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name ~~those~~ (RAY) whom You have given Me, that ~~they~~ (RAY) may be one as We *are*.

What amazing love God has for you; this prayer is His prayer for you.

End of Study

John 17:9-19

Introduction

Jesus is about 12 hours from the cross. He and the 11 disciples have left the upper room last supper and are heading to the Garden of Gethsemane. Judas is on his way to the religious leaders to put the final touches on the betrayal of Jesus. Jesus has a lot on His mind, first and foremost you! Have you ever wondered what someone thought of you, have you ever wished that you could hear them talk about you when you are not around, because then you would really know what they think of you? Well here is your chance to listen in on a one-on-one conversation between the Father and the Son, about you.

Pray by Name

This is the prayer of the High Priest for His loved ones. It is an intimate prayer, it is a prayer that He prays for each of us. You can read this prayer and insert your name, and may you grasp a sense of His heart for you.

John 17:1–19 (NKJV) ¹ Jesus spoke these words, lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said: "Father, the hour has come. Glorify Your Son, that Your Son also may glorify You, ² as You have given Him authority over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as You have given Him. ³ And this is eternal life, that ~~they~~ (RAY) may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent. ⁴ I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. ⁵ And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was. ⁶ "I have manifested Your name to ~~the men~~ (RAY) whom You have given Me out of the world. ~~They~~ (RAY is) ~~were~~ Yours, You gave ~~them~~ (RAY) to Me, and ~~they~~ (RAY has) ~~have~~ kept Your word. ⁷ ~~Now they~~ (RAY now knows) ~~have known~~ that all things which You have given Me are from You. ⁸ For I have given to ~~them~~ (RAY) the words which You have given Me; and ~~they~~ (RAY has) ~~have~~ received *them*, and (has) ~~have~~ known surely that I came forth from You; and ~~they~~ (RAY has) ~~have~~ believed that You sent Me. ⁹ "I pray for ~~them~~ (RAY). I do not pray for the world but for ~~those~~ (RAY) whom You have given Me, for ~~they~~ (RAY is) ~~are~~ Yours. ¹⁰ ~~And all Mine~~ (My Ray) ~~are~~ (is) Yours, and ~~Yours~~ (Your RAY) ~~are~~ (is) Mine, and I am glorified in ~~them~~ (RAY). ¹¹ Now I am no longer in the world, but ~~these~~ (RAY is) ~~are~~ in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name ~~those~~ (RAY) whom You have given Me, that ~~they~~ (RAY) may be one as We *are*.

What amazing love God has for you; this prayer is His prayer for you.

What You will see in Today's Passage

- 1..) Jesus Prays for You (v.9)
- 2..) You are the Father's gift to the Son (v.9)
- 3..) You Bring the Son Glory (v.10)

And much-much more! Let's pick it up in verse 9

John 17:9 "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.

1..) Jesus Prays for You (v.9)

Jesus Prays for You - Start Day with That Knowledge

Verse 9 - I pray for them - Jesus prays for you! Did you start your day off today with that realization? Will you start your day off with that realization tomorrow? He is seated at the right-hand of God at the throne of heaven praying for you. You are going to make it friend, He will see to it!

Romans 8:32–35 (NKJV) ³² He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? ³³ Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

2..) You are the Father's gift to the Son (v.9)

You are Father's Gift / 7x "You have Given" – Jesus Thanking Father for Gift / What Gifts do you Give?

Verse 9 - I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours - you are the Father's gift to the Son. The phrase "you have given Me" is found here 7 times in this prayer, and we see Jesus exalting, praises, proclaiming, expounding His heart to the Father for the gift He has given Him, and that is you and me (His believers). May I ask you, what gifts do you give to your loved ones? At Christmas do you how long do you search for that perfect gift? That gift that says "I Love You", that gift that is from your heart? That gift that when you find it you say "perfect", and you can't wait to give it that person? You know the gift I am talking about, and you still have joy in remembering when you gave it, and the look on their face. Well, that is what is happening here in this passage, this prayer, the Father is overjoyed for the perfect gift He has given the Son, and He loves the look on the Son's face upon receiving it, and the Son is overjoyed with receiving it – 7 times He repeats "You have given".

God loves you – He loves the gift that you are to Him.

John 17:10 And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them.

3..) You Bring the Son Glory (v.10)

Jesus thinking You Individually / I am Glorified in Ray - WOW

This is a personal prayer of the High Priest for us corporately and individually. Jesus is thinking of you individually, and thus you can add your name in here, "And RAY is Yours, and RAY is Mine, and I am glorified in RAY. WOW, that takes some faith and mediating upon to absorb that, that God is glorified in me.

Glory – God's Nature & Attributes are Seen (Grace – Mercy – Love)

Glory means "to become positively acknowledged, recognized, or esteemed for one's character, nature, or attributes". God's character, nature, attributes, are "love", mercy, and grace (and thus all that is associated with them such as, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control).

We Reveal His Glory – Verb Tense is Continual Revelation / He Love for Sinners Irrefutable – Grace Shown

The translation for this verse is.....**And my glory is shown through them** is more literally "and I have been glorified in them." The meaning of "to glorify" is not "to bring honor to" ("and they have done me honor"), but "to reveal the glory of" ("**through them is my glory seen**"). The Greek is in the perfect tense (I have been glorified"), used to indicate the continuing revelation of Jesus' glory through his disciples. You bring God glory, it says it right here, all that are His, bring Him glory. That is two-fold, first in that He receives glory because His love for sinners is irrefutable, His grace is made clear that He saves sinners.

But how About When I Fail – Yes Even Still – His Grace is Displayed / When see That – I get out of Mud

Yea but how ashamed He must be when I fail and disappoint Him, He receives no glory at those moments, and I have had plenty of those moments lately, so I shouldn't claim this passage today – WRONG! The verb tense is "perfect tense" means it is past, present, and future – it is continual. So even when we are failing in obedience we see reveal God's grace that He still keeps us, still loves us, that He is "a God of Love". And when I personally grasp that, I say I got to get out of this mud, this is the witness I want to give, and I live in obedience, and now the glory I reveal is that God is able to change man, that He is patient, and He never gives up on His own, and He will walk with them all the way from the highs and the lows.

John 17:11 Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.

4..) Only a Holy Father can make You Holy (v.11)

Holy Father – Only Place in all the Bible / Only Holy God can make People Holy / High – but Near

Verse 11 – Holy Father – this is the only place in all the scriptures that phrase “Holy Father” is found. As we continue through this prayer Jesus is going to be praying that we are set apart, that we are sanctified, perfect and pure, not common, and only a Holy God, can make us a Holy people. His Holy (that is high), but a Father at same time (that is near).

1 Peter 2:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; ¹⁰ who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

5..) He is a Saving God and a Keeping God (v.11)

Saving God – Keeping God

Verse 11 - keep through Your name those whom You have given Me - Praise God we have a saving God and a keeping God, because if the keeping was up to me, I'd be in big trouble.

Father – Son – Holy Spirit all Involved in Our Eternal Security

The responsibility for “our” security’ is passed on to the Father. When you do a study on eternal security you will see that you are secure because of the Father, because of the Son, and you are sealed by the Holy Spirit.

John 10:27–30 (NKJV) ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. ²⁸ And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand. ³⁰ I and My Father are one.”

Ephesians 1:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

God's Holiness is Guarantee of our Security

Now back to “Holy Father”, God's holiness is the guarantee that He will keep us eternally secure.

Are You Teaching Absolute Eternal Security – I don't Lose Sleep over My Salvation

Ray are you teaching absolute eternal security? Let me say this, I lose sleep over lots of things in my life personally, but my eternal security is not one of them. I lose a lot of sleep over other people's salvation (whether they are saved or not), but not mine.

How do I know – Because I don't Want to Go Anywhere

See here is all I know, I don't want to go anywhere, I love it right where I am at in His arms; and He loves having me in His arms, because he says He does, right here through this whole prayer. I am absolutely sure and secure where I am at. I love abiding in Him (John 15). I don't have a theological relationship with the Lord, I have a personal one, and it is an intimate one at that.

I am Absolutely Secure He Knows Best

And, I am also absolutely secure in that he knows best for Me, and that is why I have no desire to get far from those arms. I don't struggle with that He is keeping something from Me. I fully trust that He always knows best for Me, and when it comes to sin, I know fully He calls sin, sin, to protect and to provide for me. To protect me from the harm that a sin will bring, and to provide me something beneficial. I can look at drunkardness and see He is protecting me from drunk driving, foolish decisions that for a brief moment can alter my life forever. And He provides me with a peace of waking up in the morning and not wondering what I did, what consequences will I face, what regrets will I have. I have a total peace of being honest, of not lying, trusting that if I am wrong God will

grow me and mature me even greater, and I not worry and have to keep a record of all the lies I have told so I don't trip over them someday down the road.

Candace Cameron

I saw an interview with Kirk Cameron's sister Candace (Kirk was on Growing Pains, then did the Left Behind Movies). She tells how when she was 12 years old that she received Jesus as Lord and Savior. But as her acting career grew, she started to drift from the Lord, then she said God just was no longer a priority in her life. She said she felt her lifestyle of sexual promiscuity was no big deal because all the people she knew in Hollywood were doing drugs and other things. She said compared to them what she was doing was no big deal. But then one day her brother sent her the script of the movie he was going to be in (Left Behind), and when she read the part about the pastor in the movie who got left behind in the rapture, who said I believe everything in the Bible, but I haven't been living it out, I am using God's forgiveness to live my life any way I wanted. And she realized that she was doing the same as the pastor in the movie, and that she was only using God's forgiveness as an excuse to live any way she wanted. She said it really woke her up, and she needed to find out what the Bible really said about she is to live as a Christian, why Jesus died, what is the Gospel? She said she started to read the Bible, and she "got it", she saw why Jesus had to die for her sin, she saw her sin was an offense to the Holy God, she saw how much God truly loved her, and she said God I never want to forget this moment, and I want to live all for you from this point on. I am sure, she sleeps good at night.

6..) He Prays that We may be One (v.11)

We May Be One – Do You Hear His Heart?

Verse 11 - that they may be one as We are – Jesus prays that His disciples, followers, may be one together, just as He and the Father are one. Can you hear His heart, He is hours from not even being recognizable, and He prays for His followers to be One! God wants unity among His people. Christian we are all we got, the world hates us, He keeps making that clear, yet how can there be division and contentions inside the church. If you have bitterness, resentment, if you are backbiting another Christian, if you are not loving your brother and sister, then you are totally missing the heart of this prayer. These are last words alive, and He says oh Father that they may be one.

John 17:12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; and none of them is lost except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

Judas was Never His

Did Jesus lose Judas? No because Judas was never His. See John 13. Judas is called son of perdition, and perdition means waste. What a wasted life, to walk with Jesus for 3 years, and to never know Him personally.

John 13:10–20 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." ¹¹ For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean." ¹² So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you?" ¹³ You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. ¹⁸ "I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me.' ¹⁹ Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He. ²⁰ Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me."

Should Read More Literal

The sentence means this: "Those that You gave Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, **but** the son of perdition is lost, that the Scripture might be fulfilled." So, it is like "Judas is lost, so sad, he is so lost, what a waste of a life". God knew beforehand that He would be, because God is sovereign and all knowing; God knew the choice Judas would make, and gave him the free-will to do it. Judas fulfilled prophecy, because all prophecy is based on God's foreknowledge.

Acts 1:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ "For it is written in the Book of Psalms: 'Let his dwelling place be desolate, And let no one live in it'; and, 'Let another take his office.'

Psalms 69:25 (NKJV) ²⁵ Let their dwelling place be desolate; Let no one live in their tents.

Psalm 41:9 (NKJV) ⁹ *Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me.*

All Scripture Must be Fulfilled

By the way, all scripture must be fulfilled, if God fails one scripture, one prophecy, then He isn't God. But since He is God, every last scriptures will be fulfilled, and so for you, He who began good work in you, will be faithful to complete.

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;*

7..) We are Kept by His Name (v.12)

But we are Kept by His Name / Pure Power

Verse 12 - While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those whom You gave Me I have kept; The disciples, the followers of Christ, they aren't lost because they are kept by the Father, by His Name. That "Name" is pure power!

I AM – the Becoming One / All He Is – Declared in His Name

Moses says, what is your name, to which He answered "I AM". His name means, "The "Becoming One". I will become to you all that you need. That name, reflects His power and authority, and all His nature and attributes, the Becoming One describes who He is, and what He can do, and when we look into His Name, we see why we can be kept by His name.

Exodus 3:13–15 (NKJV) ¹³ *Then Moses said to God, "Indeed, when I come to the children of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What is His name?' what shall I say to them?"* ¹⁴ *And God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM." And He said, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, 'I AM has sent me to you.' "* ¹⁵ *Moreover God said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the children of Israel: 'The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. This is My name forever, and this is My memorial to all generations.'*

Names of God

And when we look through the scriptures, we see the compounding of the Lord, and he shows us and declares to us what He will become to us in our time of need:

- Jehovah Jireh - (Genesis 22:14) - The Lord God our Provider / The Lord that Sees
- Jehovah Raphah - (Exodus 15:26) - The Lord God our Healer
- Jehovah Nissi - (Exodus 17:15) - The Lord God our Banner
- Jehovah Shalom - (Judges 6:24) - The Lord God our Peace
- Jehovah Ra - (Psalm 23:1) - The Lord God our Shepherd
- Jehovah Tsidqenuw - (Jeremiah 23:6) - The Lord God our Righteousness
- Jehovah Shammah - (Ezekiel 48:35) - The Lord God our Ever Present One

Cannot These 7 Keep You

And cannot these 7 keep you?

7 "I AM" Statements

Interestingly, Jesus used the 7 "I AM" statements,

1. I AM the Bread of Life (John 6:35)
2. I AM the Light of the World (John 8:12)
3. I Am the Door (John 10:9)
4. I AM the Good Shepherd. (John 10:11)
5. I AM the Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25)
6. I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:6)
7. I AM the Vine (John 15:5)

What do You Need Today?

What is it that you in your life today? God wants to become that for you.

John 17:13 But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves.

John 17:14 I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

John 17:15 I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one.

John 17:16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

8..) He Prays against the 3-fold Attack against the Believer (v.13-16)

Definition of World

The term “world” has three references scripturally.

- First, it speaks of the planet, of the earth (Job 37:12).
- Second, it speaks of humanity (John 3:16).
- But the world Jesus is talking about here is neither the planet nor the people, but the system.

The word for world is “kosmos”, it means to bring order out of chaos. Kosmos is where we get our English word “cosmetics”, so there again “to bring order out of chaos”.

Pray Against 3 Fold Attack

What are the 3 things that come against the Christian to bring them down? The world, the flesh, and Satan. Look how Jesus covers all three of these in His prayer

1. **Satan** – He prays that we be kept from the Evil one. How, that the Father keeps us from the Evil one, and the evil one is kept from us. Here is how I think the Father does it, remember Jehovah-Nisi, the Lord-is-our-Banner? Here is what I think that banner says – “Jesus”

Philippians 2:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹ and *that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

2. **The World** – well here is how He protects us from the world, and it is not what anyone would think, He protects us from the world, by sending us into the world (see verse 18). Why does He send us back into the world, the very thing He prays to protect us from, the very thing He says hates us? Because going back into the world, as His witness, we always remind us that this world is not our home, and our home is yet future (aka – don’t try to make heaven on earth). We have a refuge in the church, but we are not to be a people who never leave the walls of the church, because those who do become are missing their purpose. The power of going into the world is that we have do what Jesus did when He was sent into the world, and that is constant connection to the Father, on how to live that day in this world. Never going into the world, and never leaving the church, makes one’s life at the least, more comfortable. I find my connection to the Father is more comfortable, meaning I’m ok missing a day here in the word, or week or two of Sundays, prayer is optional, because for the most part my life is comfortable. And the amazing thing about it, I actually start to become more like the world, by trying to stay away from the world, because I find myself seeking more things to make me more comfortable, I am looking for more ease, and most amazingly people who never face the world but only stay in the walls of the church, they become more critical and judgmental of people because they no longer see the “big picture” a lost and dying world, they just see all their brothers and sisters flaws because they don’t see anything else. God sends us into the world, as His witness, just as He sent His Son, so the world doesn’t creep into our lives.
3. **The Flesh** – How does he protect us against the flesh, verse 13, He fulfills His joy in us. That joy can only come through the cross, and Him going to the Father (that is what verse 13 is saying). There is only one place for the fullness of joy, and that is in His presence, and as we have spoken of before, when you are in His presence, when you trust Him, the things your flesh cries out for that will take you away or distract you from His presence, you say no way why would I want to mess up this beautiful place I am at, I love it here in His arms, and He loves having me, why would I ever want to leave.

Psalm 16:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ *You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; At Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

Matthew Henry – Unanswered Prayer

Matthew Henry points out three unanswered prayers in the Bible, Moses, Elijah, and Jonah – all prayed to be taken out of the world, but God didn't answer their prayer. You see God gets more glory by leaving us here (Numbers 11:14-15, 1 Kings 19:4, Jonah 4:3).

John 17:17 Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.

9..) He has Given Us His Word – it is What Sets us Apart from the World (v.17)

His Word Sets us Apart

His word is truth, and His truth is His word. Sanctify means to be set apart. God sets us apart by His Word. His Word is what sets us apart from this world. The world has not set words, they have no absolutes, but for the Christian, God has given us His Word, and it is what we believe, it is what we follow, and thus it is what makes us different from the people of this world.

Don't Ever Apologize for His Word

Christian, don't ever apologize for this word; it is what sets us apart, it is a gift from God, it is what saved our lives, and it is the only hope to save this world.

Word Sets us Apart – Turns the World Upside Down

God's Word is what sets us apart from this world. It is powerful

Hebrews 4:12-13 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. ¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.

John 17:18 As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.

John 17:19 And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

10..) He Sends Us – Finish Strong Christian (v.18-19)

He sends us Into the World

And so Jesus is praying to the Father for His disciples (followers) because He is sending them into the world. We already covered the why He sends us. So I would just like to capture the heart of the heart of our King, and I can read a passion in His voice, a strengthening in His voice, as He prays in power for us – to finish strong!

Hall of Faith

By faith these "finished the work", and are recorded in the "Hall of Faith" in Hebrews 11.

- Marching around Jericho – they finished the work by making 7 laps, in the midst of discouragement, riddle, doubt, yet they march 1 lap every day for 6, and then 7 laps on the 7th day, they finished the work. Imagine the mocking and riddle from the inhabitants of Jericho as they marched every day, they were probably pelted with rotten food and human waste, but by faith they kept marching, they finished the work, and the walls came down. Christian keep marching, keep marching even in the midst of mocking, ridicule, whatever is thrown at you, finish the work.
- Rahab – finished the work given to her by helping the spies. Rahab was a card-carrying prostitute, and she helped the spies of Israel when they came to spy out the land. I will say this, Rahab believed in the God of Israel, not the people of Israel. Knowing about the religion of Israel, her future would be stoning, as that was the sentence for harlotry, but somewhere, something inside her knew she would find grace and favor with this God she only knew from a distance. Anyone here ever been witnessed too by a Jewish person? Anyone ever been told by a Jewish person about a gracious and loving God? I would expect 99% of the answers are no, as they are a very inward religion, an exclusive religion, and they don't talk about grace and forgiveness to those outside the bloodline. But somewhere in the heart of Rahab, she believed the God of Israel would receive save her and keep her.

Hebrews 11:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ By faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days. ³¹ By faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace.

And there are many more in the list (Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel), and a study of their lives find each had their weaknesses, their failings, their “thing” that was quite disappointing, but here they all are listed in the “Hall of Faith”, because they finished the work.

Hebrews 11:32 (NKJV) ³² And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets:

Christian, you will not walk this Christian walk out, perfectly, once saved, once kept, doesn’t mean perfection in all your actions, you will still fail. But keep marching,

Finish Strong

Finish strong Christian, be valiant in battle.

Hebrews 11:33–35 (NKJV) ³³ who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, ³⁴ quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. ³⁵ Women received their dead raised to life again. Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.

Better Resurrection

A “better resurrection” – is one with no regrets. Finished the work Christian, and let those works be gold, silver, and precious stones, the solid foundation. Turn aside from the world’s foundations, which is wood, hay, and straw.

1 Corinthians 3:12–15 (NKJV) ¹² Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³ each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. ¹⁴ If anyone’s work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

Lay Aside Every Weight

Let’s lay aside every weight and snare

Hebrews 12:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

It was Worth it they would Say – So too will We Say

All these witnesses will say it was worth it, and all of them will attest, He forgives and receives just like He said He would, so keep marching Christian soldier, keep marching.

End of Study

John 17:20-26

Introduction

Jesus is about 12 hours from the cross. He and the 11 disciples have left the upper room last supper and are heading to the Garden of Gethsemane. Judas is on his way to the religious leaders to put the final touches on the betrayal of Jesus. Jesus has a lot on His mind, first and foremost you! Have you ever wondered what someone thought of you, have you ever wished that you could hear them talk about you when you are not around, because then you would really know what they think of you? Well here is your chance to listen in on a one-on-one conversation between the Father and the Son, about you.

Holy of Holies of Sacred Scripture

John 17 is one of the greatest chapters in the Bible, and certainly one of the most treasured. Some refer to it as the “Holy of Holies of Sacred Scripture,” the revelation of the inner sanctum of Christ’s heart as he bared his soul in a final public prayer to the Father before he stepped out into the night and onto the cross.

Let’s pick up in verse 20

John 17:20 “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;
John 17:21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

John 17:22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:

John 17:23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

John 17:24 “Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

John 17:25 O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me.

John 17:26 And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them.”

Outline John 17:20-26:

It is a Perpetual (never-ending) Prayer – Because the Gospel is Unstoppable (v.20)

- God’s Math is Simple (One) – God want’s Unity (v.21)
- The Glory God Give Us – His Name (v.22)
- God’s Math of One – Statement of Love to the World (v. 23)
- Jesus Longs for You – God Loves You (v.24)
- Only a Righteous Father can Make Us Righteous (v.25)
- God’s Love In Us is the Only Way we Can Love like Him (v.26)

[It is a Perpetual \(never-ending\) Prayer – Because the Gospel is Unstoppable \(v.20\)](#)

John 17:20 “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word;

Perpetual Prayer / New Disciples (Followers) Every Day – Who give the Word

This prayer is a continual never ending cycle. Verses 9-19 were for the disciples specifically, but what are disciples but followers of Christ, and so you can read those verses and apply them to yourself also. Now in verse 20, Jesus prays for future believers who disciples (followers) will lead to Christ through the Word of God. The verb structure in this sentence is “present tense”, meaning although He is speaking future, it applies for the present and the future, now that is perpetual and never-ending. A present tense verb structure means although it was spoken nearly 2,000 years ago, if you read it today, it applicable and true for today. So Jesus is praying this prayer still today, for those who will come to believe through the words of His disciples (followers).

Every Day for 2,000 Years this Cycle Repeats Itself

So these disciples gave out the Word, and people believed, just like Jesus said would happen in His prayer. So then those new believers would share the Word of God with others as they would become disciples (followers of Christ), and people would believe their Words (of God). And for 2,000 years this verse happens every day. For 2,000 years everyday people are coming to Christ and becoming followers, and every day new believers become disciples who share Christ and make (if you would) new believers who become disciples. You who have given your life to Christ were first the fulfillment of the front-end of the verse (who believed), and then the back-end (through their word).

The Gospel is Unstoppable

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is unstoppable. For 2,000 years this verse has repeated itself. For 723,795 days ((that is how long Jesus has been gone (May 2015 minus April 32AD)) this cycle has repeated itself, and it will repeat itself today, and tomorrow, and the day after that, and every day until Christ makes the New Heaven and New Earth. No one can stop it either, no man, government, or program can nor ever will stop this Gospel!

People Want Forgiveness / The Zoe Life – the Life beyond this World’s Life

Why, because man wants forgiveness, man knows they are empty, man wants more than this life has to offer. God offers “Zoe Life”, it is His Word for Life we read in this Gospel, it means a life that is beyond the life this world has to offer, it is an abundant life, it is an eternal life, it is the God Life, it is the life that Jesus lived when He walked this earth. It is an intimate relationship with the God that created you.

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life (zoe) in His name.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life (zoe), and that they may have it more abundantly.

We are not in this Alone

The word for prayer, means “to desire”, Jesus desired for you to come to Him, and He desires that others (yet future because this prayer is perpetual, never-ending) to come to Him. When you share, when you give out His Word, whether to your children, your parents, your friends, your neighbors..... you are not in it alone, you don’t go it alone, nor give it out alone, Jesus is igniting your words, anointing them, because He is and has been praying for the words, because He desires that the person you are giving the words to, will come to Him and be one with Him.

How about You – The Gospel

How about you, can I start our study out today to anyone who has not yet received Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Jesus has been praying for you, since you were born, to come to Him and have a personal relationship with Him. What is the Gospel you may ask, it is profoundly simple, yet simply profound.

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (zoe).

You my friend are perishing, and you will continue to perish because your sin separates you from “the” Holy God. God is Holy (which means perfect and pure, and set apart from all others), He cannot allow the impurity of sin into His presence. But God gave His only Son, whose blood can cleanse all your sin away, so that you may be “perfect” before the perfect God and come into His presence. And you can have the “zoe” life, the God life, that Jesus prays (desires) you to have. Jesus is praying for you right now, that you will hear these words and come to Him, and have a personal relationship with Him. What does “believe” mean? It means three things, first to recognize that your sin is an offense to “the” Holy God, it is not ok regardless of your justification. Two, repent, which means to turn from and follow. Everyone Jesus calls, He says to them “follow Me”, turn from the way you are going, your desires, your self-wants, and follow Me. And where He will take you is always better than where you were going, because you will never find the “zoe” life, the abundant life, anywhere but the where Jesus is and going. Third, means to receive, to ask Him to come into your life, to forgive you of your sin, and pledge to Him to follow Him.

My Skin Cancer

About a month ago I notice a little red spot on my arm, it didn't go away. I wanted to ignore it, I want it to just go away. I didn't want to deal with it because I am busy, I got lots to do, and maybe if I just ignore it, it will go away. But I have read enough, heard enough, and now know enough, that there is a possibility that it could be cancer. And that is the way the conviction of sin can be for us, God is giving us indicators, promptings and poking, that we know something may be wrong with our relationship with Him, but we want to ignore those signs and promptings, because we really just don't want to deal with it. But you must check into these spiritual things, you can't ignore them, because your eternity is at stake. So I go to the doctors, they said let's take a biopsy. To which again I'd rather not. So they scrap it, not a very pleasant thing, and send it in for diagnosis. So again, maybe you feel the Lord has been speaking to you, that something isn't right, maybe that is why you are here today, because God has put His finger on you and you know something is missing. Well my results came back cancerous. There is a law of reaping and sowing (Galatians 6), and my years of sun and fun have caught up to me. Now I have two choices, ignore it or have it cut out. There is a 99.99% probability that if I have it cut out, that will be the end of it. But, if I do nothing, if I let it continue to grow and spread, eventually it will spread to other areas of my body, and kill me. Beloved, if you have not "applied John 3:16" to your life, if you have not received Him as you Lord and Savior, eventually your sin will kill you, and that death is eternal separation, and that is hell. But Jesus is praying for you right now, desiring you to come to Him, to receive the "He Gave" part of John 3:16 so you can be washed, cleansed, healed of your sin. And the big difference between my 99.99% surgery is that just one drop of the blood of Jesus Christ is enough to 100% cleanse your sin (Past-present- and future). I pray you make that decision today, but more so, Jesus is praying for you right now.

God's Math is Simple (One) – God want's Unity (v.21)

John 17:21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

Be One

Jesus is about 12 hours from the cross, and He is fervently praying to the Father, oh Father that may be one. Oh may we hear the heart of this prayer, God wants us to have unity, to be of one heart, one mind, one love. Five times in this chapter He prays for us to be one, and 4 times He prays it in our passage today (verses 20-26).

Don't Divide over Petty Things / Not Uniformity – but Union of Heart

Oh Christian God is crying out to you, don't divide, be one. How His heart breaks when we divide over doctrinal issues, or petty-bickering things, how churches divide because they want to protect their numbers or claim their territory. God isn't calling for uniformity, but union. God isn't saying we all have to dress the same, sing the same, worship the same, but that we would all be one in spirit, a spirit of unity, we are all one in Him.

What do you Prayers Sound Like / Jesus 12 Hours from Cross – But Bears Open Prayer for Unity

Christian what do your prayers sound like? Do they sound like Jesus' prayer here, or do they sound like complaining to God about that person or that church? Have you ever got down on your knees and begged the Lord for unity and oneness among the body of believers? Jesus says, "they all", that means every last person who calls themselves followers of Christ, that is who we are to be one with, not just the ones that we have total agreement with whether that be doctrine, theology, personality, or the same personal interest. Jesus is 12 hours away from not even looking human, yet here He is pouring His heart out openly and publically so the disciples, so you and I, can hear His heart beat for unity.

Our Oneness – Witness to the World

Verse 21 - that the world may believe that You sent Me. – How will the world that Jesus is real? One way is they will look at the diversity among the believers and how we love one another, how we have unity even though we are so different, and they will have to acknowledge that that isn't the way things go on this earth, and there has to be some other factor in play. We have so many church programs to do outreach, so many schemes, so many

venues, so much money and efforts to witness to the world, yet Jesus gives us the surest outreach to the world, and it is the witness of our love one for another, for the world will be drawn to that.

John 13:34–35 (NKJV) ³⁴ *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.* ³⁵ *By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

So what to Do if they don't want Unity / Pray for Unity – God's Love will Flow – Because you Pray Like Jesus

So the question always arises, what am I to do if they don't want unity? Keep on seeking unity with them, keep on praying for unity, begging the Lord for unity, and desiring unity. Here is what you will always find and always receive when you seek unity, and that is love. Unity is a guarantee flow of love from God's throne to you, because you are being just like Jesus. These disciples weren't in unity, they were only a few hours before fighting over who would be the greatest, but that didn't stop Jesus from praying for unity, and I would suggest to you, His prayers were answered, because we later read they were all in the upper room in one accord. But I can guarantee you this, you pray for unity and the love of God will flow out to you, because God loves and honors unity. And eventually, if you keep praying for unity, it will come, just like it did for these 11 as we see on the day of Pentecost. Don't stop saying hello, stay lowly regardless of how they blow you off, or look down at you, you just keep being like Jesus.

Acts 2:1 (NKJV) ¹ *When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.*

More in Unity – More we Know His Love / Divided against Brother – then Divided against God

And, just another way of saying it, the more you are in unity with other believers, the more you will know God's love, and we will continually see that declared through this passage today. Also, the less I am in unity with others, the less I am in unity with God, because every believer is part of His body, and so if I am divided against my brother who is part of God's body, then I am divided against God Himself.

Encourager & Prayer

How to have unity practically? Jesus shows us right here, prayer! Pray for unity, and God's heart for unity will break forth in your heart, and prayerfully spill over into that person's heart too. Another I might add that is pure power, and that is with all sincerity, be an encourager to anyone and everyone you can, because those words of encouragement will draw hearts together.

The Glory God Give Us – His Name (v.22)

John 17:22 And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:

Staggering Statement / I Believe it was the Giving of His Name (My Son)

What a staggering statement, that the glory which God the Father gave Jesus, Jesus now gives to us. I will be the first to say, there is a depth here in this statement that not until heaven will we fully understand all that it means. There are so many avenues on which we see the glory of God, and the study is and would be inexhaustible. But I will boil it down to what I think one of the main meanings is that is the glory of the name of God.

Matthew 3:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”*

Matthew 17:5 (NKJV) ⁵ *While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!”*

God gives us His Name

I believe the glory given to us, is that we (once saved) get to bear the family name. Where God speaks about us, this is my son/daughter in whom I am well pleased. God loves you, this John 17 prayer is the holy of holies, as we read the heart of God fully exposed for us to see. He wants us to be one with Him, which can only happen by being in His family, and therefore if we are in the family we receive the family name.

Oh My Heart when I gave my Name to Renee

I can't tell you the joy, the overflowing of my heart when I gave my “name” to Renee on June 28th, 2002. This is going to be my bride, she is totally mine now, and when I give here my last name she is stuck with me for life 😊. It was a glorious day. And when she took my name, she received everything that was mine, my house, my car, my

bank account, even my closet. And so when we receive the family name, we receive everything that is, and He loves to give it.

Ephesians 1:15–21 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶ do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, ¹⁸ the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power ²⁰ which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

Of Course My Camden

And of course, oh the joy the day I gave Camden my name. How proud I was to tell the world, this is my son. And how proud the Lord is to say, this is my son/daughter. God loves you. His glory is in you, just like it is in Jesus.

Camden's Legacy – His Name

My son's name is Camden Graham Bollas. Camden after Camden Yards in Baltimore Maryland. People say wow you must be a big Orioles fan, and to which I am not. His name is from Camden Yards though. July 7-9, 2006 Franklin Graham put on a Gospel Festival at Camden Yards. We as a church made it our mission field, we went up to the city and did street ministry, we invited friends and neighbors, people served in various ministries such as follow-up counselors, ushers, office staff, set up and break down, our church was largely involved in some way or another, that was our mission trip for the year as compared to going out of country. We had 3 months of prayer leading up to it, we were deeply involved. Well we had insider information of someone who was working for the Graham team, and we were told that if Billy Graham's health was up to it, he was going to preach on the final day (Sunday July 9th). Well that morning, 5 weeks before the due date, Renee said I think this baby is coming today, and if he does, I am going to name him either Camden or Graham. So we went to the stadium, the Newsboy rocked (I think that was the beginning of the water breaking haha), and Billy Graham did preach, and it was (as of today still – 24May15), his last public crusade preaching. When we were leaving the stadium, a friend who knew the story said hey you still have 4 more hours to call him Camden or Graham. Well that night as I lay in bed, half in and half out of being awake, I hear Renee say, honey I think my water just broke. I rolled over and looked at the clock and it was still the same day, it was 11:45pm, and I said to myself – Camden Graham Bollas is on his way into this world. So Camden's name is the legacy of his parents. When people ask where his name came from, and when Camden will be asked, the answer will be this is the legacy of his parents, two people who gave their lives to tell the world about the gift Jesus Christ, it is what they lived for, it was their purpose for living, it was their whole being.

God Sends us Into World with 2 Things (His Name & His Word)

God sends us into this world with 2 things, His Name and His Word. With that, we have everything we need to overcome the world and to change the world. His name gives us His inheritance (Ephesians 1), and His Word is the power to change lives, starting with us first, and then those we give it (17:20). His word is the only thing in this world that comes with a promised blessing (Psalm 119). Beloved, stay in this word!

John 17:17–19 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth. ¹⁸ As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified by the truth.

Psalms 119:2 (NKJV) ² Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, Who seek Him with the whole heart!

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

God's Math of One – Statement of Love to the World (v. 23)

John 17:23 I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

Again – He pleads for Unity

Just like verse 21, again our oneness is His statement of love. He is 12 hours from cross pleading for unity. How will the world that Jesus is real? One way is they will look at the diversity among the believers and how we love

one another, how we have unity even though we are so different, and they will have to acknowledge that that isn't the way things go on this earth, and there has to be some other factor in play. We have so many church programs to do outreach, so many schemes, so many venues, so much money and efforts to witness to the world, yet Jesus gives us the surest outreach to the world, and it is the witness of our love one for another, for the world will be drawn to that.

John 13:34–35 (NKJV) ³⁴ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Jesus Longs for You – God Loves You (v.24)

John 17:24 "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

God Desires You – Longs for You

Verse 24 – I desire – Jesus has a yearning for you, He desires you to be with Him, He has affections for you. God loves you! Can you read that, can you see that, Jesus "desires you", He is longing to be with you. Jesus is all powerful, and in a few hours He will speak and whole armies will fall over. Here is God who walks on water, has full control over the universe, raises the dead, heals the sick, yet he desires.

John 18:1–6 (NKJV) ¹ When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. ² And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. ³ Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. ⁴ Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?" ⁵ They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am He." And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them. ⁶ Now when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground.

To Desire – is to not Be in Control

Do you realize to "desire" is to not be in total control. I don't desire that donut that is in my hand, I eat it. I don't desire sunshine when I am walking in, only when it is raining and snowy. But we see Jesus having a longing for something, and that someone is you. You can wrestle this through with all the theology in the world, but you miss the point here, and that is Jesus desires you, longs for you, as you are separated from Him right now as you live out your days on earth.

Longing the Bride / Longing for Renee when I am Away

He is praying for future believers remember? We read through the scriptures that those who come to Him are His bride. I remember how I long for Renee to be my bride, I wasn't in total control, even with all my rugged good looks, and humor (and yes I am being totally funny right now), I wasn't in full-control, I had to wait upon her response to reciprocate my love for her. And so Jesus today, for you who have yet to accept His marriage offer, He longs for you, He desires you. And, I might add, for all who have received Him as Lord and Savior, He is longing for you to be with Him physically right now. Although Renee is my bride, we are one, when I travel or she travels, I immediately begin to have a longing to be with her, I miss her, she is my bride. So too the Lord is longing for you. He loves you – soak in that thought today Christian.

Revelation 19:9 (NKJV) ⁹ Then he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!' " And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God."

John 14:3–4 (NKJV) ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And where I go you know, and the way you know."

That is Psalm 139:6 Stuff

This is Psalm 139 stuff, knowledge that is so wonderful I can't comprehend it all.

Psalm 139:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it.

[Only a Righteous Father can Make Us Righteous \(v.25\)](#)

John 17:25 O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me.

The Need to be Righteous

Righteous Father, God is a righteous God. Righteous means (virtuous, upright, innocent, faultless, and in a judicial sense – guiltless). For us, that takes us back to John 3:16, and only Jesus can make us righteous.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Our Wedding Day – is the Cross

Our wedding day and place to Jesus was at Calvary's Cross 2000 years ago.

[God's Love In Us is the Only Way we Can Love like Him \(v.26\)](#)

John 17:26 And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

Only His Love in Us – Could we Love Like Him

Only His love in us, could we ever love like Him, it is humanly impossible to love like this, with the supernatural presence of God in us, for God is love.

1 John 4:8 (NKJV) ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.

The Believer Has – As Read in John 17

So we have heard the heart of God in this glorious chapter 17 over these last few weeks, and here is a summation of what we the believer have, because of Christ:

- the same life as Christ 17:2
- the same security as Christ 17:11
- the same separation as Christ 17:14
- the same sending into the world as Christ 17:18
- the same union as Christ 17:21
- the same glory as Christ 17:22
- the same love as Christ 17:23

Does God Father answer Jesus' Prayers?

Do you think God answers Jesus's prayers? Of course you do, hear the prayer of Jesus for you in this chapter, He loves you your precious in the sight.

Some Trying to Figure Life Out

Some of you are trying to figure out how you're going to make it, this thing that's before you, you don't know if you're gonna make it, you wondering can you get through this, but here's Jesus praying for you. Do you think God answers His prayers, will He answer Jesus is prayer? You know he does, and you know He will. You are going to make it my friend.

Communion Service

Let's close this study out with "remembrance"

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

Encourage You

I would encourage you to just take some time this weekend, and read over the whole chapter 17 and reflect on the prayer of our High Priest for you. And then, read it once daily through this week, and let it just saturate you with all that it says. You will be blessed. **End of Study**

Chapter 18 John 18:1-9

Passion Week

We have been studying for the last few months what has become referred to as the “Passion Week”, the final week of the life of Jesus as He takes on the sin of the world. The week started with Jesus Triumphant Entry into Jerusalem where Jesus where the people thought He was coming in to be made King (John 12), and what has been known as the “Upper Room Discourse” as Jesus taught His disciples deep things from His heart, (chapters 13-17). Today we start then what I have to call passion day, passion hours, as Jesus is probably somewhere around 6-9 hours from the cross.

Passion Chapters / Read them Regularly

We are so blessed in that we have this whole book. But in times of 1st century church, they would get fragments of the whole gospel, and then sections. We are told through various history sources that the first “section” to make distribution was the “passion” chapters. Can I encourage you to read the passion chapters on a regular basis, the account of His arrest, crucifixion, and the resurrection, and you will continually be brought back to the basis of your faith.

Acts 2 – 4 Pillars / Breaking of Bread (Remembering the Cross) / Cross puts Everything in it’s Place

Acts 2, is the foundational passage of the early church, and this church body here at CCAAC. We shape our ministry here around (The Word, Fellowship, Breaking of Bread, and Prayer). And the breaking of bread is the remembrance of what Christ did for us, it isn’t just communion, but the whole remembrance and celebration of the cross and resurrection. Come back to these chapters often, and you will find continual power in you walk, because as you remember the cross, everything else in life falls in their proper place.

Acts 2:40–47 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.” ⁴¹ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. ⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers. ⁴³ Then fear came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ⁴⁴ Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, ⁴⁵ and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. ⁴⁶ So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, ⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Let’s read our passage for context, and then come back and look at it verse by verse.

John 18:1 When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered.

John 18:2 And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples.

John 18:3 Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons.

John 18:4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, “Whom are you seeking?”

John 18:5 They answered Him, “Jesus of Nazareth.” Jesus said to them, “I am He.” And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them.

John 18:6 Now when He said to them, “I am He,” they drew back and fell to the ground.

John 18:7 Then He asked them again, “Whom are you seeking?” And they said, “Jesus of Nazareth.”

John 18:8 Jesus answered, “I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way,”

John 18:9 that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, “Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none.”

John 18:10 Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.

John 18:11 So Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?”

John 18:1 When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered.

Blood flows from Temple into Brook / Millions in Jerusalem making Sacrifices

Verse 1, Jesus and his disciples cross over the brook Kidron. Kidron means dark, black, murky. The Kidron, is a valley that has a small stream, a brook, flowing through it, and it is located between the temple and the Mount of Olives. Historians tell us that the blood from the Temple would flow down the hill into the Brook Kidron. It is the Passover at this time. It's estimated from the historians that there are somewhere close to 1.5 million, even as high as 2.5 million people crammed into this city at this time. What they will be here doing during the Passover is many and much sacrificing of animals as prescribed in the Old Testament. At this point you can imagine with a couple of million people going to make sacrifices at the temple, the blood is flowing through the brook, Kidron. One mathematic estimation is that during the sacrifices of the Passover lamb that the blood would flow so high that it would reach a man's ankles; that was the estimate. Now, the Passover lambs are not being sacrificed at this point. That's still several hours away (at twilight on the next day according to Exodus 12). But there is much animal sacrifice going on at the temple during this time that this brook, Kidron, would be flowing with red blood. It's interesting; it's a brook meaning that it has water.

Romans Built 3 Reservoirs / Jesus Pierced - Blood and Water

We are told, by historians again, that the Romans built reservoirs there in that area so that they could release the water during these feast celebrations so that the water would flow the blood down the brook and away from the city because it was such a health hazard to have all that blood right there in the city. How fitting as we look at that, when Jesus will be on the cross, he will be pierced, and blood and water will flow from him, and it's the sign and picture of new life. It's the sign of the birthing when the water breaks. The blood is the sign of the cleansing for the forgiveness of sins and washing us white as snow. We see this as Jesus will be the Lamb of God, John 1:29, "Who will take away the sins of the world."

John 19:33-34 (NKJV) ³³ But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. ³⁴ But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!"

Jesus seeing Blood – Reminded what it to Come

This must weigh heavy upon the heart of Jesus as he's walking over the Kidron, and He's seeing the trickle of blood, the reminder of the massive blood that's to come with all the Passover sacrifices being sacrificed starting the next day, starting at twilight and ending before the sun goes down so that the Jewish people can celebrate their Passover supper. Just for a note, Jesus probably did not celebrate the Passover supper (with a lamb), he celebrated what we call the last supper because the Passover supper has to have a lamb, the Passover lamb, and Jesus is the Passover Lamb, as he will be the final, last lamb, and he will be the Lamb that takes away the sins of the world.

Jesus has Visual reminder of What is to Come / He still Crosses Over – Our Hero

As Jesus crossed over this brook, no doubt he sees blood and water. He's probably crossing over by a small bridge. Some people say he's walking through the blood in the water, and his feet would be covered with blood, but they did have little bridges made over the Kidron valley, just like we do. They're very sophisticated, they're not backwards and unsophisticated people as many would think they would be 2,000 years ago, but that's not the case. The reminder, as Jesus crosses over, sees the blood in the water, he's heading into the garden of Gethsemane, where he's going to sweat drops of blood as he prays, "If there be any other way," and we know the coming out of that prayer. There will not be any other way except for him to go to the cross, and so he has this visual reminder of what's before him, but as we see our great Savior, our Hero, our King, he still crosses over into what is before him. That's a mighty God, and that's the depths of love that he has for us.

John 18:2 And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples.

Judas knew Where to Find Jesus – Because it was His Lifestyle

Verse 2, Judas knows where to find Jesus, he didn't need a spy to track Jesus to know where He was going to be.. He knew that he would be in the garden praying because this is Jesus' custom, his practice, his lifestyle. It was easy for Judas to find Jesus. He didn't know where Jesus was going to be, that Jesus said, "Okay, Judas, I'm heading over to the garden for prayer so that you can find me and we can fulfill this prophecy," no, not at all. Judas knew where to find Jesus because this was Jesus' lifestyle.

Christian – Do People know where to Find You / Does Satan Know where to Find You

Hey, can I ask you Christian, do people know where to find you, do they know where to find you when times are troubling in your life, do they know what you're lifestyle and your habitual habits are? As for me, people know you're not going to find me anywhere on Sunday morning, except in Church. You're not going to find me anywhere on Tuesday night, except in prayer, but what is our lifestyle that people know where to find us? I would ask you, does Satan know where to find you, and what I would answer is he does. Satan has entered into Judas, and he knows where to go find Jesus because he knows Jesus is going to be in the garden praying, connecting to his Father, as was his custom and practice.

Don't be Surprised when House is Blowing Up on Sunday / Work on Tuesday / Satan comes to Disrupt

Listen, Christian don't be surprised on Sunday morning when it seems that your whole house is blowing up. Don't be surprised Tuesday at work when it seems like it's the worst day of work of the week. It's always going to be the worst day of the week because Satan doesn't want to get you to come to prayer. He doesn't want you in the place of fellowship, and he will always try to disrupt whatever it is that's going to keep you from the spiritual things, whether that's coming to the men's Bible study, the women's Bible study, the youth group, the evangelistic outreaches, all those things. He knows where to find you, he's going to come with all the distractions that he can have to disrupt that so don't be surprised, be prepared. Jesus was prepared because he didn't let anything, anyone interrupt his lifestyle of prayer and fellowship with the father.

John 18:3 Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons.

Clubs and Torches – These guys Heavily Armed

Torches were pieces of wood with strips of cloth that were dipped in tar or oil and of course a lantern was filled with oil. Weapons we know from other Gospels are swords and clubs these guys are heavily armed.

God's in Control - Judas Receives Troops / No one Stops God's Purposes / VRIF Signoff

Verse 3, Judas is coming with a detachment of troops. Notice the word there, it says having received, so he was granted this troop from the Roman government, and that's just amazing that it shows how in control God is over this whole situation, that he controls that, that Judas receives the detachment. You know I find it so interesting how God moves who he wants to move for his purposes and there's nothing that anyone can do to stop that. I remember when I was leaving my job at the space center to go to Bible College and they had offered voluntary layoffs, and you would get one week of pay for every year of work, and you would keep your medical benefits during that period, so I knew I was going to Bible College. I said, "Hey, I'm going to get 6 weeks of extra pay, which that could equal almost half of the semester salary, and then I would also have medical insurance during that period of time. I remember going to the director who had to sign off on your voluntary layoff, and I brought it to him, I handed it to him, and he looked at me with total disdain, and he's like, "This isn't for you, voluntary layoffs are for our employees who have given their whole life, 25, 30, 40 years. It's not for young people like you who have only been here, like yourself, for 6 years." He goes, "I'm not going to sign this. You don't deserve this." Again, this was equivalent to close to a semester of tuition, and so I just stood there. I didn't move. I just stood there staring at him, waiting for the Lord, and he, this director, then reached over, snatched the paper out of my hand, and started to sign his name on the slip for voluntary layoff, and I'll never forget him as he signed it going, "I have absolutely no idea why I'm signing this," and he put the dot on the paper, and he handed the paper back to me, and he walked out. Of course, I knew, "I know why you're signing it because this is what God's will is for me, and

you will comply to what he wants to do." Here's Judas, he gets this detachment of troops, and he comes to find Jesus in the garden.

Cohort – 600 Soldiers / Full Armor – Swords & Shields / Loaded for Bear

Maybe your scriptures say, "A cohort," and that's accurate. What we know is a cohort is one-tenth of a company, and we know a company, from historical writings, is 6,000 plus soldiers. What we know here is Judas is coming with 600 Roman soldiers, all in full body armor, all dressed, ready for battle, because that's how they rolled in those days. Soldiers were soldiers, just like they are today. They've got shields, they've got swords, they've got battle gear; they're ready for a fight. Judas also comes with a detachment of the temple police, and they don't have swords, but they have clubs, and hence as we see where it says, "They come with weapons," the weapons would be a mixture of the soldiers had swords, and the temple police had clubs, and either way, they hurt, and here comes how many temple police, but they're coming also, and they are loaded for bear.

Roman & Israel hated Each Other / Total Disdain / United over Common Enemy / Fear of Uprising/Noses

I find something interesting here in that the Jewish religious leaders hated the Romans. They hated the Roman government. They disdained the Roman soldiers occupying their land, which was their God-given land, so they have absolute hatred toward Rome, but here they come, Roman soldiers, Judas, with temple police, and officers from the temple, and Pharisees, and it's amazing to me how enemies will unite over a common enemy. Here you've got two people, two groups, that absolutely hate each other, but for the sake of more hatred towards Jesus, they'll join forces, and it's more so the Roman government, they're going along with this because their fear of Jesus and the uprising. Of course, the religious leaders, they're joining forces with Rome because they fear Jesus is going to steal their popularity, and they fear that people are going to follow Jesus, and therefore it's going to impact their nickel and noses because they want the pride of the people saying you're wonderful, and of course they love the comfort and ease of the money that comes with that, so here they are, they unite for one common foe.

Why Important – We are All we Got / John 17 – to Be One / Why do Christians Battle? / Make Part of Prayer

Why is this important to you is because the last words Jesus spoke to us just a few verses ago in John chapter 17, was his continual prayer, and his continual message to us, that we may be one, because you know why, the world has a common foe, and if they hate Jesus, they're going to hate you as he told us in John 17, and that's why Jesus says, "You're all that you have is each other," and so then I'm totally dumbfounded when churches and Christians battle, divide, backbite, and bicker amongst one another. When here comes Rome and here comes religion that come to tear us down and destroy us. Hey Christian, Jesus prays that we might be one. Make that part of your prayer and get into the place of prayer that you might be one with Jesus, and one with the church, one with your brothers and sisters.

John 17:20–26 (NKJV) ²⁰ "I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me. ²² And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: ²³ I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me. ²⁴ "Father, I desire that they also whom You gave Me may be with Me where I am, that they may behold My glory which You have given Me; for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. ²⁵ O righteous Father! The world has not known You, but I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me. ²⁶ And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them."

600 Soldiers for 1 Carpenter & 11 Fisherman / God's Enemies don't Underestimate Him – Don't You

Here they come, 600 soldiers, plus who knows how many temple police. They've got lanterns, they've got torches, they've got swords, they've got clubs, they're loaded up for bear, and here they come for who, this carpenter turned preacher? Isn't that pretty amazing that they would bring that much firepower to come get a carpenter and a handful of fishermen? If God's enemies don't underestimate him, and that's what we see here, they are not going to underestimate what the potential of Jesus Christ is and can do, and if God's enemies don't underestimate him, why do we? We should see, believe, and live, and apply the power of the God of the universe, who has the power of the universe surging through his veins. We should come with the same belief that these Romans and religious leaders did, that he is able, that he is mighty, and we should look at him and know that he can do whatever we ask him to do in accordance with his word and his will of course.

Do You need Work in Your Marriage – Addiction – Temper / Do You think you Can't Love your Enemy

Don't underestimate the power of your God. Look, and see and receive that he is mighty, that he can do whatever we ask him to do. Do you need a work of God in your marriage? He has the ability. Don't underestimate that he can't heal that marriage, and revive it, and make it bloom again. Do you have an addiction problem? Do you feel that there's something greater in control than you have control over? Then don't underestimate that your God has the power to overcome that, and to beat that, and to defeat that, just like he will at the cross. 600 will come, but he will defeat them, and beat them, as he will rise again on the third day. Do you think you can't love your enemy? Do you think you can't have one with that brother and sister? Don't underestimate the power of God because here we see the enemies of God didn't, and we shouldn't either.

Lanterns & Torches / Both Professional & Common Need Jesus

I know it looks just like a run on words here talking about lanterns and torches, but it is significant, as we look at it, is the lanterns were for the refined man, the lanterns were for those who were well off. The torches were for the common man. What a torch was a stick of wood with some cloth wrapped around the tip that had been dipped in tar. A lantern is more sophisticated. It was made by pounding metal into a bowl, and then filling that bowl with oil. It was something that took some time; it took some labor to make. Why do I make that point? Jesus Christ, and the need of him, isn't just for the common man, that person who is on drugs, that criminal, that person who is bound up in sin. Jesus Christ is needed for the man with the lantern, the women with the lantern, the professional, the well-off, the person that people look at and go, "Oh they're a good person. Look how refined they are. Look how they've got their life in order. They have a nice house. People call them boss, and look at them there, they excel at work, they achieve at work, they're respected, they have what appears their whole life is together." Every man and woman from the country club to the crack house needs Jesus Christ.

World wants to Silence Jesus – Both Professional & Common

The world may want to silence Jesus, just like these refined, sophisticated men who were coming, and just like those thugs with the torches are coming, they want to silence Jesus because even Rome doesn't want to hear that there's a King greater than their king. Here they come, and it's the same today. The so-called good person, "I don't need Jesus," but they also say, "And I don't want to hear about Jesus," because if they hear about Jesus then they have to deal with Jesus, then they can't help, as we see, his spirit's going to blow upon them, and they will see that they are not right with him, and they do need a savior, they do need help. So often the people with the torches, the common man, they don't want to see Jesus because they don't want to turn either. They like it, they're happy, they're content in their sin, they just don't want to be bothered with him, so they just want to silence Jesus, and nothing has changed today.

Professional you No Greater than the Addict / Both of You need Jesus

I will tell you, if you're a professional, white collar, blue collar, executive, professional, whatever it may be, you need Jesus Christ because your sin still separates you from him. If you're, what you know as a common man, maybe just a worker bee, maybe someone who is bound up in drugs and an abusive life or whatever that may be, you need Jesus. Jesus is the answer for the professional, to the common. Jesus is the answer from the refined man to the rough man. Jesus is the answer to those who carry lanterns, and those who carry torches.

John 18:4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?"

John 18:5 They answered Him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, "I am He." And Judas, who betrayed Him, also stood with them.

Jesus is Done Praying / Jesus says it is Time! – Ready for The Cross

Verse 4 - Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward -, we know from other Gospel accounts, that what happens before verse 4 is the garden prayer, and Jesus is in the garden, He's praying, He's sweating drops of blood in this prayer, and He says, "If there be any other way let this cup pass before me," but Jesus went into that prayer knowing that there is no other way, and He's saying to these guys, in verse 4, when he sees the troops coming, "Let's get up and let's get going guys. It's time." Jesus is ready to get to that cross. It's what he came for.

Matthew 26:39 (NKJV) ³⁹ He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."

Altar or Altar? / Sacrifice or Marriage / Ready to Exchange Wedding Vows

He came for you, he came for me, and it's funny how one word can be looked at in two different ways, and let's just look at the word altar. In the Old Testament we see an altar where sacrifices would come and be placed before the Lord, and lifted up before the Lord, and someone, something, some animal would die. Here Jesus, he's going to an altar, it's a cross, but Jesus' altar isn't like the altar we see, even though it's true, Jesus' altar is like a wedding altar. It's where the wedding vows are going to be exchanged as he's going to say, "I vow this day to love you. I show and I'm demonstrating my love for you," Romans 5:8, "I'm going to come, and I'm going to take your sins, and I'm going to promise to lay down my life for you, that nothing can separate from you," and here for us, our marriage vow is at the altar of the cross. It's where we say I do, and Jesus can't wait to get to the altar because he loves you, and you're precious in your sight. For the joy that is sent before him, he can't wait to get to the altar. Interestingly, some people when faced with repentance of sin, they see the altar as a place of sacrifice, and not marriage, and say no way. Even Christians lose their way (if you would), as they continually feel that living the Christian life is just one big sacrifice, things they "CANT DO" so they feel, missing the altar of marriage.

Romans 5:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

I, Jesus, take thee Ray, to be my bride, and before God the Father and these witnesses I promise to be a faithful and true husband."

Who are you Looking For? / Question for Every Man & Woman

Verse 4 - and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?" Jesus says, "Who are you looking for," and that's a question for every man today. Who are you looking for? What are you looking for in this world?

Jesus of Nazareth – A Slur (other side of Tracks) / Try to Make Him Common

In verse 5, they say, "Jesus of Nazareth." How interesting, they don't say Jesus, the one who was the miracle worker, not Jesus the one who walked on water, not Jesus the feeding of the 5,000. They said, "Jesus of Nazareth," which is a slur. Jesus of Nazareth was to make him common. Nazareth was the other side of the tracks in that region. It was the place that was looked down up. It was the place that they considered the least of the least lived. They come and they called him Jesus of Nazareth, not Jesus the one who claims to be Christ, not Jesus the one who did mighty works. Hear what they want to do. They just want to make him a common man.

Jesus Answers – I Am – Same One at Burning Bush / You are Not Arresting a Common Man – But God

We're going to see Jesus will answer, "I am." If you look at your Bible clearly and closely, you'll see that word he is in italics because it's not there. It was added by the translators to make the sentence flow, but in the original language it is simply, "I Am," and that takes us back to Exodus chapter 3, where God says, "I Am that I Am." It's God's name for himself when Moses said, "Whom shall I say sent me," he said, "Tell them I Am sent me," and 7 times through this passage, this gospel, 7 times Jesus identifies himself as the "I Am." Jesus is making it clear that he is the I Am; he is the same God of the burning bush. He is God, and so when these people to come to arrest him, and they want Jesus of Nazareth, he's going to make it clear, "I'm more than Jesus of Nazareth. I am God. You're not arresting the common man, you're arresting God," and he's going to allow it for his purposes. Here we see again, people want to take Jesus and make him less than God. They want to bring him down to just a man who walked on this earth. They want to make him common, and they don't want to lift him up, and make him who he really is, God.

Exodus 3:1–6 (NKJV) ¹ Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. ² And the Angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. ³ Then Moses said, "I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn." ⁴ So when the LORD saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." ⁵ Then He said, "Do not draw near this place. Take your sandals off your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground." ⁶ Moreover He said, "I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.

Understand This – A Man Named Jesus Christ Walked the Earth 2000 Years Ago / Liar – Lunatic - Lord

Let's say this, and let's understand this, a man named Jesus Christ did walk this earth 2,000 years ago, and he claimed to be God, and he's making it clear right here in this passage. We have 3 choices of who is. He's either a liar, because if you're not God, you're a liar, or a lunatic, and basically I would say if you claim to be God, you're more than a liar, you're a lunatic unless you are the Lord God, so three choices, Jesus was either a liar, a lunatic, or the Lord. Today, every major news media, everyone agrees, a man named Jesus walked this earth 2,000 years ago. That's a fact, and so what's up for the final decision, who are you looking for, is who was he? Was he a lunatic, or is he the Lord?

Christian – Don't make Him Common / He is the God who Overcome Death – Created Universe

For you who remain in the Lord, would you always remember, be careful not to make him common again. He's Lord of all. He's the Lord who can change your life. He's the Lord who can raise from the dead, and he's the Lord who resurrected and is seated at the right hand of God, and he lives to make intercession for you. He's more than Jesus of Nazareth who walked the earth 2,000 years ago. He's the God who lives right now today to make intercession for you. He's pleading your case. He's praying for you to make it. Go back to John 17 and see his heart, and his passion for you. Look at those high points as he prays for you, and see more than Jesus of Nazareth, see the God who loves you, and is the one you are looking for in your life? He wants you to be looking for him. It's the only place that life, and the fulfillment of life will ever be found. He wants you to look and he's asking you today, "Who are you looking for?"

John didn't Mention Garden

What is interesting is that John the writer of this Gospel, was there with Jesus, in the inner prayer circle there in the Garden, but he doesn't record it. The Holy Spirit doesn't record it more specifically as all Scripture is given by inspiration of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17). It is interesting, and wise is the Bible teacher who remains silent when the Scripture is silent, because I have no idea why God choose not to record it here via the eyewitness John. But I do see this, sometimes God is not going to give me every detail, and rather than spend countless hours debating and speculating (as so many people do with lofty theological discussions), I am to receive and apply what is known and before me, and for this passage, Jesus is ready for the cross, for you and for me, He loves you, willingly died for you.

Mark 14:32–34 (NKJV) ³² Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here while I pray." ³³ And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and He began to be troubled and deeply distressed. ³⁴ Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch."

Luke 22:41–44 (NKJV) ⁴¹ And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, ⁴² saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." ⁴³ Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. ⁴⁴ And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

John 18:6 Now when He said to them, "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground.

John 18:7 Then He asked them again, "Whom are you seeking?" And they said, "Jesus of Nazareth."

John 18:8 Jesus answered, "I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way,"

John 18:9 that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, "Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none."

3rd Time – I Am / God is Standing Before You

In verse 8, Jesus once again, now for the 3rd time, says, "Who are you looking for," and he answers with, "The great I Am," when they ask, "We're looking for Jesus of Nazareth." He makes it clear again, you're looking for Jesus of Nazareth, but you're standing before God himself. He is saying the I Am statement, and here they stand before the burning bush, the God of the burning bush back in the Old Testament, Exodus chapter 3, is the God that is standing before them right now, the same God.

Declaration of Deity

The word "he," in italics, Jesus is actually saying, "I AM," "Ego Eimi" —a declaration of deity. Let there be no mistake, you are not arresting a man, you are arresting God. Funny how 2,000 years later people still trying to arrest God, put Him on trial, bringing accusations against Him of being unloving, trouble makers, judgmental, and someone who just needs to go away. In 1963 the court case wasn't against prayer in school, it was about God in

the school. Then in 1990's it wasn't about the 10 Commandments in Government buildings, it was about God in government buildings. And the cases now have moved into our military, and into the business owners, and it will go on and on, as people continually put God on trial.

Imagine the Moment – Robes are on Fire

Verse 6 - "I am He," they drew back and fell to the ground - Jesus speaks and they fall down. Can you imagine the moment? Imagine the massive confusion that's going on? You've got to picture this that these men are all in full body armor. They've got shields, they've got body armor, they've got swords, they've got torches, they've got lanterns. When this happens and they fall down, they're falling on top of one another. Their body armor is falling onto rocks and making noise. It's falling onto each other and making noise. Lanterns are busting and breaking open. Robes are catching on fire. Somebody's torch is burning someone else's hand. This is an amazing scene to see this, and yet they get back up, and not one of them saw something supernatural happened. They all see something that they took as natural, and they can quickly adjust themselves back into the natural, and not question, did something supernatural just happen.

Ever had a God Moment – Don't Explain it Away

Have you ever had a God moment, you go, "I think that was a God moment," and then you walk away and you go, "Nah that was just something natural." I'm telling you what, it was a God moment, and we need to remember the God moments, and we need to go back to the God moments. Let me tell you the God moment, and some people will say that person is making every moment into a God moment, that couldn't have been a God moment, but you know what, I'd rather someone say this was a God moment, than someone take something that was amazing that happened and they just simply turn it into something that's natural. Have you had a God moment? What is it? Tell me, share it with me.

No Man – Government – Program – Stop Work of God!

I am, and they fall down, for the name of Jesus Christ every knee will bow and every tongue will confess. No matter how strong, no matter how mighty, no matter how much you think you're in control, at the name of Jesus Christ 600 soldiers fall, and at the name of Jesus Christ the religious police fall and his feet. 600 Roman soldiers is the symbol of might and power the greatest military, greatest government on the planet, falls at his feet. The high priest falling at his feet. This picture that no government, and religion will ever conquer Jesus Christ. The only thing that can stop God from working in your life though, is by your free-will you saying "no" to God.

Kidron – Means Black / The Black Canvas

Kidron means black and how fitting as our sin is a black backdrop that God uses the painter's canvas of the first bright color that he will paint is going to be red but that red will also include a yellow the glorious color of a sunrise resurrection, and then blue the color of heaven as He ascends into heaven.

Gethsemane – Oil Press / Has an Altar to Get to – Vows to be Shared

Gethsemane means oil press and hear Jesus is going to be pressed. It's not until you're pressed that you truly ever know what's inside of you Jesus is going to be pressed, and at the end of his pressing he's going to produce the purest perfect oil for all men to be anointed with, forgiven of their sin, and filled with the Holy Spirit. He says its time, lets get this thing started, because He has an altar to get to, vows to be made, He has a bride to wed.

Hebrews 1:8-9 (NKJV) ⁸ But to the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom." ⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; Therefore God, Your God, has anointed You With the oil of gladness more than Your companions."

End of Study

John 18:10-27

Picking Up in Verse 10

So we are picking up our verse-by-verse study here in verse 10 of chapter 18. Here is how the week has played out (even though we have been on this week for months – my my how rich the Word of God is):

- Sunday (10th) Nissan – was Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and the people thought He was going to overthrow Rome and establish His kingship in Israel (John 12)
- Monday (11th) Nissan – the other Gospels tell us was the day Jesus overturned the tables in the Temple because they were making merchandise of the people, and that becomes significant in our story today we will see.
- Tuesday (12th) Nissan – Jesus returns to the Temple and the religious leaders challenge Him on what authority He has to do and say the things He does. Jesus makes them look foolish, and more fuel added to the fires of the hatred towards Him.
- Wednesday (13th) – the Gospel's the best we can tell are silent of what happened that day. I would say the calm before the storm.
- Thursday (14th) Nissan – Jesus and the 12 celebrate the Last Supper, Jesus washes the Disciples feet, Judas leaves to go set the betrayal in action, Jesus teaches what is known as the "Upper Room Discourse", Jesus prays for His disciples (and you and I) we studied in John 17, and last week we read of Him crossing over the Brook Kidron (with the blood of the sacrifices flowing under His feet, but our Hero still crossed over), He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane if there be any other way, but there is no other way our sins could be forgiven, and now Judas has shown up with 600 Roman soldiers to arrest Jesus and we pick up in verse 10.

The Sword of the Flesh (v.10)

John 18:10 Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

10 comes after 9 / The Same Voice that Spoke Verse 9 – Same that Calmed the Sea / Still Peter draws Sword

Verse 10 comes after verse 8&9, that must be pretty impressive to you of my mastery of the biblical text. Verse 8 is Jesus speaking. The one who spoke and they fell over. Here in verse 10, right after Jesus speaks, we see Peter wielding the sword. Verse 8, the same voice that commanded the sea to be still, the same voice that says Lazarus come forth from the grave, the same voice to the lame man, "Arise and walk," the same voice that has just spoken and said, "I am," and 600 Roman soldiers fall over. The same voice that said, "Let them go," had spoken but Peter draws the sword still.

John 18:8-9 (NKJV) ⁸ Jesus answered, "I have told you that I am He. Therefore, if you seek Me, let these go their way," ⁹ that the saying might be fulfilled which He spoke, "Of those whom You gave Me I have lost none."

2 Swords we Carry (Flesh & Word) / 1 is Living & Powerful – Other always makes a Mess

I see two swords that we carry with us at any given time and we draw each of them at any given moment for any given situation. One sword is the word of God as told in Hebrew chapter 4, the word of God is living and powerful and sharper than a two-edge sword. The other sword is the sword of the flesh. It's a sword that every time we draw it, we make a mess. One comes with the breath of God and moves in people even those that are against him, maybe against us, that comes and does the same work every time. But the other one, the sword of the flesh when we wield it and pull it out and use it, it does the same every time as the picture here in John 18 as Peter cuts off the high priest's servant's ear, it just makes a mess. Every time we get into the sword of the flesh and wield it on people's lives, we make a big mess.

Hebrews 4:12 (NKJV) ¹² For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

Peter had sword – Luke 22

Why did Peter have a sword? Because Jesus had previously said, "Times are changing. Be prepared for hostility. Buy a sword" (see Luke 22:36). Perhaps Jesus spoke figuratively, but Peter must have taken Him literally.

Luke 22:36 (NKJV) ³⁶ Then He said to them, "But now, he who has a money bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one.

Here is Problem Getting in the Flesh – Eyes off Jesus on to Flesh

There you see when we get in the flesh the problem is everybody takes her eyes off of Jesus and puts it on to the work of the flesh. Jesus just said I am, he just establish he's God, this is what the garden was all about, but now everybody's looking at the ear flopping on the ground

We can All do Something – but is it the Right Thing

We all can do something in zeal, but is it the right thing to do.

Whole Point of Garden is "I Am" – Now they Miss That

Jesus just said I am, and now the whole point of the garden is being distracted. We should be careful about getting in the flesh because it nobody sees God.

Catch the Scene / Fisherman with Sword / Malchus' Ear / 4 Crosses / Jesus Fixes our Mistakes

Catch the scene: Judas comes into the Garden of Gethsemane with a cohort of Roman soldiers behind him. Peter wakes up, sees a need, and grabs his sword. A better fisherman than a swordsman, Peter manages only to lop off the ear of the high priest's servant. Jesus puts the ear back on this servant; Jesus healed the severed ear as much for Peter as for Malchus, for if Jesus hadn't healed Malchus, there would have been four crosses on Calvary the next day instead of three as Peter would have been crucified for attempted murder. But just as the Lord does with us, He healed Peter's mistake, making it impossible for Malchus to press charges. The same thing happens in the heavenly courtroom. But Jesus has forgiven the very sins of which Satan accuses us. Therefore, there is no record of them because His blood has cleansed us from all sin (1 John 1:7). Imagine the trial of Peter as they accuse him of whacking off Malchus' ear, and the judge would be looking going "which ear is missing you say?". And, the good news is that Jesus still cleans up our mistakes; how often I have made a mess of things and thrown myself on this story and cried out to the Lord, Lord as you fixed Peter's mistake, please fix this one I have created.

Luke 22:50 - 51 (NKJV) ⁵⁰ And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. ⁵¹ But Jesus answered and said, "Permit even this." And He touched his ear and healed him.

1 John 1:7 (NKJV) ⁷ But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

God Circumstances (v.11)

John 18:11 So Jesus said to Peter, "Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?"

Peter versus 600 / Courage & Zeal

I tell you what happened when Peter unsheathed his sword, 600 swords were unsheathed in response as these are trained soldiers, so it is now 600 to 1. It appears Peter is just woken up from the sleep was groggy and not aware of the situation and we can talk about what he shouldn't have done, but I will say this, that's a man of courage who will draw a sword against 600. We see in his heart I will die for Jesus. I respect that I love that zeal, even though it is zeal without knowledge.

Wonder if Peter thought Jesus should Help

I wonder if Peter looked over at Jesus with the look, "ah you going to help me here, or are you just going to leave me hanging, if You could do that speak and knock them over thing again this might be a good time to do it"?

Ever Misunderstand What God is Doing in Your Life? / He is Always doing According to Greater Glory

Verse 11 - Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?" - Ever been there, misunderstanding what God's doing? See no one understand that Jesus is set on, and must drink the cup, which is referring to the wrath of God against sin, the cross, as sin must be judged. Have you ever questioned what He's doing? Everything that you had you thought was right, the right thing to do, but it doesn't seem to go the way you thought it should? BUT you

see God going a different way than you can understand, and it good lesson example here for us, we are not always going to understand what He's doing. There are time He will be doing things beyond our understanding. And He is doing them for the greater glory, He is doing them according to what brings eternal and lasting glory, not just immediate relief of the situation.

Maybe You Bitter at God

Maybe you are bitter or resentful towards God, you were expecting Him to do something and it turn out the way you thought it would and you think He has failed you. May you hear the Lord speaking to you today, that He understands your hurt, but hear His heart saying I am working something greater, beyond what you can see right now, trust Me, come to Me, and lets walk together through this pain you have. He is doing them according to what brings eternal and lasting glory, not just immediate relief of the situation.

Wielding the Flesh – Flesh is Ahead of the Mind / Byproduct is Confusion & Chaos

Pretty much now that's the case when the flesh is wielding, the flesh is ahead of the mind, confusion and chaos is always the byproduct. Just like we see here. Peter with the sword in the flesh.

This Week I have Been All out of Sorts – Dealing with Skin Cancer

This week I've been all out of sorts dealing with the skin cancer. I'm like, "Lord, I don't have time for this, I'm overloaded already." You know what, it's also quite the killjoy having that in the back of your mind. It took me about a day for the Lord to break through all my confusion and chaos it was causing in my life. Then the Lord just spoke to me through all this. He said, "This isn't a life circumstance, it's a God circumstance, and I'm in it." Life circumstances are this is what life has dealt me and this is what I have to deal with. It's wherever the wind blows us, that is the outcome we feel. But God circumstance, is whatever He decides, He's in control, and I can rest and know He knows what's best for me.

Look at Life Circumstances – feel some Type of Control over Outcome

Seeing the life circumstance, I feel like I have some kind of type of control and input in this, and eventually I become depressed and defeated because I say, it is hopeless because this is too big for me to control, it is out of my control because I am merely human. Worst of all, in a life circumstance, I sit back and I constantly review, "If only I didn't do this. If only I would have did this." You can just live in the pain and agony of wishing that you could have the opportunity to do it over again. But in the God circumstance, it doesn't matter what the past is. He holds the present and the future. I'm not sitting there worrying about what I could have done and should have done. But I sit here now and take confidence and total trust in this. He is taking care of this and he's going to use it for His glory and that nothing will happen to me, that He hasn't determined his best.

Don't Stress over All Possible Outcomes of the Future / Just Trust He Holds the Future / It is Total Freely

I don't need to stress about what all the possible outcomes are and what every day of the future holds. I just know that every day of the future He holds. I don't know what my future holds but I know who holds my future. I can just rest and trust in that. Lord, You're with me in this and you're going to take care of these things. You know what, it's been totally freeing. Now, I can just go back on and live life again, I can just go and enjoy, that you know what, I have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and none of these things should move me, He's going to take these things. He's going to use them for His glory and one of the glories is going to be for me to see in a more glorious way, to be drawn to Him in a more glorious way.

We choose – Is this a Life or God Circumstance? / He has Allowed it – He is In IT

We can all have the choice. Am I going to let this be a life circumstance and feel that I have to get involved and have to take control of this and control how it ends up? Or, I'll just let it be a God circumstance. He's allowed it to enter into my life. He saw this coming way before I saw it. He knew it before the foundations of the world that I would be dealing with this, and that he's in the midst of it and he's going to do what he wants to do and it's always something for my best interest.

Bound by Love (v.12)

John 18:12 Then the detachment of troops and the captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him.

Not Sure What Bound With / Doesn't Matter – Bound with Love

Verse 12. They bound Jesus. We don't know what they bound him with. The scriptures just said that he was bound. Was he bound with chains, was he bound with ropes? We have no idea what he was bound but I tell you this, Christian, they could have bound him with shoestrings, they could have bound with sewing string if they wanted to because Jesus wasn't going to break them. Jesus wasn't bound by their chains or rope, whatever it maybe. He was bound with love, not some article that the world tied him up with. He was bound and tied up with the love that he has for me and for you and so once again the world still doesn't understand him, they bind him, they challenged him, they arrest him, they put him on trial all the while not knowing he's not bound by them, he's bound by his heart of love for you and me and nothing was going to keep him from that cross to buy our sin back and redeem us.

Christian – He Loves You

He's bound by love. He loves you. Christian, would you just know that today and live that today, live in the God circumstance, wherever you are and whatever you are and whatever's going on in your life, God loves you and you are precious to him. He demonstrated on the cross 2,000 years ago.

I Wish the World would Put Jesus on Trial

I wish the world, I wish every man, woman would put him on trial just as they did 2,000 years ago. I wish they would put him on trial for the first charge that everyone lays against him, "How could the God of love," they say, "allow this to happen?" In essence what they're asking is, "Is he really a God of love?" I wish the world would put him on trial, Satan would gladly be the prosecuting attorney, Satan the accuser. He will come with 1,100 exhibits, that's just on day one. He'll say, "Where was he when your mother died?" , "Where is he in your cancer, does he care that your kid is sick right now, where was he when your husband left you, how could a God of love allow all these wars, diseases, and famines?" He will try his case with 2,000 years of exhibits of all the pictures and demonstrations that they will claim that God wasn't a God of Love and God wasn't there.

Jesus has 1 Exhibit – the Cross

When he rest his case, Jesus will come and represent himself and he'll come and stand before all with just one exhibit, the cross. The case will be closed. The cross, the holy God coming down to die for my sins, your sins, he entered this fallen world with all of its fallen ills such as wars and disasters and he demonstrated his love there upon the cross to show this is how much he loves us.

Sewing String – because Nothing Stop Him from the Wedding Altar / Exchange Vows

Jesus could have been bound by sewing strings or shoestrings because it was love the bound him there, nothing was going to stop him from getting to that cross because he had a wedding ceremony to get to and that was by you and me, back his pride. It was the place that he vowed his love to us, never ending and an endless supply of it, "This is how much I love you," and he goes and he trades place and he takes our place upon the cross for that should have been our punishment for breaking the holy commandments of God's law, but God demonstrated his love for us that with Jesus, while we were still yet sinners, Jesus Christ died for us. Jesus gladly came because this is how and where he got his bride. The cross is a wedding ceremony. It's where Jesus exchanged his vow, "I, Jesus, take you to be my bride for my holy father and I will love you for all of eternity."

Selling Out for Trinkets (v.13-14)

John 18:13 And they led Him away to Annas first, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas who was high priest that year.

Annas High Priest – Passed to Sons

High Priest from A.D. 5 to A.D. 16, Annas turned his position over to his son-in-law, Caiaphas, in favor of the temple concessions that needed his full attention and were making him a wealthy man. So here is Jesus, standing before the one whose livelihood He had dared to threaten when He overthrew the tables of the moneychangers and drove the oxen out of His Father's house (John 2).

Annas Hates Jesus – Turned Tables on Monday / 3 million a Year

Verse 13, Annas, he hates Jesus because Jesus came in and turned over the tables in the Temple just 3 days earlier, for the second time in 3 years, and that was disrupting all the money changers and all the money that was being made in there. It is estimated by historians that in that day and time Annas was making \$3 million a year there off the people in the temple. First, people would come to the temple to make sacrifice and the sacrifices had to be perfect as prescribe in the Levitical law and of course, Annas would have his worker-bees look it over and make up if they had to, some imperfections that you can't use this one, but that's okay, we have some spotless perfect lambs that you can use right here in our pen and of course those one cost 10 times more than the one the person had just bought. Here's people coming to worship God, having a heart for God and to make a sacrifice before him and here's Annas making money and merchandise off the people.

Still Today – People take Money over Jesus

Annas knows Jesus well. Jesus has cleansed the temple twice and disrupted business twice. He can't wait to put an end to Jesus because it was money, which was Annas' big thing, it was money and he was making big bucks and Jesus was bad for business. It's sad today, for many people still today, they're putting their money over Jesus. They're putting their little trinkets and baubles before Jesus. They're selling out Jesus for the petty things of the world. Many people, again, worship Jesus, "I don't want to get involved I the things of Jesus because I got money to make and I'd rather be serving my own self, wants and needs, create, making money rather than following Jesus."

John 18:14 Now it was Caiaphas who advised the Jews that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

Caiaphas Prophecy

Verse 14, Caiaphas, he did prophesy but he didn't prophesy knowing that he did else he would have followed Jesus himself.

John 11:45–52 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ Then many of the Jews who had come to Mary, and had seen the things Jesus did, believed in Him. ⁴⁶ But some of them went away to the Pharisees and told them the things Jesus did. ⁴⁷ Then the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered a council and said, "What shall we do? For this Man works many signs. ⁴⁸ If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation." ⁴⁹ And one of them, Caiaphas, being high priest that year, said to them, "You know nothing at all, ⁵⁰ nor do you consider that it is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and not that the whole nation should perish." ⁵¹ Now this he did not say on his own authority; but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, ⁵² and not for that nation only, but also that He would gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad.

Peter's Denial (v.15-18)

John 18:15 And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest, and went with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest.

Courtyard – Closed in with gate

Verse 15, the high priest's courtyard, it's closed in with a gate and so wasn't just opened for anybody. You had to know somebody. John knew somebody, the one who's writing this gospel. He later let Peter in, we'll see

Zebedee's Fish Stand

The disciple spoken of here is John. There is a spot in Jerusalem traditionally and historically identified as Zebedee's fish stand. With boats and servants, Zebedee was a successful entrepreneur. According to history and tradition, it would seem as though this is how John knew the high priest, for, you see, Zebedee and his boys would sell the fish they caught in the Sea of Galilee to the wealthy folks in Jerusalem—salted fish from the north was considered a delicacy in the days before refrigeration. With the revenue from their thriving temple concessions, the priestly family could afford to eat at Zebedee's fish shop, where, according to tradition, John worked as a young boy or teenager.

John 18:16 But Peter stood at the door outside. Then the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to her who kept the door, and brought Peter in.

John 18:17 Then the servant girl who kept the door said to Peter, "You are not also one of this Man's disciples, are you?" He said, "I am not."

John 18:18 Now the servants and officers who had made a fire of coals stood there, for it was cold, and they warmed themselves. And Peter stood with them and warmed himself.

We All have Lived a Denial of Christ

Verses 16 through 18. We see Peter experiencing what everyone of us have experienced at some point in our life, maybe even in our week, feeling like we are distant from God and following him from a distance, the pressing in of the world that challenges us of our beliefs, and mocking and ridicule us for following what they consider a myth, and then last lastly in verse 18 we see warming ourselves with the fire of the world. We're all capable of this. None of us are above the life of Peter. This picture of Peter is a picture I think I've lived out many dozens of times in my life as I find myself drifting from the Lord because I'm scared about what God's doing and I'm not totally in agreement with it. This is especially true in my early walk with the Lord. How even the challenge of standing up for Jesus was frightening for me and how many times I just remained silent and didn't stand for him when someone made a comment about him that was derogatory. The fires of the world, a place where we go back to the world to find comfort and acceptance, and avoid the hard road. We're no different than Peter. We've all been there. Peter's story is just laid out before us but we can all put our name in this story.

Want to Distance from Jesus – Hang out with Wrong People / Psalm 1

Verse 18, you want to put distance between you and the Lord, hang out with the wrong people. That's where Peter is right now. He's hanging at the fire of the world with these people and you can be sure you'll be distanced from the Lord. Look at Psalm 1. We are told in another Gospel account that Peter gets challenge here at the fire because his accent gave him away. I just have to wonder, what was Peter talking about at the fire? We know he wasn't talking about the Lord, because that isn't what gave him away. Was he just joining in on the world's conversation, whatever the people of the world were talking about (sports, opinions, religion). As we look at Psalm 1, we see the slow spiral progression into the world when a person spends time in the fellowship of the world. Of course I am not saying we are to separate from the world, for how can we reach them with the Gospel, the point here is that the world gets to lead the conversation, and lead the influence, rather than the Christian setting the conversation and direction (which is towards God). Notice, first the man "walks" with the world, then secondly "stands" as he is no longer moving forward, and thirdly in the progression he is "sitting", he has now become immobilized because first he walked, then he stopped.

Luke 22:59–62 (NKJV) ⁵⁹ Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, "Surely this fellow also was with Him, for he is a Galilean." ⁶⁰ But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying!" Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. ⁶¹ And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." ⁶² So Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Psalm 1 (NKJV) ¹ Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful; ² But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night. ³ He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, That brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. ⁴ The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away. ⁵ Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. ⁶ For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish.

You have to Make Hard Decision / Separate from Them / Can't hang out in Those Places Anymore

Psalm 1, we have to make decisions and some of these decisions are going to be very tough and it's going to be severing relationship with people who put a distance between us and God. To spend time, to invest time with people who take us away from the Lord, we will have to make hard decisions of severing those relationships. If they are affecting you, you need to separate. You can't go and minister to them and coach and counsel them and lead them to Christ if you don't have the strength to stay away from what they're doing. You can't go hang out in the bars with them, you can't go hang out in the places that will bring you down. You can't allow those things or you'll be like Peter warming yourself with the fires of the world. You have to sever those relationships. Flee, youthful, lost and hang out with the people who are like minded in faith.

Paul tells Young Timothy – Flee Youthful Lust / Chase after – With the those Like-minded

Paul tells his young protégé Timothy, flee youthful youth, separate from those of the youthful lust, and look at the second part of that verse, but pursue (strive, chase after, run after in order to catch), “faith, love, peace”, and notice “with those” who call on the Lord. Paul tells Timothy, separate from those living the youthful lust things, and get yourself connected and surrounded with those who are like-minded, those seeking after the things of the Lord.

2 Timothy 2:22 (NKJV) ²² Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Cold Night

The Gospel account lets us know it was a cold night. Just for your consideration, have you ever work or worked out in the cold? Remember how long it took to reach a sweat? What a difference on a warm day, or a hot day. Do you realize what it would have taken for Jesus, the intensity of His agonizing in the Garden in order to sweat on a cold night? It gives us a glimpse of the degree of that prayer in the Garden, which was all over and about, me and you. Remember that when you make your “hard and agonizing” decision to separate yourself from youthful lust.

Luke 22:44 (NKJV) ⁴⁴ And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

The Word will Define who His Followers Are (v.19-24)

John 18:19 The high priest then asked Jesus about His disciples and His doctrine.

John 18:20 Jesus answered him, “I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing.

John 18:21 Why do you ask Me? Ask those who have heard Me what I said to them. Indeed they know what I said.”

No Witnesses to Accuse Him / Deuteronomy 19:15

Verses 20 through 21, notice, there's no witnesses to accuse Jesus. They didn't have one witness there to accuse Jesus. This is a totally, mocked trial, trumped up charges, all illegal, because they can never try Jesus in the daylight with true witnesses and true evidence because they know they would lose.

Deuteronomy 19:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ “One witness shall not rise against a man concerning any iniquity or any sin that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.

I think Jesus still Says Same Today – Want to Know My Disciples Ask about My Word

Verse 21, I think Jesus still says the same today, “Ask those who've heard my word and really that will answer who my disciple is, who my followers are.” Some people would say, “Well, I don't fully agree with that, what He said in His word, or I believe every word He spoke except these particular ones.” Those aren't his followers. If the Jewish leaders went out and asked people, and got those types of answers, they would let them go because they would see they are not wholly committed to Jesus. But, His followers are the ones who will say, “I heard his words and I will live by his words and I will follow his word.” If you say those things and I believe His word and I will follow His word then you are making a statement that separates you from the rest of the world, it is clearly black and white, there is no grey, everyone will know where you stand with Jesus Christ. History will show that the people that the Jews went and rooted out and killed (Book of Acts) were the ones who believed and stood on the Word of God.

People have Way of Staying in the Margin / World is Against – Those that are “CLEAR” where they Stand

The world has a way, people have a way of saying things generically enough to stay marginalized enough so that no one can pin them down specifically and say, He's clearly a follower of Jesus Christ." To say, "Jesus Christ said it," that settles it. Then here the world coming against just like it is right here and right now, the gloves are coming off.

John 18:22 And when He had said these things, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, “Do You answer the high priest like that?”

John 18:23 Jesus answered him, “If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?”

John 18:24 Then Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.

Esteem High Priest – What, God in Presence / Problem with Religion – Esteems Man & Rituals

Verse 22, here this guard smacks Jesus in the face, says, "How dare you talk to the high priest like this?" We have to go, who cares, high priest, whatever, God is in your presence and you don't even see it. That's the problem with religion. It stains men and misses God. Here they are esteeming the high priest, and missing God in their presence and it goes on for 2,000 years. People coming and worshiping the men of religion, following religion and esteeming its rituals, all the while never seeing God in their midst.

Again – No Witnesses

Verses 23 to 24, according to the law, Moses you are supposed to bring witnesses, that's what Jesus is saying here. Bear witness. Where's the bear witness? It's a legal term and according to the Law of Moses, they should hand witnesses and there were none.

Right Ear – Exodus 29

And speaking of hearing, it interests me that it was the High Priest's servant who ear was chopped off, and the blood flowed. For every high priest was to have their ear anointed with blood when they were installed as High Priest. The blood was placed on the right ear, the right hand, the right foot. It was representative of having your ear set apart to hear the voice of God, the hand to serve Him, and the foot to follow Him. I wonder when Malchus goes back and tells the High Priest the story, as he speaks he says I couldn't hear, and then Jesus touches my right ear and I could hear again. I think Jesus is sending yet another message to the High Priest, I can make you hear again, I can give you the ear you were purposed to have, one that hears Me and My heart. I pray for all of today, that we can hear the voice of God so very clearly, to hear His heart, to hear His words of love, and to feel His touch. It's easy for us to lose the sensitive spiritual ears with all the world is yelling in our ears at the same time.

Exodus 29:19–20 (NKJV) ¹⁹ “You shall also take the other ram, and Aaron and his sons shall put their hands on the head of the ram. ²⁰ Then you shall kill the ram, and take some of its blood and put it on the tip of the right ear of Aaron and on the tip of the right ear of his sons, on the thumb of their right hand and on the big toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the blood all around on the altar.

Anyone Here Today – Jesus Can Make you Hear Again / Religion is Deafening

Verse 10, Jesus puts the ear back on one the servant who Peter had just cut off. For anyone here today, he can make you hear again, he could touch your ear and you can hear him speak and you can hear his good news and his gospel again. The servant was the high priest's servant. He served the high priest there in the temple who had turned all the worship of God just into a religion, into a routine, into some common thing. That's what religion does. It turns the holy God into something common. Religion is deafening for it, drowns out in it, blocks the voice of God who wants to speak to us because we're so absorbed and taken up by all the religious rituals and all the things that religion wants to do and all the things that religion takes away from seeing God and hearing God and experiencing God. Jesus tells Peter, "Put your sword away." Jesus is telling Peter, "Stop what you're doing." Then Jesus picks up the ear and puts it back on and this man can hear again and now he can hear the words of God speak to him.

The Rooster Crows – A New Day is Coming (v.25-27)

John 18:25 Now Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. Therefore they said to him, “You are not also one of His disciples, are you?” He denied it and said, “I am not!”

John 18:26 One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of him whose ear Peter cut off, said, “Did I not see you in the garden with Him?”

John 18:27 Peter then denied again; and immediately a rooster crowed.

Rooster Crows – Their Eyes Meet / All the Promises Vanished / Beauty of the Rooster – It is a New Day

Verse 25 through 27, so the rooster crows and Peter's head goes and we're told in another gospel at that very moment, his eyes and Jesus' eyes meet. All the promises that, "You can count on me, I'll never fail you even if I have to die," and here's Peter denying the Lord and the rooster crows. You know what, Christian, you know what's awesome about roosters crowing, they signal a new day is coming. Even though Jesus says, "You'll deny me before the rooster crows, there's still a message woven in there for Peter, it's okay Peter, a new day is coming and some day you will rise and you will stand and you will be strong for me. The rooster crows not in condemnation, but expectation of a new day.

Luke 22:57–62 (NKJV) ⁵⁷ But he denied Him, saying, “Woman, I do not know Him.” ⁵⁸ And after a little while another saw him and said, “You also are of them.” But Peter said, “Man, I am not!” ⁵⁹ Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, “Surely this fellow also was with Him, for he is a Galilean.” ⁶⁰ But Peter said, “Man, I do not know what you are saying!” Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. ⁶¹ And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, “Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.” ⁶² So Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Christian Maybe You Failed & Denied / Today is a New Day – The Rooster Crows a New Day

Christian, maybe you failed him, maybe you denied him and maybe you feel like you're Peter and you just want to go and separate yourself and run as far as away as you can. But I would pray today that you would hear the rooster crow, no matter how far you've gone, no matter what you've done, that you hear the rooster crow and know it's not condemnation but it's a signaling of a new day is coming and may you embrace that new day and believe that God loves you and he has plans for you and he's going to fulfill those plans in you because you're precious to him.

God Loves You - He Died for You / So You would be His Bride / Have Zoe Life – How Abide

Christian, God loves you, he died for you, so that he might be able to marry you, to be his bride forever in heaven, and he wants to do a work in you today and he wants you to enjoy that John chapter 10 verse 10, the abundant life, the zoe life, the life that is beyond anything this world has to offer. You could have it today. How, just get up. That's all you have to do. Just get up and get back to Jesus and follow Jesus and let him do a work in you. You just have to abide, John 15, abide to him and you will draw off his life giving abundance and you will have that victorious Christian life that you always wanted and you can have it today. May you hear the rooster crow. It's beginning of a new day. Amen.

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

John 15:5 (NKJV) ⁵ “I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

End of Study

John 18:28-40

The Amazing Gift in Our Hand Today – Bible to Somalia

What an amazing gift we hold in our hands today. I read a story this week about a young man who lived in Somali, he tells of Jesus coming to him in his dreams saying I love you, follow Me. The man said he went to the head of the mosque and the Imam (the Muslim leader of the mosque) punched him in the face for even speaking about such a thing. He runs home dazed and confused, he runs into his bedroom and there on his bed is a three-foot cross covered in blood, and hears the words of the voice he knew in his dreams to be that of Jesus, saying “My blood is still fresh enough for you”. He yells to his mother to come to his room, and says how did this get here, to which she says you are crazy there is no cross (but acknowledges that she could smell fresh blood in the room). His younger brother who had followed to the room grabbed him and threw him to the floor and kicked him in the face for making such a reference to the cross of Jesus in their Muslim home. The mother tells him to leave and to never return to the home, to which he does. The cost to convert to Christianity from Islam in that region of the world is death.

He shortly thereafter gives his life to Christ, and starts secret meetings with other believers, knowing always that should they be found out, they shall pay for it with their lives. The first meeting had 12 people, the next meeting had 12 new followers from the prior week, but only 18 were there, as 6 from just the first meeting had been drug from their home in the middle of the night and decapitated. The message is clear, Jesus is not welcomed in this village.

Word comes to this young man that bibles can be found in Kenya, but death is the promise if a person is found with a bible. So he devises a plan to get the bibles from Kenya into Somalia, and that is that he knows that no Muslim will ever look inside of a casket, and never touch a dead body. So he makes his way to Kenya, which is close to 800 miles, and finds a casket that has a person who is from Somalia, that died in Kenya (which is common because of work or visiting relatives). He then gets the bibles from the believers in Kenya, places them on the bottom of the caskets, lays on them, then lays the dead body over top of himself, and then endures the 800 mile journey with the stench of a rotten corpse on top of him, over bumpy dusty road, to bring a handful of bibles back to the believers in his small group. People don't get to keep the bibles, they get to read them, memorize as much as they can, and they pass them on to the other new believers who come into the group. 800 miles with a dead body on top of him, just for a handful of bibles. He makes this journey on a regular basis, just so people can have this “Word” of God to read, knowing that someday he will get caught and killed for it.

So today, the gift we have received, the gift in our hands, may we glean from it all we can. Let's pray

Picking Up in Verse 10

So we are picking up our verse-by-verse study here in verse 28 of chapter 18. Here is how the week has played out (even though we have been on this week for months – my my how rich the Word of God is):

- Sunday (10th) Nissan – was Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and the people thought He was going to overthrow Rome and establish His kingship in Israel (John 12)
- Monday (11th) Nissan – the other Gospels tell us was the day Jesus overturned the tables in the Temple because they were making merchandise of the people, and that becomes significant in our story today we will see.
- Tuesday (12th) Nissan – Jesus returns to the Temple and the religious leaders challenge Him on what authority He has to do and say the things He does. Jesus makes them look foolish, and more fuel added to the fires of the hatred towards Him.
- Wednesday (13th) – the Gospel's the best we can tell are silent of what happened that day. I would say the calm before the storm.
- Thursday (14th) Nissan – Jesus and the 12 celebrate the Last Supper, Jesus washes the Disciples feet, Judas leaves to go set the betrayal in action, Jesus teaches what is known as the “Upper Room Discourse”, Jesus prays for His disciples (and you and I) we studied in John 17, and last week we read of Him crossing over the Brook Kidron (with the blood of the sacrifices flowing under His feet, but our Hero still crossed over),

He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane if there be any other way, but there is no other way our sins could be forgiven. Judas has shown up with 600 Roman soldiers and Jesus has been arrested, taken to the religious leaders (Annas and Caiaphas), trumped-up false charges have been laid on Jesus, and now the religious leaders are taking Him to Pilate the Roman Governor who is over Jerusalem, and we pick up in verse 28.

John 18:28 Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas to the Praetorium, and it was early morning. But they themselves did not go into the Praetorium, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover.

4th Watch (3-6am) / Enemies Continued all Night / Do we Pray Like there is a Lion at the Door

Verse 28 - and it was early morning - is actually a technical term, and it meant the last watch of the Roman night watch, which is the fourth watch. The fourth watch of the evening, 3-6 AM. So consider, his disciples could not watch one hour; but His enemies continued all night. We need to be people of prayer, because the enemy will not cease on his attack for your loved ones, we have to be a people who are a people of prayer and battling for them, regardless of the "so called sacrifice" it is to pray. The enemy we are told walks about like a roaring lion, seeking who he may devour. Christian, do we pray like there is a lion waiting outside the door?

1 Peter 5:8 (NKJV) ⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

Praetorium – The Governor’s Residence

Verse 28 - Praetorium - the name of the official residence of a Roman Governor. (In Western Jerusalem? Might be Antonia Fortress, just north of the Temple?)

Wouldn’t Go in – Else be Defiled

Verse 28 - But they themselves did not go into the Praetorium, lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the Passover - Here they are, about to kill the Son of God, yet worrying about defiling themselves by stepping on Gentile territory. If they did, they couldn’t eat the Passover that day.

12 Hours – Lay Hands on Passover Lamb

Here is what blows my mind, and that is that in 12 hours approximately they are going to lay their hands on the head of an innocent lamb there at their very Temple they preside over, the laying of hands will symbolize the transfer of their guilt and shame unto the innocent lamb who will take their place (as that is what all the symbolism is about – the trading of places of the innocent with the guilty). It is all a reminder of back to the first Passover back in Egypt when God had them place the blood of the sacrifice over the door of their homes, and when God saw the blood applied, the Angel-of-Death would pass over that home and not take the life of the first-born. All a foreshadow of what God Himself would one day do for every person individually as He would be the innocent lamb that would trade places with them/us the guilty, and when He sees the blood applied, guilt and death would pass over us, and we would be forgiven and given eternal life. Here is the Lamb of God who will take away the sins of the world right before them, all they had to do was lay hands upon Him to transfer their guilt and shame, and they would be forgiven and given, but they are in love with this sin, and can’t let it go, and therefore must kill Jesus to silence their conscience.

Can’t Miss the Celebration of Religion / Religion covers Everything / 6 Blocks and 13 bars

They will not eat the Passover meal if they were defiled so they won't go into Pilate’s palace because they don't want to miss out on their great religious festival. They want to come in tonight during Passover and have the great celebration of worshiping God of eating together a lamb the Passover lamb, they want to enjoy the family time, they want to have their prayers, they want to do all the religious things and yet here they are killing Jesus illegally before their celebration begins. I know it's pretty ridiculous and when we consider it hypocrisy of it all that I can relate to it very clearly personally myself. Growing up in a religion, and as long as I was doing my religion at the prescribed time, anything and everything else went. I remember myself that I would do my religion because there was a 5 o'clock mass, and so I would go to that, check my box, and feel I've done God's favor, did a favor to God (isn't that a ridiculous thought), and then I would walk home 6 blocks and 13 bars later, and finally arrived back at my house at 330 in the morning. It's funny how religion is so covered with hypocrisy and that's what we see here with these men.

Strain at Gnat – Swallow a Camel

Here they are, about to kill the Son of God, yet worrying about defiling themselves by stepping on Gentile territory. Jesus said it's crazy how people will strain at gnats but swallow camels (Matthew 23:24). And yet we do the same thing in religious circles. We are so careful about certain issues, but we risk missing the big picture altogether. We can be like that today in that some people/churches, are so focused on their one hot topic, they can't see the big picture. As noble and true as their hot topic is, they miss the big picture of God is love, God is Holy, He came to save sinners from their sin, and is the God who forgives and receives. But they can spend every moment on their topic, get all fired up and blog day after day on the social media sites about their one topic, they no longer see Jesus, they no longer experience Jesus, they no longer have that intimate relationship with Jesus like they once did. We need to be careful about getting so wrapped up in the hot topics, our personal agendas, that we miss the big picture of Jesus.

Matthew 23:24 (NKJV) ²⁴ Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!

John 18:29 Pilate then went out to them and said, "What accusation do you bring against this Man?"

The Background of Pilate / Slave to Governor / Strike 1 – Busts at Temple – Riot / #2 - \$ Temple/Aqueduct

Verse 29 - Pilate – Who is Pilate and how did he come into this place as Governor of the region. Well, when Herod the Great (who was King of Israel) died, his three sons became Tetrarchs, ruling over Israel. So lousy a ruler was Herod Archelaus, however, that the Jews appealed to Rome to send someone else to reign in his place. Rome answered with Pontius Pilate—a former slave who, through marriage and political maneuvering, became a Procurator, or overseer. The first time he came to Jerusalem, Pilate made a big mistake by bringing with him soldiers carrying busts of the emperor. As they approached the temple area with what the Jews considered to be idols, a riot broke out, and blood was shed. Rome sent a warning to Pilate, saying, "Get it together. We don't want this kind of ruckus." Thinking he could appease the people by building them an aqueduct, Pilate diverted funds from the temple treasury to finance the project. The Jews were infuriated. Rome heard about it and issued yet another warning: "You have two strikes against you, Pontius. One more and you're out." So Pilate, already on the political hot seat, goes out to survey the situation.

Other Historical Information

Archelaus was the second son of Herod the Great (the older son, Herod Antipater, was murdered by Herod the Great, along with other family members.) [Source: Josephus, Antiquities, 17:13.]. Archelaus' mother was a Samaritan (1/4 or less of Jewish blood) and was never accepted. After the death of Herod (4 b.c.?), Archelaus had been placed over Judea as "Ethnarch" by Caesar Augustus. Broadly rejected, he was dethroned and banished in 6-7 a.d. Herod Archelaus was replaced by a Roman procurator named Caponius. Then later Pilate

Pilate and Archeology

For centuries critics of the bible said there is no historical proof of a man name Pilate, and thus the bible was a fairytale. Well in 1961,

The Pilate Stone is the name given to a damaged block (82 cm x 65 cm) of carved limestone with a partially intact inscription attributed to, and mentioning, Pontius Pilate; a Prefect of the Roman-controlled province of Judaea from 26–36 AD. It was discovered in the archaeological site of Caesarea Maritima, in 1961. The artifact is particularly significant because it is the only widely accepted [not in citation given] archaeological find, to date, of an authentic 1st-century Roman inscription mentioning the name "Pontius Pilatus".

Rome & their Laws

Verse 29 - "What accusation do you bring against this Man?" – Pilate asks what are the charges. Rome may be heavy-handed, ruthless occupiers, but they were based on Law. They took great pride and concern in that things were to be done according to the Law. Roman law required three things:

- Specific indictment;
- Bringing accusers before the accused (Acts 23:28).
- Liberty granted to the accused to answer for himself (Acts 25:16).

What Accusations do You bring Against this Man today?

So Pilate asks, what accusations, what charges do you bring against this Man Jesus. And so the question still pertains to today, what charges do you bring against Jesus?

- Legalism – that His rules and laws are too confining to you and the way you want to live your life? Do you feel the police are too defining who say murder and burglary must be arrested? Of course not.
- Precious person know this, all of God’s Commands are to protect and to provide for you. All He says to not do, are to protect you from harm, and to provide for you peace and well-being. Drunkardness, keeps you from wrapping your car around a telephone pole, and providing for you no worries of the repercussions. Sex outside of marriage, to protect you from STD, unplanned pregnancies, of giving yourself away to someone who just doesn’t care about you but wants to use you; and to provide you a marriage that is what God has ordained for you, one that is built on a solid foundation, not a physical one that has no stability.
- You can go through all God’s commands, and you will see they are always for your personal well-being of protection and provision.
- Repent means to turn and follow, and Jesus says “follow Me”, and He will only lead you to what is good, what is great, and the only things He will ask you to turn away from are the things that will harm you and rob you.

John 18:30 They answered and said to him, “If He were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him up to you.”

John 18:31 Then Pilate said to them, “You take Him and judge Him according to your law.” Therefore the Jews said to him, “It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death,”

John 18:32 that the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled which He spoke, signifying by what death He would die.

Pilate can’t Afford Strike 3 / Pushes back on Jews

Pilate has two strikes, hoping to ward off yet another outburst, as he can’t afford strike 3, Pilate puts the ball back in the court of the religious leaders.

Cross not Stones / According to Prophecy / God is in Control

Verse 32 - signifying by what death He would die - Jesus had to be crucified, which was a Roman method of death. Had the Jewish nation had the authority, the method of death would be stoning. Jesus had to die on the cross, exactly as described in the Old Testament. Had he died at hands of the Nation of Israel, it would have been by stoning, but God purposed it to not be so, but by cross, so it was clear that He was in control from beginning to end.

John 3:14–15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

Numbers 21:9 (NKJV) ⁹ So Moses made a bronze serpent, and put it on a pole; and so it was, if a serpent had bitten anyone, when he looked at the bronze serpent, he lived.

Psalms 22:14–18 (NKJV) ¹⁴ I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me. ¹⁵ My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. ¹⁶ For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; ¹⁷ I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. ¹⁸ They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots.

Isaiah 53:12 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

Jews Lost Right to Capital Punishment in 30AD

Verse 31 - “It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death,” - In the year A.D. 30—two years prior to these events—the Romans took away the Jewish right of capital punishment. In response, the rabbis ripped their clothes, donned sackcloth, threw dirt on their heads, and said, “God has failed us. God has failed us,” as they marched through the streets of Jerusalem. Why did they cry, “God has failed us”? Because in the Book of Genesis, the promise was given that the scepter would not depart from Judah until Messiah came (49:10). But the basic foundation of government

was the ability to deal with lawbreakers, so the scepter had, indeed, departed—with Messiah seemingly nowhere in sight. Oh, but Messiah was there—right in their midst. They just didn't recognize Him.

*Genesis 49:10 (NKJV)*¹⁰ *The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people.*

Scepter shall not Depart / Until Shiloh Comes

The term "sceptre" refers to their tribal identity and the right to apply and enforce Mosaic Laws and adjudicate capital offenses: *jus gladii*. It is significant that even during their 70-year Babylonian captivity (606-537b.c.) the tribes retained their tribal identity. [Source: Josh MacDowell, *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, pp. 108-168.] They retained their own logistics, judges, etc. (Ezek 1:5,8). The term "Shiloh" was understood by the early rabbis and Talmudic authorities as referring to the Messiah. [Targum Onkelos, Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, and Targum Yerushalmi, *The Messiah: An Aramaic Interpretation; The Messianic Exegesis of the Targum*, Samson H. Levy, Hebrew Union College Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, 1974.]

The Hebrew word *shiloh* should be rendered "whose it is," that is, the sceptre will not depart from Judah until He comes to whom it belongs

Additional Historical Background on the Loss of Capital Punishment

When Rome took away the right to capital punishment, the legal power of the Sanhedrin was immediately restricted and the adjudication of capital cases was lost. This was normal Roman policy. [Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*, Bk 2, Ch. 8; *The Jerusalem Talmud*, Sanhedrin, folio 24.]. Again, the reaction of the Jews to these monumental events is recorded in the Talmud. Augustin Lemann in his book *Jesus before the Sanhedrin* records a statement by Rabbi Rachmon:

"When the members of the Sanhedrin found themselves deprived of their right over life and death, a general consternation took possession of them: they covered their heads with ashes, and their bodies with sackcloth, exclaiming: 'Woe unto us for the scepter has departed from Judah and the Messiah has not come.'"

[Sources: *Babylonian Talmud*, Chapter 4, folio 37; *Jesus Before the Sanhedrin*, by Augustin Lemann, 1886, Translated by Julius Magath, NL#0239683, Library of Congress # 15-24973; See also the monumental work *Pugio Fidei*, Martini, Raymundus, published by De Vosin 1651. For a detailed discussion of this reference see *The Fifty Third Chapter of Isaiah According to Jewish Interpreters*, preface pg. iv S.R. Driver, A.D. Neubauer, KTAV Publishing House, Inc. New York, 1969.]

Crucifixion – Invented by Persians (Grecian – Romans) / Not Stones by Cross / God in Control

Crucifixion was developed by the Persians (modern day Iranians), who thought the ground sacred, so they would put people on the pole, left to die, and to be picked apart by the vultures. A horrible and cruel way to die.

Invented by the Persians, picked up by the Grecians, and perfected by the Romans. Had he died at hands of the Nation of Israel, it would have been by stoning, but God purposed it to not be so, but by cross, so it was clear that He was in control from beginning to end.

Do you Believe God is in Control from Beginning to End of Your Life?

God is in control from the beginning to the end; do you believe that in your life personally today? Do you live in the peace and understanding that He is in control of your life from beginning to end?

*Philippians 1:3–6 (NKJV)*³ *I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,*⁴ *always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy,*⁵ *for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now,*⁶ *being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;*

John 18:33 Then Pilate entered the Praetorium again, called Jesus, and said to Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?”

John 18:34 Jesus answered him, “Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?”

Ultimately – The Charge is Jesus makes Himself King by Claiming to be God / Treason in Roman Gov’t

Verse 33 - “Are You the King of the Jews?” - Blasphemy was not a crime by Romans; there were three other charges (Lk 23:2, 5). Treason could not be ignored, because in Rome’s belief system, Caesar was god, and the only king of the world. To say otherwise was treason against Rome. The Jews knew this, so they make sure they let Pilate know that if you ignore this, we will go to Rome, and you will be done.

Luke 23:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Then the whole multitude of them arose and led Him to Pilate. ² And they began to accuse Him, saying, “We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King.” ³ Then Pilate asked Him, saying, “Are You the King of the Jews?” He answered him and said, “It is as you say.”

John 19:12–16 (NKJV) ¹² From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, “If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar’s friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar.” ¹³ When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. ¹⁴ Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, “Behold your King!” ¹⁵ But they cried out, “Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar!” ¹⁶ Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus and led Him away.

Don’t Cast Pearls to Swine

Verse 34 - “Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?” - Do you really want to know?” asked Jesus. As we have all discovered, a lot of times people ask questions without really wanting to know the answer. They just want to argue. You would be wise to learn whether people are asking for answers or asking to argue. If they’re asking to argue, don’t cast your pearls before swine. That way, you’ll avoid endless hours of argumentation that will get you nowhere.

Matthew 7:6 (NKJV) ⁶ “Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces.

What do you Decide Based On?

So the question for anyone who has not decided that Jesus is the Lord, and that is what do you base your decision on? Is it what you have investigated and searched through yourself personally, or what you have heard? Have you heard the world say “oh the Bible is full of discrepancies, it is obviously written by man”.

- Well, here is a good one, there is no man named Pilate who ruled over Jerusalem, how many believed that lie until 1961 when that stone was uncovered.
- Archaeologist have found in the Egyptian city that was known as Pithom, meaning the “sun-god”, it was one of the treasured cities built for Pharaoh Rameses II, that is the time frame of the children of Israel being enslaved to Egypt. They have found walls built where the first layers were bricks that had straw in them, and upper layers that were bricks with stubble, and top layers of bricks with mud only. Just as described in (Exodus 5).
- There are the Dead Sea Scrolls that were found there on the West Bank, 1947. They are dated to 150BC. All 39 books of the Old Testament are represented in some fragment of the Dead Sea Scrolls, and when compared to the current original manuscripts that the world had at that time, they are 99% accurate to them. Meaning, they don’t tell a different story than the Bible you hold in your hand today.

Don’t listen to what other people say about the Bible, including me, but search the Bible for yourself, read through it yourself, come to your own conclusion.

I read Every Book on Aviation to Get a Job

I myself had read books that would stack from the floor to the ceiling on aviation technology so when I got out of school I could get a job. I read books on aerodynamic, jet engine technology, environmental control systems, electronics, and all things pertaining to aviation. But one day as I sat at the pinnacle of aerospace, I was a launch technician/mechanic, I was the last to leave the launch pad on launch day, I closed up the cargo bay (with an armed soldier holding an M16 with order to shoot to kill if anyone tried to tamper with the satellite). I was the last one to touch the rocket, I was the one who removed the launch pins (that would allow the hold down system to

release the rocket mechanically), I had reached the pinnacle of aerospace. I was the youngest launch mechanic since the Apollo rocket days, and the few mechanics still left from the Apollo days said to me their wasn't a mechanic back then that had anything on me. I had reached the pinnacled of aerospace, I was launching military satellites that would pinpoint the location of Iraqi forces and terrorist cells. But one day I said to myself, I have read every book on aviation technology, but I have not even read this little book the Bible that supposedly has all the Words of God in it, who He is, what He thinks about me, and what He wants me to do. So I read it, and I become enraptured with the might of God, and of ultimately, the love of God that He sent His only Son to trade places with me, and there in my bed in Cocoa Beach Florida, with no preacher ever preaching to me, not evangelist ever witnessing to me, just me and this Bible, I received Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. That was February 1991, and I have never looked back since, because this Word 24 years later still speaks to me. And it will speak to you, I promise you.

My First Church – Fools Wisdom

The first church I went to (Calvary Chapel Merritt Island), the Pastor use to be in a traveling Christian Band, here is their cover song, and still the same song that opens his radio broadcasts.

*Got myself some wisdom from a leather-backed book
Got myself a Saviour when I took a second look
Opened up the pages and what did I find?
A black and white portrait of a King who's a friend of mine*

*Funny how when you think you're right
Everybody else must be wrong
Till someone with Fools Wisdom somehow comes along
His voice was strange and the words He said
I didn't quite understand
Yet I know that he was speaking right
By the leather-backed book in his hand*

Hey, hey, what a day!... Fool's Wisdom

*Got myself some wisdom from a leather-backed book
Got myself a Saviour when I took a second look*

For you who Witness

And, for you who want to share your faith, all over this building are the Gospel of John, take a handful, give them away, ask your loved one to read it, and pray for them as they do, and believe what it says, that they might see why it was written to them personally:

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

End of Study

John 18:35-40

3 Trials @ this Point

We finished in verse 34 of chapter 18 last week, we pick up there today in our verse-by-verse study. Jesus has been through three Jewish trials (mock trials and as illegal as they were) at this point. He has been sent to Pilate, and that is where we are in our study today.

Mock Trials:

1. Before Annas, John 18:12-14
2. Before Caiaphas, John 18:19-24
3. Before the Sanhedrin, Matthew 27:1,2
4. Before Pilate, John 18:28-38

Knowing All Things

But before getting back to that, I would like to read verses 1-4 again.

John 18:1-4 (NKJV) ¹ When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with His disciples over the Brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. ² And Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place; for Jesus often met there with His disciples. ³ Then Judas, having received a detachment of troops, and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, came there with lanterns, torches, and weapons. ⁴ Jesus therefore, knowing all things that would come upon Him, went forward and said to them, "Whom are you seeking?"

Jesus knowing all things, still went and endured all these things, for you and for me. Nothing could stop Him from that wedding date, the place to demonstrate His unconditional love to you and to me. To get there He, the King, will go through being disrespected, slapped, a bag put on His head and totally pummeled, then scourged, then mocked and ridiculed, and finally nailed with nails made of metal, driven through His feet and hands, the King of the Universe, all for you and for me.

Hebrews 12:2 (NKJV) ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

The King – not just a king

If He was just a king, that would be amazing to us, but the fact that He is the King (the One and Only True King of the Universe), well that is beyond comprehension.

Daddy be Quiet

The other day Camden came into my office while I was studying, and stood at the door and said Daddy I have something to tell you, and I interrupted him and said is it that you want give me ice cream, he said no, I said is it you want to take me to Rita's, as I kept interrupting him from finishing what he had come into say. He then says, "Daddy, be still, be quiet, and look at me, and then he points at himself, draws a heart with his hands around his heart, and then he points to me (signing to me - I love you). I am fully convinced that today the Lord is saying to us, be still, stop moving all around, running from place to place, task to task, be quiet and stop chattering about this and that, and just listen to Me, the King of the universe, say to you..... I love you.

Bricks without Straw

So many times I feel like the children of Israel, trying to make bricks without straw, expanding all this energy to accomplish so little. But here is a time to just sit at His feet, slowdown from all the rushing of the world, and just hear Him speak to us, minister to us, declare to us, His love.

Let's pick it up in verse 33 to give us context.

John 18:33 Then Pilate entered the Praetorium again, called Jesus, and said to Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?"

John 18:34 Jesus answered him, "Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?"

John 18:35 Pilate answered, “Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered You to me. What have You done?”

John 18:36 Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.”

You can be Sure – Pilate heard of Jesus

You can be sure that Pilate heard of Jesus. You don't have a miracle worker walking among you and not hear about Him. Even a rumor or urban legend of someone feeding 5,000 men you hear about it if it is in your region. Some man rides into the city you governor and all of the city rushes out to greet Him and herald Him as the king of that city, you hear and know of Him. This isn't Pilate's first hearing of Jesus.

Earthly Kingdoms based on (Force – Pride – Praise – Domination – Self-interest) / Christianity – to be Ruled

My kingdom is not from here: Augustine observed from this verse that earthly kingdoms are based upon force, pride, the love of human praise, the desire for domination, and self-interest—all displayed by Pilate and the Roman Empire. Christians must take care that they live and serve with the power demonstrated by the cross, not the power of Rome. The key to living in Jesus' kingdom is not found in trying to rule over others or things, but in being more fully ruled by God.

Me Speaking in Midst of Politicians

This week I found myself somehow among a community event that had hundreds of people, dozens of politicians present, and several politicians speaking, and somehow I was given 90 seconds to say something about this event. I watched and listened to the politicians, all who I am thankful for and respect for their service to the community, but as I watched and listened I observed all of them having to do the same thing, take their bows, get their credit, and build for the next election (none can ever rest for all live in the knowledge their security is only secure until the next election). What freedom it was for myself, to get up and simply give God glory, call upon Him for every need, and to sit back down knowing all things are His.

Look at Contrast

And what a contrast we see here in our story—Jesus the spiritual king and Pilate the material king. Two completely different approaches to life were thus revealed:

- One would do anything to receive power, honor, and glory. The other gave up his glory.
- One valued only what he could touch, taste, and feel. The other lived and taught that we are not to lay up for ourselves riches upon this earth.
- One ruled by material manipulation. The other lamented, “You are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs, but because you ate the loaves and had your fill” (John 6:67).
- One was arrayed in royal robes. The other had “no beauty or majesty to attract us to him” (Isaiah 53:2).
- On that crucifixion day, life was not as it appeared. Christ was in control, not Pilate.

Notice 4 “My”

Verse 36, Notice the four “My” statements that Jesus makes:

1. My kingdom is not of this world.
2. If My kingdom were of this world,
3. My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews;
4. but now My kingdom is not from here.”

Notice “NOW”

Notice very clearly the backend of this verse, Jesus did not say “My kingdom is not from here”; He said “but NOW My kingdom is not from here”. He is saying right now, I am not establishing My kingdom on earth. NOT NOW, but a day will come, that I will, but NOT RIGHT NOW. Precious folks, Jesus will one day, establish His kingdom on earth! Jesus is coming back for us, the kingdoms of the world we see today, will fall, they will bow down before Him, and there will be “A” kingdom that has no end! Isaiah 9, “There will be no end”.

Isaiah 9:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no

end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Daniel 7 – Revelation 11 / His Kingdom will Come

His Kingdom will come! Just as prophesied in the Book of Daniel the 7th Chapter, and as will be (Revelation 11), His Kingdom will come!

Daniel 7:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ "I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. ¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.

Revelation 11:15–17 (NKJV) ¹⁵ Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!" ¹⁶ And the twenty-four elders who sat before God on their thrones fell on their faces and worshiped God, ¹⁷ saying: "We give You thanks, O Lord God Almighty, The One who is and who was and who is to come, Because You have taken Your great power and reigned.

The King of the Universe is Being Crucified

And so it is today, that I do not want to rush through these verses, because we need to see this..... it is the King of the Universe going to the cross for your sin, it is the King of the Universe that is dying for you. How will that thought, how will that knowledge, determine how you will live today!

Pilate's Wife Dream

In Matthew's account, we are told that Pilate's wife (history says Pilate's wife was named Procula Claudia), had a dream about Jesus, and came and told her husband Pilate to have nothing to do with Jesus. Pilate should have listened to his wife (guys listen to what your wife says 😊). It is never good when your wife sends you a note at work, or interrupts you in the middle of meeting. She had a dream about Jesus and warned Pilate to stay out of the mess.

Matthew 27:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, "Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him."

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

I am reminded of another dream in the Bible, and dreams in the Bible always fascinate me; remember Joseph's dream? Jacob's dream? Well how about the dream of another great political power (greater than Pilate, Herod, and Caesar), it was the great King Nebuchadnezzar of the greatest world empire the world has ever seen. The story is found in Daniel chapter 2, the background is that the nation of Israel is in captivity to Babylon, the king has a dream and calls for his Wiseman to interpret the dream, which none can, except Daniel.

Study of Daniel Chapter 2 – Nebuchadnezzar's Dream of 4 Kingdoms

Daniel 2:25 Then Arioch quickly brought Daniel before the king, and said thus to him, "I have found a man of the captives of Judah, who will make known to the king the interpretation."

Daniel 2:26 The king answered and said to Daniel, whose name was Belteshazzar, "Are you able to make known to me the dream which I have seen, and its interpretation?"

Daniel 2:27 Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, "The secret which the king has demanded, the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king.

Daniel 2:28 But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these:

I can't – but God Can / Quickest route to the Shelf – steal Glory / Let Light Shine

Daniel didn't say, "I can tell you your dream." He said, "Only the Lord can give you the information and understanding you seek." I believe this was why Daniel was used from the time he was a young man all the way until he was eighty-five. He didn't take credit. The fastest way to see the work of God through your life stopped is to begin to think it's because you're special. Let your light so shine that your Father in heaven receives glory:

Matthew 5:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

There is a God in Heaven!

Verse 28 - But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets – I like this statement that Daniel says, “there is a God in heaven”, and then goes on to declare His glory and might. This world really needs more of that, statements made like that by Christians, where we say to people, “there is a God in heaven who.....”, and we fill in the blank that is applicable and appropriate for the situation.

There is a God in heaven:

- Who heals the broken heart.
- Who can heal your marriage.
- Who can deliver you from your depression.
- Who can deliver you from your addiction.
- Who can give you leading and direction in your life.
- There is a God in heaven who can.....

Latter Days – refer to Messianic Kingdom

Verse 28 - latter days – Is always used in the OT as a reference to the Messianic Kingdom, the End Times, and thus we know this dream has relevance to the Messianic Kingdom.

Daniel 2:29 As for you, O king, thoughts came to your mind while on your bed, about what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be.

Daniel tells king what was happening before the Dream / King knew Trouble / Billy Graham

The king can't sleep because he is thinking about the future. The king asked for an interpretation of the dream, but Daniel tells him what he was thinking before he even dreamed, and that was that the king was thinking about the future and what was going to happen in his kingdom. The king knew he was on top, but he no doubt knew there is always someone out there who isn't satisfied being number two. Do you know that every world leader in our modern day has asked Billy Graham privately what the End Times hold. You see as they made it to the top, they can clearly see from their view how fragile the world is held together, how it is a powder keg (better said a nuclear keg) ready to go off. From Nebuchadnezzar to Putin, to Bush and Obama, and Israel's Benjamin Netanyahu know that the world has no stability.

Daniel 2:30 But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for our sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart.

Daniel the Errand Boy / Very Freeing to me – Just an Errand Boy / No Pressure - Just Deliver

“The Lord is simply using me as an errand boy in order that you might have answers to those things about which you're concerned,” Daniel said to Nebuchadnezzar. Some people may not like the idea of being considered and ‘errand boy’, it may offend their pride; but I find it very freeing, very stress relieving. I, you, we are just errand boys/girls, we are just acting on behalf of the King, we are just messengers sent from the King, thus there is no pressure on us to perform, but simply deliver. For anyone that says they can't be used by God, deceives themselves, for all God is asking for us to do and be, are simply being errand boys/girls. Take this package, take this telegram, and deliver it this person. We've made ministry way more complicated than it really is.

The Dream

So now the dream.

Daniel 2:31 “You, O king, were watching; and behold, a great image! This great image, whose splendor was excellent, stood before you; and its form was awesome.

Daniel 2:32 This image's head was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,

Dreadful

Awesome – meaning dreadful, frightening, and scary. This image gripped his heart with fear.

Thighs – Side & Lion

Thighs – probably a more accurate translation is “side” so it the whole midsection (stomach area), however the scholars debate this word as to whether it means the abdominal area (which would include the loin area), or if it means the actual thighs. In either case – we are in the mid section of the human body.

Daniel 2:33 its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

Daniel 2:34 You watched while a stone was cut out without hands, which struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces.

Daniel 2:35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were crushed together, and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; the wind carried them away so that no trace of them was found. And the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

The Image

What a dream! Nebuchadnezzar saw a massive image of a man with a:

- head of gold,
- chest and arms of silver,
- brass belly,
- iron legs, and feet and toes a mixture of iron and clay.

Then a Stone / Great Mountain / No wonder king Troubled

Looking at this huge statue, Nebuchadnezzar saw a stone not cut with hands come rolling down. It hit the statue in the feet and pulverized it entirely. Suddenly, the stone became a great mountain that filled the entire earth. No wonder Nebuchadnezzar was troubled!

Notice regresses in Value – and Density

Notice that the head, arms and chest, belly, and the legs regressed in value. That is, gold (\$1200/oz) is of greater value than silver (\$17/oz), which is of greater value than brass (10 cents/oz), which is of greater value than iron (1 cents/oz). Also, the Specific Gravity (density) of each of these material gets less and less dense (which would determine it strength).

- Gold 19.5
- Silver 10.5
- Bronze 8.0
- Iron 5.0
- Iron + Clay 1.9

Four Metals speak of World History (as relates to Israel)

These four metals in this single image speak of world history in its entirety as it relates to Israel from the time of Nebuchadnezzar until the coming of Christ. This isn't Gentile history in whole, but Gentile history as it relates directly to the Nation Israel.

Now Interpretation

So now Daniel will give the interpretation of this dream.

Daniel 2:36 “This is the dream. Now we will tell the interpretation of it before the king.

Daniel 2:37 You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory;

Daniel 2:38 and wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all— you are this head of gold.

Clearly speaking about Kingdoms / Critics have Hard Time with Chp 2

Verse 36-38 make it clear that we are talking about world kingdoms, because it clearly says that we are. And then the following verses will declare the same. Again the critics have a hard time with Daniel 2 because it is so exact in its description of world empires. Some will even try to say it isn't talking about kingdoms, but how they get there I have no idea because it clearly and plainly says "kingdoms".

USA

Just a little side note for the leaders and people of the United States, we don't make it on to this statue, we are not a world empire, and thus we aren't even in the ballpark of seventy-five cents an ounce. The United States is great, and it is only because the God of this Country is Great – may this Nation remember who is Great, and this Nation is called to be the errand boy to proclaim the Light of Jesus Christ to the dark and lost world. It is why the original settlers came to the continent; not for religious freedom (they already had it in Holland), they came with the desires to start a Nation that would bring the gospel to the outer parts of the world. William Bradford, one of the Pilgrims on the Mayflower, and who would become one of the first leaders of the New World wrote this:

"We had cherished a great hope and inward zeal of at least playing a part, if only as a stepping stone for others, in the carrying forth of the Light of Christ to remote parts of the world."

Head of Gold

Babylon – Head of Gold / 605 BC / Monarchy

Daniel tells King he is the greatest kingdom. History books tell us that this is 605 BC (BC – Before Christ, the One who would divide time). The Babylonian empire was an absolute monarchy (meaning the king had absolute power – and his word was the only word and could never be challenged). Babylon had a greater effect on the known world than any other empire in history. That is why it was represented by gold.

Modern Day Iraq

The Babylon you read in the newspaper today (aka – Iraq) will one day again be a nation (but nothing as it once was), in the last days; and here we are today watching the reemergence of this once great empire before our very eyes – amazing! But in the end, it will be destroyed in one hour (no doubt a nuclear strike):

Revelation 18:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *standing at a distance for fear of her torment, saying, 'Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgment has come.'*

This dream goes to kings Head

This dream will go to the kings. But I just touch on the point that the kings head was filled with anxiety and confusion over this dream, but in the end the dream goes to the kings head and he will make a statue of gold that will exalt himself, and cause great trouble against the three boys.

Daniel 2:39 But after you shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another, a third kingdom of bronze, which shall rule over all the earth.

Chest and Arms of Silver,

Medes and Persians – Silver Arms and Legs /530 BC / Constitutional Monarchy

The Medes and the Persians would overthrow the Babylonians in 530 B.C. The Medes and Persians, represented by two arms of silver were a constitutional monarchy; which is a form of government in which a monarch acts as the head of state within the parameters of a written constitution (written set of rules), thus it is not as powerful because the king doesn't have absolute authority (like Nebuchadnezzar did).

Daniel in Lion Den – king can't overrule the Decree

When Daniel gets thrown into the lion's den, the king who gives the decree is Darius (king of the Medes and Persian Empire who by chapter 6 has overthrown the Babylonian Empire), and if you recall the story from the lion den, the king can't go against the law that was written, and even though he was king, he couldn't reverse the decree that was given, and could not over-ride the law.

Study Medes and Persians in Chp 7 / Will conquer in 70 yrs / Grenada defeating USA

Daniel will write more specifically about the Mede and Persian Empire in chapter 7. Daniel is prophesying of their rise to power several decades before they come to power, for at the time of this prophecy the Medes and the Persians are no threat to anyone. It would be the equivalent of warning the USA that in the near future Grenada is going to over throw us.

Belly of Brass

Grecian – Belly of Brass / Alexander the Great / 330BC – no more worlds to Conquer

The Medes and Persians would be overthrown by the Greeks in 330 B.C. by Alexander the Great had conquered the known world. Heartbroken and depressed that there were no more worlds to conquer, he died at the age of thirty-three from pneumonia he caught in a drunken stupor walking through the rain after an all-night party.

Contrast with Jesus at 33 / Living for Others

Contrast this with Another who died at thirty-three years of age, One who conquered sin and death, Jesus Christ. Jesus doesn't seek to conquer with iron fist, but to conquer the heart of every man, woman, and child. So we see that having the world will not bring peace, because living for self will bring depression because we are made to be like Jesus, and live and die for others. Jesus considered it a joy to die for others, may we at least find it a joy to live for others.

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NKJV) Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Oligarchy – Power rests in Small Group / Group accountable to each Other

The Grecian empire was represented by brass because, as an oligarchy, it was less powerful than the Medo-Persian Empire. An oligarch government is a form of government where the power rests in a small group of people (such as royal families, or military generals) and power is passed from generation to generation. No one person has the total authority, and the group is accountable to one another.

So exact – Jaddua the Priest / Jerusalem Spared

So exact is this description given by Daniel in this account that in 332 B.C. Alexander's conquest of Jerusalem: the Jewish historian Josephus writes that the Priest Jaddua showed Alexander the writing of the Book of Daniel where Alexander conquests were specifically referenced and thus Alexander spared the city from destruction.

Daniel 2:40 And the fourth kingdom shall be as strong as iron, inasmuch as iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything; and like iron that crushes, that kingdom will break in pieces and crush all the others.

Iron Legs, and Feet and Toes a Mixture of Iron and Clay.

Roman Empire – Iron and Clay / 50BC / Limited Democracy = swayed by Public Opinion

The Greeks would be unseated by the Roman Empire (around 70BC). Although they crushed everyone into bloody submission, the Romans, represented by iron, had a limited democracy, which made it even less powerful than Greece's oligarchy. A democracy is most often influenced by popular opinion.

Roman Empire – 2 Legs / 3rd Century – Diocletian divides Power / East – West Axis

How perfect the prophetic dream is in that the Roman Empire is depicted by two legs, and that is what happened in the late 3rd century AD, Diocletian established the practice of dividing authority between four co-emperors, in order to better secure the vast territory, putting an end to the Crisis of the Third Century. During the following decades the empire was often divided along an East/West axis. After the death of Theodosius I in 395 it was divided for the last time.

Daniel 2:41 Whereas you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, the kingdom shall be divided; yet the strength of the iron shall be in it, just as you saw the iron mixed with ceramic clay.

Daniel 2:42 And as the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong and partly fragile.

Daniel 2:43 As you saw iron mixed with ceramic clay, they will mingle with the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

Daniel 2:44 And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever.

Daniel 2:45 Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.”

After 4 Empires – Succession stops because in 70AD / doesn't start again until 1948

After four empires, the succession stops because in A.D. 70, the Romans annihilated Israel. They destroyed the Temple, slaughtered millions of Jews (it was written that the blood flowed like a river through Jerusalem), and then they utterly demolished the city. After that, the surviving Jews scattered and Israel was never again a sovereign nation—until May 14th, 1948 (when the UN made Israel a Sovereign Nation again). Suddenly, the prophetic clock miraculously started ticking again when Israel re-emerged as an independent nation (from AD 70 to 1948 Israel was always held by another nation – but in 1948 they regained their land and their National identity). And when that happened, slowly but ever so surely, began the appearance of the last world power, what we call the Revived Roman Empire. In May, 1950, two years later, six nations came together, formed the Treaty of Rome, and instituted a new, resurrected, Roman empire. They called it the European Common Market. And it has been gaining momentum every year, right before our very eyes.

Check out the EU's Website / Constitutions – Passports – Currency – President - Military

If you got time, check out the European Union's website. Constitutions are being written, identity cards distributed, unified currency being coined, figure-head presidents being appointed, even a multi-national army being formed. The Revived Roman Empire is forming before us today.

The Why – Economics and Security / Ireland get a Bailout

It gets easier and easier to see the “whys” behind why they would want to unite. First is militarily (lessons learned from Hitler picking off nation after nation); but today more than ever, for economic reasons. They must unite to have a diversified economic portfolio, and a unified currency that can compete against the dollar and the yen. Nations that are part of the Union are getting a bailout from the EU, and without the bailout, their economy could collapse. Economics, security, they need to unite. And so they are before our very eyes.

Just a Note – many tried to be World Powers – But none Have / Can't until Israel Regathered 1948

Just an interesting point, and that is that there has been many of nations who have tried to become world empires, but all have failed. From the Ottoman Empire to Hitler's empire, all have failed, and they are not mentioned in this dream because of two reasons; they didn't become world empires, but secondly, they couldn't according to God's design because the prophetic clock of Israel was stopped, and would not start again until Israel was a Sovereign Nation again, and it has, and thus the clock begins to tick.

Jesus calls – Time of the Gentiles / Living on Borrowed Time – Rapture Imminent

The time period from 70AD to 1948AD is what Jesus called “the times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24), a period of time that began in 70AD when Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus and the 10th Roman Legion army, and it ended in 1967 when Israel reclaimed the Temple Mount area. The “Time of the Gentiles” is the church period, it is when salvation is by grace for all who will receive it, it is when God is dealing primarily with the non-Jewish race (for the Jews eyes are blinded to Jesus – Romans 11). But when the “times of the Gentiles” is over, the focus shifts again unto the Jewish people. God is doing His work setting the pieces and people in place to do His great work

with the Nation Israel once again, and what does that mean for the rest of the world? We are living on borrowed time, for the Lord can return for His people at any given moment. The rapture is imminent my friends!

Luke 21:24 - 28 (NKJV) ²⁴ And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. ²⁵ "And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; ²⁶ men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷ Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. ²⁸ Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near."

1 Thessalonians 4:17–18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore comfort one another with these words.

Jesus is Coming

What is coming is the return of Jesus Christ, soon!

10 Toes – Ten Regions

The ten toes are a piece that is yet to be finished, and that is that the European Union will be comprised of ten regions, with ten leaders over each leader. You can liken it to the USA with its 50 States and 50 governors. Revelation concurs that they will be ten regions:

Revelation 17:12-13 *The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. 13 These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.*

Revived Roman Empire not as Strong as Original / By the Way – Rome never Defeated

This Revived Roman Empire will be strong on the earth, but not as strong as the original Roman Empire, thus why it is depicted as iron mixed with clay. By the way the dream is perfect in that the Roman Empire was never defeated by anyone, it pretty much just designated from within because of its immortality.

In time of Ten Nations – The Rock will Crush / Jesus is the Rock

In the time of the ten nations, a stone not cut with hands comes down and strikes the feet. The entire image is pulverized. The stone is the Rock of our salvation, Jesus Christ. Peter says that, to the Jews, He is a stone of stumbling (1 Peter 2:8). Indeed to this day, the Jewish people, for the most part, still stumble over Jesus being the Rock. To the Jews He is a stone of stumbling, 1 Corinthians 1 declares. To the Gentiles, He's a stone of crushing. He comes and grinds them out. Jesus calls for a man to fall on the rock, or else the rock will fall upon him.

1 Peter 2:7–8 (NKJV)

⁷ Therefore, to you who believe, *He is precious*; but to those who are disobedient,

*"The stone which the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone,"*

⁸ and

*"A stone of stumbling
And a rock of offense."*

They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

1 Corinthians 1:22–25 (NKJV)

²² For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; ²³ but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, ²⁴ but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵ Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Matthew 21:42–44 (NKJV)

⁴² Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures:

*"The stone which the builders rejected
Has become the chief cornerstone.
This was the LORD's doing,
And it is marvelous in our eyes' ?*

⁴³ "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. ⁴⁴ And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."

In the End – No Nation can Stand against Jesus

In the end, no matter how great they are or think they are, all the nations of the world will be wiped away, and only one Kingdom will stand on earth, and that is the Kingdom of Jesus Christ – Amen.

Don't get Fearful or Frustrated – we are Right on Schedule / Marriage Supper Next

Listen Beloved, we can look around and see things going on in our country and world and get frustrated, fearful, and the likes, but know and understand this – we are right on schedule for what God has planned to happen. If we are fearful, frightened, filled with anxiety then we need studies like these to be reminded that we are right on schedule for all that God is doing, and that means that His calling us home to Marriage Supper of the Lamb, the invitation have been sent, the date is imminent.

It will happen when Israel & Roman Rebirthed / It is Now – Do you know Jesus

It will happen in the time when Israel is rebirthed, and the Roman Empire revived. It is now folks. If you are here today and do not know that you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, then before you leave this place you must know that you know Him.

Daniel 2:45 Inasmuch as you saw that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it broke in pieces the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold—the great God has made known to the king what will come to pass after this. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure.”

I love Daniels Faith – he says that is the Dream!

I love the boldness and confidence of faith that Daniel has; he doesn't say is that the right dream king, but rather he says that is the dream and that is the interpretation!

[End of Study of Daniel chapter 2](#)

The King of the Universe is Being Crucified

And so it is today, that I do not want to rush through these verses, because we need to see this..... it is the King of the Universe going to the cross for your sin, it is the King of the Universe that is dying for you. How will that thought, how will that knowledge, determine how you will live today!

Wise is the Man – Wise is the Woman – Worship the King

Wise is the man, wise is the woman, who when they see the King, bow down and worship the King.

Camden – Jesus Returns Maybe on Father's Day

Camden – Maybe Jesus will come back this Sunday, for Father's Day. Amen, I like that thinking ☺

John 18:37 Pilate therefore said to Him, “Are You a king then?” Jesus answered, “You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”

You Got it Pilate

In other words, Jesus said, “You're right, Pilate.

Pilate Recognize Jesus as King

Pilate formally recognizes Jesus as King with the inscription put on the cross! (Jn 19:19-22). Middle Ages Tradition: Pilate was converted before his death (no historical documentation)

John 19:17–22 (NKJV) ¹⁷ And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha, ¹⁸ where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center. ¹⁹ Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS ²⁰ Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin. ²¹ Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but, ‘He said, ‘I am the King of the Jews.’ ” ²² Pilate answered, “What I have written, I have written.”

The Cause / Reason Born

Verse 37 - For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world - The cause, the salvation of man. Jesus says it was the whole reason I came for, the reason I was born, the whole purpose of my life, it was what I lived for, to take the sins of man so they may be reconciled to God.

Azzam – Traveling in Coffins / This what he Lived For – Thus what he was Born For

Last week we told the story of the man name Azzam, he traveled 800 miles in a coffin so to sneak Bibles back to the new converts in Somali. Here is what he says to us, and you can read into clearly, this is what He lives for, thus this is what he was born for:

While people ordinarily travel on foot, on a donkey, or by bus, I'm still riding in caskets. It's the only way to get Bibles spread around to the saints. I love the irony that caskets for dead people are used by God to bring new life into Somalia! Underground believers—and there are many now—are being transformed into the likeness of our Savior through this Book.

- Doyle, T. (2015). Killing christians: living the faith where it's not safe to believe. Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

This is What I was Born For – what were You Born For?

Azzam knows what He was born for, for what you are born for is what you live for. So Christian, have you ever stopped to consider what were you born for? Have you ever asked the Lord the question, “what was I born for”. What are you living for today? Is it what you were born for?

Matthew 16:24 (NKJV) ²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

No Matter the Circumstance – If want the Truth – Will Hear the Truth

Verse 37 - Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.” - No matter where they live, no matter when they live, every person who wants to know the truth will hear God’s voice. “God’s not fair in choosing some and not choosing others,” some protest. Not true. Jesus said everyone who wants to know the truth will hear His voice.

John 18:38 Pilate said to Him, “What is truth?” And when he had said this, he went out again to the Jews, and said to them, “I find no fault in Him at all.

Truth – When Word & Deed Become One

“...What is Truth?” A good question, and one of the best definitions I ever heard of what truth is:

- *When the Word and deed become one.*

Jesus going to the cross is the the Word and the Deed becoming one:

NO Fault – Not Guilty

Find no fault – is same as saying, “not guilty”

Lamb had to be Spotless

The Lamb had to be perfect and spotless:

Exodus 12:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

Six Trials

- 1) Jewish Trials:
 - a. Before Annas John 18:12-14
 - b. Before Caiaphas John 18:19-24
 - c. Before the Sanhedrin Matthew 27:1,2
- 2) Roman Trials:
 - a. Before Pilate John 18:28-38
 - b. Before Herod Luke 23:6-11
 - c. Before Pilate John 18:39-19:16

Not Guilty – Everything else is Illegal

“...I find no fault in Him at all.” Pilate pronounced Him innocent: he should have released Him! According to Roman Law, everything following is illegal.

- Chief priest’s remonstrance (Mk 15:3-12);
- Pilot sending Him to Herod, and abuse (Lk 23:5-18).

Jesus taken to Herod

John’s account does not record Jesus being taken to Herod (who was the Jewish King of Israel). But, Jesus refuses to answer the king of Israel, Herod. Picture of the unpardonable sin I believe.

Luke 23:4–12 (NKJV) ⁴ So Pilate said to the chief priests and the crowd, “I find no fault in this Man.” ⁵ But they were the more fierce, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee to this place.” ⁶ When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked if the Man were a Galilean. ⁷ And as soon as he knew that He belonged to Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who was also in Jerusalem at that time. ⁸ Now when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceedingly glad; for he had desired for a long time to see Him, because he had heard many things about Him, and he hoped to see some miracle done by Him. ⁹ Then he questioned Him with many words, but He answered him nothing. ¹⁰ And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused Him. ¹¹ Then Herod, with his men of war, treated Him with contempt and mocked Him, arrayed Him in a gorgeous robe, and sent Him back to Pilate. ¹² That very day Pilate and Herod became friends with each other, for previously they had been at enmity with each other.

John 18:39 “But you have a custom that I should release someone to you at the Passover. Do you therefore want me to release to you the King of the Jews?”

John 18:40 Then they all cried again, saying, “Not this Man, but Barabbas!” Now Barabbas was a robber.

6 Times try to Release Jesus

Six times Pilate will try to release Jesus

- 1) “You judge Him” 18:31
- 2) “He is innocent” 18:38
- 3) Jews substitute Barabbas 18:39
- 4) Partial punishment 19:1
- 5) Play on pity 19:5
- 6) “Behold your King” 19:14

Should have Listened to Wife

Pilate should have listened to his wife. History says Pilate’s wife was named (Procula Claudia). It is never good when your wife sends you a note at work.

Matthew 27:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent to him, saying, “Have nothing to do with that just Man, for I have suffered many things today in a dream because of Him.”

Pilate Tries to Appease

Pilate hoping to appease the crowd, offers a trade. Other gospel account says the people just start to get stirred up and incited by the crowd mentality.

Matthew 27:20–25 (NKJV) ²⁰ But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitudes that they should ask for Barabbas and destroy Jesus. ²¹ The governor answered and said to them, “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?” They said, “Barabbas!” ²² Pilate said to them, “What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” They all said to him, “Let Him be crucified!” ²³ Then the governor said, “Why, what evil has He done?” But they cried out all the more, saying, “Let Him be crucified!” ²⁴ When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, “I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it.” ²⁵ And all the people answered and said, “His blood be on us and on our children.”

Barabbas in Antonia Fortress

Pilate was of course surprised at the crowd’s choice. But how did Barabbas feel? Matthew 27 helps us here. The Praetorium was no more than 1,500 feet from the Tower of Antonia. Barabbas, because he was a prominent prisoner, was incarcerated in the bowels of Antonia, awaiting crucifixion. He probably could not hear Pilate, but it would be impossible not to hear the roarings of the crowd. Here is Pilate’s dialogue with the crowd.

Pilate: “Which of the two do you want me to release to you?” (v. 21)

Crowd: “Barabbas!” (v. 21)

Pilate: “What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?” (v. 22)

Crowd: "Crucify him!" (v. 22)

Pilate: "Why? What crime has he committed?" (v. 23)

Crowd (shouting all the more): "Crucify him!" (v. 23)

Pilate, washing his hands: "I am innocent of this man's blood. It is your responsibility!" (v. 24)

Crowd: "Let his blood be on us and on our children!" (v. 25)

But what did Barabbas hear from all this? "Barabbas ... Crucify him! ... Crucify him! ... Let his blood be on us and on our children."

As hardened as he was, Barabbas must have grown faint. He may have stared at the palms of his hands in growing horror of the awaiting agony. He had seen crucifixions. He knew their interminable agony. He heard the sound of the key in the lock, felt even greater terror, and ... suddenly he was released from his chains and told he was free! He was probably in a daze when he emerged into the sunlight. Slowly the truth unfolded: Jesus Christ was dying in his place.

**Hughes, R. K. (1999). John: that you may believe (p. 427). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.*

Barabbas Traded Places with Jesus Literally – Set Free / We are Barabbas

"Barabbas" means "son of the father." History tells us that his first name was Jesus. "Who do you want released," asked Pilate, "Jesus Bar-Abbas—Jesus, son of the father—or Jesus the Christ?" Barabbas will be set free because Jesus would go to the Cross in his place. And Jesus went to the Cross in my place as well. We're all a bunch of sinners, gang. But the good news is that Jesus Christ truly went through all of this in our place. Therefore, there is no condemnation, no record kept of our sins or failures (Romans 8:1). This leaves us free to bask in God's grace and express our appreciation to the One who was bound with cords of love.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Where did Barabbas Go?

So I wonder, where did Barabbas go after he was released? Did he ask about the man who traded places with him? Did he go to the cross and watch the man that traded places with him? Or did he hear that a man traded places, but then just went back and lived life like he had done before? So the question for all today, what have we done with the man who traded places with us? How has it changed our life? How does that factor into, what were we born for, and what do we live for today?

City would Prepare the Road In – Make it Straight

The people who were being baptized were preparing the way of the Lord, just as John's ministry was purposed to be. When a king was coming into a city, they would prepare the way for the king. They would fill in the potholes of the dirt road leading in, the final mile coming into the city would have no bends in it as they would make it a straight shot into the city, they would plant vegetation, they would light place lamps up on posts to light the way, they would remove all the eyesores, they would do what Washington DC does every time dignitaries come to town, they relocate the vagabonds. So it is that we should do in our hearts daily, prepare the way, make clear the way of the Lord.

Isaiah 40:3 (NKJV) ³ The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God.

Chapter 19

John 19:1-15

Danger of Being Desensitized

800 miles in a coffin, remember the story of the believer in Somali, just to get a Bible. We get to hold it in our hand freely today. But, there is a danger of being desensitized to our passage today, because it can become so common to us. Can you imagine what we are actually saying? Ho hum, Jesus was beating and scourged for me, ho hum.

Most Significant Event in History – John 19

The most significant event in the history of mankind is chronicled here (John 19)

Hold Communion in Your Hand

Let's hold the communion elements in our hand as we read through our passage today.

- Today you hold victory in your hands.
- Today we are reminded that we fight from victory, not to victory
- Today we proclaim the Lord's death..... (key phrase next) until He comes!
- Jesus is coming back, the King of the Universe (not just any king, but THE King) is coming back for you and for me!

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

Six Trials

- 1) Jewish Trials:
 - a. Before Annas John 18:12-14
 - b. Before Caiaphas John 18:19-24
 - c. Before the Sanhedrin Matthew 27:1,2
- 2) Roman Trials:
 - a. Before Pilate John 18:28-38
 - b. Before Herod Luke 23:6-11
 - c. Before Pilate John 18:39-19:16

Illegal Trial

Legal Irregularities of the trial of Jesus:

- The binding of a prisoner before he was condemned was unlawful unless resistance was offered or expected. Jesus offered none (Jn 18:12, 24)
- It was illegal for judges to participate in the arrest of the accused (Jn 18:3)
- No legal transactions, including a trial, could be conducted at night (Jn 18:28)
- The arrest was effected through a traitor (Jn 18:5; Ex 23:6-8)
- While an acquittal could be pronounced the same day, any other verdict required a majority of two and had to come on a subsequent day (Mt 26:65,66)
- No prisoner could be convicted on his own evidence (Mt 26:63-65)
- It was the duty of a judge to see that the interests of the accused were fully protected (Jn 18:14)
- Preliminary hearings before a magistrate were completely foreign to the Jewish legal system (Jn 18:13)
- It was illegal to carry weapons on the feast day (Jn 18:3)
- The use of violence during the trial was apparently unopposed by the judges (Jn 18:22,23)
- The judges sought false witnesses against Jesus (Mt 26:59; Mk 14:56)
- In a Jewish court the accused was to be assumed innocent until proved guilty by two or more witnesses (Jn 11:53)

- The Jews failed to find two witnesses agreeing against Jesus (Mk 14:59)
- When the witnesses first disagreed, the prisoner should have been released (Mk 14:56-59).
- No witness was ever called for the defense.
- The trial under Caiaphas took place in his home rather than the council chamber where it should be held (Jn 18:13-16)
- The Court lacked the civil authority to condemn a man to death (Jn 18:31)
- It was illegal to conduct a session of the court on a feast day (Jn 18:28)
- A guilty verdict was rendered without evidence (Jn 18:30)
- The balloting was illegal. It should have been by roll with the youngest voting first. Here it is simultaneous (Mt 26:66)
- The sentence is finally passed in the palace of the high priest, but the law demanded it be pronounced in the temple, in the hall of hewn stone (Jn 18:28)
- The high priest rends his garment (Lev 21:10) He was never permitted to tear his official robe. (If he did not have on his priestly robe, he couldn't have put Christ under oath; Mt 26:65)

So we pick up our passage today in chapter 19, verse 1.

John 19:1 So then Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him.

So Then / Let World decide how Live / Who will Follow / Never Experience Freedom – the “Then God”

Verse 1 – “so then” – Pilate, all we read chapter 18, is yielding to the pressure of the people. “So then”, lots of people living the “so then” life. Even though they know the truth, even though their conscience bears witness to them, even though the closest people in their lives bear witness, they still choose the “so then”, against all the witness before them, because they fear what man thinks, “so then” they reject Jesus Christ and let the world decide for them how they are to live. To every man who lives the “so then” life, will become a slave to the “so then” life, and will constantly live in the pressure of pleasing man, and will become a slave to it, and will never experience the freedom that comes with “Then God”, the God of power, the God of might, the God who formed you with His hands, intimately and passionately invested in every detail of your life:

Genesis 1:3 (NKJV)³ Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

Genesis 1:26 (NKJV)²⁶ Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

Genesis 1:31 (NKJV)³¹ Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Scourging - Flagellum

Verse 1 - Pilate took Jesus and scourged Him – Scourging was a vicious punishment used by the Romans. The instrument was called a “flagellum”, also called a cat-of-nine-tails. The reason the cat-of-nine-tails is because the whip had 9 leather strips all bound together at the handle. Each leather strip had shards of broken pottery, broken bones, glued into it. At the end of each leather strip was a lead ball. The prisoner was stretched over a log or beam of some sort, with their hands tied in front of them, and the weight of their body on the other side of the beam, so the back would be fully stretch out, the skin fully stretched out, so when the strips of leather hit the body, the lead would wrap itself around the body, and the shards of broken pottery and bone would dig into the skin and take chunks of flesh off with it. The lashes, the more flesh, until the whip was down to the veins and now blood would but not just be bleeding like drops, but as the heart would elevate from the exciting pain, the blood would shoot from the open vein like a fountain. Most people historical records record, didn't even service the scourging.

Assumption 39 Lashes – No Mercy (Full Wrath) / 40 Lashes

There is an assumption that Jesus was whipped 39 times, but that is only an assumption, as we are not told exactly how many times he was lashed. Forty was the prescribed number for a crime given by the Romans, but they

would stop at 39 as a sign of mercy. So I venture that Jesus had the full forty laid upon Him because He would receive no mercy as He took the full-wrath of God's punishment when He traded places with us.

Scribe sitting and Recording Crimes / of Person and Other Criminals

As a person was scourged, a scribe from the Roman Court would sit there at a table and record a confession as the person would start to confess all the crimes they had committed. This is how they cleared up many cold cases was during the scourging. The more a person confessed, the lighter the lashes would become. The person would also give up information about other criminals they knew about, and by doing so the lashes would become lighter each time they did. But even lighter lashes with the whip of this kind was excruciatingly painfully. But if a person remained silent, then every lash would get harder and harder. Jesus was sinless, He had nothing to confess of himself, and thus the lashes would get harder each time, and Jesus would not dime us out, not share the crimes we are guilty of, He would remain silent, and thus the lashes would get harder and harder.

So Brutal – Unrecognizable / But now How we Recognize Him

So brutal was His beating that we are told He was unrecognizable. This will be the only time your God will be unrecognizable to you, beaten so badly for your sin and mine that we couldn't recognize Him as our God. But that becomes how we recognize Him, for no greater love has He than this, than to lay down His life for a friend. Isaiah 50 verse six, I gave my back to my smite yours, was written 800 years before the Messiah was born.

Isaiah 53 (NKJV) ¹ Who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? ² For He shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him. ³ He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. ⁴ Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. ⁵ But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. ⁶ All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. ⁷ He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. ⁸ He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken. ⁹ And they made His grave with the wicked— But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth. ¹⁰ Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. ¹¹ He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities. ¹² Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

John 15:13 (NKJV) ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.

Isaiah 52:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. ¹⁴ Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;

Isaiah 50:6 (NKJV) ⁶ I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.

The Intel on Jesus would have Been - Blank

After the scourging, Jesus would have been brought again before Pilate and a scribe would have accompanied Jesus with a list of all the crimes that he had committed and confessed to. But this list would be blank because again Jesus had no crime to confess and he would not dime out any of his friends and neighbors, that's you and I. Pilate looks at the list and says, "I find no fault in this man." We have to grasp the depths of the scourging to get a full understanding of what it means because Pilate would stand with a list of intel on Jesus Christ and it would be blank.

John 19:2 And the soldiers twisted a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and they put on Him a purple robe.

Why Crown – Echo of Genesis Chapter 3

Why Genesis chapter 3, it is an echo from Genesis 3, as the thorns are the symbol of the curse. Jesus is becoming the king of the curse, taking on all of the curse. Not just a sinner, but the king of all sinners; Adolf Hitler, Ted Bundy, Sadaam Hussein, the rapist, the murderer, the adultery, the homosexual, the candy bar thief, He became the king of them.

Genesis 3:17–18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. ¹⁸ Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field.

Thorns Created to Picture Sin

Those thorns were created, and exist, for one purpose, to remind us of the fallen state that we live in.

The Perfect and Pure – Became the Picture of Sin

The perfect and pure, the HOLY GOD, became the picture of sin, lifted up for all to see. Willing so, so I can sit here today and say, by His stripes I am healed, cleansed, restored, made new, alive, RIGHTEOUS (Right before God in Heaven).

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV) ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

John 19:3 Then they said, "Hail, King of the Jews!" And they struck Him with their hands.

The Buffeting

Another gospel describes that along with the scourging, Jesus was also buffeted. Oh the cruelty of how Jesus was brutalized.

Luke 22:64 (NKJV) ⁶⁴ And having blindfolded Him, they struck Him on the face and asked Him, saying, "Prophecy! Who is the one who struck You?"

Isaiah 52:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ Behold, My Servant shall deal prudently; He shall be exalted and extolled and be very high. ¹⁴ Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;

Isaiah 50:6 (NKJV) ⁶ I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.

Bull in the Ring

When I coached football we trained the kids on how to receive a blow and give on back, as we would put a person in the middle, and we used to play a game called for the bull in the ring. We made a big circle and one kid was in the middle and we would call a name and they would charge and they would collide. It taught them how to brace for the blow.

Jesus was Buffeted

This was along the same line as Jesus being buffeted, but He was blindfolded. What they would do was everyone (soldiers) would raise their fist, as there would be several of them maybe even dozen or dozens would raise their fist before the prisoner, then they would put a bag over the persons head, and they would take turns hitting him all but one person. Then they took the bag off the head and say now who was it? And in the person was made to guess and then they would guess wrong and then they would put the bag over their head and do it again, over and over. The person usually would be knocked unconscious. Jesus is buffeted imagine being punched by dozens of men, hundreds of times, and then going to be in scourged, then going to the cross. We know he was beaten so badly bodily that he couldn't finish carrying the cross Simon Cyrene had to carry the cross for the last mile.

Matthew 27:32–33 (NKJV) ³² Now as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name. Him they compelled to bear His cross. ³³ And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull,

Jesus holds those Hands Together

Colossians says by him all things exist, and are held together, and he's holding their hands together for them to slap him in the face, that he might go to the cross for me

Colossians 1:15–18 (NKJV) ¹⁵ He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. ¹⁸ And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.

Hail – the Salute to Caesar

Hail, King of the Jews is a mockery, as every soldier when they would greet dignitaries would fold their hand into a fist, forcibly bring it to their chest, and say "Hail Caesar". Saying and symbolizing, Caesar is king, and is near to my

heart. So they mock Jesus but their parody of pretending Jesus is King, and close to their heart. And, the God of love allows it. One such soldier will himself say, surely this was the Son of God.

Matthew 27:54 (NKJV) ⁵⁴ So when the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly, saying, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

Why the Humiliation - Because sin Humiliates

Why did God allow his son to go through such humiliation in these mock trials and then into the buffeting, the scourging, and then on to the cross? Publicly humiliated, ashamed, embarrassed! Because that's what Satan does to us when we sin (humiliates us before the Father) we can deceive ourselves that sin is no big deal, excuse ourselves, but this is the end, this is the picture of what sin does to the person..... it mocks them, it shames them, it humiliates them, because that is what sin is, it takes us away from what we were created to be a child of God, not just created in his image, but living in his image, and sin humiliates, shames humiliates and embarrasses.

Gospel doesn't Make Good People Better / We are All Sinners

The Gospels not to make good people better. Let me just be blunt and Frank with all, you are not good, and you are not better than the next person, we are all sinners craved by our sin, and desperately in need of a Savior, and then after his salvation his Holy Spirit to come and live inside us that we might live according to his will in his way. We look at Jesus and this is what we are in the spiritual realm, unfortunately in this world round we look like we have it together, we look like we are someone, but this is a spiritual picture and insight here as we see Jesus being scourged and buffeted and then ultimately taken to the cross and that is ultimately the spiritual life of anyone and everyone doesn't receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Romans 3:9-18 (NKJV) ⁹ What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. ¹⁰ As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. ¹² They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one." ¹³ "Their throat is an open tomb; With their tongues they have practiced deceit"; "The poison of asps is under their lips"; ¹⁴ "Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness." ¹⁵ "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ¹⁶ Destruction and misery are in their ways; ¹⁷ And the way of peace they have not known." ¹⁸ "There is no fear of God before their eyes."

How patient Jesus is with Us – Christian be Patient with that Person who is Rejecting

Christian, may we see this and be this; patient and merciful with that person who may be mocking Jesus, insulting Jesus, and blaspheming Jesus. May we be patient with them, for they still haven't fully seen the cross, and the day may well be near, where they will mock Him one hour, and then the next look up and see Him on the cross, and come to the same realization you had, surely this is the Son of God.

John 19:4 Pilate then went out again, and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him."

Lamb had to be Spotless

The Lamb had to be perfect and spotless:

Exodus 12:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

Why 4 Days - To Examine the Sacrifice

Why four days between the bringing of the Passover lamb into the home, and then the sacrificing of the Passover lamb, is for the purpose of inspection to look analyze every detail of this sacrifice to make sure that it is perfect. And here Jesus comes in on Sunday and it's four days later and he will be examined and cross-examined, he will be analyzed, and detailed analyze, and in the end he will be found faultless perfect, he will be acceptable to be Passover Lamb.

Sacrifice, not Worshipper Examined

Thankfully - it is the Sacrifice that is examined, not the worshipper.

7 Times – Guiltless

Seven times we see someone declaring Jesus perfect and innocent.

- 1) Judas: innocent blood - Matthew 27:4
- 2) Pilate: no fault in Him - John 18:4

- 3) Herod, by Pilate - Luke 23:15
- 4) Pilate's wife - Matthew 27:19
- 5) Dying thief: nothing amiss - Luke 23:41
- 6) Roman centurion - Luke 23:47
- 7) Truly, Son of God Matthew 27:54

6 Times Try to Release

Six times Pilate will try to release Jesus because He knows Jesus is innocent

- 1) "You judge Him" 18:31
- 2) "He is innocent" 18:38
- 3) Jews substitute Barabbas 18:39
- 4) Partial punishment 19:1
- 5) Play on pity 19:5
- 6) "Behold your King" 19:14

Delivered because of Envy

"He knew that for envy they had delivered him" (Mt 27:18)

- "... I am innocent of the blood of this just person..." (Mt 27:24)
- "For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy" (Mk 15:10)
- "Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them" (Lk 23:20)
- "... I have found no cause of death in him ..." (Lk 23:22)
- "... I find in him no fault at all" (Jn 18:38)
- "... From thenceforth Pilate sought to release him ..." (Jn 19:12)
- "... Pilate, when he was determined to let him go" (Acts 3:13)

Lamb had to be Spotless

The Lamb had to be perfect and spotless:

Exodus 12:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

No Fault in All the Examinations

Continually – No fault is found in Jesus

Annas - When Jesus was before Annas he said that I have spoken evil than what evil have I spoken, why do you strike me. Jesus said where are your witnesses. All of to which the high priest it was his job to analyze and inspect the land and he finds no fault in Jesus.

John 18:20–23 (NKJV) ²⁰ Jesus answered him, "I spoke openly to the world. I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where the Jews always meet, and in secret I have said nothing. ²¹ Why do you ask Me? Ask those who have heard Me what I said to them. Indeed they know what I said." ²² And when He had said these things, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, "Do You answer the high priest like that?" ²³ Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why do you strike Me?"

Caiaphas - Were seen when Jesus goes to Caiaphas they seek the counsel to kill him and they are silent.

Mark 14:55–56 (NKJV) ⁵⁵ Now the chief priests and all the council sought testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, but found none. ⁵⁶ For many bore false witness against Him, but their testimonies did not agree.

Judas Iscariot - a disciple follower for three years he had more insight than any of, and at the end after the betrayal, after three years of walking with Jesus, he himself will say I have betrayed innocent blood. Guiltless perfect shameless.

Matthew 27:3–5 (NKJV) ³ Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, ⁴ saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." And they said, "What is that to us? You see to it!" ⁵ Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.

John 8 - In John chapter 8 Jesus says which of you find sin in me, and the crowd is silent, and Jesus responds and says then why don't you believe me.

John 8:46–47 (NKJV) ⁴⁶ Which of you convicts Me of sin? And if I tell the truth, why do you not believe Me? ⁴⁷ He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God."

Lamb had to be Spotless

No one in all of his life lays charge against him because he's perfect and a spotless process with the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world according to Exodus 12 had to be, the Passover lamb must be spotless, and we see he was perfect and spotless:

Exodus 12:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats.

I Add Myself to that List – I find no Fault in Him / Just gets Sweeter and Sweeter

Every last person who examined Jesus Christ all came to the same conclusion I find no fault in this Man. I add myself to that list, for I have studied him, I have researched him, I have analyzed him, and I find no fault in him. He is beautiful, he is perfect and pure. And I would tell and challenge anyone listening if you study him long enough, if you analyze him long enough, if you research him long enough, you will come to the conclusion that all that we've discussed today you will find no fault in this Man, because he is perfect and he is pure and he is you wore off. I have been walking with him now for 24 years and I can tell you that I find no fault in him, and he gets sweeter and sweeter to me as the years go by is the more that I know him. And I know that's many of your stories here today, as you have examined him and you are found he is perfect and you find no fault in him. And many of you today share the same testimony of the year has year and year go by he becomes sweeter and sweeter to you.

My First Church – Fools Wisdom

The first church I went to (Calvary Chapel Merritt Island), the Pastor use to be in a traveling Christian Band, here is their cover song, and still the same song that opens his radio broadcasts.

*Got myself some wisdom from a leather-backed book
Got myself a Saviour when I took a second look
Opened up the pages and what did I find?
A black and white portrait of a King who's a friend of mine*

*Funny how when you think you're right
Everybody else must be wrong
Till someone with Fools Wisdom somehow comes along
His voice was strange and the words He said
I didn't quite understand
Yet I know that he was speaking right
By the leather-backed book in his hand*

Hey, hey, what a day!... Fool's Wisdom

*Got myself some wisdom from a leather-backed book
Got myself a Saviour when I took a second look*

If Going to Reject Him - You must find Fault / Must stand up for All Eternity

If you're going to reject him and you must find fault in him. You must study him, you must analyze him, you must cross-examine him, and till you find fault in him and what you find has to stand up against all of eternity because it will determine your eternity.

John 19:5 Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And Pilate said to them, "Behold the Man!"

Jesus is Still Standing!

When Pilate comes out, Jesus bloodied beyond recognition Isaiah 52 an Isaiah 53, saying not a word and the lashes would have got heavier and heavier and the beatings worse and worse, and Pilate says, "Behold the man. Look at the man. Look what you've done to him. Look what's been done to him." What I see here is the astonishment of not just Pilate, but everyone else looking on, as Jesus would be standing there still. Historical records would say that most people wouldn't even survive the whippings because of the tremendous loss of blood. Here's Jesus, slashes are getting heavier and heavier every time. He is bleeding out profusely and here's what I think is the astonishment Pilate says, "Look at him. He's still standing." Can I, can we, grasp the strength and depths of the man who would not release his life and would not quit, and would not give up until he went the full

path of the cross fulfilling every prophecy, every last word. Jesus Christ didn't just die for you, he fought for you. He fought through it all because nothing could stop him from the cross to win you his bride.

Jesus – the Man's – Man / because His Connection to the Father

So we continually make Jesus weak knee and wimpy. Wrong, in his heart strong, his heart was powerful, he is more than any man's man, he is the man, behold the man! Jesus is the man a man's man, because of his connection to the father and the Holy Spirit in him. Withstand this brutality, remain standing after beating, and after a scourging of 40 lashes, and to remain standing we can't fathom the heart of a man like this, and no man will ever have a heart like this because no man will ever have the connection to the father as Jesus. It definitely gives us something to shoot for men, the example he gives us something that we can look to become, and if he can stand and take the brutality of the beating, then can we stand and take the mocking of this world, we can stand and take all that Satan pukes on us, and vomits on us, and we can remain standing for our family, for our wives, for our children, for the ministry God is given us, oh that all of us that we would be men like Jesus! And we can to a large degree, by having the connection to the Father as exemplified and demonstrated by Jesus when He walked this earth.

John 19:6 Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "You take Him and crucify Him, for I find no fault in Him."

No Compassion from the Crowd

So here's Jesus buffeted face beyond recognition, his beard was plucked out, he was scourged, now bleeding out before them, Pilate says behold the man, thinking that possibly this would evoke some type of emotional response just looking at the man so beaten and bloodied, and to say behold the Man I find no fault in him. Yet the people would still scream crucify. What you see here is not one drop of compassion, not one drop of humanity, all the things that Jesus came to be compassionate, loving, mercy, he would get not get a drop of it a drop of it from anyone.

Picture of Sin

It is the picture of sin, as sin has no compassion and no mercy, sin only wants to destroy your life. If you are living in any unrepentant habitual sin, know this, its ultimate goal is to destroy you,

John 19:7 The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God."

Challenge Jesus never God / They Killed Him for It

The challenge will say was Jesus ever God is Jesus God? I think one of the best response we can say is this what they killed them for the claim to be God

Eventually the Truth Comes Out with the Jews

Eventually the truth comes out. We know from Luke's account that the Jews brought trumped up charges that were all charges that would be an offense to Rome. They are not stating to Pilate their true charge, which was blasphemy. Blasphemy was not a crime by Romans; there were three other charges (Lk 23:2, 5). Treason could not be ignored, because in Rome's belief system, Caesar was god, and the only king of the world. To say otherwise was treason against Rome. The Jews knew this, so they make sure they let Pilate know that if you ignore this, we will go to Rome, and you will be done.

Luke 23:1-3 (NKJV) ¹ Then the whole multitude of them arose and led Him to Pilate. ² And they began to accuse Him, saying, "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, saying that He Himself is Christ, a King." ³ Then Pilate asked Him, saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" He answered him and said, "It is as you say."

Still Today – the Truth will Come Out

The truth always comes out eventually, people have all kinds of reasons that they say they reject God, they accuse Him of not being loving, or not being there for them, of being narrow, but giving enough time their main reason

will come out, the true reason in their heart, and all the smoke screen they put up will blow away, and it will come down to why they don't follow.

John 19:8 Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid,

Roman Mythology filled with gods Living Among Men

To a pagan leader, the God-man possibility required investigation: Greek and Roman mythology filled with accounts of gods living among men.

You Can't play Political Correctness and Win

A take away for all of us as we look at this process is we think being politically correct, or trying to handle a situation that garners the greatest sum gain, aka trying to do something where everyone wins, or trying to do something where not everyone is not offended, willing to sacrifice the few to save face with the many, and we go look at Pilate, and we can look at the religious leaders, we can look at the people in the crowd, we can look at the soldiers, the picture of the gentile world looking on, and go it wasn't a some win gain for everybody involved there, it was a loss for all because the truth was not declared.

Don't try to Play a Win-Win Game of Manipulation – Truth is Truth

Yes God is in control and this was his plan before the foundations of the world surely not trying to take away from that, but what I am saying is we watch people man just like us no different than us today trying to manipulate situations, move the pieces into a place to find favor and gain and to win the cause, the situation, the we think is so right and people use these strategies of some win ultimate gain and for us whatever the situation there's only 1 way to handle the situation just speak the truth. Just speak the truth and let what happens happen from there. There's no win trying to dance around an uncomfortable situation with a friend who needs to hear the truth. There's no win in your marriage trying to keep peace and not speak truth. Just speak the truth and trust that the truth will have power behind it. What is it that I'm saying with all that and the summation of it? Don't sell truth out today for the moment the peace today because that peace will flit and fade quickly but only the truth can us stability into the future.

Jewish Nation – Moment of Peace / Lifetime of War

As for the Jewish nation, they sell the truth out for that moment of peace and pride that they have. In less than 40 years from this very moment Rome will come in and utterly destroy and pulverize every Jewish person in Jerusalem and leave the city flattened and they will go into dispersion for close to 2000 years because they sold out truth for a moment of peace for that day. If they would have stayed with the truth everything could have changed.

John 19:9 and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?" But Jesus gave him no answer.

No Answer – Pilate hadn't acted Upon Prior Truth

No answer, because Pilate had not acted upon the truth that had already been giving. Jesus had said in chapter 18 that He was not of this world, that His kingdom was not of this world, (at least "not right now" at that moment – but it will be one day). So often people want a new word from God, a new insight from God, but they say "it seems as if God just isn't speaking to me, I can't hear Him"; to which I say, is there something God has spoken to you to do, which you have left undone? Has He called you to do something, but you didn't like the direction, the answer He gave you to a prayer question, and so you have just ignored it. What I can say to you is don't expect God to speak to you of something new, when you still have not responded to what He spoke to you about something old. Go do what you were told to do, not because you think you can manipulate God into doing the thing you want to ask about of for next, but because "He told you to do it".

John 18:36 (NKJV) ³⁶ Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here."

John 19:10 Then Pilate said to Him, “Are You not speaking to me? Do You not know that I have power to crucify You, and power to release You?”

John 19:11 Jesus answered, “You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.”

Who is the Greater Sin

Who has the greater sin? Was it Judas? Was it the High Priests? I am not fully sure. Personally, I think it is you and me. We are the ones who delivered Jesus to be crucified, it was us who were the cause from the beginning to need a lamb, a Savior, because of our sin. Pilate is simply one of the instruments in this drama, but our sin is what the whole drama is about and because of. Does that grab your heart?

Pilate still Sinning / Pilate not Excused from God Sovereignty

Pilate is Still Sinning. Jesus says that he is, by saying you are sinning, but there are ones who are doing a greater sin by delivering Me to you. See this, Pilate does have the power to release or crucify Jesus. However, Jesus is in total control of this situation, God is sovereign in this whole thing, but Pilate still has the power to release and crucify Him because that has been given to Him by God. Listen Christian, God’s sovereignty does not release you from your personal responsibility. People like to claim God’s sovereignty in their theology, so then they can excuse themselves from their personal actions (whether not doing what they are to do, or doing what they shouldn’t do). This Word in your hand is God’s will:

- God’s sovereignty doesn’t release a person from the “Great Commission” to go therefore.
- God’s sovereignty doesn’t release a person from “Men ought always to pray and not faith (Luke 18)”.
- God’s sovereignty doesn’t release a person from “I was born that way”
- God’s sovereignty doesn’t release a person from “it was how I was raised”
- God’s sovereignty doesn’t release a person from “it was never His will from the beginning – that is why I am getting a divorce – hey, the minute you said I do, it became God’s will”

John 19:12 From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, “If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar’s friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar.”

Now they Manipulate Pilate

“..not Caesar’s friend.” They resort to blackmail. (Caesar’s Friend: a formal title of honor among Romans). Personal loyalty questioned.

Watch out for Manipulators in your Life

Watch out for the manipulator in your lives; their manipulation has a common end to it, and that is to take away your freedom to choose for yourself. They try to manipulate you to the place you have to side with them, or you are no friend of theirs. What to do? Tell them, you are trying to take away my freedom to choose, and I don’t like it, so we will cease this conversation right here.

John 19:13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.

John 19:14 Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, “Behold your King!”

6th Hour

Based on the Roman time of reckoning, it is probably 9am; however some scholars think that it is 12 noon. Either time will work in the time frame, because the Passover Lambs are not sacrificed until twilight on the Passover.

Passover must be Killed in 14th of Nissan

Verse 14 is key in that it says the preparation day the Passover means that it is the 14th of Nisan for that is the day that the Passover lamb was to be killed at twilight which would be somewhere between 3:00 and 6:00 during that time of the year in Jerusalem.

Exodus 12:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.

John 19:15 But they cried out, “Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!” Pilate said to them, “Shall I crucify your King?” The chief priests answered, “We have no king but Caesar!”

Equivalent of Me saying Obama is My King

Verse 15 the chief priest says, “We have no king but Caesar.” That would be like me saying “I have no leader in my life but Obama or Vladimir Putin”, not God. That’s what the equivalence would be to say something such as that.

John 19:16 Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus and led Him away.

Pilate gets Bowl – Symbolic

Verse 16 we’re told Pilate gets a bowl of water to wash his hands and says, “I have no part of this. I wash my hands of the man’s blood.” That’s interesting because during that time this was ceremony symbolic that a soldier coming back from battle who had the death of many on his hands would take a bowl of water and wash his hand and say, “I wash my hands of their blood and I’m coming home to live amongst my country men again.” Pilate can wash his hands only once but it will haunt him for the rest of his life.

Matthew 27:22–25 (NKJV) ²² Pilate said to them, “What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?” They all said to him, “Let Him be crucified!” ²³ Then the governor said, “Why, what evil has He done?” But they cried out all the more, saying, “Let Him be crucified!” ²⁴ When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, “I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it.” ²⁵ And all the people answered and said, “His blood be on us and on our children.”

Pilate will Commit Suicide / Can’t Hold what is not Yours - Can’t lose what is Yours

We’re told that just in a few short years he will commit suicide. Some of the history books allude to make a deduction that he committed suicide because he knew that Caligula was going to come and kill him and so he chose to take his own life. Where the other historical position is that Caligula came and made him commit suicide and he did it rather than throw into the hands of Caligula who is ruthless and a wretched king of Rome. We see anything you try and hold on to that’s not of Jesus you will lose, but anything that you’re willing to lose for the sake of Jesus, you will find that can never be taken from you.

Communion Service

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, “Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.” ²⁵ In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me.” ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.

End of Study

John 19:16-37

We are at Verse 16 / Scourged 7 Beaten / Faultless and Acceptable – the Lamb of God

We are at verse 16 of chapter 19 of our study verse-by-verse, chapter-by-chapter, through the Book of John. Jesus has been scourged, buffeted (beaten with fists), and mocked..... but through every examination and character attack, He has been found faultless and spotless, and He only of all men that every walked the earth is acceptable to be the Lamb of God who will take on the sins of man, and take away the sins of man.

Exodus 12:3–7 (NKJV) ³ Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of his father, a lamb for a household. ⁴ And if the household is too small for the lamb, let him and his neighbor next to his house take it according to the number of the persons; according to each man's need you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵ Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats. ⁶ Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. ⁷ And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it.

John 1:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

John 19:15 But they cried out, "Away with Him, away with Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!"

John 19:16 Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus and led Him away.

No King but Caesar – for 2000 Years / Pilate can't Wash His Hands

The Jewish nation will say we have no king except Caesar, and true that will be for the nation of Israel will have to live under Caesar's for the next 2000 years from that date until May 14, 1948 when they will be freed from the Caesar's, the Gentile rulers over them and finally be an independent nation once again. As for Pilate who tries to wash his hands of it, you can't wash your hands of the blood of Jesus Christ. And for 2000 years his name will always be associated with what we know as the Apostles Creed. Because you can't wash your hands of Jesus Christ, a man or woman must make a decision who is Jesus Christ and what does he mean to you.

Matthew 27:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it." ²⁵ And all the people answered and said, "His blood be on us and on our children."

The Reject the Truth – for Moment of Peace

For both of these groups they reject the truth because of the momentary peace that they believe they will have, but history will say none will have peace for 2000 years, they will not have peace because they rejected the truth. Jesus would say we shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free, that word know doesn't mean to hear about, but means to experience and to take in personally and apply it to your life personally. Hearing about Jesus will not be enough for anyone here today, must be taken in personally, wide personally, and then and only then will be able to set you free from the things that are binding you, and the peace and the freedom that you are totally seeking and why you would be here today to hear about this God man who came 2000 years ago.

John 8:32 (NKJV) ³² And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

John 8:36 (NKJV) ³⁶ Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.

The Sign over the Cross (17-22)

John 19:16 Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. Then they took Jesus and led Him away.

John 19:17 And He, bearing His cross, went out to a place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha,

Place of Skull / 777 meters

It is called the place of the skull because when you look at it, the mount looks like a skull. How interesting it is, according to Chuck Missler, the elevation of Golgotha is 777 meters. Seven the number of completion. Jesus will say, it is done. When you have doubts or wonder about your sin being forgiven, look to the Golgotha, and see the price was paid perfectly and completely.

Cross Always on the Mind

I find it so interesting Jesus crucified above a skull, it is like the message being sent to each of us, the cross should always be on your mind, the forefront of your mind, as it will always keep all things in perspective. The Lord would speak to us through the cross, let me show things from the perspective of the cross:

- Marriage – look at the cross, die to yourself for the sake of your bride.
- Enemies - look at the cross, and see the Father will overcome.
- Family - look at the cross, sacrifice for them and you will have the family you desire.
- Others (that person you may not like) – look at the cross, here is what I think they are worth, will you see the cross and change your mind about them?
- Sin - look at the cross, that is what I think about sin
- Loneliness and betrayal, look at the cross, and know I can relate with you and will walk it through with you.
- The Word of God, look at the cross, you can trust every last Word of it.

Bearing His Cross

I am amazed by those words (bearing His cross). He took ownership of the cross, it became His cross, even though it was meant for me. I will be the first to admit, I am prideful, and I would rather do all things for myself than ask another to do it for me. I think most of you can relate to that statement. Even the cross I would say “not so Lord”, I will bear my own cross, I will pay my own sin, to which the Lord would say ‘you can’t and I must”. It has to become “My Cross” because you don’t qualify Ray. You qualify to be the sinner, but not the perfect, faultless, spotless Lamb. Jesus would say to us, it has to become My Cross, for it not it will become your cross, to which you will pay the wages of sin in full, which is eternal separation from the Father.

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hebrew Word (Golgotha) – Time has Way of Forgetting / Jews Equally guilty / I am the Most Guilty

Now, the Jewish means of capital punishment was stoning, and I believe the Hebrew writings here associated with the pavement and mount, is to make sure when the Jewish people would read this passage they would understand that this ties back to them as well. That they can place their blame and try to wash their hands like Pilate did and come to a place and go we had no part of that. It makes it very clear by tying this back to Hebrew that they had equal guilt in this and that the memory will always be reminded that they did. Time has a way of forgetting, as the years pass they can change the story and go over what a terrible thing that the Romans did, but here God's making it very clear as he ties these Hebrew words back together and points them back to the Hebrew nation that you were equally guilty of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. I can never say that without putting in the ultimate caveat on it, Jesus Christ went to the cross because of me, the hammer was in my hand, and I was the one he would go to the cross for, even if the whole world didn't receive him and want him, he would go to the cross just for me, and I accept that and I'm thankful for it but I also live in the humility of it that I am guilty.

John 19:13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.

OT and NT Merge Together / Jew and Gentiles – John 3:16

Verse 17 our second mention of a Hebrew word. The purpose of this is to make it clear that the Romans were not solely the ones to kill Jesus, but the Hebrew nation, the Jewish nation they were equally a part of the crucifixion of Jesus. So you had the gentile world, and you had the Hebrew world, you have the Old Testament merging with the New Testament, and all of it points to that he died for the sins of the world. John 3:16 for God so loved the world (gentile world and Hebrew world), that he gave his only begotten son that whoever should believe in him shall not perish but have everlasting life. The decree is be a made to any and all that you are all equally guilty, but the gift of salvation is equally open to all who to receive.

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Perfection is a Process / He who began the Work will Complete It / First need to Agree – 1 John 1:9

May I give a word to any of you who are still contemplating deciding whether to follow Jesus, or maybe you're a new believer and only recently have begun to follow Jesus and you're finding that it can be such a tall order and

request. I want to say I by no means gave my life to the Lord and became perfected in that same moment. I was saved in that moment absolutely no doubt about it, but I was only beginning the fulfillment of the scripture that he who began a good work in me will be faithful to complete it (Philippians 1:6). God had a lot of work he had to do in me and I had to come in agreement with him before he could do it. First John 1:9 says if we confess, and the word means to agree, if we confess our sins he is faithful in just to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. I had to come to the place where I agreed with him that these things were not in accordance with his word. That did not happen overnight by any means, and I said it often the only people who knew that I was saved the first six months of my profession to Christ was me and the lord, because there was hardly any evidence going on in my life at that point other than me going to church.

Philippians 1:6 (NKJV) ⁶ being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;

1 John 1:9 (NKJV) ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

I thought word was Outdated / Never Could fully Enjoy / Realized Word was Wisdom / Liquid Love

But I found myself questioning, not in agreement with his word, thinking that it was outdated and old fashioned, but as I continued in those things that were contrary to his word, first of all I noticed I could never fully engage in them again and enjoy them because there was always this prompting and tugging inside me which I know now was the Holy Spirit saying what are you doing, this isn't the life that I had for you, you're not living in the image of God who created you. As I continually found myself being disappointed, hurt, experienced pain, lacking joy, because of those things that I was doing I continued to find myself saying maybe this word has wisdom behind it. I came to the place where I knew his ways were the best ways and the perfect ways, and I can remember it like it was yesterday because it was one of the most profound impacting moments of my life laying in my bed in Cocoa Beach Florida and saying to the Lord I agree with you and from this point on your word will be my will and all I can explained that happened at that moment it was like liquid waves of love washing over my whole body within me, it was absolute peace, and it was absolute sweetness, as he continually washed over me. I can't even tell you how long it lasted to be honest with you, I just know it was quite a moment of me and my savior. That didn't happen until I came into an agreement with him, and when I came into an agreement with him, oh how he met me. Hey you might not have a period of liquid waves of love washing over you, but I promise you this, you will find decent power as you make his word your will, because every word of God is perfect and pure and it's a shield, it protects us from harm of the things that are contrary to his word.

Proverbs 30:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him.

John 19:18 where they crucified Him, and two others with Him, one on either side, and Jesus in the center.

Jesus Numbered with Transgressors - Isaiah 53

Jesus was numbered with the transgressors, place between two transgressors, just as the prophet Isaiah said in chapter 53 of the book of Isaiah.

Isaiah 53:12 (NKJV) ¹² Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the great, And He shall divide the spoil with the strong, Because He poured out His soul unto death, And He was numbered with the transgressors, And He bore the sin of many, And made intercession for the transgressors.

Mark 15:27–28 (NKJV) ²⁷ With Him they also crucified two robbers, one on His right and the other on His left. ²⁸ So the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And He was numbered with the transgressors."

Jesus is the Ultimate Thief - Stole My Heart

Of course how fitting Jesus to be placed between two thieves, because he the ultimate thief as far as I'm concerned, because he's the thief of hearts. 24 years ago, he stole my heart, he took my breath away, and I found the king who's a friend of mine, who would die for me that I could have life everlasting. The life that he offered me wasn't just an eternal life on the other side of this grave, but it was an abundant life, a Zoe life, it was a life beyond anything that this world could ever offer me. 24 years later I can still tell you it is more abundant and it continually becomes more abundant every day that I walk with him. He becomes sweeter and sweeter to me every day that I walk with him, he is an amazing friend, he's the greatest friend, and he just happens to be the king of the universe.

Matthew 27:38 (NKJV) ³⁸ Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left.

John 19:19 Now Pilate wrote a title and put it on the cross. And the writing was: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS

John 19:20 Then many of the Jews read this title, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.

King of Jews is God

Verse 19. Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. I thought he was guilty of being God, you might ask? The King of the Jews is God as God would appear and speak to Moses to have him speak to the people, "I am the Lord, your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and bring you into this place." With this statement, God has come and God has died for the sins of the nation.

Exodus 20:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ And God spoke all these words, saying: ² "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

3 Languages of the World – Died for the World / Religion – Education - law

Verse 20. Written in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, The King and God died for the sins of all mankind to whoever would receive him as Lord and Savior. Hebrew is the language of religion, Greek was the common man's language and it was also the language of the education system, and Latin was the language of the law that they used to convey the law in the land. So here you see Jesus Christ dying and showing the way for those who are religious that it's not religion but a relationship, and you see people who are into higher education and we see Jesus King of all them, we see people who are just common man. They see there's a king who wants to be their king, we see the Latin for the law and Jesus overcame the law.

John 19:21 Therefore the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, "Do not write, 'The King of the Jews,' but, 'He said, "I am the King of the Jews." ' ' "

John 19:22 Pilate answered, "What I have written, I have written."

Sign – everyone Know the Crime / Great Deterrence / This is Your Future

The reason for the sign was so that everyone would see what the charge was and what the punishment will be if you're found guilty, the ultimatum of death. Was a great deterrence, you see that those are your future when you think about maybe stealing something, or committing some various crime. You can be sure crime was very low in the city where Rome was governing.

Pilate Regrets / Handful Years Later – Pilate Driven Out / Go with Crowd – Lose it All for Moment of Pleasure

So Pilate writes this statement, he regrets it because we see him say what I've written I've written. He knows the truth, but he can't get him out of his jam that he put himself in because he was pressured by the crowd, he went along the crowd, the momentary peace. Interesting enough only a handful of year's later history tells us that this same group of Jewish people will mount an insurrection against him and it will ultimately drive him out of Israel and he will be replaced. He caves to the crowd to hold onto his power, to hold onto his position, hold on to the trappings of all the riches and wonders that came from being the governor of Rome, all the wealth and all the personal self-interest that could be fulfilled because of that position. So it is still today give in to the crowd and follow the crowd because of the momentary joy that they get, and momentary benefits that they get, but let Pilate be the example it is momentary because in the end all will be lost except what stands on the truth, the truth stands before all people today the truth is named Jesus Christ.

The Truth Stands before you – What will You Do With Him

What have you done with the truth before you today, the truth stands before you today, hanging on the cross saying I'm the King that you seek, the love letter has been sent to you and for you, and Pilate's own question what would you have me do with this man. What have you done with this man Jesus Christ?

Matthew 27:22 (NKJV) ²² Pilate said to them, "What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" They all said to him, "Let Him be crucified!"

Chuck Smith – Going against the Flow / Dad's May we Make the Impact

There was a mother continually who would tell her son that any dead fish can float downstream, but it takes a living one, a strong one to swim upstream against the tide and the flow of the current. The young boy heard that

all through his life and into his adulthood, he applied it to his life and he went on to change a generation. The man's name is Chuck Smith. Here I stand one of those impacted by his impact on a generation, and I pray someday my life example to be the same as Pastor Chuck's did. Dads and mothers I pray that your life example will make the same impact on your children, may we continually tell them any dead fish can flow downstream, but it takes a living one, a strong one to swim against the current. In the days that we live in, the current is picking up tremendous momentum is sweeping a whole nation away from Jesus Christ, and ultimately into the pits of hell.

The Soldiers Play Games (v. 23-24)

John 19:23 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His garments and made four parts, to each soldier a part, and also the tunic. Now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top in one piece.

John 19:24 They said therefore among themselves, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be," that the Scripture might be fulfilled which says: "They divided My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots." Therefore the soldiers did these things.

Jesus' Robe was Seamless – Our High Priest / Before God & People – People & God

Jesus's robe was made of one piece woven from the top to the bottom, and in the Old Testament that is exactly the description of how the high priests robe was to be made who served in the Temple. And just as we read in the book of Hebrews Jesus is our high priest. Our high priest lives to make intercession for us, the high priest's role was to present God to the people, and the people to God. God before the people the high priest was the stand and say this is who God is, this is what he thinks of you, and this is what he wants you to do. And then the people before God, as the high priest was to make intercession on behalf of the people there in the Temple. And we see Jesus demonstrated to us who God is, a God of love as he would die for us. And we would see Jesus being the high priests between the people and God as he would intercede in prayer on behalf of the people before God asking him to move in their land and upon the people. What a wonderful priest we have in Jesus Christ, and again another picture-perfect illustration before us here in this account of the crucifixion.

Exodus 28:31–32 (NKJV) ³¹ "You shall make the robe of the ephod all of blue. ³² There shall be an opening for his head in the middle of it; it shall have a woven binding all around its opening, like the opening in a coat of mail, so that it does not tear.

Hebrews 2:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.

Jesus Crucified in Undergarment or Naked / Sin wants to Humiliate You

Verse 23. At best, Jesus was crucified in his undergarment. Quite possibly, he was crucified naked. However you look at this, how humiliating, how embarrassing, how shameful, to be left barren and laid bare for such humiliation and shame. But it's a picture of sin, it's what sin does, it shames you and it embarrasses you, it exposes you, it leaves you totally uncovered, but the good news, Jesus will robe us in a robe of righteousness, he will cover us again because of his finished work here upon the cross and though we were naked and afraid and ashamed, Jesus comes and on our salvation he puts the robe upon us, welcomes us into the family, and puts the ring upon us, all to signify that we are his.

Isaiah 61:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God; For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with ornaments, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

The Soldiers Played Games – Today People Play Games

Here we see the coat that He wore and it can be speculated of what's the spiritual significance and we can trace it back to Joseph's dream and the coat of many color and those things and it could be very applicable. What I see here more so than anything and everything is they are playing games while Jesus is dying. So it is today many people playing games, their little personal pursuits, their little clubs and whatnot that people play while Jesus is there before them crying out to them, "I'm your King" and yet people just continually play games and get distracted by the little games of the world.

John & Mary (v.25-27)

John 19:25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.

John 19:26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!"

John 19:27 Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

John a Believer – Jesus Entrusts to Believer

Mary had other sons and daughters, Jesus trusts his mother to John. Why is that, because John's a believer and that's who Jesus wants to entrust his family to other believers. Mom and dads, as Jesus entrusted Mary to John, so he entrust your sons and daughters to you, and with the same heart he wants to entrust them to believers who will raise them and nurture them, encourage them and fulfill all the words of God for the believer. It's a beautiful picture

Fulfills Law Perfectly

Jesus fulfills the whole law perfectly, the law of Moses as we call it the 10 Commandments, and it says to honor your mother and father. Joseph is dead now, Mary his mother is alive, and even to the end Jesus is honoring his mother, honoring the law, by making sure that she is respected and taking care of and not left unattended to.

*Exodus 20:12 (NKJV)*¹² "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

NT Children Obey Your Parents

So children it's a New Testament commandment also, to honor your mother and father, even in a day with so much disrespect for the parents and lack of reverence, Jesus demonstrated it on his way to the cross, respect, reverence and the honor that should be given to the parental unit, the mother and the father.

*Ephesians 6:1-4 (NKJV)*¹ Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with promise: ³ "that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth." ⁴ And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Jesus always Looking out for the Sheep w/out Shepherd

Jesus entrusts his Mother to John and we can see even in the midst of the trial and the brutality and the suffering He still continually is looking for the well-being of others. What a picture for us to be looking at. Imagine us living that life as we would look at people and go this person is like a sheep without a Shepard. How do I get them under the covering and the wing of another? The picture is so huge and beautiful and broad and wonderful. Jesus in the midst of all that He's going through looks and sees this woman who is so dear to Him and says, "Take care of her." How about us? Imagine that. How about us looking around at people going look there's a sheep without a Shepard. Look over here. Here's a sheep without a Shepard, when they walk through this door may we look at them and go oh may be entrust them and get them under the covering and the protection and the love and the care of somebody who loves and cares just like I do. But not a push off of I'll push you off to them and I'll feel good about it, but an actual engagement on our behalf of wanting to be involved in the helping and the well-being of others. Oh what a picture we see here.

*Matthew 9:35-38 (NKJV)*³⁵ Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. ³⁶ But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd. ³⁷ Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. ³⁸ Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."

I Thirst / It is Finished (v.28-30)

John 19:28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, "I thirst!"

John 19:29 Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth.

Psalm 22 – 1000 years Prior

I thirst, picture of Psalm 22, as Jesus's mouth would be like a dry desert and here Jesus on the cross say I thirst, exact fulfillment even down to the saliva glands of Psalm 22, 1000 years before Christ died on the cross.

Psalm 22:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ *My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death.*

God Moves – People Offer Sour Wine

Verse 29. Still so much a picture of the world, God's Spirit is moving across the earth and all the world offers the King and God, as he thirsts for a man, as he thirsts to see us filled and abounding, as he thirsts to see his name lifted high and exalted as it rightly should be, as he thirsts to see marriages whole, as he thirsts to see children walking in the ways of the Lord, as he thirsts to see a Church living and breathing as one, as he thirsts to see a nation that's says "Our God is the Lord," as he thirsts and he thirsts and he thirsts, and yet all that the world offers him is sour wine.

Genesis 1:2 (NKJV) ² *The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.*

John 19:30 So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

Tetelestai – Paid in Full / Do You believe it is Done! / Then Roll Away the Stone and Live

It is finished, in the original language "tetelestai", and it meant paid in full. In the Roman government when your tax record came due you would take your payment down to the tax collector, pay him and he would take a stamp and on your tax record he would stamp paid in full. This is the exact word that Jesus is using here as He breathed his last paid in full. Every last sin paid in full, covered, done, it is over. Roll away the stone now and live.

There is nothing we can add to that. There's no works. There is no effort. There is no sweat, it is done Ephesians Chapter 2, It's all grace for by grace we have been saved. This is God's riches at Christ's expense for us. We just freely receive it and the stamp comes out on our debt paid in full.

Ephesians 2:8–10 (NKJV) ⁸ *For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*

Jesus did Not Drink It – Took Full Wrath

Verse 30. When he had received, the other account is more clear in that he did not take it, when it came to his lips (as he tasted what it was) he turned away from it. Why is that significant to us is that many times the wine was a numbing agent that was given to the person just so they would last longer on the cross, but Jesus never took anything that diminished the pain, nothing to escape the punishment, he took it 100% full on, he took the full wrath of God, he endured every drop of the pain of the cross, for he is fully human at this time. He is the God man, but he is suffering every last drop of this pain, as a result of the wrath of God against sin, and he feels it all and he never diminished one drop of the wrath. That's your God and King.

Matthew 27:33–34 (NKJV) ³³ *And when they had come to a place called Golgotha, that is to say, Place of a Skull, ³⁴ they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink. But when He had tasted it, He would not drink.*

No Broken Bones / Pierced on the Side (v.31-37)

John 19:31 Therefore, because it was the Preparation Day, that the bodies should not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

John 19:32 Then the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first and of the other who was crucified with Him.

John 19:33 But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.

Psalm 22 – 1000 years Prior / Cast Lots – Thirst – Crucify – No broken Bones

Psalm 22 was written 1,000 years before Jesus was ever even born, the Prophecy that they would divide his garments and play games, that he would thirst, and that His bones would not be broken, and He would be pierced in hand and feet.

Psalm 22 (NKJV) *To the Chief Musician. Set to "The Deer of the Dawn." a Psalm of David. ¹ My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? Why are You so far from helping Me, And from the words of My groaning? ² O My God, I cry in the daytime, but You do not hear; And in the night season, and am not silent. ³ But You are holy, Enthroned in the praises of Israel. ⁴ Our fathers trusted in You; They trusted, and You delivered*

them. ⁵ They cried to You, and were delivered; They trusted in You, and were not ashamed. ⁶ But I am a worm, and no man; A reproach of men, and despised by the people. ⁷ All those who see Me ridicule Me; They shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, ⁸ "He trusted in the LORD, let Him rescue Him; Let Him deliver Him, since He delights in Him!" ⁹ But You are He who took Me out of the womb; You made Me trust while on My mother's breasts. ¹⁰ I was cast upon You from birth. From My mother's womb You have been My God. ¹¹ Be not far from Me, For trouble is near; For there is none to help. ¹² Many bulls have surrounded Me; Strong bulls of Bashan have encircled Me. ¹³ They gape at Me with their mouths, Like a raging and roaring lion. ¹⁴ I am poured out like water, And all My bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; It has melted within Me. ¹⁵ My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death. ¹⁶ For dogs have surrounded Me; The congregation of the wicked has enclosed Me. They pierced My hands and My feet; ¹⁷ I can count all My bones. They look and stare at Me. ¹⁸ They divide My garments among them, And for My clothing they cast lots. ¹⁹ But You, O LORD, do not be far from Me; O My Strength, hasten to help Me! ²⁰ Deliver Me from the sword, My precious life from the power of the dog. ²¹ Save Me from the lion's mouth And from the horns of the wild oxen! You have answered Me. ²² I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will praise You. ²³ You who fear the LORD, praise Him! All you descendants of Jacob, glorify Him, And fear Him, all you offspring of Israel! ²⁴ For He has not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; Nor has He hidden His face from Him; But when He cried to Him, He heard. ²⁵ My praise shall be of You in the great assembly; I will pay My vows before those who fear Him. ²⁶ The poor shall eat and be satisfied; Those who seek Him will praise the LORD. Let your heart live forever! ²⁷ All the ends of the world Shall remember and turn to the LORD, And all the families of the nations Shall worship before You. ²⁸ For the kingdom is the LORD's, And He rules over the nations. ²⁹ All the prosperous of the earth Shall eat and worship; All those who go down to the dust Shall bow before Him, Even he who cannot keep himself alive. ³⁰ A posterity shall serve Him. It will be recounted of the Lord to the next generation, ³¹ They will come and declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, That He has done this.

Jesus didn't make up a New Religion

You know the beauty of all these Old Testament roots is that there wasn't a man named Jesus Christ who came on the scene and said I'm starting a new religion. Prophesied sometimes hundreds, sometimes thousands of years before he came.

Body Left Overnight – Defile the Whole Nation

If a body was left exposed overnight it would defile the whole nation. Here we are. It's the Passover and these religious Jews are not going to have defilement upon their Passover because this is their time to party and celebrate and have family and fellowship. It's like our Thanksgiving. Of course they are missing it totally.

Deuteronomy 21:22–23 (NKJV) ²² "If a man has committed a sin deserving of death, and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, ²³ his body shall not remain overnight on the tree, but you shall surely bury him that day, so that you do not defile the land which the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance; for he who is hanged is accursed of God.

Broken Legs – expedite Suffocation

Broken leg was to speed up the suffocation because that's how you died on the cross. It wasn't starvation. It wasn't blood loss. It was suffocation because you would have to press your feet up on those nails so that you could gain and grasp a breath of air and then your body weight would force you back down and slumping and as your body slumped, the oxygen was cut off. There was the continual cycle of pushing on the nails to push the whole body up, to straighten the arms out so you could get a breath of air, and then back down and over and over. It was cruel. It was brutal, but it was exacting way to kill somebody brutally

John 19:34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.

John 19:35 And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe.

John 19:36 For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, "Not one of His bones shall be broken."

John 19:37 And again another Scripture says, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced."

Pericardium – Water around the Heart

Water (fluid) is a sack that goes all the way around the heart is natural, is called the pericardium, it is how God created us. The fluid is used as a shock absorber and a lubricant to protect the muscle of the heart. When the heart is under pressure and trauma, more fluid flows to the area to protect the heart. The more trauma the more fluid when the heart is under severe trauma, little trauma would be little fluid. If you would pierce your heart today you would just get mostly blood if the person is a healthy person. If you find a person who is suffering some type of heart trauma, it's been medically proven that more water forms around the heart for protection.

Broken Heart – Separated from the Father

It can be said that Jesus died of a broken heart. You know what's breaking his heart, it's a separation between him and the Father. For before time as we know it in the eternity, Jesus and the Father always were, and for the first time as he will take on the sins of the world, for the first time he will be separated from the Father because he's taking on the sins of the world. Profound this is that God can't look upon sin so he must turn away from it and he cannot look at his own son for the first time they're separated and that's what breaks Jesus his heart. He will cry out at the end my God my God why has thou forsaken me, and it was there that God the Father had to turn his back on his son, because God is too holy than the look upon sin, so he turns away from Jesus and the communion and the fellowship is broken at that point, and Jesus has a broken heart.

Matthew 27:45–46 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

Habakkuk 1:13 (NKJV) ¹³ You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?

Isaiah 59:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. ² But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

Why Pierce Him if Already Dead / Isaiah 53 / Fulfill all Be the Messiah – Fail 1 and be a Heretic

So the Roman soldier comes to Jesus sees that he's already dead, therefore he doesn't break his legs, for some reason he chooses to pick up a spear, and pierce's his side. It makes no sense the whole purpose was to expedite death, he comes he sees that Jesus is dead, what is the purpose of piercing the side, it makes no sense. If you had any doubt if he was alive just break his legs. He does because prophecies have to be fulfilled, psalm 22 saying not one bone can be broken. Zechariah 12 says he has to be pierced. Fulfill all and be the Messiah, fail just one and you're not the Messiah. Jesus Christ is the Messiah. You can't make up a story like this.

Zechariah 12:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

The Swoon Theory / And they Laugh at What we Believe

There's a theory called the swoon theory which is that Jesus really didn't die even after the beating, scourging, all 40 lashes of the scourging, six hours on a cross, a spear going through the side all the way up into his heart because that's where the water would be around the heart from the suffering, water rushed to the heart to protect his heart,..... none of that killed Jesus according to this theory, they say He was merely unconscious when they put them in the tomb. He would be there for three days and the coolness of the air would revive him, and he rolled away the stone which is probably close to one ton, and he came out and he beat up 16 Roman Navy SEALs who were placed to protect the tomb, and then he told everybody that he really rose from the dead and he believes it because he actually thought he was dead. People laugh at me and they laugh at you for what we believe. They think what a ridiculous story to believe Jesus Christ rose from the dead, yet many would believe this swoon theory. As they say you don't believe in the truth you fall for any old lie that comes along.

The Savior Laid in the Tomb (v.38-42)

John 19:38 After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus.

John 19:39 And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds.

John 19:40 Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury.

John 19:41 Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.

John 19:42 So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.

Communion Service

1 Corinthians 11:23–26 (NKJV) ²³ For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; ²⁴ and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." ²⁵ In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me." ²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

John 19:38-42

Introduction

We pick up our study here in verse 38 of chapter 19. We finished out last study with those words of the Savior "it is Finished". I pray you believe it, I pray you rest in the finished work of the Savior, that there is nothing more that is left to be done, for it is done, Jesus has done it all. And, God is not done working in you as He is now creating a poem, His love story, for all the all the world to read and see, as they see the great love that the Savior has for you, and the intimate relationship that the two of you have together. God loves you, you are precious to Him.

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NKJV) ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Text Illustration:

During one of his great campaigns, D L Moody was approached by a man who had been to a number of the services and who, although convicted of his need for Christ, had kept on postponing a decision. Now the last night had come. The appeal was over, the people were going home, the work crew was busy folding up the chairs and dismantling the platform, and Mr Moody was preparing to leave. The man finally plucked up his courage. He came to the evangelist and blurted out, "Mr Moody, what must I do to be saved?" Moody looked at him. "I'm sorry sir," he said, "but you're too late." "Too late, Mr Moody?" The man was desperate now. "Surely I'm not too late!" "Yes, sir," said Moody. "You're too late. As a matter of fact, you're two thousand years too late if you want to DO something to be saved. All the DOING has been DONE. But if you would like to accept Christ by faith as your personal Saviour, you're just in time. You can do that right here, right now."

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Verse-by-verse

John 19:38 After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus.

3 Points about Joseph

So we see a few things about Joseph or Arimathea that are worth noting for we can glean much power from them.

1. First – we see he was a secret disciple (follower) of Jesus,
2. Secondly - but secretly for he feared the wrath of the Jews (which means the religious leaders of the Jewish religion Judaism).
3. Thirdly – he boldly went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus, which Pilate gave him. To ask for the body was immediate severing of his relationship with the Jews, and it was quite a physical risk considering Pilate has had a long day (remember they woke him in the middle of the night), and Pilate is no doubt fully done and stressed out over the whole thing. To ask, could only bring risk.

3 Points for You

So we can see three things in Pilate, that we should ask ourselves.

1. First – are you hiding in the shadows, is your Christian faith undercover, because you fear what others (maybe co-workers, family, old high school friends) think of you, or how it may affect your reputation or career. It's time Christian, it is time to step out of the shadows, it's time to step forth in boldness and let all know, you are a follower of Jesus Christ. Jesus said if you confess Me before men, I will confess you before My Father in heaven, but if you deny before men I will deny you before My Father in heaven. But..... here is the power of the verse, yes He says He will divide family, that even families will turn against the believer, but the power of the verse is the promise of finding life. There is no freedom and no power when we are living in the shadows. In our passage today, we will see Joseph coming out of the secrecy, and coming into life and that more abundant, and a life so bold and impacting that we read about him still 2000 years later.

Matthew 10:32–39 (NKJV) ³² “Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. ³³ But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven. ³⁴ “Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to ‘set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law’; ³⁶ and ‘a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.’ ³⁷ He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁸ And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. ³⁹ He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

Here are some small but bold steps to leave the “secret” believer place:

- **Workplace** – put a bible on your desk. Now, the one foot by two foot bible might not be the best idea, but a regular or compact would be good. Read it on break time. I am reminded of my friend Tim who was being ridiculed for reading at the break table, and one day he looked up into the air while they were cracking jokes at him and he said ‘what’s that Lord, you want me to kill them all?’. Go with the flow, take whatever engagement you can from them 😊
- **Attire** – wear a Christian T-shirt as the Lord leads you. Where I work at the airport we get every other Friday off, which most often I still have to work because I didn’t get all my hours in required to take the day off. I most often wear my Christian t-shirts and it is always interesting to watch people wait for you to turn your head so they can read your t-shirt. Then when you turn back to them they hurry up and look away, and stare at the ceiling. Me personally, I don’t wear controversial, or bloody t-shirts (the blood is a family secret – people don’t understand it until they are in the family).
- **Monday Mornings** – the Monday morning, the general conversations that occur whether at work or on the text, those big fat meatball questions “so what you do this weekend”? Oh we went to church, and/or it was my turn to serve in the children’s church, and I love those kids (kids will so often give you a good story to share). Remember, to show interest in them and ask them about their weekend or evening; or better yet you initiate the question, and it will only be natural that they respond and say “how about you, what do you do”.
- **Mission Trip** – go on a mission trip, you will get way more out of that trip than just the week or two you are actually on the ground. People will be so intrigued by your trip. You don’t have to go for a long-term trip either, you can join us for our 2 hours at the park every Sunday, and then you can tell people about that when they ask.... So what did you do this weekend? The everyday world is so bland and routine, you stepping out is intriguing and so different from the everyday life the world lives, so people will listen.
- **Speak like it is Natural** – in all these things, talk about Jesus and the things of God like they are natural, not something that is out of the ordinary. Say things like, “the Lord is so good, He blessed me this week by (fill in the blank). When you greet people or depart from people say “the Lord bless”. You speak the language of God, like every other dialect they will know what Country you are from. Speak with a southern accent they will know you from the south, speak with a British accent they will know you from the UK, and like so if you speak with a Godly accent, Godly speech, they will know you are not from Maryland.
- **Treat them like Believers** – and treat people like they are believers, talk about the Lord like it is natural and something they would want to hear. Ask people to pray for you. When people share a burden on their heart, tell them you will pray for them, and ask them if you can put their need (anonymously if they would rather not be named) on our Church prayer list that gets prayed for every Tuesday at our Prayer Meeting.

- *Pray* – and in all things, pray. Pray for the Lord to open the opportunities to let you light shine. Contrary to what we may believe, there are millions of people who are searching and desperate for something more than this world can offer them.
- *Believe* – believe they are around you, and God will establish diving appointments. Why these last two, because these two are the heart of God, and they will above all things bring you out of secrecy into witness of being a follower of Jesus Christ.

John 19:39 And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds.

Nicodemus comes out from the Shadows Also

We first met Nicodemus back in chapter 3 as he came asking Jesus what must a man do to have eternal life.

Devout now Defiled

These men are devout Jewish men, yet they cast it all away, they throw off their own Passover, by first becoming unclean by entering the quarters of a pagan, and secondly by touching a dead corpse.

Fear and Boldness

And so here these two men both lay down their fears of the Jews (and Pilate) and come and ask for the body of Jesus, and we see tremendous boldness in them by being willing to do so. Christian, question, what fear in your life personally is it time to conquer and overcome. We have discussed the fear of secret believer, but how about other fears that have you from living fully for the Lord. What bold things is it time to ask for, and not from man, but from the Lord.

- *Ministry* - Lord I am boldly asking you to give me the faith to step out of the boat and into that ministry you called me to years ago. I know you said teach the kids, I know you said go on that mission trip, I know you said to start working with the street people, but I have been fearful and I am now boldly asking You to give me the faith to do it.
- *Relationship* - Lord I have continually be fearful to leave that relationship (unmarried) I am in because I am afraid to be alone. I know this isn't from You, I know it is not a fruitful or honoring relationship to You, but I am so afraid to be alone I stay in it. Lord, I am boldly asking You to give deliver me from my fears, and give me the faith to walk away.
- *Amp up my Game* – maybe, you have a desire but are so afraid that it will end in failure, that you don't even ask God to make you a man/woman of prayer, to be filled with the Holy Spirit that you change lives by the people you encounter along the paths of life. You have made a desire to be that man/woman of prayer but you have started strong so many times only to have yourself distracted or exhausted or so busy that it ends like all the other attempts, into nothing. Be bold today, ask the Lord to give you something that you think is dead, has no life, and just see what the Lord will do with it.

3 Feet Short of Victory

In his book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, Mr. Carnegie tells of a Mr. Darby, a wealthy insurance broker from the East, who was caught up with gold fever and headed out to Colorado. He did some prospecting and discovered a very rich vein of gold in the Rockies. He returned to the East and convinced all his friends to invest their money in a mining venture. They formed a corporation, bought a great deal of equipment, and mined this very wealthy vein of gold ore in Colorado. About the time that the corporation paid off all its debts, the vein of gold ran out. The investors kept digging until they ran themselves into debt again. Finally one day, a discouraged Mr. Darby ordered an end to the digging. He closed the mine, went into Denver, and sold the mine and equipment to a junk dealer for a few hundred dollars. Mr. Darby headed back home. The junk dealer hired a geologist to study the mine and the area. The geologist came back with a report: "If you'll dig three feet past the point where Mr. Darby quit, you'll find that same vein of gold." The junk dealer became the wealthiest mine owner in the state of Colorado. Just three more feet! I wonder how many times we, too, stop three feet short of victory.

You Don't need Boldness to do the Ordinary

Here is the thing to remember Christian, asking for and getting the body of Jesus from Pilate, that was just plain supernatural stuff. You don't need boldness to do the ordinary.

It was Supernatural – God does the Supernatural

So Joseph and Nicodemus do this bold and fearless thing, they ask Pilate for the body of Jesus. There really was no logical reason for Pilate to give the body to them. A dead Jesus was what he considered the best political option for him, and now a sealed away not to be seen body would be the next logical move. When the USA exacted justice upon Saddam Hussein and Usama BinLaden, if you noticed there wasn't a parade, there wasn't massive release of photos, it was bring justice, let the world know it was done, and then silence. Why? To not make a hero or martyr out of them. Pilate would know, the risk is too high for Jesus to be paraded through the streets as a martyr, the result of the evil tyranny of Rome. It could only go bad for Pilate, yet he gives the body to them. It was supernatural, it was a move of God. It is the fulfillment of Isaiah 53:9, because God was in control.

Isaiah 53:9 (NKJV) ⁹ *And they made His grave with the wicked— But with the rich at His death, Because He had done no violence, Nor was any deceit in His mouth.*

Azzam in Somalia

How about the man we heard about a few weeks back named Azzam in Somalia, the man who would ride 800 miles in a coffin under a dead body just to get a handful of bibles for the home church.

You Don't need Boldness to do the Ordinary

Here is the thing to remember Christian, asking for and getting the body of Jesus from Pilate, that was just plain supernatural stuff. You don't need boldness to do the ordinary. So, if it is supernatural, then it is all God, no pressure on us, just looking to the Lord to do something great in our lives, and that is what He loves to do!

Christian – what boldness and greatness will you ask the Lord to do for you today? Look at Nicodemus and Joseph, and see them overcome their fear and replace it with boldness, and believe God wants to do the same for you today. Ask and it shall be given, seek and you will find, knock and it will be open!

Matthew 7:7–11 (NKJV) ⁷ *“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ⁹ Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? ¹⁰ Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? ¹¹ If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!*

Both Come out from Shadow – How did they Meet?

Here is something for consideration, ask someone to join you in your request for boldness, for them to walk alongside you, to join you, because you will very well find your desires are the same desires that others want to. How do you find such a person? I believe the Lord will do it for you, when you put yourself in the place to be found. How did Nicodemus and Joseph find each other? How did they end up in this together? Surely they didn't foreplan that when Jesus died they would come and get His body and lay it in the grave, they made this plan in the spur of the moment, as they like everyone still couldn't fully grasp what all was going on at this very moment we are studying. How did they meet? I think the Scriptures give us some good insight on the how. Both of these men were part of the Sanhedrin Council, kinda of like our Supreme Court, they shaped and upheld the laws of the nation of Israel. We can see from scriptures that neither of them cast vote in favor of the death of Jesus. What we see also is that they would have been on record, verbally, in disagreement over that Jesus should be put to death. We read in John 7 Nicodemus clearly bringing challenge before the whole counsel that they were not to judge Jesus without hearing the full story. And again, when the vote came to kill Jesus, it wasn't a secret ballot, it was a verbal vote, to which both would have said, I do not consent. So, these two because of their verbal stance, would have known that each other believed the same thing, their words brought them together into oneness. Our public words join us, or they divide us, and they help us find each other. So Christian, who is joined to you by your words, who has found you?

John 7:45–52 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ *Then the officers came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, “Why have you not brought Him?” ⁴⁶ The officers answered, “No man ever spoke like this Man!” ⁴⁷ Then the Pharisees answered them, “Are you also deceived? ⁴⁸ Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him? ⁴⁹ But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed.” ⁵⁰ Nicodemus (he who came to Jesus by night, being one of them) said to them, ⁵¹ “Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?” ⁵² They answered and said to him, “Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee.”*

Luke 23:50–54 (NKJV) ⁵⁰ Now behold, there was a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man. ⁵¹ He had not consented to their decision and deed. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God. ⁵² This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. ⁵³ Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before. ⁵⁴ That day was the Preparation, and the Sabbath drew near.

Silly Divisions in the Church

Of course, let's just agree to major on the major, Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and let's let the minor stuff just be that. Once I saw this guy on a bridge about to jump. I said, "Don't do it!" He said, "Nobody loves me." I said, "God loves you. Do you believe in God?" He said, "Yes."

- I said, "Are you a Christian or a Jew?" He said, "A Christian." I said, "Me, too!"
- Protestant or Catholic?" He said, "Protestant." I said, "Me, too!"
- What franchise?" He said, "Baptist." I said, "Me, too!"
- Northern Baptist or Southern Baptist?" He said, "Northern Baptist." I said, "Me, too!"
- Northern Conservative Baptist or Northern Liberal Baptist?" He said, "Northern Conservative Baptist." I said, "Me, too!"
- Northern Conservative Baptist Great Lakes Region, or Northern Conservative Baptist Eastern Region?" He said, "Northern Conservative Baptist Great Lakes Region." I said, "Me, too!"
- Northern Conservative Baptist Great Lakes Region Council of 1879, or Northern Conservative Baptist Great Lakes Region Council of 1912?" He said, "Northern Conservative Baptist Great Lakes Region Council of 1912." To which I said, "Die, heretic!" And I pushed him over.

What made them Change – Jesus Lived it out in Action of His Words

What made them change? It was the resurrection we know because it hadn't happened yet. I believe because Jesus died the way He lived. Jesus lived out everything He taught all the way until the end. He didn't just preach with words, but He lived the words in action all the way until the end. Until the end when His life was on the line, all the way until the end when enemies came against, all the way until the end when He had his reputation to be mocked and ridiculed, all the way until the end even when faced with losing His life. He lived beyond words, He lived the words in action of loving, forgiving, grace and mercy. I have to ask myself, do I live like that in just a common day. Does every last action reflect what I say I believe, and reflect every last word of God I claim to believe in. May it be part of my prayer, your prayer, daily that we live our words out loud in actions like Jesus did. People's lives will be changed who are watching, I guarantee it, because God guarantees it.

2 Corinthians 3:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Do we begin again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, as some others, epistles of commendation to you or letters of commendation from you? ² You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; ³ clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.

Do What God Called you To – Even if Doesn't Make Sense

Josephus of Arimathea gives Jesus his family tomb, a tomb that had never been used, a tomb that was worth consider money, a tomb that he had bought and hewed for the future of his family as in those days a family tomb would be used for all the future generations. It is interesting just from the start of all this consideration, of why Joseph was hewing a new tomb, and not being buried with his fathers as was the custom. Possibly it is because Joseph was the first to come into money, and thus all his forefathers were buried in the common man's grave outside the city. Beloved, do what God has called you to do, even when it makes no sense, even when you are not sure why He is calling you to do it, even when you see no reward for yourself. It may cost you money, reputation, sweat and tears, people may call you foolish, and you may never see the fruit of your faith, but don't let that stop you, do what God called you to do, and leave the rest to God.

Matthew 27:57–60 (NKJV) ⁵⁷ Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. ⁵⁸ This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. ⁵⁹ When Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, ⁶⁰ and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed.

The Joke

I heard, but can't confirm, when Joseph was taking Jesus' body to the grave someone yelled out to him, Joseph why are you giving up your grave for a stranger, to which Joseph answered, its ok, it's just for the weekend (hahaha).

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John 19:41 Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid.

John 19:42 So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.

The Linen - tachrichin

Still today as practiced by Orthodox Jews, the deceased is dressed in "tachrichin", also called a shroud, the traditional burial shroud, handmade of white linen or cotton. All Jews, rich or poor, are buried in tachrichin as a statement of the equality in death. Gamaliel established this practice so identify that there is no class separation, and that we come into this world with nothing and we leave this world with nothing. This shroud is 4 foot wide by 18 feet long.

Taking the Body Down

Joseph and Nicodemus take down the body of Jesus. Here are the rich men, the respected men, men who once were secret disciples, now in their lives are saying "enough" as they step out of the shadows at all cost and come for the Lord's body. Imagine going to Golgotha, carrying a pry bar, carrying a stool? Imagine as they arrive and they see the sight, Jesus dead, lifeless, slumped and hanging. Naked. Imagine what it is like for these men. How you could lovingly and delicately separate Jesus' hands from that cross with that nail is beyond me, and I have a mechanical background. They probably separate the crossbeam from the vertical beam, then from the ground they pry His hands and feet from the nails, gently wrap His naked body with cloth, then carry Him to the tomb. Imagine holding in your arms the lifeless body of our Lord. These men are older men we know because they were part of the Sanhedrin Council, the lifeless body of Jesus is dead weight, but they press on. Although rich they did not pass this task on to a servant, but lovingly take Him into their own arms and make the trek probably close to a quarter mile to the tomb.

John 19:38-42 (NKJV) ³⁸ After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. ³⁹ And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. ⁴⁰ Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. ⁴¹ Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. ⁴² So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation Day, for the tomb was nearby.

Washing the Body

Before the body was wrapped in the shroud, it was to be washed as Jewish Custom today still details out. The washing is called the "taharah". It is still done today. The Jewish practice is to wash the body and have it in the grave by sunset. A Jewish recently told the story of her father dying in Israel, and he dies and 9am and within an hour the "Holy Society" (chevra kaddisha) was there to prepare and take the body. She sat in a separate room because she was a female, as men wash the body of men, and they have woman wash the body of woman. She said she sat in the other room but listen to the whole process. She heard the water pouring, and she said that they talked to the deceased as if they could hear. She said she heard them saying, Mr. Stien, we are now going to turn you over and wash your back. The whole process done very lovingly, caring, respectful, and gentle. She said he died at 9am and was in the tomb by noon.

Washing Practiced in Acts

We know this washing practice was done in the times of Jesus because we read about it in Acts 9 after Dorcas dies. *Acts 9:36-38 (NKJV)* ³⁶ At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. ³⁷ But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. ³⁸ And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them.

Mitzvah

This process is called "mitzvah" (which means commandment) and it is the highest commandment in that you are doing something for someone that they can't do for themselves, they can't repay.

Consider Washing Jesus

Imagine these two (Nicodemus and Joseph) washing the body of Jesus. By now in the hot sun of the arid Middle-East, the blood was dried. Imagine taking a wash cloth and washing the hands of Jesus, imagine as you would clean off all the blood and you would come to the hole. Imagine washing His chest and stomach, and coming to the wound where the spear had pierced His side. Imagine as you would loving and gently roll His body over on to His stomach, saying Jesus I am going to roll you over now so I can wash your back. Imagine what you would see as you would clean the blood off His back and then see the damage that the cat-of-nine-tails had done to Him. Then saying Jesus we are going to roll you back over now, we are going to wash Your face. Imagine washing His face, that was beaten beyond human recognition Isaiah foretells, His face that they plucked His beard out. Imagine as you wash away the blood you come down to clean skin, you come down to those eyes that you once looked into, imagine just beholding His face. After that they comb the hair, and imagine looking at His face and holding His head, as you pulled the comb through His hair. And then lastly after the body was washed, the hand was placed over the eyes and the eyelids closed shut. I wonder if they kissed Him.....how I would if I could right now lay my chest upon His and hold Him, saying thank you Lord. How I would if I could right now kiss His lips and say I love You My Lord.

Isaiah 52:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Just as many were astonished at you, So His visage was marred more than any man, And His form more than the sons of men;

Isaiah 50:6 (NKJV) ⁶ I gave My back to those who struck Me, And My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting.

Loving Hands / Soldier / Thanks

Here Jesus is in loving hands. After the crucifixion He is only in loving hands. It is when we hear of one of our warriors being killed in the battlefield, our hearts grieve not only at their death, but that they are in angry and hateful hands, but then we have a sense of closure when we receive word the body has been recovered and is back in loving and respectful hands. I wonder what it was like after the resurrection when Jesus saw them, did He lay His hand on their shoulder and look into their eyes and say thanks men, thanks for all you did. As I always say, I don't think Jesus ever missed an opportunity to look into the eyes of people and make a heart connection with them.

The Final Wrapping of Linen / Tachrichin

Lastly the body would be placed on a clean piece of linen (the Tachrichin). The linen would wrap from head-to-toe, not wound around like a mummy, but wrapped from head-to-toe. Then a strip of linen was wrapped at the ankles to keep them together, then wrapped at the knees, then a strip at the waist that held the hands to the side of the body. Then there was a last strip that went around the forehead to the chin to hold the mouth shut. Before the final tying they would place myrrh and aloe and spices to bring a sweet fragrance to the body.

Then Leaving the Tomb / No Passover for Them

After it is all done, it is time for Joseph and Nicodemus to leave the body and close the tomb. I can only imagine how hard it was to leave that tomb. Where would you go, how could you leave Him, but the Sabbath Law required the body be in the tomb before the Sabbath began, but they wouldn't be able to participate in the Passover meal or the Sabbath celebration for they were now ceremonially unclean for touching a dead body, and thus they couldn't make the sacrifice of the Passover Lamb that was required of them. But the fact is, and they knew it, they had just prepared the Final Passover Lamb, who would be and was, their Passover Lamb that year and for all years to come. *1 Corinthians 5:7-8 (NKJV) ⁷ Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened. For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. ⁸ Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

Conclusion

Communion

Would you please stand with your communion elements in your hand, and lets take communion together as we reflect on this great day.

The Gift

In Mark's account it reads that Pilate "granted" the body to Joseph. The word there for "gave" is "to gift". To give as a favor. He is Jesus, God's gift to you, His favor unto you, for He favors you, He loves you. He is Jesus, God's gift to you.

Mark 15:45 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ So when he found out from the centurion, he granted the body to Joseph.

End of Study

Chapter 20

John 20:1-18

Set Free – You have been Set Free!

For who the Son sets free is free indeed! I have come that they may have life and that more abundant! And it is all based on the resurrection that Jesus is God and has the power to overcome sin and death, and give us new life!

You are set free today, you have been given new life, and the proof is in the resurrection!

John 8:36 (NKJV) ³⁶ *Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed.*

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

If You Haven't – Jesus will Set You Free

If you haven't been set free, if you are still bound, addicted, tormented, empty, in despair..... Jesus will set you free, you come to Him today with all your baggage, needs, lack thereof, and He will set you free. He will, the proof is in the Resurrection! And here today is a room full of people who will attest that the Gospel is true, and it sets a person free, it makes a person new.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

Let's Look @ Great Day / The Stone has Been Rolled Away

Let's get into that great day some 2,000 years ago, the day the stone had been rolled away. The stone was rolled away not so Jesus could get out but so everyone else could get in and see and it was empty, that it truly is "done".

John 20:1 Now the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb.

Look Into the Empty Tomb

The stone was rolled away not so Jesus could get out but so everyone else could get in and see and it was empty

First Day of Week

First day of the week is Sunday in the Jewish calendar.

17th of Nissan

It is the feast of first fruits, where the high priest would go in and wave a sheaf of grain in expectation of the harvest that would come in 50 days, which would be the Feast of Pentecost. It is the 17th of Nissan in the Jewish calendar, as it is 3 days after the crucifixion which was on the 14th of Nissan, in exact accordance with Exodus chapter 12.

Exodus 12:6 (NKJV) ⁶ *Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month. Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight.*

(1 Corinthians 15:20 KJV) *But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.*

(Leviticus 23:9 NKJV) *And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,*

(Leviticus 23:10 NKJV) *"Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: 'When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest.*

(Leviticus 23:11 NKJV) *'He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; **on the day after the Sabbath** the priest shall wave it.*

The Ark Rested on the 17th of Nissan

The 17th of Nisan is the exact day that the ark rested after the flood, after God's judgement came upon the world. God changed the calendar when they were in Egypt and the Exodus was on, God said start a new calendar. When you look at that and you take this old calendar, realign it to the new calendar that God instituted during the Exodus of Egypt and the first Passover, we come and we bring ourselves to the exact day of Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Ark resting on Mount Ararat, is the same exact day that Jesus Christ rose from the dead in perfect fulfillment of the Psalm that said, "You shall not leave my soul in hell."

Genesis 8:4 (NKJV) ⁴ Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.

Psalms 16:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

What's the Point? / Written Outside Time Domain / Absolute Truth / S-P-E-C-S

What's the point? Why do we always make the point about such little things, such as all lining up on the exact same day? Because they have to, for this book to be written outside of our time domain. Fail one prophecy and the Book is not written outside of our time domain by God. Fail one prophecy and the Book is just a book written by somebody who's as imaginative as the writers in Hollywood; but none fail, every word is perfect, and therefore this word is absolutely perfect. What's the significance of that? It means every truth is absolute truth.

This is not feels kind of right, yeah this is okay, let's go with it..... but it is absolute truth, and this world today, yesterday, tomorrow, and forever will always need absolute truth to live by, and to be guided by. It is for no one to determine which absolute truth is to be thrown out, because all are included in the word, absolute, and therefore, every word of this Bible is true, and we live it, we obey it, it guides us, and it is our book for life.

When I worked at the space center, we had a quarter billion dollar satellite sitting on top of about 100,000 gallons of rocket fuel, and we only had one shot to get it right. There was no second chance. There was no room for error. We had to hit it exactly, absolutely perfect every time, else the mission would be a failure, and so what we had to go by was our specs, standing for specifications. Specs, is it within spec, are all systems a go, did we do something that's outside the specs, are we somewhere in the red line because that was our warning sign that we're approaching danger, and to continue on mission would be failure.

We worked to the specs. I like looking at this Bible and I see specs in this Bible, S-P-E-C-S, sins to forsake, P, promises of God to keep, E, examples to follow, and C, commandments to keep, and stumbling blocks to avoid, again, that's stumbling blocks, to avoid that can trip you up Stay inside those specs and you'll have mission success.

S – Sins to Forsake - There is no negotiation, they have to be forsaken:

P - Promises to believe, always a reminder a God who is for us, a God who loves us, a God who is working for us, and that he will do great and mighty things for all who obey and follow him.

E, the examples, we see life examples all through this scripture, life examples of Jesus, life examples of Paul, life examples of even those who failed, so we have an example of what to do, more better said, what not to do, so we have all these examples of people in the Bible who were flesh and blood just like us. When I say, "Jesus, flesh and blood," I mean the God Man who came from heaven and walked this earth and showed the perfect example.

C, is for commandments to keep. God has commandments. He knows better than we know, and he knows what's best for us. The world may try to think they know better, but God is the ultimate genius of the universe. Every commandment he gives us is to protect us and to provide for us, to protect us from harm, and to provide an abundant life because it's the life he designed for us if we live according to his commandments. That's pure freedom.

Stumbling blocks where God gives a warning, don't get yourself mixed up with those people. Don't find yourself engaged in those activities. Although they're not sin, they will cause you to stumble and bring you into sin.

SPECS Scriptures

S – Sins to Forsake - There is no negotiation, they have to be forsaken:

- 1 Cor 6:9 - 11 (NKJV) 9Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, 10nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. 11And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.
- Flee from youthful lust (2 Tim 2:22)
- I've made a covenant with my eyes (Job 31:1)
- "Judge not, that you be not judged. (Matthew 7:1)

P – Promises to Believe - God's promises get me through the hard times. God's promises warm my heart and soul as I read of His great love for me:

- Jer 29:11 - 13 (NKJV) 11For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope. 12Then you will call upon Me and go and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. 13And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.
- "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you (Matthew 7:7)
- My God shall supply all my needs (Philp 4:19)
- I will never leave you nor forsake you (Heb 13:5)
- It is Finished (John 19:30)

E – Examples to Follow - this book is loaded with great examples of great men and woman who followed after God:

- John the Baptist, would not waiver or water down the Word. (Matt 14:1-12)
- Moses intercedes on behalf of the people after their great sin (Exodus 32).
- Jesus sees the hungry, so He feeds them (Matt 14)
- Jesus is moved with compassion, so He teaches the people (Mark 6:34)

C – Commandments to Obey – They are not suggestions, but commands of God. The word command in the OT means “specifically”, and in the NT it means “an authoritative prescription”. I like that, this is the specific prescription from the Great Physician to make us well, and to keep us well:

- Study to show yourself approved unto God (2 Timothy 2:15)
- Go therefore and make disciples (Matt 28:19)
- Husbands love your wives as Christ loves the Church (Eph 5:25)
- Sara called her husband Abraham Lord (haha) (1 Peter 3:6)

S – Stumbling Blocks to Avoid – Just as there are great examples to follow, there are great examples not to follow but to avoid.

- Solomon took for himself many wives (haha) (Neh 13:26-27)
- Peter warmed himself by the enemy’s fire (John 18:18)
- Aaron feared man and made the golden calf (Exodus 32)
- And Lot pitched his tent towards Sodom (Genesis 13:12)

SPECS – Assure Mission Success

S-P-E-C-S – to assure success in my life’s mission.

Here we are living within the specs and you will have mission success. Here we go into another glorious passage of scripture here in John, chapter 20.

Mary Magdalene 1st / God not Seeking Revenge

Mark 16 says that Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalene. She is the first of all people on the planet, that Jesus appeared himself to. I think it's important to note that Jesus on his resurrection did not come seeking revenge. People have this perception, a painting of Jesus' character and nature, that God is an angry god readying to strike, pounce, and devour the wrongdoer. People think, "Oh, I can't believe I blew it, my temper, or I found myself engaged in that activity again, and he's going to come and he's going to crush me like a bug because that's what God does. He crushes the wrongdoer and the evil ones like a bug." Well, if that was true and that was his nature, then surely we would see it in the resurrection as he would come and he would be seeking revenge on certain people. If Jesus was the crusher, the avenger, we would read of him going to the high priest and say, "Now what do you think?" He would have went to Pilate, said, "Next time your wife has a dream, listen to her, but as today your kingdom has ended." Or he would show up to the guards that mocked him, he'd slap those men who buffeted him, say, "Prophesy who hit you." He'd have went and found the guy with the spear that pierced his side, "Is this the spear?" as he would hold it up before he thrust it through. He'd have found the man with the cat-of-9-tails, and say, "I'm going to just give you what you deserved." But he doesn't because that's not who his character is, he came to seek and save that which was lost, and he pours his grace out upon all who will receive his grace. Judgment will come, but it doesn't come until death. For this is the period and dispensation of grace.

Mark 16:9 (NKJV) ⁹ Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.

Why Mary First? / Picture of the Morning Devotion

The first one that sees him is Mary Magdalene, is there something specific? Is there a reason she above all other people on the entire planet that he would appear to her first? Her before Peter, her before John and the other disciples, why her? I think the answer is just real simple. Because she was there, she was the first one there. Mary went to the tomb as an act of devotion. She went with spices because she wanted to add on to what Joseph and Nicodemus had done 3 days prior. She came with spices as an act of love. Mary is the demonstration of the mourning devotion, and what is that she wants to get is that she just wants to get to Jesus. She wants to get into his presence physically where he's at. That's all that the mourning devotion is, it's getting into the presence of the Lord. A mourning devotion isn't the checking off of reading three chapters, and gaining head knowledge, as good as that is, there's nothing wrong with that. Nor is it praying for 12 things on your prayer list and that is great also, but that's not what the morning devotion is, it's about getting into the presence of Jesus and that is a great way to start your day, and you start your day getting into the presence of the Lord, your day will be greatly altered throughout.

Devotion (Definition of Compound Word) / No Sweeter Time than Before House begins to Move

What does devotion mean, it's a compound word and when you put the 2 words together it means a warmth of passion, burning hot as fire. She came because her love and devotion to the Lord. To me, there's no sweeter time to spend time with the Lord than in the morning before the sun comes up. I'm not trying to be spiritual, I'm just being practical, I need to get up before the family and the house starts to move. I need to have my silence before my children start running through the house. I meet with the Lord before I even meet with my wife. Because I find there's no better time to sit with the Lord.

Devotion Overview

How many times I have heard that word devotion, since I've been a Christian. It is so a part of our Christian language, our Christianise, we say it without really thinking what it means anymore. I couldn't think of it anywhere in the Bible, but it is, one time, and that was Paul referring to the pagan worship on Mars hill in Athens, Acts

What is devotion: We hear it all the time, and say it too. How's your devotional life brother, did you do your morning devotion, Can't start my day off without my morning devotion.

I got a catalog in the mail yesterday:

- Oswald Chambers Devotional
- Awesome real life devotional
- God little devotional book 1&2
- Gods little devotional book for couples
- The one minute devotional: wisdom and Inspiration for todays business professional. / 1 minute Bible
- Songs of my soul devotional thoughts by Phillip Keller
- Legacy of joy: A devotional for fathers
- The original Azusa Street revival Devotional – which died out around 1912 I believe.
- NIV African American Bible – the first devotional bible to speak to the soul of the African American experience. 19.95 from Zondervan.

I went to the Dictionary: Devotion: ardent affection towards something.

- Ardent: warmth and passion glowing hot as fire. The something part is easy, that's Jesus.

For the Believer: Warmth and passion glowing hot as fire for our Lord Jesus Christ. I like that.

This isn't a message where I challenge you what your passion is, or how your devotionals have been. It is there, I know most of you, and I know your love for the Lord, the passion is glowing – I see it in you.

If you are here today and saying that's what you think, nothing is burning here. Let me say this - you are here. Yes we sin, but sin is not the chief characteristic of our lives, Righteousness is the chief characteristic of our Life. We need to recognize that, and claim the victory Christ has won for us, and then live like we believe it. 2 Cor 5:21 The desire in every man here today is to be righteous. And we are

I found the Greek word for passion 41 times in the Bible, and each time it was used in connection with Jesus, it meant suffering. And it became so clear – (Heb 12:2 KJV) Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Suffering to redeem us was Jesus' passion. It was His suffering that gives us passion, for we now have a passion for living because we have a hope and a future.

Passion isn't something we stir up, it comes from fellowship with God. We have been given the most awesome gift in the universe, to fellowship with the Creator, the King.

Devotion, a warmth of passion glowing hot as fire for our Lord Jesus Christ.

When you are glowing for Jesus, people will see it. I think it was Spurgeon who said, catch on fire for Jesus, and people will come to watch you burn.

Devotion - a warmth of passion glowing hot as fire for Our Lord Jesus Christ.
Christian enjoy your Devotions – Stoke the Fire.

Textual Criticism

So there can be challenge when you put all the accounts together and they can seem to contradict themselves about who came to the tomb, who Jesus appeared to first, and it can be confusing, so here is a summation of how it probably played out:

- *Mary Magdalene is heading to the tomb with the other woman, Mary Magdalene sees that the stone has been rolled away and she immediately turns around and runs to tell Peter and John. The other woman continue to the tomb and go into the tomb, and they see the angel who says Jesus has risen, go tell the other disciples, which the woman return to do. Mary Magdalene comes back with Peter and John, who the two of them return after entering the tomb, while Mary Magdalene stays at the tomb, and Jesus appears to her. Then Jesus leaves Mary Magdalene and goes meets the other woman who were returning to tell the other disciples.*

Matthew 28:1–10 (NKJV) ¹ Now after the Sabbath, as the first day of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. ² And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. ³ His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. ⁴ And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead men. ⁵ But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. ⁷ And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you." ⁸ So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word. ⁹ And as they went to tell His disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, "Rejoice!" So they came and held Him by the feet and worshiped Him. ¹⁰ Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell My brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me."

Mark 16:1–11 (NKJV) ¹ Now when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, that they might come and anoint Him. ² Very early in the morning, on the first day of the week, they came to the tomb when the sun had risen. ³ And they said among themselves, "Who will roll away the stone from the door of the tomb for us?" ⁴ But when they looked up, they saw that the stone had been rolled away—for it was very large. ⁵ And entering the tomb, they saw a young man clothed in a long white robe sitting on the right side; and they were alarmed. ⁶ But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. ⁷ But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you." ⁸ So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid. ⁹ Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons. ¹⁰ She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. ¹¹ And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe.

Luke 24:1–12 (NKJV) ¹ Now on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they, and certain other women with them, came to the tomb bringing the spices which they had prepared. ² But they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. ³ Then they went in and did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. ⁴ And it happened, as they were greatly perplexed about this, that behold, two men stood by them in shining garments. ⁵ Then, as they were afraid and bowed their faces to the earth, they said to them, "Why do you seek the living among the dead? ⁶ He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, ⁷ saying, 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.' " ⁸ And they remembered His words. ⁹ Then they returned from the tomb and told all these things to the eleven and to all the rest. ¹⁰ It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them, who told these things to the apostles. ¹¹ And their words seemed to them like idle tales, and they did not believe them. ¹² But Peter arose and ran to the tomb; and stooping down, he saw the linen cloths lying by themselves; and he departed, marveling to himself at what had happened.

John 20:1–18 (NKJV) ¹ Now the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. ² Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him." ³ Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb. ⁴ So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first. ⁵ And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in. ⁶ Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there, ⁷ and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself. ⁸ Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed. ⁹ For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead. ¹⁰ Then the disciples went away again to their own homes. ¹¹ But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb. ¹² And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. ¹³ Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." ¹⁴ Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus. ¹⁵ Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away." ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher). ¹⁷ Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.' " ¹⁸ Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.

John 20:2 Then she ran and came to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him."

Whom Jesus Loved – we should Think the Same Way

The other disciple is John, and he only refers to himself as "whom Jesus loved". John is writing this account about 70 years after the event, he is probably around 85 years old now, but this is still how he sums his relationship with Jesus up., "whom Jesus loved". I count five times that is how John referred to himself. I, we, should do the same. When we talk about Jesus, we should identify ourselves as the one whom Jesus loved, because He does, and as we speak it out loud, and hear ourselves say it, our belief will follow. God loves you, God is in love with you today, and that is all we need to identify ourselves as, the one whom Jesus loves.

John 13:23 (NKJV) ²³ Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.

John 19:26 (NKJV) ²⁶ When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!"

John 21:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea.

John 21:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?"

Where Laid Him – No One expected the Resurrection

Verse 2 - and we do not know where they have laid Him - Mary says we don't know where the body is, and the boys are bewildered also where the body may be, because nobody was expecting Him to rise from the dead, therefore they all think the body has been moved.

They did not Go to Wrong Tomb

By the way, they did not all run to the wrong tomb, we are told they watched which tomb Jesus was placed in.

Mark 15:47 (NKJV) ⁴⁷ And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joseph observed where He was laid.

John 20:3 Peter therefore went out, and the other disciple, and were going to the tomb.

John 20:4 So they both ran together, and the other disciple outran Peter and came to the tomb first.

Peter 1st Pope but John Faster

So John felt it necessary to let us know who was the fastest; yes Peter may have become the first pope, but let it be known that I was always faster, and the better athlete (hahaha).

John 20:5 And he, stooping down and looking in, saw the linen cloths lying there; yet he did not go in.

John 20:6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb; and he saw the linen cloths lying there,

John 20:7 and the handkerchief that had been around His head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself.

Linens Still There

So the linen wrapping that we discussed last study are still in the tomb, and the piece that went around the head was neatly folded. There is some who say that the linens that were wrapped around His body are still in their exact location, meaning exactly where they were originally laid, except Jesus not in them. I am not sure to be honest as I study the original language, but we are sure for sure, they are there and Jesus is not – amen!

No Grave Robbers

It indicates to me that grave robbers didn't steal the body, because why would you take Jesus out of the linens? Robbers get in and get out as quick as possible. Robbers don't fold laundry when they break in, they grab and dash.

Jesus in Control

But why folded? The folding is an indication of purposeful, intent, no rush, process that's going on at this time of Jesus and his resurrection. Jesus is in control. Men, just a note, Jesus leaves the room in better condition when He leaves, just a little freebie next time you pass that piece of paper on the floor, or that cup on the table.

For Thought

And here is something for thought, and that is I use to be an aircraft mechanic, and you could always tell the job was done, because at the end of the job we always cleaned all our tools up, and threw away all our garbage, and then always cleaned the aircraft, wiped it down, shined it up – it was ready to fly. So for thought, a rather interesting claim in his book "The Carpenter's Cloth: Christ's Journey to the Cross and Beyond", author Sigmund Brouwer states that in his research when a carpenter in those days would finish a project he would leave a message for the person. After the project was finished the carpenter would take the handkerchief that he had used, fold it up neatly, and place it on top of the piece he had just finished, it was His way of saying to the person.....it is done, you can take it with you and use it and enjoy.

A Message for Peter – A Message for All

No matter how we look at it, the folded cloth is a message for us.....it is done.

Finished and now Started

The folded cloth says it is finished, while at the same time it was saying it is started. It is a new day and a new life for you Peter, it is a new life for each of us here today. We as a people enjoy the "it is done", but let's live and enjoy the "it has started part too", let's live abundant lives, let's live set apart from the world, let's live in the love of God, let's live that love out loud for the world to see. It is done yes, but it has also begun!

John 20:8 Then the other disciple, who came to the tomb first, went in also; and he saw and believed.

John 20:9 For as yet they did not know the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.

Imagine the past 3 Days for these Disciples

These disciples, imagine what it must have been like for those three days because to them they were still expecting, as you recall, who's going to be the greatest in the kingdom, they were expecting Jesus to set up his rule and reign right then and now there on Israel but here he is now dead and in the grave.

Religious Remembered Jesus' Claim to Raise from Dead

Religious leaders knew and fully understood the claim that Jesus made regarding rising from the dead on the third day, thus why they had asked for the guard outside the tomb from Pilate. The religious leaders understood the claim, but the disciples didn't.

Matthew 27:62–66 (NKJV) ⁶² On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, ⁶³ saying, "Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise.' ⁶⁴ Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him away, and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' So the last deception will be worse than the first." ⁶⁵ Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go your way, make it as secure as you know how." ⁶⁶ So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard.

Peter throws Caution to Wind – Doesn't Care about Religion – But Relationship

So Peter runs into the tomb because he doesn't care about being defiled for Passover, the feast of first fruit, the feast of unleavened bread, he doesn't care about any of those things because he doesn't care about religion he cares about the relationship he had/has with Jesus. Peter throws caution to the wind and runs in.

See 3X (Look Visibly – to Study – Idea (get it))

In verses 5, 6, and 8, the word "saw" or "see" is used. First, John came to the tomb and saw the linen clothes lying.

- Verse 5, The word translated "saw" is blepo, meaning, "to look at, to see visibly."
- In verse 6, Peter saw the linen clothes lie, and the word used is theoreo, meaning, "to study more carefully," and from which we get our word "theory."
- Finally, in verse 8, the word translated "saw" is eido, from which we get the word "idea"—or "I get it."

It is Becoming Clear / But still Confused, Excited, Fearful

When John goes into the tomb and he now gets a closer look, that word is to perceive, it says that he believed. He is not believing in the resurrection per se because we read that they still didn't understand it in a few verses, but what he clearly believes is that Jesus is not in the shroud and that Jesus, his body, has been removed from the shroud. He somehow came out of the shroud, leaving the shroud in its original place. The picture is starting to come together and they're going to start piecing this altogether and it's going to become clear to them what has happened but right now, there's a lot of confusion, excitement, probably fear, and just a lot of what in the world is going on.

For All of Us – We can Be Confused wondering What is Going On / Key – Keep Looking & Observing

Look, for some of you, it's easy to be living your Christian life and have moments where you're not sure what's going on, you're excited, you're fearful, you're confused, you're wondering what in the world is going on, all these things are going through your mind and it's okay to be in that place and to have those times, because God is going to bring the picture into clarity for you. He's going to reveal these things to you for further and fuller understanding. The key for you is to keep looking, to keep on perceiving, to keep on observing, to keep on pondering what is going on and thinking these things through and just allowing the Lord to speak to you and to work on you because he will, I promise, bring you into a fuller and richer understanding of what he's done, and what he is doing, and what he's going to do.

Clearly See – Some Things You can't Casually Observe – Must go In

But what we clearly see in this example, there's some things you just can't experience about Jesus Christ by staying on the outside, or just glancing casually but to experience him fully, you have to go in and see everything for yourself. There are some things you just can't figure out from the outside and you have to enter in. Salvation is surely one of those things. Salvation can't be something you casually approach, you have to put your all into it if you are going to "get it" and understand it. I commend you for doing so today by coming here to hear about Jesus Christ.

John 20:10 Then the disciples went away again to their own homes.

John doesn't Cast Peter Off

Peter the Activist, John the Mystic; Peter Impulsive, John Contemplative travel together in the Book of Acts. Others, no doubt hearing of Peter's denial, looked down on Peter and distanced themselves from him. Not John. The "apostle of love" takes Peter into his home and into his heart—not knowing exactly how events would unfold. Praise the Lord for people like John, who, when folks flounder and falter, will take them in even before they know how the story's going to conclude.

John 20:11 But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down and looked into the tomb.

Wailing

The word for weeping here literally means "wailing". They (the angels in verse 13) ask why are you weeping, and Mary says because they have taken my Lord, and I miss Him, I want to see Him and touch Him again.

John 20:12 And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

Had Lain - Key Word / God became a Man – a Lamb – a Worm

The key word here is "had lain" as He is gone! In Psalm 22, which we have studied over and over in these last few weeks because of its prophetic importance, of how Jesus fulfilled all the prophecies of it perfectly, well here is one more for you.

Psalm 22:6 (NKJV) ⁶ But I am a worm (tolah – means scalet), and no man; A reproach of men, and despised by the people.

Isaiah 1:18 (NKJV) ¹⁸ "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.

Tolah also means "scarlet" (= "Crimson" 38x). Scarlet dye was made from a particular worm, *Cermes vermilio*. The *Cermes vermilio* pierces the thin bark of twigs to suck the sap, from which it prepares a waxy scale to protect its soft body. The red dye is in this scale. When reproducing, the female climbs a tree (usually the holm oak), where it bears its eggs; the larvae hatch and feed on the body of the worm. It gives its life...a crimson spot is left on the branch; when the scarlet spot dries out, in three days, it changes to white as it flakes off... (Zondervan Biblical Encyclopedia).

No Stress in Heaven

The angles are sitting, they are not pacing or stressing. They already know the outcome, they already know no one defeats Jesus. They know their King, they know the "strength of heaven", and they know He reigns in every situation.

No Stress – But still have to Fight

Now, here is a great example for us that we need not stress over the situation that we are to know "the strength of heaven", but that doesn't mean we are not to fight! We are called into the fight, we are in a war, and the earth is not a playground:

- Men fight for your marriages
- Wives fight for your husbands
- Parents fight for your children against this sinful world
- We are to fight for the souls of men and woman
- We are to fight to set ourselves apart from this world

John 20:13 Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him."

Courageous Angels

Just a note on these angels, they are courageous, for that is pure courage to ask a woman why she is crying.

- If you don't know, you are in trouble
- If you do know, you are probably still in trouble, because you are the problem

Mary goes into tomb – Somethings only See by Fully Entering

Mary goes in now, she hadn't gone in before to the tomb. She stayed back and just saw that the stone had been rolled away. Then she runs and tells Peter and John who run and go in. Now Peter and John leave, and Mary is left it appears all alone and now she enters in. Here again we see there's some things you just can't experience about Jesus Christ by staying on the outside, or just glancing casually but to experience him fully, you have to go in and see everything for yourself. Here she goes in and what does she see but two angels. That's very interesting because there's no mention obviously that Peter and John saw the angels. I think it would have been recorded if they have done so.

Sees 2 Angels – Peter/John didn't / Somethings only seen Through Tears / Same True for You

Mary sees the two angels, and it has been said there's certain things that you'll only be able to see through tears. Mary is full of tears, weeping for her Lord, and she sees something that no one else had gotten to see. The same is true for you. I know there's times that are hard for you and are difficult. You're wondering why you're going through such a hard time and wondering why you have to go through such a hard time, but take a look at Mary and though there will be certain things that you'll see through tears that no one else in the world will ever see through dry eyes. Our times are hard, but to see things such as this, those are amazing things.

Life of Mary – Turmoil & Torment

You ever have one of those moments in your life and I'm sure you have where you're under this turmoil when conflict and upheaval in your life you feel that you're just being tormented by the situation and it's leaving you a mess. Well the last thing you do in those situations is sleep. Let's start tart building the picture of Mary's past life. She is lucky if she gets a couple hours asleep day she falls asleep it's only because of sheer exhaustion having seven demons living in and controlling your life. Her life is continual turmoil that she's under. Imagine her relational life, think she has anybody that loves her, if she had a husband I picture he's long gone, she probably hasn't had a date in all the years that she's been under this demon possession. She wouldn't be allowed into the temple because of her situation, she wouldn't have friends who really cared about her, people would always have a distance from her, they would say watch out for crazy Mary. She would be the brunt of jokes, she just have no life, empty alone. That was her life, day in and day out, imagine that life. But Jesus comes through her town and her life is changed in a wonderful way.

We live in Dark World Today

This is a dark world that we live in a dark society we live in there is evil everyplace that you turn. There's no place to hide from it seems because it's everywhere where we turn there it is. And Satan and his henchmen demons are behind it promoting it propagating it pushing it all the things you can't turn to pick an evil and there it is before you readily available and whatever the situation would be there's 1,000,001 things to get hooked on in this world and it's all right there at your fingertips.

No One Beyond Touch of Jesus / Jesus moved with Compassion

But like Mary, no one is beyond the touch of Jesus. What happens when a sinner comes to Jesus? Moved with compassion, Jesus reaches out and touches that life. No matter how far gone their disease, no matter how much sin has eaten away, no matter that no one else wants to touch that life, Jesus will. No one is beyond His touch.

Maybe You feel Like Mary – Jesus wants to Come to You Today

Maybe you don't know Jesus today. But something has been moving in your heart to search him out, search these things out, I just want to tell you he'll change your life in the most beautiful way just like he changed Mary's, just like a change lots of people in this room here today, he changed these lives in a most beautiful way. He can change your life, if you will receive him today as your Lord and Savior. He will do the same thing that he did for Mary for you; He will bring you peace and bring you comfort just like he did Mary. Mary's life what Jesus did in her life and just know there's nothing too hard and difficult for the Lord to do in your life regardless of what it is he can do a great work just like he did in Mary's he can do and yours.

John 20:14 Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus.

Mary not interested in Angels – Only Presence of Jesus

Interesting to me, as I would be fascinated by seeing two angels, but not Mary; why, because she has seen Jesus, and she wants His presence more angels.

Grammar he was Standing there for a while / Catching her Tears in a Bottle

The grammar indicates that Jesus had been standing there for some time now. Jesus had been standing there watching her weep, and He does the same for every tear that we cry.

Psalm 56:8 (NKJV) ⁸ You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?

Psalm 126:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Those who sow in tears Shall reap in joy.

Revelation 21:4–6 (NKJV) ⁴ And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” ⁵ Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.” ⁶ And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.

She doesn't Recognize – Probably because not Expecting

She doesn't recognize Him, and we are not sure why. I think sometimes we don't recognize Jesus in our midst, because we aren't expecting Him to be there.

John 20:15 Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, “Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away.”

Whom do You Seek

Here we are, back to the beginning of this book, whom do you seek, for I have come to you. Mary I found you back in Magdala when you had 7 demons, and I have found you today in your weeping and heartbreak, and I will always find you, and I will always be there to catch your tears until that day I will wipe away every tear.

John 1:38 (NKJV) ³⁸ Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, “What do you seek?” They said to Him, “Rabbi” (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), “where are You staying?”

Luke 19:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; ¹⁰ for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

200 Pounds – Amazing the Burden Love can Carry

I believe she believes that she could carry Jesus, all 180 pounds (just as an example weight). Oh the burden love can carry. He ain't heavy, he's my brother.

John 20:16 Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to Him, “Rabboni!” (which is to say, Teacher).

My Sheep Hear My Voice

I believe it was the way He said her name, she knew it was Him. Jesus says I call My sheep by name and they know My voice. When He spoke her name, she knew it was Him. Want to see the Lord, learn to hear His voice. Morning devotions is a great place for that.

John 10:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

Jesus “Shined Forth” / At any Moment – Jesus can Shine Forth through the Confusion

In Mark 16 it says that Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene first. The word appear there means “to shine forth”. She had been looking at Him, but He hadn’t “appeared” yet, He hasn’t shined forth yet, even when He was speaking to her. But when He “shined forth”, she now knows it is Him. Christian at any moment, in the midst of confusion and turmoil, in a crowd or all alone, the Lord can “shine forth”, appear, and you will know it is Him and you can fellowship with Him. Those moments are precious, where we experience His presence and hear His voice, and we have to wonder why we don’t seek Him out for those moments every day.

Mark 16:9 (NKJV) ⁹ Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons.

Why Teacher? Because taught Her – Her Worth

Why call Him Rabboni? Because He has taught her so many things.

- Taught her what she is worth, priceless
- Taught her love, by giving her His love.
- Taught her friendship, by being hers, after all the years of loneliness she had lived because her demons.

Jesus always Drawn to the Hurting Person

When Jesus enters a room, He is always drawn to the hurting person. Are you hurting today, Jesus is moving towards you right now.

John 20:17 Jesus said to her, “Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God.’ ”

John 20:18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things to her.

Don’t Cling

Jesus says easy Mary, I’m ascended just yet, I have some folks to see, so lighten the grip so I can move on. Oh what a beautiful sister in the Lord, I can’t wait to meet her in heaven. But I can learn a lot about her today while I wait to see the Lord face-to-face.

Woman’s Testimony not Valid – Jesus doing Something New

Just a note, one of the reasons that you can believe that the biblical account is real is that it would include a female’s testimony because in that day and that time a woman could not even testify in court because her testimony was not considered valid, but to include her testimony here proves somebody’s not trying to make up a story. Jesus is doing something new, and He is always doing something new because He is always making people new creations through Him.

People Might Bring Up Your Past – Don’t worry what Others Think of you

Verse 18 - Mark’s gospel tells us that when Mary told the disciples, they did not believe her. They think she’s crazy because that’s what she was, crazy Mary, demon possessed, 7 of them at that. Hey, you know what? People might continually bring up your past and lay it against you, and you know what, you just got to go with it. You just got to let it be and don’t worry what other people are thinking about you because you know what, Jesus knows where you’re at and Jesus is coming to you, and Jesus is showing up to you, just like Mary, regardless of what the other people may think of you.

Mark 16:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons. ¹⁰ She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. ¹¹ And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe.

1st person commissioned – but Rejected

Don't get discouraged in your witness. Mary is the first person commissioned to deliver the whole Gospel (The Death – Burial – and Resurrection of Christ), and they don't believe her.

No Qualifications

I might add, the first evangelist was a woman, who use to be crazy (by demon possession), she had no formal training, she only spoke about what she had experienced. I think we all qualify somewhere in her story.

John 3:16

There was a woman who use to preach on the street and the only bible verse she knew was John 3:16. Didn't know any others, no theology, no doctrine, but she would share her testimony and share John 3:16. One day this man stopped and asked a question, and she could answer it, she said all I know (and quoted John 3:16). He asked another, and she replied the same, he asked another and another and another and each time she could only say, I don't know, but what I do know is (and she quoted John 3:16). The man said you are a fool and should be quiet, and left totally annoyed. The next day he came back and gave her a hug, and said thank you. He said he couldn't sleep a wink last night, because all he heard over and over through his mind was John 3:16, and then it hit him, for God so loved "him" that He gave His only Begotten Son for him, and he asked Jesus into his heart right there. We need not be bible scholars, we need only to tell people the gospel, and what we have personally experienced, and leave the rest up to the Lord.

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Go to the One

Go to the one, and don't wait for the masses, let God use you.

Story - It was a stormy night in Birmingham, England, and Hudson Taylor was to speak at a meeting at the Severn Street schoolroom. His hostess assured him that nobody would attend on such a stormy night, but Taylor insisted on going. "I must go even if there is no one but the doorkeeper." Less than a dozen people showed up, but the meeting was marked with unusual spiritual power. Half of those present either became missionaries or gave their children as missionaries; and the rest were faithful supporters of the China Inland Mission for years to come. Hudson Taylor was going to be faithful to speak even if it was to only one person. Today, God may be calling you to speak to that one person.

Father or OT – Father of NT

In the Old Testament, God was known as God the Father, but no one ever called Him "Father". Jesus is doing something new, and here it begins.

End of Study

John 20:19-23

Intro

We pick up here in verse 19 of John 20. It is Sunday, the first day of the week and the tomb is empty (Praise You Lord). Jesus has been crucified for our sins (to which I thank Him for that), He has rose from the dead (Awesome God, the stone has been rolled away from tomb (so we can look in – to see “nothing”), Mary Magdalene, Peter and John have gone to the tomb and have looked in, Peter and John have gone back home, Jesus has appeared to Mary, Mary has gone and told the disciples that she has seen Jesus, and they don’t believe her. So we pick it up here in verse 19.

John 20:19 Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

Double Locked / Waiting for Busting In

“Doors were shut”: thuron, doors (double). Greek, “Barred. The doors are double-barred, they have locked themselves down. These disciples are fearful, they are waiting for the doors to bust down.

Daytona Beach Police Raid

I remember when I was going to college in Daytona Beach Florida, and it was about 9pm at night and I decided to walk over to the store to get a few things. And just as I opened the front door to leave the house, just as I took my first step onto the front porch, four police cars came screaming up the street, two from each direction, lights flashing but no sirens, they were coming in silent. They first car started to drive into my front yard and my mind immediately raced that they were coming for me, that this raid was on me. My mind processes immediately what it could be for before my foot hit my second step. All I could process was bad hair (I had bleached it trying to look like a surfer dude), and ugly shorts (again the trying to look like a surfer – but couldn’t catch a wave even with a bus token). That moment was fearful as I saw them coming. But it wasn’t me, it was the neighbor next door, and those 4 police cars skidded into their front yard, in perfect harmony, the doors opened, guns drawn before their feet hit the ground exiting the car, well trained, fully focused, they charge the door and bust through it like it didn’t even exist, yelling Daytona Police hands in the air. My heart was in my throat, as I ended up merely being a front row spectator. I can’t imagine what it was like for them to be sitting in their homes one minute, and doors busting down the next with lethal weapons drawn to their heads. Imagine the fear that overcame them. Imagine the fear that is flowing through these disciples thinking the Jews (religious leaders) are coming for them like the came for Jesus. By the way, just to be safe I threw those ugly shorts away.

Last week – A King / This week Dead / Fearful they are Next / Who stole the Body

They still afraid of the Jews (that means the religious leaders), and now they are behind these locked doors all confused. They thought a week ago that Jesus was going to be the King of Israel and overthrow Rome, well that all went downhill fast on Friday when they watched Jesus get nailed to the cross. Now they are worried the Jews are coming to find the rest of the trouble makers, and then to top off the confusion Mary has told them that she has seen the Lord, and they themselves were at least able to confirm the stone was rolled away and His body isn’t there. Will they (Rome or the Jews) accuse us of stealing the body and coming to us looking for it so we don’t make the claim that He rose from the dead.

F-E-A-R

A good acronym for fear, and proven so true here, and continually proves true in our lives, and chases us off into fear: F (False) – E (Evidence) – A (appearing) – R (Real). How many times we, like these disciples, live a life of fear over things that are not even real, but we think they are, so much we build a whole belief system around them, yet all the while the evidence is fake. Strop living in fear of things that are not even real, things in our imagination.

Fear and Confusion like Waves of the Sea – But then “PEACE” / Jesus doesn’t Rebuke Them

They are fearful, they are confused, they don’t know which way is up. Here are the disciples, with questions mounting and confusion rising like waves on the sea—when suddenly, just as before, Jesus comes to them and

stills their storm with one word: Shalom. His first word is, “Peace.” He doesn’t say, “You guys are busted. Where have you been? I’m on the Cross and you’re running around, pretending like you don’t even know Me. What’s the big idea?” No, that’s not what Jesus does. He comes to them and says, “Peace.” And that’s what He says to you (Romans 5:1).

Romans 5:1 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Where Assembled

Verse 19 – where the disciples were assembled – this very well could be the “upper room” that we read about in Acts 2. And thus, same people, same place, same circumstances, but different results..... when Holy Spirit falls upon a person. They will have boldness, and they will move from fear to power.

Acts 2:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ² And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³ Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Jesus Comes – What Need, Not what Deserve / I thank Him for That

Christian take note of that, they in that time their greatest need was peace, and that is exactly what Jesus brings and gives them. The Lord always comes and gives us what we need, not what we deserve. I thank Him for that! There is not a day that doesn’t go by that I don’t deserve discipline (I wouldn’t have said that 20 years ago, but the more I see His holiness, the more I see my sinfulness), but God so graciously gives me Peace and Grace.

Faithful – Lay it on Me

I think it is hard for us to believe that and receive that, because it is so contrary to the world we live, a world where grace is so rarely given, but I’m going to tell you what you did wrong because I like the power your failures give me over you. We have a Golden Retriever/Labrador, just a beautiful dog. He is funny, in that when I come to pet or give him attention, he cant just sit there and let me pet and give him attention, within 15 seconds he lays down, rolls on his side, puts his paw on my arm, he gets into this full receive mode, even if it means making me have to bend down or sit on the ground in order to do it. But he gets in this full-receive mode, gets as comfortable as possible, and is like “ok, lay it on me”. I think we should all take sheet off that notebook, and just let the Lord love on us, get into full-receive mode, say lay it on me Lord, and just know He absolutely loves us, He is absolutely passionate about us, regardless of what we think we may deserve, He comes with love on His heart.

How did He get Through the Door – In Resurrected Body / Not Bound by Laws of Nature

How did Jesus get through the doubled-locked door? He is in His resurrected body, and it wasn’t bound by the laws of nature, science, and physics that these mortal bodies are bound to. Someday you will have a resurrected body, and it won’t be bound by the laws of physics and laws of health, therefore it won’t be bound by the laws of cancer, autism, dementia, heart disease, all those evil nations of the OT will be dealt with like the Amorites, the Hittites, the Amalekites, and the Cellulites, and yes finally the end of male pattern baldness (PTL). I thank Him for that! And, good news, it will still eat, as we see Jesus eat, which I saw will all be zero calories (amen). Our resurrected bodies will be like His glorious body:

Luke 24:40–43 (NKJV) ⁴⁰ When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. ⁴¹ But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, “Have you any food here?” ⁴² So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. ⁴³ And He took it and ate in their presence.

Philippians 3:20–21 (NKJV) ²⁰ For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

Recap Before Verse 19 (Road to Emmaus) – Luke 24 / Lovingly Rebukes for Not Knowing Prophecies

Verse 19 – being the first day of the week - Before this occurrence, we are told in Luke’s Gospel that Jesus appeared to the two men on the road to Emmaus. What I find so interesting about that encounter is that Jesus actually “lovingly” rebukes these followers for not understanding the Old Testament scriptures regarding Him (v.25). Jesus expected them to have an understanding of the prophecies regarding Him. Well, if of them, how much more of us who live on the other side of the cross. This is why we invest time in understanding the prophecies fulfilled. Why we spend so much time on little statements such as, it was the first day of the week.

Luke 24:13–32 (NKJV) ¹³ Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And they talked together of all these things which had happened. ¹⁵ So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. ¹⁶ But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. ¹⁷ And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" ¹⁸ Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?" ¹⁹ And He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, ²⁰ and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. ²¹ But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. ²² Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. ²³ When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. ²⁴ And certain of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see." ²⁵ Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! ²⁶ Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" ²⁷ And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. ²⁸ Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. ²⁹ But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them. ³⁰ Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. ³² And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?"

Takeaways Emmaus Road Walk

Some takeaways from the Emmaus road walk.

- Jesus had expected them to know the prophecies of the OT. So too should we, and the prophecies of not just His first coming, but His second coming too.
- 7 miles, was the travel distance of the Bible study; the average person walks about 3 miles an hour, so the bible study was about 2 hours long. So when I go over on Sunday's, you know, I just saying.
- It is interesting to see that the first two ministries Jesus did after the resurrection; He comforted those who mourned (Mary Magdalene), and He taught a Bible study. That my brethren is a great example, and a good day, for all of us to see. Look for those who mourn, and comfort them. And teach the word, share the word, teach your kids, share with your coworkers, share it with your spouse, tell the girl behind the counter, tell the kids in the park. It is a great day when we comfort those who mourn, and teach the word, we are being just like our Lord.
- The disciples after Jesus broke the word open for them, after they broke bread with Him, after they had that sweet time of fellowship with Him, said did not our hearts burn with us as He opened the Word. Christian, I hope you had awesome devotions with Him this week (as we looked at "devotion" last week). I hope you had a time of, "devotion – a warmth of passion glowing hot as fire for the Lord Jesus". We get to experience and enjoy the same things these disciples did, as Jesus loves and longs to burn within our heart.

John 20:20 When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.

You are Priceless

If you ever wonder your value, look at His hands and His side, and you will have no doubt of what you are worth to Him. Willing to endure the cross, for you. And now, go live like the value you are worth. Live in this world like the treasure you are, don't cheapen your life, don't look down upon yourself, don't listen to negative comments of others, but look at those hands and His side, and know you are a treasure that exceeds all value.

8 Cows

On a certain isolated Pacific island, when a young man proposed marriage, it was customary to announce it to the entire village. Then he and the whole community would go to the young woman's home. Her father would come outside and then – in front of the community – the father and suitor would barter. Obviously, they didn't view themselves as doing anything chauvinistic, even though we might view it that way somewhat. The main item of value on this island was the cow. Therefore, the suitor would offer the father a certain number of cows for his daughter. The average bride was worth two cows, perhaps three if she was unusually bright or attractive. The all-time record was four cows. The most eligible bachelor on the island was Johnny Lingo. He was handsome and wealthy. Imagine all of the excitement among the women of the island when Johnny announced one day that he had selected a wife. But then he shocked everyone by announcing that his choice was a girl named Lisa. Lisa was

not even in the top ten. She was regarded as rather plain and frightfully shy. Some of the jokers in the crowd even suggested that Lisa's father might pay Johnny a cow or two. The community gathered at Lisa's house for the bartering. Then came and even greater shock. Johnny's opening bid for Lisa was eight cows Her father almost fainted, but he managed to say yes. That very evening Johnny and Lisa were married. They departed for their home on an adjacent island. For a full year no one saw Johnny or Lisa. Then on their first anniversary they returned to visit their parents. From the moment they arrived at the dock, the grapevine went ballistic with gossip. Everybody said, "Come and see Johnny and Lisa You won't believe it" Everybody came, but nobody noticed Johnny. All eyes were on Lisa. She had been transformed She was a vision of loveliness. She was poised, warm, friendly, and confident. At the end of the day as Johnny and Lisa were preparing to return to their home, one of Johnny's long-time friends pulled him aside and said, "I want to know the secret of this amazing transformation in Lisa. How did it happen?" Johnny said, "I will tell you. From the time Lisa was born, she had been treated as though she was not worthy very much. She had begun to believe that about herself. But I announced to the community that she was an 8-cow wife, and I have treated her just that way. She has become that vision of herself that she sees every day in my eyes."

John 20:21 So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."

Peace Again – Knows What we Need

Jesus has to say "peace to you" again, because it is obviously they still don't have peace. Jesus knows "all" of our fears and unrest, and He wants to calm us and bring us into peace, Jesus knows what we need to hear for every moment in our lives. I thank Him for that!

Luke Cross-Reference / Disciples from Emmaus Road back in Jerusalem / Peter had already met the Lord

Luke Cross-reference to this event, the two disciples from Emmaus Road have already made it back to Jerusalem and told the other disciples of seeing Jesus, and then Jesus appears. And, Jesus at some point between appearing to Mary Magdalene, and these two disciples (who are not part of the original 12), had appeared to Peter. Somehow they knew it, which my guess is Jesus had to be the one who told them about it, but I can't be 100% sure about that. So regarding Peter, it is a deep, complex, fascinating conjecture on what has he said or not said to anyone. Is he sitting in silence pondering the meeting, has he said anything to the others yet? It appears because of their fear, their surprise, that Peter has yet to say anything. But again, I do not know because the Scripture are silent on the matter.

Luke 24:33–43 (NKJV) ³³ So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, ³⁴ saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵ And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread. ³⁶ Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." ³⁷ But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. ³⁸ And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have." ⁴⁰ When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His feet. ⁴¹ But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, "Have you any food here?" ⁴² So they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and some honeycomb. ⁴³ And He took it and ate in their presence.

Commissioning – Ambassadors in a Foreign Country

Verse 21 - As the Father has sent Me, I also send you - Jesus now gives them their commission to go. He commissioned with authority like an embassy representing a foreign government. We are no longer of this world, we are citizens of heaven, and thus now this world is not our home as we look for and wait for our eternal home. So while here, we are His Ambassadors, sent ones, to proclaim His love and offer of new life, eternal life with Him in His Kingdom that has no end,

Hebrews 3:1 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus,

Ephesians 6:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Our God is Missionary God / Beggar who Found Bread

Our God is a missionary God, and He is sent and so sends us to do the same, to seek and same the lost. I thank Him for that, because He came and found me, he me out of the ashes, gave me new life, gave me hope and a

purpose. Now I gladly go to tell others. Just a beggar who found bread, not looking for others who are hungry for the same.

Luke 19:9–10 (NKJV) ⁹ And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham; ¹⁰ for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

Sending Confirms the Forgiveness

By Jesus sending them out, is confirmation they are forgiven. To be sent, means they are forgiven and now they can tell the world they are forgiven. Who better to talk about forgiveness, than the person who has been forgiven.

Our Sending Under His Authority – His Message – His Presence

Our sending is under the authority of being sent by “God” Himself. He sends us with a message, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and He sends us with His presence as He fills us with Himself (v22). You can’t carry God’s message without carrying God.

John 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.

Now they are Born-again

At this point, the disciples are born again. Although they were already following Jesus, they were not yet regenerated because He had not yet died for their sins. But here Jesus breathes on them—reminiscent of Genesis 2:7, when God breathed life into Adam’s nostrils and he became a living soul.

Genesis 2:7 (NKJV) ⁷ And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

The Second Breath is Man’s Choice

God gives every man their first breath at birth. The picture (if you will) is that God only gives the second breath, the breath of eternal life with Him, to those who believe in Him. Man needs the second breath to enter eternity, hence what Jesus was saying to Nicodemus back in John 3, that you must be born again.

John 3:1–21 (NKJV) ¹ There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ² This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.” ³ Jesus answered and said to him, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” ⁴ Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” ⁵ Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶ That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.” ⁹ Nicodemus answered and said to Him, “How can these things be?” ¹⁰ Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things? ¹¹ Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness. ¹² If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things? ¹³ No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. ¹⁴ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. ¹⁸ He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God.”

Born Once, Die Twice / Born Twice, Die Once

Born once, die twice; born twice, die once. By "born once," I mean the physical birth. By "born twice," I mean a physical birth as well as a spiritual birth in which you are born again, spiritually putting your faith in Christ. Just as there are two births, the Bible teaches there are two deaths: one is physical, and the other is spiritual. Jesus warned that we are to fear the second death more than the first one

Matthew 10:27–31 (NKJV) ²⁷ “Whatever I tell you in the dark, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, preach on the housetops. ²⁸ And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. ²⁹ Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father’s will. ³⁰ But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. ³¹ Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.

Revelation 2:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.”

Revelation 20:6 (NKJV) ⁶ Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

Revelation 20:14 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Revelation 21:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

Road Emmaus – You from Different World / Know About His Death – but not the Reason for His Death

When Jesus came upon the two men on the Road to Emmaus, He prodded them so He may join their conversation, he said what you guys talking about? To which they said what are you from another planet (Ray’s emphasis), haven’t you heard about Jesus of Nazareth, are you a stranger in Jerusalem and you haven’t heard about Him. So it is today in the same sense, and that is that everyone in our Country has heard about Jesus, they heard about His life, His death, and even the resurrection; they have heard about His death, but they don’t really know the why, the reason of His death.

Luke 24:17–18 (NKJV) ¹⁷ And He said to them, “What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?” ¹⁸ Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, “Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?”

The Why

The why is that our sin separates us from the Holy God, who cannot look upon impurity. We needed help to be made clean

Isaiah 59:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. ² But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

Habakkuk 1:13 (NKJV) ¹³ You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?

John 3:16

Jesus is the cleanser:

John 3:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

Definition of Believe / The Gospel

What does it mean to believe? It is more than just a statement of I believe. Let me save you 4 years of seminary and boil it down. Believe means to Recognize, Repent, and Receive.

- Recognize – Recognize you sin offends and separates you from the Holy God.
- Repent – being willing to turn from your sin, and turn to follow God.
- Receive – to humble oneself and say Lord I need a Savior, come into my life and save me; Lord I give you my life.

That is believing unto salvation, that is being born again, that is the new beginning. It is not rehabilitation, but regeneration, a washing away of sin and Jesus coming in and taking up residence within you, the kingdom of God is here. Jesus said you must be born of water and blood (3:5). The blood a picture of the punishment of sin which Jesus took for “whosoever will receive it”, and the water a picture of being totally cleansed, washed anew, and just as when the water breaks in child birthing, when the water breaks upon whoever believes they are birthed into the kingdom of God.

Romans 3:23 (NKJV) ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Isaiah 59:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. ² But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear.

Habakkuk 1:13 (NKJV) ¹³ You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness. Why do You look on those who deal treacherously, And hold Your tongue when the wicked devours A person more righteous than he?

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Acts 3:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,

Romans 10:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.”

John 3:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Jesus answered, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Now – We Can Come before Holy God

And now we can come before the Holy God, because our sins are washed away, He only now sees perfection, which is His standard and requirement to come before Him.

And I Thank Him For That

To which I praise Him today, and I thank Him for that, to take my sin and give me new life.

John 20:23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

Only God Can Forgive Sins

In Mark 2, the account of Jesus healing the paralytic, said that only God can forgive sin, and that is a fact. Man has no authority to forgive sin. There is no man who another man can go to, make confession, and that man can forgive and/or absolve of their sin. That is total man made up.

Mark 2:1–13 (NKJV) ¹ And again He entered Capernaum after *some* days, and it was heard that He was in the house. ² Immediately many gathered together, so that there was no longer room to receive *them*, not even near the door. And He preached the word to them. ³ Then they came to Him, bringing a paralytic who was carried by four *men*. ⁴ And when they could not come near Him because of the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was. So when they had broken through, they let down the bed on which the paralytic was lying. ⁵ When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven you.” ⁶ And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, ⁷ “Why does this *Man* speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?” ⁸ But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, “Why do you reason about these things in your hearts? ⁹ Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise, take up your bed and walk?’ ¹⁰ But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins”—He said to the paralytic, ¹¹ “I say to you, arise, take up your bed, and go to your house.” ¹² Immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went out in the presence of them all, so that all were amazed and glorified God, saying, “We never saw *anything* like this!” ¹³ Then He went out again by the sea; and all the multitude came to Him, and He taught them.

Not Providing – But Proclaiming Forgiveness / What an Awesome Ministry we Have been Given - Forgiven

Not providing forgiveness, proclaiming forgiveness. What an awesome ministry for each and every one of us that we can tell somebody you can be forgiven, you can have your sins washed away, you can have a new beginning, you have a beginning without an end because you have been reconciled to Jesus Christ in your sins are cleansed and washed away forgiven. What an awesome way to spend a life.

Only 1 Mediator between God and Man

There is only one mediator between God and man we are told, and that is Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 2:3–7 (NKJV) ³ For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, ⁴ who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁵ For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave Himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time, ⁷ for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle—I am speaking the truth in Christ and not lying—a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth.

We have Been Given Ministry of Reconciliation – Reconcile People Back to God

We, His followers, have been given the ministry of reconciliation. That ministry is reconciling people back to God.

2 Corinthians 5:17–21 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. ¹⁸ Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, ¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. ²⁰ Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

We are Ambassadors – According to the Word (You are Forgiven – You are not Forgiven)

In Mark 2, when Jesus pronounced forgiveness to a paralyzed man, the Pharisees were aghast. “Only God has the right to forgive sin,” they said (see verse 7). And they were right. What, then, does this verse mean? It means we as

His ambassadors don't provide forgiveness, but we do proclaim it. Therefore, to the one who says, "I don't feel forgiven," it is our responsibility to say, "According to the Word of God, if you open your heart to Jesus Christ and believe in His work on the Cross, your sin is gone." Conversely, to the one who says, "I don't need Jesus Christ. I'm into meditation,"—it is our responsibility to say, "Your sin remains because only the blood of Jesus can wash it away."

And I Thank Him For That

And I thank Him for that, Amen!

End of Study

John 20:24-31

Intro

We pick up here in verse 24 of John 20. It is Sunday, the first day of the week and the tomb is empty (Praise You Lord). Jesus has been crucified for our sins (to which I thank Him for that) three days ago, He has rose from the dead before the morning dawn (Awesome God, the stone has been rolled away from tomb (so we can look in – to see “nothing”), At this point, Jesus has appeared to Mary Magdalene, the two disciples who were walking the road to Emmaus, a special meeting with Peter that we don’t have any details on, and all the disciples in Jerusalem (except Thomas). So we pick it up here in verse 24, with Thomas coming back to the home they all were gathering in.

John 20:24 Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

The Twin – The World’s Labels

Verse 24 – called the Twin – So Thomas was a twin. Now we could say Thomas had a twin, but in that culture it is more correct to say, Thomas was a twin. What do I mean by that is that in that culture, the oldest brother was more esteemed than the younger, the oldest (firstborn) brother was expected to take over the role of family priest when the father passed on, the oldest brother was responsible for dividing the inheritance to the other brothers when the father passed, and in that culture the oldest brother got double portion compared to the other brothers. Now we do not know at all if Thomas and his twin brother were the oldest of the family, or if there were older brothers, but what we know in that culture is that when twins were born, both got names, but the oldest twin was always referred to by their name, while the youngest twin was simply referred to as “the twin”, and we see that confirmed here in this passage before us. So when people talked about his family, they would refer to the brother by first name, and then often when referring to Thomas, they would simply say “the twin” (ex. So Billy caught 10 fish, and the twin caught 10 fish; Billy is going to school in Jerusalem, and the twin is going to school in Bethlehem). Pretty much all his life he lived as number two, all his life he lived under the label of his culture, and whether you realize it or not, those rankings and labeling of the world, start to stick to you and shape you. Maybe that’s you here today, maybe all your life you have been living under a label the world, the culture, has given you (addict, chubby, failure, backslider, adulterer), and that label has shaped your life, it follows you wherever you go, even if that label is nothing that you are. The world likes to label looks, the world likes to label past failings, the world likes to label us because they think they know us, and they have no idea who we truly are. It could be a friend, a neighbor, a coworker, it could even be your parent, and yes even your spouse who puts a label on you, and that is who you are to them; But God knows us, God knows you, every detail of you, and He isn’t comparing you to this person or that person, to God you are one of a kind, unique in every way, and He loves you and is always on His way to you (as we will see in our text today). Beloved of God, don’t live under the world’s label it gives you, whatever it is, but live under the label God gives you, “mine, chosen”! He loves you. You are a new creation (2 Cor 5:17). Hey, even if what they label has some truth to it, it was your past, it was your failing, but it is not what defines you, it is not who you are, you are the child of the Most High God, and He doesn’t label you like the world, He only seals you with His Spirit, calls you His! So go live like it Christian, go live like it!

Deuteronomy 21:15–17 (NKJV) ¹⁵ “If a man has two wives, one loved and the other unloved, and they have borne him children, both the loved and the unloved, and if the firstborn son is of her who is unloved, ¹⁶ then it shall be, on the day he bequeaths his possessions to his sons, that he must not bestow firstborn status on the son of the loved wife in preference to the son of the unloved, the true firstborn. ¹⁷ But he shall acknowledge the son of the unloved wife as the firstborn by giving him a double portion of all that he has, for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

1 Peter 2:4 (NKJV) ⁴ Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,

Ephesians 1:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

John 20:25 The other disciples therefore said to him, “We have seen the Lord.” So he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

The Room

Sentence Structure / These Disciples are off the Hook

The verb in the sentence structure is that they kept saying repeatedly we have seen the Lord. If you just saw the resurrected Lord, what would you be talking about? Not, hey Thomas we just saw Jesus, it was awesome! And, check it out the Orioles are playing a double-header today, and the Ravens just made an awesome trade to boost their defense, and rumor out of Jerusalem is that the Romans are working a deal out with the Persians (Iran) that will allow them to start building rocks of mass destruction which you know can't be good for us because the Persians hate us. They would have been talking one thing only, and that was they saw the resurrected Lord! Sometimes I wonder why we put Jesus's resurrection on the same conversation plain as the world's events. These disciples would be off the hook, the room would be electrified (and that is literally because the power of the Holy Spirit is in these disciples, and they are not the same men/woman they were when they woke up that morning. Ken Wuest, who has mastery in the Greek language, says it can be read (see below), that they have seen Him with discernment (meaning they fully analyzed and verified of what they saw was real), and then they said He is still vivid in our mind (meaning we can still see Him as if He was still standing here). These men are off the hook, and the room is electrified.

Therefore the other disciples were saying to him, We have with discernment seen the Lord and He is still vivid to us in our mind's eye
**Wuest, K. S. (1961). The New Testament: an expanded translation (Jn 20:24–29). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.*

Where Was Thomas? / He was told by Woman / Disciples Mourning – Thomas not / Doing Own Thing

Where was he, why wasn't he with the other disciples? He would have been told by the woman, for the angel told them to tell the disciples. See I don't think that He was out by himself having devotions, nor running errands to get the others food, nor witnessing (obviously because he doesn't believe), nor anything of spiritual qualities. In Mark's account we read the disciples were gathered together mourning and weeping, but for whatever reason Thomas wasn't mourning and weeping, he was out doing something else, something other than mourning and weeping. I believe this because it would be contrary to the nature of Jesus that we have seen through this book continually, of Jesus leaving someone out who was seeking Him. Based on that then, Thomas must have been out doing his own thing, whatever that may have been.

Matthew 28:5–8 (NKJV) ⁵ But the angel answered and said to the women, “Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. ⁷ And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you.” ⁸ So they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to bring His disciples word.

Mark 16:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. ¹¹ And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe.

Thomas Willing to Die – Now AWOL / But no One can Fall so Far that Jesus can't Reach Them (or Find)

Thomas was willing to die for Jesus just a short while ago (remember when the hit was out against Jesus in Judea, but Jesus said lets return because Lazarus is dead), but now he (Thomas) is AWOL (absent without leave). He has fallen quite far, but no one can ever fall so far that Jesus can't reach them..... or find them.

John 11:5–16 (NKJV) ⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. ⁶ So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. ⁷ Then after this He said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.” ⁸ The disciples said to Him, “Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?” ⁹ Jesus answered, “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. ¹⁰ But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.” ¹¹ These things He said, and after that He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up.” ¹² Then His disciples said, “Lord, if he sleeps he will get well.” ¹³ However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. ¹⁴ Then Jesus said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵ And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him.” ¹⁶ Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”

Label – Doubting Thomas

What is the label Thomas carries now for 2,000 years? Correct – doubting Thomas. Well all the other disciples doubted too, they didn't believe until they saw, Thomas isn't alone in the doubt, but gets labeled by the world for

the rest of his life. The world, the culture, the church, has labeled him but not Jesus. Jesus comes to Him, Jesus doesn't recognize any label the world puts on us, and He comes to find us, for no man can fall so far that God can't reach them, or find them. God finds Thomas we will see, God come to Thomas, and He will come to you , find you, and reach you, and lift you up and set you upon a solid rock.

The Dangers of Isolation

Isolation dangerous Place / Know Difference between Isolation and Separation

But for Thomas, and for us, isolation is a dangerous place to be when the waves of fear and confusion come upon us. Separation for prayer and meditation upon the Lord is not isolation, but devotion. After devotions, there is wisdom and power in surrounding ourselves with the body to encourage and strengthen each other. But isolation, which turns into separation, can set us up for devastation.

OT – Pick off Stragglers / Keep Watch out for Others / Guard Yourself

In Old Testament we read how when the Children of Israel wandered the wilderness, the surrounding enemies would attack the rears, the people who were trailing the multitude from afar; Satan doesn't change his strategy, he loves to go after the people who are isolated and distant from the congregation because they are all alone, they have no support, they have to fight all by themselves, and they most often lose because the fight is way too big for them. I think one of the greatest dangers of mega-churches is that people can become lost in the large crowd, and it is easy for them to miss a few weeks that turns into irregular attendance, which turns into distancing and trailing behind, and they get neutralized, nullified, or devoured. If you end up at a mega-church, make sure you get yourself into a small group that meets regularly so you can stay close to the fold, and you can keep watch for those in your small group who may be wandering or straggling behind.

Deuteronomy 25:17–19 (NKJV) ¹⁷ “Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt, ¹⁸ how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you were tired and weary; and he did not fear God. ¹⁹ Therefore it shall be, when the LORD your God has given you rest from your enemies all around, in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance, that you will blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. You shall not forget.

I Won't be Hard on Thomas – the Other Disciples didn't Believe until the Saw

I won't be hard on Thomas, I know myself too well that I think I would be any different from Thomas at that point. In fact, Thomas is not much different from the other disciples, because we read they too didn't believe the report of Mary. But no one calls them Doubting Peter, Doubting John, Doubting James. They are only believing now because they have seen them for themselves, not on the account of a someone else, just as Thomas is at this moment, not believing someone else's account, but wants to see personally with his own eyes.

Mark 16:10–11 (NKJV) ¹⁰ She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. ¹¹ And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe.

Thomas Lacked Imagination / Jesus specializes in Taking Dead back to Life

Thomas was loyal but he lacked understanding. That is, he didn't know that Jesus specializes in taking that which was dead and bringing it to life. Maybe you've had shattered expectations in marriage, business, or family, and, like Thomas, you're not going to dream anymore. Don't give up, for Jesus “is able to do exceeding abundantly above all you can ask or even think” (see Ephesians 3:20).

Ephesians 3:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

Assembling Together of the Believers

It's Sunday – There is Power in the Assembling Together

So it is Sunday, the first day of the week, the day the brethren gather together, as established throughout the New Testament (Acts 20:7, 1 Cor 16:2). There is power in the assembly together as we do,

- There is power because Jesus comes and worships in our midst, He actually leads us in worship, so to miss a Sunday or to miss worship, we miss a lot (Hebrews 2:11-12)

- In Titus we are told that God manifests His word through preaching. And there are times that God speaks something very uniquely to the pastor who shares it in the sermon, and a person knows that is God speaking to me (Titus 1:1-3).
- The Lord gives us another reason for the assembling together and that is to encourage one another, to stir one another up for good works, and to remind and fire each other up that the “Day” is approaching, we are going to see the King! (Hebrews 10:24-25). You can’t encourage others, if you are not there.

So there are the reasons the Lord says not to forsake the assembly of the brethren. Now, for clarity the word forsake isn’t talking about missing a Sunday when you are on vacation, sick, kids are sick (which reminder we livestream so you can watch from home in those circumstances), but the word forsake means “to abandon, leave behind, desert”, and that is when a person is saying I don’t need church because I worship out in nature, or I don’t need church because I am a mature Christian and I am just fine on my own, or I don’t need church because it is my only day to sleep in, or I don’t need church because they are all hypocrites.

Acts 20:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.

1 Corinthians 16:2 (NKJV) ² On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.

Hebrews 2:11–12 (NKJV) ¹¹ For both He who sanctifies and those who are being sanctified are all of one, for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, ¹² saying: “I will declare Your name to My brethren; In the midst of the assembly I will sing praise to You.”

Titus 1:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ Paul, a bondservant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God’s elect and the acknowledgment of the truth which accords with godliness, ² in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began, ³ but has in due time manifested His word through preaching, which was committed to me according to the commandment of God our Savior;

Hebrews 10:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Two or More

The guarantee is that where two are more are gathered He is in their midst, that is a guarantee.

Matthew 18:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”

Always Sad to Watch those Struggling to Miss Church

I suppose one of the saddest things I see as a pastor are disciples who miss the meeting. They’re out there struggling, while at a Sunday evening service, for example, at some point Jesus begins to appear through the Word or in worship, through prophecy or the washing of feet. “I can worship at home,” they say. But Jesus didn’t go to Thomas’s house. He went where the saints were meeting together. “Don’t forsake assembling together,” Paul would say (see Hebrews 10:25)—because Jesus shows up in the midst of the congregation.

Thomas Missed More than Jesus – he Missed Receiving the Holy Spirit

Hey realize this, Thomas missed more than seeing the resurrected Lord, he missed receiving the Holy Spirit, he missed Jesus breathing on them (on him). He may have doubted for 8 days, but I will tell you this, God breaths His Holy Spirit on you and takes up residence within you, you will never be the same, and these disciples and whoever else were in the room were not the same people when Thomas returned from whatever it was he was doing, and there is no doubt in my mind that it was clearly evident these guys were changed men, and Thomas missed it.

Application/Example of Thomas – Lots Ahead of the Week / Never Know What He may Do / You may Miss

So here is the application that is important for us in the example of Thomas, and that is that God is establishing right from the beginning, the power of the gathering of the believers together. He is making the statement, you guys and gals need to gather together, be encouraged and strengthen together, because you have a lot ahead of you for the week, the month, the year, and the lifetime. And a major point we see here, you never know which Sunday God is going to do something over and beyond what you ever imagined. Two or more are gathered, Jesus promises to be there; but there are times and we have experienced them here, where God shows up in a special way and you just know He showed us something that blew us away. Thomas missed it. You know sometimes you have to sit through the ordinary, for those moments of extraordinary! Just ask Thomas. Wherever Thomas was, I

doubt he felt it was worth missing was happened in that room that day. But God is good, all the time, and He makes sure that He finds Thomas, and He will do the same for us all the time, because God is good.

Matthew 18:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ *For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them."*

Sunday is First Day of Week – New Beginning

In the Jewish calendar, Sunday is the first day of the week, but for us it is the end of the week. Oh that we would see it as the first day, not the last. How often we dread the end of the weekend because it is back to work on Monday, another week of stuff. Oh that we would glean from the example the Lord sets for us, that Sunday is the first day of the week, it is a new beginning, and a new week for Him to do something awesome in our lives and the lives of others we touch. And, it starts with what He does on Sunday, that Sunday is when He prepares us for what He going to do for the new week. First person in His week, is you!

John 20:26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!"

A Long 8 Days – Sending Message, Does Unique Things when Assembled

Verse 26 - And after eight days His disciples were again inside - What a long 8 days for Thomas, and clearly ordained by Jesus to have him wait 8 whole days..... until the following Sunday to show Thomas Himself. Eight whole days, until the following Sunday, I think Jesus was sending a message not just to Thomas, but to all of us, that He does unique things when we gather together.

Thomas Won't Change his Position

By Now – Has to Believe Something is Up / But didn't Change his Position for 8 Days

If Thomas didn't think something was up, he wouldn't be there. Thomas did not change his position for the entire 8 days. Imagine these disciples have talked about nothing else for 8 days, Thomas sitting in their midst, and yet he still doesn't budge off his unbelief. I would think he would have to be thinking these guys are either all crazy, or just maybe they did see Jesus. It is interesting to note, that before Jesus had appeared to all the disciples in the room the week before (minus Thomas), Jesus had somewhere along the way before that on that first Sunday appeared to Peter (Luke 24). Somehow the two on the road to Emmaus were told that Jesus had appeared to Peter, by whom and how, I don't know as the Scriptures don't give us all that detail. As an FYI, when we read (the Twelve, or the Eleven), it is a title of the apostles, not an actual number. The author is simply identifying who the specific group was, and not the details of every name. But Thomas is spending time in a room full of men who had just seen Jesus – what do you think those 10 were talking about non-stop?

Luke 24:33–39 (NKJV) ³³ *So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, ³⁴ saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" ³⁵ And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread. ³⁶ Now as they said these things, Jesus Himself stood in the midst of them, and said to them, "Peace to you." ³⁷ But they were terrified and frightened, and supposed they had seen a spirit. ³⁸ And He said to them, "Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? ³⁹ Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have."*

Jesus will Always Find Us / Even if it is Only About You

He will find us! He finds us when we are gathered together that we have seen and now know, so let's gather together and expect Him to show up together. Jesus will find you, even when and if it is only about you.

Disciples said – Thomas You Coming with Us / When People Leave (Go Weekly – Serve)

I suggest the disciples said, "Thomas, we're meeting again next week, and you'd better be there. In fact, we're bringing you with us." Sometimes, we just have to give the call to that brother or sister and saying are you coming? Need a ride? Whatever encouragement they need to shake them out of the place they are at, and to come back to the family gathering here at CCAAC. If they say they are going to another church, say PTL go where you are lead, but say to them, promise me two things (that you will go every week, and that you will find a ministry to get involved in and serve in it personally).

The 3 Works of the Holy Spirit

8 Days Later – Still Locked Doors

Verse 26 - the doors being shut - It is eight days later they are still locked away, they still haven't gone out into the world, even though they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

John 20:22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

3 Prepositions Regarding Holy Spirit / Need to Understand the 3 Relationships

There is so much confusion today about the baptism in the Spirit. People get hung up and miss out because they don't understand there are three relationships Jesus talked about that a person can and should have with the Holy Spirit (also called Holy Ghost – which I don't care for that translation personally).

1.) With Us "para" / John 14:17 / God will use Vessels like John Baptist /

He is with us (the Greek preposition "para" which means alongside of). The Holy Spirit comes alongside of a person and God's Spirit moves across the earth witnessing to a person their need for a Savior for their sin separates them from the Holy God (John 14:17). God will often time use vessels such as a John the Baptist to proclaim His message. You never would have been born again unless the Holy Spirit had been with you, whispering, "God loves you. You're a sinner, but Jesus died in your place." Speaking the message of sin, separation, repentance, and restoration. Whether it was through a meeting at church, or at a Billy Graham crusade, whether it was over the radio, or through a friend, it was the Holy Spirit with you who began to tug on the strings of your heart, drawing you to salvation. If the Holy Spirit had not been with you, you could not have been born again. "There is none that seeketh after God," wrote Paul (Romans 3:11). "We are born again not of the will of man, but of God" (see John 1:13). A person can't, on his own, say, "Hmm. I think I'll be born again." The only way someone can be born again is for God to sovereignly choose to send His Holy Spirit to work with him. God the Holy Spirit comes alongside a person and says, "Hello, I love you, let Me open your eyes to see it".

John 14:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with (para) you and will be in you.

Romans 3:11 (NKJV) ¹¹ There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.

John 1:12-13 (NKJV) ¹²But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: ¹³who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Warning – The Spirit will not always Strive with Man – Genesis 6:3

Before moving on, let me clearly give warning, the Spirit of God will not always strive with man, so if you haven't received Him yet, be warned that there may come a day where He is no longer knocking on the door of your heart (Genesis 6:3).

Genesis 6:3 (NKJV) ³And the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not strive^e with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years."

2 Corinthians 6:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ We then, as workers together with Him also plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain. ² For He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, And in the day of salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

2.) In – En / Comes in and Dwells / We can Cry Out – Abba Father

After coming alongside of us, The Holy Spirit then comes in us the moment we open our heart to the Savior (John 20:22), after hearing the message proclaimed through a vessel chosen by God, or just God speaking to us in His own way; The Greek preposition for in, is "en". When you opened your heart to Jesus, the Holy Spirit came into you. He indwelt you. You were born again. You were regenerated. The baptism of John spoken of by Christ is the washing away and forgiveness of sin, and the power to overcome sin. It is then because the sin and separation has been dealt with, that God takes us residence, the indwelling, it is then we can cry out Abba Father!

John 14:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with (para) you and will be in (en) you.

John 20:21-22 (NKJV) ²¹So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." ²²And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

Romans 8:15-17 (NKJV) ¹⁵For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." ¹⁶The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, ¹⁷and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.

Ephesians 1:13-14 (NKJV) ¹³In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

3.) Comes Upon – Heppi / Comes to Empower Us for Service

Then there is the third, as Jesus said John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit when He comes upon you (the Greek preposition is "heppi") when He empowers us for service (Acts 1:5). The Spirit of God is available not only to work with you to become a Christian, or to come into your life once you open your heart to Him, but He is now available to come upon your life and to empower you to see your own world turned upside down and made right-side up. In the Old Testament, when the Holy Ghost came upon men like Moses and David, Gideon and Ezekiel, Samson and Bezaleel, it was to empower them for service. So, too, Jesus said to His disciples, "The Spirit is in you, but when the Spirit comes upon you, you will be empowered for unique ministry and service, and then you will be My witnesses" (see Acts 1:4-8).

(Acts 1:5 NKJV) "for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

(Acts 1:8 NKJV) "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon (heppi) you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

A-S-K

How do you receive the Holy Spirit, you ask, simply ask:

Luke 11:9-13 (NKJV) ⁹"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. ¹⁰For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. ¹¹If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? ¹²Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? ¹³If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

John 20:27 Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing."

Obviously – Jesus knew what Thomas had Said / That would Include Fighting with Wife – Tuesday Prayer

Verse 27 - Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side - Obviously Jesus knew what Thomas had said, because He responds to Thomas' question of not believing unless he can touch the nail prints. Was Jesus in the room when Thomas had said this? Was He outside the room? Don't know, but He knew, and He says to Thomas, touch My hands and side. Here Jesus is teaching a lesson of great importance, for in repeating Thomas's ultimatum, it's as if He's saying, "Boys, even though you don't see Me, I'm with you always." You, can take this passage as ought-oh he heard that fight (excuse me – strong fellowship between me and my wife this week), and I so glad the rapture didn't happen when I was in strong fellowship with my wife, but what I what you take away is, He hears every last word, cry, heartache, of our Tuesday Night Prayer Meeting, and He will respond in due time, perfect time.

Stop Doubting – Start Believing – Nothing more Needed

Verse 27 - Do not be unbelieving, but believing." - So Jesus says, in love to Thomas, stop doubting, and start believing, there is nothing more for you to see to believe. The same is true for anyone here today, you know all facts, you know in your heart Jesus is alive and speaking to you, and so Jesus would say to you, time to starting believing.

John 20:28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!”

Jesus has All Authority Over Thomas / Jesus is Thomas’ Personally

Jesus now has authority over him and he belongs to him. Thomas belongs to Christ. He then talks about us—Jesus does. Does Jesus have absolute authority over your life? Thomas uses the possessive pronoun “my”, Jesus is all his, and Jesus will say Thomas is all mine. Jesus calls you His, possessive pronoun

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

1 Peter 2:4 (NKJV) ⁴ *Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,*

Ephesians 1:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ *In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,* ¹⁴ *who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.*

Jesus receives Title of God / Take that Cults

My Lord and my God: Both Lord and God were titles of deity, and Thomas boldly and explicitly assigns these titles to Jesus. Jesus accepts these titles, and did not tell Thomas, “Don’t call Me that.” When Peter went into the house of Cornelius, Cornelius fell at his feet. “Stand up,” said Peter. “I’m a man also” (see Acts 10:26). When the people of Lystra started worshiping Paul and Barnabas, Paul and Barnabas ripped their clothes and said, “Stop. We are men of like passions” (see Acts 14:15). When John fell down before an angel, the angel said, “Don’t do that” (see Revelation 22:9). Paul, Peter, and the angel all refused to be worshiped. Regardless of what the cults say, Jesus accepted this proclamation of deity for one reason: He is God.

When did they Realize It was Jesus – When they saw the Nail Prints / He Loves You – Wants take You Zoe Life

The two disciples on road to Emmaus when do they realize it is Jesus, when they see the nail prints (as He broke bread with them – Luke 24:30). Here in John 20:20, Jesus proves it is really Him and the resurrection is true, by showing them the holes in His hands and side. And it is so fitting that it is 20:20, because when you see the scars, everything comes into focus, everything becomes clear. He loves you, He died for you, He wants to lead you out of this life into an abundant spiritual life, a life beyond the life this world has to offer. The Greek word for life is “zoe”, and the “zoe” life, is the God life, the life beyond the life this, it is the life that Jesus Himself lived, and it is the life that God intends for all His children to live.

Luke 24:30 (NKJV) ³⁰ *Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.*

John 20:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ *When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.*

Story of man rescuing boy from fire.

I am reminded of the story of a dreadful fire that consumed a family home. The mother and father lives were lost in the fire, but the young 5 year old son was saved. He was saved by a hero, a man who sacrificed himself to save the boy. The boy was trapped in the upstairs bedroom, the whole first floor was in flames, the outside walls were in flames also. This man climbed up the drain pipe that ran from the roof to the ground, even though the pipe was extremely hot, so hot it gave him 3rd degree burns on both hands. News of the story ran on all the major news channels and newspapers. Peoples heart were gripped and torn to hear the story of the loss of a mother and father, and now a child left orphaned. The boy had no next of kin, and so the courts were to decide who the boy would live with. On the day of the court hearing several orphanages came to offer to take the boy and provide for him, family after families came and made case of how the story had gripped their heart and they wanted to take the boy and care for him, and make him part of their family. All such beautiful people with such wonderful hearts, and such a decision for the judge to have to decide. But then the doors of the court opened, and in came a man in total silence, but all eyes turned to him as he walked in, then walked past the gallery seating and onward to the front of the judge’s bench, and then the man rolled his sleeves up and extended his burned and disfigured hands, disfigured for life because of the 3rd degree burns. The judge looked at those hands, reached for his gavel and hit it against the bench, and said, “let the court records show, the boy goes and belongs to this man”.

Only Manmade Things in Heaven – those Scars

We are told in Revelation that when we get to heaven, we will still see those nail scars. The only manmade thing in heaven will be those scars, but the Lord will wear them with pride, because they were the purchase price to get His sons and His daughter. He endured and survived the fires of hell, He has overcome, and He shows His hands to say, this one is Mine (personal possessive pronoun), they belong to Me, and they come home with Me.

Revelation 5:6 (NKJV) ⁶ And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

Zechariah 13:6 (NKJV) ⁶ And one will say to him, 'What are these wounds between your arms?' Then he will answer, 'Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

1 Peter 2:4 (NKJV) ⁴ Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious,

Blessed be the Lord our God.

John 20:29 Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Imagine Listening/Watching Bible Study with Jesus' Hands displaying the Nail Prints

Imagine listening to a Bible Study today of Jesus teaching, and as He would teach, and talk with His hands as we do, every time we say those scars we would be saying "yes and amen", we believe everything you are saying because you proved it on the cross.

Praises Thomas for Believing – And Praises You for Believing by Faith

He praised Thomas for his faith, saying to him, "Because you have seen Me, have you believed?" But looking ahead to the time when the tangible, physical evidence Thomas had witnessed would no longer be available, the Lord pronounced those "blessed ... who did not see, and yet believed" (cf. 2 Cor. 5:7; 1 Peter 1:8–9). They, who will never see physical evidence of Christ's rising, will have a greater measure of the Holy Spirit to empower faith in the resurrection. This is the second beatitude in this gospel (cf. 13:17). Blessed does not just convey a condition of happiness, but also declares the recipient to be accepted by God.

Romans 10:17 (NKJV) ¹⁷ So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Wuest

I like how Wuest makes literal translation of this passage, and that is we who believe by faith based on the Word of God, 'spiritually prosperous will we be'

Spiritually prosperous are those who, not having seen, yet believed.

Wuest, K. S. (1961). The New Testament: an expanded translation (Jn 20:24–29). Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Lord Never Gave up on Thomas

Thomas is forever known as doubting Thomas, but notice, the Lord never gives up on doubters, He never casts them off, He is never impatient with them; He knows how to work with them, and on them, to bring them into believing. And I say that those who are here listening and you have some doubts about Jesus, His claims, is He really God? You may have doubts that if He is real that He will forgive you, receive you, be personal to you. Let doubting Thomas be the example to you, that Jesus will work with you through your doubts, and He will find you, and He will show Himself to you.

For You – Keep Asking and Challenging

For you, keep posing the challenges, keep asking the questions, and we here at CCAAC will gladly keep answering all your questions, and walking it out with you.

Thomas Doubt Turned into Faith – Died in India

Church history says after catching a cargo ship to India to preach Jesus Christ, Thomas was warned to be quiet. When he kept preaching, his opponents ran a spear through his back. But the church he started in India still flourishes today. Thomas said he would die for Jesus, and he did. His doubts turned into a solid faith.

John 11:14–16 (NKJV) ¹⁴ Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead." ¹⁵ And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him." ¹⁶ Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him."

Skepticism can Be Good – Solidify Your Faith / Ray's Story

Skepticism can be good, makes you think though what you really believe and why you believe it. Interestingly for me, I grew up in a religious home and we went to church most every Sunday. I can't think of a time growing up and into my early adult life that I ever doubted God existed. I went through higher education, received a bachelors and master's degree, yet was never shaken by all the science and history and philosophy I studied that God might not exist. What makes the story interesting is that I got saved in my bedroom reading the bible from Genesis through Revelation, clearly saw that I was a sinner, that my sin separated me from the Holy God, and I saw Jesus came and traded places with me and took my sin and I become a son to God. But shortly thereafter, maybe 6 months, I was flooded with all kinds of doubts, and the doubts were..... Did God really exist? Is there really a God who lives outside this world I know, and did He really create the universe. I struggled continually, but silently, I let know one know of my struggles and doubt. I kept going to church, I grew stronger in turning from sin each day, I actually looked like the model Christian, yet all the while I was actually doubting God existed. I studied creation versus evolution like there was no tomorrow. I went and listened to the top creation scientist in the world, but they were not enough to end my doubt. I studied and could win the argument from either side, or at the least get a draw in the debate, for in the end both positions take faith. But I really felt in the end based on all the evidence, that it took me more faith to believe evolution than creation. This whole thing went on for close to a year, I believed, but I doubted, try to figure that one out. But then, it all came clear, and my struggles, my doubts, all boiled down one day..... and I came to realize what I really was struggling with. It wasn't did God exist, it wasn't could He create the universe with a word, but it all boiled down and I saw that my struggle was..... Could there really be a "Being" that could love, like He said He does. Could there be a "One" that could love me, after all I had done, and all my past failings, and still yet all my present failings, that was the ultimate issue that I was struggling. To which God, through His Word, clearly spoke to me..... Yes I do, I love you Ray, in all that you are, and I will never leave you nor forsake you. And like Thomas, He showed me His hands, he demonstrated of His love that would never fail, and that was the end of all that. And what my doubts did for me was solidify my faith of what I believed, who believed in me, and now I live on that foundation, and I share with the world standing on that solid foundation.

Romans 5:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

John 3:16 (NKJV) ¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Hebrews 13:5 (NKJV) ⁵ Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Verse 29 – Sets up Verse 30-31 / This Word is All we Need

So God will use the skepticism, the doubts, to reveal Himself to us and lay the solid foundation. But, God, Jesus, is actually saying that we need not see with our eyes to believe, but that He has given us all we need to believe, by giving us this Word..... verse 30 and 31.

John 20:30 And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book;

Jesus did More than Recorded

Jesus did more than what was recorded, but what was recorded is all we need to read to know He was the Son of God, and the Messiah who would take our sin away (verse 31).

John 20:31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Thomas is Fitting Leading into the Summary Statement of John's Gospel

Thomas's confession and Christ's response are a fitting lead in to John's summary statement of his goal and purpose in writing his gospel: Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book (cf. 12:37; 21:25). Those who have not and will not see the Lord risen will depend on this gospel penned by John (as well as the other three) to provide the word concerning Christ by which the Spirit can give them regeneration and faith (Rom. 10:17). As has been said, to expand this verse one need only to go back through the whole gospel. This is the summary statement. To believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate (1:1, 14), the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (1:29), and the resurrection and the life (11:25) is to believe that truth that when accepted provides forgiveness of sin and eternal life (3:16). John's purpose is clearly evangelistic.

Written that we Might Believe

Give people the Gospel of John, it comes with the promise to us from God that it is written so that people might believe. So give it to them, pray for them to read it, and pray that they might believe. That is easy witnessing.

Lets go All the Way back to the Beginning of John

Let's go all the way back to the beginning of this book, and right here to the summary. And the word for life used in verse 4 of chapter 1, and verse 31 of chapter 20 is, "Zoe" in the Greek language.

John 1:4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

Zoe Life – Vines Dictionary

Definition of Life in Vines Dictionary (Zoe in the Greek) as used in the NT "of life as a principle, life in the absolute sense, life as God has it, that which the Father has in Himself, and which He gave to the Incarnate Son to have in Himself, John 5:26, and which the Son manifested in the world, 1 John 1:2.

Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W., Jr. (1996). Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words. Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.

Zoe Life – More Definition

The richness of the word "zoe"

- God Life (for it is the life that comes from God and is God's Life)
- More than this Life (John 10:10 – that we might have life and that more abundant)

Greek Words

Here are how the different Greek words are used throughout the Scriptures.

- Bios – living life, livelihood, manner of living
- Psyche – life as in breathing, "existence", contrasted to being dead, and not breathing
- Zoe – A God Life, Absolute Life, More than this Life (Bios & Psyche)

Zoe Life – Summarized

So here is the summation definition of Zoe Life –

Life emanating (coming forth) from God, manifested (made known) by Christ.

God Loves You / You are not some Random Chance / No Mistakes

There in verse 3 of chapter 1, "All things were made through him and without him nothing was made." What God wants us to know is he made you, discreetly and uniquely, in the depths of his love. Psalm 139 says, "He formed us in our mother's womb." Ephesians 1 says we are his masterpiece, his poema, and both of those words give a conveyance of a tapestry. We are knitted. Needlework is what that is in Psalm 139, in that verse. Jesus knit us in our mother's womb, and so there's an intimacy and there's an involvement on his behalf in our lives. We're not just some random accident or some afterthought. Even if someone would come and say that that was a mistake. God makes no mistake and God forms every person in the womb and he's forming them for a reason, just like he

formed Adam and Eve, to have a personal relationship with them, to walk with them and to have an intimate experience with them. That's how much he loves you. And, how precious life is in that God created every person in this world today. May we honor life.

John 1:3-5 (NKJV) ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. ⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

Zoe Life – Full Life / Light of Men – to Illuminate the way to Zoe Life / Find Zoe Life only 1 place – In Him

Verse 4, "In him was life and the life was the light of the men." That word there for life is zoe, in the Greek. It means abundant life. It's not the word that means breathing and life as an existence in the body, but a spiritual life, an eternal life. In him, Jesus was zoe life, and I just summarized that, abundant life, absolute life, in him was abundant life and there can only be a life, and an abundant life be found in Jesus Christ. The second half of the verse goes on to say, "And the life was the light of men." Hence, Jesus came to be a light, an illumination to all of man. Here is where you can find abundant life. Life emanating from God, manifested by Christ. Another great definition for zoe, life emanating from God, manifested by Christ. Jesus is the light of all man and he's pointing and showing men this is where you can find abundant life, in me. Try to find it anywhere else and you will fall short. Try to find it in your job career, try to find it in your children, try to find it in your spouse, try to find it in your night life, try to find it in your party life, and none of them will bring you to a zoe and abundant life. It will always leave man short.

Keep Weaving Verse 1; Alpha & Omega / Not Salvation & Death – Everything In-between

We have to keep weaving this theme together of Jesus is the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and then end. Can I say that to you as those who believe that Jesus is the life? That he died for your sins and that you have eternal life through him and that when you die you will go to heaven? Listen, relationship with God is not just an Alpha and Omega. It's everything in between. So many people want to have an Alpha. "Yeah, I asked Jesus into my heart when I was this certain age, or at children's church, or at a Billy Graham crusade," and then they say, "And when I die I will go to heaven." But God wants to be the Alpha and the Omega. He wants to be everything in between, not just salvation and death, but everything in between of our lives he wants to meet us and be a part of it, because in him is zoe life.

John Writes

John writes, that we might believe so that we might have this type of life, God's Life, life more than this world can give, full life, abundant life, eternal life in heaven that has no end.

John 20:30-31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

End of Study

Chapter 21 John 21:1-14

The Making of Fishermen (Fisher Of Men)

Recap – Skepticism – See Notes from Last Study

John 20:29 (NKJV) ²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Recap Zoe Life – See Notes from Last Study

John 20:30–31 (NKJV) ³⁰ And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; ³¹ but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Flow into this Passage

So there is a flow into this chapter that we build on, and first is that Jesus took and built off of Thomas skepticism (the others also – because to be honest none of them believed until they saw Jesus). He took that skepticism and turned it into solid footing that these men would never be moved from again, they will believe and live like Jesus is alive. And, the flow into this passage is that God wants us to have an abundant life, a God life, a life beyond what this world can offer and give us. That is the very life Jesus in this passage offers to these men, and offers to each of us today.

Start with 2 Questions

So I start with two questions:

2. Do you want the Abundant God Life?
3. What has God called you to Do?

Both these questions are intertwined, and you will never have the abundant God life, the zoe life, apart from doing what God has called you to do. God draws that out of our text today, let's take a look.

John 21:1 After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and in this way He showed Himself:

Sea Tiberias/Galilee – 60 miles North of Jerusalem

The Sea of Tiberias (also called the Sea of Galilee) is in the northern part of Israel, about 60 miles from Jerusalem.

Appearances to Date in the Gospels

Post-Resurrection Appearances

- 1) To Mary Magdalene (Day of Resurrection) - Jn 20:11-18; Mk 16:9-11
- 2) To women returning from tomb (Day of Resurrection) - Mt 28:8-10
- 3) To Peter (Day of Resurrection) - Luke 24: 34, 1 Cor 15:5
- 4) Two disciples on Emmaus Road (Day of Resurrection) - Mk 16:12; Lk 24:13-35
- 5) To 10 disciples (no Thomas) in Jerusalem (Day of Resurrection) - Jn 20:19-25; Lk 24:36-49;
- 6) To 11 disciples in Jerusalem (this time including Thomas) (8 days since resurrection)- Jn 20:26-31;
- 7) Now..... here To 7 disciples in Galilee (how many days unknown) - Jn 21:1-25

Timeline – Told to Meet Him in Galilee

So in the timeline, after the resurrection He told the woman to tell the disciples that He will meet them in Galilee (also known at that time as the Sea of Tiberias); in fact He had told the disciples that after the resurrection He would go before them to Galilee and meet them.

Matthew 26:32 (NKJV) ³² But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee."

Mark 14:28 (NKJV) ²⁸ "But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee."

Matthew 28:5–7 (NKJV) ⁵ But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. ⁶ He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. ⁷ And go quickly and tell His disciples that He is risen from the dead, and indeed He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him. Behold, I have told you."

Mark 16:6–7 (NKJV) ⁶ But he said to them, “Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He is risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid Him. ⁷ But go, tell His disciples—and Peter—that He is going before you into Galilee; there you will see Him, as He said to you.”

Right Place

The disciples are in the right place here in John 21, this is where Jesus said He would meet them, in Galilee.

John 21:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and in this way He showed Himself: ² Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together.

Matthew 28:16–17 (NKJV) ¹⁶ Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, to the mountain which Jesus had appointed for them. ¹⁷ When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.

Jesus Meets Us – Finds Us – Even When we not in the Right Place / Do I do the Same to Others in Wrong Place

We immediately learn something sweet and wonderful about our Lord based on what we just read. Now, if we piece all these verses together, we see Jesus tell the woman to tell the disciples what He had already told them, that after the resurrection He would meet them in Galilee (that is 60 miles north of Jerusalem). But where did He meet them first? In Jerusalem. I thank the Lord for that, the even when I am not where I am supposed to be, He still comes and finds me there, appears to me there, speaks to me there, loves me where I am at, even when it isn't where I should be. He is a God of love, so gracious, so kind, so forgiving, so merciful. So, the question for you, and the question for me, do I do the same for others when we find them in the wrong place. Are we gracious and kind, loving, forgiving, and merciful to them..... or do we come down hard, do we “set them straight”, are we the voice of God speaking condemnation unto them. Now, I am not saying we simply wink at their wrong doing and wrong place, not at all; but what I mean is coming to them with love and a gentle word, coming in peace, so that we can get them to the place they should be, not a heavy hand and a judgmental heart.

John 20:19 (NKJV) ¹⁹ Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, “Peace be with you.”

John 20:26 (NKJV) ²⁶ And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, “Peace to you!”

After 40 Days – Go wait for Baptism of the Holy Spirit

So just to add a bit more to the timeline, and that is we do not know exactly when this event occurs here in John 21, other than it occurred in the first 40 days after the resurrection (and thus 10 days before the ascension into heaven), because we know from Acts 1 that it was 40 days, and then Jesus commanded them to wait in Jerusalem for the Promise of the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which ended up being 10 days, as the Spirit would fall on the Day of Pentecost which was 50 (penta) days from the Feast of First Fruits (which was Resurrection Sunday – as Jesus was the First Fruit of the Resurrection which conquered death).

Acts 1:1–3 (NKJV) ¹ The former account I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, ² until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen, ³ to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

Acts 1:4–9 (NKJV) ⁴ And being assembled together with them, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me; ⁵ for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” ⁶ Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, “Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. ⁸ But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” ⁹ Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.

(1 Corinthians 15:20 KJV) But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

Leviticus 23:9–11 (NKJV) ⁹ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ¹⁰ “Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: ‘When you come into the land which I give to you, and reap its harvest, then you shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest to the priest. ¹¹ He shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted on your behalf; on the day after the Sabbath the priest shall wave it.

They are Back at Headquarters

The Sea of Galilee was Jesus headquarters when He did His public ministry. This is where He spent more time and did more ministry than anywhere in the land of Israel, including Jerusalem. His fame spread through the whole region there, and they would bring the sick to Him to be healed. It is where He taught the Beatitudes at Sermon

on Mount (Matt 5-7), healed the nobleman's son (John 4), turned water into wine (John 2), walked on water (Mt 14), healed Peter's mother-in-law (another miracle)(Mt 8), healed paralyzed man (mark 2), and so many more things.

Matthew 4:23–25 (NKJV) ²³ And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people. ²⁴ Then His fame went throughout all Syria; and they brought to Him all sick people who were afflicted with various diseases and torments, and those who were demon-possessed, epileptics, and paralytics; and He healed them. ²⁵ Great multitudes followed Him—from Galilee, and from Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and beyond the Jordan.

Reminds Me of Story Mother-in-Law Dying in Jerusalem

Speaking of the miracle of healing Peter's mother-in-law, an American man, his wife, and mother-in-law went to the holy land of Israel for vacation to view the sites of the land. While there his mother-in-law died unexpectedly while they were in Jerusalem. So the funeral service there in Jerusalem said well we have put some prices together for you, and we can arrange to have your mother-in-law flown back to the States for 3,500 dollars, or good news we can have her buried right here in the Holy Land for 150 dollars. The man thought about it, then said fly her back to the States. The funeral director said sir, I don't understand, only 150 to bury her here in the Holy Land, but 3,500 to fly her back to the States, we just don't understand. To which the man replied, 2000 years ago a man raised from the dead at this very place, I just can't take the chance of it happening again. Anyways

Good to Get Away

Jesus called them out of Jerusalem to Galilee 60 miles away to the north in the beautiful land, away from the city. It's good to get away; Galilee was where these men and Jesus did the most part of their 3 year ministry. It had its challenges, but nothing like Jerusalem. Jerusalem was hostile and tense, Galilee was peace and rest for them at this time. See Jesus is calling them away from the hostility, a place to rest, it's a men's retreat. Christian it is good to get away, and just get to a place to rest with the Lord, whether that be a retreat (men's, woman's couple's, youth, young adult), your morning devotion, a mid-day break..... the Lord wants to call you away from all the tension and hostility, to a place of rest and refreshment.

He is Praying for You

I am reminded of when the boys were in the boat, Jesus was on the mount, and the storm arose upon the boys and Jesus walked on water and calmed the storm that was upon them. What was Jesus doing while up on the mountain, while the boys were toiling away in the water? he was praying for them (see v.46), and I suggest to you that is what He is doing for them at this moment, He is praying for them, and He is praying for you today in your confusion, in your troubled circumstance, for your future, He prays.... For you! Romans 8 tells us that is what He is doing for you right now.

Mark 6:45–52 (NKJV) ⁴⁵ Immediately He made His disciples get into the boat and go before Him to the other side, to Bethsaida, while He sent the multitude away. ⁴⁶ And when He had sent them away, He departed to the mountain to pray. ⁴⁷ Now when evening came, the boat was in the middle of the sea; and He was alone on the land. ⁴⁸ Then He saw them straining at rowing, for the wind was against them. Now about the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea, and would have passed them by. ⁴⁹ And when they saw Him walking on the sea, they supposed it was a ghost, and cried out; ⁵⁰ for they all saw Him and were troubled. But immediately He talked with them and said to them, "Be of good cheer! It is I; do not be afraid." ⁵¹ Then He went up into the boat to them, and the wind ceased. And they were greatly amazed in themselves beyond measure, and marveled. ⁵² For they had not understood about the loaves, because their heart was hardened.

Romans 8:34–39 (NKJV) ³⁴ Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." ³⁷ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, ³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 21:1 After these things Jesus showed Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and in this way He showed Himself:

John 21:2 Simon Peter, Thomas called the Twin, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together.

Where Other 4 / Christian we Must Stick Together / Stir Each Other Up in Love & Good Works

So there are 7 gathered here, and immediately we must ask where are the other 4? You would think after the experience with Thomas the 11 would be inseparable. Thomas didn't just miss seeing the resurrected Lord, He missed being filled with the Holy Spirit. These other 4 didn't just miss out on a great day of fishing, but they missed out on breakfast with Jesus. You would think that with all that is going on in their world they would all be together. Again, cant encourage you enough, that with all that is going on in our world, that we would continue to gather together, stir one another up, remind each other that the Day is approaching, we are going to see Jesus. We are all we got beloved, the world doesn't want us or love us, we need to stick together. We need to remind each other we are going to see the King, and to stir each other up to love and good works as we wait upon the Lord.

Hebrews 10:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Like the Representation of the 7

I like the representation of those present, of the ones Jesus seeks out:

- Peter – cock-a-doodle-do, I will never forsake you Lord even if all others fail.
- Thomas – I can't believe it's not butter, I won't believe unless I put my fingers in His side.
- Nathanael – can anything good come out of Nazareth, duh I stand corrected.
- Sons of Zebedee (this James and John) – the momma boys, also known as the sons of thunder, but they let their mother ask Jesus (as they stand next to here), that they could sit on His left and right hand when He comes into His kingdom (Matt 20:20-21). Good thing Jesus didn't answer that prayer request, else those boys would have been crucified on the left and right of Jesus (Matt 20:22-23).
- And two others of His disciples - purposely unnamed so we can fill our names in, as we all fall into one of these categories at one time or another. Overconfident, doubting and challenging to His Word, misunderstanding the goodness of the Lord, errant prayer request that thankfully He doesn't answer. Yet, here comes Jesus, never leaving us nor forsaken us, never pointing out all faults and failings, but coming to us, finding us, in such grace and mercy, abounding in love.

John 21:3 Simon Peter said to them, "I am going fishing." They said to him, "We are going with you also." They went out and immediately got into the boat, and that night they caught nothing.

John 21:4 But when the morning had now come, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.

John 21:5 Then Jesus said to them, "Children, have you any food?" They answered Him, "No."

John 21:6 And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some." So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish.

Jesus asks Question – So we Ponder Situation we are In

Jesus asked had you caught anything, but of course He knew they didn't, He is God. Jesus asks questions, to get us to ponder the situation we are in, so He can direct us where to go, when we come to the end of ourselves and our efforts.

Where Jesus First Called the Disciples

The Sea of Galilee (also known as Sea of Tiberias) was where Jesus first called His disciples. And, first sent them out.

Matthew 4:18–22 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ Then He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." ²⁰ They immediately left their nets and followed Him. ²¹ Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets. He called them, ²² and immediately they left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

Mark 2:13–14 (NKJV) ¹³ Then He went out again by the sea; and all the multitude came to Him, and He taught them. ¹⁴ As He passed by, He saw Levi the son of Alphaeus sitting at the tax office. And He said to him, "Follow Me." So he arose and followed Him.

Matthew 10:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease. ² Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew

his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; ³ Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; ⁴ Simon the Cananite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed Him.

First Called them to be Fisher of Men / Dajavu

Not only is Galilee where Jesus first called them, it is where He told them He would make them fisher of men. And when you read that account Luke 5, this should be a Dajavu, as it has so much resemblance to this account here in John 21. They toiled all night and caught nothing, but Jesus tells them where to cast the net and the nets are so filled it almost sinks the boat, and they know they are in the presence of God Himself.

Luke 5:1–11 (NKJV) ¹ So it was, as the multitude pressed about Him to hear the word of God, that He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret, ² and saw two boats standing by the lake; but the fishermen had gone from them and were washing their nets. ³ Then He got into one of the boats, which was Simon's, and asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the multitudes from the boat. ⁴ When He had stopped speaking, He said to Simon, "Launch out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch." ⁵ But Simon answered and said to Him, "Master, we have toiled all night and caught nothing; nevertheless at Your word I will let down the net." ⁶ And when they had done this, they caught a great number of fish, and their net was breaking. ⁷ So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. ⁸ When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord!" ⁹ For he and all who were with him were astonished at the catch of fish which they had taken; ¹⁰ and so also were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, who were partners with Simon. And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid. From now on you will catch men." ¹¹ So when they had brought their boats to land, they forsook all and followed Him.

Fishing – Time to Think –

Now I am not much of a fisherman that is true, if I had to live off the land I would be 50 pounds lighter. But here is one thing I know about fishing, and that is that it gives you lots of time to think. It is a waiting activity / recreation, and you spend lots of time waiting. Even the casting of the rod/net, becomes automatic, you don't even have to think about doing it, you just do it over and over again, and you wait to see what is on the line, in the net, and so you think, plenty of time to think. Jesus is giving them all night to think, to think about what is it that they are meant to be doing, what is their calling, what has Jesus told them to do.

Brings to Place of Nothing / Boys – This isn't what I Called you to Do

Like then, and like now in this event, Jesus is waiting for them to expend all their energy, to toil and have no fruit, to come up empty, and then he comes upon them to show them where to be filled. I believe Jesus is bring them to this place of empty nets, so He can speak to them, this isn't what I called you to do, this isn't what I want you to do. When I said "fisher of men", I meant it.

To Do what Doesn't Make Sense / Spencer Street Ministry

Now, I am not a great fisherman, but even I would say, that is not the greatest fishing advice. To say go fishing on the other side of the lake for I heard the fish are really biting over there. Or to fish closer to shore for I see the fish from here. But to say cast your net on the other side of the boat, a whole 8 foot difference, that really isn't the greatest fishing advice. It really doesn't make much sense, but it worked, because Jesus said to do it. Christian, are you willing to do things in your life that really make absolutely no sense, but you will do them, because God told you to? Yes, sometimes He will ask us to do things that make no sense, from every human intellect aspect it makes no sense, but you know God has told you to do it. So now you have the decision, my wisdom and intellect, or simple faith. I remember when I was leading the Street Witnessing Team in Southern California, and we had finished up for the evening and were getting ice cream, and as we came up we saw the police writing a ticket up for this young couple, towing their car away, and it was quite heated as the couple were not in agreement with what the police were doing to them. I heard them on the phone calling someone, and asking to be picked up, and I could hear the anger and irritability in their voice as they spoke. The Lord spoke to me and said go over there and tell them about Me, share the Gospel. I was like, that can't be the Lord because this is not the environment, they are not in the mood for this, this is just me being "Mr. Evangelist". So I didn't do it, and I went in and got an ice cream. Well on the team was a young brother, named Spencer, somewhat nerdy, the big glasses and all, often looked through by others in the church because he wasn't as cool as others (the worlds labels and perceptions), well anyways I come out and there is Spencer witnessing to them, then 10 minutes later I come out from the restroom, and there is Spencer praying with them to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. I heard God speak, but it didn't make sense to me, even though I was the leader. Spencer heard God speak, and by faith he did what God called him to do, and he brought in a great catch.

Me – Baltimore or Melbourne

However, I remember 15 years ago when I was in Louisiana, I had job opportunities in Melbourne Florida, and Baltimore Maryland, and I remember God speaking clearly to me, go to Baltimore; every last person I knew at the time says are you crazy! But I knew what God had spoken, and I looked past intellect and what seemed to make sense, and went on faith, and have not one doubt in my mind, I am exactly where the Lord wants me to be.

To Not Cast – is to Become too Conservative / No Ark – No Jericho

To not cast the net because it doesn't make sense according to the human intellect, is to be too conservative in the faith. Once we become too conservative, we will never be the ones to build and ark on dry land, or march around a city and tumble the walls. Sometimes it just doesn't make sense, but we do it by faith.

Change Everyday Life into the Supernatural

Want power, ask God to take what is natural to you, and turn it into something supernatural. There are things you can do in your sleep, you may even be the best at it in your whole work place, school, sport field, even your ministry..... but say Lord, would you change my every day, into something supernatural, and you watch what God will do when you do. Watch how that every day job because something dynamic, that brings God glory; you watch how raising your children changes, you watch how just going to the grocery store changes, when you ask God to change what is every day to you, well enough for you to do with no help from Him, and you watch what happens when you say Lord change the everyday thing into something supernatural.

John 21:7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment (for he had removed it), and plunged into the sea.

Disciple Jesus Loved – Knew it was the Lord

We see in verse 8 that they are 300 feet out from the shore, we know it is dawn, it is not easy to see, and yet John knows it is the Lord, because John is the disciple that Jesus loved. That is how he always identifies himself in this Gospel. That is all he wants to be known for, not the great apostle, not the great Gospel writer, not one in the inner circle, but the one whom the Lord loved. That was his life, and his whole being and existence. And how does he know it is the Lord in this situation, because his heart knows the presence of God, whether resting on His bosom in the upper room, or a football field away, I know my Lord. So too for you and for me.

John 10:27 (NKJV) ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.

Peter dresses in Modesty

Peter puts his outer garment on; meaning he was fishing in just his boxer shorts. We see modesty on Peter's behalf, he is coming back to the shore and he is coming in modesty, and I think we should continually be conscience of modesty today, regardless of how immodest our culture is today.

200 Cubits – Football Field / That is a Long Swim – What was I Thinking

Two hundred cubits is about 300 feet, which is about the length of a football field. So they are a way away, and it is hard to see Jesus, and it is dawn, hard to see. Not to mention, that is quite the swim, at least for a man. Woman swim, men just beat and punch the water. I remember when I first started to swim right after Bible College I swam on length of the pool (not a lap – just one trip down, not down and back), and I got to the end and thought my heart was going to explode. There was their retiree woman there doing her morning swim and she said you men all swim the same, like your killing snakes. I think Peter would be killing snakes, I don't picture him as a smooth swimmer. Probably at the half way mark he was thinking, what was I thinking, I'm going to drown, this is going to be so embarrassing.

Give all – Give 50% - I got It

I wonder if Peter is like us, at the 100 yard mark going strong, at 80 yards going what did I get myself into, Lord if you get me through this I will give all I have to you and dedicate my life to ministry, then at 40 yard mark hey I am almost there, Lord if you get me through this I will give you 50% of all that I have and teach in Sunday school every week, then at 10 yard mark, I can see the shore, never mind Lord I got this.

John 21:8 But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far from land, but about two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fish.

Little Boat – When Catch a lot

It's a big boat when you catch a few, it is a little boat when you catch a lot, as we will see in verse 11 that they caught 153.

No Difference between Right Side & Left Side

There is no difference between the left side and the right side of the boat, except that Jesus said do it this way.

Fishing is Always Better with Jesus

Fishing is always better with Jesus.

- So is your job,
- so is your marriage,
- so is your ministry,
- so is your childrearing,
- everything is always better when Jesus is in it.

John 21:9 Then, as soon as they had come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid on it, and bread.

Fire – Reminds Peter of his Failure of Denying Jesus

Peter comes to shore, and faced with the reminder of the fire of coals he warmed himself before when he denied Jesus.

Where to Go in Your Reminder of Failing – Go back to the Fire of Devotion / Draw Near to God

Where to go when you are reminded of past failings, to the devotion (a warmth of passion glowing hot as fire for our Lord Jesus Christ). Here Jesus is, in the vivid reminder of Peter's failure, turning it into a place of warmth and invitation. Warm fire after a cold/cool night on the water, fresh meat, and fresh bread, ready to feed and nourish the body, ready to warm the body, and draw near to you. We so often want to run away after we fail, we don't want to look and think of that failure one more second, we want to distance ourselves from it..... which most often means we distance ourselves from God at the same time. Here, we see Jesus does the opposite, He brings Peter into a place of remembrance so Jesus can deal with it, and put it away (as far as east from west), and we will pick that up in verse 15 as Jesus solidifies His forgiveness to Peter, solidifies His restoration of Peter, by giving Him the calling to "feed My Sheep". Not only do I forgive you Peter, I entrust my treasures to you to feed and tend to. Don't run from your failing, bring them before the Lord and let Him turn your failings into forgiveness and on to great things.

John 21:10 Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish which you have just caught."

Jesus says Caught – Though He Directed the Catch / Imagine Jesus directing the Fish – No not Now – ok Now

Funny that Jesus says you caught, even though it was His miracle. Ever think about Jesus controlling the fish that night? Ok here is how it is going to go, every time the net hits the water you fishy swim the other way, but you wait until My signal, and when I say go, swim into the net.

Lord wants us to Partner

All things we have, have been given to us by the Lord (Employment, Money, Spouse, Children, Home, Car, Friends, Etc). But the Lord lets us take ownership of them, and then says now come and contribute what you have, to what He is doing. I am making breakfast, come and contribute so you have the joy of contributing and partnering, even though He has more than enough by Himself, even though He needs not from us, but He says contribute what you got, so you can enjoy being part of what I am doing. For where your treasures are, your heart will follow:

*Matthew 6:19–21 (NKJV)*¹⁹ "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;²⁰ but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.²¹ For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

John 21:11 Simon Peter went up and dragged the net to land, full of large fish, one hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not broken.

First and Last Miracle

First and Last Miracles

- First and last miracles were both in Galilee.
- Also compare the first and last miracles:
 - In Cana, it was on the 3rd day; here it was the 3rd time.
 - In Cana there was no wine; here there were no fish.
- Jesus' commands:
 - In Cana it was "Fill the waterpots"; here it was, "Cast the net."
 - In Cana the waterpots were filled to the brim (2:7)
 - here the net was full of great fishes (21:11)

Jesus is always in control of every detail.

What does 153 Mean

There are all kinds of conjectures of what the 153 mean, a mystical meaning:

- 153 is the sum of numbers 1 to 17. Some (like Augustine) say that it is a number representing the number of commandments (10) added to the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit.
- 153 is the added numerical value of the Greek words "Peter" and "fish."
- Some ancient writers (such as Jerome) held that there were 153 different types of fish in the world; this represents a "full harvest" of all of the world.
- Some (like Cyril of Alexandria) say that 100 stands for the Gentiles, 50 for Israel and 3 for the Trinity.
- Here is what I think it means, that they caught 153 fish. The truth is that all we know for certain is that 153 stands for the number of fish that they caught! We must always be careful of manufacturing "hidden meanings" in the Word of God. Be careful to read the text, not read into the text.

John 21:12 Jesus said to them, "Come and eat breakfast." Yet none of the disciples dared ask Him, "Who are You?"—knowing that it was the Lord.

Come

"Come and see," Jesus said in John 1.

"Come and drink," He said in John 7.

"Come and dine," He says in John 21.

John 1:38–39 (NKJV) ³⁸ Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?" ³⁹ He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).

John 7:37–39 (NKJV) ³⁷ On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. ³⁸ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." ³⁹ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

John 21:12 (NKJV) ¹² Jesus said to them, "Come and eat breakfast." Yet none of the disciples dared ask Him, "Who are You?"—knowing that it was the Lord.

Breakfast with Jesus

Imagine this, working and toiling all night, tired and hungry. The wording of the fish and bread and breakfast is that it is a full meal. These guys come to shore and they have a full meal, they are breaking the pita and dipping it in the hummus, they are eating fresh fish (ohh it doesn't get any better than that). I remember fishing with some friends up in Long Island Sound, and we anchored the boat, swam to shore with our catch in a burlap bag. Then we built a fire, let it burn down to coals, then put seaweed down over the fire, the fish over the seaweed and then the wet burlap bag over the fish. That fish was the moistest tastiest fish I have ever eaten. And, after fishing all

day (which I caught nothing – but the fisherman did), to eat that food, to be on dry ground, to feel the warmth of the sun on our body, and to just hang out with my friends, it was a good time, it was a special meal. And that is what the Lord calls us to, come and let's fellowship together, let's have oneness and communion together.

Revelation 3:20 (NKJV) ²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

I love to Eat

I have found that when I am tired, eating makes me happy. I have found that when I am sad and blue eating makes me happy. I have found that when I am grumpy eating makes me happy. I have found that when I am happy, eating makes me happy. I have come to the conclusion, that I just like to eat, and eating always makes me happy. I realize that I look forward to my coffee as soon as I wake up in the morning, and it makes me happy. At work I can't wait until lunch, and after work I can't wait to get home for dinner. Meals make me happy ☺. Jesus says to you, come and dine, let's have sweet fellowship, and you will always go away full and happy (blessed).

John 21:13 Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish.

John 21:14 This is now the third time Jesus showed Himself to His disciples after He was raised from the dead.

Jesus has Power of Universe – Makes Breakfast

Jesus has all the power of the universe flowing through Him, and what does He do? He makes breakfast, He serves others. How about us, we have the power of the Universe Living in us, Christ Himself, the Spirit of the Living God. So, have you made breakfast lately for the tired and hungry? Oh I don't mean literal breakfast but that is good too, but serving others to bless them.

Making Fisher of Men

We are all Called to be Fisher of Men

We are all called to be fisher of men. Our purpose in life, to first know Him, and then to make Him known. Jesus' departing words were to go make disciples. Romans 10 speaks of how will they hear if preachers are not sent. Young Timothy was told by Paul to do the work of the evangelist. Jesus promised the baptism (overflowing) of the Holy Spirit so that we might be witnesses for Him, not to have some entertaining church gathering. In Ephesians Paul tells us that God gave pastors, teachers, and evangelist to the church as gifts..... for the "equipping of the saint" for the work of the ministry. It wasn't the professionals who would go evangelize, but all the saints who would. And finally, we are told how to resist the wiles (methods) of the devil, and how to stay strong against the devil's attack, and one of the pieces of armor, was to witness. Why, because as you witness, you become strengthened in the Lord and His might, His power is flowing through you (Acts 1:8), and He is moving with you. So we are called to all be fishers of all men.

Matthew 28:18–20 (NKJV) ¹⁸ And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Mark 16:15 (NKJV) ¹⁵ And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

Romans 10:14–15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? ¹⁵ And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!"

2 Timothy 4:5 (NKJV) ⁵ But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Acts 1:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Ephesians 4:11–16 (NKJV) ¹¹ And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together

by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

Ephesians 6:10–20 (NKJV) ¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶ above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—¹⁹ and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

3 Final Takeaways – Be Fisher of Men

To be fisher of men, here are three takeaways from our study today;

- 1- You have to settle in your heart and mind, that Jesus is alive, He is real, and He is real to you. You have the fullest confidence in the resurrection, and..... that He has called you to be, fisher of men.
- 2- You must listen to His voice, even when it doesn't make sense, even when it goes against your area of expertise, you have to be obedient and go and say and do what He tells you to do, even when it doesn't make sense.
- 3- Count every last one, all 153. Know that every last soul is precious to the Lord, and this gospel is to the whole world, the rich and poor, the young and old, the beautiful and the not, the clubhouse to the crackhouse, the religious to the wretched, God wants every last one of them, and wants us to go to every last one of them, and there is always at least one..... that He will put in your path today, tomorrow, and until He returns.

End of Study

John 21:15-25

56 Weeks

This is our 56th study in the Book of John, wow!

Intro – Where we Are

Here we are, our last study in this glorious Gospel. The final scene is up at the Sea of Galilee, the boys were fishing all night and caught nothing, Jesus appears on the shore and says cast your net to the right side of the boat (for wherever Jesus tells you to cast your net is the “right” side). The resultant was a full net so full they couldn’t bring the fish into the boat and thus had to drag them in the water all the way to the shore. And then there they had breakfast with Jesus, fresh fish and fresh baked bread. It says that Jesus took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish. The King of the universe, all the power to speak creation into existence, makes breakfast for His boys. He loves you, just as He loves them, and His desire is to serve you and take you to greater heights and deeper things in the Spirit, to take you beyond what the world could ever offer you, and draw you closer to Him. Jesus has a meal prepared for you this morning, lets read our last passage of this gift He has given us, this Holy Bible.

John 21:13 (NKJV) ¹³ *Jesus then came and took the bread and gave it to them, and likewise the fish.*

Our Study Passage today:

John 21:15–25 (NKJV) ¹⁵ So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Feed My lambs.” ¹⁶ He said to him again a second time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Tend My sheep.” ¹⁷ He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me?” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Feed My sheep.” ¹⁸ Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish.” ¹⁹ This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, “Follow Me.” ²⁰ Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, “Lord, who is the one who betrays You?” ²¹ Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, “But Lord, what about this man?” ²² Jesus said to him, “If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me.” ²³ Then this saying went out among the brethren that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, “If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you?” ²⁴ This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true. ²⁵ And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.

John 21:15 So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Feed My lambs.”

They Go Walking

We often think this is an open conversation, that all of them are sitting around the fire, and then Jesus breaks the silence or changes the conversation and says what we just read. I don’t think, and the reason is because in verse 20 we read that John came “following” them, he came up behind them and Peter then turns and looks at John. The word “following” is in the active verb form, and it means to travel, to come after. So here what I see is that Jesus and Peter are walking together. I can picture in my mind, like we ourselves would do when we want to talk to someone privately, we stand, we look at them and make eye contact, and then we motion with a head turn, or in a hand wave, in the direction we are heading, as the invitation to come join. Breakfast with Jesus is awesome, and so is walking. I pray that you would be sensitive to all the times where the Lord gives you the hand wave and says lets go for a walk together. One of my most favorites things to do, greater than watching something on television, or playing some sport, or engaged in some activity, is to just go for a walk with the Lord, sometimes in silence, sometimes listening to a bible study (to which I hit pause often and contemplate and let the Lord speak to me more about what I just heard), and sometimes just listening to worship and praising Him. Usually it is a mixture of all the above. Here is the thing, and catch this, it is the Lord who is the one motioning to you, come on lets go get alone and walk and spend some time together. You will be blessed every time you do, and the exercise feels good too. And just a note, maybe those of you married with kids are going to need to work an agreement so each of you get that opportunity. And, its ok to tell your spouse, if it is ok with you each day at 7am I would like to take a 30-40 minute walk alone with the Lord. Because sometimes you end up walking together, which is good, do that, but alone time with the Lord is necessary for all of us.

John 21:20–21 (NKJV) ²⁰ Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, “Lord, who is the one who betrays You?” ²¹ Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, “But Lord, what about this man?”

More Than These

Simon Son of Jonah

And, Jesus makes a very purposeful statement here, he calls him not Peter (the name He changes him to – John 1:42) which means rock, but he calls Peter by his old name “Simon” which means shifting sand, unstable, loose, and that is what Peter has been since that night. He doesn’t know who he is, what his identity is, what his future holds, what he is supposed to be doing, and he knows in his heart, I am totally confused, I don’t know which end is up, my life seems like it is adrift at sea. Ever feel that way? Like Peter, Jesus will come and motion to you, say come away with Me, I know you feel lost at sea, like your life is on shifting sand, lets talk about that. Jesus starts with where Peter is at, so they can cut to the chase, it is going to take Peter a few rounds to get where Jesus is already at, and so too it is often the same for us, but Jesus will go as many rounds with us and needed to bring us to where He wants us to be. At the end of this study, we will see Peter living up to his name, the rock, but it had to start here in this walk on this sea shore to get him to that place.

John 1:42 (NKJV) ⁴² And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, “You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas” (which is translated, A Stone).

What are the These? / Blank so you Can fill in the Blank / If asked Today – What Battling for Number 1 in Life Verse 15 - “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?” It’s not defined for us what these are that the Lord speak into Peter when He says, “Do you love me more than these.”

- The fish – going back to what I am best at, fishing
- The boat – going back to my career, I am good at it and it provides me ease and comfort
- The disciples – enjoying his friends, doing what they love, our group, not caring about this world and all its ills and struggles. No worries of Rome and Jews coming after us when we keep to ourselves.

It’s just like last week’s study, the unnamed disciples so we can feel in the blanks and put ourselves into the story. All of us here, every day, are faced with the same question from the Lord. Do you love me more than these, I get to decide what’s going to be the preeminent love of my life every day before I start my day. By the end of the day, it’s too late. It’s over. What I had spent has been spent, never to be captured back again. When I start my day, what is the most important thing? What is the most important “these” in my life? Then I can make a decision before I even step out the door. What is going to be my focus today? What will I live for? What will I love for? What will be my passion? The “these” are not described for us so we can all fill in the blank. Christian, what would Jesus ask you today if He filled in the blank for you? Do you love me more than these, this job, your career, your money, your toys, your hobbies, a person, even a child, all the things that we can love more than these, than Jesus. And so if He asks you right now, I think everyone of us wouldn’t be able to fill in the blank real quick of what’s always up there battling for number one in our life and wanting to be the “these” whereas God says, “Make Him the ‘these.’”

Make it All About Him - You will Have Abundant Life

Make it all about Him and you will live the abundant God-life, the Zoe life, the life that is beyond this life because it’s a God-life and a God-leading that is so much smarter and a life that’s so much more vibrant than anything we could ever even think of and yet, we do think something in our mind, we can make out to be the ultimate satisfaction, all the while missing there was something greater because we didn’t let God be the greatest in our life and start the day off saying, “Lord, I love you more than these, all these things that are coming into my life today. I love you more than all of these so Lord, be on the thrown of my life and lead me and guide me. Just be a part of everything that I do.”

John 10:10 (NKJV) ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.

The Public Correction – Needed for Unity

The first series: (verse 15)

- A. Jesus' Question: "love" (agapaō)
- B. Peter's Answer: "know" (oida) / "love" (phileo)
- C. Jesus' Response: "take care of" (boskō) / "lambs" (arnion)

Peter can't answer with "agape" the unconditional love, but with "phileo" which means a brotherly love.

Peter Made a Grandstand Publically / Had Personal Meeting With Lord / But this Public One – Recorded for All

Although it is Peter and Jesus walking together, John is given the whole account to record for us. I believe Peter told him and the other disciples what all went down in that walk. See, One of the things that's going on here is that Peter denied the Lord three times, even after saying, "If all these others shall fail you, I won't, Lord, even to the point I'll die for you." Peter made that statement publicly, and he made it in front of these disciples. Here, one of the things is that we know that the Lord had a private meeting with Peter on the Resurrection Sunday. We know nothing about it. We know nothing that was said, nothing that was imparted or shared. Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Here, the Lord makes sure that the Apostle John records this whole conversation so that it goes out and on public record. Peter, he made a bold statement, but you know what else saw Peter did? He made a very inflaming statement against the other disciples.

Matthew 26:33–35 (NKJV) ³³ Peter answered and said to Him, "Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble."
³⁴ Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." ³⁵ Peter said to Him, "Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!" And so said all the disciples.

Luke 24:34 (NKJV) ³⁴ saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!"

Peter Slammed other Disciples / Talked Down – I am Greater / Example – Doing it in Workplace

Peter talked down about the other disciples. Peter, by his statement, was saying "I'm greater than these guys. They don't have the spiritual backbone that I have, but you can count on me, Jesus." The equivalence to that would literally be us sitting in a work environment and the boss says, "I'm looking to start this new program," and you would speak up and go, "Out of the 12 of us sitting here, I'm the most qualified. I'm the smartest and I'm the man for the job because these guys don't rank with me." Now, you might impress your boss and you might get the job, but you know what, those other 11 people in the room are never going to be endeared to you. They will be offended by you and they will be put off by you. What Jesus has to do here with this public recording even though they're walking alone, John gets the earful of what all transpires and records it for us, but the Lord makes sure that it's recorded so Peter can make a public confession, "I'm not greater than these other guys."

Peter needs to make Public Confession / Restore Unity

What does the Lord do with that and what's his purpose in that is he needs to unify these 11, he needs to make them one and he's going to turn the world upside down, and the first thing he has to do right here before that upper room, day of Pentecost where they will be in one accord, is he has to bring Peter to the place where he comes and he's not just making confession before the Lord, he's making confession before the other disciples, "I'm not greater than you. I thought I was. I'm not. I've been humbled. I've been broken. I don't consider myself the greatest among you, just glad to be with you."

Humility Needed for Unity / A Must before Spirit can Flow

Brokenness, humility, humbleness, contrite heart, this is what we need to keep unity and oneness, and God then takes that and uses that in a great and mighty way. First, he has to bring all to unity before he can pour out of spirit and do a great work such as he did on the day of Pentecost, it says they were with one accord in the upper room, but first Jesus must deal with Peter to create that unity.

Acts 1:12–14 (NKJV) ¹² Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey. ¹³ And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James the son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas the son of James. ¹⁴ These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

That They Might Be One – As We Are One

Jesus in John 17, the prayer God recorded for us to hear, the personal prayer between Jesus the Son and God the Father, and He prayed 4 times, oh Father that they might be one as we are One. It was His fervent passion that we may be one, for if not the Spirit will not move among us. Guys, we are all in this together, and we are all that we have, we only have each other.

John 17:11 (NKJV) ²¹ Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one as We are.

John 17:21 (NKJV) ²¹ that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

John 17:22 (NKJV) ²² And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one:

John 17:23 (NKJV) ²³ I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.

All the Disciples needed to hear this Encounter / For all had the Greatness Complex

But let's not just focus this on Peter, because you know what, all these disciples had a greatness complex, and all of them needed to hear what the Lord said to Peter, because is applied to them also, as we saw they the night before the crucifixion arguing over who would be the greatest in the kingdom.

Matthew 18:1-5 (NKJV) ¹ At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" ² Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, ³ and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. ⁵ Whoever receives one little child like this in My name receives Me.

The Question for All – Do we have the Same Problem / Search Our Own Heart

The question for all of us, is there something that we ourselves have been like Simon Peter, exalting and lifting ourselves above others and looking down on others, even verbally putting them down. I pray we just search our hearts today and say, "Lord, forgive me that," and go and seek restoration, go and seek unity, and watch what God does in your life.

If Peter said Yes - His Ministry would have Been Over

If Peter did not have this moment with the Lord, if he would have said, "Yes, I agape you. Yes, I agape you. Yes, I agape you," Peter wouldn't have been there in the upper room. God wouldn't allowed it because Peter wouldn't have been with one accord as it says there that they were. Peter's ministry, Peter's Zoe abundant life, Peter's fullness of joy would never have moved forward apart from this moment. The same is true for us in any way when we exalt ourselves and put our brethren down.

Feed My Lambs – Teach the Word

The first series: (verse 15)

- A. Jesus' Question: "love" (agapaō)
- B. Peter's Answer: "know" (oida) / "love" (phileō)
- C. Jesus' Response: "take care of" (boskō) / "lambs" (arnion)

Peter getting Commission to Teach the Word

So here is Jesus giving Peter the commission to teach the Word, and we will talk more about that through this study, but first.....

Need to First be Fed – Before Can Feed Others

It wasn't until after Peter was fed that Jesus talked to him about feeding others. Gang, if you're not being fed, don't attempt to feed others, because what you give out will not be nutritious. It'll be junk food, hollow calories. If,

however, you are being fed, make sure you feed others—because if you just keep getting fed and don't feed others, you'll become spiritually bloated and lethargic.

John 21:16 He said to him again a second time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Tend My sheep.”

God has to Speak 2X to Men – before they Get It

Has to speak to men multiple times to get it. You can see the Lord speaking to a man because here, the Lord is repeating Himself three times to make sure Peter hears and gets it. It's interesting that you don't read through the scriptures, “Mary-Mary, Hagar –Hagar, Elizabeth-Elizabeth, Sarah-Sarah.” You just hear them called one time and they turn, they hear it and they get it. But how interesting when the Lord talks to a man how many times we read, “Abraham-Abraham, Jacob-Jacob, Moses-Moses, Samuel -Samuel, Simon-Simon, Saul-Saul” repeatedly the Lord has to say it to the men twice before he gets it.

*Luke 10:41, Jesus did say Martha, Martha – when she overworked rather than worshipped.

Told Woman about Resurrection First

It is interesting that Jesus told woman first about the resurrection. It has been suggested that he did so because the news would spread faster because woman talk so much, but I am just repeating something I heard, I am not even suggesting that I agree with that theology, just something I heard (haha).

Tend My Sheep – Shepherd Heart

The second series: (verse 16):

- A. Jesus' Question: “love” (agapaō)
- B. Peter's Answer: “know” (oida) / “love” (phileō)
- C. Jesus' Response: “take care of” (poimainō) / “sheep” (probaton)

Peter still can't answer with “agape” the unconditional love, but with “phileo” which means a brotherly love.

First Feed – Second Tend (Nurture) / Couple your Words with a Shepherds Heart

The Greek word translated “feed” is poimaino, which means “to tend, or to shepherd.” “Feed my lambs, Peter, but also care for them,” Jesus instructed. Let all Bible teaching we give, whether from a pulpit, a children's church, that word that you share with a person, let them all be coupled with a shepherd's heart. May we not just give a word, but give ourselves, invest in their lives, care for them, nurture them, protect them. Our heart has to go with our words. No one will care how much we know until they know how much we care. Let teaching be followed up with caring, ask them how are you doing? Praying for them. Having a cup of coffee with them. A nurturing and a caring should go with every word.

CCAAC – Best Taught – Most Loved

Here, we see the Lord say, “Feed my sheep and tend to them,” which means nurture them and care for them, simply love them. This is a summation of what we desire our whole ministry here to be at Calvary Chapel and that is to make every person that comes in here the best taught most loved sheep in the whole area. But make no doubt about this, sometimes a shepherd has to fight and all of us are shepherds of somebody, parents, overseers of teaching in children's church, teaching on the street ministry, whatever it is. Sometimes a shepherd has to rise up and fight for the sheep because ravenous wolves come in to try to destroy them. Yes, Jesus is meek and mild, loving and kind, but there is a time He rolls up His sleeves and He'll say to His shepherd, “Roll up your sleeve. Let's go. We got somebody to take care of.”

If Move – Stay Steadfast in Word

Have you ever moved on from here and moved to a different state, city, you feel God leading you on to another church? I pray that one thing will always remain and that's your steadfastness for the word of God, the love it, the study of it, but building off of it because it will keep you and it will build you up.

John 21:17 He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?” Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, “Do you love Me?” And he said to Him, “Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You.” Jesus said to him, “Feed My sheep.

The third series: (verse 17):

- A. Jesus’ Question: “love” (phileō)
- B. Peter’s Answer: “know” (oida) everything
- C. Jesus’ Response: “take care of” (boskō) “sheep” (probaton)“

Jesus doesn’t ask agape this time, He asks with “pheleo” which Peter ahs answered twice, to which now Peter can’t answer with “agape” the unconditional love, nor with “phileo” which means a brotherly love, he simply answers with ‘you know all things’, and Peter is broken of his self-reliance, his self-overconfidence, and sees he needs Jesus to be all that Peter wanted to be, that rock that would die for Him.

3 Times – You Need to Get This Peter

Three times, the Lord will ask him. The Lord is trying to get through to Peter, you need to hear this and you need to get this.

President Roosevelt – Is anyone Listening

President Franklin D. Roosevelt got tired of smiling that big smile and saying all the usual things at those White House receptions. So, one evening he decided to find out whether anybody was paying attention to what he was saying. As each person came up to him with extended hand, he flashed his big smile and said, "I murdered my grandmother this morning." People would automatically respond with comments such as "How lovely." or "Continue on with your great work." Nobody listened to what he was saying, except for one foreign diplomat. When the president said, "I murdered my grandmother this morning," the diplomat responded softly, "I'm sure she had it coming to her.

3X – Can’t Answer with Agape / Lord bringing Peter to Place of Reality/Realism / What’s in Your Heart

Three times the Lord asked Peter, “Do you love me?” Twice Peter will answer with the word in the Greek that means friendship, not the unconditional love which in the Greek is the word Agape. The Lord is bringing him to a place of reality and realism and He is allowing Peter to look inside his heart and to see what’s truly in his heart and to see, “When I said I would die for you, I was saying I had Agape love for you, but I denied you. I had not Agape love. In fact, I didn’t even have Philia, a friendship love.” But here, Peter, he’s seeing what’s in his heart and now, he can move forward and respond in kind to the truth that he now knows and sees.

Grandma’s White Hair

One day a little girl was sitting and watching her mother do the dishes at the kitchen sink. She suddenly noticed that her mother had several strands of white hair sticking out in contrast upon her brunette head. She looked at her mother and inquisitively asked, "Mom, why are some of your hairs white?" "Well", her mother replied, "every time that you do something wrong and make me cry or unhappy, one of my hairs turns white." The little girl thought about this revelation for a while and then said, "Momma, how come all of Grandma's hairs are white?"

Unrealistic Evaluation of Self – Destined for Failure / When Honest – Lord I need You

When we give ourselves an unrealistic evaluation of ourselves and we look at ourselves in a way greater than we truly are, we’re destined for a failure and a falling, but when we’re just honest about ourselves, honest to ourselves, then we can just be real before the Lord and we can cry out to the Lord. “You know my weakness. You know my frailties and therefore, Lord, I need you because looking to myself, I see I’m not going to make it and I can’t do what you’re calling me to do.”

Nothing Wrong with That / Lord doesn’t Rebuke / Before Used by Lord – Need to see Ourselves

And you know what? There’s nothing wrong with that. There was absolutely nothing wrong with that and we know that’s true because here, the Lord, He doesn’t rebuke Peter. He doesn’t cast Peter off. Instead, He confirms and affirms Peter’s calling. “You’re going to be a fisherman.” I think before he could do that, he had to come to this

place to truly see himself and understand himself, to see his shortcomings and his weaknesses, his overconfidence so that now, he will fully rely on the Lord for all that he will do. And that's a message for us, every last one of us.

Really – IT is Totally Freeing & Liberating / Only Fool Self / Come to Lord – Let Him take it From There

I find admitting my weaknesses and my failings in the areas that I'm not strong in. I find that totally liberating and freeing, because then, I don't have to pretend in front of anybody that I am someone that I'm not and especially, I don't have to pretend before the Lord because who could ever fool the Lord. But instead, I can look at myself and I can say, "Man, I'm not strong here. I'm not gifted here. Man, this is a weak area here," and I don't feel defeated, instead, I feel liberated because and I can just come before the Lord real knowing that He knows everything about me and He still loves me unconditionally, Agape love and then He'll say, "I'll take it from here." "From when I'm weak, then I am strong," as the Apostle Paul would say.

No Need to put Front on For God / Just be Real – Say Here I Am

Seize that and grab that Christian. Apply that and be free in your life. You don't have to worry about putting on a front before God or man. Just be real before Him and you will be free to be used by Him. As you are, you'll find a deep intimacy in relation with Him because you won't hide from your failings. You know that He knows and therefore, you can just come and go. Here I am, all of me and yet, you say you want all of me.

Feed My Sheep – Key Word "MY"

Key Word for Ministers – "MY SHEEP" / Greatest Vote Confidence of me – Give you my Son

A keyword for anyone in ministry, desiring ministry, is known as a keyword that Jesus says my sheep. "These are my sheep," Jesus will say. He's entrusting them to us. There's no greater vote of confidence that I can give anyone than to let them teach my children to teach my son and I thank you for that. There's no greater vote of confidence that I can give anyone to show what I think of you and how the confidence that you give me that I let him ride in your car, that I let him be watched by you, that I let him go over your house because I trust you fully knowing that you're going to take care of my son.

The Greatest Vote of Confidence of Lord to You – To Let you Minister to His Sheep

That's what the Lord is saying to Peter. I give you the greatest vote of confidence and give you my sheep. May we always look whether we're feeding the children in Sunday school, young adults, any adult, the Word of God, are ministering to them or visiting them in the hospital, that Jesus said, "They're mine and I'm entrusting them to you and I trust you." What a great vote of confidence. We should all be rushing to find ministry because what an amazing place it is that the Lord would say, "I trust you with them. I think you're worthy of this."

John 21:18 Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish."

John 21:19 This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, "Follow Me."

Follow Me - back to the beginning

Jesus says to Peter, Follow Me – they are going back to the beginning, which was right here at this very place where Jesus told them to leave everything and to follow Him. The Lord will always find you beloved, even if you are in the wrong place doing the wrong thing, He will always come back to you and reaffirm His love and desired life He has for you.

Mark 1:16–20 (NKJV) ¹⁶ And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew his brother casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. ¹⁷ Then Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men." ¹⁸ They immediately left their nets and followed Him. ¹⁹ When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat mending their nets. ²⁰ And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him.

Stretch Forth Hand – Prediction of Peter’s Death

“...stretch forth thy hands”: A prediction of Peter’s martyrdom.

- Crucified by Romans in Nero’s circus in a.d. 67; upside down by his own request.
- (By the time John recorded these verses Peter had been dead more than twenty years.)

Jesus telling Peter – You will be the Rock

The Lord tells Peter that he will die business crucifixion. Do we understand what the Lord is saying here to Peter? Peter, you denied me. You just scattered at my cross, but Peter, you are going to live a life from this day forward that will be such an amazing spirit-filled, impacting the world, changing the world, turning the world upside down the life, that they’re going to want to kill you for it, and they will. Jesus is telling Peter, "You will rise, Peter, and you will be strong. You will be that rock."

May we All Live Life – That World wants us Silenced

I hope we all want to live a life like this, a life that if the world had their way, they would silence us because of our witness, because of the truth that we stand on. I pray that that is the life that each and every one of us would live even if it means dividing, that people won't like us, that people will want to silence, that people will murder us in their hearts because of the witness that we are. Peter is not going to die and be crucified because he's obnoxious; Peter is going to die and be crucified because people are blinded by the light of his witness. May people be the same in regards to you and I, that our witness burns bright. Hey, it might cost you that promotion. That might be your death. Hey, it might cost you some friends and some lonely nights. That might be your death, hey, it may cost you being mocked and ridiculed, that might be your death, but I pray it is the life that we live, the bright life.

Peter will Die for the Lord

Peter said he would die for Jesus, but we saw him scatter at the cross, deny Him at the fire. But let’s not forget Peter drew the sword against 600 Roman soldiers there in the garden. Church tradition says that Peter will die for the Lord, and even first have to watch them martyr his wife. When they were taking her away, he would say to her, “Remember thou the Lord”.

Peter Got Everything Jesus Saying – Will Finish Strong

Peter got it and when you read through Peter’s writings, you’ll read him where he says, “Shepherd the flock of God, be an overseer not for gain.” Decades later, here Peter, this meeting with Jesus, it’s sunk in and it’s sunk deep and it was exactly what God has seen. I can build off of this man. He’s a rock. He doesn’t know it right now. He’s back to shifting sand, but I’m laying a foundation for him so that he can build not just himself, but build others off of his foundation. And while we, Christian, we need to constantly be building and working our foundation so that not just ourselves, but others, friends, family and kids, wives can build off of this foundation that we have laid.

1 Peter 5:1–2 (NKJV) ¹ The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: ² Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;

John 21:20 Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, “Lord, who is the one who betrays You?”

John 21:21 Peter, seeing him, said to Jesus, “But Lord, what about this man?”

John 21:22 Jesus said to him, “If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? You follow Me.”

John 21:23 Then this saying went out among the brethren that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, “If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you?”

Peter are You Seriously Going to Ask That / Don’t Conform into Other’s Image

Peter are you seriously going to ask that question? Why? Just be quiet, you have just been humbled and broken, this would be a good time to just be quiet. Well, this is who Peter is, ready-fire-aim, it is his make-up. Yes it needs some tuning, but also this make-up is what will make him great. Can I can encourage you all in this, don’t conform into the church, but conform into Jesus. What am I saying is sometimes there is this thought that Christians are supposed to be a certain way, wear the same clothes, same hair, same reserved personalities, etc, etc. I know when I first got saved I was not well received at the church I went to, I was too something, to which I can say I was

too different. I always felt I was looked down upon because I too had the Peter foot-n-mouth disease, was a little too loud for them, too amped up. So I found myself trying to tone it down, be more mellow, be more guarded, to which I was not who God designed me to be. And I say to you, be who God designed you to be, seek Him, obey Him, read His Word, yield to His Word, and..... Be you, and let God use you, as you. Don't know if that fully made sense, but 24 years later, I still have to remind myself of it.

Lots People too Wrapped Up in Other's Ministries / Stay focused on Yours

Lots of people like to get all wrapped up in going after other people's ministries; they spend lots of time investigating their ministries. Yes we need to warn of wolves in sheep clothing, but if they are not clearly blatant wolves, false teachers, I myself say "what are they to me", just do what God has called me to do, and let God do with them what He wants. No Christian should keep his eyes on another Christian but should look unto Jesus (Heb 12:1, 2). Jesus deals with each Christian individually.

Hebrews 12:1-2 (NKJV) ¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Two-Fold Purpose – Validate Peter's Ministry / John will not Die

John 21 provides validation of ministry. You see, although Peter and John would go on to travel together in ministry, there would be those who would question Peter's ministry due to his denial of the Lord previously. John seems to write this epilogue, including this final story, to let us know that our God being the God of the second chance, Peter's ministry was particularly and singularly commissioned by the Lord. Secondly, John 21 provides a correction of a misunderstanding. That is, word had gone out through the early church that John wouldn't die before the Lord's return. We'll see John address this issue toward the end of the chapter.

Peter & John's End

Peter Called to Die to Self / Invest In others

But the Lord is calling Peter to something even harder than dying a martyrs death right here, He is calling Peter to die to himself (whatever it is that was on Peter's mind that he was loving), and to give his life to invest in others for the sake of others, not himself.

This Calling – Picture for all of Us Today

That calling is a calling and picture for all of us today, for in Peter and John, these final two represented here at the end of this Gospel, we see two who will first die to self, serve others, and then go home and be with the Lord. John won't die a martyrs death, but church history tells us that they tried to kill John by placing him in a cauldron of boiling oil (so he was the first church friar), but that didn't kill him, so they banished to the Island of Patmos where Jesus appeared to him and gave him the Revelation of Jesus Christ (the Book of Revelation). So both before dying physical deaths, were asked of the Lord to die to themselves and to follow Jesus, and serve Him by serving others.

What Are you Living For / Want Abundant Life – Zoe / Follow Me

What are you living for? What has God called you to do? Do you want the abundant zoe life? Jesus says, "follow me". How did they, how do we, live the abundant life? By following Jesus, which is to seek Him in what to do, and then do what He called us to do.

John 21:24 This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true.

John 21:25 And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.

Jesus is the Volume of the Book

Jesus came in the volume of the Book, and Jesus is the volume of the Book – the book is all about Jesus.

Hebrews 10:7 (NKJV) ⁷ Then I said, 'Behold, I have come— In the volume of the book it is written of Me— To do Your will, O God.' "

World Cant Hold the Books

The world could not even hold all that should be written of Jesus. But Ephesians 2 indicates that in the ages to come, we will at last be able to explore more fully His grace and mercy.

Ephesians 2:7 (NKJV) ⁷ that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

I Love Reading Biographies of Christians – Can't Wait to Read Yours

Verse 24 and 25. I love reading books on the lives of saints. I love reading books of people like Moody and Spurgeon and Finney, Billy Graham in his younger years, his whole ministry, and I hope they have more on video and I get to check out the church library every day in heaven and watch a video of these greats. I'll tell you another thing, there's a greater book, books, plural, that I want to read more than any than those other men. When I get to heaven, I want to read the book of your life, every last one of you, a book of Christians who stood strong, a book about Christians who live their life following Jesus, sold out for Jesus, bringing him glory all the way until their last breath, until they entered into heaven.

I Pray this Greatest Chapter of Your Life

That's the book I can't wait to read. I pray that as we ponder and meditate on the words that we've studied over these 56 studies in this glorious gospel of John, that we will write such a book, and whatever chapter of life **you're** in right now, I pray it's the greatest chapter of your life to date. May we live sold out for one thing: Jesus Christ. Amen.

End of Study – But Never the End of the Book! Study it for Life ☺