

THE GOSPEL OF

Teacher Manual

JOHN

A black and white photograph of several wheat stalks. The stalks are in the foreground, with their heads of grain clearly visible. A bright light source, likely the sun, is positioned behind the stalks, creating a strong lens flare and illuminating the scene from behind. The background is blurred, showing more of the field and a dark structure, possibly a building or fence. The overall mood is serene and natural.

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Many passages in the New Testament exhort us to look to our Lord Jesus Christ as the example in living a life that glorifies God (Phil. 2:5; Eph. 5:1). Glorifying God not only requires a right relationship with God through faith in the person and work of Christ, but it also requires an ever-deepening knowledge of that person and work. This study was crafted with the hope you'll gain an increasing appreciation for the greatest man to ever live. Our prayer is that everyone who studies the Life of Christ as portrayed in the Gospel of John will come away with a newfound love for our Savior. We want you to say like those who were commissioned to arrest Jesus said, "*Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks.*" (John 7:46)

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The Gospel of John

I. Introduction

A. The Four Gospels

1. The New Testament begins with four accounts of the **life** of Jesus Christ. These accounts are commonly known as the four Gospels. The term “the Gospels” is not to be confused with the word gospel, which refers specifically to the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose again.
2. Although each of the Gospel authors reported on the same life of Christ, each of them emphasized different events and doctrines particular to the **interest** of their different audiences.
 - a. The author of the Gospel of Matthew wrote to a **Jewish** audience.
 - b. The author of the Gospel of Mark wrote to a **Roman** audience.
 - c. The author of the Gospel of Luke wrote to a **Greek** audience.
 - d. The author of the Gospel of John directed his account of Christ’s life to the entire **world**. John wanted everyone to understand who Jesus is and believe in Him as Savior.

B. The Gospel of John

1. The author of the Gospel of John was one of Jesus’ disciples named **John**. John was part of the inner circle of disciples that also included James, Peter, and sometimes Andrew.
2. After Christ’s ascension, John, along with James the brother of the Lord and Peter, became the **pillars** of the church in Jerusalem.
3. Characteristics of John’s Gospel
 - a. While the other Gospel authors focused on Jesus’ Galilean ministry, John concentrated on Jesus’ **Judean** ministry.
 - b. John’s Gospel is mostly **evangelistic** in nature.
 - c. John wrote his account toward the **end** of his life, after many years of meditation on the events. Therefore, his Gospel is the most selective, topical, and theological.
 - d. John captured profound theological concepts using a simple **style** and vocabulary.
 - e. John presented the Messiah as the eternal Son of **God**.

II. John 1:1-51 – Introducing Christ

A. John 1:1-18 – The pre-existent state of Jesus Christ

1. John 1:1 – *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.* In this verse, John called Jesus Christ the **Word**.

- a. As God, Jesus Christ is the second person of the Trinity. Before becoming a human, Christ existed eternally with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. At creation, in the beginning of the world, Christ had already been alive from all **eternity**. Genesis 1:1-2
- b. Being God, Jesus Christ was not created. He had no beginning and will never **end**. Jesus Christ chose to become a human in time. He was born into this world as a normal human child, yet without a sin nature. He came to redeem sinful humankind back to God.
- c. Why did John call Jesus the Word?
 - 1) A written-out word can reveal or describe things both seen or unseen. In a similar manner, Christ came to **reveal** God to the world. John 1:18 says, *“No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.”*
 - 2) In Exodus 33:20, when Moses asked to see God’s glory, God told Moses, *“You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!”* This limitation shows why God chose to send Christ as a visible and fully human person. Jesus Christ came to **reveal** the Father to us. Matthew 11:27; John 6:46, 14:7
2. John 1:2 – *He was in the beginning with God.* Since Jesus Christ is God, He is also **eternal**. From before the beginning, He was eternally co-existent with the Father and the Spirit.
3. John 1:3 – *All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.* Creation had a start date, but the Word, Jesus Christ, did not. He has simply **always** existed, and this verse adds that it was through Jesus Christ that God brought everything into existence. John 1:10, 1 Corinthians 8:6
 - a. Nothing was **created** without Jesus Christ’s active involvement. Colossians 1:16 says, *“For in Him all things were created, things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities. All things were created through Him and for Him.”* Hebrews 11:3
 - b. Hebrews 1:2 adds emphasis to this by stating that God *“in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, **through** whom also He made the world.”*
4. John 1:4a – *In Him was life...* Jesus Christ gave **life** to all that exists. Contrary to notions postulated by modern education, John declared Christ to be the energizer of every living thing. John 5:26, 11:25, 14:6, 20:31; 1 John 1:1-2, 5:11
5. John 1:4b – *...and the life was the Light of men.* Christ, the possessor of life, shines **light** on every person to offer salvation and give deliverance from the darkness of sin, slavery and death. In John 12:46 Jesus said, *“I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in Me should remain in darkness.”* John 9:5

6. John 1:5 – *The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.* By means of both His perfect life and the truth He taught, Christ shone into the darkness. The knowledge of God always shines, but sadly men love the darkness and **suppress** the light of the truth. Romans 1:18-21
7. John 1:6 – *There came a man sent from God, whose name was John.* This **man** sent by God was none other than John the Baptist. John the Baptist was the forerunner to the Messiah’s ministry. The prophets Isaiah and Malachi both predicted John the Baptist’s eventual emergence.
 - a. Malachi 3:1 – *“Behold, I am going to send My **messenger**, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming,” says the LORD of hosts.*” Isaiah 40:3; Matthew 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 1:76, 7:27
 - b. As is discernable from John 1:35-40, John, the author of this book, was originally a **disciple** of John the Baptist. At first John and Andrew followed John the Baptist, but when they heard him declare that Jesus was the Lamb of God, they immediately left him and started following Jesus.
8. John 1:7-8 – *He came as a witness, to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him. He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light.* John the Baptist’s primary purpose was to point others to the **light**, namely Jesus Christ.
 - a. Acts 19:4 – *Paul said, “John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in Him who was coming after him, that is, in Jesus.”* John preached powerfully. He wanted people to **trust** in Jesus Christ.
 - b. In Acts 13:24-25 Stephen said that before Jesus came *“John had proclaimed...a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And while John was completing his course, he kept saying, ‘What do you suppose that I am? I am not He. But behold, one is **coming** after me the sandals of whose feet I am not worthy to untie.’”*
9. John 1:9 – *There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.* In a dark world of lies and confusing messages, Jesus Christ, the one and only true light, is the sole source of **truth**. Thankfully, the light of understanding He offers is freely available to all people. There is therefore no reason to suffer ignorance. Colossians 2:1-3
10. John 1:10 – *He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.* Incredibly, the awesome creator of the universe was recognized by a **small** handful of His creatures, even though He had painstakingly sacrificed for their redemption. Isaiah 53:3, John 17:25
11. John 1:11 – *He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.* Jesus, the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant, came first to His own people the **Jews**, but the Jews did not trust in Him. Unthinkably, they rejected Him. Psalm 22:6-7, John 16:3
12. John 1:12 – *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.* Generally, as was true of Israel, most people in the world reject Jesus. Even so, by faith, **some** do receive Him.

- a. All who believe in Christ are immediately called **children** of God. This is because they are given a new birth into the family of God by means of the Holy Spirit. John 3:5, 16; James 1:18; 1 John 3:1
 - b. Additionally, all who believe in the name of Jesus Christ and are born again and are instantly **adopted** as sons and daughters of God. Galatians 3:26, Ephesians 1:13-14
13. 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.* God gives everyone who believes in Christ a new **birth**. This spiritual birth occurs at the moment of faith in Christ. 1 Peter 1:23 says, *“For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.”*
14. John 1:14 – *And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.* John used the term **flesh** to emphasize Jesus’ humanity. Philippians 2:5-8
- a. John emphasized the historical reality of God becoming **man**. This truth has historically been called the Hypostatic Union. 1 John 4:2, 2 John 1:7
 - b. As this verse indicates, Jesus is the most **unique** person in the universe because He is undiminished deity and true humanity in one person forever. Let’s consider this truth more fully. 1 John 2:22-23
 - c. A short doctrine of the hypostatic **union**: Jesus Christ as the God-Man
 - 1) The hypostatic union is the theological **term** that describes the uniting of undiminished deity with true humanity in the one person of Christ, without mixing or diluting the two and without any loss of the distinctiveness of each identity.
 - a) Jesus Christ is not 50% God and 50% human; Jesus Christ is **both** 100% God and 100% human. John described the hypostatic union when he stated that *“the Word became flesh”* (John 1:14).
 - b) As God, Christ had no beginning; yet as man, he became, or took on, **flesh**.
 - c) Christ will eternally be both God and man at the **same** time. 1 Timothy 3:16
 - 2) Understanding this truth is essential. Most **cults** today see Christ as a demigod or a son, or child, of God. They view Christ as primarily human with some divine characteristics. They do not see Him as God the Son, or God in human flesh. They do not teach that Christ is both fully God and fully man.
 - a) In the beginning of the Church Age, there was a false belief (Docetism) that Christ did not actually have a human **body**; it was only an apparition. John 1:14, 1 John 4:2, 2 John 1:7
 - b) Any time either Christ’s deity or His humanity is diminished or mixed, our understanding of Christ will be corrupted. This kind of corruption has a devastating **effect** on our lives personally and globally on the church. Titus 2:13
 - 3) In order to be an appropriate **substitute** for mankind, Christ had to be a perfect man. 1 Timothy 2:5

- 4) Christ had to be fully God, because only God could provide **salvation**. Psalm 3:8, Isaiah 43:10-12, Revelation 7:10
15. John 1:15 – *John testified about Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’”* John the Baptist continually gave **witness** to Jesus. John spoke of the fact that even though Christ came after him birth wise, He lived eternally before him. John humbly recognized Christ’s supremacy.
16. John 1:16 – *For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.* Christ’s provision both for our justification as well as for our sanctification is exceedingly **abundant**. Because of the fullness of Christ’s grace, we receive blessings upon blessings, without any merit on our part. Ephesians 1:23, Colossians 1:19
17. John 1:17 – *For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.* Through Moses’ ministry, God gave the Law to Israel, which according to Scripture is a ministry of condemnation. Jesus Christ, on the other hand, brought us **grace** and truth. Grace and truth find their fullest expression in the person and work of Christ. 2 Corinthians 3:6-11
18. John 1:18a – *No one has seen God at any time...* Not one person in all of human history has ever **seen** the countenance of God the Father. According to Exodus 33:20, to gaze upon God would bring immediate death. Exodus 33:23, John 6:46, 1 Timothy 6:16
19. John 1:18b – *...the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.* Jesus Christ revealed the full **essence** of God the Father. To know Jesus Christ in person was truly to know the Father. Christ’s goal was to unfailingly reveal Him to the world.
- Christ displayed God the Father’s **nature**. John 14:9 says, *“Jesus said to him, “Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’”*
 - Christ revealed God the Father’s **power**. In John 3:2 we read, *“This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, ‘Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.’”*
 - Christ continually showed God the Father’s **wisdom**. John 7:46 confirms this saying, *“Never has anyone spoken like this man!”*
 - Christ reflected God the Father’s **glory**. John 1:14 states, *“And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”*
 - Christ displayed God the Father’s **life**, which is eternal life. 1 John 1:2 says, *“And the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us.”*
 - Christ exemplified God the Father’s **love** to humanity when He died for us. 1 John 3:16 says, *“We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us.”*

B. John 1:19-51 – A four day view into the ministry of John the Baptist

1. John 1:19-28 – Day One: John’s testimony concerning himself
 - a. John 1:19 – John the Baptist preached a message of vital importance to **Israel**.
 - 1) John 1:19a – *This is the testimony of John...* In his Gospel, John used the Greek word for testimony or witness (MARTURIA) 33 times. The repeated use of testimony and witness shows the importance John placed on having verifiable **evidence** regarding the person and work of Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:5-19
 - 2) John 1:19b – *...when the Jews sent to him priests and Levites from Jerusalem...* The term *Jews* in John’s Gospel typically refers to the religious **leaders**, including the priests, Pharisees, Sadducees and scribes who were hostile to Jesus and His message.
 - 3) John 1:19c – *...to ask him, “Who are you?”* The Pharisees sent priests and Levites to investigate John the Baptist’s identity. It is evident that the leaders of Israel were **perplexed** concerning John the Baptist’s message and ministry.
 - b. John 1:20 – *And he confessed and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.”* Many in Israel falsely claimed to be Messiah. John the Baptist, on the other hand, clearly and emphatically **denied** being the Christ.
 - c. John 1:21a – *They asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” And he said, “I am not.”* The Jewish people had many expectations and speculations concerning Elijah’s **return**. Malachi 4:5-6
 - d. John 1:21b – *“Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.”* John denied being the prophet of Deuteronomy 18:15. The reason for John’s short answers may have been his **disdain** for the defiant arrogance of the religious leaders who refused to repent and believe in Christ. Matthew 3:7, Luke 3:7
 - e. John 1:22 – *Then they said to him, “Who are you, so that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?”* These emissaries were anxious to take back a satisfactory **report** to the Pharisees.
 - f. John 1:23 – *He said, “I am a **voice** of one crying in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord,’ as Isaiah the prophet said.”* To explain his ministry, John the Baptist quoted Isaiah 40:3. John knew that he was the prophesied forerunner of the Messiah. By his teaching, he was preparing the people for the coming of the Christ. Matthew 3:1-3
 - g. John 1:24 – *Now they had been sent from the Pharisees.* John, the author this book, made it clear that it was the Pharisees who had **sent** these priests and Levites to probe into John the Baptist’s person and ministry.
 - h. John 1:25 – *They asked him, and said to him, “Why then are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?”* These leaders wanted to know why John felt he had the **authority** to baptize people. In their minds, unless he was someone great like the Christ, Elijah or the prophet of Deuteronomy, he did not qualify to baptize people.

- i. John 1:26 – *John answered them saying, “I baptize in water, but among you stands One whom you do not know.”* Instead of answering their question concerning his authority, John shifted the **focus** to the Messiah. This was a perfect answer, since his assignment from God was to introduce people to Christ. Matthew 3:11, Acts 19:4
 - j. John 1:27 – *“It is He who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.”* John was faithful to the ministry God gave him. He always promoted the Messiah and never himself. In fact, John freely acknowledged he was not **worthy** of even performing the lowliest task for the coming Messiah. Mark 1:7; John 1:15, 3:30
 - k. John 1:28 – *These things took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.* Bethany was on the east side of the Jordan River; it was the **base** of operations for John’s baptismal ministry at that time.
2. John 1:29-34 – Day Two: John disclosed the identity of Jesus, the Messiah
- a. John 1:29 – *The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!* John’s statement was a reference to both the Passover **lamb** and Christ’s future substitutionary sacrifice for the sins of the world.
 - b. John 1:30 – *This is He on behalf of whom I said, “After me comes a Man who has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.”* Even though John was older than Jesus and his ministry began before Jesus’ ministry, John recognized that Jesus was the eternal God and therefore infinitely **superior** to him.
 - c. John 1:31 – *I did not recognize Him, but so that He might be manifested to Israel, I came baptizing in water.* Although John knew who Jesus was, and that he was responsible to prepare the way for the Messiah, it was not until John baptized Jesus that he **discovered** He was the Messiah. John 1:7, Mark 1:7, Acts 19:4
 - d. John 1:32 – *John testified saying, “I have seen the Spirit descending as a dove out of heaven, and He remained upon Him.* Unlike Matthew’s detailed account of Jesus’ baptism, John recorded only one indispensable **detail** the coming of the Holy Spirit on Jesus at that event. Matthew 3:13-17, Romans 1:4
 - e. John 1:33 – *I did not recognize Him, but He who sent me to baptize in water said to me, ‘He upon whom you see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Him, this is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit.’* God had told John the Baptist how he would be able to **recognize** the Messiah. Isaiah 40:3-5, Malachi 3:1
 - 1) The man on whom John would see the Holy Spirit **descend** and remain, that man would be the Messiah.
 - 2) Matthew 3:16-17 says, *“As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water. Suddenly the heavens were opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and resting on Him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is My beloved **Son**, in whom I am well pleased!”* Matthew 17:5
 - 3) Upon seeing the Spirit descend upon and remain on Jesus, John knew, and could confidently proclaim, that Jesus was **Messiah**.

- f. John 1:34 – *I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God.* John the Baptist was the first witness in scripture to **confirm** that Jesus was indeed the promised coming Deliverer and the Son of God. Luke 1:35, John 5:23
3. John 1:35-42 – Day Three: John’s disciples follow Jesus
- a. John 1:35 – *Again the next day John was standing with two of his disciples.* In the Gospels the term “disciples” refers to John’s and Jesus’s most intimate and **devoted** followers. In the book of Acts, Christ’s disciples came to be called Christians. Matthew 9:14, 28:19; Acts 11:26, 14:21
- b. John 1:36 – *...and he looked at Jesus as He walked, and said, “Behold, the Lamb of God!”* John the Baptist pointed Jesus out to his disciples and declared that He was God’s provision to bear the sins of mankind. Since John’s mission was to prepare the way for the Messiah, he was happy for his disciples to **follow** Christ. John 1:6-7, 15, 23, 29
- c. John 1:37 – *The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.* Even though it is somewhat hard to discern from this verse, these two disciples were Andrew (Jn. 1:40) and, likely, John. In the gospel of John, the apostle John often spoke of himself indirectly in the third person. These two **men** were Jesus’ first disciples.
- d. John 1:38 – *And Jesus turned and saw them following, and said to them, “What do you seek?” They said to Him, “Rabbi (which translated means Teacher), where are You staying?”* Jesus questioned them to **uncover** their real motivation for following Him.
- e. John 1:39 – *He said to them, “Come, and you will see.” So they came and saw where He was staying; and they stayed with Him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.* Even though Jesus’ place of lodging was likely humble, He unashamedly invited these two disciples to come see Him. He was glad to take the time to **visit** with them.
- f. John 1:40 – *One of the two who heard John speak and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother.* Andrew immediately believed that Jesus was the Son of God. Andrew would soon go out and invite his brother Simon (Peter) to come meet Jesus. **Peter** became a prominent and influential follower of Christ.
- g. John 1:41 – *He found first his own brother Simon and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which translated means Christ).* Andrew immediately looked for his brother to tell him the exciting news that he had **met** the promised Deliverer.
- h. John 1:42 – *He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, “You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas” (which is translated Peter).* The Lord saw Peter for who he could be if he learned to depend on Christ. Jesus immediately nicknamed him Cephas, which is the Aramaic word for **stone**.
4. John 1:43-51 – Day Four: Jesus left the region where John the Baptist was ministering
- a. John 1:43a – *The next day He purposed to go into Galilee...* John the Baptist’s ministry was in a **region** called “Bethany beyond the Jordan,” some 60 kilometers from Jerusalem. After His baptism, Jesus decided to leave this area and head north into the province of Galilee.

- b. John 1:43b – *...and He found Philip.* The word *found* is HEURISKÓ and is in the present tense, active voice, and indicative mood, signifying that that which was found had been **pursued** or sought after. Jesus intentionally found Philip; He did not just happen to bump into him. He searched for him and found him.
- c. John 1:43b – *...and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, “Follow Me.”* Jesus decisively invited Philip to be His disciple. Though Jesus does not audibly call us today, through His Word He invites every saint to a deeper walk with Him. Jesus wants us all to become His **mature** followers.
- d. John 1:44 – *Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter.* The town of Bethsaida was in the northeast corner of the Sea of Galilee. It was a fishing community. It was near this town that Jesus fed the 5,000 and walked on **water**. Matthew 11:21, Mark 8:22, John 12:21
- e. 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.”* In his testimony about Jesus, **Philip** emphasized to Nathanael Jesus’ fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies concerning the coming Messiah.
- f. John 1:46a – *Nathanael said to him, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?”* As a **student** of the scriptures, Nathanael would likely have known that Messiah was to come from Bethlehem, not Nazareth. His derogatory statement about Nazareth (and Galilee) was common among Jews at the time of Christ. John 7:41,52
- g. John 1:46b – *Philip said to him, “Come and **see**.”* Rather than arguing with him, Philip invited Nathanael to find out for himself. Philip was sure that if Nathanael met Jesus, he would reach to the same conclusion he had.
- h. John 1:47 – *Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!”* Jesus basically said, “Look here! This is an **honest** descendant of Israel. He is a man of impeccable integrity.”
- i. 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.”* Jesus’ omniscience blew Nathanael’s mind. How could Jesus have known **where** he was and what he had been doing?
- j. John 1:49 – *Nathanael answered Him, “Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel.”* Nathanael’s use of these **titles** for Jesus, showed his understanding of the Old Testament scriptures. When Nathanael saw Jesus, he instantly believed He was the Messiah, God-become-man, and the great and final King of kings. Isaiah 7:14, 9:6-7, 11:1, 22:22; Daniel 2:44, 9:25; Matthew 1:23, Luke 1:35
- k. John 1:50 – *Jesus answered and said to him, “Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? You will see greater things than these.”* Nathanael responded correctly when he saw Jesus’ omniscience and believed. However, Jesus also told Nathanael that he was going to see Him do even **greater** miracles in the future.

- l. John 1:51a – *And He said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you...”* John, the author of this book, used the phrase “*Truly, truly,*” **25 times** in his Gospel as if to say, “Hey, listen up! What I am about to tell you is the truth, and you really need to know it.”
- m. John 1:51b – *“...you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”* John was referring to an important **future** event. Ezekiel 1:1
 - 1) Jesus was **referring** to Jacob’s dream in Genesis 28. Had this been on Nathanael’s mind earlier that day? Had Jesus read his mind?
 - 2) In Genesis 28:12, Jacob had a dream in which he saw **angels** ascending and descending on a stairway that reached from earth to heaven.
 - 3) In Genesis 28:13 Jacob dreamed that God appeared at the top of the stairs and promised to give him and his prodigy the land of Canaan. In essence, Jesus said to Nathanael that He was the fulfillment of Jacob’s **dream**. Christ is indeed the only access (the staircase) to God. John 14:6, Acts 4:12

III. John 2:1-3:36 – Jesus’ ministry begins

A. John 2:1-12 – The first sign miracle: the wedding in Cana

1. John 2:1a – *On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.* The third day probably referred to the third day of Jesus’ **journey** to Galilee with His six disciples. By this time, Jesus had called John and his brother James, Andrew and Peter, Philip and Nathanael to be His disciples. Matthew 4:18-22
2. John 2:2 – *...and both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.* This wedding set the stage for Jesus’ first miracle and His inauguration into ministry. This was the first powerful public display of Jesus’ **deity** and undoubtedly served to strengthen the faith of His disciples and their resolve to follow Him.
3. John 2:3 – *When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, “They have no wine.”* To run out of wine at a wedding would have been embarrassing and disgraceful. Mary turned to Jesus to **solve** this awkward problem.
4. John 2:4 – Understanding Jesus’ response to Mary
 - a. John 2:4a – *And Jesus said to her, “Woman...”* Although this statement may sound disrespectful to us today, we know that Jesus would not have been disrespectful to his **mother**. However, the time had come for Him to do the work His heavenly Father had sent Him to do. Matthew 19:19, Luke 2:48-51, John 19:26, Ephesians 6:6
 - b. John 2:4b – *“Woman, what does that have to do with us?”* Literally translated this would read, “Woman what to **me** and to **you**.”
 - 1) Jesus came to do the **will** of His Father in heaven, not His own will or the will of any other human. John 6:38 clearly says, *“For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”* John 5:19, 30

- 2) John 4:34 clearly shows how important it was to Jesus to exclusively do the will of God the Father. Doing God's will was more important to Jesus than **eating**. *"Jesus explained, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work.'"*
- c. John 2:4c – *"...My hour has not yet come."* In John's Gospel, Jesus used the phrase, "My hour" to refer to the future events of His crucifixion. Right from the very beginning of His ministry, Jesus alluded to the ultimate **purpose** for which the Father sent Him to earth, which was to lay down His life for our sins. Acts 2:23, 1 Peter 1:20
5. John 2:5 – *His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."* Mary's command to the servants showed confidence in Jesus' supernatural **ability**. Likely more than anyone else at that time, Mary knew Jesus was the Son of God. Luke 1:31-32
6. John 2:6 – *Now there were **six** stone water pots set there for the Jewish custom of purification, containing twenty or thirty gallons each.* The water pots would have been for washing hands and feet, according to Jewish customs. Stone water pots would have been less susceptible to impurities than earthen ones. Leviticus 11:29-33, Mark 7:3
7. John 2:7 – *Jesus said to them, "Fill the water pots with water." So they filled them up to the brim.* The servants obeyed Jesus just like Mary told them to do. When He said to fill the water pots, they filled them to the very **top**.
8. John 2:8 – *And He said to them, "Draw some out now and take it to the headwaiter." So they took it to him.* The head waiter was about to become aware of something very amazing. Jesus' **amazing** miracle-working power would quietly bypass time and create wine without grapes and the long period required for fermentation. No one can do that.
9. John 2:9 – *When the headwaiter tasted the water which had become wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the headwaiter called the bridegroom...* The servants were **aware** of the miracle, but the headwaiter and the husband were not.
- a. This backstage **miracle** was particularly beneficial for Christ's recently called disciples.
- b. Jesus used this sign miracle to show His **glory** to His new disciples in order to bolster their faith in Him as the all-powerful Son of God. John 1:14
10. John 2:10 – *...and said to him, "Every man serves the good wine first, and when the people have drunk freely, then he serves the poorer wine; but you have kept the good wine until now."* The wine Jesus created was far **superior** to the wine that had been served previously.
11. John 2:11 – *This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.* This miracle was a sign. God designed signs to be miracles that pointed to something greater, **beyond** the miracle itself.
- a. Fast-forwarding the long process of fermentation to produce such high-quality wine pointed to the fact that Jesus was Immanuel, **God** with us, the long-awaited Messiah predicted in the Old Testament. Only God can create out of nothing, and whatever He creates is perfect. John 20:30-31

- b. Since the disciples had already believed in Him for their salvation, this miracle served to further strengthen their **faith**.
 - c. This account of Jesus' first miracle marks a shift from the testimony evidence of John the Baptist, to the viewable evidence of Christ's **sign** miracles.
12. John 2:12a – *After this He went down to Capernaum...* Capernaum was an important **city** on the northwestern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Capernaum became the center of Jesus' Galilean ministry.
13. John 2:12b – *...He and His mother and His brothers and His disciples; and they stayed there a few days.* Why did Jesus **begin** His ministry in Galilee rather than Jerusalem?
- a. By centering His ministry in Galilee, He fulfilled **prophecy**. In Isaiah 9:1-2, Isaiah prophesied that Messiah would bring glory and light to the region of Galilee.
 - b. In Matthew 4:12-16, Matthew confirmed this fact by applying Isaiah 9:1-2 directly to **Jesus'** ministry efforts in Galilee.
 - c. Interestingly, in this Gospel, John focused more on Jesus' ministry in **Judea** and Jerusalem than on His Galilean ministry.

B. John 2:13-22 – The first cleansing of the temple

1. John 2:13 – *The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.* Not long after His **baptism**, Jesus went up to the temple for the Passover feast. He was zealous to begin doing His Father's plans and purposes.
 - a. As specified in the Mosaic Law, once a year Jews everywhere were required to go to Jerusalem to celebrate the **Passover** feast.
 - b. The Passover served as a **reminder** to the Jews of the time God redeemed Israel from slavery in Egypt. Exodus 12:1-14
 - c. From scripture (1 Cor. 5:7) we know that the Passover pointed to the Messiah's principal **work** of redemption. It should not surprise us that Jesus would eventually be crucified during a Passover celebration. Mark 15:42, John 1:29, 18:38-39; 1 Corinthians 5:7
2. John 2:14 – *And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables.* Corrupt businesspeople were extorting **money** from their fellow Jews who came to the temple to make a sacrifice. Ezekiel 34:1-10
 - a. Since sacrificial animals had to be without blemish, **dishonest** temple inspectors would find imaginary blemishes on the animals brought by the people. Since their animals did not pass the test, they were forced to buy the temple animals at inflated prices.
 - b. These events occurred in the Court of Gentiles. The Court of the Gentiles was the only area within the temple complex where non-Jews were allowed. This was the one area in the temple where Gentiles could **learn** about the one true God and how to come near to Him. Ezekiel 34:23-24

- c. Sadly, the money-making businesses of corrupt religious leaders was ruining this possibility. Instead of being a **light** to the nations of the world, these corrupt Jewish businesspeople were hindering anyone from wanting to, or even being able to, learn about God. Mark 11:17
3. John 2:15 – *And He made a scourge of cords, and drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.* Jesus displayed His Messianic **authority** and passion for God by using a whip to drive the moneychangers from the temple, His Father’s house. John 4:45
- a. Malachi 3:1-3 taught that when Messiah would come to the temple, He would manifest Himself in a spectacular manner and would **purify** the sons of Levi who served as priests.
- b. This event clearly showed that Jesus was physically **strong** and that He possessed divine authority. In the fulfillment of prophecy, no one interfered or successfully stopped Him from completing this important task. Ezekiel 34:20-22
4. John 2:16 – *...and to those who were selling the doves He said, “Take these things away; stop making My Father’s house a place of business.”* Jesus did not **oppose** the sacrificial animals; He opposed the fact that they were turning the temple into a marketplace. They were corrupting the purpose of God’s house. Psalm 69:9, Mark 11:17
- a. Through both His words and **actions**, Jesus took authority over the temple. After cleansing the temple, He stated that it was His Father’s house. By calling the temple His Father’s house, Jesus made a Messianic declaration.
- b. By calling God His Father, Jesus essentially claimed to be **equal** to God the Father. John 5:18, 19:7
5. John 2:17 – *His disciples remembered that it was written, “ZEAL FOR YOUR HOUSE WILL CONSUME ME.”* The disciples connected Jesus’ **passion** for the temple to Psalm 69:9, a Davidic psalm about unjust suffering for obedience to God.
6. John 2:18 – *The Jews then said to Him, “What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?”* As confirmed by His disciples in the previous verse, Jesus’ authoritative and zealous entry into the temple was a credible **sign** of His Messianic authority. The brash religious leaders did not want to entertain even the possibility that Jesus was the Messiah.
7. John 2:19 – *Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”* Jesus answered these rebellious religious leaders with a **prophecy** about His future resurrection. As Messiah, he would die for all the sins of the world, but on the third day He would rise from the dead as head over all authority and power forever! Ephesians 1:19-21
- a. Later, as seen in Matthew 27:63, these religious leaders showed they plainly **grasped** His prophecy. They said to Pilot, *“Sir, we remember that when He was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I am to rise again.’”* Matthew 27:62-64
- b. Although these religious leaders **illegally** and with determination participated in Christ’s death, they would prove to be totally unsuccessful in preventing His resurrection. Luke 9:22, Acts 2:23

8. John 2:20 – *The Jews then said, “It took forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?”* The religious leaders were blinded by religious pride. They did not choose to understand the significance of Jesus’ words when He said, “This **temple**.”
9. John 2:21 – *But He was speaking of the temple of His body.* John explained that Jesus was talking about His physical **body**.
10. John 2:22 – *So when He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He said this; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had spoken.* Jesus prophesied about his death and resurrection three years before it occurred. After His resurrection, the disciples’ **faith** was strengthened when they recalled Jesus’ statement.

C. John 2:23-25 – Omniscience; Jesus’ wisdom in action

1. John 2:23 – *Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing.* Jesus’ sign miracles were verifying His Messiahship and giving **authority** to His preaching. His miraculous signs resulted in many people believing in Him for their eternal salvation. John 4:45
 - a. John’s Gospel states that **simple** faith in Christ is all that is necessary for salvation. John 1:12 says, “*But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.*”
 - b. In Jewish culture, a person’s *name* referred to their essence, or internal character. It spoke of **who** the person was and of their personal significance.
 - c. Believing in the name of Jesus Christ is accepting the biblical testimony about Him. It is believing that He is the Son of God, that He **paid** the penalty for our sins on the cross, and that God the Father verified that payment by raising Him from the dead.
2. John 2:24 – *But Jesus, on His part, was not entrusting Himself to them, for He knew all men,* Christ did not **entrust** His person and ministry to these believers; He did not invite them to be His disciples, following Him wherever He would go. In fact, Christ was careful about who He called to be His immediate disciples.
 - a. The word *entrust* can mean to put into the **care** of another or to commit something to another’s trust. At that time, Christ was not willing to put the propagation of His message into the hands of these specific believers.
 - b. This verse in no way infers that Jesus doubted the faith of those who had believed in Him. It does show, however, that He **knew** their thoughts and potential and discerned that they were not the ones He was going to put directly into a ministry of preaching and representing Him to the rest of Israel.
 - c. This type of discernment is undoubtedly what made Jesus **choose** certain men to be his disciples, while excluding others. In choosing the 12 disciples most of whom would later become apostles, Jesus specifically committed himself to only 12 of His many disciples, and, in the process, excluded others. Mark 3:13-19

3. John 2:25 – *...and because He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was in man.* Not only did Jesus not entrust Himself to the people, but He also did not need mankind to **testify** for Him. His own witness, the witness of the Father, and the signs He performed were enough proof to Israel of His Messiahship. John 8:18-19

D. John 3:1-21 – Jesus confronts Nicodemus

1. John 3:1 – *Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.* Nicodemus, a Pharisee who served on the Sanhedrin, the ruling body of Israel, was an important man who trusted his privileged **birth** as an Israelite to make him acceptable to God. He had been taught all his life that all genetic Israelites went to heaven. John 7:45-51
2. John 3:2 – *This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, “Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.”* Jesus’ teaching and **sign** miracles had impressed Nicodemus and many others. Nicodemus acknowledged that Jesus was a gifted teacher sent and empowered by God.
3. John 3:3 – *Jesus answered and said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”* Jesus did not let Nicodemus’ commendation distract Him. Without wasting words, He directly addressed Nicodemus’ real **need**.
 - a. Nicodemus knew Jesus was an extraordinary teacher, but he did not believe Jesus was the Messiah. Jesus told Nicodemus that in order to see and understand the kingdom of God, Nicodemus would have to be **born** again. In his present condition, Nicodemus could not comprehend spiritual truth. 1 Corinthians 2:14
 - b. To be born again means to receive new birth into God’s family. Nicodemus thought his **physical** birth into the lineage of Abraham was his ticket into heaven.
4. John 3:4 – *Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?”* Nicodemus response reveals that he thought Jesus was talking about **literal** birth, a literal physical rebirth of some sort.
5. John 3:5 – *Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* In order to **enter** the Kingdom, Nicodemus would need the Holy Spirit to give him spiritual life.
 - a. To help Nicodemus understand, Jesus moved from the **known** to the unknown, from the physical to the spiritual, explaining in simple terms how a person could be born again.
 - b. The context here indicates that being born of **water** refers to natural, physical birth when a baby exits the water in the mother’s womb and enters the world for the first time. Jesus was not talking to Nicodemus about water baptism as some assume. John 1:13
 - c. Jesus was contrasting physical **birth** with spiritual birth. Nicodemus thought his first birth as an Israelite would get him into heaven. Nicodemus needed to understand that his first birth was not enough; he needed a second birth.

6. John 3:6 – *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”* Nicodemus would likely have assumed that being a descendant of Abraham (born of the **flesh**) automatically ensured him entrance into the Kingdom. This, of course, was not true. Matthew 3:9
7. John 3:7 – Jesus went on to say, *“Do not be amazed that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’”* Jesus saw Nicodemus’ amazement and challenged him to **consider** what He was saying.
 - a. As is often the case with religious people, when you remove salvation from the realm of human possibilities, there is doubt and confusion, and even **denial** and defiance.
 - b. When Jesus said you must be born again, he took away the **ability** of people to save themselves. Just as we do not give ourselves our first birth (physical birth), we cannot give ourselves the second birth (spiritual birth).
8. John 3:8 – *“The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.”* Jesus used the analogy of **wind** to explain to Nicodemus the concept of spiritual birth. It may be that an evening breeze was blowing as He spoke.
 - a. The undeniable force of the invisible wind illustrates well the unseen workings of the Holy Spirit in bringing about spiritual rebirth (regeneration). Even though we cannot **see** the wind or fully understand the physical laws that control it, we do not doubt its existence or power.
 - b. Likewise, even though we cannot see the outward effects of a person’s birth into the family of God or fully acknowledge the operation of the Holy Spirit in this process, we can know for **certain** that every person who believes in Christ has become born again. Ephesians 1:13-14, 1 Peter 1:23, 1 John 5:13
 - c. Nicodemus should have readily **believed**.
9. John 3:9 – *Nicodemus said to Him, “How can these things be?”* Even though Nicodemus was a religious leader of the Jews, he foolishly questioned the possibility of **spiritual** regeneration. Ezekiel 11:19, 37:14, Joel 2:28-29
10. John 3:10 – *Jesus answered and said to him, “Are you the teacher of Israel and do not understand these things?”* Jesus’ exasperated response showed that Nicodemus should have already grasped this **truth** from his studies of the Old Testament. Ezekiel 37:9
11. John 3:11 – *“Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know and testify of what we have seen, and you do not accept our testimony.”* Despite Jesus’ utilization of practical, everyday **examples** like physical birth and the effects of the wind, Nicodemus found it difficult to believe.
12. John 3:12 – *“If I told you earthly things and you do not believe; how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?”* Jesus chided Nicodemus’ for his **refusal** to believe.
 - a. Sadly, if he did not believe when Jesus spoke using simple, commonsense examples, **how** would he ever believe if Jesus explained the supernatural using spiritual truths?

- b. Notice that Jesus emphasized Nicodemus' lack of **faith** rather than his lack of understanding. Nicodemus seemingly understood to some degree Jesus' teaching, but sadly he was not willing to believe.
13. John 3:13 – *“No one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven: the Son of Man.”* Jesus was making a claim to deity in this verse. God the Son, Jesus Christ, is the One who came down from heaven. Jesus Christ is the **only** person who left heaven to be born a man. John 1:18, 3:31, 6:38-42, 8:23; Romans 10:6; Ephesians 4:9
14. John 3:14 – *“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up...”* Here, Jesus referred to the **events** of Numbers 21:5-9, which describe Israel under divine judgement for grumbling about their difficult travels through the wilderness.
- a. John used the phrase “lift up” to refer to Christ being lifted up, as he was brutally hung on the **cross**. John 8:28; 12:32, 34; 2 Corinthians 5:21
- b. When the Israelites grumbled, God sent serpents to attack them so that they began dying. When Moses prayed for the people, God told Moses to make a bronze serpent and stand it up on a **pole**. All who believed Moses, looked up at the pole and were healed.
- c. The Israelites who were bitten by snakes needed only to **look** at the bronze serpent on the pole to be delivered from death. Numbers 21:8
15. John 3:15 – *“...so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.”* Those among Israel who believed Moses words, looked at the serpent and were instantly healed. This example illustrates how we are saved from sin and given eternal life. All who **look** to Jesus to rescue them from sin are instantly and eternally saved. John 20:31, Acts 16:31, 1 John 2:25
16. John 3:16-21 – There is debate among interpreters whether these verses are John's commentary on the Lord's statements or a direct **quote** of Jesus' words. Either way, these verses are the inspired words of God and can be fully trusted. 2 Timothy 3:16
- a. John 3:16a – *“For God so loved the world...”* The adverb translated *so* HOUTOS in this verse means “in this manner or in accordance with this description.” A literal translation of this phrase might read, “In the following **manner**, God loved the world...”
- b. John 3:16b – *“...that He gave...”* The word *gave* DIDOMI here speaks of God's **grace** in His provision of salvation through Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 5:21
- c. John 3:16c – *“...His only begotten Son...”* *Son* in this phrase is not the typical word for male child HUIOS nor the general word for offspring TEKNON. This word *Son* MONOGENES is a technical term, meaning only, only begotten, or **unique** offspring. John used this term to describe the uniqueness of Christ in relation to God the Father. Hebrews 5:5
- 1) Born of a virgin, without a human father and with no ties to Adam, Jesus Christ was a **sinless** human being. Hebrews 7:26
 - 2) In one person, Christ is **both** incorrupt human and holy God at the same time. Hebrews 1:1-6

- d. John 3:16d – “...that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life...”
The result of God giving His one and only Son is that anyone who believes in Him will not suffer throughout eternity but instead instantly receives eternal **life** as a free gift.
- e. John 3:17 – “For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.” God’s purpose in sending Jesus into the world was not to condemn sinners but to **save** them. God wanted to offer salvation to the world, so Jesus came to make that proposal possible. Acts 2:23, 3:18, 4:28; 1 Peter 1:18-21
- f. John 3:18a – “He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already...” As a result of Adam’s **sin**, all Adam’s descendants are sinners and under God’s condemnation. This verse goes on to tell us why. Romans 5:12
- g. John 3:18b – “...because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” However, since Christ bore the penalty for the sin of the world, there is only one **sin** that sends people to hell. John 16:8-9
- 1) John 16:8 says, “And He [the Holy Spirit], when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment.” Notice here that the word *sin* is singular. Of what sin does the Holy Spirit **convict** sinners?
 - 2) John 16:9 gives the answer. “Concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me.” The great sin of all sins is to not **believe** in the only begotten Son of God. Refusal to do this, results in suffering eternal separation from God.
- h. John 3:19 – “This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.” Christ came into the world as the true light, but people rejected Him because they did not want their **sins** exposed. John 1:4, 8:12, 9:5, 12:46
- 1) The light produces one of two responses: people either rejoice or they recoil. Those who see their need for salvation, love the **light**; but those who want to continue in their sin, run from the light. 2 Corinthians 2:15-16
 - 2) People will be judged because they rejected Christ, the **Light** of the world.
- i. John 3:20 – “For everyone who does evil hates the Light and does not come to the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.” People who do evil do not want their sin **exposed** because it is convicting. They want to be left alone to do as they please.
- j. John 3:21 – “But he who practices the truth comes to the Light, so that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God.” Those through whom Christ is living have nothing of which to be ashamed. When their deeds are exposed to the light, they are shown to be the uncorrupted **fruit** of the Spirit. Galatians 5:16-23, Philippians 1:9-11

E. John 3:22-36 – John decreases; Jesus increases

1. John 3:22 – *After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He was spending time with them and baptizing.* Jesus went south from Galilee into Judea, where He focused on spending time with His disciples and **baptizing**, although according to John 4:2, Jesus Himself was not actually performing baptisms.

2. John 3:23 – *John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there; and people were coming and were being baptized.* John the Baptist’s message and preaching pointed people to Jesus. Those who **agreed** with John’s message consented to baptism; those who did not agree refused to be baptized. Matthew 3:5-8
3. John 3:24 – *...for John had not yet been thrown into prison.* John was faithful to his calling and ministry all the way until he was cast into **prison**. Luke 7:18-30
4. John 3:25 – *Therefore there arose a discussion on the part of John’s disciples with a Jew about purification.* God the Holy Spirit did not provide the details of this **dispute**. We know that the religious leaders did not submit to John’s baptism because they were not in agreement with his teachings. Luke 7:30, 33
5. 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.”* At this point there was a shift **away** from John the Baptist’s ministry towards Jesus’ ministry. Many in Israel began following Jesus rather than John. John’s disciples were concerned.
6. John 3:27 – *John answered and said, “A man can receive nothing unless it has been given him from heaven.* God is the one who **gives** each person their gifts and ministry according to what He decides. He is the one who works through us to produce His will in us. We have nothing to boast about. Romans 12:3; 1 Corinthians 3:7, 4:6-7, 12:4-7; 1 Peter 4:11
7. John 3:28 – *“You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, ‘I am not the Christ,’ but, ‘I have been sent ahead of Him.’”* John the Baptist humbly accepted his behind-the-scenes ministry. He recognized that it was God who had **selected** him to prepare a wayward nation for faith in the long-awaited Messiah. It was a necessary, but not glamorous work. John 1:20
8. 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. So this joy of mine has been made full.”* John saw himself as the best man at a **wedding**. Christ, like the groom, was central. John was secondary. As the best man, he rejoiced in the groom’s indelible joy.
9. John 3:30 – John the Baptist boldly declared, *“He must increase, but I must decrease.”* John knew his ministry was ending. He had done the work God had planned for him to do. Now the spotlight must **shift** exclusively to Jesus Christ. John 17:4, 2 Timothy 4:7
10. John 3:31 – John, the Gospel writer, commented on John the Baptist’s **words**.
 - a. John 3:31a – *“He who comes from above is above all...”* In emphasizing the heavenly **origin** of Jesus Christ, he highlighted Christ’s superiority over John the Baptist or any other man.
 - b. John 3:31b – *“...he who is of the earth is from the earth and speaks of the earth...”* John the Baptist was simply an **earthly** man, just like all of Adam’s sons; he was not divine. He was not Emmanuel, God with us.
 - c. John 3:31c – *“He who comes from heaven is above all.”* **Jesus** came from heaven. He is God in human flesh. For this reason, John the Baptist joyfully took second place to Him. Isaiah 9:6, Colossians 2:10, 1 Peter 3:22

11. John 3:32 – *“What He [Jesus Christ] has seen and heard, of that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony.”* Speaking from God’s perspective, Jesus told the **truth**. Sadly, many people today reject the Bible’s testimony about Jesus. Many listeners altogether reject the gospel message. Luke 4:17-19
12. John 3:33 – *“He who has received His testimony has set his seal to this, that God is true.”* Jesus spoke the words of God. Anyone who accepted His testimony about what He had seen and heard acknowledged that God is true. Believers habitually recognize and **affirm** the truth because the Holy Spirit shows them what is true. John 8:26, 14:26, 15:26
13. John 3:34a – *“For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God...”* Jesus, who was sent to earth by God the Father, faithfully spoke God’s **words**. The accuracy of Christ’s words testified to the fact that He was indeed from heaven and was unquestionably God. Matthew 12:18
14. John 3:34b – *“...for He gives the Spirit without measure.”* God the Son, Jesus Christ, spoke God the Father’s words. He had an unlimited **supply** of God the Holy Spirit. Isaiah 11:1-2 said that the Holy Spirit, the One who is the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge and the fear of LORD, would rest on Messiah.
15. John 3:35 – *“The Father loves the Son and has given all things into His hand.”* Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice in not only giving up heaven and coming to earth, but more so, in dying for our sins on the cross. God is therefore honored to also put everything under the Son’s **authority**. Isaiah 53:11-12, Ephesians 1:22, Philippians 2:5-11, Colossians 2:10
16. John 3:36 – *“He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”* This verse emphasizes once again that salvation comes solely by faith alone in Christ **alone**. To believe the gospel is to obey the Son and to reject Him is rebellion. Jesus declared to Nicodemus, *“You must be born again.”*

IV. John 4:1-54 – Jesus’ departure from Judea and return to Galilee

A. John 4:1-4 – Jesus followed God the Father’s leading

1. John 4:1 – *Therefore when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John...* The Pharisees and other religious leaders kept a close eye on Jesus. Not only did they **watch** Him closely, they sent scouts to question Him. Matthew 22:15-22; Luke 6:7, 20:20-22
2. John 4:2-3 – *(although Jesus Himself was not baptizing, but His disciples were) He left Judea and went away again into Galilee.* Even though Jesus was having a “successful ministry” in Judea, He **left** and went back to Galilee.
 - a. Even though John was phasing out of ministry, Jesus was not willing to undermine him in any way. Jesus was not seeking to bring **attention** to Himself. He trusted God the Father’s timing and followed His leading to leave Judea. John 6:38, Philippians 2:3-8

- b. If the Pharisees would have thought Jesus was in competition with John, they would have had reason to **gossip**, but Jesus did not give them any reason to discredit Him. Proverbs 16:28, Hebrews 7:26, 1 Peter 2:22-23
- 3. John 4:4 – *And He had to pass through Samaria.* In those days, virtually no Jew would choose to travel through Samaria. Jews avoided Samaria at all costs. But once again, Jesus did not follow Jewish **customs** or cultural guidelines; He followed God the Father and sought only to please Him. John 5:10
 - a. This verse emphatically declares that Jesus **had to pass** that way. This is probably because the Father directed him to take that route against the norm of the day.
 - b. Something special was about to happen among these “deplorable” Samaritans and Jesus had to be there as a **key** character in the unfolding story.

B. John 4:5-42 – The woman at the well

- 1. John 4:5 – *So He came to a city of Samaria called Sychar, near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.* Sychar was a Samaritan village built near the site of Jacob’s **well**. It was located near to Mt. Gerizim and Mt. Ebal. Genesis 33:19
- 2. John 4:6 – *...and Jacob’s well was there. So Jesus, being wearied from His journey, was sitting thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.* The trip from Jerusalem to Sychar was a dusty, hot, thirty-two-kilometer (20 mile) walk. The fact that Jesus was exhausted shows He was fully **human**.
- 3. John 4:7 – *There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give Me a drink.”* This was not a chance meeting; it was a meeting **planned** by God.
 - a. In asking the Samaritan woman for a drink, Jesus was breaking some deep-rooted social **practices**, as we will see. John 4:27
 - b. However, this woman’s eternal **destiny** was more important to Jesus than following the protocol of Jewish society or the religious leaders’ code of conduct. Galatians 5:13-14
- 4. John 4:8 – *For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.* After their long journey, the disciples went to buy **food**, but Jesus had something more important to do than satisfy His hunger.
- 5. John 4:9 – *Therefore the Samaritan woman said to Him, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask me for a drink since I am a Samaritan woman?” (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)* This woman understood the cultural **barriers** Jesus was breaking by asking her for a drink of water.
 - a. This woman had three things set against her: One, she was a **woman**. Two, she was a Samaritan. Three, as we are about to see, she was a woman of questionable character. John 8:48
 - b. Any one of these would have kept a Jewish **man** from talking to her.

6. 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.”* Jesus **ignored** the social and cultural barriers. Isaiah 55:1-3
- He did not allow this woman’s objections to sidetrack Him. Jesus was an expert at turning conversations around to address the **real** underlying problem.
 - Just like Nicodemus, this woman needed the **gift** of eternal life that only He, the Savior, could provide. Neither one recognized their true need and neither one realized that the only one who could give them eternal life was standing there talking to them.
7. John 4:11 – *She said to Him, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with and the well is deep; where then do You get that living water?”* As Nicodemus had done, she too interpreted Jesus’ words **literally**. Because the woman was focused on the natural, she did not understand the spiritual implications of Jesus’ statements. Jeremiah 2:13
8. John 4:12 – *“You are not greater than our father Jacob, are You, who gave us the well, and drank of it himself and his sons and his cattle?”* Since there is no direct Old Testament reference to Jacob digging this **well**, this statement must have been based on oral tradition. Jesus did not answer her question but brought her back to her need.
9. John 4:13 – *Jesus answered and said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again.* Jesus reminded her that physical water only temporarily quenches thirst. This statement was designed to **shift** her away from the natural to the spiritual.
10. John 4:14 – *“but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life.”* The water Jesus offered would quench her spiritual thirst **forever**.
- Ever since **Adam** fell, mankind has been spiritually thirsty. Because of this innate spiritual thirst, hopelessness abounds.
 - Humanity has tried to satisfy this **spiritual** thirst with idolatry, false religion, philosophy and every other kind of human effort and reasoning, but nothing can take away the longing deep within. Jesus Christ is the only fountain of eternal life; all else invariably leads to a dead end. Ecclesiastes 3:11, 8:17
11. John 4:15 – *The woman said to Him, “Sir, give me this water, so I will not be thirsty nor come all the way here to draw.”* This woman continued to misunderstand the Lord’s teaching. She still believed Jesus was talking about **physical** water.
12. John 4:16 – *He said to her, “Go, call your husband and come here.”* Wow! Jesus knew **all** about this woman. He knew just where she was vulnerable. Step by step He ingeniously led her to the conclusion that she was a sinner and that He was the Messiah who could give her eternal life.
13. John 4:17 – *The woman answered and said, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You have correctly said, ‘I have no husband.’”* Jesus knew her statement was only **partly** true; it was not the entire truth. He would use this to open her heart spiritually.

14. John 4:18 – “...for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; this you have said truly.” Since He is **God**, Jesus knows everything. Nothing you think or do is hidden from Him. Jesus knew all about this woman. Hebrews 4:12-13
- Jesus knew that her thirst for love and acceptance had led this woman to many painful and broken relationships. What she may have wanted to **forget** was exactly what Jesus exposed to light.
 - Jesus brought it to her attention that she was telling only a partial truth. She only told the part that didn't put her in a **bad** light; she conveniently left out that she was currently living with a man outside of wedlock.
15. John 4:19 – *The woman said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.”* This was a **logical** conclusion since Jesus knew precise details about her past.
16. John 4:20 – *“Our fathers worshiped in this mountain, and you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.”* She may have quickly changed the **subject** to the controversial topic of worship to take the focus off herself and her sinful brokenness.
- When the Assyrians conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel, they brought in foreigners to intermarry with the Israelites left in the land. The resultant mixed race became known as Samaritans. The Samaritans' religion was a **mixture** of the worship of the God of Israel with the worship of foreign gods. 2 Kings 17:24-39
 - The woman at the well, however, was not interested in a theological debate as much as she was in diverting the focus from her sin and desperate condition. As is the case with all unsaved sinners, she did not want to be faced with her need for salvation. She preferred to remain in **denial**. John 3:18-20
17. John 4:21 – *Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe Me, an hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father.* After Christ paid the penalty for sin on the cross, the Jewish temple was no longer the **focal** point of worship.
- Since now in the Church Age the Holy Spirit lives in every believer, **believers** both individually and corporately are the temple of God.
 - Believers in Christ can **worship** God alone wherever they find themselves or as a group of believers in a gathering. 1 Corinthians 6:19; Ephesians 2:21-22; 1 Peter 2:5
18. John 4:22 – *“You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews.”* Jesus pointed out the spiritual ignorance of the Samaritans, stating that eternal salvation comes from the **Jews**. Salvation comes through Jesus Christ, a descendant of Abraham, a Jewish man. Genesis 12:3, Matthew 1:1, Luke 1:30-33
19. John 4:23 – *But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.* God seeks those who will humbly worship Him in spirit and truth. Where one worships is not as important as **how** one worships.
- Only born-again believers who have the indwelling Holy **Spirit** can worship God. Romans 8:9, 1 Corinthians 12:3

- b. God looks for those who worship Him in **honesty**, not hypocritically. Jesus had nothing good to say about the hypocritical Pharisees who put on a show of worshiping God when really, they did not care about Him at all. Matthew 23:25-27
20. John 4:24 – *“God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”* God created mankind to worship Him and Him **alone**, but ever since the Garden of Eden, mankind has sought fulfillment outside of God. This, of course, always proves to be an empty search. Jeremiah 2:5, Psalm 86:9, Isaiah 53:6, Romans 1:18-25, 1 Peter 2:9
21. John 4:25 – *The woman said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when that One comes, He will declare all things to us.”* Despite their ignorance and spiritual darkness, the Samaritans maintained a **concept** of a coming Deliverer.
- a. In her limited knowledge, the Samaritan woman knew how they would be able to **recognize** the Messiah when He came: *He will declare all things to us.*
- b. Jesus had just declared to her, a perfect stranger, many detailed **facts** about her personal life!
22. John 4:26 – *Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am He.”* With this pronouncement Jesus plainly **claimed** to be Messiah. His statement could be translated literally, “I am [he], who am speaking to thee.” (YLT) *I am* is a title of deity. See also the following references: John 6:48, 51; 8:12, 58; 11:25; 14:6; 18:5-6
23. John 4:27 – *At this point His disciples came, and they were amazed that He had been speaking with a woman, yet no one said, “What do You seek?” or, “Why do You speak with her?”* When the disciples returned with food, they were shocked to find Jesus conversing with this Samaritan woman, a behavior that was totally unacceptable in the **culture**.
24. John 4:28 – *So the woman left her waterpot and went into the city...* The woman immediately left to **tell** the men of the city the exciting news that the Messiah had come. Amazingly, in her great excitement, she forgot about the water she had come to draw. Her real thirst had been quenched. She left her pot and took the wellspring of life with her.
25. John 4:29 – *...and said to the men, “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I have done; this is not the Christ, is it?”* In verse 25 the woman said that when Messiah came, they would recognize Him by the fact that *He will **declare** all things to us.* When Jesus told her all about her past life, she started to realize He must be the awaited Messiah.
26. John 4:30 – *They went out of the city and were coming to Him.* Imagine this! The Samaritans came to hear Jesus based on the testimony of a scorned, unnamed, Samaritan **woman**. God is a redeeming God. He can salvage and use even the most unlikely people, all to the glory of His amazing grace. Ephesians 2:7, 1 Timothy 1:13-16
27. John 4:31 – *Meanwhile the disciples were urging Him, saying, “Rabbi, eat.”* The disciples were **hungry**, but out of respect for their teacher (Rabbi) they would not eat before He ate.
28. John 4:32 – *But He said to them, “I have food to eat that you do not know about.”* The Lord indicated that there was a **higher** priority than eating at that moment. The disciples did not understand.

- a. For three years the disciples went with Jesus everywhere He went. Real-life situations like this one provided useful teaching opportunities. It was in settings like this where the disciples saw Jesus in action and where Jesus **taught** them through both His words and His actions how to be “fishers of men” (Matthew 4:19). Acts 4:13, Ephesians 5:1-2
- b. Jesus considered starting and completing the **will** of God to be that which truly sustained Him. He considered doing God the Father’s will to be His top priority, over and above eating physical food.
29. John 4:33 – *So the disciples were saying to one another, “No one brought Him anything to eat, did he?”* It is good and right to take God’s words literally, but here the disciples needed to see through Jesus’ eyes to understand what He was really saying. Jesus was a master at teaching deep spiritual truth using **everyday** situations and language.
30. John 4:34 – *Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.* Although Jesus did God’s will every moment of everyday of His life, a large part of doing the will of the Father was dying on the **cross** to pay for our sins. Luke 22:42, John 5:30, 1 John 4:14
31. John 4:35-38 – A great harvest the disciples had not sown was taking place right before their eyes. They had just gone on a mission to find food, spending time and money getting something to eat. Jesus was showing them that a more important “**harvest**,” a rich bounty of souls, was on its way to being brought into the household of God.
- a. John 4:35 – *“Do you not say, ‘There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest’? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest.”* At that moment people from town were pouring out to meet Jesus. If the disciples would simply **look** up, away from their dishes, they would see a great harvest.
- b. John 4:36 – *“Already he who reaps is receiving wages and is gathering fruit for life eternal; so that he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.”* This is a principle in evangelism. One waters and another sows, but God alone gives results. Who does the planting and watering is irrelevant; what is relevant is **who** causes the growth.
- c. John 4:37 – *“For in this case the saying is true, ‘One sows, and another reaps.’”* We often see ourselves as being the key person in some victory or breakthrough and forget that God has **many** who are working in His field. We often reap where we did not sow. We need to humbly realize that God is the only one who causes growth. 1 Corinthians 3:5-9
- d. John 4:38 – *“I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored and you have entered into their labor.”* Indeed, this is often the case. Jesus Himself was building on the labors of others. Someone had planted the truth of a coming Messiah among these Samaritans. Jesus was building on their **work**.
32. John 4:39 – *From that city many of the Samaritans believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, “He told me all the things that I have done.”* This is nothing short of astounding. This woman’s enthusiastic testimony about Jesus provided the information her fellow townsmen needed to believe and be **saved**.

- a. This woman was not a religious, educated, distinguished Jewish citizen like Nicodemus in the previous chapter. Quite the opposite! She was a disreputable woman from a **despised** and rejected race.
 - b. Nevertheless, she became one of the greatest **evangelists** found in the biblical narrative. 1 Corinthians 1:26-29
33. John 4:40-42 – The overwhelmingly positive response to Christ by pagans in Samaria was in stark contrast to the shocking **negativity** towards Him among the Jews.
- a. John 4:40 – *So when the Samaritans came to Jesus, they were asking Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.* These Samaritans begged Jesus to stay and minister to them. Even though Jesus’ ministry was specifically to **Israel**, He readily agreed to their request.
 - b. John 4:41 – *Many more believed because of His word.* As Jesus continued to minister, many more people came to believe in Him as Messiah. John made a **contrast** here between “*His [Christ’s] word*” in this verse and “*the word of the woman*” in the previous verse. It is notable that one of the greatest evangelists in the Bible remains anonymous.
 - c. John 4:42 – *and they were saying to the woman, “It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves and know that this One is indeed the Savior of the world.”* These Samaritans **believed** what most in Israel failed to accept.

C. John 4:43-54 – The second sign miracle: the healing of a royal official’s son

1. John 4:43 – *After the two days He went forth from there into Galilee.* This transitional passage continues the thought from John 4:1-3. Jesus intentionally left **Judea** behind. He would continue to minister, but in an area that was not so hostile to His message.
2. John 4:44-45 – The Israelites’ reception of the Lord was superficial. Their real interest was in the miracles, not genuinely focused on Jesus’ message or **person**.
 - a. John 4:44 – *For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.* Isn’t that true? Often the last people to listen are those who know you best. Sometimes that is one’s own problem because of a bad testimony. That was not the case with Jesus. It was His **peers** who did not want to accept the truth from a hometown guy.
 - b. John 4:45 – *So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things that He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they themselves also went to the feast.* What had Jesus done at the feast? The only thing recorded is that He had heroically **cleansed** the temple. This would have made Him a celebrity to some of these Israelites.
3. John 4:46 – *Therefore He came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a royal official whose son was sick at Capernaum.* This officer was possibly a Gentile and most likely a Herodian **official**. His son was critically ill. Coming to Jesus showed his desperation.

4. John 4:47 – *When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and was imploring Him to come down and heal his son; for he was at the point of death.* This royal official knew of Jesus and His power to heal, but he mistakenly thought Jesus had to be present to work a **miracle**.
5. John 4:48 – *So Jesus said to him, “Unless you (plural you = all Galileans) people see signs and wonders, you simply will not believe.”* Although Jesus was speaking directly to this man, He addressed and rebuked **everyone** present. Sadly, the people of Galilee insisted on miracles before they’d believe. They refused to believe based on Jesus’ words alone.
6. John 4:49 – *The royal official said to Him, “Sir, come down before my child dies.”* The official reiterated the **urgency** of the situation.
 - a. Jesus was going to do something extraordinary. He was going to heal without being present, and that from a great distance. This was a **sign** miracle that again proved Jesus to be the Son of God, the prophesied Messiah.
 - b. Like Jesus’ first recorded sign miracle where He broke the laws of physics by circumventing the fermentation process by making wine in an instant, here again Jesus broke the laws of physics by healing a critically ill child without being bodily present. Both miracles clearly point to His **deity**.
7. John 4:50 – *Jesus said to him, “Go; your son lives.”* The man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him and started off. Without fanfare, Jesus simply **stated** that his son was alive. The official believed. He stopped imploring Jesus and went home. What amazing faith!
8. John 4:51 – *As he was now going down, his slaves met him, saying that his son was living.* Because he unreservedly believed his son was healed, he **waited** till the next day to go home, as we see in the next verse.
9. John 4:52 – *So he inquired of them the hour when he began to get better. Then they said to him, “Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.”* The official’s son was healed the **precise** moment Jesus said, “Go, your son lives.”
10. John 4:53 – *So the father knew that it was at that hour in which Jesus said to him, “Your son lives”;* and he himself believed and his whole household. This sign miracle resulted in the **salvation** of the official and all who were in his home, family and slaves alike.
11. John 4:54 – *This is again a second sign that Jesus performed when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.* The first two incredible sign miracles in the book of John **convince** people to believe in Jesus as Messiah. Christ’s miraculous power is unequalled. Do you believe?

V. John 5:1-47 – Hated for Good

A. John 5:1-16 – The third sign miracle: healing a lame man

1. John 5:1 – *After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.* It is interesting that John organized this part of his Gospel (chapters 5-11) around several Jewish **feasts** the Lord attended.

- a. The Mosaic Law commanded the Israelites to **celebrate** three feasts: Passover, the Feast of Weeks (later known as Pentecost) and the Feast of Booths, or Tabernacles. The Jews still celebrated a semblance of these feasts, but it is unclear which one Jesus attended here. Deuteronomy 16:1-16
 - b. Although this chapter begins with a festival in Jerusalem, Jesus challenged manmade Sabbath traditions throughout the entire chapter. To the religious legalist of the day it may have seemed Jesus was opposed to the Law of Moses, but this was not so. Jesus was opposed, however, to manmade laws and **religious** tradition. Matthew 5:17
 - c. Sabbath keeping focused people's eyes on religion rather than on their actual need for redemption. Due to their obsession with rule keeping, the people of Israel were going to **miss** the Messiah. The Sabbath was not given to be a burden to Israel but rather a gift: a day when they could get some much-needed rest. Mark 2:27, Romans 10:1-4
2. John 5:2 – *Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porticoes.* Interestingly, the Lamb of God likely entered the pool of Bethesda via the **sheep** gate. Bethesda means house of mercy or kindness. Jesus, the Lamb of God, was about to show unelicited kindness to an undeserving paralytic.
 3. John 5:3 – *In these lay a multitude of those who were sick, blind, lame, and withered, [waiting for the moving of the waters...]* The hopelessness of this mass of sick individuals reminds us of the hopeless, sin-sick condition of all humanity. These people needed physical help. Similarly, **all** people need spiritual help. God alone provides.
 4. John 5:4 – *[...for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool and stirred up the water; whoever then first, after the stirring up of the water, stepped in was made well from whatever disease with which he was afflicted.]* John explained a common belief surrounding the moving of the waters at the **pool**.
 - a. John did not comment on the **validity** of this belief; he simply stated what was alleged to occur. It is totally possible that the water was occasionally agitated by an angel and that this was not just a local myth.
 - b. In view of the **large** number of suffering people lying near the pool in hopeful expectancy, it seems possible that people were occasionally healed of diseases.
 5. John 5:5 – *A man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years.* Notice the long span of time this man had been crippled. God purposefully had John include this significant **detail** in the narrative. 2 Timothy 3:16-17
 6. John 5:6 – *When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he had already been a long time in that condition, He said to him, "Do you wish to get well?"* Jesus purposely **chose** this man because of how long he had been crippled. If this man were healed, it would be an obvious miracle only God could do. John 11:4
 7. 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."* Instead of simply answering Jesus' question, the man explained his predicament. After unsuccessfully waiting so long, his situation must have begun to feel somewhat **hopeless**.

8. John 5:8 – *Jesus said to him, “Get up, pick up your pallet and walk.”* Even though this man had been crippled most of his life, Jesus audaciously gave him three impossible **commands**: get up, pick up, and walk. Discernibly, in his own strength, the man was powerless to do what Jesus said.
9. John 5:9 – *Immediately the man became well and picked up his pallet and began to walk. Now it was the Sabbath on that day.* Christ instantaneously and completely restored this man to health. Only an all-powerful **Creator** God could bring about such an incredible miracle! Here are some thoughts to be gleaned from this event. Colossians 1:15-17, 2:9
 - a. First, just like this man by human **willpower** alone could not fulfill Jesus’ command to get up and walk, no one can walk in obedience to Christ apart from His enabling power. John 15:4-5
 - b. Second, God always gives the **grace** needed to do whatever He asks. In this verse, He graciously provided the man everything necessary to obey His orders. 1 Corinthians 10:13, 12:9; 2 Corinthians 3:4; Ephesians 3:16, 6:10; Philippians 4:13; Colossians 1:11
 - c. Third, Jesus was **intentional** in all He did. He deliberately chose a man who had been ill for a long time. He intentionally healed the man on the Sabbath, and He knowingly told him to carry his bed.
10. John 5:10 – *So the Jews were saying to the man who was cured, “It is the Sabbath, and it is not permissible for you to carry your pallet.”* Jesus healed the man and intentionally told him to carry his bed on the Sabbath day. This was to confront the **false** religious system of the Jews. The traditions of the religious leaders had wrongfully replaced the truth.
11. John 5:11 – *But he answered them, “He who made me well was the one who said to me, ‘Pick up your pallet and walk.’”* The healed man answered his questioners in a way that avoided personal responsibility. It was the healer’s **fault**, not his.
12. John 5:12 – *They asked him, “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Pick up your pallet and walk?’”* The Pharisees’ question showed they were more interested in finding a **law** breaker than in meeting an amazing miracle worker. They were bitter, not joyful. This attitude is characteristic of all legalists. Matthew 12:7, 15:3-9
13. John 5:13 – *But the man who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped away while there was a crowd in that place.* This man did not know who had healed him because Jesus had quietly disappeared into the **crowd**. Mark 7:9
14. John 5:14 – *Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, “Behold, you have become well; do not sin anymore, so that nothing worse happens to you.”* From Jesus’ statement, it is clear that this man had, prior to his illness, committed some sin. The fact that Jesus found him in the **temple** may have been an indication of a changed heart.
 - a. From Genesis 3:16-19, we know that ultimately all sickness is connected back to the original sin of **Adam** and is the result of the curse God placed on creation. At the same time, many illnesses have nothing to do with an individual’s personal sins.

- b. In this instance, however, Jesus' statement shows that this man's illness **was** directly related to a former sin. Jesus warned him not to return to his sin so that something worse would not happen to him.
15. John 5:15 – *The man went away and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.* It is interesting that scripture does not record this man expressing any **thanks** to Jesus. On the contrary, upon learning that it was Jesus who healed him, he quickly conveyed this information to the "Sabbath police," the religious Jews.
16. John 5:16 – *For this reason the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath.* Because they held their traditions above the **word** of God, these religious leaders missed a perfect opportunity to meet and welcome their Messiah. Instead of embracing Jesus, they began to persecute Him. Religion always rejects truth.

B. John 5:17-19 – The Son is God

1. John 5:17 – *But He answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working."* Jesus' statement was an obvious **claim** to deity as shown in the negative reaction of the religious elite. This event marked a turning point in Christ's relationship with the religious leaders of the day. From this point onward they wanted him dead.
2. John 5:18 – *For this reason therefore the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because He not only was breaking the Sabbath, but also was calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God.* Amazingly, the religious leaders, those whose job was to promote impartiality and justice, wanted to **kill** Jesus.
- a. They correctly understood that Jesus had indeed claimed **equality** with God when he called God his own Father. Also, He had deliberately defied their legalism by breaking their manmade Sabbath rules.
- b. Jesus' healing on the Sabbath and His claims to deity put these false religious leaders on the offensive. He was now considered a threat to their **power** and influence over Israel.

C. John 5:19-21 – The Son is omnipotent

1. John 5:19 – Jesus did not **deny** the charge that He claimed equality with God. Instead He sought to prove His claims with verifiable evidence.
- a. John 5:19a – *Therefore Jesus answered and was saying to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, unless it is something He sees the Father doing..."* Jesus said that His actions as the **Son** were in total harmony with the Father. He only did what He viewed the Father doing, nothing more.
- b. John 5:19b – *...for whatever the Father does, these things the Son also does in like manner.* Anything the Father could do, Jesus said He could also do in the **exact** same manner. With this statement, Jesus communicated that He was coequal with the Father in **power** and ability. This was an open claim to deity.

2. John 5:20a – *“For the Father loves the Son and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing...”* Jesus was in perfect fellowship with His Father every day of His life. Jesus said that the Father had an intimate **love** PHILEO for Him as His Son. The Father showed Jesus everything He was doing. No ordinary human could make such claims. Matthew 3:17
3. John 5:20b – *“...and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel.”* Jesus said the Father was going to show the Son greater works than the miracle of raising a bedridden man. When the Father did these greater **works** by means of the Son, Israel would be astonished at His amazing power. John 3:35
4. John 5:21 – *“For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son also gives life to whom He wishes.”* Jesus would raise the dead. They would be witnesses of this fact. The Son of God has the same authority and power to impart life as the Father. Jesus had given life to the dead legs of a bedridden man. Later He would give **life** to dead people.

D. John 5:22-23 – The Son is judge

1. John 5:22 – *“For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son.”* The fact that the Father gave the Son authority to **judge**, proves the Son is equal with the Father. Whatever the Father can do, the Son can equally do. Jesus has been entrusted by the Father with the full authority to pass judgement.
2. John 5:23 – *So that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.* Having been granted absolute authority as judge, Jesus merited the same **honor** and reverence as the Father. This statement was yet another direct claim by Jesus Christ to deity.
 - a. In the mind of the average Israelite, if a person made a claim of equality with God, He was blasphemous and worthy of **death**. However, Jesus was God. He was the promised Messiah and Immanuel, God with us. All of Israel ought to have fully revered the Son just as they revered the Father who sent Him. Psalm 2:12
 - b. It is never considered to be a good thing to cross a judge. Israel’s religious leaders were playing with fire when they blatantly defied and challenged Christ’s **authority**.
2 Thessalonians 1:6-10

E. John 5:24-30 – The Son is life

1. John 5:24 – *“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.”* Jesus immediately followed up His strong, but **true**, statements about His right to judge and condemn, with a way of escape.
 - a. Whenever Jesus Christ said, “Truly, truly,” you can be **certain** beyond a shadow of doubt that what He said was both of utmost importance and undeniably truthful.
 - b. Jesus promised that whoever hears His word and believes the Father will **escape** condemnation. This is a promise you can rely on. The moment an unbeliever trusts in Christ alone for salvation, he or she instantly possesses eternal life. Acts 16:31,
1 John 5:12

- c. Jesus graciously showed these malicious religious leaders how they could escape judgment and obtain eternal **life**. This was good news, but most of them rejected what He said.
 - d. In relation to His future judgement of the world, Jesus taught about two resurrections: a resurrection to life for those who believe and a resurrection to death for those who **reject** Him.
2. John 5:25 – *Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.* Jesus not only raised the dead when was here (*now is*), He also promised a future **resurrection** for all those who believe in Him (*is coming*). John 11:25, Colossians 3:4, 1 Corinthians 15:20-24, 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17
 3. John 5:26 – *For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself.* This is an amazing statement. Life begins and ends with **God**. Humans don't give life, not physical temporal life or eternal life. We don't have life in ourselves; it is given to us by God. Genesis 2:7; John 1:4, 11:25, 14:6; 1 John 1:2, 5:11
 4. John 5:27 – *...and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man.* Because Jesus is the Son of Man (see Daniel 7:13-14) God gave Him authority to judge humanity. Christ now possesses the **authority** that Adam foolishly surrendered at the fall. Genesis 1:26-28, Hebrews 2:6-8, Revelation 1:13
 5. John 5:28-29a – *“Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice ...and will come forth.”* Jesus prophesied that **He** would one day initiate the resurrection of the dead. He told his hearers not to be surprised at this fact. The dead of the earth (those in tombs), would hear His voice and come to life.
 6. John 5:29b – *“...those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life...”* **Both** believers and unbelievers will one day be resurrected, but only those *“who did the good deeds”* will be resurrected to life. What does this mean?
 - a. We know from passages like Isaiah 64:6 that the natural man is incapable of doing truly **good** deeds. Romans 3:10 says *“there is none righteous, not even one.”* The ones referred to here as doing good deeds are the redeemed sons and daughters of God. Only the righteous are able to do good deeds. Romans 6:20, 7:18
 - b. Christ's righteousness in a person's life is the only **source** of good deeds. At the moment of salvation, God declares a believer righteous. Only after salvation is a person capable of doing good. Therefore, the resurrection to life for *“those who did the good deeds”* refers exclusively to believers. 2 Corinthians 5:21, Galatians 5:16-25
 7. John 5:29 – *“...those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment...”* The unsaved are resurrected to face judgment. Those who *committed the evil deeds* as spoken of here characterizes all the unrighteous who failed to trust in Christ. An unrighteous person can only produce **evil** deeds. 1 John 3:10, Revelation 20:11-15

8. John 5:30 – *“I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”* Before advancing, Jesus summarized the evidence of His deity. He reminded His audience that He did not say these things on his **own** authority or initiative. He was following the Father’s will.
- Jesus was indeed **Messiah**. The religious leaders should have recognized this truth.
 - Jesus was now going to call witnesses to the stand to **testify** to the truth of His claims.

F. John 5:31-47 – The witnesses to Christ’s deity

- John 5:31-32 – The need for witnesses
 - John 5:31 – *“If I alone testify about Myself, My testimony is not true.”* Jesus anticipated that His listeners would likely **object** to His claims of being equal with God. He did not base His claims on His own authority. If He did that, His testimony would be unreliable. Deuteronomy 19:15
 - John 5:32 – *“There is another who testifies of Me, and I know that the testimony which He gives about Me is true.”* Jesus’ testimony was **true** and confirming by itself (John 8:12-18), but in keeping with the Law of Moses, He graciously provided more witnesses. Numbers 35:30, Deuteronomy 17:6, John 8:17, 2 Corinthians 13:1, Hebrews 10:28
 - John used the noun **“testimony”** (or witness) MARTURIA 14 times and the verb “testify” MARTUREO 33 times, making this a profound and fundamental theme in his Gospel. John brought to the witness stand many unmistakable witnesses who proved Jesus is God and our true Messiah.
 - John’s goal was to **prove** Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, so that people would come to believe in His name. Acts 4:12; John 19:35, 20:31; 2 Timothy 1:12; 1 John 1:2
- John 5:33-35 – The witness of John the Baptist
 - John 5:33 – *“You have sent to John, and he has testified to the truth.”* John the Baptist was a **faithful** witness. We read his testimony in John 1:19-28 when the Jews sent interrogators to question him.
 - John 5:34 – *“But the testimony which I receive is not from man, but I say these things so that you may be saved.”* Jesus, being God, obviously did not need the testimony of **human** witnesses, yet He graciously provided John the Baptist’s faithful testimony. He did this so that His hearers would listen, believe and be saved.
 - John 5:35 – *“He was the lamp that was burning and was shining and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.”* Although John the Baptist was not the “true Light,” he **shone** as a messenger of the coming Christ. For a time, the masses of Israel rejoiced at his witness. John 1:6-9, 29-34
- John 5:36 – The witness of Jesus’ works

- a. John 5:36a – *“But the testimony which I have is greater than the testimony of John...”* As good as John’s testimony was, Jesus’ **works** gave even greater evidence of who He was. Jesus now called His own works, the signs and miracles He daily performed, to come to the witness stand and testify on His behalf.
- b. John 5:36b – *“...for the works which the Father has given Me to accomplish—the very works that I do—testify about Me, that the Father has sent Me.”* Jesus’ works gave observable evidence of His **deity**. Jesus’ miracles proved that God had sent Him. No ordinary son of Adam could do the works of Jesus. John 3:2, 5:17
4. John 5:37-38 – The witness of God the Father
- a. John 5:37a – *“And the Father who sent Me, He has testified of Me.”* The Father had testified of Jesus at His baptism. In Matthew 3:17 the Father said, *“This is My beloved Son in whom I am well **pleased**.”* 1 John 5:9
- b. John 5:37b – *“You have neither heard His voice at any time nor seen His form.”* Although certainly there were those who heard the audible voice of the Father speaking from heaven at Jesus’ baptism, spiritually the Jews were blind and **deaf** towards God. Matthew 15:14, 23:24; Mark 4:11-12
- 1) In their **hearts**, the religious Jews were far from God. They cared more about their traditions than they did about God. Mark 7:6-8
 - 2) Their problem was a **faith** issue, not a lack of information. Listen to what Jesus said next.
- c. John 5:38 – *“You do not have His word abiding in you, for you do not believe Him whom He sent.”* Clearly, the religious leaders did not believe God’s **word**. If they would have believed God’s word, they would have also believed Jesus, God’s messenger.
5. John 5:39-40 – The witness of scripture
- a. John 5:39 – *“You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me...”* No one professed to know the truth better than the religious people of that day, yet Jesus said they had **missed** the greatest witness of all: The Old Testament scriptures.
- 1) The Hebrew scriptures decisively **proved** Jesus’ deity and messiahship.
 - 2) But the Jews were **blind** and misguided. They were trying so hard to gain righteousness through the Law that they missed the only One who could give them eternal life and genuine righteousness. Romans 10:2-4
- b. John 5:40 – *“...and you are unwilling to come to Me so that you may have life.”* The problem was not a lack of evidence concerning Jesus’ deity and messiahship; it was a refusal to believe the existing, overwhelming **evidence** all around them. They were simply too proud to come to Jesus as their Savior. Romans 1:18-20
6. John 5:41-47 – The witnesses rejected

- a. John 5:41 – *“I do not receive glory from men.”* Even though the Pharisees and other religious leaders prided themselves in loving and knowing God, the reality was that they sought glory from **people**. On the other hand, people’s empty praise did not mean a thing to Jesus. John 12:43, Galatians 1:10
- b. John 5:42 – *“...but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves.”* Jesus Christ, as God, could see right through these religious hypocrites. He told these **pious** leaders that they did not possess, or even begin to know, the love of God. John 5:38
- c. John 5:43a – *“I have come in My Father’s name, and you do not receive Me...”* Jesus had come to earth in the authority of God the Father, audibly identified and praised by the Father at His baptism, yet these religious leaders did not **accept** Him. Luke 3:21-22
- 1) Angels heralded His birth, wisemen traveled great distances to adore him, His star appeared in the night sky and prophets announced His arrival, but the religious leaders of Israel remained **unmoved**.
 - 2) John 1:11 says, *“He came to His **own**, and those who were His own did not receive Him.”* Isaiah 53:3
- d. John 5:43b – *“...if another comes in his own name, you will receive him.”* Having **rejected** the truth, they would readily believe a lie. This is often the case. 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12
- 1) 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 says, *“And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has **blinded** the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.”*
 - 2) Having rejected Christ and all these witnesses, these religious leaders were wide open to Satanic **deception**. Jesus told them that they were dangerously disposed to self-proclaimed impostors. Jesus said that if someone false came touting his own authority or validity, they would readily accept him.
- e. John 5:44 – *“How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another, and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?”* It is no wonder they did not believe, since they **cared** more about pleasing people than about pleasing God. Matthew 6:24, Galatians 1:10
- f. John 5:45 – *“Do not think that I will accuse you before the Father; the one who accuses you is **Moses**, in whom you have set your hope.”* The Jewish people set their hope of salvation on keeping the Mosaic Law. But the Mosaic Law brought death, not life. Romans 3:19-22, 10:2-4
- g. John 5:46 – *“For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me.”* **Israel** prided itself in possessing the Pentateuch, but tragically the nation did not accept by faith what Moses wrote regarding the coming Messiah. Genesis 3:15, 12:3; Deuteronomy 18:15; John 1:45; Luke 24:27; Acts 7:37
- h. John 5:47 – *“But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My words?”* Jesus accused the religious leaders of not believing Moses’ **writings**.

- 1) The religious leaders had refused to believe the various witnesses to Christ's deity.
- 2) The Father's witness, John the Baptist's witness, the witness of Jesus' works, and the witness of the scriptures itself all testified to Jesus being the Messiah. They should have believed in Him based on these witnesses. How about you? Will you believe in Him? Numbers 14:11

VI. John 6:1-25 – Intensified Training for the Twelve

A. John 6:1-15 – The fourth sign miracle: Jesus fed the multitude

1. John 6:1 – *After these things Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (or Tiberias).* This is the only miracle recorded by all four Gospel writers. Through this miracle, Jesus showed He was God incarnate. John 1:14, 20:30-31
 - a. When Jesus multiplied the boy's small lunch, it showed He could create something out of nothing. Only God can do that. Colossians 1:15-16
 - b. In Hebrews 11:3 we are reminded that God formed the entire universe by commanding it to appear. God made everything out of that which cannot be seen. Only God has that kind of power. Jesus is God. Psalm 33:6
2. John 6:2 – *A large crowd followed Him, because they saw the signs which He was performing on those who were sick.* Jesus was at the height of His popularity. Everywhere he went He drew huge audiences. But His popularity would soon drop.
3. John 6:3 – *Then Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat down with His disciples.* Jesus' disciples had just returned from their missionary travels. Jesus invited them to an isolated location to rest. Maybe He planned to use this as a teaching time. But the multitudes wouldn't leave Jesus alone. Mark 6:30-35, Luke 9:10-12
4. John 6:4 – *Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near.* This is the second Passover that John mentions in his gospel (John 2:13, 11:55). It may be Jesus went to Jerusalem after these events to celebrate this Passover. It should be remembered that Passover was more than just a meal. Passover was a joyous event that involved travel, preparations and eating.
5. John 6:5 – *Therefore Jesus, lifting up His eyes and seeing that a large crowd was coming to Him, said to Philip, "Where are we to buy bread, so that these may eat?"* Jesus had compassion on the people. Philip was from the nearby town of Bethsaida, so logically he would know where the best place to buy food was located. Matthew 14:14, Mark 6:34
6. John 6:6 – *This He was saying to test him [Philip], for He Himself knew what He was intending to do.* Jesus already knew He was going to work a miracle to provide food, but by asking this question, He gave His disciples a wonderful opportunity to deepen their dependence on Him.
 - a. This reminds us of Adam in the Garden of Eden. He did not know he needed a companion and helper until God showed him. Why would God show him his need if there was nothing Adam could do about it? Because it gave Adam an opportunity to depend totally on God and then rejoice in His bountiful provision. Genesis 2:18-22

- b. We should rejoice when we face impossible and ludicrous situations because they provide a wonderful opportunity for us to **trust** our all-powerful and compassionate Creator. 2 Corinthians 1:9, 12:9; Philippians 4:6-7, 19
7. John 6:7 – *Philip answered Him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little.”* The amount of money needed to feed the crowd was basically a year’s salary. Just like Philip, our default is to **calculate** the possibility and then depend on logic or commonsense rather than on God’s supernatural ability.
 8. John 6:8-9 – *One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to Him, “There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?”* Five loaves of bread and two fish would never **satisfy** such a large crowd. It is amazing they even mentioned it to Jesus. Nevertheless, Jesus took the offering.
 9. John 6:10 – *Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.* According to the book of Mark, the people were organized into **groups** of 50 and 100 (Mark 6:40). According to Matthew the number 5,000 was not including the women and children (Mat. 14:21).
 10. John 6:11 – *Jesus then took the loaves, and having given thanks, He distributed to those who were seated; likewise, also of the fish as much as they wanted.* Jesus **thanked** the Father for the boy’s offering, small as it was. Then He gave it to His disciples to serve and strangely it kept multiplying. They must have enjoyed distributing this amazing provision.
 11. John 6:12-13 – *When they were filled, He said to His disciples, “Gather up the leftover fragments so that nothing will be lost.” So they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.* Twelve baskets full was exceedingly **beyond** what they had to begin with! Mark 6:42
 - a. In 2 Kings 4:42-44, there is a similar story where God turned a small amount of food into enough for 100 prophets. When all had eaten, there was food **leftover**.
 - b. In a similar way, God has blessed us today with incomprehensible **riches**. We have all we need to live godly lives in this sinful world of suffering. 2 Corinthians 9:8; Ephesians 1:3, 3:8, 20-21; Philippians 4:19, 2 Peter 1:3
 12. John 6:14 – *Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.”* John presented this sign miracle with the **intent** of showing that Jesus is God the Creator and as such the qualified provider of salvation. John 1:3, 10; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:16
 13. John 6:15 – *So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone.* Sadly, the people missed the point of the miracle. They were focused on Jesus as a revolutionary political **activist**, not as the Savior of the world. They were more interested in the temporary than the eternal.

B. John 6:16-21 – The fifth sign miracle: Jesus walked on water

1. John 6:16 – *Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea.* Because the crowd sought to make Him their **king** by force, Jesus instituted a plan to avoid their actions. According to Matthew 14:22, Jesus made His disciples go away by boat, while He went back to send away the crowds. Then He went up the mountain alone to pray.
2. John 6:17 – *...and after getting into a boat, they started to cross the sea to Capernaum. It had already become dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them.* While the disciples were crossing the sea, Jesus was off on the mountain in **prayer**. Jesus would soon catch up to them on the sea, but by a method no other human being had ever tried. Mark 6:46-47
3. John 6:18 – *The sea began to be stirred up because a strong wind was blowing.* The disciples faced a strong contrary **wind**, making progress difficult, but were too far out to turn back. The sea of Galilee is about 7 miles wide and 12 miles long; strong winds can make the sea extremely dangerous to small fishing boats.
4. John 6:19 – *Then, when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat; and they were frightened.* This would **terrify** even the most stoic human. People just don't walk on water. Only God can resist gravity and defy the laws of nature. Once more Jesus showed through a sign that He was God.
5. John 6:20 – *But He said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid."* Without calming the storm, Christ instantly stilled the disciples' hearts with His **words**. In the Greek language, Jesus literally said, "I am (EGO EIMI)," which is an expression of deity throughout the book of John. At this, the disciples lost all fear and welcomed Him onboard. Isaiah 41:10
6. John 6:21 – *So they were willing to receive Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.* Jesus preformed yet another miracle by **instantly** teleporting them to their destination, about three miles away.
 - a. Several **proofs** of Christ's deity happened on that one day. Jesus healed the sick, fed more than 5,000 (Mat. 14:21), walked on water (Peter, too), stopped the wind, and made the boat instantly arrive at its destination. Matthew 14:28-33
 - b. A lack of **evidence** of Jesus deity and messiahship is not a valid reason for people to not believe in Christ. The evidence is powerful. Unwillingness to trust in the Lord has always been the real problem people have in recognizing Jesus as their Savior. Romans 1:18-24
7. John 6:22 – *The next day the crowd that stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other small boat there, except one, and that Jesus had not entered with His disciples into the boat, but that His disciples had gone away alone.* The crowd from the day before was **puzzled** concerning Jesus' whereabouts. They knew He had not left with His disciples.
8. John 6:23-24 – *There came other small boats from Tiberias near to the place where they ate the bread after the Lord had given thanks. So, when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they themselves got into the small boats, and came to Capernaum seeking Jesus.* These people were determined to find Jesus so they could get more free **food**.

9. John 6:25 – *When they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, “Rabbi, when did You get here?”* The crowd recognized Jesus as a great **teacher**, but not as their messiah. They wanted him to be their king but not their savior.

VII. John 6:26-71 – The Bread of Life Discourse

A. Introduction to the discourse

1. The crowd Jesus fed the previous day saw Jesus as the answer to their material needs: healing their diseases, providing food, and protecting them from Roman tyranny by becoming their king. They did not realize that their real problem was **spiritual**.
2. God had put Israel under Roman rule because of their **rejection** of Him. By rejecting the Son of God, they continued in their sin. This is the background to the following conversation.

B. John 6:26-34 – Seeking Jesus for a quick meal

1. John 6:26 – *Jesus answered them and said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.”* Jesus knew that the crowd only sought Him to satisfy their physical **desires**. They were not following Jesus because they believed that the sign miracles proved He was Messiah.
2. John 6:27a – *“Do not work for the food which perishes...”* Jesus was referring here to the miracle of the bread and fish. These people had made a great effort to find Him so He could meet their physical appetites. Instead of trying so hard to get food that spoils, they needed to put their focus on the **eternal**. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18
3. John 6:27b – *“...but for the food which endures to eternal life...”* Physical food satisfies only for a short while and then one must eat again; nevertheless, it does not keep a person alive forever. Jesus Christ, on the other hand, gives never-ending life. The people should have made more of an **effort** to seek after the eternal than the temporal. John 4:14, 11:25-26
4. John 6:27c – *“...which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal.”* The Son of Man is a Messianic title that emphasizes Christ’s humanity. Jesus Christ’s words and works proved God had given Him His divine **approval**. God approved Jesus for the task of imparting eternal life to humanity. Psalm 80:17, Daniel 7:13-14
5. John 6:28 – *Therefore they said to Him, “What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?”* As is always the case with the unregenerate, this crowd desired to **earn** points with God through their own efforts. Jesus was performing God’s works. They asked Jesus how they could also perform God’s works. Romans 10:2-4
6. John 6:29 – *Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.”* *The work of God* is simply believing in Christ for salvation. Just as He had lavishly provided a **free** and undeserved meal for them the day before, so Christ also gives salvation by grace. Faith for salvation is the ultimate non-work. Romans 4:5

7. John 6:30 – *So they said to Him, “What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform?”* Although the Lord had **given** an amazing sign of multiplication and creation the day before, they not only asked for another sign but also set the parameters for the type of sign they would accept.
 - a. This demand showed the crowd’s **disrespect** for Christ.
 - b. And their next statement revealed their **true** intentions.
8. John 6:31 – *“Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.’”* Quoting from Psalm 78:24, the crowd erroneously asserted that Moses (not God) had given Israel bread (manna) from heaven. On the contrary it was **Yahweh** who had given them the bread. Exodus 16:4
9. John 6:32 – *Jesus then said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven.* Jesus corrected His audience concerning **three** important misperceptions.
 - a. After the Exodus from Egypt, while Israel traveled in the wilderness, it was God the Father and not Moses who provided the **bread** from heaven.
 - b. Jesus used the present tense of the verb “gives” to inform His listeners that God is **always** offering eternal life. This was true not only in the past but also in the present and the future. John 8:23
 - c. We also observe that Jesus was being offered as **true** bread. In contrast to the manna from heaven, Jesus was the true bread from heaven. The manna had to be replenished every morning, but those who believe in Jesus receive life once and forever.
10. John 6:33 – *“For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world.”* Unlike the Old Testament manna that merely provided physical nourishment, the true bread from heaven imparts eternal life. To us today it is obvious Jesus was speaking about Himself, but His hearers at that time did not **see** the connection.
11. John 6:34 – *Then they said to Him, “Lord, always give us this bread.”* Although it sounds like they almost grasped the idea, the aorist imperative *give* DIDOMI (an imperative meaning to give it here and now) shows they were still focused on **physical** food and not spiritual bread. They wanted a material meal then and there, and always thereafter.

C. John 6:35-40 – Bread from heaven for the hungry crowd

1. John 6:35 – *Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.* Using *I am* EGO EIMI, Jesus again pointed to His deity. He invited His audience to come to Him as their true spiritual sustenance (food and water). He showed that to come to Him meant to **believe** in Him.
2. John 6:36 – *“But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe.”* Although they had **seen** Christ and the sign miracle evidences, they sadly refused to believe in Him as their personal Messiah.

- a. They demanded to see yet another supernatural **sign** in order to see and believe in Him. Jesus chided them for seeing Him, the true bread from heaven, yet not believing in Him.
 - b. As it was with this crowd, many people today are drawn to Jesus. Many people acknowledge His existence, and, just like they did in Jesus' day, many want to **imitate** His good works. But few want to accept Jesus as the Savior.
3. John 6:37 – *“All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.”* In this context (John 5:35), Jesus defined **coming** to Him as synonymous with believing in Him. When someone comes to Christ by faith, they are God the Father's gift to the Son. Christ will not refuse them or later cast them out. John 6:35
 4. John 6:38 – *“For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”* Jesus said His role was to do the Father's **will**. This was in strong contrast to their refusal to do the Father's will, which for them was to believe in the Son. John 6:39-40
 5. John 6:39 – *“This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing but raise it up on the last day.”* The one who believes in Christ is the Father's gift to the Son. The Son will never **lose** or discard any He receives. Christ also promised that He would indeed resurrect all who believe in Him on the last day. John 10:28
 6. John 6:40 – *“For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.”* Every individual believer in Jesus Christ is guaranteed not only to have eternal life but also to be raised on the last day. **Jesus** will personally resurrect all who have believed in Him. 1 Corinthians 15:51-52, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

D. John 6:41-58 – Words for the complaining crowds

1. John 6:41 – *Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, “I am the bread that came down out of heaven.”* The grumbling of His audience proved they rejected Jesus' claim to be God's gracious “bread” provision from heaven. This is a reminiscent **parallel** to the complaining Israelites from the Exodus generation. Exodus 16:2, 7-9, 12
2. John 6:42 – *They were saying, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, ‘I have come down out of heaven’?”* To **justify** their unbelief, they went a step further and declared Jesus to be a mere human, the son of Joseph and Mary, with no right to claim a direct connection with heaven.
 - a. This is the same group that begged for sign; they would have loved a **show**. They would have loved to have their bellies filled with barley loaves and fish.
 - b. But they did not want to accept Jesus as the Messiah. They did not believe they were sinners who were separated from God. Like the Israelites of old, they thought they could **merit** salvation. They did not see their need of a savior. Romans 10:2-4
3. John 6:43 – *Jesus answered and said to them, “Do not grumble among yourselves.”* Their grumbling proved how focused they were on their own personal needs and **selfish** desires. They were blind to their need for eternal salvation. Historically this issue has stopped multitudes from coming to Christ in faith.

4. John 6:44a – *“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him...”* No one is ever saved nor comes to Christ without God first drawing them. However, it is important to understand that to draw is not the same as to **force**. Let’s look at what the Bible says on this subject. How does God draw people to Himself?
 - a. God draws people to Himself through the **inborn** knowledge of God that every human has. Romans 1:19 says, *“Because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them.”* Ecclesiastes 3:11
 - b. God draws people to Himself through **general** revelation. Creation is preaching a never-ending message about God. That message is heard in every language. It is designed by God to seize man’s attention. If anyone responds to creation’s message, God will respond with even more light. Psalm 19:1-4, Acts 17:25-27, Romans 1:20, James 4:8
 - c. God draws people to Christ by means of His **Law**. The Law is used by God as a school master (tutor) to lead sinners to Christ for forgiveness. Romans 3:19, Galatians 3:23-26
 - d. God draws people to Christ by the convicting work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is in the world to **convict** the world of three issues: the sin of not believing in Christ, the quality of righteousness needed to go to heaven, and the impending judgement of God. This work prepares the world for trusting in Christ alone. John 3:17-21
 - e. God draws people to Christ by means of faithful **ambassadors**. We are His emissaries to go and preach the gospel to the lost. Mark 16:15, 1 Corinthians 3:9, 2 Corinthians 5:18-21, Ephesians 6:19-20
 - f. God draws people to Christ using the seemingly foolish method of **preaching**. Through the process of preaching, God amazingly opens minds and draws people to Christ. 1 Corinthians 1:21, Romans 10:17-18
 - g. God draws people to Christ via the power of God’s **Word**. Romans 10:17 shows how faith comes by hearing and hearing by means of the Word of God. Hebrews 4:12
 - h. God draws people to Christ by means of the **gospel** message. The gospel is the power of God for salvation to all who believe. John 12:32, Romans 1:16, 1 Corinthians 1:18
5. John 6:44b – *“...and I will raise him up on the last day.”* Jesus was saying here what He said before, that in the future, on the last day, Christ will raise up all who have come to Him based on the Father’s drawing. This was meant to be a message of **hope**. The person frightened about eternity would see this as good news. John 12:32
6. John 6:45a – *“It is written in the prophets, ‘and they shall all be taught of God...’”* This Old Testament quote from Isaiah 54:13 implies that all people will be taught by the Father. This seems to refer to the Father’s general call to **all** humanity through His multifaceted work of drawing as mentioned in the statements above.
7. John 6:45b – *“...Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.”* The Father draws every person, but only those who heed to Him and **recognize** their need come to Christ for salvation.

8. John 6:46 – *“Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father.”* Although the Father draws all people, no person, other than Jesus Christ, has seen the Father. Since He alone came from the Father and has seen the Father, He alone can effectively **reveal** the Father’s work and essence to us. John 1:18, 1 John 5:20
9. John 6:47 – *“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.”* If Jesus, who never lies, began His sentence with, *“Truly, truly,”* the declaration that follows must be authoritative and crucial. You can **know** with certainty that whoever believes in Christ instantly and eternally possesses eternal life as God’s free gift. John 5:24, 20:21; 1 John 5:13
10. John 6:48 – *“I am the bread of life.”* You see? If you have believed in Christ, you have eaten the bread of life and you have become eternal. There is no one else in the universe who can impart eternal life. To trust in Him is to **eat** the bread of life. 1 John 5:12
11. John 6:49 – *“Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died.”* The **entire** generation that ate the manna day after day in the wilderness eventually died. Jesus now contrasted that story with a one-time eating of the bread of life, Jesus Christ. Christ, as the bread from heaven, brings endless satisfaction and eternal life to all who believe.
12. John 6:50 – *“This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die.”* Jesus is vastly different from the Old Testament manna. That bread sustained Israel only one day at a time, whereas believing in Christ **instantly** insures you will live forever. The bread from heaven eliminates your spiritual hunger forever.
13. John 6:51a – *“I am the living bread that came down out of heaven...”* The repetition of the phrases *“bread of life”* or *“living bread”* in verses 35, 41, 48, and 51, was certainly meant as a **prelude** to the difficult statements Jesus was about to make. Being God’s one and only essential provision for our salvation makes His next analogy truthful though challenging.
14. John 6:51b – *“...if anyone eats of this bread [Jesus Christ], he will live forever...”* The aorist active subjunctive of the Greek word *eats* ESTHIO indicates a one-time desired action. The grammar stresses that in order to live forever the person ought to **eat** the Bread of Life just once, for all time. John 1:4, 1 John 5:11
 - a. In the book of John, eating and drinking are occasionally used as metaphors for **faith**. Proverbs 9:1-6
 - b. The truth is that if anyone believes in Christ, he or she by faith heartily ingests Christ, and **God** guarantees him or her eternal life from that moment onward. Why would the Lord equate faith with eating?
 - c. When we eat, we are exercising great **faith**. Most of the time we do not know if what we are eating harbors some venom, disease, poison or other fatal substance. When we confidently consume our meals, we are trusting both the food and those who made it.
 - d. This food fact makes this a great analogy to our faith in Christ. When we trust what He has accomplished for us on the cross to be **sufficient** for our eternal salvation, we, by faith, take Him. We trust in Him. John 1:12, 2 Timothy 1:12

15. John 6:51c – *“...and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh.”* Jesus stated that He would give His **flesh**, or His life, as a sacrifice in the place of us, as a substitute for everyone in the world. Jesus became the bread, or food, that gives us life. John 1:29, Romans 5:8
16. John 6:52 – *“Then the Jews began to argue with one another, saying, ‘How can this man give us His flesh to eat?’”* Sadly, these people could not understand the non-literal way Jesus was comparing eating bread with trusting in Him. Clearly, Jesus said these things this way on purpose. Ultimately, this was Jesus’ way of making them come to a **decision**.
17. John 6:53 – *“So Jesus said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no **life** in yourselves.* Whether they liked it or not, whether they understood it or not, this was a crucial and trustworthy fact. 1 John 1:2, 5:12
- Jesus wanted them to get off the **fence** and to believe in Him or not. Therefore, He wisely used a revolting analogy of eating His flesh and drinking His blood to speak of fully trusting in Him. Jeremiah 15:16
 - This sounded like cannibalism to His audience, just as it sounds that way to us today. But Jesus was encouraging them to trust in Him **fully** like as if He was food and drink at a meal. Normally they did not think twice about eating bread and drinking a beverage at a meal. In the same way, they should fully trust Him as if He were their essential food.
 - Despite what some religious groups believe, in this context, Jesus was not referring to **communion** or the communion elements of bread and wine.
18. John 6:54 – *“He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”* Eating in this verse means that someone has believed the message and has made it their very **own**. When a person believes in Christ, they receive eternal life and the promise of a future bodily resurrection as a totally free gift.
19. John 6:55 – *“For My flesh is true food, and My blood is true drink.”* These were very hard words to hear, but Jesus continued the metaphorical use of eating and drinking linking it to His flesh and blood. This was not only to get them to **shift** their thinking from the physical to the spiritual, but to also elicit a response to either believe or to not believe in Him.
20. John 6:56 – *“He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.”* This verse promises that if someone does indeed trust in Christ, they will be **one** with Him in a reciprocal and sheltered relationship.
21. John 6:57a – *“As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father...”* Jesus knew that His life as a human was because His life-giving Father willed it to be this way. He was fully submitted to the Father’s will in every way. Christ **chose** not to maintain His own existence, instead He humbly depended on the Father for protection and sustenance.
22. John 6:57b – *“...so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me.”* Jesus was saying that just as He lived dependently on the Father’s provisions, all who would trust in Him would likewise be **sustained** by Christ’s life.

23. John 6:58a – *“This is the bread which came down out of heaven...”* Speaking of Himself, Jesus reminded His audience once again that He was true bread. He was the life-giving bread God sent down from heaven to **save** the world from eternal, spiritual starvation.
24. John 6:58b – *“...not as the fathers ate and died...”* The major difference between Christ and the manna God sent from heaven in the wilderness was that all who ate the manna eventually **died**, but those who believe in Christ receive more than a temporary fix. Listen to the next phrase.
25. John 6:58c – *“...he who eats this bread will live forever...”* Jesus again showed that He was God’s choice of true spiritual sustenance. If anyone trusted in Him for salvation, they would receive the free gift of **eternal** life.

E. John 6:59-65 – Words for would-be disciples

1. John 6:59 – *These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.* At some point in Jesus’ teaching on the bread of life, He had **moved** from the shore of the sea of Galilee into the synagogue of Capernaum.
2. John 6:60 – *Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this said, “This is a difficult statement; who can listen to it?”* **Three** groups of people were present during this teaching. As a whole, the religious crowd reacted negatively. Similarly, all of Christ’s disciples reacted, some adversely and others determined to follow on at all costs.
 - a. The Jews’ leaders: The unbelieving religious **leaders** and those who followed them rejected Christ’s words.
 - b. The disciples: **Weaker** disciples, those who had believed in Jesus but were struggling to understand His teachings, reacted negatively.
 - c. The Twelve: Those disciples whom Jesus personally chose to be His **intimate** followers reacted in a generally positive manner. Most of these eventually became the apostles. These were the men who laid the foundation of the church. John 21:15-17
3. John 6:61 – Jesus knew that the way He had taught on the bread of life had caused His disciples great **difficulty** and that many were struggling to grasp what He said. They were complaining because His teachings offended them.
 - a. John 6:61a – *But Jesus, conscious that His disciples grumbled at this...* Because the disciples’ continued to **focus** on the physical realm, the spiritual meanings behind Jesus’ teachings became difficult to grasp.
 - b. John 6:61b – Jesus *...said to them, “Does this cause you to **stumble**?”* The word “*this*” refers to Jesus’ message. What had He said that caused them so much difficulty?
 - 1) Bread in Jesus’ teaching represented Himself and how He was given by the Father, from heaven, to specifically come and supply eternal **life** (salvation) to the masses.
 - 2) His death on the cross for our sins and resurrection is God’s provision, God’s bread, for giving us never-ending life (eternal life). Our **faith** in that provision is spiritually equated to “eating” that bread. 1 Peter 2:24

- 3) What became difficult was when Jesus changed His metaphor from eating Him as the bread of life to eating His flesh and drinking His **blood**. Of course, this was not literal, and with any logic they should have known that.
- 4) But the question remains, **why** did Jesus change the metaphor from bread to His body and blood? First, He truly wanted the strong reaction it brought. He wanted them to get off the fence in relation to Him and His message. Second, He wanted to project them forward to His eventual sacrifice of a broken body and shed blood.
 - a) The penalty for sin is **death** in all forms; including physical, spiritual, and eternal. On the cross, Jesus paid our death penalty for us when He suffered as our substitute before God. He bore our sins in His own body. Isaiah 53:4-5, 11; Acts 5:30; 1 Peter 2:24
 - b) In Genesis 2:17, we see that death is primarily spiritual separation from God, but as in the case of Adam and Eve, spiritual death resulted in physical death and eventually would result in eternal death in the Lake of Fire. Eternal life is the only thing that can reverse that, and Jesus is the **only** bread that gives eternal life.
 - c) To solve Adam and Eve's nakedness problem, the physical death of an animal pictured death as a necessary means of resolution for the sin problem. To kill the animal and remove its hide was bloody and **gruesome** way for an innocent animal to die. Genesis 3:21
- 5) Jesus' referral to His flesh and blood prefigured the **sacrificial** part of His coming death. The gospel message that we believe for salvation includes both Christ's person and work.
 - a) In the future, the disciples would not only believe in Christ as a person but by faith would also trust in His **horrific**, substitutionary sacrifice given in payment for their sins.
 - b) Faith in His **sacrifice** is why He demanded the eating of His flesh and drinking of His blood. This fact would become an essential part of the gospel message preached and believed. 1 Corinthians 1:17,23; 2:1-5, 15:3-4,11; Galatians 3:1
4. John 6:62 – *“What then if you see the Son of Man ascending to where He was before?”* Jesus not only spoke of His coming sacrifice (flesh and blood) but also added His future ascension together with a clear statement of His pre-existence. As God, Jesus is eternal. He never had a beginning, and He will never have an end. He would **return** to the Father. 1 Timothy 3:16
 - a. Why did Jesus prophesy about this coming **ascension**?
 - b. This is because if His mention of their need to embrace by faith His impending death had caused them such consternation and offence, what would the mention of His coming departure back to heaven cause them. Would they give up completely if He **left** them?
5. John 6:63a – *“It is the Spirit who gives life...”* Only the Holy Spirit can give life. They needed to clearly know that the only one who can give eternal life is the Holy Spirit and Christ's words came from the life-giving Holy **Spirit**. John 3:5-7

6. John 6:63b – “...*the flesh profits nothing...*” Living according to their fleshly agenda would not profit them. Living and looking at life through fleshly **human** eyes would never bring them life. They needed Jesus to challenge their thinking. They needed words that would cause them to stop and profoundly ponder life. This is what He was doing for them.
7. John 6:63c – “...*the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.*” Believing the Lord’s words would bring them life. Jesus was affirming that His teaching was not fleshly. Our Lord’s words and teaching were from the Holy Spirit, and they were life-giving. They needed to look past the offence of what He said and ponder the **heart** of the matter.
 - a. Instead of pondering Jesus’ message, the unbelieving masses were merely offended by what He said. Feeling insulted, they would not stop and **consider** the spiritual aspects of His teaching. 2 Corinthians 4:3-4
 - b. On the other hand, Jesus called His disciples to thoughtfully **consider** the spiritual aspects of the life-giving truth He preached. Their fleshly reactions would profit them nothing, but if they listened to His words the Holy Spirit could give them deep and transformative life-giving understanding.
8. John 6:64 – Jesus **knew** the hearts of the people present.
 - a. John 6:64a – “*But there are some of you who do not believe.*” Jesus knew that some just did not **believe** in Him or His teachings. He was perfectly aware His words would be entirely offensive to those individuals.
 - b. John 6:64b – *For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe...* Jesus **knew** from the very beginning that many of those who were following Him (getting into boats and tracking Him down) were in it for adventure (the fantastic; the food, fame, and fights), but they did not actually believe in Him as the life-giving bread.
 - c. John 6:64c – *For Jesus knew from the beginning ... who it was that would betray Him.*” Jesus knew from the beginning of His ministry that one from His inner circle, one of 12 disciples, was a non-believer. He knew he would one day betray Him. Jesus knowingly **chose** Judas Iscariot, in order to fulfill prophecy. John 6:70-71, 13:18-19, 13:26-27
9. John 6:65 – *And He was saying, “For this reason I have said to you, that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted him from the Father.”* God the Father draws mankind to Jesus, but as we have just observed, those who do not believe are not allowed by God to **come** to Jesus. Only believers come to be owned by Christ.
 - a. Throughout this discourse, Jesus associated coming to **Him** with believing on Him. God draws, but only those who believe actually come to Jesus and are saved.
 - b. Salvation is completely God’s work and God’s plan. However, as seen in scripture, it involves a **decision** to either humbly trust in Christ or pridefully reject Him. Those who believe come to Him. Matthews 23:37, Luke 13:34-35

F. John 6:66-71 – Peter’s confession

1. John 6:66 – *As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore.* Many of Christ’s disciples rejected his difficult teaching. They were unwilling to **rethink** their theology and understand the deeper meaning of His words. These believers became offended and parted company with Jesus.
 - a. Here we see a sad reality that still happens today. Due to the impact of His teachings, many of Jesus’ disciples departed, turning back and refusing to **follow** Him.
 - b. This statement does not say that they **lost** their salvation. They did lose their intimacy and closeness with Jesus. This was a sad day for their spiritual progress and maturity. We hope that in time they repented and returned to once again walk with Jesus. How about you? Where do you stand in the discipleship process with Jesus? Revelation 2:4-5
2. John 6:67 – *So Jesus said to the twelve, “You do not want to go away also, do you?”* Jesus challenged His twelve close disciples about their future with Him. He asked them bluntly, “Are you going to leave too?” In our lives as disciples of Christ, this **question** is often before us. Are we going to let an offense or misunderstanding sideline us?
3. John 6:68 – *Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? **You** have words of eternal life.* Speaking for the group, Peter said they would not leave. As far as Peter knew, no one else had the words of eternal life. Have you likewise come to this conclusion?
4. John 6:69 – *“We have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God.”* The **title** “Holy One of God” shows clearly that Peter and the disciples recognized Jesus as Messiah. Jesus was the anointed one, the Christ, the prophesied Messiah. Mark 1:24
5. John 6:70 – *Jesus answered them, “Did I Myself not choose you, the twelve, and yet one of you is a devil?”* Judas Iscariot, however, continued to reject Jesus’ claims. Christ **knew** Judas’ thoughts and all about his coming treachery. Christ also knew His own. Peter thought they were all onboard by faith, but Jesus knew the truth about each individual.
6. John 6:71 – *Now He meant Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray Him.* **John** gave some commentary here. At the time Jesus spoke these words, John did not understand what Jesus meant. Many years later, when he was writing, he remembered and understood what Jesus said. John 6:64,70; 12:6

VIII. John 7:1-53 – Increasing Opposition

A. John 7:1-9 – Family antagonism

1. John 7:1 – *After these things Jesus was walking in Galilee, for He was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him.* Judging from the details given by the other Gospel writers, six months may have passed between John 6 and 7. There is definitely a **shift** in the Lord’s ministry between these two chapters.
 - a. From here forward, we notice at least three **changes** in Jesus’ ministry.
 - 1) Jesus no longer **publicly** presented Himself as the Messiah.

- 2) Jesus' ministry became more **private**.
 - 3) Jesus focused His **teaching** more on His twelve disciples.
- b. There was a substantial upsurge in **hostility** towards Jesus in the following areas:
- 1) Jesus' popularity **declined**.
 - 2) The religious leaders **openly** challenged Jesus' and His teaching.
 - 3) Many of His disciples **stopped** following Him.
 - 4) Jesus no longer concealed the fact that one of His disciples would **betray** Him.
 - 5) The religious leadership began a constant search for an opportunity to **kill** Jesus.
2. John 7:2 – *Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Booths, was near.* John often mentioned the various Jewish feasts that affected Jesus' ministry, as seen in John 2, 5, 6 and 7. These major public events with their large **crowds** made Jesus' able to appear in public in Jerusalem without a likelihood of arrest.
 3. John 7:3-5 – Jesus' brothers **mocked** Him because they did not believe in Him.
 - a. John 7:3 – *Therefore His brothers said to Him, "Leave here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may see Your works which You are doing."* Jesus never took **orders** from anyone but God. This passage provides a good example for us. Like Jesus, we too need to please God rather than people. Proverbs 3:5-6, Acts 5:29, Galatians 1:10
 - b. John 7:4 – *"For no one does anything in secret when he himself seeks to be known publicly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world."* His brothers were only interested in **fame**. They likely thought He was just a small-town country prophet who did not have the wisdom to promote Himself. They tried to stimulate Him to action.
 - c. John 7:5 – *"For not even His brothers were believing in Him."* At this time in Jesus' life and ministry His half-brothers were not believers. It was not until after Christ died and rose again that **James** and Jude, became believers. Matthew 13:55-56; Mark 3:31-32, 6:3; Galatians 1:19; 1 Corinthians 9:5
 4. John 7:6 – *So Jesus said to them, "My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune.* Jesus pointed out that He operated on a different **timetable** and program than theirs. Jesus said that it was not time for Him to go to the feast but for them virtually any opportunity was good. As nonbelievers they were impatient, but Jesus was not.
 5. John 7:7 – *"The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are **evil**."* Jesus' continued to explain to His brothers why He would not simply do things on a whim. Nearly everywhere Jesus went, He caused conflicts and hostility. His presence exposed the world's folly and awkwardly put light on the world's need for salvation.
 6. John 7:8-9 – *"Go up to the feast yourselves; I do not go up to this feast because My time has not yet fully come."* Having said these things to them, He stayed in Galilee. This verse has caused some people to have difficulty. They feel that **Jesus** was somehow disingenuous.

- a. A literal reading of this verse adapted from the YLT could be translated: “[*You all*], go [*yourselves*] up to this feast; I do not yet go up to this feast, because my time [*has*] not yet been fulfilled.” He was not denying that He would ever go up to the feast, but instead that He would go at the God **ordained** time.
- b. We know that Jesus **knew** He would eventually go to the feast, but not according to the arrogant agenda of His unbelieving brothers. Christ was following His Father’s precise orders and plans and therefore He wisely dismissed them and their fleshly agenda.

B. John 7:10-39 – Confrontation at the Feast of Booths

1. John 7:10-11 – *But when His brothers had gone up to the feast, then He Himself also went up, not publicly, but as if, in secret. So the Jews were seeking Him at the feast and were saying, “Where is He?”* Jesus went to the feast in **secret**. He did this so that the devious Jewish leaders would not find Him until the right time.
2. John 7:12 – *There was much grumbling among the crowds concerning Him; some were saying, “He is a good man”; others were saying, “No, on the contrary, He leads the people astray.”* The Feast of Booths anticipated the Messianic Kingdom. Each year during this season, the national anticipation of **Messiah** was at a heightened pitch. Malachi 3:1
3. John 7:13 – *Yet no one was speaking openly of Him for fear of the Jews.* Some secretly praised Jesus, while others alleged that He was a fraud. The general populace was divided about who Jesus was, but since the religious leaders had publicly denounced Jesus, everyone feared to **talk** about Him openly.
4. John 7:14-15 – *But when it was now the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and began to teach. The Jews then were astonished, saying, “How has this man become learned, having never been educated?”* Near the middle of the week, Jesus suddenly began to teach publicly. He spoke so profoundly that He **shocked** the religious establishment.
5. John 7:16 – *So Jesus answered them and said, “My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me.”* Jesus was transmitting God the Father’s message. Since He was teaching God’s words, His message came from a source infinitely **superior** to that of the religious leaders. There was nothing subjective about His message. His words and explanations were from above.
6. John 7:17-19 – *At this feast, Jesus challenged the unbelief and downright rejection of His message by the religious **elite**.*
 - a. John 7:17 – *“If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself.”* Jesus said that if anyone was willing to do God’s will (*believe in the name of Jesus Christ, 1 John 3:23*), that person would **discern** the true source of His teachings.
 - b. John 7:18 – *“He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.”* Jesus gave the people a **lesson** on discernment.
 - 1) If a person speaks their own thoughts, it’s because they are promoting **self**. In that case, don’t trust the message.

- 2) But if a person seeks to glorify the one who sent him, that person's message is trustworthy. Jesus claimed to be that person. They could trust His teaching because He was being faithful to preach the **Father's** message.
- c. John 7:19 – *“Did not Moses give you the Law, and yet none of you carries out the Law? Why do you seek to kill Me?”* Jesus knew that not one of the religious leaders fully kept the Law. If they were honest, they'd admit they deserved death. So why did they seek to kill the man who had never once broken even one Law. **Hypocrites!** Luke 23:41
7. John 7:20 – *The crowd answered, “You have a demon! Who seeks to kill You?”* Since murder is a violation of the Law, they quickly tried to deny their plans to kill Jesus. In their extreme reaction, they accused Him of **demon** possession. In arrogant denial they said, “What in the world makes you think someone's trying to kill you.” Matthew 12:24, John 7:25-26
8. John 7:21 – *Jesus answered them, “I did one deed, and you all marvel.”* The deed Jesus referred to here seems to be the **healing** of the man at the Pool of Bethesda (see verse 23), which Jesus did on a Sabbath day. John 5:1-17
9. John 7:22 – *“For this reason Moses has given you circumcision (not because it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and on the Sabbath you circumcise a man.”* Jesus continued His chain of **thought** concerning the Law that He started in verse 19.
- a. The Jews persecuted Jesus for healing on the Sabbath. According to their laws, it was forbidden to **heal** someone on the Sabbath.
- b. However, according to the Mosaic Law every baby boy was to be circumcised on the eighth day. If that happened to be a Sabbath, the Jews had no problem performing the **surgery** on that day.
10. John 7:23 – *“If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath so that the Law of Moses will not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made an entire man well on the Sabbath?”* Jesus showed the Jews the **inconsistency** of their reasoning.
- a. In keeping with the Abrahamic covenant, they permitted the **work** of surgery to be done on the Sabbath.
- b. But, although all religious Jews understood that the entire Law was summed up in two commands: to **love** your neighbor as yourself and to love the Lord with all your heart, soul and mind; they persecuted Jesus for lovingly healing a man on the Sabbath. Matthew 22:34-40, John 5:9, Galatians 5:14
11. John 7:24 – *“Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.”* Jesus exposed their hypocrisy and **biased** judgments. It is unjust to draw conclusions based on outward appearances rather than on facts. Romans 2:1-3
12. John 7:25-27 – The crowd wanted a verdict from the religious leaders. If Jesus was a deceiver, they wanted their rulers to objectively reject Him; however, if He was Messiah, they wanted them to openly **accept** Him.

- a. John 7:25 – *So some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, “Is this not the man whom they are seeking to kill?”* The crowd knew who Jesus claimed to be. They **knew** the religious leaders wanted to kill Him. Some of the people did not believe Jesus was the Messiah, but many in the crowd did believe in Him as we will see in verse 31.
- b. John 7:26 – *“Look, He is speaking publicly, and they are saying nothing to Him. The rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they?”* The people noticed the contradiction of the religious leaders. Jesus was right there in the open. Why did they not arrest Him? Were they **unsure** about whether He was the Messiah or not?
- c. John 7:27 – *“However, we know where this man is from; but whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from.”* The Jews seemed to have the **notion** that no one would know from where the Messiah had come. They reasoned that since they knew Jesus came from Nazareth, He could not be the Messiah.
- 1) Jesus had deliberately and openly proclaimed that heaven was His place of **origin**. These people clearly did not believe what He declared. John 3:13, 4:34, 6:29, 33, 38
 - 2) And, contrary to popular opinion, Old Testament prophecies did give indications as to Jesus’ **human** origin.
 - a) From Matthew 2:1, 5 and 7, which quoted the Old Testament passage of Micah 5:2, they could know that the Messiah would be **born** in Bethlehem. Matthew 2:16, Luke 2:4
 - b) Although Hosea 11:1 was not a prophecy, Matthew quoted it in Matthew 2:15, to show a parallel between Israel’s exodus from **Egypt** and Jesus’ return from Egypt after His parents fled there to protect Him from Herod. Exodus 4:22, Numbers 24:8-9, Matthew 2:13-15
 - c) We know from Matthew 2:23 that Jesus was going to be called a Nazarene, a term that would become a disrespectful **label** and a criticism He’d endure throughout His earthly ministry. Isaiah 53:3, Luke 1:26, 2:39; John 1:45-46; Mark 1:24; John 18:5-7, 19:19
13. John 7:28-29 – Raising His voice, Jesus loudly reaffirmed His **origin**.
- a. John 7:28 – *Then Jesus cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, “You both know Me and know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know.”* The problem was not that they did not know who Jesus was or where He was from, the problem was they did not **believe** Jesus’s statements.
- 1) The Jews **knew** Jesus’ human origin and they had heard His claim to also have a divine and eternal origin. John 3:13, 4:34, 6:29, 33, 38
 - 2) Jesus clarified that He had not come on His own; He was sent by God the Father, who is **true**. God the Father is faithful and true, but by rejecting Jesus, they proved they did not know the Father. Psalm 33:4, Daniel 4:37

- b. John 7:29 – *“I know Him, because I am from Him, and He sent Me.”* Jesus passionately and decisively assured the religious leaders and the unreliable crowd that even though they did not know the Father, He did. Jesus came from the Father. He came to earth to **represent** God to man.
14. John 7:30 – *So they were seeking to seize Him; and no man laid his hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.* Jesus’ declaration made the religious leaders angry. But they were powerless to touch Jesus until the **time** was right by God’s calendar and design.
15. John 7:31 – *But many of the crowd believed in Him; and they were saying, “When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?”* Based on His claims and on His sign miracles, many in the crowd reasoned correctly that Jesus was the Messiah. Those who believed in Christ were instantaneously **saved**.
16. John 7:32 – *The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about Him, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to seize Him.* Jealous and unbelieving, the Pharisees tried to put a **stop** to the crowd’s acceptance of Jesus. They sent officers to arrest Jesus, but because of Roman law, they had to be careful not to cause a public commotion or riot.
17. John 7:33-34 – Jesus responded to their attempts to entrap Him by using true, but baffling statements, about His upcoming return to **heaven**. John 13:33, 16:7
- a. John 7:33 – *Therefore Jesus said, “For a little while longer I am with you, then I go to Him who sent Me.* The Pharisees could not arrest Jesus until God allow it to happen. God was in **control** of all the events of Jesus’ life. At exactly the right time, He would return to the Father who sent Him, and no one could stop that from happening. Acts 2:23, 4:28
- b. John 7:34 – *“You will seek Me and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come.”* Only those who believe in Jesus and who have received God’s righteousness will **go** to heaven. You cannot make it to heaven based on your own righteousness. Jesus wanted them to understand this truth. Isaiah 64:6, John 16:8-11, Romans 10:1-4, Galatians 2:16
18. John 7:35-36 – Because they did not believe, the religious leaders were **blind** to the truth.
- a. John 7:35 – *The Jews then said to one another, “Where does this man intend to go that we will not find Him? He is not intending to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks, is He?* Because the Jewish leadership did not understand spiritual truth; they thought Jesus was talking about traveling to an **earthly** destination.
- b. John 7:36 – *“What is this statement that He said, ‘You will seek Me, and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come?’”* They heard what Jesus said and repeated His exact words, but they had no idea what He meant. Was Jesus going to escape or try to hide from them? Their spiritual dullness was evident. 1 Corinthians 2:14
19. John 7:37 – *Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.* On the final day of this festival, Jesus made a loud public call to salvation. Jesus invited Israel to come to Him and drink. This was an invitation to believe in Him. Jesus had come to seek and save that which was **lost**.

20. John 7:38 – *“He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’”* During the feast, Jesus emphatically proclaimed that if anyone would believe in Him, they would be the recipient of an internal **fountain** of living water. Their thirst would be quenched. They would be saved eternally.
21. John 7:39 – *But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.* After Jesus ascended to heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to live in all believers. The instant someone believes in Christ the Holy Spirit come to live **inside** of them. John 14:16-17, Acts 1:4-9, Ephesians 1:13-14

C. John 7:40-53 – Reactions among the religious leaders

1. John 7:40-43 – The Jewish people had differing opinions regarding Jesus’ **identity**.
 - a. John 7:40 – *Some of the people therefore, when they heard these words, were saying, “This certainly is the Prophet.”* Some of the Jews speculated Jesus was the **prophet** predicted by Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15.
 - 1) As Messiah, Jesus had three distinct ministries or **titles**. He was prophet (Deut. 18:15), priest (Ps. 110:4) and king (Is. 9:7, Jer. 23:5). So, the crowd was correct. Jesus was indeed the promised Prophet. Luke 1:32-33; Acts 3:22-26, 7:37
 - 2) The Jews thought the prophet Moses predicted and the promised Messiah were two separate people. The fact that they debated this issue shows Jesus indeed **fit** both descriptions of the prophet and the messiah.
 - b. John 7:41a – *Others were saying, “This is the Christ.”* Some of the others in the crowd speculated that Jesus was the Christ, or **Messiah**. These people were also right.
 - c. John 7:41b – *Still others were saying, “Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He?”* But there was a third group that said Jesus could not be either since He was from Galilee. They had the false notion that no prophet could come from **Galilee**.
 - 1) These people failed to realize that the prophet **Jonah** (although probably not highly esteemed) was from Gath Hopher, a mere five miles north of Nazareth in Galilee. Joshua 19:13, 2 Kings 14:25
 - 2) The fact is, Jesus was not actually from Galilee, but from Bethlehem via Egypt. Most of His very earliest years were spent in exile in Egypt, the very place from which their greatest prophet, **Moses**, had arisen.
 - d. John 7:42 – *“Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?”* Again, these people were not very observant. They were **not** examining the facts.
 - 1) Fixed on the idea that Jesus’ hometown was considered to be Nazareth, they were unaware that He was actually **born** in Bethlehem, the city of David.

- 2) A quick trip to the temple to examine the **archives** would have revealed Jesus was a double descendent of King David. Never in scripture was this fact legally challenged or disproved. Soon after Christ death, the archives were destroyed by Rome (70 AD) therefore no one can genetically prove royal ascendancy like King Jesus can.
- 3) By adoption Jesus was Joseph's son, and therefore in the royal lineage of King David through Solomon (Matt. 1:6). By blood He was Mary's son, and therefore in the royal blood line of King David through David's son Nathan (Luke 3:31). Jesus was eminently **qualified** to be the Messiah.
 - e. John 7:43 – *So a division occurred in the crowd because of Him.* Not surprisingly, their ignorance caused a huge debate and several divisions among the people. This, of course, resulted in fertile soil for Jesus to clarify their misunderstanding. In the end, this discussion should have led them to **search** the scriptures.
2. John 7:44-46 – As John noted previously (John 7:32), a plan was afoot to arrest Jesus, but the temple officers who were charged with the task refused to arrest Him because they recognized something **special** about His teaching.
 - a. John 7:44 – *Some of them wanted to seize Him, but no one laid hands on Him.* The officers had gone with full intentions of arresting Jesus, but with the oversized crowds of the festival, they were likely obliged to stand in the back and listen. As they listened to Jesus **teaching**, something happened: They lost their courage to act.
 - b. John 7:45 – *The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said to them, "Why did you not bring Him?"* Instead of blaming the crowds or giving some other excuse, the officers responded **candidly**.
 - c. John 7:46 – *The officers answered, "Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks."* This was an honest answer and serves as an unbiased commentary from people of that day as to the true impact of Jesus' teaching. This was not John's narrative or fanciful speculation. This unscripted **testimony** came directly from the heart of these policemen.
3. John 7:47 – *The Pharisees then answered them, "You have not also been led astray, have you?"* These religious leaders were quick to pass a negative judgment on these men who involuntarily praised Jesus. Yes, they had been **impacted**, but they were simply stating the facts. Jesus had spoken in such a way that the crowds were overwhelmed. Matthew 7:28
4. John 7:48 – *"No one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he?"* The unspoken assumption behind this statement was that no **educated** ruler or Pharisee would ever dare to believe in this Galilean named Jesus. You can always expect this is type of mockery from religion. When religion cannot defeat truth, the masses get accused of ignorance.
5. John 7:49 – *"But this crowd which does not know the Law is accursed."* According to the religious leaders, only the ignorant and untaught would listen to Jesus' message. Their **harsh** summary was: "If you believe Jesus of Nazareth to be the messiah, you do not know the Bible and are duly cursed." There was no room for even considering Jesus' teachings.

6. John 7:50-51 – Realizing the religious leaders had already passed judgment on Jesus, Nicodemus spoke up, asserting that according to the Law they were required to give Jesus a **fair** trial. Exodus 23:1; Deuteronomy 1:16-17, 19:15-21
- a. John 7:50 – *Nicodemus (he who came to Him before, being one of them) said to them...* Since Nicodemus was a Pharisee who had considered Jesus' teachings, He tactfully spoke up. Like the temple policemen, he had listened to Jesus and **knew** by personal experience Jesus' teachings were astounding.
 - b. John 7:51 – *"Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it?"* According to Jewish law a person was "**innocent** until proven guilty."
 - 1) This is the basis of true judgment. You first **listen** to the facts and then you pass judgment.
 - 2) These leaders of Israel were the ones who were ignorant of the Law and under its curse. They were the perfect definition of the word **hypocrite**.
7. John 7:52-53 – The religious leaders refused to admit that Nicodemus was right in asking for a fair trial. Instead, they ridiculed him, an all too common **tactic** of religious people. Matthew 23:34-35
- a. John 7:52 – *They answered him, "You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee."* Again, these religious leaders were woefully mistaken. **Jonah** was from Galilee, just north of Nazareth. 2 Kings 14:25
 - b. John 7:53 – *Everyone went to his home.* The religious leaders conveniently **forgot** about Jonah, but Jesus had not forgotten. In Matthew 12:38-41 when the Pharisees requested a sign, Jesus cleverly gave them the sign of Jonah. He said that like Jonah was in the belly of the fish, He would be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.
 - 1) They would one day know that He was truly a prophet. They would also be able to know from His amazing **sign** of dying, being buried and the rising again on the third day that He was who He claimed to be.
 - 2) They denied that a prophet could come from Galilee, but both Jesus and Jonah came from there. These two had something totally amazing in common that proved their **validity** and demanded careful consideration of Jesus' claims.

IX. John 8:1-32 – The Light of the World Revealed

A. John 8:1-12 – A woman taken in adultery (A parenthetical event)

1. John 8:1 – *But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.* In contrast to the members of the Sanhedrin, who went home, Jesus went to the Mount of Olives, likely to **pray** and rest for the night. Luke 5:16; 6:12; 9:28-29, 22:39
 - a. If Jesus needed to **depend** on the Father through prayer, how much more do we need to be in prayer? Ephesians 6:18-20, 1 Timothy 2:1-8

- b. Jesus needed God the Father's **direction** and wisdom for the events of the following day. Proverbs 3:5-6
2. John 8:2 – *Early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people were coming to Him; and He sat down and began to teach them.* Coming from the Mt. of Olives, Jesus would have most likely entered the temple compound at the east gate. From there He would have gone directly into the court of **women**.
 3. John 8:3 – *The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery and having set her in the center of the court...* These leaders rudely intruded into the Lord's teaching with a case that should have gone before the **elders**, not Jesus. They wanted to trap Jesus. They needed something that could sway the masses against Him. Then they could execute Him.
 4. John 8:4 – *They said to Him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in adultery, in the very act."* How could a woman be caught in the act of adultery without the **man** likewise being hauled in? This is a striking omission, to say the very least. This was clearly a snare.
 5. John 8:5 – *"Now in the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women; what then do You say?"* Jesus had repeatedly condemned their oral laws, so now they sought to catch Him opposing the **written** Law of Moses. This was an interesting dilemma and one that would take wisdom to resolve. Jesus did not oppose the Law, nor did He lower its requirements.
 6. John 8:6 – *They were saying this, testing Him, so that they might have grounds for accusing Him. But Jesus stooped down and with His finger wrote on the ground.* The religious leaders tried to put Jesus into a **moral** dilemma. What would He do? James 2:13
 - a. If Jesus told them to stone the adulterous woman, He would seem to lack compassion and would even cause Himself trouble with the **Roman** authorities. They were the ones who had the sole rights to administer capital punishment. John 18:31
 - b. If He told them not to **stone** her, He would be encouraging disobedience to the Mosaic Law. This of course was not an acceptable option.
 - c. Jesus knew their **evil** intentions and therefore He simply ignored them by writing on the ground. No one knows why or what He wrote.
 7. John 8:7 – *But when they persisted in asking Him, He straightened up, and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her."* Contrary to their expectations, Jesus agreed to a **guilty** decree and punishment. Then by ordering the "one" with no sin to be the first to carry out the judgment, He put them into a moral dilemma.
 - a. According to Deuteronomy 17:6, they needed more than one **witness** in order to carry out the execution. Where were the two or more witnesses?
 - b. Also, according to Deuteronomy 17:7, the witnesses who testified were required to cast the first **stones**.
 8. John 8:8 – *Again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.* Having left them with a legal knot to untie, Jesus again **ignored** them, leaving them to figure out what should be done.

9. John 8:9 – *When they heard it, they began to go out one by one, beginning with the older ones, and He was left alone, and the woman, where she was, in the center of the court. With the morning sun beginning to shine into the temple compound, those who hated the light scurried away. The sinful woman was left standing alone in the court. John 3:19-21*
10. John 8:10 – *Straightening up, Jesus said to her, “Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?” The issue of condemnation was based on the Law of Moses. Since no witnesses came forward, no one had thrown a stone and so she was accordingly not condemned. She was nonetheless guilty and so Jesus had sobering words for her.*
11. John 8:11 – *She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “I do not condemn you, either. Go. From now on sin no more.” Jesus, like the others, did not condemn her. He was one who had no sin; therefore, He could legitimately have thrown the first stone, but He chose not to. Jesus then commanded her to go her way and stop her adultery.*

B. John 8:12-20 – The testimonies of the Father and of the Son

1. John 8:12 – *Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.” Quite possibly, as the woman went out of the temple toward the eastern gate, walking towards the rising sun, Jesus shouted out another amazing “I am” statement: “I am the Light of the world.”*
 - a. In scripture, God's perfect personhood is illustrated by comparison with brilliant light. 1 Timothy 6:16, 1 John 1:5
 - b. As the ultimate revealer of God the Father, Jesus is the Light. John 8:12
 - c. The gospel message is a brilliant light, shining brightly to rescue this dark and dying world. 2 Corinthians 4:3-4
2. John 8:13 – *So the Pharisees said to Him, “You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not true.” The oral traditions of Israel, not the Mosaic Law, prohibited people from vouching for themselves. A light proves itself, simply by shining. In the same way, by being Himself, Jesus’ words and works proved His validity.*
3. John 8:14a – *Jesus answered and said to them, “Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is true, for I know where I came from and where I am going...” Jesus’ witness about Himself was true. This challenged their artificial rules about evidence, but as a standard for truth, no loftier evidence existed than Christ’s own witness. He firmly knew the truth about Himself.*
4. John 8:14b – *“...but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. Jesus, on the other hand, challenged their trustworthiness as a witness. They could not stand as a witness for or against Him, because they did not know where He was from nor did they know where He was going. They were entirely unreliable as observers or accusers.*
5. John 8:15 – *“You judge according to the flesh; I am not judging anyone.” Their standard of evaluation was built on fleshly human logic; it was not according to truth. Jesus on the other hand was not even casting judgment. The story of the woman caught in adultery in this passage is a very good example of this fact.*

6. John 8:16 – *“But even if I do judge, My judgment is true; for I am not alone in it, but I and the Father who sent Me.”* In His incarnation, Jesus did not come to judge but to rescue what was already judged. Nevertheless, when and if He judges anything, His verdict is always perfect and according to the **divine** standards of Himself and God the Father.
7. John 8:17-18 – Jesus presented testimony from two **witnesses**, Himself and the Father. Numbers 35:30, 1 John 5:5-12
 - a. John 8:17 – *“Even in your law it has been written that the testimony of two men is true.”* The Jewish laws, for establishing a fact, are based on the testimonies of two or more people. If two people agree, their testimony can be considered factual and trustworthy. Many countries base their **judicial** system on this biblical standard.
 - b. John 8:18 – *“I am He who testifies about Myself, and the Father who sent Me testifies about Me.”* Based on their laws and standards, Jesus now presented two witnesses. He was the first, and the Father was the second. If they accepted the **frail** testimony of a human, they would surely accept these divine eyewitnesses. John 5:37, 1 John 5:9
8. John 8:19a – *So they were saying to Him, “Where is Your Father?”* The religious **leaders** may have been implying with this that they considered Him illegitimate, born out of wedlock. Most certainly, they were also casting doubt on His previous statements about the Father testifying on His behalf.
 - a. On the banks of the Jordan river just north of the dead sea, at one of the **lowest** points on earth (400 meters below sea level), the Father had testified from heaven that Jesus was His beloved Son: *“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased (Matthew 3:17).”*
 - b. Later in Matthew 17:1-8, from the top of a very high **mountain**, likely Mount Hermon (2200 meters above sea level), God the Father again said of Jesus, *“This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him.”*
 - c. From the highest peak to the lowest valley, God the Father made it known **audibly** that He loves the Son and is well-pleased with Him in every way. 2 Peter 1:17
9. John 8:19b – *Jesus answered, “You know neither Me nor My Father...”* Even though these people were very religious, Jesus made it **known** to them that they did not have any sort of a relationship with God or with Him. If they would have, things would have been very different. They were clearly unregenerate nonbelievers. They were devoid of eternal life.
10. John 8:19c – *“...if you knew Me, you would know My Father also.”* If they would acquire a relationship with Jesus Christ, they would also have a relationship with the Father. This is because to know the Son is to know the Father. They knew neither. This was the sad story of their spiritual condition. They should have taken this as an invitation and not an **insult**.
11. John 8:20 – *These words He spoke in the treasury, as He taught in the temple; and no one seized Him, because His hour had not yet come.* This phrase, *“His hour had not yet come,”* is John’s way of emphasizing God’s perfect **timing** in Jesus’ death on the cross. Jesus would be crucified at a definite predetermined moment in history. Galatians 4:4-5

C. John 8:21-30 – Rejection by the religious crowd grows

1. John 8:21 – *Then He said again to them, “I go away, and you will seek Me, and will die in your sin; where I am going, you cannot come.”* If they died in their sin of unbelief, they would not have the righteousness required for entrance into heaven. In John 16 we observe that God the Holy Spirit will convince the world about the need for this **righteousness**.
2. John 8:22 – *So the Jews were saying, “Surely He will not kill Himself, will He, since He says, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come?’”* These Jews based their thinking entirely on the **natural**. They refused to grasp the spiritual. When Jesus taught that their righteousness would not get them to heaven, their rebellion kept them in the dark. 1 Corinthians 2:9-16
3. John 8:23 – *And He was saying to them, “You are from below, I am from above; you are of this world, I am not of this world.”* In their human logic they were earthly in their thinking. There was a rebellious unwillingness to see and appreciate the **Light** of the world, Jesus Christ. He could give them understanding and true vision, but their callous hearts resisted.
4. John 8:24 – *“Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.”* Jesus is the great “I am.” Everyone who refuses to accept by faith that Jesus, as Christ, is **deity** will be eternally separated from God. John 3:36, 1 John 4:1-3
 - a. We have observed how the crowds **denied** that Jesus came from God and that He was God. They said He was from Galilee and that no prophet could arise from there.
 - b. We observed how they were unwilling to **accept** that He was going to a place they could not go. At one point they thought He meant He was going to the Greek-speaking Jews and another time that He was going to kill Himself. In their blindness they did not believe Jesus was the Christ, who came from heaven and would one day return there.
 - c. Jesus made many claims to deity and uniqueness. Sadly, when Jesus made these **claims** the religious leaders only hardened their hearts and refused to see and believe.
 - 1) Jesus claimed deity by multiple uses of “**I am**” statements. John 4:26, 6:20, 35, 48, 51; 8:12, 24
 - 2) Jesus claimed to perform **deeds** identical to those God the Father accomplished. John 5:17-18
 - 3) Jesus claimed deity by calling Himself the **Son** of God. Calling Himself the Son of God was a way of equating Himself with God, as expressed by his opponents in John 5:18. John 5:23, 10:33, 19:7; Philippians 2:6
 - 4) Jesus claimed to be the source and giver of **life**. He claimed to be able to give life just as does God the Father gives life. John 5:21, 28
 - 5) Jesus claimed to have the same authority to **judge** as God the Father. John 5:22
 - 6) Jesus claimed to have been sent directly from **heaven** from the Father. John 6:29, 38, 51, 57, 7:28-29

- 7) Jesus claimed to be the only one who had seen God and the only one who could reveal God to humanity. John 6:46
5. John 8:25a – *So they were saying to Him, “Who are You?”* The Pharisees’ sarcasm as expressed in this statement shows their great disdain for Jesus Christ.
 - a. The Pharisees were likely trying to trap Jesus in a blasphemous statement in order to legalize His arrest and execution. John 19:7
 - b. Jesus avoided a direct answer. He was exactly who He had always been saying He was!
 6. John 8:25b – *Jesus said to them, “What have I been saying to you from the beginning? In Greek, Jesus’ reply could be understood as a question, a statement, or an exclamation; it is hard to know which one it was. Regardless, Jesus said in essence, “I am the one who I have always claimed to be.”*
 7. John 8:26 – *“I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world.”* Jesus stressed that His purpose was to proclaim the message to humanity the Father had given Him to give. Jesus faithfully gave us the Father’s message.
 - a. God always desires to communicate with man and Jesus has always been His best ambassador. No one knows the mind of the Father like His Son Jesus does.
 - b. Many people believe that God is somehow silent, but that could not be further from the truth. God wanted mankind to know Him so badly He sent His Son on a mission to explain the Father to us. Today we have that message in written form in the Bible.
 8. John 8:27 – *They did not realize that He had been speaking to them about the Father.* Because of their spiritual darkness, the Pharisees didn’t understand the words Jesus spoke. In their spiritual ineptitude, they failed to see that Jesus was talking to them about His heavenly Father.
 9. John 8:28 – *So Jesus said, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.* Being *lifted up* referred to Jesus’ coming substitutionary death on the cross. Jesus told them His purpose would make sense when one day they saw Him crucified. John 3:14-15
 10. John 8:29 – *“And He who sent Me is with Me; He has not left Me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.”* Even though death on the cross was the Father’s plan, the Lord Jesus Christ was convinced of the Father’s companionship throughout. Jesus assured His hearers He was in perfect harmony with the will of God the Father. Hebrews 10:5-10
 11. John 8:30 – *As He spoke these things, many came to believe in Him.* The active voice, aorist tense of the Greek word PISTEUO, to believe, indicates a punctuated one-time decision to place faith in Christ for salvation. God makes salvation uncomplicated and accessible to all, because He desires everyone to be saved. 2 Peter 3:9

D. John 8:31-32 – Encouragement to believers to follow on

1. John 8:31 – *So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, “If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine.* Jesus began teaching discipleship to those He **knew** had believed in Him. He wanted them to grow to become all they were meant to be.
 - a. Jesus taught that when a person believed in Him, they instantly became God’s **offspring** by being born again through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus had communicated this truth to Nicodemus early in His ministry. John 1:12-13, 3:3-8
 - b. In saving people, the Lord Jesus did not simply want to have newborn babies. He also desired to nourish, discipline, and **mature** every child whom He received. This process is called sanctification or discipleship. Hebrews 12:5-11
 - c. He wanted those who believed in Him to **grow**. He knew how important His word was to their growth. In John 7 some of His disciples had left Him. He knew they would quickly languish and suffer spiritually without His teaching. Progress in their discipleship would cease and that is contrary to God’s will for His children. Hebrews 5:11-14
 - d. Just as they needed to know the importance of eating-up the word of God, so do we. Just like back then, if we desire to grow to become a true **disciple** of Christ, it will require a steady diet of God’s word. In 1 Peter 2:2 the apostle encouraged us to consume the pure milk of the word.
 - e. Positionally, at salvation you are automatically called a disciple, but conditionally you do not automatically qualify as a true disciple. True discipleship is a **choice** that requires an ongoing walk of faith by means of the word of God.
2. John 8:32 – *“...and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”* All believers are delivered from sin’s penalty the moment they come to *know the truth*, Jesus Christ. After that, those who daily abide in Christ’s word, grow and come to *know the truth* more fully. True disciples of Christ find daily deliverance (freedom) from sin’s power via the **truth**.
 - a. Knowing the one who is the truth makes you free from sin’s **penalty** at salvation.
 - b. Knowing the teaching of the one who is the truth continues to set you free from sin’s **power**. This is called sanctification.

X. John 8:33-59 – Words to Challengers

A. John 8:33-38 – A word of incentive to doubters

1. John 8:33 – *They answered Him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never yet been enslaved to anyone; how is it that You say, ‘You will become free?’”* The religious leaders interrupted Jesus words to His disciples with an **arrogant** statement that denied the reality He spoke about. Matthew 3:9
 - a. We can see a change of audience here and forward. These **scoffers** jumped in on Jesus teaching with a sarcastic remark. (See verse 37 to confirm this change in audience.)

- b. Jesus stopped talking to the new believers about discipleship in order to address these arrogant antagonists. These were those who prided themselves in their **ethnic** identity of belonging to Abraham. There was a sharp challenge in their voice.
 - c. The fact is, Jews were in bondage at that very moment. Rome ruled Israel. But these antagonists conveniently skipped over that detail. Jesus was about to unveil to them, however, that they were also in bondage to something else. They were slaves to **sin** due to the fact they were sinners.
2. John 8:34 – *Jesus answered them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.* Jesus made this statement using the double declaration of truly, truly. This was Jesus’ way of emphatically assuring them that what He was about to say was absolutely true. Every person who sins is a slave to **sin**. Romans 6:16, Galatians 5:16
- a. These people had just said they were free. Jesus wanted them to understand the truth that they were indeed slaves. Jesus’ reasoning was simple. The fact that they **sinned** revealed that they were slaves to sin. This is a profound truth.
 - b. Jesus was not a slave to sin, but they were. This had to be understood in order to see their need to believe in Him and be set **free**. But they were proud, so Jesus had to be straightforward and clear.
3. John 8:35 – *“The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son does remain forever.”* Jesus contrasted the slave (those who sin) with the son (Jesus and those who have believed and become born again). To be a child in a family is far superior to slavery. Children are a part of a **family** and household forever, slaves of course are not.
- a. In John 8:33 we see that the Jews considered themselves **free** because they descended from Abraham.
 - b. In John 8:34 Jesus taught that being **natural** sons of Abraham didn’t matter since everyone who sins is actually a slave and not a son.
 - c. Even though these people were biological sons of Abraham, they were slaves due to sin. As slaves they could not remain in the house. They were not part of the family. They needed to **hear** this harsh truth.
4. John 8:36 – *“So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.”* The truly wonderful news was that Jesus could give them freedom. And if He did, they would truly be free indeed. Jesus invited His enemies to **believe** in Him. They could be freed forever and have a permanent place in God’s eternal family. This certainly was and is good news.
5. John 8:37 – *“I know that you are Abraham’s descendants; yet you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you.”* Ironically, these religious leaders ignorantly wanted to **murder** the very one through whom God fulfilled His promises to Abraham. Jesus said it clearly. Tragically, their hearts had no place for Christ’s words and teaching. John 7:1, 8:40
6. John 8:38 – Jesus emphasized the intimate **fellowship** He enjoyed with His Father. He contrasted it with the fellowship they had with their father (the devil).

- a. John 8:38a – *“I speak the things which I have seen with My Father...”* In contrast to their claims, Jesus spoke the truth about the Father. They claimed loyalty to Abraham, but neither Abraham nor God was their true **father**. They could not speak of things they had personally seen God the Father accomplish, but Jesus could.
- b. John 8:38b – *“...therefore you also do the things which you heard from your father.”* Jesus identified these Jewish religious leaders with their father, but He did not yet say it was the **devil**. They knew and did Satan’s evil deeds. The religious leaders demonstrated Satan’s evil nature in several ways.
 - 1) Like Satan, they **lied**. Genesis 3:4, John 8:33
 - 2) Like Satan, they devised **cunning** schemes. Genesis 3:1, John 8:6
 - 3) Like Satan, they maligned **God’s** holy character. Genesis 3:5, Matthew 12:24, John 7:49
 - 4) Like Satan, they **lived** for making trouble. Genesis 6:1-6, John 7:11
 - 5) Like Satan, they gave **false** witness. Job 1:9-11, John 8:4
 - 6) Like Satan, they sought to **murder** the innocent. Genesis 4:8; John 5:18
 - 7) Like Satan, they were **arrogant**. Isaiah 14:13-14; John 8:25, 33
 - 8) For an interesting study, compare the **list** of sins God hates in Proverbs 6:16-18 with the sinful activities of the religious leaders and the Pharisees.

B. John 8:39-47 – A word to religious opponents

1. John 8:39 – In an attempt to contradict Jesus’ insinuations, the religious leaders emphatically claimed Abraham as their **father**. They were not about to allow Jesus to align them with anyone else.
 - a. John 8:39a – *They answered and said to Him, “Abraham is our father.”* These religious antagonists immediately told Jesus He was wrong. Because Abraham was their father, they were sure they were legitimately **acceptable** to God.
 - b. John 8:39b – *Jesus said to them, “If you are Abraham’s children, do the deeds of Abraham.* Jesus challenged them to prove their relationship with Abraham by **acting** like Abraham. Abraham was clearly a man of faith. He not only believed the Lord and was justified, he also learned to walk by faith. Genesis 15:6, Galatians 3:6
2. John 8:40a – *“But as it is, you are seeking to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God...”* Sadly, these religious leaders wanted to murder Jesus, God’s ambassador. He came preaching to them a message from God the Father. Instead of receiving him with joy and **embracing** His words by faith, they sought to kill him.
3. John 8:40b – *“...this Abraham did not do.”* Sadly, these religious leaders wanted to murder Jesus, God’s messenger. Long ago when Jesus, as the Angel of the Lord, went to visit Abraham and give Him good news, Abraham gladly welcomed Him and hurried to prepare him an excellent meal. What a **contrast** to their reception of the Lord. Genesis 18:1-15

4. John 8:41a – *“You are doing the deeds of your father.”* Jesus was setting the stage to tell them that their father was **Satan**. Their murderous intentions did not come from the God of Abraham. They were following their god and it was terrifyingly obvious.
5. John 8:41b – *...They said to Him, “We were not born of fornication; we have one Father: God.”* The religious leaders’ underhanded **retort** was aimed at shaming Jesus by insinuating His birth was illegitimate. In a vain attempt to wiggle out of the light Jesus’ shone on them, they resorted to devious slander.
6. John 8:42a – *Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me...”* Jesus responded that if they were of God, they would **love** Him. In Greek, this “if” statement is a 2nd class condition, which means it is a contrary-to-fact statement. Jesus assumed they were not children of God.
7. John 8:42b – *“...for I proceeded forth and have come from God, for I have not even come on My own initiative, but He sent Me.* Jesus claimed to have come directly from God with His full authority. He was not here doing His own will or **agenda**. He was accomplishing God’s work in God’s way. Hebrews 13:20
8. John 8:43 – *“Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you cannot hear My word.”* Jesus asked these religious authorities why they could not understand His **statements**. He then answered for them. He told them they could not understand because of their spiritual deafness toward His message. Matthew 13:15
 - a. In John 7:15 Jesus told his hearers that if they really wanted to do God’s will they would easily **discern** whether His words and teaching were from God or if they were merely human thoughts. Psalm 25:9-14
 - b. These religious leaders had built a **wall** around their minds because they did not want the light of Jesus Christ to enter and expose their false beliefs and their hypocrisy. They were hardened to the Lord. Isaiah 6:9, Jeremiah 6:10, John 8:55
9. John 8:44 – Jesus had already told these religious officials that by rejecting His words they were rejecting the truth. In the process of their rebellion they had been seeking to murder Jesus. Because of this fact, Jesus told these religious leaders that they were following their father **Satan**.
 - a. John 8:44a – *“You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father....”* Jesus dared to say what others did not acknowledge. He told them the truth. They may not have known it, but the truth was they belonged to the devil. From **birth** they belonged to Satan and therefore they needed to be born again.
 - b. John 8:44b – *“He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him.* Jesus said that from the very beginning Satan has always been a **murderer** and a liar. There is not even a speck of truth in him. Every person on earth should know this fact. 2 Corinthians 11:3, 1 Peter 5:8-9

- c. John 8:44c – *“Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”* When Satan speaks, he is lying, because that is his native tongue. Lies are a manifestation of Satan’s depraved **nature**. By not walking in truth, the religious establishment was unconsciously following Satan. 1 John 3:8
10. John 8:45 – *“But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me.”* Due to being so in tune with Satan and his lies, the establishment rejected the truth. Jesus told them the truth, but just like Satan, they preferred **lies**, and so they blatantly rejected anything He said.
11. John 8:46a – *“Which one of you convicts Me of sin?”* Jesus asked for anyone to step forward with **evidence** that He had ever sinned. Could anyone bring forth credible witness against the Son of God? The truth was they had nothing they could legitimately bring against Him. Therefore, they should have stopped rejecting His message. Matthew 7:3-4
12. John 8:46b – *“If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?”* If no one could bring a judgment or **charge** against Jesus, then naturally they should have trusted His words. He had never done any sin. He had never broken the Mosaic Law. He had only ever spoken the truth. Therefore, they should have believed His statements. 1 Peter 2:22
13. John 8:47 – *“He who is of God hears the words of God; for this reason you do not hear them, because you are not of God.”* What Jesus was saying here is challenging. He claimed His words to be the words of God. This is a deity claim. Jesus claimed **equality** with God.
- Jesus said the religious establishment could not understand for one simple reason: they did not belong to God. This was a sharp **blow** and something that was sure to yield a negative response.
 - Jesus not only told them the positive truth about God, He also told them the negative truth about themselves. They needed **both** messages. They needed to know that He was the light of the world and the bread of life. They equally needed to understand that they were sons and daughters of God’s enemy, Satan.

C. John 8:48-59 – Fighting words

- John 8:48 – *The Jews answered and said to Him, “Do we not say rightly that You are a Samaritan and have a demon?”* Being unable to refute Christ’s argument, they resorted to false accusations. They dreamed up the vilest **insults** they could imagine and hurled them at Him with fury. Matthew 11:19
 - The day before they had called Him a **Galilean** (John 7:52). Now they were calling Him a Samaritan. This was a harsh insult and exposed their sin of intolerant racism.
 - In the next verse Jesus answered only the charge of **demon** possession, not the insult of calling Him a Samaritan. Sometimes no answer is the best answer. Proverbs 26:4-5
- John 8:49 – *Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon; but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me.* Without hesitation Jesus told them the truth: He had no demon. When they insulted Jesus Christ, God’s Son, in this way, they also vilified and **scorned** the Father, since that’s who Jesus honored. He honored God, but they claimed He had a demon. Matthew 12:24,30-32

3. John 8:50 – *“But I do not seek My glory; there is One who seeks and judges.”* Jesus was not searching for His own honor. He was not looking for praise. His sole desire was to give glory to God. Jesus said there is only one who seeks **glory** (i.e., true worshipers) and that is God the Father. God the Father is the one who judges. John 4:23-24
4. John 8:51 – *“Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word, he will never see death.”* Once again this is a “truly, truly” statement made by the God who cannot lie, so you can be 110% sure it is true! Believers are the ones who guard, or keep, the words of Christ. No unsaved person could ever do that. Believers are the only ones who will **never** face death.
 - a. Jesus was not speaking of **physical** death. Even people who keep His words die physically. Jesus himself died physically.
 - b. Jesus spoke here of escaping eternal death. The believer, the one who keeps Christ’s word, will not face **eternal** separation from God. John 3:16, 11:25
5. John 8:52 – Again these Jewish leaders accused Jesus of demon possession, and again they were so focused on the **natural** realm they could not understand Jesus. Jesus spoke of spiritual death, not physical death.
 - a. John 8:52a – *The Jews said to Him, “Now we know that You have a demon...”* A blatant accusation, even if not true, is a great **tactic** for shutting down an adversary before they can even speak. These leaders were only trying to shut Jesus up.
 - b. John 8:52b – *“...Abraham died, and the prophets also; and You say, ‘If anyone keeps My word, he will never taste of death.’”* The religious Jews **failed** to understand that Jesus was not talking about physical death. He was talking about eternal death.
 - 1) The Bible says that the only way to please God is to have faith in Him, but the religious leaders did not **believe** Jesus or the Father. Hebrews 11:6
 - 2) The religious establishment boasted of their great understanding and knowledge. Jesus, on the other hand, had taught them **truth** from God’s viewpoint. Jesus had shown incredible sign miracles that only God could do. They did not believe in Him. Unbelief is ultimately why they did not embrace Jesus. 2 Corinthians 3:14-16
 - 3) The religious leaders refused to let in the light; therefore, they lived in darkness. They believed the lie that being a descendant of Abraham made them acceptable to God and assured them of eternal life. But the truth was, they were going to **die** in their sins. John 1:5, 1 Corinthians 2:14-15
6. John 8:53 – *“Surely You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died? The prophets died too; whom do You make Yourself out to be?”* Since Abraham eventually died, they believed Jesus was trying to make Himself **greater** than him and the prophets. They thought He was some arrogant fool claiming He could somehow defy death.
7. John 8:54a – *Jesus answered, “If I glorify Myself, My glory is nothing...”* Although Jesus was greater than Abraham, and could have said so, He did not. Though equal with the Father, Jesus was not on a mission to glorify Himself. His **objective** was to bring glory to the Father. Philippians 2:8-11

8. John 8:54b – “...it is My Father who glorifies Me, of whom you say, ‘He is our God’” They said the Father was their God and Jesus said that the Father glorified Him. The God that they claimed to worship wanted Jesus Christ to have preeminence. This was a daring statement they would either accept or **deny**. They denied it and would soon be ready to fight.
9. John 8:55 – Jesus was bringing this confrontation to a head. He would make them **decide** to either accept the fact that He was from God or reject Him altogether. He was purposely escalating the conflict.
- John 8:55a – “...and you have not come to know Him, but I know Him...” Jesus alleged that they were ignorant of the very **God** they claimed to worship. They had never come into a relationship with God. But Jesus did know God.
 - John 8:55b – “...and if I say that I do not know Him, I will be a liar like you...” Jesus said that if He denied knowing God, He would be a liar, just like the religious leaders. Those were **fighting** words for the proud throng.
 - John 8:55c – “...but I do know Him and keep His word.” Jesus again adamantly claimed to know the Father and keep (guard, protect and treasure) His word. Jesus knew His heavenly Father. He had come forth from heaven. He was God’s only begotten **Son**.
John 1:1, 3:16
10. John 8:56 – “Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.” If they were so attached to Abraham, they should have been **eagerly** anticipating the Messiah’s arrival the way Abraham did. Abraham was living for that coming day and he saw it beforehand, by faith. Hebrews 11:9-10, 13
11. John 8:57 – So the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?” The people made **fun** of Jesus’ words. How could He claim to know anything at all about Abraham? At this point, Jesus gave one of the clearest and strongest **claims** to deity in the book of John.
12. John 8:58 – Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am.” Jesus said that He had existed **eternally** before Abraham was even born. This “I am” statement may sound vague to us today, but that religious crowd understood exactly what Jesus said. He had plainly and openly claimed to be God. Exodus 3:14; John 17:5, 24
13. John 8:59a – Therefore they picked up stones to throw at Him.... The crowd’s immediate violent reaction proved they understood Christ’ claim to deity. It equally showed their dismissal of His claim. To them, Jesus had just made a blatantly blasphemous statement deserving of **death**. But Jesus’ time to die had not yet come.
14. John 8:59b – ... but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple. Inexplicably, Jesus disappeared from the temple complex. Miraculously He avoided their attempts to stone Him. Jesus was in charge of His own **destiny**. No man could take His life. He gave it up willingly, at the appropriate time. John 10:17-18

XI. John 9:1-41 – Healing on the Sabbath

A. John 9:1-12 – The sixth sign miracle: Jesus healed a man born blind

1. John 9:1a – *As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.* In John 8:1-10:21, John **presented** Jesus shining in His glory, as the light of the world. John 1:11-13
 - a. In John 8, Jesus, the light of the world, was tragically rejected **inside** the temple by the spiritually blind religious leaders.
 - b. In John 9, Jesus, the light of the world, was gladly received by a physically blind man **outside** the temple.
2. John 9:1b – *As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.* Jesus specifically noticed this blind man. This man did not become blind at a point in time; he was **born** that way. He had never been able to see. His eyes had never functioned.
3. John 9:2 – *And His disciples asked Him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?”* How could the man have sinned **before** he was born?
 - a. Purportedly, the Pharisaic **absurd** notion was that a baby who kicked its mother while in the womb violated the command to honor his or her parents.
 - b. The Pharisees taught that grave personal suffering was the **result** of grave personal sins. As quick study of the book of Job disproves this view.
4. John 9:3 – *Jesus answered, “It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him.* Jesus said it was not the fault of the parents or the man. This man’s blindness was so God’s **power** would be displayed in his healing. Sickness is not always the result of sin. Only God knows the true source of illnesses.
5. John 9:4 – *“We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can work.”* Jesus included His disciples in His **mission**. Matthew 28:16-20
 - a. The coming **night** Jesus referred to here may be the Tribulation period which will occur after the church is raptured. That is a time when survival, not work will be central. As those days grow darker and darker it will be better to die than to live. Revelation 14:13
 - b. Jesus encouraged His followers to **work** in God’s program while they were still able to do so. John 4:25-28, Ephesians 5:15-17, Colossians 4:5-6
6. John 9:5 – *“While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.”* By bringing tangible light to a man born in darkness, Jesus was about to demonstrate in a profound way that He is the true light of the world. No one could give **sight** to someone who had never seen before, and Jesus was not only about to do so but would do so in a very unorthodox way. Isaiah 35:5
7. John 9:6 – *When He had said this, He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and applied the clay to his eyes...* The making of clay is a reminder that God made man of the **dust** of the ground. Jesus, the creator, was able to use dirt to give sight. He would give life to eyes that had never before functioned.

8. John 9:7 – ...and said to him, “Go, **wash** in the pool of Siloam” (which is translated, Sent). Without a show, the man went and did as Jesus directed and was healed completely.
9. John 9:8 – Therefore the neighbors, and those who previously saw him as a beggar, were saying, “Is not this the one who used to sit and beg?” When they saw him walking about and able to see, the people were perplexed. He certainly looked like the blind **beggar**, but how could he possibly be the same person?
10. John 9:9 – Others were saying, “This is he,” still others were saying, “No, but he is like him.” He kept saying, “I am the one.” There was a lot of speculation going around, but the healed man **assured** everyone that he was in fact the beggar who was born blind.
11. John 9:10 – So they were saying to him, “How then were your eyes opened?” The people started questioning him about how he was healed. The fact that this same question appears again in verses 15, 19, and 26 shows the scope of the **dilemma** the Jews were having.
 - a. The Old Testament scriptures prophesied that the Messiah would give sight to the blind. No one besides Jesus had ever made a blind person **see**, much less one blind from birth. So, if this man was telling the truth, the Messiah had to be among them! Psalm 146:8; Isaiah 35:5, 29:18; Matthew 11:4-6; Luke 4:18-19
 - b. The problem for the Pharisees was that the miracle was done on the sabbath. They were about to be forced to decide between their oral traditions and the word of God. It should have been an easy decision, but not so for religious fanatics. In religious circles manmade commandments often **eclipse** God’s law and kindness in general.
12. John 9:11-12 – The last time the Lord healed on the sabbath in John’s Gospel the man did not know who healed him. This time it was different. This man **knew** it was Jesus who healed him.
 - a. John 9:11 – He answered, “The man who is called Jesus made clay, and anointed my eyes, and said to me, ‘Go to Siloam and wash’; so, I went away and washed, and I received sight.” Instead of rejoicing with the man about his newfound eyesight, they wanted to know who had **worked** on the sabbath.
 - b. John 9:12 – They said to him, “Where is He?” He said, “I do not know.” You can be sure the Pharisees were not looking for Jesus to thank Him. They had other, less noble motivation for wanting to **find** Jesus.

B. John 9:13-34 – Reactions to the healing of the man born blind

1. John 9:13-14 – Jesus deliberately caused a dilemma. Would the Pharisees be consumed with following their legalistic manmade traditions or would they accept the clear **evidence** that Jesus was the Messiah?
 - a. John 9:13 – They brought to the Pharisees the man who was formerly blind. The people took and presented the **healed** man to the Pharisees. They were likely enthralled to see how the Pharisees would react to this once in a lifetime miracle.

- b. John 9:14 – *Now it was a Sabbath on the day when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes.* John now points out that Jesus **purposely** healed on the sabbath and that He crafted a clay poultice as a part of the process.
- 1) In an attempt to protect the Mosaic Law, the Pharisees had added many of their own stipulations. Keeping their **rules** often became more important to them than the intent of the Law, which was to love God and love others. Matthew 22:37-40; Mark 2:27, 7:1-13; Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:14
 - 2) The Mosaic Law set the sabbath apart as a day of **rest** for honoring God as creator of the world, but the Pharisees had added many ridiculous and picky restrictions of their own to God’s laws. Exodus 20:8-11
2. John 9:15-17 – The Pharisees faced a predicament: The fact that Jesus healed a man who had been blind from birth was clear evidence that He was the Messiah. But by healing on the sabbath Jesus had **violated** their precious tradition. They were in a vexing dilemma.
- a. John 9:15 – *Then the Pharisees also were asking him again how he received his sight. And he said to them, “He applied clay to my eyes, and I washed, and I see.”* In **simple**, straight-forward terms the man recounted once again how Jesus healed him: “He smeared mud on my eyes. Then I washed them. Now I can see.”
 - b. John 9:16a – *Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, “This man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath...”* So, the **debate** began. There were some Pharisees who said Jesus could not possibly be from God because He did not observe their sabbath day rules. There were other Pharisees who had a different opinion.
 - c. John 9:16b – *...But others were saying, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?” And there was a division among them.* Some of the Pharisees argued that if Jesus was able to do such amazing sign miracles there was no way He could be a law breaker. They were in a quandary. What was the **truth**?
 - 1) First, Jesus did what no mere **human** could ever do. As they had observed, Jesus performed a wonderful sign miracle of healing a man who had been born blind.
 - 2) Second, Jesus was not a sinner. While soundly rejecting all forms of legalism, Jesus never once broke one of God’s laws, yet He had no patience with their meaningless and oppressive **religious** obligations. 2 Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 7:26, 1 Peter 2:22
 - d. John 9:17a – *So they said to the blind man again, “What do you say about Him, since He opened your eyes?”* Surely these religious extremists were not hoping to hear some sort of criticism. How could anyone ever **criticize** the person who had healed them?
 - e. John 9:17b – *And he said, “He is a prophet.”* This was a brilliant answer. Since Jesus had obviously worked a miracle, the Pharisees were **powerless** to refute his claim.
3. John 9:18-20 – In an attempt to deny that Jesus had done a miraculous sign, one they believed only the Christ could do, they sought to **disprove** the miracle. By their own standards, if they could not discredit the man’s statements or the miracle, they’d have to accept that Jesus was Messiah. That was an admission they were quite unwilling to make.

- a. John 9:18 – *The Jews then did not believe it of him, that he had been blind and had received sight, until they called the **parents** of the very one who had received his sight.* Not willing to accept that a man born blind could have been healed, they dug into his past. The man’s parents were summonsed and grilled.
 - b. John 9:19 – *...and questioned them, saying, “Is this your son, who you say was born blind?”* They asked his parents if he had indeed been **born** blind. To heal a person who had become blind during their lifetime would have been a great miracle, but to heal someone who was born blind was even more astounding and beyond human possibility.
 - c. John 9:19 – *“...Then how does he now see?”* The Pharisees demanded an explanation from the parents concerning how their son had received his sight. This was a sticky issue. The parents knew if they did not give a satisfactory **answer** to the Pharisees, they would be in trouble.
 - d. John 9:20 – *His parents answered them and said, “We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind.”* The parents **verified** that he was indeed their son and that he was indeed born blind. They did not try to convince the Pharisees of Jesus’ credentials or His abilities. About that issue they remained silent.
4. John 9:21-23 – However, out of **fear** of being excommunicated from the synagogue, they avoided the last question.
- a. John 9:21 – *“...but how he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. Ask him; he is of age; he will speak for himself.”* The man’s parents **evaded** the question about Jesus and His works by telling the Pharisees to ask their son for that information. They avoided having to defend or deny Jesus.
 - b. John 9:22 – *His parents said this because they were afraid of the Jews; for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone confessed Him to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.* They may have wondered if Jesus was the Messiah, but they did not dare **admit** it. Isaiah 29:18, 35:5
 - c. John 9:23 – *For this reason his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”* Since their son was an **adult**, the parents told the Pharisees to take up the issue with Him.
5. John 9:24-25 – Only by God’s **power** could a man born blind receive sight. The Pharisees’ stubborn refusal to believe the obvious irritated the man who had been healed.
- a. John 9:24 – *So a second time they called the man who had been blind, and said to him, “Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner.”* Wow! What audacity. In the same breath these religious leaders asked the healed man to both glorify God and **deny** Jesus. They were convinced that Jesus was a sinner, not a savior.
 - b. John 9:25 – *He then answered, “Whether He is a sinner, I do not know; one thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.”* The **fact** remained: the man had been miraculously healed. He was born blind, but now could see.

- 1) The Pharisees should have taken their own advice and given glory to God for giving sight to a blind man, a truly marvelous miracle. Instead they called the Son of God a sinner. Their pride and jealousy made them **irrational**. Proverbs 27:4, Matthew 27:18
 - 2) Although Jesus gave this man physical sight, the primary reason He came into the world was to give light to those in **spiritual** darkness. John 1:4, 9; 12:46
6. John 9:26-27 – The problem with the Pharisees was simply that they did not **believe**. Like Nicodemus, they thought they were right with God because of their heritage and because they were good people. Instead of admitting they were helpless sinners who needed the Savior, they audaciously thought they were acceptable to God. Romans 2:17, 10:3
 - a. John 9:26 – *So they said to him, “What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?”* This was a redundant question. The man had already plainly stated how Jesus had healed his blind eyes. The Pharisees were likely hoping to find some **detail** which they could critique and use to condemn Jesus for this act of mercy.
 - b. John 9:27 – *He answered them, “I told you already and you did not listen; why do you want to hear it again? You do not want to become His disciples too, do you?”* This sarcastic statement communicated that the man was intellectually allied with Jesus. Very soon he would indeed become a believer and a true **disciple**.
 7. John 9:28 – *They reviled him and said, “You are His disciple, but we are disciples of Moses.* The Greek word for *reviled* LOIDOREO means to speak abusively to someone. Their disrespectful response exposed their **hatred** for Jesus and His followers. These Pharisees claimed to follow Moses, not Jesus. John 5:45-47, Romans 2:17
 8. John 9:29 – *“We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where He is from.”* This reply revealed their sad **condition**. Jesus had taught repeatedly that He came forth from the Father in heaven. Jesus was the promised one God said was coming to bring salvation to the world.
 - a. These religious leaders accepted Moses, acknowledging that God had **spoken** to him. Earlier in Jesus teaching He had said, *“For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me, for he wrote about Me (Jn 5:46).”*
 - b. Jesus is the exact **person** Moses wrote about in their beloved book, the Torah (the first five books of the Old Testament). If they truly accepted Moses and his words, they should have equally accepted Jesus and His teaching. Genesis 3:15, 12:3, 49:10; Deuteronomy 18:15; Luke 24:27
 - c. Not only did Moses prophesy concerning the coming Messiah, the purpose of the Mosaic Law (which comprised a large segment of the Torah) was to point the Jews, and all people, to their **need** of the promised Messiah. Clearly, the Pharisees had not understood the true meaning of Moses’ writings. Romans 3:19-26, 10:3-4
 9. John 9:30-33 – The man who was born blind gave these religious leaders a theology **lesson**. Nicodemus, a Pharisee, admitted that no mere human could do the miracles Jesus was doing unless God was with him. To believe otherwise was to deny the obvious. John 3:2

- a. John 9:30 – *The man answered and said to them, “Well, here is an amazing thing, that you do not know where He is from, and yet He opened my eyes.”* Jesus had given this man sight, but because of their unbelief, the Pharisees remained **blind**.
 - b. John 9:31 – *“We know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is God-fearing and does His will, He hears him.”* Using simple **logic**, the man argued that since God only hears the prayers of the righteous, Jesus must be righteous. Otherwise God would not have given Him the power to heal. They could not disagree with that!
 - c. John 9:32 – *“Since the beginning of time it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a person born blind.”* In all of human history, this was the first time that anyone born blind had ever received their eyesight. This **sign** was of unprecedented uniqueness. This was a powerful miracle.
 - d. John 9:33 – *“If this man were not from God, He could do nothing.”* The man rightfully concluded that apart from God’s power, it would be impossible for Jesus to heal him. This miracle was a clear signpost, a screaming **message**, that Jesus was indeed sent from God and that He was the Christ, the promised deliverer.
10. John 9:34 – *They answered him, “You were born entirely in sins, and are you teaching us?” So they put him out.* Realizing they had no case, the religious leaders verbally **attacked** the man and expelled him. Religious people love to maintain control through fear, threats and cruelty. Having lived his life as a beggar, this kind of rejection was not likely new to him.

C. John 9:35-41 – Jesus, the Light of the world, is God

1. John 9:35 – *Jesus heard that they had put him out, and finding him, He said, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?”* Jesus took the initiative to seek out the man He had healed. He was interested in more than just his physical well-being; He wanted to give this man **eternal** life. Daniel 7:13, Revelation 1:13
2. John 9:36 – *He answered, “Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?”* Jesus **desired** for this man to be saved. That’s why He went and sought him out. Luke 19:10, John 14:6
 - a. The gospel centers on the **person** of Jesus Christ, but regrettably this man did not know who Jesus Christ was or about the work He came to accomplish to save people from sin and death. 1 Corinthians 15:1-5
 - b. Clearly this man had never personally glimpsed Jesus. When he returned from washing in the pool of Siloam, there is no mention of him seeing Jesus. So obviously, when Jesus found him and posed this question, the man did not recognize Jesus. He did not **know** that the man who healed him, was standing right in front of him, talking to him.
3. John 9:37 – *Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you.”* Similar to the way Jesus revealed Himself to the woman at the well, He now revealed Himself to the man who had been born blind. Jesus was the Son of Man, the Messiah, Immanuel, God **among** men, and the Savior of the world. John 4:26

4. John 9:38 – *And he said, “Lord, I believe.” And he worshiped Him.* This must have been a touching moment. In complete simplicity and sincerity, this man put his faith in Jesus Christ and was **saved**. Although in verse 27 this man “claimed” to be Jesus’ disciple, he had not yet realized Jesus was the Messiah and had not yet believed in Him for salvation.
5. John 9:39 – *And Jesus said, “For judgment I came into this world, so that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may become blind.”* Jesus came to differentiate between two **classes** of people: those who are saved and those who are not saved.
 - a. Jesus came so that the spiritually blind might be able to see and so that those who think they see would become blind. Why? Because God **resists** the proud but gives grace to the humble. Those who recognize their spiritual blindness receive grace and come to see. Those who are proud and think they see are blinded by their own arrogance.
 - b. There is no contradiction here to what Jesus said in John 3:17. When Jesus came to earth the first time, He did not come to **condemn** people but to bring salvation to all mankind through His death for sins and resurrection. However, when He comes to earth the second time, He will come to judge.
6. John 9:40 – *Those of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these things and said to Him, “We are not blind too, are we?”* The Pharisees were blinded by self-righteousness. If they had said, “We are blind. Please give us sight,” the Lord would have had **pity** on them and would have given them spiritual eyesight. Luke 13:34-35
7. John 9:41 – *Jesus said to them, “If you were blind, you would have no sin...”* If they had recognized their spiritual blindness, they would have sought the light of the world, Jesus Christ, and He would have **healed** their sin-sick blindness and forgiven their sins.
8. John 9:41 – *“...but since you say, ‘We see,’ your sin remains.”* Instead, Jesus assured them that because of the spiritual blindness of their arrogance, they were still lost in the **darkness** of their sins.

XII. John 10:1-42 – Jesus, a Master Illustrator

A. John 10:1-6 – The good shepherd versus the thief

1. John 10:1a – *“Truly, truly, I say to you...”* Although some commentators disagree, Jesus was likely still dialoguing with the Pharisees from the previous chapter. There’s no reason to believe otherwise since there is no mention of a **change** of audience or setting.
 - a. Verse 21 confirms that this is a **continuation** of the conversation concerning Jesus healing a man born blind. John 10:21 reads, *“Others were saying, ‘These are not the sayings of one demon-possessed. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?’”* In verse 22 we can observe that the setting changes.
 - b. This chapter begins with a merciful **appeal** to these stiff-necked religious leaders. Jesus’ compassion and patience extend to all people. Since He is the only one who can save sinners, He greatly desires that all people trust in Him for salvation. Isaiah 30:18, Luke 23:34, Acts 4:12, Romans 5:8, 1 Timothy 2:5, 2 Peter 3:9

2. John 10:1b – *“...he who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber.”* The door was the only valid entry into a sheep pen. In the average sheep pen, the door was merely an opening in the circular enclosure that protected sheep. A shepherd would serve as the **gate** by lying in this opening at night.
 - a. The only legitimate way to enter the sheep pen was through the gate opening, which Jesus called the door. Only a thief (nonconfrontational burglar) or robber (an armed villain) would seek a more **covert** way to enter.
 - b. What was Jesus’ point? Jesus was building an analogy to compare His relationship with Israel with the way the religious leaders related to Israel. In this **analogy**, Israel was God’s flock. The religious leaders were thieves and robbers. In this comparison, Jesus was the true shepherd.
3. John 10:2 – *“But he who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep.”* Jesus came to the **flock** via the doorway. He came directly as God’s shepherd sent to God’s flock, Israel. He came identifiably in an open, candid and honest way, just as scripture had predicted He would come. Micah 5:2, Isaiah 7:14
4. 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.”* Often, in open fields, a large sheep pen was **shared** by various shepherds and flocks. This allowed multiple herds to be safeguarded in the same enclosure.
 - a. In such instances there might be one shepherd assigned as doorkeeper. His job was to remain in the gateway to **safeguard** the various flocks of sheep inside the pen overnight.
 - b. In the morning, each shepherd would call out to his own sheep, often by name. The sheep would easily **recognize** and respond to the voice of their shepherd.
5. John 10:4 – *“When he puts forth all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice.”* The believing remnant among Israel readily followed Jesus Christ because they recognized His **call**, His voice. Those who were of their father the devil did not recognize Him nor did they follow Him. John 8:44
6. John 10:5 – *“A stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.”* Jesus proposed that believing Israel would not follow false messiahs. Those who knew the true shepherd would not follow the **lies** offered by the false shepherds among the flock of Israel.
7. John 10:6 – *This figure of speech Jesus spoke to them, but they did not understand what those things were which He had been saying to them.* Because the Pharisees were spiritually blind, they did not understand the **significance** of the analogy Jesus made.
 - a. Jesus spoke of Himself as the true shepherd of Israel who came legitimately in the way a genuine shepherd would enter the sheep pen, through the principal **gateway**.

- b. Jesus spoke negatively of the religious elite. He basically called them **bandits**. He implied that these religious leaders could beckon to Israel all day long but the true remnant of Israel, those who were believers, would simply not respond. In fact, they would flee from them.

B. John 10:7-10 – Jesus is the gate

1. John 10:7 – *So Jesus said to them again, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.” Truly in Greek is **AMEN**, let it be so, or of a truth. The repetition of the word truly emphasized Jesus as the one and only true gateway, Israel’s one true shepherd.*
2. John 10:8 – *“All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.”* The thieves and robbers were the religious leaders and others who tried to get Israel to follow them. These were not sent by God and did not actually care about the spiritual well-being of God’s sheep. Believing Israel did not submit to these **imposters**. Acts 5:35-37
3. John 10:9 – *“I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.”* This verse describes two of the **tenses** of salvation, past and present.
 - a. Justification is salvation from sin’s penalty occurring at a moment in time and can be likened to entering through an open door. Entering through Jesus describes believing in Him **alone** for salvation. That describes the past tense of salvation.
 - b. Sanctification is ongoing salvation from sin’s power and is described by the phrase *“and will go in and out and find pasture.”* Finding pasture means the continual process of consuming the spiritual **food** necessary for spiritual growth. This describes the present tense of salvation. Acts 20:32, Ephesians 5:26-27, Colossians 3:16
4. John 10:10a – *“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy...”* Do not trust anyone who is self-promoting and unconcerned for the **welfare** of the sheep. Such people exploit God’s flock by using religion for riches or fame. Acts 20:33, 1 Thessalonians 2:3-6
5. John 10:10b – *“...I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”* Those who pass through the open door of Jesus Christ for salvation receive **life**.
 - a. This includes **eternal** life obtained in justification. John 3:16
 - b. This also includes **fullness** of life obtained through sanctification. John 17:3, Ephesians 3:8, 19-20, Colossians 2:9-12
 - c. And lastly, this includes **resurrection** life (the believer’s glorification) which will be obtained in the future at the rapture of the church. 1 Corinthians 15:51-57

C. John 10:11-21 – Jesus is the good shepherd

1. John 10:11 – *“I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.”* By this statement, Jesus predicted His upcoming death on the cross. When Jesus came to earth, He did not have His own **agenda**; He came for the benefit of God’s sheep. As the good shepherd, He willingly died so that the sheep could live. John 1:29, Philippians 2:3-8

2. John 10:12 – *“He who is a hired hand, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, sees the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them.”* Hired hands flee at the first sign of danger because they do not truly **care** about the sheep.
 - a. Hired hands are not usually **evil** in their intentions, but at the same time, they are not fully committed to the protection and wellbeing of the flock.
 - b. The leaders of Israel during the times of Jesus were like **hired** hands. They were not concerned, or worried Israel might be devoured by an enemy. They were only concerned about keeping their position of power and control over the nation.
3. John 10:13 – *“He flees because he is a hired hand and is not concerned about the sheep.”* Jesus told the truth. The religious elite of the day were not truly concerned for Israel’s welfare. They were concerned only for their **own** advancement, even if it meant destroying the sheep of God’s pasture. They were as indifferent as a hired hand. Philippians 2:20-21
4. John 10:14-15 – Jesus drew attention to His coming substitutionary **death**.
 - a. John 10:14 – *“I am the good shepherd, and I know My own and My own know Me...”* As a perfect shepherd, Jesus is intimately acquainted with every lamb in His flock. Jesus’ lambs also recognize Him as their shepherd. Psalm 23:1, 139:1-6
 - 1) This statement shows why the Pharisees continually speculated, argued and denied Jesus identity. The Pharisees did not **recognize** Jesus because they were not the sheep of His fold.
 - 2) They did not know from where He had come. They did not know who His real Father was, and they constantly denied the truth of His person. This was all proof that they did not **belong** to God.
 - b. John 10:15 – *“...even as the Father knows Me and I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep.”* Not only did Jesus know His sheep, He also intimately knew the **owner** of everything, God the Father. The religious leaders of the day could not make that claim. Jesus stated again that He would lay down His life for the sheep. Amazing!
5. John 10:16 – *“I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; I must bring them also, and they will hear My voice; and they will become one flock with one shepherd.”* Up until this point, the flock Jesus referred to was Israel. Now He spoke of **other** sheep who were not part of the flock of Israel.
 - a. The other sheep Jesus mentioned here are the **Gentiles**. Jesus was going to save others besides Israel. On the day of Pentecost, Jews and Jewish proselytes from gentile nations were among the first converts. Acts 2:5, 14
 - b. As time passed, we see Peter first, and then Paul, preaching the **gospel** to the gentile nations. Acts 10-11, 13:11
 - c. With the passing of time, the church became composed of both **Jews** and Gentiles. Jesus Christ, *the Chief Shepherd* (1 Pet. 5:4), presides over the church, accepting all equally. Galatians 3:26-29, Ephesians 2:11-22

6. John 10:17 – *“For this reason the Father loves Me, because I lay down My life so that I may take it again.”* Being fully assured of His Father’s **love**, Jesus willingly obeyed the Father’s plan. He did not seek to work out His own private agenda.
 - a. For the third time in this chapter, Jesus spoke of His coming death and resurrection. Each time He made it clear that **He** was laying down His own life. No one took it from Him. He was not forced to give it up unwillingly.
 - b. Those who were listening to Jesus could not have understood the full **meaning** of His words, but today, from hindsight, we readily understand that He was talking about His death and resurrection. Hebrews 12:2
7. John 10:18a – *“No one has taken it away from Me, but I lay it down on My own initiative. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again...”* When Jesus died, no one took His life; He voluntarily laid it down. In His substitutionary death on the cross, Jesus was never a victim. He was both **priest** and sacrifice at the same time.
8. John 10:18b – *“...This commandment I received from My Father.”* God the Father gave Jesus **authority** to do with His own life whatever He wanted. Jesus ultimately made the decision to lay down His life. He willingly chose to die for our sins. This shows that Jesus’ sacrifice was an offering and not an obligation.
9. John 10:19 – *“A division occurred again among the Jews because of these words.”* Again, Christ’s teaching **caused** a noteworthy division (SCHISM meaning a division into opposing groups). Jesus tended to create this kind of stalemate. Matthew 10:34, John 9:16
10. John 10:20 – *Many of them were saying, “He has a demon and is insane. Why do you listen to Him?”* Rather than trying to understand Jesus’ teaching, a lot of the people went back to their typical accusations against Him. These people were a great **example** of those who did not know Jesus because they were not from His flock and He was not their shepherd.
11. John 10:21 – *Others were saying, “These are not the sayings of one demon-possessed. A demon cannot open the eyes of the blind, can he?”* Still others reasoned that Jesus had to be someone **special**. No demonic person could ever heal a man born blind.

D. John 10:22-42 – Confrontation at the Feast of Dedication

1. John 10:22 – *At that time the Feast of the Dedication took place at Jerusalem...* This feast, which was celebrated in December, was not required by the Mosaic Law.
 - a. Israel first celebrated this festival back in BC 164 when the **temple** was reopened after it had been desecrated by Antiochus Epiphanes.
 - b. Today the Feast of Dedication is often referred to as Hanukkah or the Festival of Lights. It is typically a **happy** time of the year for Jewish people.
2. John 10:23 – *“It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the portico of Solomon.”* This entryway likely provided some shelter from the **cold** weather.

3. John 10:24 – *The Jews then gathered around Him, and were saying to Him, “How long will You keep us in suspense? If You are the Christ, tell us plainly.”* The religious leaders demanded a straightforward **answer** from Jesus.
 - a. The truth was they had all the **evidence** necessary to come to a correct conclusion.
 - b. They were simply unwilling to believe that Jesus was indeed the Christ. A direct answer does not dissuade people like this who do not believe; it only ends up becoming the topic of accusations and conflict. These people were looking for something to hold **against** Him, not for something to make them believers.
4. John 10:25 – *Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe; the works that I do in My Father’s name, these testify of Me.”* Not only had Jesus told them who He was, His works also powerfully testified to His identity. It was glaringly **evident** who Jesus was. The Jews just did not want to believe.
5. John 10:26-28 – Since the religious leaders had not believed in Jesus as Messiah, they were clearly not sheep from God’s **flock**. On the other hand, those who had believed were eternally secure in God's omnipotent hand.
 - a. John 10:26 – *“But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep.”* The reason they did not believe that Jesus was the Christ was because they did not belong to Him. The believing remnant of Israel readily believed in Jesus as Messiah. Conversely, unbelieving Israel **rejected** Him when He came on the scene. John 1:11
 - b. John 10:27 – *“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.”* The recognition of a shepherd by the sheep was a run-of-the-mill concept in ancient Israel. Sheep will not follow a stranger. They know the **voice** of their shepherd and follow his calls and lead.
 - c. John 10:28a – *“...and I give eternal life to them...”* Jesus told a most fascinating fact here. Jesus gives all His sheep, speaking of those He saves, eternal life as a **gift**. Eternal life lasts forever, and all true gifts are free. This is God’s grace in action. John 1:17
 - d. John 10:28b – *“...and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand.”* Those who believe in Jesus **never** perish. If in the future a child of God could end up perishing, this statement would be false, but Jesus Christ does not lie. He loses nothing. No one can rob you out of His hand. Nothing He holds gets dropped or stolen. Psalm 100:3
6. 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 the Father’s hand.”* It is not the believer’s ability or work, but rather God the Father’s infinite **power**, that saves and keeps the believer. The sheep Jesus owns are gifted to Him by the Father and no one can take them from His mighty grip.
 - a. Understanding God’s multifaceted work in salvation is a major step in understanding the eternal nature of our salvation. We are **safe** and secure in the double grip of God the Father and God the Son’s hands.

- b. Since the day of Pentecost until today, no believer has ever become un-indwelt by God's Holy Spirit. Speaking of the enduring **presence** of the Holy Spirit in John 14:16 Jesus said, *"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever."* 1 Corinthians 3:16
 - c. A believer cannot be **unsealed** by the Holy Spirit. We are protected because we have been sealed by the Holy Spirit as a guarantee of our coming glorification. Since He can never leave us, Paul in Ephesians 4:30 pleaded with us to never give the Holy Spirit grief by our actions. Ephesians 1:13-14
 - d. A believer can never be un-regenerated. To be born again is a one-way trip that can never be **undone**. Titus 3:5
 - e. All believers are spiritually baptized into union with Christ by means of the Holy Spirit. Nowhere in the Bible are we taught that anyone can become unbaptized spiritually, and **retreat** from union with God. 1 Corinthians 12:13
 - f. All believers in Christ are given eternal life as a gift the **moment** they trust in Christ. Romans 11:29 clearly shows that God's gifts cannot be removed or taken back. Romans 6:23
 - g. We can conclude then that absolutely no believer is in danger of losing his or her salvation. That is the point of Jesus **pledge** that *"no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand."* 2 Timothy 2:19
7. John 10:30 – *"I and the Father are one."* In this simple yet powerful statement, Jesus claimed to be God. When Jesus stated that He and the Father are one, He was essentially declaring **equality** with the Father.
- a. Together with the Holy Spirit, the Father and the Son, are co-equal and constitute our one true **God**.
 - b. They are not three God's. The Son is not the Father or vice versa. They, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, are, all three, the one and **only** true God.
8. John 10:31 – *The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him.* The religious leaders understood Jesus' claim to deity, and because they did not believe in Him, they instantly sought to **murder** Him. They had asked Him who He was, and He told them. Ironically, when He answered their question in direct, plain words, they immediately wanted Him dead.
9. John 10:32-33 – Jesus tried to **reason** with the furious mob.
- a. John 10:32 – *Jesus answered them, "I showed you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you stoning Me?"* Jesus had **only** done good for Israel. He had healed their sick, blind, deaf and mute. He had miraculously cleansed lepers and had even raised the dead. Which of those deeds, all inspired by the Father, justified Jesus' death?
 - b. John 10:33 – *The Jews answered Him, "For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy; and because You, being a man, make Yourself out to be God."* They believed killing Jesus was **valid** because He claimed to be God. To them Jesus was a common man. Today, His claims to deity are false to unbelievers, but to us it is profound truth.

10. John 10:34 – *Jesus answered them, “Has it not been written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’?”* Quoting from Psalms 82:6, the Lord presented a **shrewd** argument. From time to time they would have sung that Psalm. No one ever considered those words to be sacrilege. Jesus showed them where they quoted something similar, without a second thought.
11. John 10:35-36 – Jesus stunned these religious leaders by quoting from their own beloved scriptures. In the Old Testament God had called mere human beings **gods**. How then could they call Him a blasphemer if He said He was the Son of God?
- a. John 10:35 – *“If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken)”* If the word of God is always **true** and cannot be cancelled, changed or altered, how is it that mere humans were called “gods” back then? Jesus showed them biblically that they were overreacting.
 - b. 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’?”* If the Bible calls mere humans gods, why did they **accuse** Him, whom God the Father had personally approved and sent into the world, of blasphemy for calling Himself the Son of God?
12. John 10:37-38 – Jesus said His works proved that He was in perfect oneness with the Father. Anyone who humbly and honestly examined the evidence found in the miracles and teaching of Christ had to **conclude** that He was indeed one with the Father. John 10:30
- a. John 10:37 – *“If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me...”* Jesus asked His critics to simply look at the things He did and see if they **matched** the Father’s works. This was a simple test they could easily perform. If His works did not match up with God’s works, then Jesus told them to not trust in Him.
 - 1) If Jesus was lying and sinning, He would not have been **like** the Father. In that case, they should not believe in him.
 - 2) On the other hand, if He was blessing, healing, helping, feeding, and saving, He was like God. In that case, they should indeed **trust** Him and His words.
 - b. John 10:38 – *“...but if I do them, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, so that you may know and understand that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father.”* Jesus encouraged them to examine His **works** and compare them with what they knew to be true of God.
 - 1) Jesus was convinced that even if they did not believe what He said, careful consideration of His works was enough **proof** that He and the Father were in perfect oneness.
 - 2) Jesus had nothing to hide. He invited them to examine the record and consider the facts; then come to their own conclusion. He knew that an honest examiner would come to an honest, positive conclusion. We should approach cynics in a similar manner. True Christianity has nothing to **hide**.

13. John 10:39 – *Therefore they were seeking again to seize Him, and He eluded their grasp.* The religious leaders tried again to arrest Jesus, but once more He escaped. After this Jesus did not return to Jerusalem until Palm Sunday, a day Christians everywhere still celebrate. That day, in Jerusalem, He presented Himself as **king** to cheering crowds.
14. John 10:40 – *And He went away again beyond the Jordan to the place where John was first baptizing, and He was staying there.* After slipping through the fingers of the angry religious mob, Jesus went back across the Jordan to the area where John first baptized and stayed there out of direct reach of the **cruel** religious leaders.
15. John 10:41 – *Many came to Him and were saying, “While John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true.”* This shows that a lot of people followed Jesus to this secluded area beyond the Jordan. Many realized that while John had done no miracles, everything he said about the coming Messiah was **true** of the person of Jesus.
16. John 10:42 – *Many believed in Him there.* As a result of realizing that Jesus was the person predicted by John the Baptist, many believed in the Christ right then and there. In Greek, the aorist tense of the word *believed* ΠΙΣΤΕΥΟ indicates a one-time completed instance of **faith** in Christ. This faith of course resulted in their eternal salvation. Acts 19:4

XIII. John 11:1-54 – Jesus raises the dead

A. John 11:1-16 – The death of Lazarus

1. John 11:1 – *Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.* Lazarus was the Greek transliteration of the name *Eleazar*, which means God **helps**.
 - a. Mary, Martha and Lazarus were good **friends** of Jesus. Bethany was about two miles east of Jerusalem on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives.
 - b. This event with Lazarus should not be confused with the story of the **rich** man and Lazarus mentioned in Luke 16:19-31. That is a different story.
2. John 11:2-3 – We know from John 4:46-54 that the Lord had power to heal from a distance, so this decision to not heal immediately but instead wait a few days was part of a deliberate **plan**.
 - a. John 11:2 – *It was the Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.* This story is not told in John’s Gospel until John 12:1-8, but it was recorded in detail in Mark 14:3-9. Jesus said that what she did would be **told** the world over, wherever the gospel was preached.
 - b. John 11:3 – *So the sisters sent word to Him, saying, “Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick.”* Although this was sad news and Jesus was most certainly moved, He did not instantly **leave** to help Lazarus or comfort the fears of the two sisters. Jesus had a greater plan that would benefit Mary and Martha’s faith and bring glory to God.

3. John 11:4 – *But when Jesus heard this, He said, “This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.”* Jesus said Lazarus’ sickness would not terminate with death but would be used to bring **glory** to God the Father and God the Son.
4. John 11:5 – *Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus.* Because of Jesus love for their family, Lazarus’ sisters, Mary and Martha, totally expected Jesus to drop everything and come immediately. Contrary to their expectations, Jesus deliberately delayed His **arrival**.
5. John 11:6 – *So when He heard that he was sick, He then stayed two days longer in the place where He was.* Lazarus died the same day the messenger delivered the news, but Jesus delayed two more days so that He would arrive on the fourth day after Lazarus’ death. Jesus was in complete **control** of the entire situation. As always, He was intentional in all He did.
6. John 11:7 – *Then after this He said to the disciples, “Let us go to Judea again.”* The religious leaders who sought to murder Jesus lived in Judea. Humanly speaking this was a risky decision, but Jesus went calmly and deliberately. He knew the religious leaders would be at Lazarus’ home, but they could not touch Him until the precise **time** set by the Father.
7. John 11:8 – *The disciples said to Him, “Rabbi, the Jews were just now seeking to stone You, and are You going there again?”* Not many days prior the Jewish leaders had sought to stone Jesus because He claimed to be God. The disciples were undoubtedly concerned for their own **safety** as well as His.
8. 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.* Daylight is literally when you can see to work and move about. Figuratively, Jesus implied that as the **light** of the world, He provided His disciples with spiritual illumination and understanding.
9. John 11:10 – *“But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.”* Unbelievers easily stumble because they do not have Jesus as their light. This was the miserable condition of the religious establishment at the time of Christ. They blindly **stumbled** about in spiritual darkness. John 3:19, Romans 1:21, Ephesians 4:17-19
10. John 11:11 – *This He said, and after that He said to them, “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I go, so that I may awaken him out of sleep.”* Using His omniscience, Jesus knew that Lazarus had already been dead for a while. Jesus was planning on resurrecting him. He used the concept of **sleep** here to refer to the death of Lazarus, a believer.
11. John 11:12 – *The disciples then said to Him, “Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will recover.”* When Jesus said that Lazarus was asleep, the disciples understood Him to mean that Lazarus had physically fallen asleep and was now resting. They were sure that now he would **recover**. But Jesus meant that Lazarus had died.
12. John 11:13 – *Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking of literal sleep.* John’s commentary makes it clear that believers in Christ do not die but rather **fall** asleep in God. Matthew 9:24, 27:52; Mark 5:39; Acts 13:36; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

- a. This statement does not mean that after death believers are in **soul** sleep, as some teach. Luke 23:43
 - b. When a believer dies, the soul and spirit remain conscious and are immediately taken into the presence of the Lord to await the resurrection of the **body** at the Rapture. Philippians 1:23, 2 Corinthians 5:8
 - c. In the New Testament sleep is a common way of describing the death of believers. The souls of the dead are not literally asleep, but their bodies lie in a state of **rest** in anticipation of being awakened in the future resurrection. 1 Thessalonians 4:16
13. John 11:14 – *So Jesus then said to them plainly, “Lazarus is dead.”* Since the disciples **failed** to understand His spiritual metaphor, Jesus told them bluntly, “Lazarus is dead.”
14. John 11:15 – *“...and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let us go to him.”* God was going to use Lazarus’ death to not only give more evidence of Jesus’ messiahship but to also deepen and **solidify** the faith of the disciples. God is pleased to use negative situations to sanctify His children. 2 Corinthians 4:17, 1 Peter 1:7
15. John 11:16 – *Therefore Thomas, who is called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, “Let us also go, so that we may die with Him.”* Thomas’ **cynical** comment paralleled his words of doubt after Jesus’ resurrection (Jn. 20:25-28). Thomas, much like us, needed his faith to be boosted, the very goal the Lord had in mind with what was soon to transpire.

B. John 11:17-46 – The seventh sign miracle: Lazarus’ resurrection (resuscitation)

1. John 11:17 – *So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days.* Because of a prevalent false belief that a person’s spirit hovered above their body for three days, Jesus purposely **waited** four days so that in the mind of the people there was no more possibility of Lazarus returning to life.
2. John 11:18-19 – **Many** mourners came from Jerusalem to mourn Lazarus’ death, indicating the high level of respect and prominence his family enjoyed.
 - a. John 11:18 – *Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles off...* Due to the closeness of Bethany to Jerusalem, a large crowd of family, friends, and acquaintances came to mourn Lazarus’ death. This was the perfect **setting** for Jesus to demonstrate His divine power.
 - b. John 11:19 – *...and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to console them concerning their brother.* The word *many* is critical in this verse. Jesus desired to perform this sign before a large **crowd**. In the days just before His death, this powerful sign would give irrefutable proof to as many as possible that He was indeed Messiah.
3. John 11:20-22 – Although Martha was disappointed with Jesus for not coming **sooner**, she still recognized His oneness with the Father and His mighty miracle working power.
 - a. John 11:20 – *Martha therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him, but Mary stayed at the house.* While Mary stayed at home, Martha **hurried** to meet Jesus. She greeted Him with mixed feelings of disappointment and faith.

- b. John 11:21 – *Martha then said to Jesus, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.* It was clear to Martha that Jesus could have worked a miracle of healing, but it seemingly did not enter her mind that Jesus could **raise** Lazarus from the dead, especially after having been in the tomb for so long.
- c. John 11:22 – *“Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You.”* What a testimony of faith. We would do well to have this same **mindset**, especially in those all-too-common moments of doubt and despair we often seem to experience.
4. John 11:23-24 – All believers will one day rise from the dead, never die again. This is the certain **hope** we have as believers in Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:50-58
- a. John 11:23 – *Jesus said to her, “Your brother will rise again.”* Jesus promised Martha that Lazarus would **rise** again.
- b. John 11:24 – *Martha said to Him, “I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.”* Martha **believed** Jesus. Like most religious Jews, Martha believed in a future resurrection, but she had no clue that Jesus was about to perform an incredible miracle right before her eyes.
5. John 11:25-26 – Jesus instantly gives eternal life to all who believe in Him. All who believe in Him will live on, even in death. This was obviously true of Lazarus. He was still **alive** but not in His physical body. One day Jesus will resurrect the lifeless, decomposing bodies, of all who have believed in Him. He is both resurrection and life. 1 Thessalonians 4:16
- a. John 11:25 – *Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies...”* Jesus is, in the **present**, both the life and the resurrection. The moment a person believes in Jesus they receive true life.
- 1) Even when one’s body expires in death; the soul continues to live on throughout eternity. Believers do not **wait** until the end of time to get the life Jesus promised. 1 Corinthians 15:45 explains, *“So also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul.” The last Adam [Christ] became a life-giving spirit.”*
 - 2) Since Jesus is the resurrection, those saints who die physically will be resurrected and physically restored to life by Christ’s power and work. Jesus gives to all who believe in Him the hope of never-ending life and a future restoration to a glorified **physical** body. 1 Corinthians 15:48-55
- b. John 11:26a – *“...and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die.”* Anticipating those who might assume a person ceases to live or have awareness after physical death, Jesus unmistakably and vigorously stated that no person who trusts in Him ever **ceases** to have consciousness or existence even after physical death.
- 1) Paul referred to this truth in 2 Corinthians 5:8 when he said, *“We are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.”* At the physical death of a saint, the soul continues to be conscience and aware in the awe-inspiring **presence** of the Lord.

- 2) Likewise, in Philippians 1:23-24 Paul declared, *“But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much **better**, yet to remain on in the flesh [the body] is more necessary for your sake.”*
- c. John 11:26b – Jesus asked Martha, *“...Do you believe this?”* Can we believe this? Can we believe that Jesus is fully capable of raising us up after death? Or are we buying into new age deceptions that we return to the stars or dissolve into the universe? Are we buying into the devil’s **lies**? 2 Peter 3:3-4,17
- 1) In the intermediate state between physical death and our literal future bodily resurrection, the **soul** never dies. There is no interruption of existence for either the saved or the unsaved. Luke 16:19-31 tells the story of a rich man and Lazarus. There Jesus showed how consciousness continues for both the just and the unjust.
 - 2) We must understand that all dead human bodies do indeed rest or **“sleep”** in the dust of the earth after death, awaiting future resurrection. Isaiah 26:19, Daniel 12:2, John 5:28-29, Acts 24:15
 - 3) In Revelation 20:13 the apostle John foretold the coming physical resurrection of the bodies of the **unsaved** in this way: *“And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds.”* Revelation 20:11-15
6. John 11:27 – *She said to Him, “Yes, Lord; I have believed that You are the Christ, the Son of God, even He who comes into the world.”* The word *believed* is in the perfect tense, active voice, and indicative mood, conveying that Martha definitely had trusted in Jesus at a previous point in time and she continued even now to **believe** in Him.
- a. We can note here again that like Martha many in Israel had heard about a coming savior and were **looking** for the Christ. Luke 2:25,38; 24:21; Acts 13:23, 32
 - b. We see that Martha, having heard about the coming deliverer, had concluded that Jesus was that person. She then believed in Him and **instantly** became born again. At that moment, she was given eternal life as a gift. John 3:16
7. John 11:28-29 – Martha quickly and discreetly went to **tell** Mary that Jesus had come.
- a. John 11:28 – *When she had said this, she went away and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, “The Teacher is here and is calling for you.”* Martha was still totally unaware of Jesus’ plan. Privately she whispered to her sister that Jesus was asking for her. We do not know why she whispered this news to **Mary**.
 - b. John 11:29 – *And when she heard it, she got up quickly and was coming to Him.* Immediately Mary jumped up and went to Jesus. As we observe in the verses that follow, upon seeing Jesus, Mary also, like her sister Martha, voiced **regret** that He had not come sooner. John 11:21,32

- c. When a loved one dies, it is easy to feel this kind of regret. “**if only** this or if only that our loved one would still be alive,” is often what we voice. We must trust that our times are in God’s hands. He controls the date and circumstances of our death. His ways and thoughts are higher than ours. Psalm 31:14-15, 139:16; Isaiah 55:8-9; Romans 11:33-36
8. John 11:30 – *Now Jesus had not yet come into the village but was still in the place where Martha met Him.* Jesus waited outside of town for Mary to come out to where He was. He had a plan to draw the majority of the mourners, many who were unsaved, out to the **tomb**. They were all going to witness one of the greatest signs miracles of Jesus ministry.
9. John 11:31 – *Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and consoling her, when they saw that Mary got up quickly and went out, they followed her, supposing that she was going to the tomb to weep there.* We see that when Mary abruptly left to go meet Jesus, the mourners thought she was going out to the tomb to weep, and so they **followed** her.
- a. There were Jewish mourners in the crowd who might have **avoided** Jesus if they had known she was going to meet Him. When they saw Mary jump up, they followed without asking questions. They simply thought she was going to the gravesite to mourn.
- b. At times Christ accomplished miracles from a distance or away from the public eye. Other times, He used miracles to astonish and impress the multitudes. In this instance, Christ was nearing His final days of ministry and therefore wanted this miracle to be witnessed by many and then widely **publicized**.
10. John 11:32 – *Therefore, when Mary came where Jesus was, she saw Him, and fell at His feet, saying to Him, “Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died.”* Bowing at the feet of Christ, Mary expressed both disappointment and faith. What she did not know was that Jesus can **easily** resurrect a corpse, even days after death. Luke 10:39, John 12:3
11. John 11:33 – *When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled...* The word translated *deeply moved* EMBRIMAOMAI means “to be moved with **anger**, to snort with anger, or to sternly admonish.” It does not mean to be moved to sadness as we might logically assume.
- a. In Matthew 9:30 and Mark 1:43, EMBRIMAOMAI speaks of a stern warning and in Mark 14:5 of a scolding. It clearly portrays a negative emotion. Why would Jesus have been deeply **disturbed** and not simply sad?
- b. While it is difficult to know for sure, Jesus may have been incensed with an **insincerity** He perceived among some of the mourners. He probably knew that some of those present were going to report the astounding miracle He was about to perform to the leaders of Israel who would conspire even more diligently to kill Him. John 11:46-54
12. John 11:34 – *...and said, “Where have you laid him?” They said to Him, “Lord, come and see.”* Jesus wanted them to **lead** him to the location of the tomb. Inquisitiveness about Jesus’ intentions would naturally draw a curious crowd to follow. This event was a perfect situation for many witnesses to see the logic defying miracle that was about to unfold.
13. John 11:35 – *Jesus wept.* Not only is Jesus divine, He is also fully human. Jesus, the resurrection and the life, **wept** at Lazarus’ funeral. Luke 19:41, Hebrews 5:7

- a. Death was never God’s plan for His creatures. Sin, death and separation, with all their pain and sorrow are truly unnatural. Jesus did not like death any more than we do. Ironically, He was about to face death Himself, but in doing so, He would gain **victory** over sin and death for us forever. 1 Corinthians 15:56-57
- b. *Jesus wept* DAKRYO. This is the only occurrence of the Greek word DAKRYO meaning “to weep” in the Bible. Evidently, Jesus did not weep for the **same** reasons we would. That’s probably why John, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, chose a more uncommon Greek word to describe Jesus’s grief.
- c. Those present speculated as to why Jesus wept, but they were divided in their theories. Since the author does not state a definite **reason** for Jesus’ sorrow, we must use caution and restraint in arriving at our conclusions.
14. John 11:36-37 – The multitudes always had differing opinions about Jesus and His motives. This kind of reaction to Jesus still exists in our world today. The **Word** of God alone, not religion or human philosophy, should shape our views of Jesus Christ. John 7:43, 9:16, 10:21
- a. John 11:36 – *So the Jews were saying, “See how He loved him!”* Jesus indeed **loved** Lazarus deeply (Jn. 11:3,5), but since He was about to resurrect Him, it is not likely He was sad in the way they speculated.
- 1) It may be Jesus sorrowed because He was bringing Lazarus back to this cruel world, away from the glories of **paradise**. In Philippians 1:21 we know from the apostle Paul that, “*For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain.*” 1 Corinthians 12:4
 - 2) We can be certain that Jesus did not grieve like people who have no **hope**. Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 4:13, “*But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope.*”
- b. John 11:37 – *But some of them said, “Could not this man, who opened the eyes of the blind man, have kept this man also from dying?”* Critics abound. If you act, they **criticize** what you do. If you don’t act, they criticize your lack of action. Even their example of healing the blind man was insincere. They had vilified Jesus for that act of mercy.
- 1) Jesus’ critics, however, were soon to be dumbfounded by the **greatest** miracle ever, one that made giving sight to a man born blind look like child’s play.
 - 2) Jesus would raise a rotting corpse back to life. Lazarus was going to be **fully** restored to complete and vibrant health. John 12:2,9-11
15. John 11:38-39 – When Jesus commanded that the **stone** be removed, Martha cautioned Him against being repulsed by the stench.
- a. John. 11:38 – *So Jesus, again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it.* Here again we see the phrase *deeply moved* EMBRIMAOMAI, which we saw was an **adverse** emotion meaning to be infuriated, or snort with anger. What would provoke such a strong negative reaction in Jesus?
- 1) The crowd’s cynical reaction to Jesus’ tears shows their great **disrespect** for Him as a person and an incredible lack of faith. Matthew 13:58

- 2) In their disdain they grumbled because even though Jesus healed a blind man, He was seemingly powerless to keep Lazarus from dying. Their **callous**, unbelieving hearts would obviously have distressed Jesus. Matthew 17:17,20
- b. John. 11:39 – *Jesus said, “Remove the stone.” Martha, the sister of the deceased, said to Him, “Lord, by this time there will be a **stench**, for he has been dead four days.”* Martha’s statement shows that enough time had passed for decomposition to be well advanced. A stone covered the mouth of the tomb where Lazarus’ body lay.
16. John 11:40 – *Jesus said to her, “Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?”* Jesus had told Martha that Lazarus would rise again. He had reminded her that He Himself is the resurrection and the life. But Martha did not **expect** Jesus to raise Lazarus to life right then and there.
- a. This miracle was about to greatly impact the disciples’ faith. Earlier in verse four Jesus had indicated to His disciples that something **good** was going to come from Lazarus’ sickness. *“This sickness is not to end in death, but for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified by it.”*
- b. By this great miracle, Jesus Christ’s **glory** was about to be astoundingly manifested. Jesus had told Martha that she was about to see the glory of God, but she did not understand to what He referred.
17. John 11:41 – *So they removed the stone. Then Jesus raised His eyes, and said, “Father, I thank You that You have heard Me...”* No one had ever gone out to a cemetery, opened a tomb, and resurrected the dead. As the stone was removed, the **tension** of the moment had to be entrancing. Jesus’ prayer exposed His constant fellowship with the Father.
18. John 11:42 – *“I knew that You always hear Me; but because of the people standing around I said it, so that they may believe that You sent Me.”* Jesus prayed publicly so that those listening would be convinced that He was Messiah. God the Father’s direct answer to Jesus’ prayer was conclusive **proof** that the Father sent Him and worked miracles through Him.
19. John 11:43-44 – Jesus needed only to **speak** and immediately Lazarus was alive. The Bible says that in the beginning Jesus created the world and gave life by His words, by speaking. John 1:1-4, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 1:2-3
- a. John 11:43 – *When He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth.”* As soon as He finished praying to the Father, Jesus shouted to Lazarus. This would have been as scary as it was amazing. Only Jesus **could** conquer death.
- b. John 11:44a – *The man who had died came forth, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth.* These wrappings were **bands** of cloth, or bandages, that held the linen and spices in place around the corpse. Jesus could have miraculously removed these, but He chose not to. This allowed the crowd to help.
- c. John 11:44b – *Jesus said to them, “Unbind him, and let him go.”* No amount of spices could overpower the **stench** of death. Unwrapping these bandages from a man who had been decomposing for four days had to have been nauseating, to say the least.

- 1) Scripture does not say a lot about the immediate reactions. Some may have fled in fear. But no one could deny the **reality** of this astonishing miracle: Jesus brought an indisputably dead man back to life. Everyone present witnessed firsthand Jesus Christ's resurrection and life-giving power.
 - 2) Lazarus' sisters must have been awestruck and overjoyed beyond imagination. In the next chapter we will read about Jesus' appreciation banquet with a very serene Lazarus and his thankful sisters in their **home** community.
20. John 11:45-46 – Jesus' disclosure of His divine glory provoked two responses: some believed in Him, while others defiantly **rejected** Him. Acts 17:32-34
- a. John 11:45 – *Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary, and saw what He had done, believed in Him.* Thankfully, when they saw Lazarus' resurrection, many placed their faith in Christ, which was also John's purpose in recording this event. As a truly great **sign**, this miracle still helps people believe in Christ for salvation. John 20:30-31
 - b. John 11:46 – *But some of them went to the Pharisees and told them the things which Jesus had done.* Regrettably, for the Pharisees this event created an urgency to assassinate Jesus. The fact that these witnesses **informed** on Jesus revealed their hardened hearts of unbelief. John 5:15, Mark 16:13-14

C. John 11:47-54 – Lazarus' resurrection triggered a conspiracy to kill Jesus

1. John 11:47 – *Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, "What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs."* After Lazarus' resurrection the Jews' **apprehension** concerning Jesus skyrocketed.
 - a. The religious leaders called a **meeting** to plan how to deal with Jesus. They felt that Jesus was a danger they needed to deal with quickly.
 - b. They could not deny His works; in fact, they called His works signs. But instead of convening the counsel for good, they met for **evil** purposes.
2. John 11:48 – *"If we let Him go on like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."* Misinterpreting Jesus's miracles and message, the religious leaders made decisions based on both **fear** and self-preservation.
 - a. Obviously under **satanic** influence, Israel's leaders feared that everyone would end up believing in Jesus. That in fact, was Jesus' goal from the beginning. Luke 19:10; John 3:17, 6:38-40; 1 Timothy 1:15
 - b. The council believed that if everyone believed in Jesus and followed Him, the Romans would take away their few remaining freedoms as a nation. They viewed Jesus as a **threat** rather than a savior.
 - c. This **bad** decision to reject Jesus as Messiah led to the very destruction they were trying to avoid. In 70 AD the Romans came and destroyed both Jerusalem and their beloved temple. Luke 21:20-24

3. John 11:49-50 – *But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, “You know nothing at all, nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish.”* Caiaphas feared Jesus might bring **physical** death to the whole nation.
 - a. Caiaphas was high priest from AD 18-36. Due to the possibility that Jesus might cause a rebellion that would result in Roman reprisals, Caiaphas recommended a simple solution to the council: **Kill** Jesus. Acts 3:14, 7:52, 13:28
 - b. When Caiaphas spoke of Jesus dying on **behalf** of (HUPER) the people, he did not realize he was prophesying.
4. John 11:51 – *Now he did not say this on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation...*
 - a. God sovereignly turned the words of Israel’s high priest into a **prophetic** declaration concerning Jesus’ upcoming substitutionary death for the nation. It would actually be for their eternal good rather than their physical welfare. 2 Corinthians 5:21
 - b. Caiaphas is an interesting example of God **moving** men to speak prophetically. He was not a believer, but much like the prophet Balaam, God turned his evil intentions into a blessing. Numbers 22:35, 2 Peter 1:20-21
5. John 11:52 – *...and not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.* Not only was Jesus going to **die** for Israel, He was also going to die for the Gentiles. John clarified that the death of Christ would bring many children to glory. Genesis 12:3b, Luke 2:13-14, Ephesians 2:11-22, Hebrews 2:10
6. John 11:53 – *So from that day on they planned together to kill Him.* The great achievement of the “United Council for the Resolution of the Lazarus Dilemma” was that the Pharisees and Sadducees (ruling priests) finally **agreed** on one thing: Jesus must die. Matthew 26:3-5
7. John 11:54 – *Therefore Jesus no longer continued to walk publicly among the Jews but went away from there to the country near the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim; and there He stayed with the disciples.* Knowing their evil plans, Jesus avoided public appearances until the time chosen by the Father. He would die on the Father’s **timetable**.

XIV. John 11:55-12:50 – The Triumphal Entry

A. John 11:55-57 – A warrant issued for Jesus’ arrest

1. John 11:55 – *Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the Passover to purify themselves.* Worshipers from around the country gathered in Jerusalem for Passover. On this particular occasion, however, there was more excitement than usual because people were looking for Jesus, but not with pure **motives**.
2. John 11:56 – *So they were seeking for Jesus, and were saying to one another as they stood in the temple, “What do you think; that He will not come to the feast at all?”* Many speculated that Jesus might not show up at all. They knew that if He did, there would be a **fight**.

3. John 11:57 – *Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where He was, he was to report it, so that they might seize Him.* We can see here how the religious leaders’ exercised cult-like **control** over the masses. No one dared challenge them openly. The nation was told to report Jesus for arrest if His whereabouts were discovered.
 - a. In preparation for the first Passover in Egypt, the Israelites searched for an unblemished **lamb** to replace their firstborn sons. Exodus 12:21 said “...then Moses called for all the elders of Israel and said to them, ‘Go and take for yourselves lambs according to your families and slay the Passover lamb’.”
 - b. Here at Jesus’ final Passover, another Passover lamb was being sought. Starting from John 11:55, we see various people looking for Jesus. Some looked for Him for **malicious** reasons, but others with wholesome motives. Regardless of the reason, the Lamb of God was soon to be found and sacrificed in the place of us all. 1 Corinthians 5:7

B. John 12:1-10 – In preparation for His death, Mary anointed Jesus

1. John 12:1 – *Jesus, therefore, six days before the Passover, came to Bethany where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead.* Six days before Passover, Jesus arrived in Bethany. Each day of that week, up until the Last Supper, Jesus would retreat from Jerusalem to **sleep** in Bethany.
2. John 12:2-8 – The following amazing story is quite possibly the **event** that transpired in Simon the Leper’s home, as recorded in Matthew 26. Matthew did not record the name of the woman, only that she would be remembered the world over, wherever the gospel is preached. This is true. Today this is being fulfilled in your hearing as well. Matthew 26:6-13
 - a. John 12:2 – *So they made Him a supper there, and Martha was serving; but Lazarus was one of those reclining at the table with Him.* Jesus was back in Bethany. A special dinner had been prepared in His **honor**. Lazarus was also a guest of honor at the meal.
 - 1) Having raised Lazarus from the dead, Jesus was now a celebrated **hero**.
 - 2) We see that Martha was again **servicing** at this meal. Mary was there also.
 - b. John 12:3 – *Mary then took a pound of very costly perfume of pure nard and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.* With this selfless act and extravagant freewill **offering**, Mary reverently worshipped her Messiah.
 - 1) The perfume she used was pure nard (spikenard) and probably came from as far away as India or China, since it grows primarily in the Himalayas. It is an essential **oil** that was used in sacred ceremonies, medications, and as an embalming ointment.
 - 2) The lovely, expensive aroma of this oil filled the room. One specific person, a trusted disciple, singled it out and was **infuriated**.
 - c. John 12:4-5 – *But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples, who was intending to betray Him, said, “Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to poor people?”* On the surface, this statement sounds noble, but don’t be deceived. The only regret Judas had was a lost opportunity to confiscate a chunk of **money**.

- d. John 12:6 – *Now he said this, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief, and as he had the money box, he used to pilfer what was put into it.* This verse gives us a window into Judas’ hypocrisy. He was obviously trusted by the disciples, since they put their money in his care. Yet, he was a **thief**.
 - e. John 12:7-8 – *Therefore Jesus said, “Let her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of My burial. “For you always have the poor with you, but you do not always have Me.”* Jesus pointed out that opportunities to help the **poor** would always be available, but the chance to bless the Savior would soon be history. Through this Jesus foretold His death.
3. John 12:9 – *The large crowd of the Jews then learned that He was there; and they came, not for Jesus’ sake only, but that they might also see Lazarus, whom He raised from the dead.* The people came not only to see Jesus but also to see Lazarus. Having been brought back to life after being dead for **four** days gave Lazarus an amazing opportunity to testify.
 4. John 12:10 – *But the chief priests planned to put Lazarus to death also...* In order to suppress Lazarus’ astonishing testimony, the religious leaders conspired to **kill** him also. If he was alive, he stood as a living monument and tribute to Jesus’ amazing power and authority. In fact, His witness was already reaching the lost.
 5. John 12:11 – *...because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and were believing in Jesus.* Lazarus’ testimony led many to walk away from the Jewish religious establishment and to faith in Christ alone for salvation. This enraged the unbelieving leaders of Israel and heightened their desire to **eliminate** both the Lord Jesus and innocent Lazarus.

C. John 12:12-19 – The Jewish nation welcomes Jesus as their king

1. John 12:12 – *On the next day the large crowd who had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem...* Jerusalem was brimming with people who had come for Passover. Many Jews believed Jesus was the Messiah who had come to **liberate** them from Roman oppression. They were eager for Jesus to make a bold move in that direction.
2. John 12:13 – *The crowds...took the branches of the palm trees and went out to meet Him, and began to shout, “Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the **King** of Israel.”* The crowd welcomed Jesus to Jerusalem as their Messiah. Psalm 118:25-26
 - a. The people of Israel wanted a messiah who could solve their political and social woes. They wanted a **conquering** monarch who would deliver them from the cruelty of the Romans.
 - b. But Jesus did not come to meet their worldly expectations. He came to seek and save the lost and to lay down His life as a ransom for all. This seemed weak and pathetic to the fickle masses, but in reality, it was an unheard-of act of selfless **love**.
Isaiah 52:13-53:12
3. John 12:14-15 – *Jesus, finding a young donkey, sat on it; as it is written, “Fear not, daughter of Zion; behold, your King is coming, seated on a donkey’s colt.”* Jesus fulfilled every **prophecy** concerning Messiah’s First Advent. Riding on a colt, He entered Jerusalem as a king bringing peace, exactly as predicted by scripture. Zechariah 9:9

4. John 12:16 – *These things His disciples did not understand at the first; but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things were written of Him, and that they had done these things to Him.* After Jesus' resurrection and with the coming of the Holy Spirit, many things became **clearer** in the minds of the disciples. John 14:26, 16:13
5. John 12:17 – *So the people, who were with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, continued to testify about Him.* News of Lazarus' resurrection continued to **spread** to more and more people.
6. John 12:18 – *For this reason also the people went and met Him, because they heard that He had performed this sign.* Bringing a dead person back to life was no ordinary feat. **Everyone** wanted to catch a glimpse of the man who had the astonishing power to bring a decomposing corpse back to life.
7. John 12:19 – *So the Pharisees said to one another, "You see that you are not doing any good; look, the world has gone after Him."* The throngs of people following Jesus **unnerved** the angry religious leaders. His popularity made their plans to openly seize Him impossible. Mark 14:1-2

D. John 12:20-26 – Some Greeks wanted to personally meet Jesus

1. John 12:20 – *Now there were some Greeks among those who were going up to worship at the feast...* Some Greek-speaking Gentile converts had made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish Passover festival. Interestingly, in the previous verse the Pharisees feared that the whole **world** was going after Jesus.
2. John 12:21 – *...these then came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and began to ask him, saying, "Sir, we wish to see Jesus."* Unlike Israel, these Gentile worshippers did not ask for a sign; they wanted to **see** Jesus. The *wicked and* [spiritually] *adulterous* majority in Israel only wanted signs (Matt. 12:39, 16:4). 1 Corinthians 1:22
3. John 12:22 – *Philip came and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip came and told Jesus.* We do not know why these Greeks approached Philip, other than that Philip had a Greek **name** and was from Bethsaida, a community which boasted many non-Jewish residents. Interestingly, Andrew was the only other disciple with a Greek name.
4. John 12:23 – *And Jesus answered them, saying, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified."* Philip and Andrew might have found Jesus' response perplexing and irrelevant, but Jesus never got side-tracked with **superficial** matters.
 - a. Just like these Greeks, Nicodemus came to see Jesus because of the great things he had seen and heard. But Jesus was much more than a great person. He was God, the Messiah. Jesus immediately pointed both Nicodemus and the Greeks to the **gospel** message (John 12:24).
 - b. The greatest need of all mankind, Greeks and Jews, is to be saved from sin and death and to be made right with God. Jesus **purpose** in coming to earth was to make this possible by dying on the cross in our place and rising again. John 12:27, Romans 1:16-17

- c. Throughout the book of John, the event of Jesus' crucifixion is referred to as an *hour* yet to come. This **hour** was the very purpose for which Jesus came to earth. Jesus' hour was going to happen at the precise time determined by God from all eternity. John 2:4; 7:30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 16:32; 17:1; 1 Peter 1:20
- d. Sometimes we are **perplexed** by God's answers to our prayers. However, God knows our true need and He is more interested in an eternal solution than in a quick temporal fix. Christ came not to save us from physical pain, but to save us from sin and death through justification, as well as sanctification. Romans 8:28-29, 2 Corinthians 4:18
5. John 12:24 – *"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit."* Jesus continued His response with the words, *"Truly, truly."* By means of a **metaphor**, Jesus was about to share with them a super important truth on which they could rely.
- a. Like a kernel of wheat, Jesus would die, and like a seed planted in the soil He would come forth and go on to provide true bread for this world. In His case, if He failed to die, He would remain alone and not provide salvation. But if He died, He would come forth and offer true **food** for the spiritually starving masses. 1 Corinthians 15:20, 23, 36
- b. Without the death of a seed, growth and harvest are impossible. In the same way, without the death of Messiah, a great spiritual harvest would never occur. The Greeks, who esteemed knowledge, should have rejoiced with such amazing **wisdom**. Romans 14:9
6. John 12:25a – *"He who loves his life loses it..."* Still responding to the Greeks, Jesus continued His deep sayings. He said that if you guard your life, you'll lose it. An unbeliever who lives for the pleasures of this life, will **miss** the chance to find Christ and eternal life.
7. John 12:25b – *"...and he who hates his life in this world will keep it to life **eternal**..."* The person who values eternal life more than the natural life of this world will listen to the gospel and be saved. The person who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, does not hold this life as important. In losing their life, they actually keep it. They gain eternal life.
8. John 12:26a – *"If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me..."* Building on His previous statement regarding salvation (justification), Jesus added an additional challenge of **discipleship** (sanctification).
- a. The goal in Jesus' metaphor was not simply for the seed to **sprout**, but also for there to be a harvest.
- b. The sprouting of the seed would be compared to being born again with new life while the goal of being born again would ultimately be to bear **fruit** that remains.
9. John 12:26b – *"...and where I am, there My servant will be also; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him."* As believers we are slaves of the one to whom we present ourselves. Presenting our members to Christ as **slaves** of righteousness results in sanctification and true life. Romans 6:16, 22

- a. A servant stays **near** his or her master, not running ahead or trailing behind. Servants keep their eyes on their master just like Jesus kept His eyes on the Father and always did His Father's will. Jesus came to earth to serve and to give His life as a ransom for sinners. He accomplished His goal. Psalm 32:9, 123:2; Matthew 20:28; John 8:9; Ephesians 5:1
- b. A servant needs to be filled with God's word and led by the Holy Spirit in order to know what God's **will** is, both globally and personally. God's will is always good and perfect in every respect. Romans 12:1-2, Philippians 1:9-11, Colossians 1:9-11
- c. Upon glorification, a believer will be **rewarded** for works done according to God's will and by His power. 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, 15:57-58

E. John 12:27-36b – If I be lifted up

1. John 12:27 – *“Now My soul has become troubled; and what shall I say, ‘Father, save Me from this hour’? But for this purpose, I came to this hour.”* Jesus' **hour** referred to His death for our sins and resurrection. This was the hour prophesied in the Old Testament and the reason for which He came to earth.
 - a. Jesus knew why He came into the world. He knew a terrible hour of **agony** was coming. But He did not live His days dreading that hour. He knew everything would happen at the exact time set by the Father, no sooner, no later. In the meantime, He had work to do. Every day, every moment, He did what God the Father showed Him to do.
 - b. But now the hour was upon Him, and Jesus' soul was greatly **disturbed**. He knew He was about to bear the sins of the world in His body on the cruel cross. He was going to be judged and separated from God the Father in our place, as a substitute for all mankind. Matthew 26:38-45, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 2:24
 - c. As a human, Jesus wanted to be saved from the **anguish** and torture He was about to face. But He had come to earth as the promised deliverer to save mankind from sin and death, and He was determined to complete His mission. No matter what, God always does what He says He will do. Acts 2:23, Galatians 4:4, Hebrews 12:2, 1 Peter 1:20
2. John 12:28 – *“Father, glorify Your name.” Then a voice came out of heaven: “I have both glorified it and will glorify it again.”* God the Father answered Jesus' prayer. His immediate thunderous reply was, once again, undeniable **proof** that God the Father approved of Jesus. Jesus' death would bring great praise and honor to God.
3. John 12:29 – *So the crowd of people who stood by and heard it were saying that it had thundered; others were saying, “An angel has spoken to Him.”* As we might predict, the people nearby misunderstood the Father's remarkable response. Their **inability** to grasp God's words paralleled national Israel's hardheartedness towards the voice of God.
4. John 12:30 – *Jesus answered and said, “This voice has not come for My sake, but for your sakes.”* Jesus did not need an audible voice to know His Father was listening. God the Father's loud answer was for the sake of those listening. God did everything He possibly could to get people to **believe** in Jesus and be saved.

5. John 12:31 – *“Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.”* Christ’s main purpose in coming to earth was to be judged for the sin of mankind. The judgement Christ bore on the cross assured Satan’s demise. On the cross, Jesus judicially **defeated** the devil. You can rest assured; Satan will be cast out.
6. John 12:32 – *“And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself.”* Being *lifted up* was Jesus’ way of predicting and explaining His death on the cross. That was a death He willingly suffered on **behalf** of the entire world. John 3:14
 - a. The word *draw* HELKUO means to move by pulling, to **attract**, to drag or to haul. This word is used four other times in John’s Gospel. Twice it describes pulling a loaded fish net up out of the water and another time it describes drawing a sword out of its sheath. John 6:44, 18:10, 21:6, 21:11
 - b. This clearly shows that God uses the preaching of Christ crucified to powerfully draw and **attract** people to Himself. The lifting up of Christ on the cross, as well as the lifting up of Christ in our preaching, becomes a powerful attraction to the truth. We can see why Paul preached Christ crucified. 1 Corinthians 1:17-18, 23-24; 2:1-2; Galatians 3:1
7. John 12:33 – *But He was saying this to indicate the kind of death by which He was to die.* Being lifted up literally referred to Jesus’ body being raised up on the **cross**. The cross ironically led to Jesus’ ultimate exaltation. Isaiah 52:13, Philippians 2:9, Hebrews 12:2
8. John 12:34 – *The crowd then answered Him, “We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, ‘The Son of Man must be lifted up’? Who is this Son of Man?”* The crowd did not understand the significance of the suffering Messiah foretold in Isaiah 53. They could not make sense of His predictions concerning His **death**.
9. John 12:35 – *So Jesus said to them, “For a little while longer the Light is among you. Walk while you have the Light, so that darkness will not overtake you; he who walks in the darkness does not know where he goes.* Jesus issued another **urgent** invitation for the crowd to believe in Him. As the light of the world, He was right there with them at that moment.
 - a. The light of the world was with them. By simply believing in Him they could have their spiritual eyes opened and **avoid** the ever-present snares of deception.
 - b. However, if they continued to walk in the darkness, they were in **danger** of permanently remaining in a spiritually blind condition.
10. John 12:36a – *“While you have the Light, believe in the Light...”* Jesus encouraged His hearers to believe in Him while He was physically **present** with them. It is easier to believe in something you can see. They would find it harder to believe once He was gone. John 20:25-29
11. John 12:36b – *“...believe in the Light, so that you may become sons of Light.”* Jesus assured them that if they would believe in Him, they would become children of God (*sons of Light*). To become a **child** of God depended on them believing in the light of the world. This is still true today. Have you become a child of God by faith in Jesus Christ? John 1:12

F. John 12:36c-43 – Some believed but others did not

1. John 12:36c – *These things Jesus spoke, and He went away and hid Himself from them.* Jesus knew that the religious leaders of the Jews would seize Him if they could, but He controlled His own destiny. It is very amazing that He could effortlessly **conceal** Himself from their view when and wherever He wanted.
2. John 12:37 – *But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him.* Despite the countless miracles Jesus did during the days of His earthly ministry, many in Israel still refused to believe in Him. This is a very **sad** statement. This shows how hardened many in Israel had become. John 20:30-31, 21:25
3. John 12:38 – *This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: “Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?”* Spiritual deliverance came to Israel, but they rejected it. The Lord’s power was unmistakable. They heard Jesus’ words and saw His miracles, yet, as He predicted, they persisted in **unbelief**.
4. John 12:39-40 – *For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again “He has blinded their eyes and He hardened their heart, so that they would not see with their eyes and perceive with their heart and be converted and I heal them.”* Because of Israel’s continued stubborn **rejection** of the Savior, God finally hardened their hearts. Luke 13:34, 19:41-42
 - a. After ongoing rejection of the truth, God may give a person over to his or her own decision and personal hardness. We see this happen in the story of Pharaoh. God hardened Pharaoh’s heart after he had **repeatedly** hardened his own heart.
 - b. The subject of eternal salvation is not a **trivial** issue: it is a serious matter of life and death. In 2 Corinthians 6:2b Paul said, *“Behold, now is the acceptable time, behold, now is the day of salvation.”* God is patient not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance (2 Pet. 3:9b).
5. John 12:41 – *These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke of Him.* Isaiah was not like Israel. When Isaiah saw God’s glory, he believed. His belief in the Lord caused him to speak about Him. Israel, however, saw God’s **glory** and even heard His voice but did not believe. 2 Peter 3:15a
6. John 12:42-43 – *Nevertheless many even of the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they were not confessing Him, for fear that they would be put out of the synagogue, for they loved the approval of men rather than the **approval** of God.* This is a remarkable passage.
 - a. Many men of **power** and influence, like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, believed in Jesus, but they were not yet public with their faith.
 - b. Before we criticize these believers, let’s remember that the Holy Spirit had not yet been given. Today we have the Holy Spirit and yet we all struggle with being **strong** in our testimony or witness. When our faith is tested, we sometimes fail.

- c. However, as they grew in their faith, many of these believers would gain courage. At this point, they were still infants in their faith. They should have **spoken** up for Jesus, but they were afraid to lose worldly things like prestige and prominence. John 19:38-39

G. John 12:44-50 – Jesus’ last public sermon

1. John 12:44 – *And Jesus cried out and said, “He who believes in Me, does not believe in Me but in Him who sent Me.* Jesus said that to believe in Him was to believe in God the Father. These **true** statements of equality with God always brought controversy. But Jesus knew exactly what He was saying. John 5:22-24
2. John 12:45 – *“He who sees Me sees the One who sent Me.”* Jesus stated that whoever looks at Him in faith is looking at God the Father who sent Him. In other words, to believe in Jesus is to believe in the Father. No one can behold the one and not behold the other. Jesus’ every word and action **revealed** and explained the Father. John 1:18, 8:19
3. John 12:46 – *“I have come as Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.”* Because of sin, this world is a **dark** place. That’s why Jesus came. He came to be true light, to shine and give hope. No one who puts their faith in Him will be in darkness ever again because they will have the true light of life. John 1:4,9,14
4. John 12:47 – *“If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world.”* Jesus emphasized the gracious purpose of His coming. He came to be the **Lamb** of God, to take away the sin of the world. The world was already condemned at the fall. Jesus came to save it from judgment.
5. John 12:48 – *“He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.”* Jesus, who is the Word of God, will have the last word on judgment day. Those who reject Jesus Christ and His teaching will not escape judgement. Like it or not, on judgement day, Christ’s word will be the **judge**.
6. John 12:49 – *“For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak.”* Jesus did not speak on His own; the Father commissioned Him. The Father gave Him **authority** to challenge the system. Jesus spoke for the Father. His words should have been heeded. Matthew 28:18
7. John 12:50a – *“I know that His commandment is eternal life...”* In 1 John 3:23a we read, *“This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ...”* Jesus knew that God’s command to believe in the Son would bring eternal **life** to all who obey that command. John 6:29
8. John 12:50b – *“...therefore, the things I speak, I speak just as the Father has told Me.”* Since the message God commands us to preach is the **only** message that brings eternal life, Jesus made sure that He only preached that message, nothing more, nothing less.
 - a. Jesus never changed God’s message, nor did He deviate from it. He gave it just as the Father gave it. We would do well to take note of this principle. How could we even entertain the thought that it is our prerogative to **change** His message?

- b. A correct understanding of the gospel is a matter of life and **death**. We should be extremely faithful to the message, presenting it just as the Father gave it in the Word. God's message does not need enhancements or changes. 2 Corinthians 2:15-16, Galatians 1:6-10
- c. The gospel is the **simple**, objective and life-changing good news that on a day in history Christ died for your sins and rose again. Everyone who believes in Him, has eternal life. John 3:16, 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

XV. John 13:1-30 – The Last Supper

A. John 13:1-11 – Jesus washed the disciples' feet

1. John 13:1 – *Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. Jesus was completely aware that He would be crucified the very next day, yet He desired to share a final **meal** with His disciples.*
 - a. Starting here in chapter 13, there is a **shift** in the narrative of John's Gospel. After Judas left, Jesus began to give new instructions to the disciples. These instructions would be specifically applicable to the coming Church Age.
 - b. Since the church was still a mystery, the disciples did not understand the complete significance of Jesus' teaching. After the church began and the Holy Spirit came to indwell believers, these truths (John 3-17) became more readily **understood**.
2. John 13:2 – *During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him... When Judas realized he was not going to get fame and **fortune** by following Jesus, he abandoned himself fully to Satan. Proverbs 15:27, Matthew 26:14-16*
3. John 13:3 – *Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and was going back to God... Because of what Jesus **knew** to be true about Himself, He was able to face the cross.*
 - a. Jesus knew **three** things about Himself.
 - 1) Jesus was fully aware that God had put all things under His care and sovereign authority. Jesus was Adam's replacement as the one tasked to bring everything into subjection to God. Jesus is therefore rightly called the last **Adam**. Genesis 1:26; Psalm 8:6; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:9-10,20-23; 2 Timothy 1:10
 - 2) Jesus was also fully aware of where He came from. He came from heaven as **Emmanuel**, God with us. He came forth from God the Father. Isaiah 7:14, 9:6-7; Matthew 1:23; Hebrews 1:3, 2:8-10
 - 3) Jesus was fully aware of where He was going. He knew His ultimate **destiny** was the right hand of the Father, via the rejection, pain and suffering of the cross and the obscurity of the tomb. He knew His future was one of glory and not punishment. Psalm 110:1, Mark 16:19, Acts 3:15, Hebrews 12:1-3

- b. In a moment when most of us would likely give up, Jesus not only remained **faithful** to the Father's plan but also continued to selflessly serve others. Not only did He serve His friends and loved ones, He served Judas, His betrayer, by washing his feet right along with the other disciples. John 13:18-30, Philippians 2:8
4. John 13:4 – Jesus *...got up from supper and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself.* What was Jesus planning to do? He was preparing to wash the feet of His disciples. Jesus prepared to take on a role of service usually done by the lowest of all household **servants**. Jesus did this to model real love and true humility. Philippians 2:1-8
- a. Jesus showed that all of us, especially those who are “leaders,” are to actively **serve** and not wait to be served. Matthew 23:11; Mark 9:35, 10:43-44; Luke 22:26; 1 Peter 5:5
- b. This kind of **grace** is the chief distinguishing mark Christianity has over all other belief systems on earth. We are not to seek superiority over people, we instead humbly attend to their needs. We seek to serve, not to be served. Luke 19:10, Philippians 2:3-8
5. John 13:5 – *Then He poured water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.* In that day, people needed their feet washed because they walked down **dusty** roads with only sandals on their feet.
- a. Even though people bathed before leaving home, by the time they arrived at their destination, their **feet** needed a good cleaning. Upon arrival, the most insignificant servant in the home typically performed this lowly task for the guests.
- b. The Greek word *wash* NIPTO referred to washing merely a **part** of the body, not to having a full bath.
- c. Interestingly, the disciples had just argued about which one of them would be considered the **greatest**, and Jesus had told them that the way to true greatness is through service.
- d. The Christian way of doing things is **opposite** from the secular. It may be that the disciples' feet still needed washing because none of them was willing to stoop down and do this for the others. Pride is an ugly beast. Luke 22:24-27
6. John 13:6 – *So He came to Simon Peter. He said to Him, “Lord, do You wash my feet?”* As would be the case for the majority of us, Peter was **uncomfortable** with Jesus serving him in such a lowly and debasing way.
- a. From this historical event, we learn an important lesson. Jesus is the master of the universe and yet He stooped to wash the feet of His very imperfect disciples. We, therefore, should never be too big or too important to stoop to serve and love one another in the **humblest** of ways. John 13:35
- b. Peter strongly objected to having his feet washed by his Master, the Lord Jesus. In essence, Peter exclaimed, “Lord, You? **You** wash my feet?” Peter did not want the Christ to perform such a demeaning task for Him. Matthew 16:16

7. John 13:7 – *Jesus answered and said to him, “What I do you do not realize now, but you will understand hereafter.”* Peter did not understand the significance of Jesus’ actions at the moment, but Jesus assured him that one day he would indeed understand. Jesus was **patient** with Peter, but He did insist on washing His feet. John 21:15-19
8. John 13:8a – *Peter said to Him, “Never shall You wash my feet!”* In objection to the Lord washing his feet, Peter used the strongest of all Greek negations, OU ME, meaning “never, no not ever.” Peter refused to humbly **submit** to the Lord’s act of love.
9. John 13:8b – *Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.”* Jesus rebuked Peter. He basically told Peter that to not let Him wash his feet would cut Peter off from **closeness** and camaraderie with Him.
10. John 13:9 – *Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, then wash not only my feet, but also my hands and my head.”* Peter failed to listen carefully to the Lord’s words. In our immature zeal for the Lord most us have made similar statements. When we are wrong, it’s wise to simply **admit** it and avoid “all or nothing” statements. The Lord was not impressed. Psalm 12:3
11. John 13:10a – *Jesus said to him, “He who has bathed LUOU needs only to wash NIPTO his feet, but is completely clean KATHAROS...”* The Greek word to bathe LOUO refers to a full bath. Jesus used the word bathe here to express to Peter and the disciples that we are **fully** cleansed at a moment in time, in the moment we believe and are justified. Titus 3:5
 - a. Cleansing, as in a bath LOUO, happens only **once**, at the point of our salvation.
 - b. Cleansing as in a foot washing NIPTO happens many times after salvation. Having been fully cleansed in our justification, we now need only to wash our feet in our on-going sanctification, whenever they get **dirty**. Ongoing cleansing is described in 1 John 1:5-2:2.
12. John 13:10b – *Jesus said to him, “...and you [singular, Peter] are clean, but not all of you [plural].”* In reference to justification, Jesus told Peter that he was already clean KATHAROS. But for the sake of those listening, Jesus immediately clarified that not all of them were clean like Peter. Jesus knew one of His followers had never been **bathed** LUOU (justified).
13. John 13:11 – *For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason, He said, “Not all of you are clean.”* In an audience of both saved and unsaved, we should always make a **distinction** between them. Jesus wanted Judas to know that he was not included among those who were bathed. Judas was not only a false disciple of Christ; he was treacherous. 2 Corinthians 11:26

B. John 13:12-20 – Jesus explained the meaning behind His actions

1. John 13:12 – *So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you?”* Jesus Messiah had just blessed them by doing one of the **lowliest** tasks possible. What did He want them to learn from this act?
2. John 13:13 – *“You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am.”* The disciples addressed Jesus as ‘Teacher’ and ‘Master.’ It was right for them to do so because Jesus truly was their teacher and their **master**.

3. John 13:14 – *“If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.”* Jesus showed the disciples a style of leadership that is **contrary** to the secular model.
 - a. The disciples should follow the example set by their teacher and master. Just like Him, they should be **servants** first as leaders. This amazing distinction has characterized the church from its inception. Luke 22:24-27
 - b. It is important to note that the Lord was not establishing a **ritual** of foot washing to be observed by the church. However, He did communicate that Christian service should be an ongoing practice for every believer.
4. John 13:15 – *“For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.”* If their esteemed master and teacher washed their filthy feet, they should likewise humbly follow His example. They should consider the needs of others as more important than their own. We should all humbly **copy** Christ’s example. Ephesians 5:1, Philippians 2:3-8, 1 Peter 2:21
5. John 13:16 – *“Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him.”* Jesus wanted His disciples to fully embrace the important principle that no servant is **greater** than his master and no messenger is greater than the one who sent him. 2 Corinthians 5:20
 - a. Jesus made Himself the prime example to follow in leadership. The disciples were not to follow Roman, Jewish, or any other **earthly** style of leadership. Christ was the one and only perfect example and He led by love and service even when faced with rejection. Luke 9:52-55, Romans 12:14-21
 - b. Jesus’ disciples were going to be the apostles who would lay the foundation of the church. As head of the church, Jesus served to the point of giving His life for it. The concept of grace and service would be at the heart of the Church Age. Jesus wanted the disciples to **adopt** and teach this pattern. Acts 1:8-9; Ephesians 2:19-20, 4:11-12, 5:25
6. John 13:17 – *“If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.”* Here are two conditional statements. If you understand the principles of servant-leadership, you are on the right track, but don’t stop there. You only **profit** from this knowledge if you put it into practice in your own life. James 1:22-25
7. John 13:18 – *“I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled, ‘he who eats my bread has lifted up his heel against Me’.”* The Lord handpicked twelve disciples and brought them into His service. One of them was a betrayer, and yet Jesus knowingly **chose** him anyway. This was prophesied. Psalm 41:9
 - a. If this had not been **foretold**, people may have questioned Jesus’ wisdom and omniscience in bringing such a man into His confidence.
 - b. But Jesus deliberately used this evil-hearted individual to bring about His arrest and sacrifice. God used Judas to execute His **sovereign** plans. Nothing was out of control.

8. John 13:19 – *“From now on I am telling you before it comes to pass, so that when it does occur, you may believe that I am He.”* Jesus told His disciples this **detail** in advance so that when they saw it happen, they would be strengthened in their faith and not destroyed. To predict your own future is impossible for ordinary humans. Jesus was God incarnate.
9. John 13:20 – *“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.”* The disciples needed to understand this crucial principle. To accept a messenger is **equivalent** to accepting the one who sent the messenger. John 5:23-24
 - a. God the Son sent out His disciples as ambassadors. Jesus said that whoever welcomed His ambassadors welcomed Him. And whoever welcomed Jesus, the Son, welcomed the Father as well. All Jesus’ disciples, except for Judas, **welcomed** the Son. By accepting Jesus by faith, they accepted the Father by faith as well.
 - b. The opposite is also true. By rejecting Jesus, the Son, Judas **rejected** the Father who sent Him. In the same way, those who reject Jesus’ ambassadors are actually rejecting Jesus, who sent them, and the Father as well. As Christ’s servants, we should not expect to be received better than our master was received. Luke 10:16; Acts 9:5; 1 John 3:1b

C. John 13:21-30 – Predictions of betrayal and denial

1. John 13:21 – *When Jesus had said this, He became troubled in spirit, and testified and said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you will betray Me.”* Jesus only ever said what the Father told Him to say (Jn. 12:49-50). The Father wanted Jesus to tell His disciples the truth about receiving an ambassador, yet as soon as He said those **words**, He became troubled.
 - a. Jesus must have suddenly thought of Judas, who had not received Him by faith. This thought briefly threw Jesus into emotional **turmoil**. One of His beloved followers, one who sat at the meal with them right then and there, was a traitor.
 - b. Jesus was about to be betrayed into the hands of His enemies by one of His own. He **knew** it and that thought deeply pained him.
2. John 13:22 – *The disciples began looking at one another, at a loss to know of which one He was speaking.* The surprised disciples could not imagine who from among them would **betray** Him. They sat mystified, staring at each other, wondering who on earth Jesus might be speaking about. Matthew 26:22-25
3. John 13:23-25 – Peter motioned for **John** to ask Jesus.
 - a. John 13:23 – *There was reclining on Jesus’ bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved.* This was the way John referred to himself in the Gospel of John. He was not claiming a special relationship with Jesus that none of the other disciples enjoyed; he simply was **confident** that Jesus loved and accepted him. John 13:23, 19:26, 21:7, 21:20
 - 1) John lived in the light of Jesus’ **love**. Because of that his joy was full. John enjoyed the abundant life Christ came to give His children. As God’s child, you also should view yourself as the disciple Christ loves. John 10:10b; 1 John 1:3-4, 3:1a

- 2) At that time, the custom when eating was for everyone to **recline** around the table, leaning on their left elbow. Since John was next to Jesus and reclined in this way, it was easy for him to lean over and whisper to Jesus.
- b. John 13:24 – *So Simon Peter gestured to him, and said to him, “Tell us who it is of whom He is speaking.”* Peter caught John’s attention and nodded to him to find out who the **betray**er was.
- c. John 13:25 – *He, leaning back thus on Jesus’ bosom, said to Him, “Lord, who is it?”* This disciple (likely John himself) leaned back toward Jesus and asked Him who. Who was He talking about? Who would do such a thing? This was likely one of the most **perplexing** moments the disciples had experienced.
4. John 13:26 – *Jesus then answered, “That is the one for whom I shall dip the morsel and give it to him.” So, when He had dipped the morsel, He took and gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.* Jesus answered John in a hidden, yet discernable, way. We do not know if the other disciples **heard** what Jesus said, but John certainly did.
- a. Instead of simply pointing out Judas as a traitor, Jesus offered him a piece of dipped bread. In this way, according to the custom of the day, Jesus set Judas apart as a guest of **honor**, while at the same time letting Judas know that He knew of His plans.
- b. Was this an offer of grace by Jesus before Judas passed a point of no return? Most likely it was, but sadly the very next verse shows the condition of Judas’ **heart**.
5. John 13:27 – *After the morsel, Satan then entered into him. Therefore, Jesus said to him, “What you do, do quickly.”* Right then and there, Satan took possession of Judas. Even though Jesus was fully aware of the consequences of Judas’ actions, He commanded Judas to go ahead and quickly carry out his evil plans. Jesus was in **control**, even in that moment. John 13:2
6. John 13:28 – *Now no one of those reclining at the table knew for what purpose He had said this to him.* This verse and the next indicate that Jesus had not **overtly** identified Judas as the betrayer. Judas was the only one who knew for certain that Jesus knew of His evil plans. John 6:70
7. John 13:29 – *For some were supposing, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus was saying to him, “Buy the things we have need of for the feast”; or else, that he should give something to the poor.* The disciples **trusted** Judas with their money; they would not have suspected he was a traitor planning evil against Christ Jesus.
8. John 13:30 – *So after receiving the morsel he went out immediately; and it was night.* John pointed out that it was nighttime when Judas left. Judas was working His evil plan to betray Jesus under the cover of darkness. Without question, Judas had rejected the **Light** of the world, Jesus Christ. Proverbs 2:13; John 3:19-21, 8:12, 12:46; 1 John 2:11

XVI. John 13:31-14:31 – The Upper Room Discourse

A. John 13:31-35 – The new commandment

1. John 13:31 – *“Therefore when he had gone out, Jesus said, “Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him...”* Judas had **left** to go betray Jesus to His executioners, but God was going to turn Judas’ evil deed into a blessing that would glorify Him. Psalm 76:10 says, *“For the wrath of man shall praise You; with a remnant of wrath You will gird Yourself.”*
 - a. Here Jesus’ use of His messianic title, *Son of Man*, is a reminder that from this point onward He will suffer, die and be resurrected as a **human** substitute for all humankind. 2 Corinthians 5:21, Hebrews 2:17
 - b. Also, now that Judas left, we notice a shift in the content of Jesus’ teaching. Now that the only unbeliever was gone from the group of disciples, Jesus began to teach truths that would be expanded and developed later in the **epistles**.
2. John 13:32 – *“if God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and will glorify Him immediately.”* Since Jesus displayed God’s glory, God was going to give His own glory to Jesus, and He was going to do it immediately, without further **delay**.
3. John 13:33 – *“Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come’.”* As any good parent would do, Jesus reminded his fledgling disciples that He only had a **short** time left with them. This caused them great sadness as we will see.
 - a. Speaking affectionately to His disciples, Jesus called them “little **children**.” This was a term of endearment, not one of ridicule or criticism. He told them they would seek for Him once He was gone, but they would not find Him. They could not come to the place He was going. John 7:33-34, 8:21, 13:1
 - b. We now know that His departure was via death on the cross, burial, descension into Paradise, resurrection, and ascension to the Father. This was a road that only He could walk. That is why He told them they could not go where He was going. It was a **burden** that only He would bear; it was a cup that only He would drink. Matthew 26:39
4. John 13:34 – *“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.”* The command to love was nothing new as we see in Leviticus 19:18 and Deuteronomy 6:5. What was new was a new standard: *“even as I have loved you.”* This was a **deeper** love than what the law commanded.
5. John 13:35 – *“By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”* It is our love for one another, our love for fellow believers within the church, that distinguishes us from this dying **world**.
 - a. Love shows we are Christ’s **disciples**, trained, commissioned and empowered by Him. 1 John 4:12, 20
 - b. When we lose our love or fail to walk in love, we **malign** the very basis of Christianity and our greatest distinctive. Revelation 2:4-5

6. John 13:36 – *Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, where are You going?” Jesus answered, “Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you will follow later.”* Peter’s question showed he still did not understand Jesus’ true **purpose** for coming to earth. Matthew 16:21-23
- Only after Jesus ascended to heaven and the Holy Spirit came to indwell believers did Peter and the disciples understand fully the reason why Jesus came to earth. Jesus’ death and resurrection paved the way for all who believe in Him to be with Him in **heaven** one day. Hebrews 12:2
 - Jesus graciously promised Peter that eventually he would go where Jesus went, just as we will eventually go where Jesus went. Jesus is now in heaven. To die now means we depart to be with Him. We count on this **fact**. Philippians 1:23
7. John 13:37 – *Peter said to Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You right now? I will lay down my life for You.”* Peter sincerely had great enthusiasm for the Lord. Sadly, as we often find, he trusted in his own **ability** to stand. Peter had to discover that he could not stand for the Lord in his own strength. He would fail if he attempted to serve the Lord in his own power.
8. John 13:38 – *Jesus answered, “Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly, I say to you, a rooster will not crow until you deny Me three times.* This was a sobering and sad prophecy concerning Peter. Jesus prophesied that Peter would **deny** Him three times in one night. In saying this, Jesus rebuked Peter for his confidence in the flesh. John 15:4-5
- In the New Testament we see this truth reiterated by the apostles. They all came to understand that the ability to serve, to be faithful, and to accomplish anything of true spiritual value requires a **dependence** on the Lord and His enabling power. Human determination or impulsiveness cannot accomplish God’s purpose.
 - Romans 15:18 – *For I will not presume to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished **through** me, resulting in the obedience of the Gentiles by word and deed.*
 - 1 Corinthians 15:10 – *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the **grace** of God with me.*
 - 2 Corinthians 3:5 – *Not that we are **adequate** in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God.*
 - 2 Corinthians 4:7 – *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the **power** will be of God and not from ourselves;*
 - 2 Corinthians 12:9 – *And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my **weaknesses**, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.*
 - Galatians 2:20 – *I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by **faith** in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.*

B. John 14:1-7 – A comforting promise

1. John 14:1 – *“Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.”* Jesus challenged the disciples to not waver but to keep **trusting** in God and in Himself. He was not inviting them to be saved by faith (justified), because they were already saved. He invited them to be strengthened in their faith. What preceded His passionate counsel?
 - a. To comprehend the full significance of Christ’s words, we should ignore the **chapter** break, because Jesus’ words here are a continuation of what He told them in chapter 13.
 - b. In chapter 13, Jesus told His disciples that there was a traitor among them. He told them He was going to leave them. He also just gave Peter the bad news that, before the night was over, he was going to **deny** Him three times.
 - c. With all this bad news, Jesus did not want His disciples to become overwhelmed and **hopeless**. He called them to hold tightly to their faith in God and Himself. It is faith, not our toil and striving, that gets us through tough times. Psalm 23, Romans 15:13
2. John 14:2a – *“In My Father’s house are many dwelling places if it were not so, I would have told you...”* On a night when Jesus could have used personal encouragement Himself, He spent His time **comforting** His disciples. He encouraged them with some inside information about the Father that only a true Son could know. 1 Corinthians 15:56-58
 - a. He said that in His Father’s home there are many dwellings in which to live. In other words, heaven has many **rooms** where a person can rest and feel at home.
 - b. This description is somewhat **mysterious** to us. Obviously, we would love to know more of what Jesus meant here. We are sure His descriptions are true. For those who doubt Him, Jesus added, “If this is not the way it is, I would have clearly told you.”
3. John 14:2b – *“...for I go to prepare a place for you (plural).”* These words answer Peter’s question from John 13:36-37 where he asked, *“Where are You going?”* Jesus gave this promise to shift the disciples’ **focus** from temporal things to the eternal. He wanted them to focus on heaven, not on their present circumstances. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18
 - a. Jesus promised that He was going to prepare a place in His Father’s house just for them. This statement was designed to encourage Peter who would soon fail through **denial** and the others who would likewise abandon Jesus in panic. Matthew 26:56, Mark 14:50
 - b. Many of the promises given in John include us as well. This future heavenly home is a reality for every believer. When you know you have a place to call **home**, you can get through even the toughest of trials. 1 Corinthians 15:22, 51-52
4. John 14:3 – *“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.”* When Jesus said He was going to His Father’s house (heaven) to prepare a place for His disciples, it logically meant they would **all** eventually be with Him in that place.
 - a. When Jesus told His disciples this fact, Judas had already **departed**. With Judas gone, Jesus spoke openly, intimately and inclusively to His saved disciples.

- b. Jesus promised He was going to go and prepare a dwelling place for them. This was **good** news. He also promised something more. He vowed to return and take them back there with Him. This speaks of the future return of Christ when He plans to gather believers together and take them home with Him. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18
- c. Jesus did not simply refer to their souls being taken to heaven; He also spoke of a time when Jesus would **physically** receive them, body, soul and spirit, to Himself. That part of His promise has not yet occurred. 2 Timothy 2:16-18
5. John 14:4 – *“And you know the way where I am going.”* Jesus declared that the disciples already knew the **way** to the place He was going. This was simple. In verses 2-3 he had plainly told them He was going to His Father’s house to prepare a place for them and would come back to get them and take them with Him.
6. John 14:5 – *Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, how do we know the way?”* Sometimes the **simplest** things are the hardest to understand. Thomas’ question showed he had not grasped Jesus words. His personality tended to be pessimistic and he struggled with believing. He may have thought Jesus was going into hiding.
7. John 14:6 – *Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.* This “I am” statement was another claim to deity. Jesus stated that He was the **only** means of reaching the Father. In our world today, statements like this are deemed arrogant, narrow, rude, or bigoted. However, this statement is absolute truth.
- a. *I am the way:* Through His death on the cross and resurrection, Jesus opened to us the one and only true **pathway** to heaven. There are not several ways to God. He is the only road; no other possibility exists. John 10:9; Hebrews 10:19-21; 1 John 5:13, 20
- b. *I am ... the truth:* By nature, truth is exclusive. Contradictory messages cannot both be true. In relation to gaining access to God, forgiveness for sins, and eternal life, Jesus represents the only **truth** that exists. Look nowhere else! If you seek truth elsewhere you will be led astray and deceived. John 13:1,3, 17:3
- c. *I am ... the life:* Jesus gives life to every creature; however, in this context, He is called the life because He is the only one who gives **eternal** life to spiritually dead sinners. He alone delivers on the promise to give eternal life to all who believe in Him. John 10:10
- d. In summary, *the way* communicates access, *the truth* communicates accuracy, and *the life* communicates existence. Jesus is the true conduit to heaven. He is the only accurate roadmap to God. Jesus is the fountain of life. Is your hope found in **Him** alone?
8. John 14:7 – *“If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him and have seen Him.”* Here is yet another claim to deity. In this verse, Jesus stated that since the disciples knew Him, the Son, they knew the **Father**. John 1:18, Hebrews 1:3
- a. *If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also.* This kind of **conditional** statement in Greek can be either a true or a hypothetical statement. The context helps us decide which it is. In this case it was a true statement. The disciples did indeed know Jesus. Jesus is the revelation of our unseen God.

- b. Paraphrased, this statement can be understood as follows: “If you **know** Me and you do, you likewise know My Father. In fact, from now on you do know Him and you have seen Him.” Jesus assured His disciples that knowing Him intimately had a direct impact on knowing God the Father intimately.
- c. John 1:18 said, “No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has **explained** Him.”

C. John 14:8-15 – The Father explained

1. John 14:8 – *Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.”* Some historical background may help us understand Philip’s **request**.
 - a. When Philip said he wanted to see the Father, he may have been thinking of the kingdom. The kingdom was prophesied to be a time when everyone would **know** the Lord from the high down to the low. Jeremiah 31 explains how things will be during the kingdom. Joel 3:17-21, John 6:45, Hebrews 8:10-11
 - 1) Jeremiah 31:33 – “But this is the **covenant** which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the LORD, “I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.
 - 2) Jeremiah 31:34 – “They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they will **all** know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” declares the LORD, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”
 - b. Philip was likely requesting that the Lord bring in the **kingdom** so they could know the Father. Jesus had said in John 14:7, “...from now on, you know GNOSKO Him and have seen Him.” There Jesus’ used the verb to know GNOSKO in the present tense, active voice, and indicative mood emphasizing present, first-hand knowledge, of the Father.
 - c. How do we get to know the Father today? Now that Christ is no longer here in person, we get to know God the Father through studying His **word**. Without a correct knowledge of God, as revealed in scripture, no one can have real fellowship with the Father. Jeremiah 9:23-24, John 17:3
2. John 14:9 – *Jesus said to him, “Have I been so long with you, and yet you have not come to know Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’?”* Jesus designed this question to encourage Philip and the listening disciples to consider His verbal testimony as evidence of His **unity** with the Father.
 - a. God spoke through the **Son**, Jesus Christ. Peter once said, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life.” John 6:68
 - b. Jesus was God’s spokesperson to the **world**. In John 7:46 we read, “Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks.” Matthew 7:28-29, Luke 4:22,32, John 7:26-28
 - c. Sadly, Philip had heard the words of the Lord for three years, since the beginning of His ministry, and yet he still failed to realize Jesus and the Father were **one**. John 1:43-46

3. John 14:10 – *“Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding in Me does His works.”* Interestingly, instead of saying to Philip, “Don’t you know,” Jesus said, “Don’t you **believe**?” It is one thing to know about something, but it is totally different to believe in it.
 - a. Jesus essentially told Phillip, “If you do not know I am God because I tell you that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; you should at least believe My unity with the Father based on My **works**.”
 - b. Jesus’ works proved the Father was abiding in Him. This **statement** is key to unlocking some of Jesus’ later teachings in these chapters.
 - 1) Jesus stated that His words were not His own but rather were from the Father. Jesus was not doing freelance work for God. He was not doing things on His **own** initiative and then asking the Father to come and bless them. He was not doing His own will. Instead, He walked dependently on the Father, obeying His orders.
 - 2) The Father was abiding in Jesus and Jesus was abiding in Him. From that posture, the Father easily carried out His desires through the Son. Jesus was a **channel**, or conduit, for the Father’s ministry. This statement gives us the groundwork for understanding what Jesus said in John 15, that without Him we can do nothing.
 - c. Philip needed to know God’s word; then he needed to respond in faith. The fact that the Father was doing His works in and through the Son was something to be accepted by faith. The way Jesus dependently walked, trusting in the Father, was precisely how Philip and the other disciples were going to be taught to **walk** with the Lord. John 15:4-5
4. John 14:11 – *“Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me; otherwise believe because of the works themselves.”* Jesus told Philip to believe Him when He said He was in the Father and the Father was in Him. More than describing their equality, this statement refers to the **interdependence** between God the Father and God the Son.
 - a. If Philip found Jesus’ statements hard to accept, Jesus suggested he at least believe based on His miraculous works. These easily **proved** that the Father was working in and through the Son.
 - b. Jesus’ encouragement here showed that Philip was struggling with His faith. Does that problem sound familiar to you? Do you sometimes struggle with doubts and confusion? Do those doubts keep you from trusting the Lord? Typically, knowledge is not our struggle; believing what we know is our biggest **challenge**.
5. John 14:12 – *“Truly, truly, 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 the Father.”* Jesus stated that whoever believes in Him will do the works He did.
 - a. Since Jesus was going to the Father, He entrusted God’s work to His disciples. Jesus was going to send the Holy Spirit to empower them. Just like Jesus was a channel for the Father, believers are a **channel** for Christ to live through us to do His work as we present our members to Him. Romans 12:1; 2 Corinthians 4:7; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 4:6

- b. One way believers do greater works than what Jesus did is that we now enjoy a global impact because through the Spirit God has many servants through whom He **works**. Jesus, on the other hand, had a localized ministry. Acts 1:8
6. John 14:13 – *“Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”* Jesus told His disciples that when He went to the Father, they needed to live by faith, looking to Him in believing **prayer**. He promised to faithfully answer their requests. In this way God would be glorified in the person of the Son. Hebrews 10:38
 7. John 14:14 – *“If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.”* Praying in the name of Jesus is not a magic **formula** that forces God to obey us. Jesus died for our sins and rose again. He paid the full penalty for our sins. Now He sits at the Father’s right hand contending for us. Based on His merits, we can approach God in prayer. Hebrews 4:15-16
 - a. To do something in the name of someone means to be authorized by them to do it. A policeman can enforce the law because he is **authorized** by the government to do so.
 - b. In the same way, based on Jesus’ **authority** we can present our requests to the Father.
 8. John 14:15 – *“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”* When you truly love someone, you carefully **guard** their instructions.
 - a. Jesus made an interesting word choice here to describe our relationship with His commands. He used the word to **keep** TEREO rather than other more direct and stronger Greek concepts like to obey HUPAKOUO (Rom. 6:16), to obediently submit to HUPOTASSO (Eph. 5:21), or to obey one’s leader PEITHARCHEO (Acts 5:29).
 - b. This word translated to *keep* TEREO has obedience built into it and is sometimes used that way, but obedience is a **secondary**, implied meaning.
 - c. The literal meaning of to *keep* TEREO is to **guard**, protect, or keep in custody (Acts 12:5-6, 25:21). Similarly, the figurative meaning of to *keep* TEREO is to hold, reserve, preserve, protect, carefully observe, treasure, and even believe. John 17:11-12,15
 - d. We can safely conclude that Jesus intended a greater meaning than a simple command to obey. Beyond mere obedience, we are called to believe God’s word, holding firmly to His teaching, protecting it from error, and guarding it as a very valuable treasure. We show our **love** for Christ by cherishing what is valuable to Him.

D. John 14:16-21 – Christ’s promises

1. John 14:16 – Jesus made His disciples an important promise. Notice that our **triune** God is clearly seen in this verse.
 - a. John 14:16a – *“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper...”* We see that the Spirit would be given to Jesus’ disciples in **answer** to Jesus’ petition to the Father.
 - 1) Jesus planned to ask the Father to grant a special request. He knew the Father would give Him His request, and He promised His disciples that this would happen **after** He was glorified and stationed in heaven.

- 2) This statement cannot refer to the New Covenant, since under the New Covenant God promised He would pour out His Spirit on all of **Israel** and would do so without the need of Christ or anyone making it a special request.
 - 3) Under the terms of the New Covenant, God will without **hesitation** give forth His Spirit in fulfilment of His covenant promises. There will be no asking for this to be the case. Ezekiel 37:14, 39:29; Joel 2:28-29; Zechariah 12:10
- b. John 14:16b – “...and He will give you another Helper...” Jesus also told the disciples that the Holy Spirit would continue serving them as He (Jesus) had **served** them. The phrase *another Helper* PARAKLETOS literally means one who comes alongside to help. PARAKLETOS could also be translated comforter, advocate or intercessor.
- 1) The Holy Spirit would **comfort** them just as Jesus had comforted them. John 14:18, Romans 8:16
 - 2) The Holy Spirit would **testify** concerning Jesus just as Jesus had testified concerning the Father. John 15:26
 - 3) The Holy Spirit would **teach** them just as Jesus had taught them. John 16:13
 - 4) The Holy Spirit would **guide** them just as Jesus had guided them. John 16:13
 - 5) The Holy Spirit would **intercede** for them just as Jesus had interceded. Romans 8:26,34
- c. John 14:16c – “...that He may be with you forever.” Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would always **be with** those who believe. John 7:39
2. John 14:17 – “...that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.” Before Pentecost, the Holy Spirit did not continually dwell in the disciples, but here Jesus promised that in the future the Holy Spirit would come to continually **dwell** in them.
- a. Just like the disciples knew the Father because they knew Jesus, they also knew the Holy Spirit because they knew Jesus. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit are all three equally one and they are the **same** God. God the Son had been with them, but now God the Holy Spirit would be in them.
 - b. Today, the Holy Spirit indwells **every** believer. This fact is unique to this present age. He does not live in the unsaved. They do not see Him or know Him. Romans 8:9-11, Ephesians 2:22
 - c. The Holy Spirit in us allows Christ to greatly impact our lives. Because the Holy Spirit eternally resides in us, Christ can now live out His life in us and do His work **through** us. When we humbly walk by faith, fully dependent upon Christ, we are changed into His image. John 15:4-5; Romans 12:1-2; Galatians 2:20, 5:22-23

3. John 14:18 – *“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.”* The Lord was not going to leave His disciples “parent-less.” Even though Jesus returned after His resurrection, it seems likely that here in this context He referred to the **Holy Spirit** whom He would send to live inside them after He ascended. Acts 1:8, Romans 8:9-10, Colossians 1:27
4. John 14:19a – *“After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me.”* Jesus fulfilled this promise with His post-resurrection **appearances**. He appeared to the disciples and other believers on several occasions. Luke 24:36-48; John 16:16-22, 1 Corinthians 15:5-9
5. John 14:19b – *“...because I live, you will live also...”* Jesus spoke of the fact that His resurrection would **ensure** their future resurrection as well. Romans 6:8-9, 1 Corinthians 15:12-20, 2 Corinthians 4:14
6. John 14:20 – *“In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.”* Later, when the disciples would see Jesus resurrected, they would know the **unity** that exists between the Father and the Son. The disciples also had unity with both the Son and the Father. However, although they were united with Christ, they were not His equal! Colossians 3:3
7. John 14:21 – Our **love** for God is evidenced by keeping, or guarding, His words.
 - a. John 14:21a – *“He who has My commandments...”* To **possess** God’s commands, like the Pharisees did, is not enough. A person can own a Bible or even recite large portions of scripture, but that is likewise not enough.
 - b. John 14:21b – *“He who has My commandments and keeps them...”* It is one thing to have Christ’s words and teachings; is quite another thing to keep them. Remember that *to keep* Christ’s commandments, means to guard, protect, **value**, preserve, believe and ultimately conform to His instructions. Colossians 3:16
 - c. John 14:21c – *“He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me...”* Our love for the Lord is measured by the **extent** to which we *keep* His commands, owning them as a precious treasure. Job 23:12, Psalm 1:2, Proverbs 2:1-12
 - d. John 14:21d – *“...and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.”* If we love our Savior by guarding His instructions, Jesus said we will be loved in a special way by the Father. As we guard Christ’s instructions, we enjoy **intimate** communion with Him.
 - 1) 1 John 2:3 – *By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments.* Many Christians boast of intimately knowing the Lord; however, we only enjoy **true** intimacy with the Lord to the extent that we value and believe His words.
 - 2) 1 John 2:4 – *The one who says, “I have come to know Him” and does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him...* Let’s suppose a believer brags about having a close and intimate friendship with the Lord yet does not actually cherish Christ’s word. That person is self-**deceived**. Talk is cheap. James 2:14-16

- 3) 1 John 2:5 – *...but whoever keeps His Word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected.* John taught that a believer’s spiritual **walk** progresses from knowing God, to keeping His Word, to ultimately becoming **mature** in God’s love.
 - a) A believer who is mature in God’s love is very secure and **confident**. This believer trusts God and His word refusing to doubt then even when faced with fierce trials and setbacks. Romans 8:35-39, Ephesians 3:19, 1 John 4:16-18
 - b) **John**, the author of this book, was mature in Christ’s love. His maturity gave him confidence in Christ’s love. He did not suffer with paralyzing doubts, instead he boldly believed in Christ’s words.

E. John 14:22-31 – Judas Thaddaeus’ question

1. John 14:22 – *Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, “Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?”* Judas Thaddaeus, the son of James, just heard Jesus say *that the world will no longer see Him* (Jn 14:19). That made him ask why Jesus would **disclose** Himself to His followers but not to the world.
 - a. The disciples were anxious for Jesus to reveal Himself as Messiah-King to the world. Until that evening, they had been riding high. Jesus had defied Jewish leaders, raised the life of a decaying man, and arrived in Jerusalem triumphantly. Now they were impatient for Him to show Himself as **King**.
 - b. The sudden realization that Jesus was not going to immediately reveal Himself to the world, provoked Judas’ question. **Why** would Jesus show Himself to them but not to the rest of the world? Jesus was clearly not living up to his expectations. The disciples tried to make sense of what Jesus was planning and doing.
 - c. This question revealed that they wanted Jesus to immediately set up His **Kingdom**, right then. They had a lot to learn. They did not know about the Church Age. It would take time and the coming of the Holy Spirit to fully understand God’s timetable. Acts 1:6-8
2. 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 abode with him.* Jesus did not directly answer Thaddaeus’s question. He simply returned to the theme of love (1 Cor. 13:1-3) and showed him how he or anyone else could **already** get to know Him. 1 John 2:3-6
 - a. We know Jesus referred to believers here because only believers can truly love Him and treasure His teaching. Every believer who guards God’s word enjoys close **communion** with the Father and the Son. This promise of close fellowship with God is very special and encouraging.
 - b. Even though God loves all His children, only those who walk in the light, guarding His word, enjoy intimacy with Him. Jesus and the Father will come to make their **home** with each believer who keeps His word. In the Church Age, believers who keep God’s word will disclose Jesus to the world. John 1:1-7

3. John 14:24a – *“He who does not love Me does not keep My words...”* Just like the believer who loves Jesus keeps His word, the believer who does not love Jesus does not keep His word. Believers who do not guard God’s word **show** they really do not love God. If they loved Him, they would keep His word.
 - a. In John 8:31-32 Jesus explained this dynamic, *“So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, ‘If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.’”* By keeping God’s word, they manifestly showed they were Jesus’ **disciples**.
 - b. The disciples who walked away from Jesus in John 6:66 and the believing Pharisees who remained quiet about their faith in John 12:42 are prime examples of believers who did not guard Christ’s words. Their low esteem of His words showed they did **not love** God.
4. John 14:24b – *“...and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s [word] who sent Me.”* Jesus’ words carried divine authority. His words were the Father’s words. To disregard or refuse Christ’s words was to **disregard** and refuse the Father since He was the true source of Christ’ teachings.
5. John 14:25 – *“These things I have spoken to you while abiding MENO with you.”* All the days, months and years Jesus dwelt among His disciples, He **continually** taught them God’s truth. Here in this verse the word *abiding MENO* means Jesus lived among them and remained in continual companionship with them.
 - a. Jesus used the term *abide MENO* three times in John 14. This term will be extensively applied to the disciples in chapter 15. *Abide MENO* could be simply defined as remaining in **unbroken** fellowship.
 - 1) In John 14:10b we see, *“The words that I say to you I do not speak on My own initiative, but the Father abiding MENO in Me does His works.”* Because they kept unbroken fellowship, God the Father was free to **accomplish** His works through God the Son.
 - 2) In John 14:17b we also see, *“...but you know Him because He abides MENO with you and will be in you.”* God the Holy Spirit lived **with** the disciples in the person of Jesus Christ; however, very soon the Holy Spirit would come to live eternally **inside** the disciples. Romans 8:9-11
 - 3) Here now in John 14:25 we see, *“These things I have spoken to you while abiding MENO with you.”* This shows that day in and day out, throughout Jesus’ public ministry, He was **continually** present with His disciples as He taught.
 - b. This is a somewhat difficult concept to grasp because the word *abide* literally means to remain somewhere or to stay in residence. Metaphorically, however, it carried the deeper concept of abiding in **intimate** companionship.
 - c. For the believer, abiding becomes an issue of faith. It carries the idea of resting, depending, and residing in fellowship. Of course, our fleshly nature very much resists this posture of continual **dependence** on the Lord. Since this is against our nature, faith-abiding becomes a robust battle for all believers.

6. 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 that I said to you.”* Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would not only remind them of what He, Jesus, had taught them during the time He resided among them, but would soon go further and teach them **all things**.
- After Jesus ascended to heaven, the Holy Spirit **reminded** the disciples of Jesus’ words. The fulfillment of this promise is the basis for the writings of the New Testament by the apostles. Without the work of the Holy Spirit, they would not have accurately or precisely remembered the details of Christ’s words and work. John 2:16-17, 22
 - After the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of **Pentecost**, He caused the apostles and prophets who authored the New Testament to **remember** the truth, just as Jesus had taught them. Jesus said, “[He will] ...bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.”
 - Beyond reminding them of what Jesus had said, Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would also teach them additional truth. These additional truths had to do with the **mysteries** of the present church age.
 - In Ephesians 3:4-5, Paul said, *“The mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the **Spirit**.”*
 - Today, the Holy Spirit continues a ministry of teaching, but He does not give **new** or additional truth. The Spirit teaches us by illuminating for us the already recorded truths found in the pages of the New Testament. 1 Corinthians 2:10-13
7. John 14:27 – *“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be **troubled**, nor let it be fearful.”* This is the second time Jesus spoke peace to the hearts of His followers. In John 14:1 He instructed them to not let their hearts be troubled. This was a truth they needed to guard, now and in the days to come.
- Jesus Christ alone gives true **peace** that provides confidence and abolishes fear. This world does not give peace. This world gives conflict, war and hatred. Only Jesus can say, “Don’t be worried and upset,” and actually deliver on those words. Jesus alone gives us the incredible gift of tranquility. Philippians 4:7, John 16:33, Acts 10:36, Romans 1:7
 - Romans 15:13 says, *“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”* Christianity is the only belief system on earth that delivers on the promise of providing **genuine** peace to its adherents. Are you enjoying His peace today?
8. John 14:28a – *You heard that I said to you, ‘I go away, and I will come to you.’* Jesus rehashed what He told them in John 13:33. This was the very statement that had greatly troubled the disciples and started this long discussion (Jn. 14). Jesus reminded them again, that although He is going away, He would **return** to them.
9. John 14:28b – *...If you loved Me, you would have rejoiced because I go to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.* Since Jesus said they should have **rejoiced** at the news of His going to the Father, we can conclude that His leaving would actually be exceedingly positive for them. Why was it a good thing that Jesus would go to the Father?

- a. It is good that Jesus is with the Father because from that posture He is able to **advocate** and intercede for us whenever there is a problem, question or accusation. Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25, 9:24; 1 John 2:1; Revelation 12:10
 - b. It is good that Jesus is with the Father because from that posture He **mediates** between all mankind and God. 1 Timothy 2:5 explains, *“For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”*
 - c. It was good for Jesus to go to the Father because when He did, He sent the **Holy Spirit** to indwell each believer to be their comforter, guide and constant companion, strength and wisdom.
 - d. Because Lord Jesus became a **man**, in His humanity, He can only be in one place at a time, with one group of people. By means of the Holy Spirit indwelling every believer everywhere on earth, God can now accomplish His work around the world.
10. John 14:29 – *“Now I have told you before it happens, so that when it happens, you may believe.”* The literal fulfillment of this prophecy, that Jesus would rise from the dead, ascend into heaven and represent us before the Father, would **strengthen** the disciples’ faith in Him and in His words.
- a. With the coming of the Holy Spirit the disciples would **know** He was glorified and currently advocating on their behalf. Luke 24:49 says, *“And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”* Acts 1:4
 - b. John 7:39 says, *“But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet **glorified**.”*
 - c. Acts 2:33 says, *“Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has **poured** forth this which you both see and hear.”*
11. John 14:30 – *“I will not speak much more with you, for the ruler of the world is coming, and he has nothing in Me.”* Jesus predicted the manifestation of **Satan** through Judas Iscariot, who would betray Him. This testimony shows Christ’s omniscience and power over the devil. He was in complete control of the circumstances of His suffering and death.
- a. Jesus told His disciples that His ability to minister directly to them was soon coming to an end. This is because He was about to be face to face with the **tyrant** who had long ruled this world. Even at that moment, Judas was snaking about, entirely possessed by the devil.
 - b. Jesus assured His followers that even though he would face Satan, Satan had nothing over Him; no authority, no claims, and no grip on Him. The disciples needed to hear this **victory** statement so that they would not lose heart when Jesus was arrested.

12. John 14:31 – “...but so that the world KOSMOS may know that I love the Father, I do exactly as the Father commanded Me. Get up, let us go from here.” Jesus Christ would **complete** the Father’s plan despite any personal pain or vicious confrontations. He knew He would suffer on our behalf, but He gladly accepted that cup from His Father’s hand. John 4:34
- Jesus always did His Father’s **will**. Because He always did the will of God, the whole cosmos could see that He unquestionably loved His Father. Hebrews 10:7-10, 12:2
 - Jesus and the disciples left the Upper Room and headed for the Garden of Gethsemane. The garden was likely the **classroom** where He used the metaphor of a grape vine to teach some crucial truths to His disciples.

XVII. John 15:1-27 – After Supper Discourse: Episode One

A. John 15 – An introduction

- A review of events from John 13:18 to John 14:31
 - The disciples were all shocked to hear news of a **traitor** among them. John 13:18-30
 - Jesus told the disciples to love one another, and, in this way, show they were true **followers** of His. John 13:34-35
 - They were stunned to hear Christ was going to **leave** them. John 13:36
 - Peter claimed he would die for Christ, but Jesus told him that before the break of dawn he would **deny** Him three times. John 13:37-38
 - The disciples were disappointed that Jesus would not immediately present Himself as **king** and set up His earthly kingdom. John 14:8-9
 - Jesus imparted peace to His alarmed and **anxious** disciples. John 14:27
 - Before eating the Passover, the disciples argued who would be the **greatest**, but Jesus showed them true greatness through serving. Luke 22:24-27
- The setting of this section
 - Jesus and His disciples had just **left** the upper room and were walking on their way to the Garden of Gethsemane located on the Mount of Olives. Jesus may have stopped occasionally for final and important discipleship moments. John 15-17 records in great detail these important after supper discourses by Jesus.
 - Jesus was very near the time of His arrest, trial and crucifixion for our sins. There remained only a few short **hours** before the night would be shattered by the arrival of soldiers led by the traitor Judas Iscariot.
 - Just before their world came unglued, Jesus gave last minute **instructions** to His beloved followers. After Jesus’s arrest they would need a solid hope on which to stand.
 - Jesus taught these truths with the full knowledge that that very night all the disciples would **abandon** Him, and Peter would publicly disown Him three times. Matthew 26:31,56; Mark 14:50-52; John 16:32

- e. Jesus was aware of the disciples' **frailty**, just as He is aware of ours. He loved them just as He loves you. Psalm 103:13-14, 138:8
3. Your background, previous teaching, and even your personal study will greatly influence your **interpretation** of the upcoming passage of John 15. In view of this reality, here are some factors to consider.
- Some people interpret this passage as a stern **warning**.
 - Some interpret this as a **judgement** passage.
 - Some interpret this as a discussion on how to **distinguish** believers from unbelievers.
 - Some take this teaching to be about the **loss** of salvation.
4. In contrast to these views, the authors of this curriculum believe this passage was written to believers and was meant to teach them how to live **fruitful** lives.
- We do not believe this passage is a warning, a judgment, a comparison of saved versus unsaved, or a teaching on the loss of salvation. We prayerfully trust you will attentively **consider** our perspective.
 - With this said, if you disagree with our interpretation and find through your studies that the Bible teaches differently, then we encourage you to stick with the scriptures and not these notes. The **scriptures** are infallible; these notes are not.
5. There are several important terms that appear in this passage that we should define.
- What is meant by "the **vine**," mentioned three times in verses 1, 4 and 5? The answer, Jesus Christ.
 - What is meant by "the **branch**," mentioned five times in verses 2, 4, 5, and 6? The answer, a believer in Christ, a born-again Child of God.
 - What is meant by "**to bear**," mentioned six times in verses 2, 4, 5, and 8? The answer, to yield fruit.
 - What is meant by "**takes away**," mentioned once in verse 2? The answer, to lift up.
 - What is meant by "**prunes**," mentioned once in verse 2? The answer, to purge or cleanse.
 - What is meant by being "**clean**," mentioned once in verse 2? The answer, to be saved. See John 13:10-11
 - What is meant by "**fruit**," mentioned six times in verses 2, 4, 5 and 8? The answer, good works.
 - What is meant by "**abide**," mentioned ten times in verses 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10? The answer, to remain in fellowship.
 - What is meant by "**fire**" and "burned," mentioned in verse 6? The answer, divine discipline.
6. The **characters** involved in this analogy

- a. Jesus **Christ** is the *vine* or the *true vine*. John 15:1, 4-5
 - b. God the **Father** is the *vinedresser*. John 15:1
 - c. **Believers** are the *branches*, for the following reasons:
 - 1) The branches are spoken of as being **in Christ**. John 15:2.
 - 2) In verse 3 Jesus told the disciples that they were already **clean** (believers) and then in verse 5 He told them that they were the branches.
 - d. The unnamed **workers** in John 15:6 are those who gather and burn dried and withered branches. They carried out this type of work in the fall of each year.
7. The context of this passage is fruitfulness, not salvation. At this point in the narrative of John's gospel the disciples were all believers. Equally true is that they were failing in their walk and spiritual productivity. We must **distinguish** between salvation and discipleship.
- a. Salvation happens at a point in time when we are justified, or declared righteous before God, whereas discipleship **increases** over a lifetime as we are sanctified, or made righteous, in conduct through daily steps of faith in Christ.
 - b. Salvation is eternal deliverance from sin's penalty, whereas discipleship is daily deliverance from sin's **power**.
 - c. Salvation is non-revocable, whereas discipleship can either progress or **regress**.
 - d. Just before He departed, Jesus laid out for His disciples their potential to be either fruitful or regretfully unfruitful. This passage teaches **degrees** of fruitfulness among believers. This passage shows our relationship to Jesus regarding fruitful Christian living.
8. Understanding middle eastern grape **cultivation** as practiced in the time of Christ
- a. There was a vinedresser who was typically the **owner** of the vineyard.
 - b. There was always a main **vine** or grape plant. Sometimes there were several, but in Jesus' metaphor in this section of John 15, there is only one vine.
 - c. Many limbs sprouted from each vine. These branches were spring shoots that would bear the grapes that would soon develop. The **grapes** did not grow directly on the main vine, only out on the branches.
 - d. In preparation for a bountiful harvest of grapes, branches had to be **lifted**, or propped up for support.
 - e. Then there was the process of **cutting** off (cleansing, pruning or purging) untamed shoots or abnormal growth from fruiting branches. This was a help to them to bear better grapes.
 - f. There was the process of **waiting** for the vines to produce. In John 15, some branches gave no fruit (15:2a), others bore some fruit (15:2b), some bore more fruit (15:2c), some bore much fruit (15:5) and some bore fruit that remains (15:16). Matthew 13:8

- g. In the fall of the year, dead limbs were removed from the vineyard. Typically, under the direction of the vinedresser, after the growing season workers cut out and removed unproductive branches. These were then **burned** outside the vineyard.

B. John 15:1-8 – Abide in Christ

1. John 15:1 – *“I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser.”* To correctly understand this analogy, we must keep in mind the **metaphor** of Jesus as the vine and the Father as the vinedresser. The wonderful aspect of having God as our vinedresser is His detailed devotion to the spiritual health of every individual branch. Isaiah 5:1-8
2. John 15:2 – Since the branches are in Christ (*Every branch **in Me***), we know they are believers. 2 Corinthians 5:17
 - a. John 15:2a – *Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away* AIRO... This sounds like God removes the believer who does not bear fruit. It sounds like believers who do not bear fruit can lose their salvation, but the Greek word AIRO can also legitimately be translated **‘to lift up.’**
 - 1) Here are some **examples** of how AIRO has been translated *takes up* or *takes away*: In Matthew 9:6, AIRO was translated *pick up (your bed)*, in Mark 16:18, *pick up (serpents)*, in Matthew 16:24, *take up (your cross)*, in Mark 13:16, *get (his coat)*, in Luke 8:12, *takes away (the word)*, and in Matthew 25:28, *take away (the talent)*.
 - 2) The vinedresser usually handles branches in the **spring**, during their growth spurt when they are not bearing fruit. At that time, he lifts the branches and ties them to runners or props them up on rocks in hopes of a bountiful harvest in due time.
 - b. John 15:2b – *“...and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bear more fruit.”* The vinedresser **prunes** (cuts on, gives trials or even suffering) to the branches that bear fruit so they will bear even *more* fruit. If a branch could speak, it might deem this procedure cruel and unfair, but it is good. Romans 8:28, Hebrews 12:5-11
3. John 15:3 – *“You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.”* The disciples had already been purified by salvation through faith in the word that Christ **preached** to them. Jesus did not doubt His disciples’ cleansing in salvation. John 13:5-9
 - a. John 13:10-11 gives valuable insight into Christ’s statement here: *“Jesus said to him, ‘He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely **clean**; and you are clean, but not all of you.’ For He knew the one [Judas Iscariot] who was betraying Him; for this reason, He said, ‘Not all of you are clean’.”* Matthew 26:24, John 6:64-65
 - b. Additionally, in Ephesians 5:25-26 Paul said, *“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having **cleansed** her by the washing of water with the word.”*
4. John 15:4 – *“Abide **in Me**, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me.”* Just as an unconnected branch cannot bear fruit, so also a believer cannot bear fruit apart from a vital connection to Lord Jesus Christ. For this reason, we must **abide** in fellowship with Christ.

- a. So, although we are clean through the word of Christ, we must abide in fellowship in order to bear fruit. This makes abiding an issue of faith and dependence on the Lord, not an issue of works and obedience. Obedience is a **fruit** of faith and should not be taught as a synonym for abiding.
 - b. This term for abiding **MENO** has to do with our fellowship with Christ and not our position in Christ. The command to **remain** has to do with our fellowship, which fluctuates, and not with our relationship with the Lord, which is already secure.
 - c. This concept can be likened to one's relationship to his or her parents. You will always be a son or daughter of your parents, a relative or an offspring. You cannot change that. But you may or may not be consistently enjoying **friendship** with them.
5. John 15:5 – *"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."* To abide in Christ is to **depend** by faith on Him and His gracious provisions for you. 2 Peter 1:3, Romans 1:17, Galatians 2:20b
 - a. Jesus Christ is the vine who produces the fruit that we as branches **bear**. The branch is completely dependent on the vine for life and fruit bearing. This analogy parallels walking by the Spirit as found in Galatians 5:16.
 - b. The spiritual **works** that Christ produces through us are called the *fruit of the Spirit* (Galatians 5:22-23) and are contrasted to the evil *works of the flesh*. Galatians 5:19-21
 - c. Apart from Christ and His enabling **power**, we can do nothing to please God. Acts 21:19; Romans 7:18, 25a; Ephesians 5:18b; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 2 Corinthians 3:5
 - d. At this juncture, the disciples were not what we would call fruitful. They really needed to hear these teachings and learn to abide in fellowship with Him. It is our **decision** to abide or not abide, but it must be clearly understood that without abiding in Him no Christian can please God or do anything good. Romans 7:18; Hebrews 10:38, 11:6
 6. John 15:6 – *"If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."* We see here that Jesus was talking about dried-up branches, referring to believers who **lose** their usefulness because they refuse to abide in Christ. Such a believer will be disciplined.
 - a. A believer who decides not to abide in fellowship with Christ faces a sad consequence. He or she becomes as **useless** as a dried-up branch that is going to be thrown into a fire and burned. When believers do not abide in Christ, by default they are living according to their flesh. Nothing good ever comes from that. Galatians 6:7-8
 - b. The word fire here does not refer to hell; it refers to strong **discipline**. The believer who does not abide in fellowship with Christ will face discipline and loss of future rewards. 1 Corinthians 5:3-13, 11:30-32; Hebrews 12:6; 1 John 5:16-17
 - c. Jesus said **they** (plural) gather the dried-up branches and throw them into the fire to be burned. God uses other believers in this discipline. 2 Samuel 7:14 describes how God can do this, *"I will be a father to him, and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men."*

7. John 15:7 – *“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.”* Jesus promised to **answer** the requests of those believers who abide in Christ and are being filled with His word. Colossians 3:15-17, Psalm 37:4, Proverbs 3:5-6
 - a. Obviously, a believer who is filled with God’s word and abiding in Christ will **agree** with God’s will and not have selfish desires. The concept of abiding in Christ makes this blank check promise of God rational. Romans 8:26-27, 12:2
 - b. It is interesting that this promise is found right in the middle of Jesus’ talk on bearing fruit and abiding in Him. Through God’s word we learn His **will** and can then pray accordingly, both for ourselves and for others. Romans 12:2, Ephesians 6:18-20, Philippians 1:9-11, Colossians 1:9-11, 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12
8. John 15:8 – *“My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.”* To become a child of God a person must believe the gospel, **not** bear fruit. You don’t become a child of God by bearing fruit. Ephesians 2:8-9
 - a. However, God is **glorified** when His disciples bear fruit. This shows they are healthy growing disciples. Every child of God ought to become fruitful. That is God’s will.
 - b. The disciples were about to go through three days of severe pruning. Forty days later, they would begin to experience an immense **harvest** of souls. Acts 2:41, 47
 - c. As observed in this passage, we should make our goal to abide in Christ and not to produce fruit. To focus on fruit production is to misunderstand this passage. In order to bear fruit, the disciples needed to abide in Christ. Fruit bearing is a passive **product** of actively abiding in the vine, Jesus Christ. Galatians 5:16
 - d. If you want to bear abundant fruit, fruit that brings glory to God, fruit that lasts, and fruit that proves you are Christ’s **disciple**, then abide in the vine by actively depending on the Savior, Jesus Christ. Galatians 2:20b

C. John 15:9-11 – Abide in love

1. John 15:9 – *“Just as the Father has loved Me; I have also loved you; abide in My love.”* Throughout His ministry, Jesus loved the disciples in the **exact** same manner, and to the exact extent, that the Father loved Him. Jesus commanded His disciples to rest in His love for them. Sometimes like children we need to be told what is good for us.
2. 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.”* Jesus commands us to **keep** His commandments so we can abide in His love. John 14:15, 21, 23; 1 John 2:3
 - a. The Christian life is somewhat circular. We must keep God's commandments in order to abide in His love, but in order to successfully keep His commandments, and therefore abide in His love, we must abide in fellowship with Him. He is the **source** of our energy to serve. John 15:4-5
 - b. For us to be able to keep, guard or treasure any of Christ’s commands, we must **abide** in Him in the same way He abided in fellowship with the Father.

- 1) 1 John 2:6 – *Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.* How did Jesus live? He **lived** every moment of His earthly life in complete dependence on the Father, who was then able to accomplish His will through Jesus. Acts 2:22
 - a) John 5:30 – *I can do nothing on My **own** initiative ... because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.*
 - b) John 6:38 – *For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who **sent** Me.*
 - c) John 8:28 – *I do **nothing** on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.*
 - d) John 12:49-50 - *For I did not speak on My own initiative, but the Father Himself who sent Me has given Me a commandment as to what to say and what to speak. I know that His commandment is eternal life; therefore, the things I speak, I speak just as the **Father** has told Me.*
- 2) We absolutely cannot love the Lord and keep His commands without the **strength** God gives us as we abide in Christ. John 15:4-5, Romans 15:18, 1 Corinthians 15:10, 2 Corinthians 3:4-6
- 3) 2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 says, *“Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us **eternal** comfort and good hope by grace, comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word.”*
 3. John 15:11 – *“These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.”* We cannot have true joy apart from abiding in Christ and keeping His words. Jesus taught these truths so that our joy would be thorough and complete. Let us all gladly maintain **close** fellowship with Him. Philippians 2:2
 - a. We see in this passage **four** benefits that come from abiding in Christ.
 - 1) John 15:7 – A life that is marked by answered **prayer**
 - 2) John 15:8a – A life that **exalts** God
 - 3) John 15:8b – A life that **bears** abundant fruit
 - 4) John 15:11 – A life that is filled with the **joy** of the Lord
 - b. True joy begins at salvation (Phil. 1:25) and it **grows** as God teaches us through His word, as we abide in fellowship with Him, and as we experience His transforming power in our lives. Psalm 51:12, 1 John 1:4, Romans 15:13
 - c. Contrary to what we easily think, God’s ways are not burdensome or a drudgery. Walking according to God’s word results in peace, joy and life because His paths are **good** and perfect. Jeremiah 21:8; Romans 6:21, 23; Galatians 6:8

D. John 15:12-17 – Love one another

1. John 15:12 – *“This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you.”* After teaching extensively on abiding in the vine (Christ), the Lord gave the idealistic command to love one another just as He loves us. Humanly speaking this is **impossible**. Romans 5:12, 8:4; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
 - a. To love as Christ loved is only possible for the person who abides in Christ and in whom Christ also abides. Christ’s command is that we unselfishly seek what is best for each other, just as Christ seeks what is **best** for us. Romans 5:6-8, Galatians 5:22a, Philippians 2:3-8
 - b. To unselfishly love others is called the **law** of Christ. Galatians 6:2 gives an active explanation of this command: *“Bear one another’s burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.”*
 - c. In John 14:15 we saw that Jesus told the disciples if they loved Him, they would keep His commandments. In Romans 13:8-9 the apostle Paul wrote that God’s commands are **“summed up in this saying, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”**
 - d. Galatians 5:14 repeats this same principle when it says that *the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, ‘you shall **love** your neighbor as yourself’*. Matthew 7:12, 1 Corinthians 9:19-23; Galatians 5:13-14; 1 John 2:7-11, 5:3
 - e. If we do not love our brothers and sisters in Christ, then we are walking in **darkness**. If we do not love others, we are not loving God who made them. If we love Christ, we will guard His command to love others. 1 John 2:7-11
2. John 15:13 – *“Greater love has no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.”* The highest form of **love** is sacrificing yourself for others. This expresses the essence of the gospel. John 3:16, Romans 5:6-8, Hebrews 2:9-12
 - a. True love is seen in Christ when He came into this dark world and **died** in our place while we were still utterly lost and helpless sinners. The simple truth is, most of us would never think of dying even for a worthy person, much less for a sinner. Ephesians 2:1-9
 - b. Our God, on the other hand, showed us unbounded love by sending His only Son to die on our behalf, an act that is entirely alien to our nature. Jesus gave Himself for us when we were totally undeserving evil sinners and that, my friend, becomes the factual **definition** of true love.
 - c. That is the kind of love Christ had for us and that is the kind of love we **exhibit** when we keep His words and abide in active fellowship with Him. Romans 8:4
3. John 15:14a – *“You are My **friends** if you do what I command you.”* 1 John 2:4 says that *the one who says, “I have come to know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* We cannot have friendship with God when we walk in darkness. Matthew 12:50, 1 John 1:5-7, 2:3-6

4. John 15:14b – *“You are My friends **if** you do what I command you.”* This *if* statement is a 3rd class condition in the Greek meaning that maybe you will do what He commands or maybe you will not. It is up to each individual believer to decide whether he or she will do what God commands and walk in dependent friendship with Christ or not.
 - a. Those who have a consistent friendship with Christ, based on abiding in Him, have lives marked by fruitfulness, **joy**, and obedience. Galatians 5:16, 22-23; Ephesians 5:8-9
 - b. Those who choose **not** to abide in friendship with Christ will experience a barren, sorrowful, and defiant life. Romans 8:6-8
 - c. Clearly, our friendship with Christ is closely **linked** to our submission to His commands. 1 John 1:6

5. John 15:15 – *“No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you.”* Christ proceeded to explain the kind of relationship we have with Him. Our relationship with Him is not slave to master but rather a **friend** to friend bond.
 - a. Earlier Jesus spoke of loving Him and loving one another. Now He spoke of friendship. Jesus had **washed** their feet, eaten with them, and walked and talked with them as friends. He had corrected, instructed, encouraged and sacrificed for His disciples; they were truly His friends.
 - b. Jesus was **happy** to share with the disciples *all things* that the Father had communicated to Him. A friend gets to sit at the table, but a slave stands off to the side watching and serving. A slave is not in on conversations, but Christ had brought them into His confidence. Psalm 25:14, Proverbs 18:24b
 - c. Now in the present Church Age, Christ communicates with believers through His inspired written word and by means of His Holy Spirit. He wants us to know Him. He wants to guide and teach us. And He wants us to be involved in His **plans**. Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 2:16, Colossians 1:9-11

6. John 15:16 – Here in this verse Jesus used five verbs (go, bear, remain, ask, give), each one in the subjunctive mood. This grammar choice expressed a desired and optimistic outcome rather than an absolutely guaranteed outcome. This communicates that we have been **chosen** with the desired goal of bearing fruit in our service to God. Ephesians 2:10
 - a. John 15:16a – *“You did not choose Me, but I chose you...”* This choosing had nothing to do with an election to salvation. Jesus was telling His disciples that He had personally selected them from among the masses in Israel to be His **disciples**. Often a student chose a teacher, but here the ultimate teacher of teachers hand-picked these students.
 - b. John 15:16b – *“...and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain...”* Jesus said that He handpicked and commissioned them to go out into the world and produce fruit that would not spoil. They had seen a divine **model** of love in action. He had taught them through correction, instruction and encouragement.

- c. John 15:16b – “...so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.” Jesus made a promise. This was not a blank check for selfish use, but as they went out to serve and bear lasting fruit, if they had a need, they were to boldly make their **request** known to the Father in Christ’s name and the Father would readily answer.
7. John 15:17 – “*This I command you, that you love one another.*” The command to love is a primary theme of the chapter. In John 15:12 Jesus said, “*this is My commandment, that you love one another.*” This kind of love is not natural to us. We are naturally **selfish**. Therefore, we must *abide in Christ* since *apart from [Him we] can do nothing*. John 15:4-5
- a. Why would we be commanded to love one another? Because in life there are many things that will put your love to the test. There will be disagreements, disappointments, conflicts, sin, and the like. Without a **command** like this to love each other, we’d likely not even care to pursue forgiveness and unity. John 13:34-35
- b. Even the very night Jesus gave this twice-repeated command, those He loved most had been exasperatingly stubborn, asking irrational questions and making brash statements (Peter). Judas had left the group to betray Him. Jesus was not talking about some cheap human **emotion**. He was talking about the agape love, a love that stems from God.

E. John 15:18-25 – Seven reasons to be hated

1. Introduction to this section.
- a. Nowadays, many Christians are **mistakenly** enraged against this world.
- 1) Christians complain because the culture doesn’t **support** them.
 - 2) Christians want government and society to **enforce** Christian values.
 - 3) Christians are angry because their **rights** are violated.
 - 4) Christians **sue** businesses and governments and march for the rights to celebrate or push Christian monuments and holidays on this world.
 - 5) Christians are easily **offended** and surprised by the ills of society.
 - 6) Christians are often bringing open shame and **contempt** to the cause of Jesus Christ, thinking He sanctions these actions when indeed He never asked us to fight for these things. 1 Peter 2:21-24
- b. What about this world?
- 1) We must understand that this world is not our friend; it considers us to be the enemy. The world hates us. That is not saying something bad about this world; it is just seeing **reality** for what it actually is.
 - 2) Satan marshals the **forces** of education, religions, philosophy, literature, art, entertainment and government to deceive, discredit, and neutralize unguarded believers. These forces counter, ridicule, obscure, and obstruct the spread of the gospel message. Daniel 1:3-7, John 8:44, Acts 13:10

- 3) The world system, run by the enemy of our souls, uses **compromise** as a primary weapon against God's people. Satan is a master of deception; therefore, believers must be alert. Genesis 3:4, 2 Chronicles 18:21, Romans 12:2, Ephesians 6:10-20, James 4:4, 1 Peter 5:8-9
 - 4) We need to understand that we are blessed if we are hated by this world. We should **rejoice** in such cases. Why? Because we will be rewarded for tolerating persecution. 1 Peter 4:12-19
 - 5) Matthew 5:10-12 – *Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness... Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they **persecuted** the prophets who were before you.*
 - 6) We do not consider the individual unsaved **people** or this world as our enemies. In fact, God loved the world so much He sent Christ to die for all sinful humanity, as we are about to see. God does not want any person to perish. He wants to rescue everyone from Satan's dominion. Ezekiel 33:11; Ephesians 2:1-7, 6:12; 2 Peter 3:9
- c. What is the world?
- 1) *World* in Greek is the word KOSMOS. World (KOSMOS) in many contexts does not refer to the physical earth or universe; it refers to the godless organized **system** that envelopes and demonically governs this planet. John 12:31, Colossians 1:13, James 3:14-15, 1 Peter 2:11, 1 John 2:16
 - 2) The leader of this godless organized system is **Satan**. His world order is divided into three areas. Isaiah 14:12-17, Ezekiel 28:11-19, John 14:30
 - a) An organized system of **thought**: this organized system includes religious, political, philosophical and societal thinking, to mention just a few examples. 1 Corinthians 7:31, 1 John 2:15-16
 - b) An organized system of **organizations**: this organized system includes nations, religions, bureaucracies, political parties, corporations, unions, militaries, etc. Luke 4:5-7
 - c) An organized system of **people**: These are the unbelievers. These include people from every walk of life who are totally unaware they are involved in an evil world system. Mark 4:15, 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, Ephesians 2:2
 - 3) Even though this evil system of governance exists, God keeps it in check. Absolute rule by the world system (KOSMOS) is curbed by the Holy Spirit. This system is also interrupted by the actions of faithful and obedient Christians. This makes Christianity **enemy** number one to the world system. 2 Thessalonians 2:6-10

- a) Satan **hates** believers with red-hot intensity. You must accept this reality. You must get used to the fact that you cannot make this world your friend, or friendly to the cause of Christ. If you believe that is possible, you are in for a rude awakening. James 4:4, 1 John 2:15
 - b) Until Christ finally returns, **conflicts** will persist between Satan's evil realm, the KOSMOS, and God's Church. Satan's forces do not adhere to any rules. God's children have specific instructions; their primary weapon being love. Proverbs 25:21-22, Matthew 5:43-48, Luke 6:27-36
 - c) We need to remember that as we preach the gospel and add souls to the church of Jesus Christ, we are marching against Satan's gates. Satan is on the **defensive** in this battle, not us. In Christ we are the true overcomers. We are the spiritual infiltrators. The Church marches victorious. Matthew 16:18, 1 John 3:8
 - d) Oh, by the way, we **win** in the end. The battle has already been decided. Therefore, we should not be surprised by desperate attacks from the king and his evil system. Let's not use the enemy's tactics or weapons. God's armor is sufficient. Romans 13:12; 2 Corinthians 6:7, 10:3-5; Ephesians 6:10-13
 - e) Keep in mind the fact that you are a **citizen** of heaven, an ambassador of Christ, and a stranger and pilgrim in this dark KOSMOS here below. 2 Corinthians 5:20, Philippians 3:20, Colossians 3:1
2. John 15:18 – The first reason the world hates us is because it hated **Jesus** first. *“If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you.”*
- a. After speaking considerably about love, Jesus now switched to talk about hate. Since, as believers, we are followers of Jesus Christ, we shouldn't be surprised if the world **hates** us. It hated Him first. John 1:10-11
 - b. This hatred is intense and **perpetual**. The world has always hated God, and it will never change. The way the world expressed its hatred to Jesus was by killing Him. How do you feel the world will treat you because of your love for Jesus? Believer, you wear a target.
 - c. We are to respond to the world's hatred with **love**. Romans 12 teaches us a unique way to live in this world.
 - 1) Romans 12:17-19 – *Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at **peace** with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, “vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord.* 1 Peter 5:8
 - 2) Romans 12:20-21 – *“But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with **good**.* 1 Peter 3:9

3. John 15:19 – The second reason the world hates us is because we no longer belong to it, and that makes us an enemy. *“If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you.”* The world considers us to be **traitors**.
 - a. The world loves those who **belong** to it. On the day of your salvation you were born again, redeemed from the slave market of sin, and officially documented as a citizen of heaven. Since you no longer belong to the world, the world now scorns you.
 - b. Satan hates losing people to God. He hates God’s ultimate plan to rescue humanity from his dominion of darkness. Therefore, you are an object of antagonism. If this is not your experience, you should check your location. Maybe you are standing terrifyingly **close** to the world in your life and actions. Psalm 1:1-2, Proverbs 4:14, Romans 12:1-2
4. John 15:20 – The third reason the world hates you is because you now **serve** God.
 - a. John 15:20a – *“Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A slave is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you...”* Since the world system persecuted Christ, His servants can **expect** opposition and persecution from the same crowd. The way they harassed Jesus is the way we will be harassed. 2 Timothy 3:12
 - 1) Your slavery to Christ brings animosity against you. Bearing fruit in service to Christ and for His glory makes you a **threat** to the devil’s strategy.
 - 2) Satan does not take **losses** lightly. Every time we lead someone to Christ, we are taking ground for the Lord.
 - b. John 15:20b – *“...if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.”* In this verse we see a glimmer of **hope**. Some in Israel had responded positively to Jesus. In the same way, some people will listen and believe when we share the gospel. 1 Thessalonians 2:13
5. John 15:21 – The fourth reason the world hates you is because it does not **know** the One who sent Jesus. *“But all these things they will do to you for My name’s sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me.”* John 8:55, 17:25
 - a. The world’s hostility stems from biblical illiteracy resulting in dismal ignorance of God and His ways. Creation shows there is a creator who is powerful, wise, and loving; yet the world suppresses this knowledge. They choose instead to **remain** willfully ignorant of God, their creator. Romans 1:18-24
 - b. God the Father sent Jesus to die for sins and to rise again victorious over Satan, sin and death. This was His **plan** from the beginning. Satan always counters God’s plans and does not want his victims to hear about it. He wants ignorance of God to prevail. Genesis 3:15, Acts 2:23, 1 Peter 1:3, 2 Thessalonians 2:16
6. John 15:22 – The fifth reason the world hates us is because when Christ is preached a raw nerve is touched. *“If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no **excuse** for their sin.”*

- a. If Jesus had not come into the world and communicated truth, the world would not have any real knowledge of its sinfulness. Now that sin has been duly **exposed**, the world has no way to excuse or justify its sinful behavior. 1 John 3:12-13
 - b. Jesus, as the true light, clearly revealed the glory of the Father, and, in the process, exposed humanity's sin. The world does not want its sin exposed, so it rejected Him. Because the preaching of the gospel exposes sin, the world blames Christians for being judgmental and **intolerant**.
7. John 15:23-24 – The **sixth** reason the world hates us is because it hates God Himself, the Father of our Lord. *“He who hates Me hates My Father also. If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated Me and My Father as well.”*
- a. The **oneness** between the Father and the Son means that to hate the one is to hate the other and to worship the one is to worship the other. John 5:22-23, 8:42
 - b. Jesus' miracles were of such quantity and quality that no objective and intelligent person could deny Christ's claim to be Messiah (Jn. 21:25). The world's sin was blatant rejection and denial of Christ, which is the **same** as rejection of the Father who sent Him. John 5:36, 10:38, 14:11
8. John 15:25 – The seventh reason the world hates us is no reason at all. Just as was scripture prophesied, the world hated Jesus without a **cause**. *“But they have done this to fulfill the word that is written in their Law, ‘they hated Me without a cause’.”*
- a. The world had no legitimate reason to hate Jesus. The Old Testament prophesied about Him, His miracles showed He was God, He perfectly obeyed the Law, and He never sinned. He showed kindness to all. He should have been loved and accepted. The world had no reason at all to **condemn** Him. Psalm 35:19, 109:3; 1 Peter 2:20-24
 - b. Jesus taught about this hatred so we would not be caught off guard or embrace the **fantasy** that we can make this world somehow fall in love with Jesus or look on Him favorably. The world hated Him without a cause, and, as His children, we can expect the same. We win the world by preaching the gospel not by becoming like it. 1 John 3:12-13

F. John 15:26-27 – Respond to rejection

- 1. John 15:26 – Jesus promised a helper for our survival in a **hostile** environment.
 - a. John 15:26a – *“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father...”* Why did Jesus call the Holy Spirit a **helper**?
 - 1) When you think of the seven reasons we will be hated by the world, it could be disheartening. Jesus knew His disciples (and later us) would need true help, someone perfectly suited for our comfort, protection and stability and on whom we could heavily **lean** in this sinister and hateful world.
 - 2) Just as Christ came into this world with complete divine authority because the Father sent Him, so also the Holy Spirit came with complete divine authority because **Christ** sent Him.

- b. John 15:26b – *“that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me...”* One of the major **jobs** of the Holy Spirit is to convict and convince the unsaved world about the truth of Jesus. In making the statement, *“the Spirit...He,”* John used an irregular grammatical construction.
- 1) John used the masculine pronoun *He* to refer to the Greek neuter noun *Spirit*. Grammatically, a neuter noun has a neuter pronoun, but in this case, since God the Holy Spirit is a **person**, John used the masculine pronoun *He*.
 - 2) The masculine pronoun shows that the Holy Spirit is not an impersonal it (a ghost) but an actual person who can be **known** and loved.
2. John 15:27 – *“...and you will testify also, because you have been with Me from the beginning.”* Just as the Holy Spirit’s ministry would be to **testify** concerning Jesus, so also the disciples would become witnesses of Jesus. They would give this testimony in the face of great hostility. The Holy Spirit would be their strength. Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8
- a. The Holy Spirit gives the marching orders of ministry. In modern warfare, before military hostilities begin between opposing nations, ambassadors and embassy personnel are recalled. This is not the case in spiritual warfare. Christ sends His emissaries and ambassadors right out to the **front** lines.
 - b. When Christ’s ambassadors reflect the character and calling of Jesus Christ, they experience rejection and hostility from this world system. How they **respond** to these situations is critical. We are not the losers; we are the victors. Philippians 1:27-28
 - c. Acts 5:17-42 tells how the apostles were arrested, jailed, miraculously freed, jailed again, and then severely beaten. Nevertheless, they **rejoiced** *that they had been considered worthy to suffer shame for [Jesus’] name. And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they kept right on teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.*
 - d. When we are mistreated, we should respond in love. We should not retaliate, grumble, quarrel or campaign against our persecutors. Like the apostles, we should rejoice for the privilege to suffer for our Savior. When we are not frightened by our opponents, it is a sign of their **defeat**. Philippians 1:27-28, 2:14-16; 1 Peter 2:23, 3:9, 4:12-13

XVIII. John 16:1-33 – After Supper Discourse: Episode Two

A. John 16:1-6 – Jesus spoke of the hard road of discipleship

1. John 16:1 – *“These things I have spoken to you so that you may be kept from stumbling.”* Jesus **warned** the disciples of sure-to-come hostility and persecution that might cause them to lose hope. Hebrews 2:18
 - a. The idea of *stumbling* SKANDILIZO is a concept that is difficult to translate precisely. Context best determines its use. Typically, this word can be understood as “made to falter, caused to stumble, or taken unawares.” It conveys the idea of being brought to a **downfall**. Matthew 11:6

- b. Jesus did not want His disciples to turn back because of trials. **Offenses** are unavoidable. When they do come, confusion, doubt and fear make it easy to lose heart. What does it take for us to give up? Do we falter or stagger in trials? Are we shaken by doubts and fears? Isaiah 40:30-31; 2 Corinthians 4:16; Galatians 6:9; Hebrews 3:12-14, 10:32-39
- c. Jesus knew it was important to **prepare** the disciples for future adversities. Sadly, difficulties, insults and injustice cause many uninformed believers to become skeptical of God' word and person. These children of God unwittingly fall into the world's trap. 2 Corinthians 4:8-11, 11:23-29; 1 Peter 4:12-13; 1 John 3:13
2. John 16:2a – *“They will make you outcasts from the synagogue...”* It is interesting that the disciples would be persecuted by being cast out of *the synagogue!* The worst persecution often comes from **religious** people who hate the gospel of grace because, like Cain, they wanted to be justified by their good works. Matthew 23:37; 1 John 3:12-13
 3. John 16:2b – *“...but an hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering service to God.”* After Jesus ascended to heaven, the believers faced a lot of persecution, just as Jesus predicted. Much of this persecution came from religious Jews like **Saul**, later called Paul (Phil.3:5-6). Acts 7:58-59, 8:1-3, 9:13-14, 26:9; Galatians 1:13-14, 2:4; 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16
 4. John 16:3 – *“These things they will do because they have not known the Father or Me.”* Life was going to get rough for believers because most of Israel did not believe in Christ as their personal Savior. They **hated** Jesus because they wanted a powerful Liberator not a weak Redeemer. They didn't trust in Jesus because they didn't know God the Father.
 5. John 16:4a – *“But these things I have spoken to you, so that when their hour comes, you may remember that I told you of them...”* Jesus forewarned His disciples of sure-to-come persecution, so that when it occurred, they would not be **disconcerted**.
 6. John 16:4b – *“These things I did not say to you at the beginning, because I was with you.”* At first Jesus didn't tell His disciples about **imminent** persecution. If He was with them, He could protect them. But now that He was leaving, He felt the need to prepare them for the inevitable future adversity.
 7. John 16:5 – *“But now I am going to Him who sent Me; and none of you asks Me, ‘Where are You going?’”* Jesus **noted** that the disciples no longer questioned Him about where He was going. Instead they were simply saddened by His statements.
 8. John 16:6 – *“But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.”* The disciples' grief **eclipsed** their hope. The present overwhelming reality of Jesus' death and His forecast of imminent persecution overshadowed His predictions of future glorification.

B. John 16:7-15 – Jesus' predicted the Spirit's work

1. John 16:7 – *“But 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 go, I will send Him to you.”* As their friend, Jesus **shared** His plans with the disciples. He assured them that it was for their benefit that He was leaving, so that they could receive the Helper.

- a. The Lord had to **depart** before God would send the Helper PARAKLETOS (the Holy Spirit) to personally comfort and minister to them. So, we must ask, “When did the Holy Spirit come to earth?”
- 1) The Holy Spirit was present in the Old Testament; He came and went to help believers as **needed**. Genesis 1:2, 6:3; Judges 15:14; Psalm 51:11
 - 2) While Jesus was on earth, the Holy Spirit was continually with Him. He was also **sometimes** with the believers. Luke 2:26-27, 4:1; John 1:33; Acts 10:38
 - 3) However, at Pentecost the Holy Spirit was going to come to **permanently** reside in every believer. John 14:16-17; Acts 1:4-8, 2:1-4; Romans 8:9-10
- b. There is complete **equality** in the Holy Spirit’s relationship with God the Father and God the Son. Each member of our one God equally possesses every attribute. Although there is perfect unity within the Trinity, there is voluntary submission. The Son submits to the Father and the Holy Spirit submits to the Son and the Father.
- 1) The Father **authorized** and sent the Son, and the Son revealed and glorified the Father by obeying Him.
 - 2) The Son authorized and sent the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit bore witness to the Son and **glorified** Him.
- c. Presently the Holy Spirit is at work in the **world** and in the lives of believers.
- 1) The Holy Spirit **convicts** the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgement. John 16:8
 - 2) The Holy Spirit’s work in the lives of **believers** is wide-ranging. Following is a list of some of the ways the Holy Spirit is your helper as a believer.
 - a) He **resides** inside every believer. In Colossians 1:27, the apostle Paul referred to the indwelling Holy Spirit as “*Christ in you.*” John 14:16-17, Romans 8:9
 - b) He **seals** believers until the day their souls arrive in heaven. Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30; Colossians 1:27
 - c) He **teaches** God’s children the truth. John 15:26, 16:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13-14
 - d) He gives spiritual **gifts** to believers. 1 Corinthians 12:7-11
 - e) He gives **assurance** of salvation. Romans 8:15-16
 - f) The Holy Spirit mediates between us and the Father when we **pray**, so that our prayers are in accordance with God’s will. Romans 8:26-27
 - g) He produces **fruit** in the lives of believers, causing us to do God’s will and explain Christ to this world. Romans 8:4; Galatians 5:16, 22-23; Philippians 2:15-16
 - h) He **strengthens** believers in times of hardship. We are not promised a trouble-free life, but we are promised free help with the trouble life brings. Ephesians 3:16

- d. Sadly, the ministry the Holy Spirit provides can be **hindered**. If a child of God holds on to sin, he or she will grieve the Holy Spirit, and if he or she persists in rebellion, they will with time greatly extinguish or quench His influence in their lives Ephesians 4:30, 1 Thessalonians 5:19
2. John 16:8-11 – The Holy Spirit’s gospel ministry to the unbelieving world involves **conviction** of sin, righteousness, and judgment. When we share the gospel, we should work in accord with the Holy Spirit, using God’s word, His sword, to convince the lost world of these three issues; sin, righteousness, and judgment. Isaiah 55:11, John 15:26-27, Ephesians 6:17
- a. John 16:8 – *“And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment...”* God wants **all** people to be saved. Christ came to seek and to save the lost. He also sent the Holy Spirit into the world to convince the world of the three areas. Ezekiel 33:11; Luke 19:10; John 3:16; 1 Timothy 1:15, 2:4; 1 Peter 3:9
- b. John 16:9 – *“...concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me...”* The great sin of all sins, about which the Holy Spirit convinces unbelievers, is the **sin (singular)** of not believing in Jesus Christ. This is the only sin that sends people to hell. If a person dies not having believed in Jesus Christ as savior, they perish. John 3:17-18
- c. John 16:10 – *“...and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see Me...”* The righteousness that the Holy Spirit convicts the world about is the perfect **righteousness** required to reach God, a righteousness the world does not innately possess. 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Peter 3:18
- 1) While Jesus, *the Holy and Righteous One* (Acts 3:14), was in the world, He was the light that exposed the **sin** of the world. But now that He was going to the Father, He was going to send the Holy Spirit to convict the world of righteousness. John 1:4-5, 7:7, 9:5, 16:7
- 2) The Holy Spirit convinces sinners that all their efforts at righteousness are just **filthy** rags to a holy God. Every person on earth is a sinner. Jesus Christ died for our sin so that we could be declared righteous and be allowed to enter God’s perfect heaven where Jesus lives. Isaiah 64:6; Matthew 5:20; Romans 3:10-12, 23; Revelation 21:27
- d. John 16:11 – *“...and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.”* Satan has been sentenced to eternity in the Lake of Fire, and if he, the ruler of this world, will not escape God’s **wrath**, those who side with him certainly have no chance of escaping God’s wrath, either. Acts 17:31; 1 John 3:8; Revelation 20:10-15
3. John 16:12 – *“I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.”* In both the Upper Room and afterward in Gethsemane, the Lord taught the disciples various foundational **truths**. Later, when they could handle more with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, God added more details to these truths. We find this teaching in the epistles.
4. John 16:13a – *“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes...”* After speaking of the Holy Spirit’s ministry to the world, Jesus shifted to speak directly to the disciples about the Holy Spirit’s future **ministry** to them.

5. John 16:13b – *...He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative...* Jesus promised the disciples that the Holy Spirit would **guide** them into all truth. Jesus was speaking of the Spirit’s ministry in giving the special revelation we now have in the already completed New Testament. 2 Peter 1:3-4, 19-21
 - a. The Holy Spirit would refuse to present His own **ideas**, instead He would relate only what the Father and the Son said.
 - b. The Holy Spirit was not coming to do His own thing or to speak for Himself or to give His own message. He came to speak and reveal the Father and the Son’s message. That’s what the phrase *“He will not speak on His own **initiative**”* means.
6. John 16:13c – *“...but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.”* Not only would the Holy Spirit help these future apostles to remember the things Jesus taught them during His days on earth, He would reveal to them the **mystery** of the coming Church Age, as well as other future events. Ephesians 3:3-11
7. John 16:14 – *“He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and will disclose it to you.”* The Holy Spirit never promotes Himself; He always puts the **spotlight** on Jesus. The Spirit was going to bring glory to Jesus by taking His words and message and telling it to the disciples. This was precisely how the New Testament came to be. 2 Peter 1:20-21
8. John 16:15 – *“All things that the Father has are Mine; therefore, I said that He takes of Mine and will disclose it to you.”* The Trinity is visible in this verse. While our triune God is not divided, a large **focus** of scripture is on Christ’s person and work. His death and resurrection are the basis for our justification, our daily sanctification and our future glorification. John 3:35, 5:39-40, 14:21, 17:10; Luke 24:25-27

C. John 16:16-22 – Jesus’ death and resurrection foretold in a riddle

1. John 16:16 – *“A little while and you will no longer see Me; and again a little while and you will see Me.”* Jesus’ comments often **confused** the disciples, and this was no exception. How would they see Jesus, and then not see Him, and then see Him again for a little while?
 - a. Now that the crucifixion is in the **past**, this riddle is easily understood. As we look back, we understand what Jesus meant, but at the time, the disciples were sad and confused.
 - b. Jesus meant that while He was **buried** in the ground, they would not see Him, but after His resurrection they would see Him again for a little while. This statement referred to His various appearances during the 40 days before His ascension back to heaven.
2. John 16:17 – *Some of His disciples then said to one another, “What is this thing He is telling 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’?”* Instead of asking Jesus what He meant by this, they **discussed** it among themselves. Human reasoning is not sufficient for understanding the mind of God.
3. John 16:18 – *So they were saying, “What is this that He says, ‘A little while’? We do not know what He is talking about.”* They did not understand what Jesus meant by *“A little while.”* The whole thought of Jesus leaving elevated the disciples’ **anxiety**.

4. John 16:19 – *Jesus knew that they wished to question Him, and He said to them, “Are you deliberating together about this, that I said, ‘A little while, and you will not see Me, and again a little while, and you will see Me’?”* Jesus is omniscient. He **knew** their every thought and question. Psalm 139:1-4
- a. There are three **elements** to this riddle so far are:
 - 1) Right **now** you disciples see Me...
 - 2) In a little **while** you disciples will not see Me...
 - 3) And then **again** for a little while you disciples will see Me...
 - b. This riddle did not fit their long-term expectations. A messiah takes over, He does not come and go. Next Jesus added more **intrigue** to His riddle.
5. John 16:20 – *“Truly, truly, I say to you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; you will grieve, but your grief will be turned into joy.”* Jesus expanded His first riddle with yet another riddle. Jesus explained that while the world would rejoice, the disciples would mourn. Later their mourning would turn to **joy**.
- a. The elements of this deeper riddle are:
 - 1) The disciples will **weep** and mourn...
 - 2) The world will **rejoice**...
 - 3) The disciples will **grieve**...
 - 4) The disciples’ grief will **change** to joy...
 - b. As Jesus was arrested, tried and crucified the disciples wept, but the world cheered. Later when Jesus rose again, their grief suddenly **shifted** to great rejoicing.
6. John 16:21-22 – These thought-provoking riddles reflected the Lord’s habit of using the everyday, **ordinary** events of life to teach extraordinary truth.
- a. John 16:21 – *“Whenever a woman is in labor, she has pain, because her hour has come; but when she gives birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish because of the joy that a child has been born into the world.”* Jesus used an ordinary life event to explain His riddle. He used **childbirth** as a metaphor.
 - 1) A mother’s labor pains are intense and overwhelming. What makes her forget the pain? The moment she sees her newborn child she immediately **forgets** the pain.
 - 2) Jesus predicted that this would be the experience of the disciples. During the crucifixion and burial they would suffer great anguish, but as soon as they saw the resurrected Lord Jesus their sorrows would quickly **vanish** away. Luke 2:35
 - b. John 16:22 – *“Therefore you too have grief now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you.”* Sometimes the pain of sadness can be so great you can hardly go on. We can think all is lost, but inevitably, just when we are certain all hope is gone, suddenly the **light** shines again. 2 Corinthians 4:17

- 1) For now, the disciples were in deep distress. To counter their depression, Jesus assured them they would see Him again very soon. Jesus knew they would once again celebrate with true joy and gladness. He also knew their joy would **continue** forever. 2 Corinthians 6:10, Galatians 5:22, 1 Thessalonians 1:6
- 2) After the resurrection, when they saw Jesus again, everything in their world changed. The light shone again. Jesus had told them that no one would be able to wipe their joy away. Even though from that point onward they faced death by persecution, over and over again their joy remained sure and **complete**.

D. John 16:23-26 – Prayers answered in the name of Jesus

1. John 16:23 – *“In that day you will not question Me about anything. Truly, truly, I say to you, if you ask the Father for anything in My name, He will give it to you.”* The phrase *“in that day”* referred to Jesus’ ascension **back to heaven** to His Father’s house.
 - a. When Jesus went back to the Father, He was no longer able to meet their needs in person. They would not be able to ask Him direct questions. Instead He commanded them to prayerfully depend on the Father, approaching Him in His holy **name**. Jesus assured them that the Father would listen and answer.
 - b. This would mark a new way of communicating with God. After Jesus’ ascension when they could no longer talk to Him directly, in the **authority** of Jesus’ name they could bring their requests to the Father and He would answer. John 14:13-14, 15:16
 - c. Israel had never prayed to God in someone’s **name**. This was brand-new church-related doctrine that they’d understand better after the church began.
2. John 16:24 – *“Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full.”* This statement shows that our **permission** to pray and make requests of the Father is based on Christ’s name and authority.
 - a. The disciples had never before asked God the Father for anything based on Jesus’ merits or authority. When Jesus first taught them to pray, He did not mention praying in His name. Now, as He was about to leave them, Jesus encouraged the disciples to **boldly** pray for any and everything they needed, and to do so in His name. Luke 11:1-4
 - b. Jesus wanted answered prayers to fill the **void** His departure would create. If they prayed in the name of Jesus, from the throne above, God would respond to the disciples’ requests and their needs would be readily met.
3. John 16:25 – *“These things I have spoken to you in figurative language; an hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figurative language, but will tell you plainly of the Father.”* Although up until this time Jesus had often spoken to them in riddles or parables, but now He promised to speak to them **clearly**.
 - a. Jesus did not say when this would happen, but we know that when the Helper, God the Holy Spirit came with His teaching ministry, He **clarified** many of the symbolic sayings the Lord used, such as “the Father’s house” and “the vine and branches.”

- b. Jesus was still purposely keeping some things a **mystery**. Later, most of Jesus' teaching would be further developed in the epistles. Throughout our lifetime, the Holy Spirit continues to show us the meaning of Christ's and the apostles' teaching. Thank God for this amazing ministry. Ephesians 1:9, 16-19; Colossians 1:26-27
4. John 16:26 – *"In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I will request of the Father on your behalf..."* In plain language Jesus said, "In the future you can directly approach the Father in my name, and I won't need to ask Him for you." Now believers can address prayers **directly** to the Father in Christ's name or authority. Ephesians 3:14
 - a. A new dispensation was drawing near. Jesus was preparing His followers for that coming eventuality. After He ascended, they would make requests to the Father **through** the Son in prayer.
 - b. We do not pray to Jesus or the Holy Spirit. Our prayers are directed to the Father in the name of the Son. We now have direct **access** to the Father. Hebrews 4:15-16, 10:19-22

E. John 16:27-33 – Jesus the ultimate overcomer

1. John 16:27 – *"...for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth from the Father."* One reason God the Father loved the disciples was because they **loved** Christ and believed He truly was from God. Clearly Jesus did not cast doubt on the faith or love of the disciples.
 - a. If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, God loves you. God the Father dearly loves all those who love His Son. Against the current of the times, these disciples **risked** their future when they believed Jesus came forth from the Father above. Even though many of their dreams were never fulfilled in time, they were not disappointed.
 - b. This verse is directly tied to the previous one where Jesus promised them that they'd be heard by the Father Himself. Now He added the **bonus** of the Father's love due to their love of Jesus and because they believed Jesus was from the Father.
2. John 16:28 – *"I came forth from the Father and have come into the world; I am leaving the world again and going to the Father."* Since Jesus **came** from heaven, His departure from here would mean He was returning to His first abode, the Father's house. He left heaven and to heaven He would return.
3. John 16:29 – *His disciples said, "Lo, now You are speaking plainly and are not using a figure of speech."* The disciples said they now understood Jesus' teaching. This was a good start. Understanding comes before **faith** (Rom. 10:17) and faith before actions (2 Cor. 4:13).
4. John 16:30 – *"Now we know that You know all things, and have no need for anyone to question You; by this we believe that You came from God."* Now that the disciples realized Jesus was **omniscient** (in verse 19 He read their minds) and indisputably wise (Rom. 11:33-36), they believed He was God-incarnate, having come forth from heaven above.

- a. Contrary to this clear testimony, the disciples would soon forget Jesus' statements and even **struggle** to believe the women who would later testify of His resurrection. Matthew 28:1-10
 - b. Thankfully, future **doubts** did not nullify the legitimacy of their present faith or the permanency of their salvation. Any one of us can become unbelieving believers since we all occasionally struggle with doubts.
5. John 16:31 – *Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe?"* Although Jesus confirmed their faith in John 16:27, He was totally aware of their frailty. He knew that even though the disciples were strong in faith now they would soon abandon Him and be scattered. Their faith would be severely **tested**. Matthew 26:31, James 1:2-4
 6. John 16:32 – *"Behold, an hour is coming, and has already come, for you to be scattered, each to his own home, and to leave Me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me."* The prophesied **hour** included the time of Jesus' arrest plus all other events leading to His crucifixion. At that *hour* His disciples would desert Him. Matthew 26:56
 7. John 16:33a – *"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have **peace**."* Jesus' prophecy showed His disciples that He knew they were going to fail Him, but even with that knowledge, He still cared about them. No amount of bad behavior can separate the believer from God's love. This kind of security and peace is only found in Christ. Romans 8:38-39
 8. John 16:33b – *"In the world you have tribulation..."* Jesus used the word *tribulation* THLIPSIS in John 16:21 to describe the anguish a woman experiences in childbirth. The word means **trouble**, persecution, or affliction, and that is exactly what we can expect from this world. John 15:18-19, 16:2
 9. John 16:33c – *"...but take courage; I have overcome the world."* We can have confidence and courage in the face of this world's harsh persecution because Jesus Christ overcame this world during every moment of His earthly life – even **before** the cross. 1 John 5:4-5

F. Conclusion to the "After Supper Discourse: Episode two"

1. Jesus loved the world so much that He died for everyone, even for those who were His avowed enemies. Today, our Lord Jesus Christ commands us to love at a humanly **impossible** level. He set the standard much higher than our human determination or personal willpower can perform. John 13:34-35, Galatians 6:2, Matthew 22:39, Luke 6:35
2. Only through the **power** of the Holy Spirit are we able to fulfill His command to love. We are fully incapable of loving at this level through human wisdom or strength. John 14:15-17
 - a. Because we need the Holy Spirit, we must first be **saved**. Salvation comes through faith alone in Christ alone as we trust in Him alone as Savior. Galatians 3:26
 - 1) After salvation we live by the **same** faith that saved us. Colossians 2:6
 - 2) As we grow, we learn to **abide** in Christ by faith. 2 Corinthians 5:7, Galatians 2:20b

- b. To abide in Christ is equivalent to living by God's grace through faith. As we walk **dependently** on the indwelling Holy Spirit, we learn to abide in Christ. Galatians 2:20b, Romans 1:17, 8:9
- c. Here is a list of **synonyms** for abiding in Christ (not intended to be exhaustive).
- 1) **Looking** unto Jesus. Hebrews 12:1-2.
 - 2) **Walking** by or according to the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:16, Romans 8:14
 - 3) Being **filled** with or by the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 5:18
 - 4) Allowing the *Word of Christ* to **dwell** richly within you. Colossians 3:16
 - 5) The Lord Jesus Christ living in and **through** us. The mystery of godliness is Christ in us making us holy and godly in our daily conduct. Romans 8:9-11, Colossians 1:27, Philippians 1:21, 3:9; 1 Timothy 3:16
 - 6) Christ dwelling at **home** in your hearts through faith. Ephesians 3:16
 - 7) Entering into His **rest**. Hebrews 4:1, 10
 - 8) By faith **presenting** the members of our bodies as instruments of righteousness to God, reckoning ourselves to have died with Christ to sin, and to have been raised to newness of life. Romans 6:11-14
 - 9) Walking in the **light** by being in fellowship with Christ. 1 John 1:4-7
- d. Abiding in Christ and confession of sins are not synonymous. We confess our sins when we realize we have not been abiding. To abide in Christ is to **consistently** depend on Christ. The abiding believer looks to Christ by faith on a moment-by-moment basis. Romans 8:10-11, Hebrews 12:1-2
- 1) When we **realize** we have not been walking by the strength and guidance of the Spirit, but rather according to our sinful flesh, we must confess our sins. 1 John 1:9
 - a) Confession of sin is **necessary** but should not be equated with abiding in Christ.
 - b) Using the metaphor of living or abiding in a home, confession would be the **doorway** back into the house of fellowship. Once we are in the house, we should abide or remain in fellowship by faith, relying on the Holy Spirit's enabling power.
 - c) Using this metaphor, we enter the house by confession of sins, but abide in it by ongoing faith or **dependence** on God. Galatians 2:20b, Colossians 2:6
 - d) In a human context, we would never feel like we were **enjoying** communion or friendship if we sat around confessing our sins to each other all the time.
 - e) Confession restores a broken friendship, but abiding is living, growing and enjoying **camaraderie** together. Jesus stressed this truth in John 15. Luke 15:11-32, Ephesians 3:16-19

- f) We will fail many times and have to confess our sins, but if confession were the same as abiding in Christ, our walk would not be **enjoyable**.
 - g) John wrote in 1 John 1:9 that **if we sin**, we are to confess it, but also as we see in 1 John 2:1, the goal is for us not to sin. John's purpose in writing the book of 1 John was for us to have fellowship with the person Jesus Christ, not to teach us about confession of sin. 1 John 1:1-3
- 2) When we confess our sins as God commands in 1 John 1:9, we then have the potential to go on to enjoy abiding fellowship with Christ as taught in John 15:4-5. As we clock time abiding in Christ, we grow, **mature** and learn to truly love one another just as He loved us.
 3. We cannot bear **fruit** unless we abide in Christ, enjoying fellowship with Him. John 15:1-8
 4. Abiding in Christ places us in direct opposition to the world in a powerful way. In that position, we enjoy Christ's enabling **power** to live the Christian life. John 15:18-19
 5. As we obey Christ's command to abide in Him, by His strength we become **victorious** over the world's allure. John 16:33.
 6. As we walk depending on the Holy Spirit, our Lord becomes **glorified** through our lives as we become increasingly fruitful. Galatians 5:16-23
 7. The ministry of the indwelling Holy Spirit **empowers** us to be fruitful. He gives practical victory over the world in our daily life and ultimately God gets the glory. Ephesians 5:18, Colossians 3:16

XIX. John 17:1-26 – After Supper Discourse: Episode Three

A. Introduction

1. When Jesus finished teaching His disciples, He **prayed** in their hearing. This was a magnificent prayer, prayed just hours before the crucifixion.
2. This prayer by Jesus is considered by many to be a **priestly** prayer. It models the mediatory service done by the priests of the Old Testament. Hebrews 9:27 reads, "[Jesus] *who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.*"
 - a. First, the Old Testament priests would offer daily sacrifices for themselves for their **own** sins.
 - b. Second, the priests would offer daily sacrifices for the **people**.
 - c. Third, the priests would offer a yearly sacrifice for the entire **nation**.
3. From the perspective of priestly intercession, Jesus' prayer is divided into **three** sections.
 - a. In John 17:1-5 Jesus offered a prayer for **Himself**.
 - b. In John 17:6-19 Jesus offered a prayer for His **disciples**.

- c. In John 17:20-26 Jesus prayed for **future** Church Age believers.
- 4. This prayer immediately follows Christ's declaration that He had overcome the world (Jn. 16:33) and reflects His position as **victor**. By praying in their hearing, the Lord certainly intended to encourage His disciples. This prayer reminds us of Jesus' ongoing intercessory ministry at the right hand of God. He is indeed the final great High Priest. 1 John 2:2
- 5. Though He spent many hours in prayer, this is Jesus' longest recorded prayer in scripture. The Bible records Jesus praying before major events in His life. Jesus understood the importance and power of clamoring to God for grace. If prayer was important to our almighty Lord Jesus, it should be that much more **important** to us! Luke 6:12, Mark 6:45-46

B. John 17:1-5 – The Lord prayed for Himself

1. John 17:1 – This prayer proclaimed **victory**. Jesus was the true overcomer even when faced with imminent betrayal and violent death. John 16:33
 - a. John 17:1a – *Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said "Father..."* Looking upward, Jesus **opened** His eyes toward heaven. Jesus did not say "Our Father," He merely said, "Father." This is because this was an intimate and personal interaction between Father and Son. John 5:18
 - b. John 17:1b – *"...the hour has come..."* The *hour* refers to the **prescribed** time for Christ's suffering, death for our sins, and resurrection. The verb *has come* ERCHOMAI is in the perfect tense, indicating that His march to the cross was already in progress. We can be certain that the Lord had absolute knowledge of every detail before it developed.
 - c. John 17:1c – *"...glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You."* Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and subsequent resurrection would bring the utmost glory to God the Father. Jesus made the glory of God a foundational aspect of His prayer. He wanted the Father to have **preeminence** in and through His life. Ephesians 2:4-10
 - 1) Christ's death for unworthy sinners brought immeasurable glory to God and continues to do so. God will forever be praised for His indescribable **gift** to us through Christ Jesus. Ephesians 1:3-14, Revelation 5:9-14
 - 2) As believers, we glorify God when we by **faith** present ourselves to Christ so that His glory shines through us in all we say and do. When others see the characteristics of Christ in our lives, God the Father is glorified. Matthew 5:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12; 1 Peter 2:12, 4:11
 - 3) As the song says, we boast in Christ alone: "When I survey the wondrous cross, on which the Prince of Glory died, my richest gain I count but loss and pour contempt on all my pride. Forbid me Lord that I should **boast**, save in the death of Christ, my God." Jeremiah 9:23-24, Galatians 6:14, 1 Corinthians 1:29-31
2. John 17:2 – *"...even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life."* Throughout His ministry, Christ emphasized that He came in the **authority** of the Father. John 4:34, 5:24, 7:16, 8:26

- a. In His prayer, Jesus once again emphasized the authority given to Him by God the Father. He said that Father had given Him authority over all flesh (Gen. 1:26-29). Satan offered Him all this authority without the cross (Luke 4:5-8), but Jesus firmly **rejected** him. Jesus overcame every attempt of the devil to get Him to submit. John 13:3, Philippians 2:9-11
 - b. The Father gives to Jesus every individual who believes in Him (Mat. 11:28a, Heb. 7:25), and then Jesus in turn gives eternal life (Jn. 1:12) to each individual believer. Jesus' death on the cross authorizes Him to **offer** the amazing gift of eternal life to every person who believes. Matthew 28:16-20, John 10:28
3. John 17:3 – *“This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”* In His prayer, Jesus voiced the essence of eternal life. Eternal life is described as knowing God. Only through the Son can God be **known**. John 1:17-18
- a. It may surprise you, but this is the **only** time and place in the Gospels where Jesus verbally referred to Himself as *“Jesus Christ.”* This verbal declaration emphasizes that He alone is Messiah and that He alone gives eternal life. John 14:6, Acts 4:12
 - b. A person gains eternal life through faith alone in Christ alone; then he or she can grow to embrace eternal life **practically**. 1 John 2:25, 5:20
 - c. There are two **aspects** of eternal life. One aspect is a possession (unending life) and the other is experience (quality of life). Context helps us determine which aspect is in view. 1 John 5:11, 13, 20
 - 1) Eternal life as a possession comes at justification (Titus 3:7); while eternal life as an **experience** comes through sanctification (Rom 6:22-23).
 - 2) Eternal life is a possession that is received at a moment in time (Eph 1:13); while eternal life as an experience becomes an eternal **quest** (1 Tim 6:12).
 - 3) Eternal life is a possession that can never be forfeited (Jn. 5:24); while eternal life as an experience is in **jeopardy** and can be mishandled or cast aside in practice (Gal 6:8, 1 Jn. 3:15).
 - 4) Eternal life as a possession comes by faith in the good news of Christ's finished work on the cross (1 Cor 1:17); while eternal life as an experience come through **daily** faith in the good news of Christ's inclusion of us in His cross (Rom 6:10-11, 1 Cor 1:18).
 - d. Based on our decision to actively abide in Christ by faith, we go on to learn to live life in **companionship** with Him. Christ teaches us through His word, and we respond to Him in dependent prayer. Philippians 1:21, 1 John 1:1-3
4. John 17:4 – *“I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.”* Jesus brought the Father glory here on earth by fully completing the task the Father assigned to Him. Doing God's bidding brings Him glory. Jesus fulfilled this goal even in the smallest **details**. In every moment, He powerfully represented God to the world.

- a. The Father **chose** Jesus to bring salvation to humanity, and Jesus, at the price of His life, perfectly executed and fulfilled that plan. Philippians 2:8, 1 Peter 1:28-21
 - b. Through His sufferings and sacrifice Christ planned to glorify the **Father**. When we depend on Christ by faith, just as Christ lived in dependence on the Father, then through the power of the Spirit, we come to bring God glory through our sufferings. 1 Peter 2:21, Philippians 1:29-30
5. John 17:5 – *“Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.”* Jesus did not ask for **new** glory. Jesus asked His Father to restore His pre-incarnate glory, which, except for His transfiguration (Matt. 17:2), had been veiled during the days of His lifetime.
- a. We know that God the Father answered His prayer because when He returned to His Father’s house, He was granted His previous glory. When John saw Jesus in Revelation 1:12-17, he fell at His feet as if dead because of Christ’s **splendor**. Acts 2:33, 34-36; Hebrews 8:1, 12:2
 - b. Christ received this new position of honor because He completely **submitted** His will to the Father’s plan. Philippians 2:5-9, Hebrews 5:8

C. John 17:6-8 – The Lord prayed about His disciples

1. John 17:6a – *“I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world...”* From among the masses of humanity, God had **chosen** some men for Jesus to train. Jesus revealed the Father’s person, His real self, to them. He showed them exactly what God is like in reputation and character.
2. John 17:6b – *“...they were Yours and You gave them to Me...”* In Jesus’ prayer, He reminded God that the disciples had first belonged to Him, but He had personally **given** them to Jesus. Jesus was supposed to faithfully train and look after them, which He did.
3. John 17:6c – *“...and they have kept Your word.”* The disciples listened to Jesus’ commendation of them: Jesus told the Father that they had **faithfully** taken in and treasured up all they could understand of God’s message, His word.
 - a. This may seem like an exaggeration since we know the disciples’ failures and limitations, but Jesus **saw** their hearts. He knew very well where they’d come from spiritually three years earlier and where they were now. John 14:9-10
 - b. Even though God knows who we are in real time, He sees our ultimate **progress** better than anyone. In Romans 14:4 Paul said, *“Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.”* 1 Corinthians 4:5, Jude 1:24-25
4. John 17:7 – *“Now they have come to know that everything You have given Me is from You.”* In His prayer, Jesus mentioned that the disciples had seen the extraordinary **example** of how He daily lived. Instead of living each day by His own divine strength and authority, Jesus chose to live His life in dependence on the Father’s enabling power, as should we.

- a. Jesus could have lived His life by His own wisdom and power, but instead, He willingly **chose** to rely on the Father. Jesus set aside His divine right to independence. He worked miracles only when directed by the Father to do so. John 7:17-18, 28; 8:28; 12:49; 14:10
- b. That very evening, Jesus had commanded His disciples to *abide in Him*. He was asking them to live the same **way** He had lived every day of His life here on earth.
5. John 17:8a – “...for the words which You gave Me I have given to them; and they received them...” Jesus assured the Father that the disciples had indeed received all that the Father wanted them to learn through Him. Jesus did not mean they could recall every detail, but rather that they now **embraced** and cherished His word in their hearts.
6. John 17:8b – “...and [they] truly understood that I came forth from You...” Jesus said there was now no doubt in the minds of His disciples that He was the promised Messiah. They were fully persuaded that Jesus represented God. Most of them **died** for that belief.
7. John 17:8c – “...and they believed that You sent Me.” Not only had they received God’s message through Jesus, but they were now also **convinced** that He was sent directly from God’s glorious presence. The coming of Jesus to earth was coordinated and commissioned by the Father. John 3:34; 6:63, 68; 14:10

D. John 17:9-19 – The Lord prayed for His disciples

1. John 17:9 – “I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours...” At that time, Jesus did not plead for the world. He had only His **disciples** in mind as He begged, “My followers belong to you, Father, so I lift them up to you.”
2. John 17:10a – “...and all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine...” As Jesus continued His thought from the previous verse, He affirmed His **co-equality** with the Father; Jesus co-owns all that the Father owns.
3. John 17:10b – “...and I have been glorified in them.” Jesus’ followers, who also belonged to the Father, had honored Him while He was on earth. He was **jealous** for them and earnestly guarded their backs in prayer.
4. John 17:11a – “I am no longer in the world; and yet they themselves are in the world, and I come to You...” This was a forward-looking statement. Jesus was still present in the world. But being so near to finishing the work the Father sent Him to do, He prayed for them as if His work were already done. Very soon He’d shout, “It is finished!” But the disciples **stayed**.
5. John 17:11b – “Holy Father, keep them in Your name, the name which You have given Me...” Jesus was going to return to heaven to be with His Father, but the route He would take was through the sufferings of the cross and the separation of the grave. He asked God, His Holy Father (and theirs), to **care** for the disciples in His absence.
 - a. Jesus, as a son, had been given His Father’s holy name, and with it, total authority. He implored God to now protect His disciples by the **power** of His name. Matthew 28:18

- b. God the Father would need to guard the disciples in Christ's **absence** since He was going to the cross and into death itself. Jesus implored the Father to keep the disciples safe by the power of the name that He have given Christ. Isaiah 52:13-15, 57:15; Jeremiah 23:5; Philippians 2:9-11
6. John 17:11c – *“...that they may be one even as We are.”* The Father and the Son share the same name. Jesus wanted the disciples to be completely unified, just like the Father and the Son. In this prayer Jesus prayed for them to have **singularity** of purpose.
7. John 17:12 – *“While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled.”* Jesus protected His own while He was with them. Not **one** of them perished, except Judas Iscariot, the *son of perdition*. Judas had never believed.
8. John 17:13 – *“But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves.”* Because Jesus was about to depart to the Father, He prayed preemptively for the disciples’ spiritual well-being. He wanted His joy to become their joy. Jesus prayed in **hope**, and we know now that God answered His prayer.
9. John 17:14 – *“I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”* Believers who embrace God’s word find themselves at **odds** with the world. In John 16 Jesus had warned His disciples of the world’s hatred, so now He prayed for protection and help in their trials. 1 John 2:15-16
10. John 17:15 – *“I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one.”* Jesus did not ask for the disciples to be taken out of the world but to be protected from the evil one (Satan) while they were still here. God leaves His children here so they can *appear as lights* in the world. Philippians 2:15
- a. God fulfills this petition every day by thoroughly maintaining our salvation both safe and secure just as He promised in His word. Hebrews 13:5b lovingly states, *“for He Himself has said, “I will never desert you, nor will I ever **forsake** you.”* 1 John 5:13
- b. God also daily protects us in a myriad of practical ways. He constantly delivers us from Satan’s vicious attacks and the fatal attractions of the **world**. Ephesians 6:16, 1 John 2:13, 2 Thessalonians 3:3
- c. As we **walk** in the light, we expose the world’s darkness because of their sin and unbelief. This makes them angry and upset because they think we are somehow judging them. We are not judging them, but the light of God’s word can be very convicting. 2 Corinthians 4:4, Ephesians 5:8, Matthew 5:16, John 3:19-20
11. John 17:16 – *“They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.”* In English the word order of John 17:14 is the same as here in verse 16: *they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world*, However, in Greek there is a subtle **change** in word order. This change emphasizes two distinct, yet important, truths.
- a. John 17:14b could be paraphrased, *“The world does not supply them with life even as I do not draw My life from this world.”* Jesus focused on the fact that as with Him, the disciples’ spiritual lives did not **originate** from the world, but from God. John 1:13, 3:7

- b. John 17:16 could be paraphrased, “They are not to live by the world, as their life source, just as I do not live by this world.” Here, Jesus focused on the fact that the world could add nothing of **value** to the disciples’ spiritual lives.
- c. While Jesus lived on earth, He did not tap into **human** effort-based living. The disciples’ resources for living a victorious life would not come from a worldly source. Galatians 3:3; Colossians 2:8-10; Philippians 3:3, 9
12. John 17:17 – Jesus had yet another important prayer request for the Father. He prayed for the spiritual **growth** of His followers. In 1 Thessalonians 5:23, the apostle Paul prayed a similar prayer when he prayed that God would sanctify the believers *entirely*. In 2 Corinthians 1:21-22, he asserted that God is the one who *establishes* us. Philippians 1:6
- a. John 17:17a – “*Sanctify them in the truth...*” Jesus prayed because He was aware that simply learning Bible **doctrine** or memorizing scripture does not produce sanctification, and yet He also knew that a person cannot be sanctified apart from God’s word. Ephesians 5:26, 2 Timothy 3:15
- 1) God’s word sanctifies us by teaching us about **God**. Psalm 89:5-18, 2 Peter 1:16-21, 3:18, 1 John 1:1-3
 - 2) God’s word sanctifies us by teaching us everything we need to know for **life** and for holiness. 2 Peter 1:2-4
 - 3) God’s word sanctifies us by making us a **blessing** and encouragement to the body of Christ. Colossians 3:16
 - 4) God’s word sanctifies us by encouraging us when we are down hearted, by making us **wise**, by enlightening us, and by causing us to rejoice. Psalm 19:7-11
 - 5) God’s word sanctifies us by causing us to bear **fruit**. Psalm 1:2-3
 - 6) God’s word sanctifies us by **equipping** us to serve the body of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-13, 2 Timothy 3:16
 - 7) God’s word sanctifies us by **correcting** us where we are wrong and training us in righteousness. 2 Timothy 3:16
 - 8) God’s word sanctifies us by filling us with the knowledge of God’s good and perfect will and **purpose** so that we are able to *walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work* (Col. 1:9-11). Romans 12:1-2
 - 9) God’s word sanctifies us by protecting us against the devil’s **attacks**. Through knowledge of the truth we can firmly stand our ground, without being shaken by the fiery darts Satan sends our way. And with God’s word as our sword, we are fully equipped for battle. Ephesians 6:10-17, 1 Peter 5:8-9
 - 10) God’s word sanctifies us by giving us **hope**. Romans 15:4

- b. John 17:17b – “*Your word is **truth**.*” In an ever-changing world, we can stand securely and confidently on God’s word. All scripture is God-breathed. It is all God’s word, and He cannot lie. God’s word is perfect, right and pure. It can be fully depended upon. Psalm 12:6; 18:30; 19:8-9; 119:138, 160; 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Titus 1:2
13. John 17:18 – “*As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world.*” This was also part of His prayer for the disciples. Just as the Father sent the Son into the world, with all authority, Jesus likewise sent His disciples with full **authority**.
- a. Seated at the right hand of God the Father, *far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named* (Eph. 1:20-21), Jesus’ authority **supersedes** all other. Isaiah 9:6, Matthew 28:18-20, Colossians 2:10, Hebrews 1:2, 1 Peter 3:22
- b. Jesus sends us out with the same authority He sent out His disciples. We have been commissioned by the highest authority there is; the one who promised He would build His church and the gates of hell would not prevail. We are on the **offensive**; we are the winners. Matthew 16:18
14. John 17:19 – “*For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.*” Jesus, our great example, sanctified Himself, setting Himself apart for God’s plans and purpose, just as we should do. We know the truth from God’s word. The truth is meant to set us **apart** as holy unto the Lord.

E. John 17:20-26 – The Lord prayed for us too

1. John 17:20 – “*I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word.*” Here, Jesus broadened the scope of His supplication to pray for us too. In the near future, the apostles would not only preach the gospel to the lost but would also **teach** believers how to be spiritual in daily conduct. Matthew 28:19-20a
2. John 17:21 – “*...that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me.*” Jesus prayed that we, His disciples, could have oneness with the Father, each other, and Himself (1 Jn. 1:3). He asked that our testimony **impact** the world. Our unity is twofold.
- a. There is positional unity with God and each other that all believers possess from the point of salvation onward and then there is experiential unity with God and each other that we can experience in time, over the course of our lives. Since Jesus was praying for us to get along, He spoke of **experiential** unity in this verse. Let’s see some distinctions.
- 1) Positional unity occurs at salvation, but experiential unity occurs **over** the course of our lives.
 - 2) Positional unity is achieved by faith, but experiential unity is achieved through **love**.
 - 3) Positional unity comes as a result of God’s actions, but experiential unity involves our individual acts of **volition**.
 - 4) Positional unity can never be lost, but experiential unity can be **lost** and may or may not be regained.

- 5) Positional unity is static but experiential unity **fluctuates**.
 - 6) Positional unity involves eternal relationships, but experiential unity involves **daily** fellowship.
- b. Positional unity comes at salvation and results in membership in the universal church. Experiential unity comes as a result of **fellowship** with God and others. In positional unity, individual believers are joined to the universal church. In experiential unity, believing individuals who are associated with each other become a unified church.
3. John 17:22 – *“The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one...”* Jesus stated that He had imparted His **glory** to those who believed in Him. Jesus imparts His glory to believers so we can have a unity among ourselves similar to the unity Jesus and the Father experience. John 17:3
 - a. In our spiritual growth, we manifest His character, Christ’s *glory*. It’s one thing to have eternal life as a possession and another to practice it in daily conduct. As we get to know God, we exhibit His glory. That’s what it means to **live** out the eternal life we possess. Romans 6:22-23
 - b. Jesus was praying that we would share in His glory, which is seen in His character and attributes. When Jesus prayed that night, He had you in mind. God did not want you to express the bitter **darkness** of Adam’s nature but to exude the awesome glory of Jesus.
 4. John 17:23 – In this prayer, Jesus shared the purpose for *abiding in Christ* and *Christ abiding in [us]*. We should abide in Christ so we can come to enjoy true **unity**. Unity is something the world can never experience.
 - a. John 17:23a – *“I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity...”* Unity is perfected when we understand **who** we are in Christ. Unity is based in our identification with Christ and His identification with us and the Father.
 - 1) Don’t listen to those who reject sound Bible teaching because, as they erroneously propose, “Christ unites but doctrine divides.” We **need** to know truth. Christ is truth. Truth mutually believed builds a strong bridge of unity in the body of Christ. John 8:32, Acts 20:27, 1 Timothy 4:16, 2 Timothy 1:13-14
 - 2) God wants us to mature. This verse teaches that as we understand our position in Christ, we are *perfected in unity*. *Perfected* carries the idea of being brought to a level of completeness or **maturity**.
 - b. John 17:23b – *“...so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.”* Knowledge that Christ was sent forth from the Father and that they are loved to the same degree the Father loved Christ is **essential** to our faith and purpose in life. John 17:17,19
 - 1) If we do not understand what God went through to save us when He sacrificed to send Jesus to die for our sins, we do not understand the love God has for us. He gave up His Son so we could be saved. When we come to believe He loves us to the depth and **degree** He loves Jesus, we will be radically changed. Ephesians 3:14-19

- 2) The believer who comes to realize God's great love will be **wowed** into a closeness with God. God's love has that kind of impact and sway on us. His love for us is true, but we often miss it. This is why Jesus made it a matter of prayer. 2 Corinthians 5:14
5. John 17:24a – *“Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am...”* Jesus longingly prayed for His disciples to have the joy of seeing Him again in person. The day that happens, we will see Christ in all of His glory. It will be a **day** to be remembered throughout all eternity, the reunion of reunions. John 6:40, Revelation 22:20
6. John 17:24b – *“...so that they may see My glory which You have given Me...”* This phrase shows that Jesus was thinking of the distant future and not simply His post resurrection appearances. Our destiny includes the incredible **honor** of worshiping and beholding the unveiled glory of Christ. John 14:2-3, 1 Corinthians 13:12, Revelation 1:13-16
7. John 17:24c – *“...for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.”* Jesus wanted the disciples to experience His preincarnate glory; therefore, in the presence of His listening disciples, Jesus reminded God of His love for Him before the world was made or **time** began.
- a. God loved Jesus and gave Jesus His glory long before there was ever a world. Jesus now has that glory fully **restored**. We will be amazed beyond words or imagination when we finally experience the full extent of His divine glory. Revelation 1:12-17
- b. It is interesting that in all this prayer He did not ask for His disciples to be healthy, successful or **rich**; He asked that they would be with Him and experience the fullness of His unveiled glory.
8. John 17:25 – *“O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me...”* Jesus called God His righteous Father, for indeed God alone is **righteous**. God is perfectly good, truthful and just. This verse certifies once again that Jesus came from heaven. 1 John 1:1-3
- a. This is the only place in scripture where God is referred to as the *righteous Father*, and of course it is Jesus who called Him by that title. Earlier Jesus had referred to His Father as **holy Father** (Jn. 17:11), which is likewise found only once in scripture. Jesus knew the Father and His true essence and therefore aptly revealed Him everywhere. John 5:43
- b. Jesus said that even though the corrupt world system had never known God, He certainly knew Him. Jesus had always known the Father. This corrupt world has lurked defiantly in the darkness of willful ignorance. Jesus' disciples understood that God sent the Son on a special **mission** to reveal the Father to the world, and He did so beautifully.
9. John 17:26 – Here we have the **conclusion** to the amazing high priestly prayer of Jesus. As He closed, Jesus reminded the Father that He had faithfully disclosed Him to the disciples.
- a. John 17:26a – *“...and I have made Your name known to them and will make it known...”* Right from the start (Jn. 1:18), John wrote that Jesus had seen the Father and proclaimed His name. Jesus added, *“and will make it known,”* meaning He would **continue** to reveal the Father's name in the future. Jesus had two goals in mind.

- b. John 17:26b – “...so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them...” Jesus had revealed the Father to His followers so that God’s amazing love for Christ would be in them. Amazingly, Jesus wanted the very same profound love God had for Him to **flood** the disciples’ hearts and minds. Romans 5:5, Ephesians 3:17-19
- c. John 17:26c – “...and I in them.” Jesus revealed the Father so that He could consistently abide in their lives. Jesus lives in every believer by means of the Holy Spirit, but the question is this, is He fully **at home** in your life? Fellowship with Jesus is found in a consistent walk of faith. Ephesians 3:14-17a

XX. John 18:1-11 – Treachery in the Garden

A. John 18:1-3 – Judas and the mob

1. John 18:1 – *When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the ravine of the Kidron, where there was a garden, in which He entered with His disciples.* After Jesus finished the lengthy prayer of John 17, He and the disciples continued their **journey** through the Kidron valley, arriving at the Garden of Gethsemane.
 - a. The most likely **route** from the Upper Room to the garden was along the southern side of the Temple Mount through the Kidron valley.
 - b. To get to the wooded Garden of Gethsemane, they would have **crossed** the little Kidron brook. This confirms that what we read in John 15-17 transpired after leaving the Upper Room and before reaching the garden. This shows that Jesus did not need brick and mortar to teach a class. Matthew 26:36
2. John 18:2 – *Now Judas also, who was betraying Him, knew the place, for Jesus had often met there with His disciples.* Judas may have gone to the Upper Room, and finding them **absent**, assumed they were in the Garden of Gethsemane, a usual refuge for Jesus and His men. Due to Jesus’ popularity, a remote place was chosen to arrest Him. Luke 22:39
3. John 18:3 – *Judas then, having received the Roman cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.* A Roman cohort consisted of between 380 to 800 men. As many as 1000 people may have come to arrest Jesus; most with **weapons** in hand. Matthew 26:36-46, Mark 14:32-42, Luke 22:40-46
 - a. Judas Iscariot led the cohort of Roman soldiers, along with the temple police, to the arrest site. He knew where Jesus and His followers would likely camp. Judas was needed to positively **identify** Jesus, not to find the garden.
 - b. What **treachery** to lead an entire army to attack a small band of resting men. Judas had traveled, eaten, slept and talked day after day with these men but now He intended to double-cross them. The soldiers certainly did not approach stealthily; they openly arrived with lanterns and weapons.

- c. Judas was not a violent traitor. His sin was everyday greed. **Greed** led Him to be used by Satan to fulfill despotic goals. Remember this, He was in the presence of Jesus Christ day after day, under the greatest teacher of all for so many years, yet he remained hardened to truth. What about you and your relationship to the truth? 1 Timothy 6:9-10

B. John 18:4-11 – An inverted arrest

1. John 18:4 – *So Jesus, knowing all the things that were coming upon Him, went forth and said to them, “Whom do you seek?”* Jesus was not taken by **surprise**. He calmly approached the armed men with a question. Nothing ever took Him by surprise. Jesus knew exactly what was coming. He is God.
 - a. Instead of fading away into the darkness, Jesus went directly to the officers who were leading the battalion and **asked** them upfront, “*Whom do you seek?*” Jesus would powerfully defuse an extremely volatile situation.
 - b. “*Whom do you seek?*” These were not the words of a victim. Jesus calmly set the parameters of His own arrest. He was in **control**. No one took His life. He laid it down. Matthew 26:53-56; John 2:19, 10:18, 19:11
2. John 18:5 – *They answered Him, “Jesus the Nazarene.” He said to them, “I am He.” And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them. When Jesus asked them **who** they were seeking, they plainly answered, “Jesus of Nazareth.”*
 - a. This verse says that Judas the betrayer *was standing with them*. What an appropriate description for Judas, who had firmly taken His **stand** with the enemy.
 - b. Jesus stated He was the man they were looking for by using an “**I Am**” statement. Jesus often used “I am,” to equate Himself with Yahweh, God’s Old Testament covenant name. As we will see, the effect of this powerful declaration on the crowd showed who exactly was in control in this armed confrontation.
3. John 18:6 – *So when He said to them, “I am [He],” they drew back and fell to the ground. For a brief moment, the very **power** of God exploded forth, forcing the entire group backwards and to the ground. Jesus’ voice created the world (Heb 11:3) and His voice will judge it (Heb 12:26). Surely this exhibition of power served as an invitation to believe, or at least to fear.*
 - a. When Jesus answered, “*I am EGO EIMI,*” He released a blast of His divinity that sent them all **sprawling**. What went through their heads as they gained their composure, picked themselves up off the ground, and took their places once again?
 - b. These were not only temple police, but also a **cohort** of Rome’s warriors. These soldiers were trained not to stumble, especially in confrontational situations, but Jesus’ spoken word knocked them right off their feet. This event had to have thrown them off mentally as much as it did physically.
4. John 18:7 – *Therefore He again asked them, “Whom do you seek?” And they said, “Jesus the Nazarene.”* Even an undeniable manifestation of Jesus’ **deity** did not stop their evil plans.

- a. Obviously, their fall put them into confusion, so Jesus restated His question. This would have solidified in their minds **who** exactly they were looking for.
 - b. In this way, Jesus **safeguarded** His disciples in a very tense moment. Being Himself God, He was in control of the situation. For a second time, they answered, “Jesus the Nazarene.”
5. John 18:8 – *Jesus answered, “I told you that I am He; so, if you seek Me, let these go their way.”* Jesus willingly surrendered to them with one **stipulation**: they had to let His men go free. He lovingly sought to protect His beloved disciples.
- a. What an amazing portrayal of divine power and **wisdom**. Without a weapon in hand, Jesus totally disorientated this detachment and imposed full control over their plans.
 - b. No ordinary man could accomplish such a feat, but Jesus was not ordinary. John was **right** on when he recorded, “*Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end (Jn. 13:1).*”
6. John 18:9 – *...to fulfill the word which He spoke, “Of those whom You have given Me I lost not one.”* The fact that Christ’s words were fulfilled **exactly** as promised testifies again to His divine authority and to the authority of the Bible.
- a. This verse reminds us of the statement Jesus made earlier in prayer. In John 17:12 Jesus prayed, “*While I was with them, I was **keeping** them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled.*”
 - b. While He was still able to protect His disciples, He did so. Soon He would die, and God the Father would take on this job temporarily. Do you doubt Christ’s protection and care for you? If so, you need a fresh vision of Christ’s love. Jesus has **never** lost even one person who has come to Him in faith. John 10:28-30, 2 Timothy 1:12
7. John 18:10 – *Simon Peter then, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s slave, and cut off his right ear; and the slave’s name was Malchus.* Peter’s zeal to protect Jesus prompted his **impulsive** action. The problem was, Peter was a fisherman not a warrior.
- a. In that tense moment brimming with adrenalin and soldiers ready to spring into action, it is hard to imagine how Peter’s attack did not bring on an immediate free-for-all. Jesus’ **presence** is the only explanation for the serenity that prevailed.
 - b. Peter was being Peter. He was fulfilling his earlier well-intentioned but impetuous promise to fight and even die for Jesus. He may have thought at that moment He could **defy** Jesus’ earlier predictions of denial and failure. Mark 14:29-31
 - c. Of course, Peter attacked a **slave**, not a soldier. As a result, that slave got his name in the Bible. Interestingly, Peter not only avoided the Roman soldiers, he also bypassed the temple police. He was probably not as brave as he claimed to be.

8. John 18:11 – *So Jesus said to Peter, “Put the sword into the sheath; the cup which the Father has given Me, shall I not drink it?”* Without Jesus, Peter would have likely caused a bloodbath. Jesus’ rebuke to Peter centered on the necessity of Christ to go to the **cross**. Without that work, we’d all be doomed forever.
- a. Jesus told Peter to put away his sword. He reminded him that He had a bitter drink held out to Him by the Father that He must drink. Jesus was not going to circumvent the Father’s **plan**.
 - b. Jesus asked Peter if he thought He should drink the cup? Once before Peter had encouraged Jesus to **avoid** the cross. Back then he got a searing rebuke. Jesus said, “Get behind me Satan.” Often the things we think are important are totally unimportant and maybe even very much against what God wants us to do. Isaiah 55:8-9, Jeremiah 17:9

XXI. John 18:12-19:16 – The Six Trials of Jesus

A. John 18:12-24 – The first trial: Jesus before Annas, a former high priest

1. John 18:12-14 – Bound like a criminal, Jesus was led to His first trial. This initial **trial** is recorded only here in the Gospel of John.
 - a. John 18:12 – *So the Roman cohort and the commander and the officers of the Jews, arrested Jesus and bound Him...* Jesus was bound as if He were a dangerous criminal and then escorted like a **villain** to Jerusalem. After having invested so much in His capture, you might expect the Romans to maintain jurisdiction over His person, but they did not.
 - b. John 18:13 – *...and led Him to Annas first; for he was father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year.* This first trial was convened before **dawn**. Annas, who belonged to the aristocratic party of Sadducees, profited from temple scams. Earlier that very week Jesus had disrupted the corrupt temple syndicate, likely directly affecting Annas.
 - 1) Jesus was taken to Annas’ home first, to be arraigned and interrogated. This man Annas, however, was not the actual high priest at that time but had served as high priest back in AD 6-15. In the same way we call **former** leaders “Mr. President” or “Madam Secretary,” most still called Annas “high priest.” John 18:15-16, 19-22
 - 2) Annas was extremely wealthy and influential within Judaism. He swayed the Sanhedrin, Israel’s supreme **court**. Nothing major concerning Jewish internal, religious or societal affairs could be done without its approval or consent. Soon, right after dawn, they would convene to deal with the “Jesus-problem.”
 - 3) Although in these notes we call this a trial, it was really an **illegal** court, a sort of lynch-mob proceeding. In fact, everything about the trial was illegal. Annas actually had no judicial authority and trials could not be held after sunset or in private.
 - c. John 18:14 – *Now Caiaphas was the one who had advised the Jews that it was expedient for one man to die on behalf of the people.* Caiaphas was the actual high priest at that time, yet Jesus was brought to Annas. Caiaphas was the son-in-law of Annas and he unwittingly **prophesied** that Jesus’ would die in the place of Israel. John 11:50

2. John 18:15 – *Simon Peter was following Jesus, and so was another disciple. Now that disciple was known to the high priest and entered with Jesus into the court of the high priest... **John**, the son of Zebedee and author of this book, was likely this unnamed disciple.*
 - a. Although a fisherman by trade, John could easily have had family or business **ties** with Annas. We note that he enjoyed some freedoms the other disciples did not have, like being present at the cross when Jesus was crucified. John 19:35
 - b. We will see that Peter was trying to stay anonymous while still watching from the sidelines. The high priestly family was in **opposition** to Jesus and had never believed in Him or His message. This event was not going to go well for Jesus, nor for Peter.
3. John 18:16 – *...but Peter was standing at the door outside. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the doorkeeper, and brought Peter in. Since the unnamed disciple personally **knew** the high priest, he was able to get Peter on site.*
 - a. The doorkeeper was a servant girl. So, this was not high security. By her simple question, she would play a role in the undoing of Peter. Remarkably it was not the Sanhedrin or a squadron of soldiers that forced Peter to first deny the Lord. It was a mere **slave** girl.
 - b. It may be that the “*other disciple*” remained anonymous in this passage in order not to seem judgmental. The truth is, any of us can **deny** the Lord, and if we boast otherwise, beware of a nearby rooster.
4. John 18:17 – Then the slave-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.” Warming himself by the fire, Peter **denied** being Jesus’ disciple, just as Jesus had predicted. What a sharp contrast to His earlier declaration that very night of, “Lord... I will lay down my life for You.” John 13:37
5. John 18:18 – *Now the slaves and the officers were standing there, having made a charcoal fire, for it was cold and they were warming themselves; and Peter was also with them, standing and warming himself. Peter had taken a major **risk** by coming into the place where Jesus was being held.*
 - a. It is not surprising that they were building a charcoal fire since during Passover month (Nisan) the nights can get rather chilly in Jerusalem. Peter was standing near the fire with guards who had likely been at the arrest where he had tried to be a hero. Did Peter really believe he could somehow **escape** recognition?
 - b. There are only two places in scripture where a **charcoal** fire is mentioned: here, where Peter denied Jesus; and later in John 21:9, where Jesus restored Peter. Precision in such small details helps us ascertain that John was likely the unnamed disciple who was with Peter that night.
6. John 18:19 – *The high priest then questioned Jesus about His disciples, and about His teaching. The scene changed away from Peter and back to **Jesus**.*

- a. Annas, the de facto high priest, wanted information. He wanted to know more about Jesus followers' and teaching. This line of questioning was not in good faith; Jesus was being vindictively **interrogated**.
 - b. After they killed Jesus, they'd probably need to round up and **execute** His followers. Any information they could glean from Jesus by intimidating Him would be helpful in stomping out the rising "Jesus movement."
7. John 18:20 – *Jesus answered him, "I have spoken openly to the world; I always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all the Jews come together; and I spoke nothing in secret."* Ignoring Annas' first question concerning His disciples, Jesus said He had nothing to **hide**. This was in direct contrast to this illegal meeting done under the cover of darkness.
- a. Instead of giving out sensitive information, Jesus turned their questions around. He went on the **offensive** with questions of His own.
 - b. Jesus informed the former high priest that what He taught was **public** knowledge. He could ask anyone. Jesus had nothing to hide. He was not guilty.
8. John 18:21 – *"Why do you question Me? Question those who have heard what I spoke to them; they know what I said."* Jesus was not going to go along with their witch-hunt. He asked why they questioned Him. If they wanted to know what He taught, they could ask anyone, because everyone knew. Some spectators thought Jesus was being too **defiant**.
9. John 18:22 – *When He had said this, one of the officers standing nearby struck Jesus, saying, "Is that the way You answer the high priest?"* Responding to Jesus' legitimate challenge, an officer illegally **struck** Jesus, an un-convicted person.
- a. Hitting Jesus for His question was extreme. Overreaction is the type of hypocrisy common among zealots who belong to **corrupt** religions.
 - b. When Jesus had lawfully challenged the legitimacy of the high priest's question, one of the officers **retaliated** with a harsh physical slap. Jesus turned to the man who had slapped him with a question specific to him.
10. John 18:23 – *Jesus answered him, "If I have spoken wrongly, testify of the wrong; but if rightly, why do you strike Me?"* Instead of reacting negatively, Jesus lawfully and calmly **challenged** the officer's authority to hit Him. Jesus asked the officer to show Him where He had misspoken. 1 Peter 2:22-23
- a. In a legitimate court even the worst of criminals are treated with human **dignity**, but this was obviously not a valid trial. They had already passed judgment on Jesus.
 - b. They were hoping to get Jesus to say something that might **incriminate** Him.
11. John 18:24 – *So Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.* Faced with total injustice, Jesus remained composed. When Annas saw that he was **outwitted** by Jesus, he quickly dispatched Him to Caiaphas for more interrogation.

- a. This short walk would take Him into His next illegal trial. This would be yet another kangaroo court. At no point was Jesus offered proper **legal** representation, proper defense, or the right to appeal their decisions, present evidence and/or witnesses.
- b. They had **prejudged** His case and would try to execute Him as quickly as possible, without due process. They were seeking for anything to justify execution.

B. Mark 14:53-65 – The second trial: Jesus before Caiaphas, the ruling high priest

1. Mark 14:53 – *They led Jesus away to the high priest; and all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes gathered together. After leaving Annas' presence, Jesus was next taken to the house of Caiaphas where many **leaders** of Israel were gathered. This was a second predawn trial. It was a little more involved than the previous trial before Annas.*
2. Mark 14:54 – *Peter had followed Him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest; and he was sitting with the officers and warming himself at the fire. This hearing happened while Peter was in the **courtyard** warming himself by the fire and repeatedly denying His Lord.*
3. Mark 14:55 – *Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, and they were not finding any. This was a **phony** trial. They were trying to find testimony they could use against Jesus, but it needed to represent something worthy of death. This was an exercise in futility since Jesus was not a sinner.*
4. Mark 14:56 – *For many were giving false testimony against Him, but their testimony was not consistent. There were lots of false witnesses. Based on lies, their testimonies were faulty and **inconsistent**. They were likely paid to testify against Jesus. This was a desperate strategy to find something against the Lord. It is amazing how badly they wanted Him dead.*
5. Mark 14:57-58 – *Some stood up and began to give false testimony against Him, saying, "We heard Him say, 'I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.'" This of course was a total **distortion** of what Jesus said.*
 - a. Jesus did not say **He** was going to destroy the temple. His statement was directed at them: "[You] destroy this temple and I will raise it up again in three days." John 2:19-22
 - b. When Jesus made that statement most who heard it scoffed. They said it took over 40 years to construct the temple. How could He *raise it up*, or rebuild it, in three days? That would be impossible. But Jesus was saying **they** would destroy His body and in three days He would come back to life. John 2:21
6. Mark 14:59 – *Not even in this respect was their testimony **consistent**. The law said no one was to be put to death on a single testimony. Deuteronomy 19:15 states emphatically, "A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed."*
7. Mark 14:60 – *The high priest stood up and came forward and questioned Jesus, saying, "Do You not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against You?" During this process of false accusations and lies, Jesus did not **defend** Himself. Their questions did not deserve a response. 1 Peter 2:23*

- a. Caiaphas stood up and walked over to the now bound Lord Jesus and tried to elicit a reaction. He asked Him if He was going to answer, but Jesus remained **silent**.
 - b. Isaiah 53:7 – *He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; Like a **lamb** that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth.*
8. Mark 14:61 – *But He kept silent and did not answer. Again, the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, “Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed One?”* Jesus remained quiet until this **valid** question was made. Yes, He was the Christ the Son of the Blessed One! The high priest asked a valid question to which Jesus replied with the affirmative.
 9. Mark 14:62 – *And Jesus said, “I am; and you shall see the son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming with the clouds of heaven.”* Jesus answered that He was Messiah. He did not deny this **fact**. John 1:19-23
 - a. Jesus was not only the Christ, but He predicted that they would all see Him seated on the **throne** and coming with the clouds of heaven. Daniel 7:9-10
 - b. Since they would all see this, it likely speaks of the future day of **judgement** when the dead will stand before a great white throne to be judged by the Lord Jesus Christ. As the saying goes, you can either embrace Him now as savior or face Him then as judge. Revelation 20:11-15
 10. Mark 14:63 – *Tearing his clothes, the high priest said, “What further need do we have of witnesses?”* The high priest reacted to this in a cultural way that showed great sorrow, **shock** or disgust (Gen. 37:29, Acts 14:14). Anyone watching would immediately interpret Jesus’ words as sacrilege.
 11. Mark 14:64 – *“You have heard the blasphemy; how does it seem to you?”* And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death. After tearing his clothing in a public show of horror and disgust, the high priest accused Jesus of the sin of **blasphemy**.
 - a. He was right only if Jesus was **not** the Messiah.
 - b. The problem is, He was and **is** the Messiah, the promised Christ. When Caiaphas reacted this way, they immediately condemned Jesus as worthy of death.
 12. Mark 14:65 – *Some began to spit at Him, and to blindfold Him, and to beat Him with their fists, and to say to Him, “Prophecy!”* The officers **despised** Him with slaps in the face. At the end of the trial in Annas’ home, He received a slap on the face. At the end of this trial, He was spit on, beaten with fists, openly mocked and again slapped in the face.

C. John 18:25-27 – Jesus’ prophecy about Peter’s denial fulfilled

1. John 18:25 – *Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. So they said to him, “You are not also one of His disciples, are you?”* He denied it, and said, “I am not.” Here we **return** to where we left Peter warming himself in the courtyard of the high priest’s home. Luke 22:54-62

- a. Who were these people standing by the fire? They were a mixed **group** of guards and slaves. Since they were in the courtyard that joined Caiaphas' and Annas' homes, these were not likely Roman soldiers.
 - b. This was the **second** time Peter denied Jesus with the words, "I am not."
 - c. The Gospel of Mark gives some commentary on the disciples' **failure**. Mark 14:27 – *And Jesus said to them, "You will all fall away, because it is written, 'I will strike down the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered'."* Matthew 26:69-75; Mark 14:26-31, 66-72; Luke 22:54-62
2. John 18:26 – *One of the slaves of the high priest, being a relative of the one whose ear Peter cut off, said, "Did I not see you in the garden with Him?"* This is another minor detail only an **eyewitness** would know.
 - a. Of all the Gospel writers, John is the only one who mentioned Malchus by **name**.
 - b. John was not only familiar with this slave but also **knew** the details of his relationship to Malchus. John 18:10
 3. John 18:27 – *Peter then denied it again, and immediately a rooster crowed.* After a third denial, the **rooster** crowed just as the Lord had prophesied. John 13:38
 - a. It is interesting that John did not include the fact that Peter **cursed** in his denials nor did he bring out that fact that Peter had gone away and wept. Mark 14:71-72
 - b. His purpose in including this story was obviously not to bring Peter shame or to show the dark side of his humanity; rather it was to prove that Jesus' predictions were **literally** fulfilled.

D. Luke 22:66-23:1 – The third trial: Jesus' formal arraignment and the Sanhedrin

1. Luke 22:66 – *When it was day, the Council of elders of the people assembled, both chief priests and scribes, and they led Him away to their council chamber, saying...* This would be the **formal** arraignment of Jesus by the national leaders of Israel. John did not mention this trial in his Gospel.
 - a. First thing in the **morning**, Jesus was taken from the house of Caiaphas to the Sanhedrin council chamber, where Caiaphas presided.
 - b. In this process, they leveled formal charges against Him, charges that could be brought to Pontus Pilot to get him to order the **death** penalty.
2. Luke 22:67-68 – *"If You are the Christ, tell us." But He said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe, and if I ask a question, you will not answer."* Their first question was, "Are you the Christ?" Jesus avoided giving an answer. He knew they only wanted to use His answer to **condemn** Him. They did not genuinely want to know so they could believe in Him.
3. Luke 22:69 – *"But from now on the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the power of God."* Jesus answered their question with a reference to the book of **Daniel**. The prophet Daniel described an event where the Son of Man was glorified and given dominion over all creation (Dan 7:13-14). Jesus was that person and He would indeed reign.

4. Luke 22:70 – *And they all said, “Are You the Son of God, then?” And He said to them, “Yes, I am.”* Jesus had just stated He was the Son of Man but now He added forthrightly that He was also the Son of God. This declaration was the final straw for them. The national leaders of Israel regarded this **declaration** grounds for the death sentence.
5. Luke 22:71-23:1 – *Then they said, “What further need do we have of testimony? For we have heard it ourselves from His own mouth.” Then the whole body of them got up and brought Him before Pilate.* The entire **assembly** of leaders from Israel rose up and took Jesus to Pilate.
 - a. Israel’s leaders **rejected** their long-promised and long-awaited Messiah. This was a sad and dark day in Israel’s history.
 - b. The religious leaders wanted the **death** penalty for Jesus. In Matthew 23:29-37 Jesus told the Pharisees they were no better than their forefathers who killed the prophets and He predicted that they themselves would persecute, kill and crucify the prophets and those Jesus would send to them in the future.

E. John 18:28-38 – The fourth trial: Jesus first trial before Pilate, 1 Timothy 6:13

1. John 18:28-32 – After illegally trying Jesus at Caiaphas’ house and then before the Sanhedrin, the religious leaders brought Jesus into the Praetorium, Pilate’s palace, for **Pilate** to hear their accusations.
 - a. John 18:28 – *Then they led Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorium, and it was early; and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorium so that they would not be **defiled**, but might eat the Passover.* The religious leaders would not enter the compound of the Gentile Roman governor.
 - 1) Entering the home of a Gentile during the week of Passover would disqualify Jews from participating in this feast. As is typical of phony legalists, the religious leaders insisted on keeping the **minor** details of the Law while overlooking the weightier matters like, *“You shall not murder (Ex. 20:13).”* Matthew 23:23
 - 2) The twofold mandate to all Roman governors was to maintain **peace** and collect taxes. Any governor that did these two things well was considered a good leader by Rome regardless of personal character or worth.
 - 3) Pilate ruled in Jerusalem for nearly 20 years and for the most part he successfully fulfilled these two mandates. This was probably due in part to his cruelty. According to Philo of Alexandria, Pilate was known to be extremely **cruel** and hateful.
 - b. John 18:29 – *Therefore Pilate went out to them and said, “What accusation do you bring against this Man?”* Jesus was inside with Pilate, and the Jewish leaders were outside; thus, Pilate went outside and asked a reasonable question about the **facts** of the case.
 - 1) He asked the chief priests and scribes (*the Council of elders of the people*) what the man they brought to him had done.

- 2) Luke 23:2 says, “And they began to accuse Him, saying, “We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar, and saying that He Himself is Christ, a **King**.” Matthew 27:11-14, Mark 15:1-5
- c. John 18:30 – They answered and said to him, “If this Man were not an evildoer, we would not have delivered Him to you.” Since they had no **concrete** evidence against Jesus, they answered Pilate with an evasive question.
- 1) Jesus was not an evildoer at all, and they knew it! Jesus had healed the sick, helped the poor and fed the hungry. He was the living picture of **love**. He came to save Israel from their sins and from their enemies. They rejected Him and labeled Him a fraud and a criminal.
 - 2) The truth was they had no **legitimate** charges. They only wanted Jesus dead. In Matthew 27:18 we find that it was out of envy they wanted Jesus crucified and 1 Corinthians 2:8 shows that Satan and his demons were the ones behind it all.
- d. John 18:31-32 – So Pilate said to them, “Take Him yourselves, and judge Him according to your law.” The Jews said to him, “We are not permitted to put anyone to death,” to fulfill the word of Jesus which He spoke, signifying by what kind of death He was about to die. Jesus was about to **willingly** die as a sacrifice for the people. John 3:14, 12:32
- 1) After listening to their grievances, Pilate suggested they deal with Jesus according to their laws. In an attempt to get out of the **mess** in which he found himself, Pilate tried to put the entire issue back on the shoulders of the Judean leaders. But they did not have the power to execute anyone and they wanted Jesus dead.
 - 2) Pilate did not want to have **anything** to do with their internal affairs. In Pilate’s mind, at its worst, this was a religious or civil matter; it was definitely not a capital crime deserving of death. All of this, of course, was prophecy being fulfilled. Psalm 2:1-12, John 15:25, Acts 2:22-24
2. John 18:33-38 – So Pilate went ahead and investigated Jesus himself. It is a travesty that Jesus was not given this kind of fair trial by the people of God, the Jewish nation. After examining Him, Pilate decided He was **innocent** of crimes of rebellion against Rome. Evidently, even this hardened ruler was somewhat impressed by Jesus.
- a. John 18:33 – Therefore Pilate entered again into the Praetorium, and summoned Jesus and said to Him, “Are You the King of the Jews?” When they asked for the death penalty, he went back in to where Jesus was to do some personal **investigation** on the subject.
 - 1) Pilate asked Jesus straight up if He was the **King** of Israel. It was a legitimate question.
 - 2) Depending on Jesus’ answer, He could be accused of **insurrection**.
 - b. John 18:34 – Jesus answered, “Are you saying this on your own initiative, or did others tell you about Me?” Jesus asked Pilate a clarifying question. Asking in this way focused the light on Pilate’s **personal** opinion of Him as King of the Jews. Jesus asked this to get Pilate to think; He did not need him to answer.

- c. John 18:35 – *Pilate answered, “I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests delivered You to me; what have You done?”* Pilate’s response, that he was not a Jew, showed his **apathy** toward Jewish theological squabbles. He was not concerned for Jewish internal affairs unless they created a revolt. Jesus immediately calmed his fears.
- d. John 18:36 – *Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm.”* Since Jesus’ right to rule was granted by His Father, Jesus explained that His Kingdom was of a different **realm**.
- 1) Jesus answered Pilate in a way that would not be taken as an immediate threat to Pilate’s reign or Rome’s sovereignty. Jesus did not deny being the King of the Jews, but He stated it **indirectly**. He said His kingdom was not an earthly kingdom but one that originated somewhere outside of this world.
 - 2) Pilate was surprised to hear Jesus claim rights to a kingdom. Jesus’ answer must have puzzled Pilate, but he certainly did not see it as **grounds** for the death penalty.
- e. John 18:37 – *Therefore Pilate said to Him, “So You are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”* Jesus said He was **born** to rule.
- 1) Pilate’s question turned into a pronouncement: “So You are a king?” Jesus said Pilate had just **declared** Him to be a King, and Jesus did not deny it.
 - 2) He came into this world to rule and to testify concerning the **truth**. Everyone who believes the truth, believes Jesus.
 - 3) But intellectuals always love to **debate** the truth. They didn’t believe in Jesus. They did not nor do they readily receive Him. They only ask, “What is truth.” Of course, Jesus is truth. John 8:32, 3 John 1:3-4
- f. 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 guilt in Him.”* Pilate basically scoffed at Jesus. He made this **sarcastic** remark because he did not believe there is absolute truth.
- 1) Without wanting to know the answer, Pilate asked, “What is truth?” Even though Pilate did not believe in absolute truth, He had the objectivity to declare Jesus **innocent**, but he lacked the integrity to save Him. Sadly, the religious leaders of the day had neither objectivity nor integrity.
 - 2) But Pilate had heard enough. He did not need to investigate the matter any further; Jesus was **not** guilty, at least by his standards. This did not mean, however, that Pilate was a pushover or merciful.
 - 3) It was **convenient** for the Jews that Pilate happened to be the Roman governor since he was known to be cruel and capricious, able and willing to take a bribe and even execute the innocent. Pilate had remained in power for several years, not because of diplomacy, but because of an iron fist.

F. Luke 23:5-12 – The fifth trial: Jesus before Herod Antipas

1. Luke 23:5 – *But they kept on insisting, saying, “He stirs up the people, teaching all over Judea, starting from Galilee even as far as this place.”* During His trial before Pilate, the Jewish leaders decided to bring a **charge** against Jesus that almost threw their plans into peril.
2. Luke 23:6 – *When Pilate heard it, he asked whether the man was a Galilean.* This inadvertent **disclosure**, concerning Jesus being from Galilee, was good news for Pilate. Now he could take advantage of Herod being in town to shuttle Jesus off. Herod could deal with this mess and Pilate could simply wash his hands of the whole scandal.
3. Luke 23:7 – *And when he learned that He belonged to Herod’s jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who himself also was in Jerusalem at that time.* Herod was an **evil** but stable ruler who presided over Galilee 42 years before his sudden illness and death. Acts 12:23
 - a. This Herod was the man who **executed** John the Baptist. Since He was governor of Galilee, he knew who Jesus was.
 - b. Matthew 14:1-2 records that He thought Jesus was John the Baptist **resurrected**.
4. Luke 23:8 – *Now Herod was very glad when he saw Jesus; for he had wanted to see Him for a long time, because he had been hearing about Him and was hoping to see some sign performed by Him.* Herod had heard reports of Jesus. He hoped Jesus would **entertain** him with some incredible miracle. But Jesus was not interested in amusing Herod.
5. Luke 23:9 – *And he questioned Him at some length; but He answered him **nothing**.* Herod tried hard to get Jesus to at least say something, but Jesus was not going to speak with this evil tyrant. There is no recorded dialogue between Jesus and Herod. Herod had reportedly tried to kill Jesus, yet Jesus was not intimidated by Him; not then, not now. Luke 13:31-33
6. Luke 23:10 – *And the chief priests and the scribes were standing there, accusing Him vehemently.* The chief priests were in a frenzy now, wildly hurling insults and accusations at Jesus. They might have thought that now that Herod was involved their chances for an **execution** were quickly slipping away.
7. Luke 23:11 – *And Herod with his soldiers, after treating Him with contempt and mocking Him, dressed Him in a gorgeous robe and sent Him back to Pilate.* Here we see the full extent of the mockery of Jesus by this **godless** ruler. Since he could not get anything from Jesus, he refused jurisdiction and sent Him back disgraced.
8. Luke 23:12 – *Now Herod and Pilate became friends with one another that very day; for before they had been enemies with each other.* What a demented way to become **friends**. Instead of causing a turf war, it brought these two enemies together.

G. John 18:39-40 – A failed ploy to release Jesus

1. John 18:39 – *“But you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover; do you wish then that I release for you the King of the Jews?”* Pilate was still **uneasy** about putting Jesus to death and looked for a way to release Him. Matthew 27:11-26

2. John 18:40 – *So they cried out again, saying, “Not this Man, but Barabbas.”* Now Barabbas was a robber. Barabbas, a murderer, robber, and revolutionary, was one of the **worst** criminals in Judea (Mk. 15:7). Pilate reasoned that no thinking person would ever want him roaming the streets again, but he was wrong. Pilate’s efforts were unsuccessful.

H. John 19:1-15 – The sixth trial: Jesus second and final trial before Pilate

1. John 19:1-5 – Hoping to **satisfy** the crowd, Pilate had Jesus whipped.
 - a. John 19:1 – *Pilate then took Jesus and scourged Him.* Pilate still viewed Jesus as innocent of any legitimate crime, especially since Herod had sent Him back, apparently finding no reason to kill Him. Therefore, Pilate hoped to punish Jesus and **release** Him.
 - 1) Pilate hoped the flogging would be enough to satisfy the Judean leadership’s thirst for blood. A scourge was a multistrand whip with bits of metal or glass in the tip of each strand. When flogged, skin would be torn from the victim’s back. This whip was called “the **scorpion.**”
 - 2) Floggings were brutal and life-threatening, to say the least. There would have been a lot of bleeding. It was His great love that caused Jesus to willingly suffer the pain and agony associated with death on a cross. His love for us gave Him the power to **endure** such malicious and painful abuse. Hebrews 12:2-3, 1 Peter 2:23
 - b. John 19:2 – *And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head and put a purple robe on Him.* It was standard practice for Roman soldiers to **humiliate** anyone sent to them for judgment. Isaiah 53:3
 - 1) We see the soldiers having a good time at Jesus’ expense. Putting the purple robe on Him was pure **mockery**, since purple was the color of royalty.
 - 2) The robe would have **soaked** up blood from the flogging and glued itself to Jesus’ back. The crown of thorns they planted on Jesus’ head was used to ridicule Him and to give Him great pain at the same time.
 - c. John 19:3 – *...and they began to come up to Him and say, “Hail, King of the Jews!” and to give Him slaps in the face.* We should remember this was a fortress containing as many as a thousand **hardened** soldiers. They were used to seeing and giving suffering and not feeling any remorse about it.
 - 1) Having dressed Jesus as a make-believe king, they pretended to worship Him, all the while relentlessly **striking** Him.
 - 2) To *slap* RHAPISMA in Greek can mean to slap in the face or to strike with a rod, club or whip. We can be sure this fittingly describes their **cruel** treatment of Christ.
 - 3) “*Hail, King of the Jews!*” was equivalent to saying, “**Welcome**, King of the Jews!” Isaiah 53:5-7

- d. John 19:4 – *Pilate came out again and said to them, “Behold, I am bringing Him out to you so that you may know that I find no guilt in Him.”* Pilate had already told them, but one more time he declared to the crowd of religious and national leaders of Israel that he found Jesus “**not guilty**.” Matthew 27:19, 24; Luke 23:4; John 18:38, 19:6
- 1) Pilate now presented Jesus to them fully humiliated. Jesus had claimed to be a **king**, so they made Him king for a day. Surely this public shaming would prove to the religious leaders that they had nothing to worry about regarding Jesus.
 - 2) This public and severe treatment was meant to shatter Israel’s **resolve** to seek the death penalty. Pilate wanted them to reason and say, “Yes, Jesus claimed to be a king, but it was of some make-believe kingdom. Clearly, He was no king. He was no threat to Rome. Couldn’t they see He had been completely debased?”
- e. John 19:5 – *Jesus then came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, “Behold, the Man!”* Pilate did not know he was drawing attention to the **greatest** man of all history, the God-Man, Christ Jesus. Mark 15:16-20
- 1) Pilate’s words could be rephrased to say, “I now present to you the ‘**man**’.” Look at Him.” Jesus came out before them bleeding, beaten, humiliated, and nearly dead.
 - 2) Parading Him around like this made Jesus look **foolish** and weak. In this state, He was not someone to fear at all. This is what Pilate wanted to communicate to the Judean heads-of-state; but tragically, the horrific sight of the tortured and shamed Lord Jesus did not in any way dissuade their demands for His death.
2. John 19:6 – *So when the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out saying, “Crucify, crucify!” Pilate said to them, “Take Him yourselves and crucify Him, for I find no guilt in Him.”* Pilate mocked the crowd. He knew that as a **servant** nation under Rome the Judean leadership had no authority to crucify Jesus.
- a. Incredulously, however, the flogging was not enough for the leaders of Israel. They were bent on Jesus’ death. The only way to satisfy their desires was for Jesus to be **crucified**.
 - b. Even when Pilate emphatically announced that he found **nothing** worthy of death in Jesus, the crowds, led by the chief priests and the heads of the temple guard, became frenzied in their demands.
3. John 19:7 – *The Jews answered him, “We have a law, and by that law He ought to die because He made Himself out to be the Son of God.”* So, the truth was out: the leaders of Israel rejected Jesus’ claims to **deity**, and this became their final justification for having Him killed. Proverbs 27:4, Matthew 27:18
- a. Leviticus 24:16 is the passage they cited: *Whoever blasphemes the name of the LORD must to be put to death; the whole assembly surely must stone him, whether he is a foreign resident or native; if he blasphemes the Name, he must be put to death.* They were right, Jesus did claim to be **God**. John 5:18, 8:53, 10:36

- b. Telling this superstitious **pagan** governor that Jesus claimed to be the Son of God did not help their case. Matthew 27:19 says, *“While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him a message, saying, ‘Have nothing to do with that righteous Man; for last night I suffered greatly in a dream because of Him’.”*
 - c. For Romans, whose religion was steeped in demigod **mythology**, these were worrisome words. Their pagan minds would instinctively have wondered if this man could perhaps be a son of the gods come down to earth from mythical Mount Olympus. In Pilate’s mind, this revelation would require an additional investigation.
 - d. Note: The negative use of the term “Jews” in this Gospel refers to the Judean leaders and those under their influence; it is not a general description of an **ethnicity**. John was not antisemitic. In time, multitudes of Jewish people believed in Christ and became His disciples.
4. John 19:8 – *“Therefore when Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid...”* This new development rattled Pilate’s pagan worldview. Immediately he reentered the Praetorium to privately investigate Jesus’ true **identity**. The first thing he needed to know was where Jesus really came from: earth or somewhere else.
 5. John 19:9 – *...and he entered into the Praetorium again and said to Jesus, “Where are You from?” But Jesus gave him no answer.* Roman mythology taught that the gods occasionally came to earth to mix with humanity. When Jesus gave no **answer** it greatly annoyed Pilate.
 6. John 19:10 – *So Pilate said to Him, “You do not speak to me? Do You not know that I have authority to release You, and I have authority to crucify You?”* Pilate used the authority he thought he had to try to **intimidate** Jesus.
 - a. In essence Pilate asked Jesus, “You’re not going to answer me? “Don’t you know I have the power to free you or to kill you?” The truth was, Jesus was there by His **own** freewill.
 - b. No one was taking His life. No man was holding Him. At His arrest in Matthew 26:53 Jesus told Peter, *“Or do you think that I cannot **appeal** to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels?”*
 7. John 19:11 – *Jesus answered, “You would have no authority over Me, unless it had been **given** you from above; for this reason, he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.”* Jesus assured Pilate he did not have one ounce of authority over Him.
 - a. God was the one who put Pilate into the **position** of governor. Therefore, Pilate was obligated to fulfill that role for the Roman government.
 - b. The one who delivered Jesus over was Judas. The Greek word *delivered* PARADOUS means to hand over or to **betray**. Pilate was fulfilling his position as governor, but Judas committed treason.
 - c. Matthew 20:18-19 says, *“Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes [by Judas Iscariot], and they will condemn Him to death, and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify Him, and on the third day He will be raised up.”*

8. John 19:12 – *As a result of this Pilate made efforts to release Him, but the Jews cried out saying, “If you release this Man, you are no friend of Caesar; everyone who makes himself out to be a king opposes Caesar.”* Now Pilate was **caught** between a rock and a hard place.
- When Pilate continued to try to **release** Jesus, Israel’s leaders brought a deadly weapon out of their arsenal.
 - If Pilate pardoned someone who claimed to be a king, he was acting as an **enemy** of the state, the great emperor, Caesar. This could put his life in danger, and the Jews knew it.
9. John 19:13 – *Therefore when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.* So, Pilate went out to the stone pavement, the judgment seat, and drafted an authorization for Jesus’ **execution**. John 19:17, 20
10. John 19:14 – *Now it was the day of preparation for the Passover; it was about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, “Behold, your King!”* Through the voice of an unsaved ruler, God gave Israel one last **chance** to embrace Jesus as their king, but they did not.
- It is hard to know exactly what **time** Jesus was crucified, since Mark 15:25 says *it was the third hour when they crucified Him*, and this verse says *it was about the sixth hour*.
 - According to the Jewish way of reckoning time, the third hour described any time between 9am and noon and the sixth hour any time from noon to about 3pm. Therefore, it is likely Jesus was crucified just before or around **midday**.
 - In Jesus’ day people were not nearly as time conscience as we are today. Time was told mostly by where the sun was in the sky and different groups of people had different **ways** of telling time. To the Jews, a day was made of 12 hours and the night was divided into four “watches.” Matthew 20:1-9, 27:45; Mark 15:25, 33; Luke 23:44; John 11:9
 - As the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world* (Jn. 1:29), it was fitting that Jesus die on **Passover**. In 1 Corinthians 5:7, Christ is called *our Passover*. 1 Peter 1:19 says that Christ was an *unblemished and spotless lamb* just like the lambs the Israelites were commanded to sacrifice on Passover. Exodus 12:5-6
11. John 19:15 – *So 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.”* When Pilate presented Jesus to Israel as their **king**, they declared that Caesar was their only king.
- This was Israel’s final rejection of Christ by its leadership. When Pilate pointed to Jesus as their king, they unanimously cried out, “Put him away! Kill him! Crucify him!” They, as the leaders of Israel, blatantly rejected Jesus as Messiah. This was a **national** rejection.
 - Paraphrased, Pilate asked them again, “Do you want me to nail your king to a wooden cross?” And their unified response as chief priests and leaders of Israel was in essence, “The emperor, Caesar, he is our king. We have no other.” This public denouncement of Jesus as Savior solidified their **decision** to choose Rome over Jesus.

I. John 19:16 – The verdict: Death by crucifixion

1. John 19:16 – *So he then handed Him over to them to be crucified.* Pilate conceded. He gave in to their demand and turned Jesus over to be **crucified**.
 - a. Not only was Jesus handed over to the desires of the chief priests, but also to the Roman **soldiers** to carry out the execution. Luke 23:25
 - b. Crucifixion was one of the worst forms of execution. This was the price Jesus paid to free mankind from its sin **debt**. 1 Corinthians 1:21-25, 2:7-8; 1 Peter 3:18

XXII. John 19:17-42 – The Crucifixion and Burial of Jesus

A. John 19:17-24 – Crucifixion details

1. John 19:17 – *They took Jesus, therefore, and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called the Place of a Skull, which is called in Hebrew, Golgotha.* Pilate handed Jesus over, because **capital** punishment was Rome’s responsibility. From this point onward the soldiers took over.
 - a. Typically, the vertical pole for crucifixion was permanent, but the crossbeam was carried to the site by the person condemned to die. This wooden **plank** was placed on Jesus’ shoulders.
 - b. Jesus was forced to carry this plank to the execution site, which was called The Place of the **Skull** (in Hebrew, Golgotha). Tradition has it that this name came from a nearby large rock that from a distance looked like a human skull.
 - c. Although John did not mention it, Jesus, in His weakened state, was **unable** to carry the cross the entire distance. Therefore, the soldiers seized a man (Simon of Cyrene) *coming in from the country* and forced him to carry the cross the rest of the way (Lk. 23:26).
2. John 19:18 – *There they crucified Him, and with Him two other men, one on either side, and Jesus in between.* Christ was lifted up on the cross was between two other criminals. They were there because they deserved death; Jesus was there to conquer death. They were there for their crimes; Jesus was there for **our** crimes.
 - a. Hundreds of years before crucifixion was ever practiced, the psalmist, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, predicted this event. Psalm 22:16 reads, *“For dogs have surrounded me; A band of evildoers has encompassed me; They **pierced** my hands and my feet.”*
 - b. In Isaiah 53:12 the prophet foretold, *“Therefore, I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the booty with the strong; Because He poured out Himself to death and was **numbered** with the transgressors; Yet He Himself bore the sin of many and interceded for the transgressors.”* This prophecy was literally fulfilled. Luke 23:33

3. John 19:19 – *Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It was written, “Jesus the Nazarene, The King of The Jews.”* To place a sign naming the crime committed on a criminal’s cross was a somewhat common practice. However, Pilate had this inscription placed above Jesus’ head as an **insult** to Israel’s religious leaders.
4. John 19:20 – *Therefore many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and it was written in Hebrew, Latin and in Greek.* These were the **major** languages of Jerusalem at the time. Since the site of the crucifixion was near the city, many people read Pilate’s notice, which greatly displeased the chief priests.
5. John 19:21 – *So the chief priests of the Jews were saying to Pilate, “Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews’; but that He said, ‘I am King of the Jews.’”* The religious leaders understood Pilate’s **insult** and told him not to write, “King of the Jews,” but rather, “He claimed to be the King of the Jews.” Pilate would not change his wording.
6. John 19:22 – *Pilate answered, “What I have written I have written.”* Pilate went back to his normal uncooperative ways and **refused** to change the sign he had placed over Jesus’ head. He was no longer concerned about the mob or a possible adverse report to Caesar.
7. John 19:23 – *Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took His outer garments and made four parts, a part to every soldier and also the tunic; now the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece.* John was the **only** disciple who witnessed the crucifixion; therefore, as an eyewitness, he gave a very precise account of these events.
 - a. A tunic was an undergarment worn next to the skin. Jesus was stripped of both His outer garment and His undergarment. This means He hung on the cross **naked**.
 - b. Hebrews 12:2 says Jesus *endured the cross, despising the **shame**.*
8. John 19:24 – *So they said to one another, “Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, to decide whose it shall be”; this was to fulfill the Scripture: “They divided my outer garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.”* Since Jesus’ undergarment was woven as **one** piece, the soldiers did not rip it up.
 - a. Casting lots for Jesus’ tunic and dividing up His outer garment were both **predicted** in the Old Testament. Psalm 22:18 says; *“They divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.”* This statement would have been unintelligible to Old Testament readers, but after the cross, its significance became astonishingly clear.
 - b. The amazingly **accurate** fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies found in passages like Psalm 22, Psalm 69 and Isaiah 53 is nothing short of miraculous. These passages could hardly have been understood before the events actually transpired.

B. John 19:25-27 – Behold your mother!

1. John 19:25 – *Therefore the soldiers did these things. But standing by the cross of Jesus were His mother, and His mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.* This is a fulfillment of Luke 2:35 when Simeon said Mary’s **soul** would be pierced. Watching her son endure such incredible suffering surely caused Mary indescribable anguish.

- a. Mary, the woman God chose to be the **mother** of Jesus, was at the cross when He was crucified.
 - 1) The Bible teaches that Mary was blessed among (not above) women because God **chose** her to give birth to Jesus, our Messiah. Luke 1:28, 42
 - 2) Even though she bore Jesus as a son, she is not the “mother of God.” That is a **false** idea based on the notion that Mary was a goddess, or somehow divinely eternal.
 - b. Salome, the mother of James and John, Jesus’ disciples who were sometimes called the sons of Zebedee, was also at the cross when Christ was crucified. Salome was the **sister** of Jesus’ mother, Mary.
 - c. Another Mary, believed to be Mary’ sister-in-law, was at the crucifixion. She was the wife of Clopas, whom tradition teaches was the **brother** of Joseph. She was the mother of James the younger (also called James the less). Clopas is believed to be Cleophas from Luke 24:18. Matthew 27:55-56, Mark 15:40
 - d. Mary Magdalene can be understood as Mary of Magdala, the woman out of whom Jesus had cast **seven** demons. Luke 8:2
2. John 19:26 – *When Jesus then saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, “Woman, behold, your son!”* Even in his suffering, Jesus was **concerned** for his mother’s well-being.
 - a. What we see in this passage makes it obvious that something had happened to Joseph. He most likely had died, leaving Mary a widow. With Joseph out of the picture, Jesus, being the oldest son, would be considered the **head** of the family. Even on the cross, Jesus took responsibility for the care of His mother. Mark 15:40
 - b. Jesus had at least four brothers and two sisters, but it may be that since they had not yet **believed** in Him as Messiah, He did not entrust Mary to them. We do not know.
 3. John 19:27 – *Then He said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!”* From that hour the disciple took her into his own household. Jesus entrusted Mary’s care to John, His first cousin. From that day forward, John accepted **responsibility** for Mary, and she went to live in his home.

C. John 19:28-30 – Statements from the cross

1. John 19:28 – *After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, “I am thirsty.”* At this point Jesus realized His work was basically finished. Jesus was aware of everything going on around Him, and He purposefully made sure to fulfill every **detail** of prophecy. 1 Corinthians 15:3
 - a. The last Old Testament prophecy to be fulfilled about the crucifixion was this one concerning Jesus’ thirst: *My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my **tongue** cleaves to my jaws; and You lay me in the dust of death.* Psalm 22:15
 - b. Psalm 69:21 adds, *“They also gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.”* This statement again shows the **humanity** of Jesus. On the cross, He was very thirsty. The next verse gives an actual fulfillment of this prophecy.

2. John 19:29 – *A jar full of sour wine was standing there; so, they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop and brought it up to His mouth.* Death by crucifixion was accompanied by great **thirst**. A jar of sour wine, or vinegar, was conveniently standing nearby. Being an eyewitness, John noticed this detail.
 - a. The **hyssop** branch mentioned here may or may not have been the exact same plant as the one used to apply blood to the doorposts during the first Passover. At any rate, it is of interest that hyssop is mentioned in connection with the first Passover and again when the last Passover lamb was sacrificed. Exodus 12:22, Psalm 69:21
 - b. Earlier Jesus refused to drink wine mixed with gall (or myrrh, Mat. 27:34, Mk. 15:23) because gall had a narcotic effect and would have deadened the **pain**. The vinegary substance in this verse, however, was not a pain killer, so Jesus consumed some of it.
3. John 19:30a – *Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is **finished!**”* On the cross, Jesus victoriously accomplished all that was needed for our salvation. He did this through His sacrificial death. His death paid our sin debt. He died as our redemptive substitute.
 - a. Upon tasting the sour drink, Jesus said, “It is finished” or “It is complete.” Everything the Father had given Him to accomplish was finally **complete**. Nothing remained. Therefore, Jesus hung His head and died.
 - b. Psalm 22:31 prophesied, “*They will come and will declare His righteousness to a people who will be born, that He has performed it.*” Jesus performed “**righteousness**” in His substitutional, sacrificial death on the cross, in our stead. Hallelujah!
4. John 19:30b – *And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.* Usually a person dies and then *bows* their head after dying. As an eyewitness, John wrote that Jesus first laid down KLÍNO His **head** and then He gave up His spirit, in that order.
 - a. Early in His ministry Jesus said, “*The Son of Man has nowhere to lay KLÍNO His head*” (Mat. 8:20, Lk. 9:58). On the cruel cross, after stating, “It is finished,” Jesus **finally** found a time and a place to lay down His head.
 - b. Jesus found a place of **rest** only after completing the redemptive work needed for our salvation. He was in control of His death even in the brutal hours on the cross.
5. John 19:30b – *Jesus ...gave up His spirit.* This is how Jesus’ life ended. Salvation stood completed. Today we can add nothing to His **perfect** and fulfilled work. *It is finished!* Jesus controlled the timing and process of both His spiritual and physical deaths. John 10:17-18
 - a. Luke 23:46 says, “*And Jesus, crying out with a loud voice, said, ‘Father, into Your hands I commit My spirit’.*” As He gave up His spirit, Jesus addressed God as His **Father**, indicating that He staked His resurrection on His Father’s willingness to raise Him from the dead. Jesus did not resurrect Himself from the dead. Hebrews 13:20
 - b. In fulfillment of Psalm 31:5, Luke quoted Jesus as saying, “*Into Your hands I commit my **spirit*** (Luke 23:46).” Mark 15:37

- c. John 3:16 says, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” The greatest outpouring of God’s **love** for the world was Jesus’ substitutionary death for our sins. His sacrifice motivates us to live for His glory. 2 Corinthians 5:14, Ephesians 5:2, Hebrews 12:1-2

D. John 19:31-42 – Events immediately following Jesus’ death

1. John 19:31 – *Then the Jews, because it was the day of preparation, so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), asked Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.* To **hasten** their death, the religious leaders asked Pilate to order the legs of the crucified men to be broken.
 - a. It was the Friday before Passover. Concerned with fulfilling **minor** details of the Law, the chief priests wanted the bodies taken down.
 - 1) According to the Law of Moses, the Israelites were never to **leave** a dead body hanging in a tree (or on a cross) overnight. Deuteronomy 21:22-23, Matthew 27:57-58, Galatians 3:13
 - 2) Depending on the year, Passover could fall on any **day** of the week. This particular year Passover fell on the Sabbath, making it an extra special Sabbath. John 12:12
 - b. Although, breaking the legs of the victim would add insult to injury, it would greatly speed up death. Not only would the pain be more than anyone could bear, with broken legs the individual would be unable to lift up the body to **breathe**, and this would result in death by asphyxiation.
 - c. In 1 Corinthians 5:7b Paul said, “For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed.” If Jesus’ legs were **broken**, Jesus would not have qualified as a suitable Passover lamb. Exodus 12:46 highlights that the legs of a Passover lamb were never to be broken.
 - d. This passage also proves that Jesus did not merely die by asphyxiation as some might contend. He willingly **gave up** His life. He was both the sacrifice and the priest on the Cross. Hebrews 2:17, 7:26-27; 1 John 3:16
2. John 19:32-33 – *So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first man and of the other who was crucified with Him; but coming to Jesus, when they saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs.* Since Jesus was already dead, there was no **reason** to break His legs.
 - a. Way back in Exodus, God knew that in the distant future when Jesus the perfect Passover lamb would be slain, His legs would not be **broken**. That is the only reason the Israelites were not to break any of the Passover lamb’s bones. Keeping the bones intact certainly did not make it easier to prepare or consume the Passover lamb. Exodus 12:46
 - b. Jesus did not picture the Passover sacrifice; the Passover sacrifice pictured **Him**.
 - c. After hundreds of years of wondering why God did not allow the lamb’s bones to be broken on Passover, any honest Israelite would have taken **note** of the fact that Jesus’ bones were not broken when He was crucified.

3. John 19:34a – *But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out.* This literally fulfilled Zechariah 12:10b which says, “*So that they will look on Me whom they have **pierced**.*” The piercing of Jesus’ side proved He was truly dead. Jesus later offered to show this scar to Thomas.
 - a. Just to make sure Jesus had not simply swooned, one of the soldiers **jabbed** his javelin into Jesus’ chest cavity right below His ribs. John recorded that when he did this, both blood and water came out. This separation of Jesus’ blood was proof that He had died.
 - b. The prophetic Psalm 22:14 says, “*I am poured out like **water**, and all my bones are out of joint; My heart is like wax; it is melted within me.*”
4. 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 also may believe.* John, who witnessed these events, emphasized that this was a **literal** and accurate description of what happened and the actual fulfillment of prophecy. Exodus 12:46
 - a. There was an eyewitness to this actual moment who gave accurate testimony of what occurred. This was not mere conjecture or hearsay. The one who gave this report was 100% correct. You can believe it now and keep right on believing it into the future (Jn. 20:31). Jesus **verifiably** died on the cross for our sins.
 - b. This passage may help us understand a puzzling passage in 1 John 5 where John included proof of the humanity of Jesus Christ. When John wrote 1 John there were those with **Gnostic** thinking who denied that Jesus came in true humanity (Docetism), so John gave the water, blood and Spirit as proofs of His humanity. 1 John 5:1
 - c. 1 John 5:6-8 – *This is the One who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. For there are three that **testify**: The Spirit and the water and the blood; and the three are in agreement.* Jesus Christ was fully human and fully God.
 - d. Who was this eyewitness who was so certain? It was John himself. He was there at the crucifixion and could verify both the water and the blood that flowed from Jesus’ punctured human body. Claiming Christ was merely a **phantom** or apparition was considered blasphemous from John’s perspective. 1 John 4:1-2
5. John 19:36 – *For these things came to pass to fulfill the Scripture, “Not a bone of Him shall be broken.”* Christ’s bones not being broken is important because it fulfilled Hebrew scriptures. In the Old Testament, Psalm 34:20 predicted the following concerning the Messiah: “*He keeps all his bones, not one of them is **broken**.*”
 - a. This detail about Jesus’ bones not being broken is significant, because when you consider how Jesus was put to death you might expect many broken bones, but Jesus’ bones remained **intact**.
 - b. This parallels the sacrificial death of animal victims in the Old Testament, whose bodies were not shattered and torn apart as in pagan religions, but whose flesh (neck) was cut instead in a way that allowed the blood to flow freely and the animal to bleed out. Exodus 12:46, Numbers 9:12, Hebrews 9:7

6. John 19:37 – *And again another Scripture says, “they shall look on Him whom they pierced.”* Here is another mention of Zechariah 12:10 that predicted people would **gaze** at the one they had stabbed or pierced. This scripture came true.
7. John 19:38 – *After these things Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but a secret one for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate granted permission. So, he came and took away His body.* Joseph of Arimathea was a member of the Sanhedrin who up until now had remained a **secret** believer in Christ.
8. John 19:39 – *Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a **hundred** pounds weight.* This exorbitant amount of costly spices showed Nicodemus’ love for the Lord. Exodus 30:23, Psalm 45:8, John 7:50-52
9. John 19:40 – *So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen wrappings with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.* Together these two **wealthy** men wrapped Jesus’ lifeless body with strips of linen cloth drenched with fragrant spices. This was the common practice of the Jewish people when they buried their dead.
 - a. This was in fulfilment of Isaiah 53:9 which says, “*His **grave** was assigned with wicked men, yet He was with a rich man in His death, because He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in His mouth.*”
 - b. Contrary to first century heresies, Jesus’ lifeless human body was **real**. Joseph and Nicodemus handled Him and prepared Him for burial. However, Jesus wouldn’t make use of these preparations for very long!
10. 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.* Near the site of the cross was a **brand-new** tomb freshly carved out of the rocks. In those days, only wealthy people were buried in these types of tombs. This tomb was in a garden. John 20:15
11. John 19:42 – *Therefore because of the Jewish day of preparation, since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there.* Nicodemus and Joseph had to hurry to get Jesus buried before the Sabbath; therefore, they placed His body in a nearby tomb. However, unknown to them, this would only be a **temporary** burial.

XXIII. John 20:1-21:25 – Jesus’ resurrection appearances

A. John 20:1-10 – The tomb is empty

1. John 20:1 – *Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came early to the tomb, while it was still dark, and saw the stone already taken away from the tomb.* Very early Sunday morning, right after the Sabbath, some women came to the tomb. Scripture does not say how many, it just emphasizes that it was **women** who came first. Luke 24:1, 10
 - a. From scripture, we see that many women followed Jesus. They were Jesus’ **disciples**, as shown by the fact that they called Him Rabbi and contributed in various ways to His ministry. Some of these women had witnessed Jesus’ crucifixion (Mark 15:40-41) and now came to anoint His body with burial spices.

- b. The women were amazed when they saw the *large* (Mark 16:4) **stone** removed from the entrance of Jesus' tomb. They had expected to find the tomb closed. Matthew 27:59-60, 66; 28:1-2; Mark 16:1-4, 15:46; Luke 8:2-3, 24:1-2, 10
2. John 20:2 – *So 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."* In her deep grief, Mary Magdalene thought someone had removed or **stolen** Jesus' body. Matthew 27:62-64
- a. Since there were other women with Mary Magdalene and other disciples with Peter (Mark 16:7), it is interesting that John mentioned **Mary** and Peter specifically. Mary Magdalene was the demon-possessed woman whom Jesus had healed (Mark 16:7-9) and Peter was the disciple who had recently denied Jesus three times (Mat. 27:56).
- b. As he did numerous other times throughout his Gospel account, John referred to himself in this verse as the *disciple whom Jesus **loved***. John 13:23; 19:26; 21:7, 20, 24
3. John 20:3-4 – *So Peter and the other disciple went forth, and they were going to the tomb. The two were running together; and the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first... Upon hearing Mary's report of the open tomb, Peter and John ran to see. John **outran** Peter.*
4. John 2:5 – *And stooping and looking in, he saw the linen wrappings lying there; but he did not go in.* John got to the tomb first. John **saw** the situation before him.
- a. The fact that he had to stoop down to see inside suggests that the tomb opening may not have been very large. When John looked, he saw the linen **cloths** lying there.
- b. Although the text does not specifically say, it is likely the cloths were lying in the shape of a **body**. Jesus' glorified body likely passed right through the linen wraps.
5. John 20:6 – *And so Simon Peter also came, following him, and entered the tomb; and he saw the linen wrappings lying there. Peter was **perplexed** with all he saw.* Luke 24:12
- a. The Greek word for *saw* in this verse means to stare or **gaze**, to discern. It is stronger than the word for *looked* in the previous verse.
- b. John *looked* into the tomb, but Peter entered the tomb and studied the wrappings, trying to **discern** their meaning. Peter noticed something else.
6. John 20:7 – *...and the face-cloth which had been on His head, not lying with the linen wrappings, but rolled up in a **place** by itself.* This was not the scene of a body-snatching.
- a. If Jesus' body had been taken as Mary reasoned, the linen strips would most likely also have been **missing**. With guards outside the tomb, no robber would have taken the time to unwrap the body.
- b. Also, we note the care with which the cloth used to cover His face was placed. It was by itself and neatly **folded**, not what you'd expect in the case of a grave robbers.

7. John 20:8 – *So the other disciple who had first come to the tomb then also entered, and he saw and believed.* Upon processing this information, John now saw EIDON with understanding, and then he believed that Jesus was truly **alive** from the dead.
 - a. The word for *saw* in this verse speaks of internal perception or knowledge. When John eventually went inside, he saw the evidence and believed. He saw and believed Jesus had **risen** from the dead.
 - b. This is not speaking of John’s faith for salvation. According to Jesus, other than Judas, all the disciples were already saved by faith (Jn. 13:10-11). However, as the disciples’ understanding grew, their faith progressively solidified and **increased**.
8. John 20:9 – *For as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead.* No one can believe what they do not **understand**. Romans 10:17 says, “*So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*”
 - a. Even though Jesus’ resurrection was prophesied in the Old Testament and Jesus had **told** them on more than one occasion that He would die and rise again on the third day, the disciples had not put it all together. Psalm 2:6-8, 16:10; Isaiah 53:10-12; Hosea 6:2; Jonah 1:17; Matthew 16:21-22; Mark 9:9-10, 31-32
 - b. The events surrounding Jesus’ crucifixion plunged the disciples into a rollercoaster of **emotions**. If they had understood the Old Testament better and paid more attention to Jesus’ words, they would have been more equipped to handle current events.
 - c. For this reason, Christians need to study God’s word. Knowing God’s word keeps us **stable** in the middle of turbulent circumstances and events. Psalm 18:30-31, 119:165
9. John 20:10 – *So the disciples went away again to their own homes.* These two disciples immediately went back to the **places** where they were staying in Jerusalem. They did not stay at the tomb searching for Jesus’ corpse or looking for evidence of a robbery.

B. John 20:11-18 – Jesus’ revelation of Himself to Mary Magdalene

1. John 20:11 – *But Mary was standing outside the tomb weeping; and so, as she wept, she stooped and looked into the tomb...* Mary Magdalene was very emotional at this point, making it difficult for her to **understand** what was happening; clearly, she had not yet believed in Jesus’ resurrection. Mark 16:9-11
 - a. Apparently after telling Peter and John about the open tomb, Mary again **returned**.
 - b. Arriving at the tomb, deep sadness overwhelmed her. In her **grief**, Mary bent down and looked intently inside the opened tomb.
2. John 20:12 – *and she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been lying.* To her amazement, there were two **angels** sitting at either end of the place where Jesus’ body had lain. Very likely they were sitting at either end of Jesus’ now vacant grave cloths.

- a. This scene reminds us of the two cherubim at each end of the mercy seat. Ephesians 2:4-7 describes the great **mercy** God had on us as sinners by sending Jesus Christ.
- b. Romans 4:22-25 says that Jesus died and was raised again for our justification. Because of His death on our behalf, we will never face the **wrath** of God. John 1:16-17
3. John 20:13 – *And 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.”* Amazingly, the angels spoke to Mary. They asked her **why** she was crying.
 - a. Mary was sure someone had **taken** Jesus’ body.
 - b. The angels’ **question** should have made her stop and consider that there might be another reason His body was missing from the tomb. However, at that moment it did not enter her mind that Jesus must have risen from the dead as He had said He would.
 - c. Mary referred to Jesus as “**my Lord**.” This statement shows the type of relationship she had with Him.
4. John 20:14 – *When she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing there, and did not know that it was Jesus.* Mary was the **first** person to see Jesus after His resurrection.
 - a. Jesus did not appear first to the great or **elite** people of Jerusalem, instead he appeared to one of His most humble followers.
 - b. Why would Mary not have recognized Jesus? It is because when Jesus came back to life, He had a **glorified** body. Jesus’ new body has similarities to His earthly body but is also very different. Mark 16:12; Luke 24:28-35, 39
 - c. Jesus’ new body is not subject to the normal laws of nature. After Jesus came back to life, He could pass through walls and vanish at will. Jesus’ new body will never die nor decay. At the Rapture, all believers will receive this same **type** of upgrade; we will receive a body like Jesus received at His resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15:20, 42-53
5. John 20:15 – *Jesus said to her, “Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?” Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, “Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away.”* Jesus asked Mary the **same** question the angels asked her.
 - a. Jesus asked her why she was **crying**. He also asked her for whom she was looking. Not even for a moment did Mary think she was talking with Jesus.
 - b. Since the tomb was in a garden, Mary mistook Jesus for the groundskeeper and asked him about the **location** of Christ’s body.
6. John 20:16 – *Jesus said to her, “Mary!” She turned and said to Him in Hebrew, “Rabboni!” (which means, Teacher).* When Jesus spoke to her by **name**, she immediately recognized Him and exclaimed, “Teacher!” Mary could not believe her eyes and ears. With just one word, Jesus jolted Mary out of her sadness.

7. John 20:17 – *Jesus said to her, “Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.’”* If you lost a loved one and then he or she suddenly came back to life, you would hang on to them also and never want to let go. But Jesus had a **job** for Mary.
 - a. Jesus was not telling Mary to not touch Him, because in Matthew 28:9 we read about women holding on to Jesus’ feet and in Luke 24:39 Jesus told His startled disciples to **touch** Him. Both instances occurred after His resurrection.
 - b. Jesus just wanted Mary to move on the task at hand. She had **work** to do and so did He. He needed to be about His Father’s business. John 9:4-5
 - c. Jesus wanted Mary to take a very special message back to the disciples. The content of this message was likely **strange** to Mary. Mary was not in the Upper Room on the night of Jesus’ betrayal. Jesus taught the disciples extensively about His return to the Father.
 - d. But as soon as she told the disciples Jesus’ words, *“I ascend to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God,”* they would **remember** what He said that night. Since Mary was ignorant of that conversation, the disciples would immediately know and believe the message was truly sent from the resurrected Christ. John 14:1-3
 - e. In forty days, Jesus would indeed go to heaven where He would sit at the Father’s right hand. Here Jesus specifically said, *“My Father and your Father.”* Jesus also called the disciples, *“My brethren.”* This is because a new spiritual **relationship** was being formed.
 - f. Because of Jesus’ death and resurrection and our identification with Him, God now adopts us as His very own **children**. Therefore, now in this age after the resurrection of Christ, spiritually speaking Jesus is our brother and God is our Father. Ephesians 1:5, Romans 8:29, Hebrews 2:10-12, 1 John 3:1
8. John 20:18 – *Mary Magdalene came, announcing to the disciples, “I have seen the Lord,” and that He had said these things to her.* A woman, Mary Magdalene, was the first to see the angels, the first to see the risen Lord Jesus, and the first to be sent on a **mission**.
 - a. Magdalene was the first person commissioned to go and **tell** others of the resurrected Savior.
 - b. Those who claim Christianity is negative toward **women** have not examined the scriptures.

C. John 20:19-25 – Jesus’ first appearance to the disciples, as a group

1. John 20:19 – *So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, “Peace be with you.”* It was still the day of the resurrection. The disciples, minus Thomas, were gathered in a **room** with the doors locked.
 - a. They had reason to **fear**. Their leader had just been brutally and treacherously assassinated. Their heads were spinning. What were they to do?

- b. Suddenly, Jesus appeared among them, and according to Luke, *they were startled and frightened and thought that they were seeing a spirit* (Lk. 24:37). Jesus' greeting, "**Peace** be with you," was timely.
2. John 20:20 – *And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord.* When the disciples recovered from their **fear**, they rejoiced to see the resurrected Savior. Jesus patiently showed them the scars on His hands and side.
- a. The disciples had been told by Mary Magdalene and the other women (Matt. 28:9-11) that Jesus was alive. According to Luke 24:34 Peter had also seen Jesus (1 Cor. 15:5). At the moment Jesus appeared in the room, the two men from Emmaus were relating how they had just seen Him earlier that day as well. Even still, the disciples were **doubtful**.
- b. Luke 24:41 says that when *they still could not believe it because of their joy and amazement*, Jesus asked for some food. So, they gave Him a piece of a broiled fish and He **ate** it before them. Luke 24:13-43
- c. Even though Jesus is presently in heaven in His glorified body, He still bears the scars of His crucifixion. John wrote of Jesus in heaven as a Lamb who appears to have been slain (Rev. 5:6-13). Unbelievably, someday we will be in heaven with perfect bodies, no scars or blemishes, yet apparently Jesus will carry the **marks** of our redemption for eternity.
3. John 20:21 – *So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you."* Jesus was sent by the Father's **authority**. The Lord's commission of the disciples was similar to the Father's commission of Him. 1 Timothy 2:3-6
- a. On this very first appearance after His resurrection, Jesus already gave the disciples the Great Commission. The **Great Commission** was the subject of most of Jesus' post resurrection appearances. Matthew 28:19, Luke 24:47, Mark 16:15
- b. The message of how humanity can have peace with God through Jesus Christ is the greatest message ever told. God wants **all** people to hear the gospel and be saved. Luke 2:14; Romans 5:1, 10:14-15; Colossians 1:22; 2 Peter 3:9
- c. Amazingly, Jesus entrusted this great message to a small group of frail men who had all recently **deserted** Him in His hour of trial. Why would He choose such weak people for the building of His church?
- 1) These were **ordinary** men of ordinary means. We know that God purposefully chooses weak vessels so that His glory can be maximally displayed. 1 Corinthians 1:26-31, 15:8-10; 2 Corinthians 4:5-7; Ephesians 3:8
 - 2) However, these weak, ordinary men could have confidence because Jesus, the highest **authority** on earth, was sending them forth and He promised to be with them everywhere they went. Ephesians 1:20-23
 - 3) And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "*All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the **nations**...and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*" Matthew 28:18-20

4. John 20:22 – *And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”* Here Jesus gave God the Holy Spirit as a **temporary** gift to His disciples. The Holy Spirit would not come as a permanent gift until after Christ’s ascension. John 14:16-17, 25-26, 15:26-27, 16:7-15
 - a. Since Pentecost, whenever a person **believes**, he or she immediately, upon belief, receives the Holy Spirit as an eternal gift. John 7:39, 14:16-17; Ephesians 1:13-14
 - b. Here Jesus gave a command for the disciples to receive the Holy Spirit. The fear-filled disciples needed this temporary gift in order to **survive** the next 50 or so days before Pentecost.
5. John 20:23 – *“If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained.”* This verse does not teach that the disciples or any other **person** can eternally forgive sins. Only God gives eternal forgiveness, but we can by faith grant practical or personal forgiveness by means of the Holy Spirit. Acts 8:22, Mark 2:7
 - a. The Lord Jesus taught them that it was their responsibility to personally **forgive** those who had wronged them, just as we should do to those who hate us for the sake of Christ. This degree of lovingkindness is only possible by the power of the Holy Spirit. Matthew 6:12, 18:21-22; John 15:18-25; Ephesians 3:16
 - b. The disciples had just witnessed horrific events that could easily embitter their hearts against the national leaders of Israel and their capricious followers. If they held on to the wrongs done, they would not grant Israel forgiveness. Jesus did not want unforgiveness or **bitterness** to prevail in their hearts. Ephesians 4:31, Hebrews 12:15
6. John 20:24 – *But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.* Just as they were to grant forgiveness by faith to Israel, Thomas was called to receive the testimony of his fellow disciples by faith. Thomas wanted to **see** Jesus for himself before he would believe, but the Lord wanted him believe without seeing.
 - a. Thomas was a believer, just like the other disciples (Jn. 13:10-11), but something caused Thomas to be absent that night. We know he struggled at times with his **faith** (Jn. 11:16), as we will observe in the verse that follows.
 - b. At the very time Thomas should have been getting encouragement from being around **others**, he was absent. This was to his detriment. Hebrews 3:12-13, 10:25
7. John 20:25 – *So the other disciples were saying to him, “We have seen the Lord!” But he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”* When the disciples told Thomas that Jesus had appeared to them, he did not **believe** them.
 - a. Thomas said he would not believe it unless he himself personally saw Jesus. Thomas’ **skepticism** may sound logical, but in reality, it was a lack of faith. John 20:27
 - b. Not only had Jesus **said** He would rise again after three days, His resurrection was predicted in the Old Testament, and now the other disciples reaffirmed it.

D. John 20:26-31 – Jesus’ second appearance to the disciples, especially for Thomas

1. John 20:26 – *After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, “**Peace** be with you.”*
 - a. About a week later, the disciples were **locked** in the house again. They were present together, but this time Thomas was with them.
 - b. We don’t know where Jesus had been during that week, but suddenly, even though the doors were locked, Jesus stood in the middle of His disciples and once again greeted them with, “**Peace** be with you.”
2. John 20:27 – *Then He said to Thomas, “Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving but believing.”* Jesus singled out Thomas. Thomas was a doubting believer. Though Jesus had not been present when Thomas expressed his **doubts**, He clearly knew Thomas’ words and thoughts.
 - a. Jesus does not give up on believers who **struggle** with their faith. In fact, His nature is to leave the ninety-nine to go after the one who is hurting. Matthew 18:12
 - b. After greeting the disciples, Jesus immediately directed His conversation to Thomas. He invited Thomas to touch His hands and His side. Instead of being impatient with him, Jesus gave Thomas sufficient **evidence** to help his unbelief. Mark 9:24
 - c. Ever since Jesus rose from the dead, the gospel we preach demands faith in Christ’s resurrection. Thomas could never have **testified** about Christ if he had continued doubting the resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15:12-19
3. John 20:28 – *Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!”* The text does not indicate that Thomas touched the Lord. It seems that upon seeing the Lord, he instantly believed. Thomas voiced that he believed Jesus was both God and **Lord**. Jesus never countered what Thomas said. Jesus did not deny that He was God.
 - a. In the previous verse, Jesus basically told Thomas, “Stop doubting and believe.” We all struggle with doubts sometimes, especially in the face of unexpected **illness** or death. But upon seeing Jesus and hearing His loving words, Thomas immediately believed.
 - b. We often face the same dilemma Thomas faced. Because we do not see the Lord Jesus with our eyes, our faith is easily challenged. However, we are called to simply believe God’s written **word** without first seeing anything. Psalm 138:2b
 - c. Truly we all do one or the other: we either believe or we do not believe. If you find yourself in disbelief, Jesus would simply say to you, “**Trust Me.**” Psalm 56:3-4
4. John 20:29 – *Jesus said to him, “Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed.”* Jesus told Thomas that those who believe based only on the message of God’s Word without physical evidence are **blessed**.

- a. Jesus was not disappointed that Thomas believed; He was disappointed that Thomas believed only after seeing. Jesus added that people who believe **without** seeing are more greatly blessed than those who must have viewable evidence. Romans 8:24; 2 Corinthians 4:18, 5:7
 - b. Believing without seeing is counterintuitive, but once you do believe God's word and His promises, you can experience His extraordinary **peace**. Philippians 4:6-7
 - c. Faith is not an irrational, contrary-to-evidence response; it is a rational response based on biblical **truth**. Faith is not an irrational leap into the darkness; it is the reasonable acceptance of the scriptures as reliable evidence. Hebrews 11:1, 13
 - d. Children readily believe without seeing; therefore, we should **teach** them the truth while they are young. Also, for this very reason, it is appalling to cause a child not to believe. Deuteronomy 4:9, Matthew 18:6, Ephesians 6:4
5. John 20:30 – *Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book...* In light of Thomas' unbelief, John added an important **commentary**.
- a. One of the reasons Jesus performed the sign miracles recorded in the Gospel of John was so that people could read and believe. John wanted faith in our Lord Jesus Christ to be substantiated with actual proofs and **facts**. This is one of the major reasons he wrote this book. We cannot go back in time and watch video footage of what happened.
 - b. Because we were not physically present when these things happened, we must believe what is written or else reject it altogether. According to John, we have the actual words and works of Jesus **recorded**. These words have remained intact for two thousand years and are the basis and foundation of our faith today.
 - c. These are credible evidence that allow us to see with our mind's eye and believe. If John would have had an eternity to write, he could have included many more miracles and signs that would likely help us to believe even more readily. But the Holy Spirit had him pen these **specific** events for our solid faith and confidence.
 - d. John could have provided more evidence of Jesus' glory as Messiah, but he chose to arrange his message around the following eight specific signs. Remember that a sign is a special miracle that points to the **glory** of Christ's person and work.
 - 1) **#1 – The wedding at Cana**: Since wine making is normally a very slow process, this miracle defied **time** because this amazing wine was created instantly. John 2:11 says, *"This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him."* John 2:1-11
 - 2) **#2 – Healing the official's son**: Since the dying child was far away, this was a miracle defied **distance** and the need for Jesus to be present to in order to perform it. John 4:54 says, *"This is again a second sign that Jesus performed when He had come out of Judea into Galilee."* John 4:46-54

- 3) #3 – **Healing the invalid at the Pool of Bethesda:** Since the individual who was healed never asked Jesus for healing or even showed any signs of faith, this miracle defied the common belief that the sick person must **believe** in order to be healed. John 5:1-15
 - 4) #4 – **Feeding the multitude:** Out of a tiny meal, Jesus made an abundance of food. This was a **creation** miracle. *Therefore, when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, “This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world.”* John 6:1-14
 - 5) #5 – **Walking on water:** By walking on top of water, Jesus showed He could defy the laws of **nature**, something no other human can do. John 6:15-21
 - 6) #6 – **Healing the man born blind:** In giving sight to a person born blind, Jesus showed His incredible **power** to do the impossible. John 9:16a says, *“Therefore some of the Pharisees were saying, “This man is not from God...” But others were saying, “How can a man who is a sinner perform such signs?”* John 9:1-41
 - 7) #7 – **The restoration of Lazarus to Life:** The resurrection of Lazarus decaying corpse is totally amazing and shows Jesus power over **death**. John 11:47 says, *“Therefore the chief priests and the Pharisees convened a council, and were saying, “What are we doing? For this man is performing many signs.”* John 11:1-44.
 - 8) #8 – **The resurrection of Christ, the ultimate sign:** John 20:30-31a says, *“Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book, but these have been written so that you may believe...”* This was a sign done by the Father to prove Jesus is the **Christ**. Matthew 12:29
6. John 20:31 – *“...but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.”* John provided these signs as evidence so people would believe in Jesus as Messiah and be **saved**.
- a. Why did the Holy Spirit have John **record** this information? It was specifically so that you, the reader, the student, the listener, might believe two important truths. 2 Peter 1:18-21
 - 1) The first truth is that Jesus is the Christ, or Messiah, the one who was promised long ago, immediately after the fall of man in the garden (Gen.3:15). In the mind of God, He was sacrificed before the world began (1 Pet. 1:19-20). He is the one whom the prophets foretold was coming. This is a primary **reason** this book was written.
 - 2) A second reason John wrote his Gospel was so we would know Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is God become **flesh**. He is the unique man of the universe: Jesus is both God and man at the very same time.
 - b. The desired outcome of knowing these two truths, that Jesus is both Messiah and the Son of God, is that you will come to have **eternal** life by believing in His name.

E. John 21:1-25 – Jesus’ third appearance to the disciples, especially for Peter

1. John 21:1a – *After these things...* The events of this chapter detail the disciples’ third encounter with Christ after His resurrection. In this encounter, Christ addressed the issue of their potential return to the **mundane** things of life rather than to full involvement in what He had called them to do.
 - a. This chapter seems to be somewhat of an epilogue to the book. It **answers** important questions that might otherwise remain unclear. In this chapter, John answered the question about the restoration of Peter, who was a very important figure in the infant church. John also quelled a myth about him not dying before Christ’s return.
 - b. A disciple of Christ can lose his or her focus. Many who have given themselves to fulltime service have returned to their former lives when things got hard. This chapter shows that God does not give up on disciples who lose their focus. Rather he **pursues** them and “calls” them again, so to speak. Romans 11:29
2. John 21:1b – *...Jesus manifested Himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias, and He manifested Himself in this way.* Here’s how Jesus **revealed** Himself to His disciples for a third time in the Gospel of John. There were seven disciples involved in this event.
 - a. In Matthew 28:7 Jesus promised to **meet** the disciples in Galilee saying, “Go quickly and tell His disciples that He has risen from the dead; and behold, He is going ahead of you into Galilee, there you will see Him; behold, I have told you.”
 - b. John is the only Gospel writer who referred to the Sea of Galilee as the Sea of Tiberias. This name was more commonly used in the latter half of the first century AD, which adds credence to a **late** dating of the book of John (circa AD 95).
3. John 21:2 – *Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together.* Although there were seven disciples who saw Jesus on this occasion, we know the **identity** of only five.
4. John 21:3 – *Simon Peter said to them, “I am going fishing.” They said to him, “We will also come with you.” They went out and got into the boat; and that night they caught nothing.* Note that Peter decided to go fishing **after** Jesus told the disciples in John 20:21, in his first post-resurrection appearance, “As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.”
 - a. Sadly, even after Jesus had called Peter away from his former life, he went **back** to fishing. Matthew 4:19, Mark 1:17
 - b. The other disciples followed Peter’s **example**. They all got into a boat and fished all night. But these seasoned fishermen did not catch one fish all night long.
5. John 21:4 – *But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus.* First thing in the morning, as the sun was coming up, the disciples saw a man on the shore, whom they did not recognize. They were unaware that the **light** of the world, Jesus Christ, was standing on the beach.

6. John 21:5 – *So Jesus said to them, “Children, you do not have any fish, do you?” They answered Him, “No.”* Jesus called out to them from the shore. He called them **children** and He asked them a common question.
7. John 21:6 – *And He said to them, “Cast the net on the right-hand side of the boat and you will find a catch.”* So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish. Even though they did not yet recognize Jesus, for some reason they **obeyed** His command and ended up catching a miraculously large amount of fish.
8. John 21:7a – *Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, “It is the **Lord**.”* John referred to himself as the disciple Jesus loved, when he realized that it was Jesus standing there on the shore and told Peter.
9. John 21:7b – *...So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put his outer garment on (for he was stripped for work), and threw himself into the sea.* Without hesitation, Peter abandoned everyone, **jumped** into the water and swam to shore.
10. John 21:8 – *But the other disciples came in the little boat, for they were not far from the land, but about one hundred yards away, dragging the net **full** of fish.* There were so many fish that instead of trying to put them into the boat they simply drug the full net ashore.
11. John 21:9 – *So when they got out on the land, they saw a charcoal fire already laid and fish placed on it, and bread.* So, when they arrived at the bank, they saw that the “man” who had beckoned to them was **cooking** fish on a charcoal fire.
 - a. The only other time a **charcoal** fire is mentioned in the Bible is the night Peter denied Jesus. This detail was likely included as a reminder of the occasion of Peter’s greatest failure. John 18:18
 - b. Jesus also had bread there for them. This was a kind gesture for men who had worked all night long. Instead of reprimanding the disciples for going back to fishing, Jesus **fed** them a hearty meal. This reminds us of 1 Kings 19 where the angel fed Elijah when he was discouraged and then sent him on another mission.
12. John 21:10 – *Jesus said to them, “Bring some of the fish which you have now caught.”* In his desire to please the Lord, Peter spontaneously and singlehandedly **drug** ashore the full net of fish. It’s interesting that although Jesus was already cooking fish, He asked the disciples to bring some of the fish they caught.
13. John 21:11 – *Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land, full of large fish, a hundred and fifty-three; and although there were so many, the net was not torn.* Peter singlehandedly pulled the net in. There were a 153 fish in all, and they were all big. If each fish weighed just three pounds (1.5Kg), the entire **catch** would have weighed nearly 500 pounds (230Kg).
14. John 21:12 – *Jesus said to them, “Come and have breakfast.”* None of the disciples ventured to question Him, “Who are You?” knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus invited them to come and enjoy a hot meal. Jesus **blessed** them in this way. John 1:39, 7:37

- a. After Jesus' resurrection, He was not **easily** recognized. Mary Magdalene recognized Him when He said her name, and the disciples on the road to Emmaus recognized Him when he prayed and broke bread for a meal. Mark 16:12; Luke 24:30-31, 35; John 20:16
 - b. While they were eating, no one asked Him who He was. This is interesting. Even though they knew He was Jesus, after the resurrection everyone showed greater **respect** for Him. They were probably more aware of His deity and more fully conscious of the incredible sacrifice He made for mankind's sin.
15. John 21:13 – *Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and the fish likewise.* True to His nature, Jesus lovingly **served** them. Matthew 20:27-28, John 13:12-16, Philippians 2:4
16. John 12:14 – *This is now the third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after He was raised from the dead.* Jesus' third manifestation to the disciples was significant on several levels. **Peter** was the focus. Although Jesus appeared to individuals after the resurrection, this was the third time He appeared to His disciples as a group. John 20:19-29
- a. In John 1:41 Peter's first response to being told Jesus was Messiah was to go see Him. Here in John 21:7 he again went immediately to **see** Jesus.
 - b. Earlier in Luke 5:1-11, Peter received a **call** to follow the Lord after a miraculous catch of fish. Here again in John 21:1-11, Christ called him to follow Him after a miraculous catch.
 - c. In John 18:18, Peter's failure in Christ's service was as he stood by a charcoal fire. Here, in John 21:9 Peter's restoration to service was once again by a charcoal **fire**.
 - d. In John 6:68, after a meal that included fish and bread, Peter confessed Jesus as the source of eternal life. Here in John 21:9-12, Peter was once again in the presence of the resurrected Christ, eating fish and bread. Eating together symbolizes **fellowship**. Revelation 3:20
 - e. Conclusion: This meal and Peter's recommissioning by the Lord indicated Peter's public **restoration** to fellowship and service.
17. John 21:15a – *So when they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?"* Now the scene changes to a **conversation** specifically between Jesus and Peter. During Jesus' trial, Peter denied Christ three times and now Peter was back to living his old manner of life.
- a. In this narrative Peter and the others had been out all night and caught nothing. Then Jesus appeared on the shore. Jesus wanted to **talk** to Peter, but first He gave Peter and those with him one of the largest catch of fish they had probably seen in a very long time, if ever. Then He fed them all a hearty breakfast.
 - b. Finally, when Peter's stomach was full, Jesus had a question for him. Notice that Jesus **initiated** this conversation with Peter. Jesus had not given up on Peter. He loved him and wanted to include him in His service.

- c. He asked Peter, “*Simon, son of John (Jonas KJV = Jonah), do you love Me more than these?*” Jesus did not say, as some **speculate**, “Do you love me more than these other disciples do?” That kind of comparison is not likely (2 Cor. 10:12). In fact, in this same passage, in verses 20-22, Jesus told Peter not to meddle in other’s affairs.
- d. The best way to understand this question is to look at the greater context. Earlier Jesus had told the disciples He was sending them out as the Father had sent Him (Jn.20:21), but Peter, like Jonah of old, was going in the **opposite** direction of God’s call.
- 1) Peter may have gone back to fishing for several **reasons**. He may have felt he was too much of a failure for God to use, or he may not have wanted to face imminent persecution, or maybe he simply went back to what was familiar. Fishing is what he had done all his life until three years before when Jesus first called him.
 - 2) Whatever the case, since the night of the Upper Room, Peter had tended to function in his **own** strength, starting with not wanting Jesus to wash his feet.
 - 3) Notice Jesus here used his **old** name, Simon. In Luke 22:31-32, Jesus used the same name when He told Peter, “*Simon, Simon... Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat.*” Jesus knew Peter would deny Him, but Peter claimed he was ready to die with Jesus; nevertheless, that very night he sadly denied Jesus three times.
- e. By questioning Peter, Jesus sought to restore him to fellowship and to his calling. **Questions** are a great way to help people sort out their motives. Jesus often used them. When Jesus asked Peter, “*Do you love me more than these?*” He was referring to the net full of fish. Jesus was in no way encouraging comparison with the other disciples.
18. John 21:15b – *...He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Tend My lambs.”* Jesus asked Peter if he *loved* AGAPAO Him more than the huge catch of fish onshore. AGAPE love is **unconditional** love. Peter responded to Jesus question with, “Yes, Lord, I PHILEO love you.” PHILEO love is a fellowship type love, comparable to “I like you.”
- a. Peter was somewhat evasive in His response to Jesus. When he answered Jesus, Peter used a weaker word for love than Jesus used. He basically said, “You know I **like** you.” Despite his response, Jesus replied with the command: “Feed my lambs.”
 - 1) Peter had been so certain he would follow Jesus until **death** (Mt. 26:33, Mk. 14:29), but sadly he failed miserably. Failure easily results when we know God has called us to an important task, but we set out to do it in our own strength. John 15:4-5
 - 2) Later when we face failure, we want to give up. That place of weakness is ironically just where God wants us to be. Those are the times when we can finally **hear** His voice and learn to do His work in His way, in His timing and in His strength.
 - b. Peter had followed Jesus and Jesus had taught him to fish for people. Now Jesus wanted Peter to **care** for His soon-to-be-born-again flock of lambs. Thousands of newborn believers would very soon be added to the church. This fledgling flock of lambs would need tender feeding and care. Acts 2:41, 47; 4:4; 1 Peter 5:1-3

19. John 21:16 – *He said to him again a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love Me?” He said to Him, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” He said to him, “Shepherd My sheep.”* **Again**, the Lord asked Peter about his love AGAPAO for Him. Peter’s again responded with, “Yes Lord, You know I like (PHILEO) You.”
- This time Jesus told Peter, “Be a shepherd of my **entire** flock.”
 - Jesus used the verb *shepherd* (POIMAINO, to **shepherd** or guide a flock) to emphasize the need for Peter to guide Christ’s entire flock into truth through protecting and feeding both young (*lambs*) and maturing believers (*sheep*). Psalm 23:1-3, Acts 20:29-31
 - Jesus commanded Peter to **demonstrate** his love by teaching foundational truths that would establish the flock in fruitful service. John 14:15, 15:10
20. John 21:17 – *He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, 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, “Tend My sheep.”* The reason Jesus asked Peter three times is likely because Peter denied Him **three** times.
- This third time Jesus asked, “Simon, do you like PHILEO me?” The Lord shifted to Peter’s word for love PHILEO to emphasize the priority of His command (to shepherd the flock) rather than the quality of Peter’s love. This third time of questioning deeply **troubled** Peter, maybe because it painfully reminded him of his three denials of Christ.
 - Peter said something significant here. He affirmed that as God, Jesus knows everything; therefore, Jesus knew Peter cared for Him. To which Jesus responded, “**Tend My sheep.**”
 - By using the term *tend* BOSKO in the present tense, imperative mood, and active voice, the Lord emphasized that Peter must reflect Christ’s love to the flock immediately, willingly, and **actively** through careful communication of truth and loving care. Jeremiah 3:15, 23:4
 - We now know the flock to which Jesus was referring was going to become the **church** of Jesus Christ. Acts 20:28, Ephesians 4:11-14
 - In 1 Peter 5:1-3, an older and more mature Peter encouraged the elders of the church saying, “*as your fellow elder...**shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, ...nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock.***”
21. John 21:18 – *“Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were younger, you used to gird yourself and walk wherever you wished; but when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands and someone else will gird you, and bring you where you do not wish to go.”* Years later, after Peter had learned to follow Christ, he was **crucified** upside down in Rome. Psalm 139:16
- Jesus guaranteed Peter he would **suffer** in the future. Earlier Peter had said he would die for Christ, and now Jesus assured him that that would indeed be the case.
2 Timothy 3:12

- b. This is interesting because Peter had said he would die for Jesus, but then he denied Him three times. Now Jesus asked him three times if he loved Him, as if **undoing** those denials, and then Jesus added he would indeed suffer for Him.
- c. Jesus told Peter that as a young man he did whatever he **wanted** to do. That in fact is where Peter had been the last 12 hours, doing what he wanted to do, going fishing.
- d. Although Peter had boldly claimed he would die for Christ, in truth he did not really want to suffer, as proved by his three denials of Christ. But Jesus was now calling Peter to maturity, to the point where eventually, as an old man, he would hold out his hands to willingly be **martyred**. John 13:37
22. John 21:19 – *Now this He said, signifying by what kind of death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, “Follow Me!”* Peter would die for Christ after all, but only after he first learned to **follow** Christ.
- a. Peter ministered for about 30 years after the resurrection and then he was martyred in Rome by **Nero** in about AD 67. Roman historian Eusebius said Peter was crucified upside down at Peter’s own request.
- b. The verb *follow* as used here by Jesus is in the present tense, active voice, imperative mood. As Christ stood up to walk away, He commanded Peter to immediately, willingly and resolutely follow Him. Peter had a **choice**. He could stay with the boat and the great catch of fish or willingly follow Jesus Christ. What would it be? What did he love most?
- c. As He walked **away** from the seashore, the fish and the nets, Jesus told Peter, “You, follow Me.” We can see from this context that that’s exactly what Peter did. Peter was never again a fisherman. On that very day, he became a shepherd.
23. John 21:20 – *Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them; the one who also had leaned back on His bosom at the supper and said, “Lord, who is the one who betrays You?”* Peter may have inquired about John to **divert** the focus from himself.
- a. As they walked away, Peter saw that John was also following. It is of note that John always spoke of himself in the 3rd person. This was likely to turn the spotlight away from him. He also often described himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved. John seemed **secure** in Christ’s love and without the need of the praises of man. John 3:29-31
- b. John’s Gospel, as well as his first epistle, focuses a lot on love and **fellowship**. Here John added that he was the one who asked Jesus about the betrayer at the last supper.
24. John 21:21 – *So Peter seeing him said to Jesus, “Lord, and what about this man?”* According to tradition, John was the only apostle to die of **natural** causes. He died around AD 100, having lived well into his nineties.
- a. Since Peter was predicted to die as a martyr, he was **curious** to know what would happen to John. Therefore, he asked this question of the Lord.
- b. Although most of us would have been tempted to ask the same question, John’s life was not Peter’s **concern**.

25. John 21:22 – *Jesus said to him, “If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow Me!”* Jesus rebuked Peter. Peter needed to focus on his **own** life. Now that Peter was restored to fellowship, Jesus simply commanded Peter to focus on following Him. Galatians 6:4
- a. This is an appropriate rebuke for all of us. We often spend time and energy fretting over the next person and their relationship with the Lord, when that in reality is not our **business**.
 - b. Romans 14:4 says, *“Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will **stand**, for the Lord is able to make him stand.”*
26. John 21:23 – *Therefore this saying went out among the brethren that that disciple would not die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but only, “If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?”* Because of this statement, the **rumor** spread that Jesus had predicted that John would be alive until Christ returned.
- a. John wanted to **clarify** here that that was not what Jesus had said. Jesus only told Peter to mind his own business and not worry about John.
 - b. We should note the use of the word **brethren** in this context. This term developed over time as a Church Age description for believers in Christ, slowly replacing the term disciples. This is another clue to the late dating of this Gospel (circa AD 95).
27. John 21:24 – *This is the disciple who is testifying to these things and wrote these things, and we know that his testimony is true.* John stated here that he was the **author** of this book. John wrote what he saw, and he wrote the truth.
- a. 1 John 1:1-2 – *What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the Word of Life— and the life was manifested, and we have seen and **testify** and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us.*
 - b. John provided a trustworthy, or **legal**, testimony MARTUREO of the life and times of Jesus the Christ.
28. John 21:25 – *And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written.* Jesus performed many other miracles and taught often. We have only a small **portion** of His life preserved for us in God's infallible Word.
- a. The NET Bible reads: *There are **many** other things that Jesus did. If every one of them were written down, I suppose the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.*
 - b. This verse tells us that John was very **selective** in the events he included in his account. We will have to wait until eternity to learn about all the many other things Jesus did.

- c. Maybe heaven hosts a **library** filled with books containing accounts of all that Jesus did while He was here on earth. Do you have your library card in hand? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved. Acts 16:30-31