

John

BIBLE STUDY GUIDES



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ISBN: 1-930264-15-1

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Suggestions for Bible Study

READ CAREFULLY

Observation is the most basic step in Bible study. Misinterpretation is often the result of careless reading. Only when we know what the passage says can we interpret what it means. Before each lesson, read the passage closely. Read it a few times until you become familiar with it. Observe words, phrases, paragraph structure, relationships, emphases, as well as anything that seems unusual. In doing so, you will discover things that you could never have if you read it casually.

USE A PENCIL

Keep your pen or pencil busy by recording your observations and thoughts as you go through the passage. Mark key words and phrases. Take note of the relationship between words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs. Jotting your observations down on paper helps you focus your mind on the Bible text and leaves a much deeper impression on your mind. Your notes will also become valuable reference material the next time you come back to the passage.

STUDY WITH PRAYER

“No one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God” (1 Cor 2:11). The guidance of the Holy Spirit is key to understanding and being inspired by God’s word. Pray everyday and ask God to reveal to you the truth in His words. Whenever you come across a difficult passage, rely on the Holy Spirit by putting it in your prayer. Through your life of prayer, God will open your inner eyes to know His will and give you the strength to put it into practice.

LET THE WORD SPEAK TO YOU

Bible study is not an intellectual exercise. Its aim is to change the reader in his thoughts, behavior, and lifestyle to conform to God’s will. The final goal of every Bible study is to apply God’s word in our lives. God reveals His will to the humble. So always approach the Bible with an attitude to be taught and corrected. When you are willing to let God’s word be a mirror to reflect your shortcomings and are determined to carry out His command, your Bible study will have achieved its intended purpose.

Using this Guide

HANDS ON APPROACH

This guide is not meant to be your coffee-table reading. Use it as a tool to make your study or discussion more effective. Make use of the spaces in the lessons to record your thoughts and observations.

OUTLINE

One of the exercises under the section “observation” is to record an outline of the passage. Spend time to work on this important exercise because it helps you get the big picture of the entire passage as well as see the relationship between the parts. It also trains you to read the passage carefully and thoughtfully. Try to write the outline without copying the headings from your Bible. Each entry in the outline should accurately reflect the main idea of the paragraph.

KEY WORDS

Key words are words that give meaning to the text or are related to the main idea. Key words are often repeated to mark emphasis. Key words tell you about who, what, when, where, why, or how. Since there are no right or wrong key words, your list may be different from the one provided at the end of the book.

LENGTH OF LESSON

Although the lessons are also designed for group Bible study, sometimes a lesson may be too long for a study session. If this happens, the Bible study leader who began the lesson should inform the next leader where the passage was left off and the discussion results from the first study.

SUGGESTED ANSWERS




The end of this book contains suggested answers that serve as pointers when you need help. Since many of the questions do not have standard answers, use the answers provided only as reference. With these suggested answers as a starting point, you should be able to come up with more complete answers on your own.

PREPARING FOR GROUP BIBLE STUDIES

Before leading a group Bible study, you should go through the lesson in advance to get a good understanding of the material. Then select questions based on the amount of time you have for discussion and the group’s size, makeup, level of biblical knowledge, etc. Try to also design additional application questions that you think would suit the particular needs of the group.

THE INDUCTIVE METHOD

The inductive approach is an effective way to study the Bible. It follows 3 basic steps: observation, interpretation, and application.

-  **Observation** — *What did God say? How did He say it?* This type of questions helps you look at the Bible passage carefully and equips you for a sound interpretation.
-  **Interpretation** — *What does it mean?* When answering this type of questions, let the Bible interpret itself whenever possible. Look at the immediate context (the surrounding verses) as well as the broader context (the surrounding chapters and the whole Bible) to see the intended meaning. Also ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten your heart to know the spiritual things that God wants to convey to you.
-  **Application** — *How can I put this into practice?* Application questions encourage you to think about what God is teaching you personally through your study. What are His commands? What shortcomings in you is He pointing out? What message of encouragement does He have for you today? It is in examining your relationship with God and acting out God’s word that the words of the Bible can truly come to life.

Because the order of the questions in this guide generally follows the order of the Bible text, we did not group the questions according to the 3 steps mentioned above. Instead, we have used symbols to identify the type of question. By helping you become acquainted with these 3 basic types of questions, we hope that you will acquire the ability to develop meaningful questions for future personal studies as well as group discussions.

REFERENCES

The notation for citations follows this format: 2/3:134. The number before the slash refers to the number on the list of references at the end of this book. The number immediately after the slash, if applicable, represents the volume number, and the last number indicates the page number.

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN

1 Jesus, the Son of God

AUTHOR

According to John 21:20–24, the author of the Gospel is “the disciple whom Jesus loved.” He is mentioned in several scenes: the last supper (13:23–25); Jesus’ crucifixion (19:26–27); running to Jesus’ tomb (20:1–10); and Jesus’ appearance to the disciples in Galilee (21:7, 20–24). His role as a direct witness is particularly important to the book. Despite the remarkable description, “the disciple whom Jesus loved,” the disciple remains anonymous. The book’s title, “John,” was derived from the testimony of the early church fathers.

RECIPIENT

The author simply addresses the readers as “you” (plural; 20:31), without specifying who they are. But we may infer from certain observations something about the intended readers. For example, the author translates some Hebrew or Aramaic terms into Greek (1:38, 41; 9:7; 19:13, 17) and provides a brief explanation about a particular Jewish custom (2:6; 19:40). These are indications that the author is reaching out to a wider audience beyond the Jewish circles.

DATE

Probably between A.D. 70 and 100.

PURPOSE/OCCASION

The author makes it explicit what his purpose is for writing this book. It is twofold: 1) “that you may believe Jesus is the

Christ, the Son of God;” and 2) “that believing, you may have life in [Jesus’] name” (20:31).

UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS

1. Jesus’ origin from above as central to the approach of the Gospel.
2. Presentation of key themes that are not found or are not as prominent in the other gospels, such as the Word, signs, Jesus’ relationship to the Father, glory, Jesus’ hour, “I AM,” truth, etc.
3. Intimate connection between Jesus’ works and the deeper spiritual truths behind them.
4. Jesus’ personal interaction with specific individuals (e.g. Nathanael, Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, the man born blind, etc.).
5. Inclusion of important events not included in the Synoptic Gospels, such as the cleansing of the temple early on in Jesus’ ministry, the raising of Lazarus from the dead, and Jesus’ washing of the disciples’ feet; as well as exclusion of some significant events, such as the transfiguration and the institution of the Lord’s supper (Holy Communion).
6. Insights on the sacraments and the Holy Spirit, all of which are fundamental to the beliefs of the True Jesus Church on salvation.

CENTRAL VERSE

“But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name” (20:31).

SURVEY

Go through the entire book briefly for an overview and record descriptive headings in Chart B.

One approach to seeing the layout of the entire Gospel is to view the book according to the phases of Jesus' mission to the world as He described in 16:28:

1. "I came forth from the Father"
The prologue to the book (1:1–18) introduces the Lord Jesus as the Word who had become flesh. He was with God, and was God Himself. As the only begotten who is in the bosom of the Father, He came to dwell among us in order to declare the Father to us.
2. "And have come into the world."
Starting from 1:19, the book begins to narrate the ministry of Jesus in the world by first introducing the testimony of John the Baptist. This portion of the Gospel (1:19–12:50) is often known as the "book of Jesus' signs," since the many signs the Lord performed and the truths they convey form the core of this part of the book. Near the end, Jesus gave a summary of His purpose for coming into the world: "I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness" (12:46).
3. "Again, I leave the world"
"Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father..." (13:1). This weighty introduction in 13:1 marks the transition from Jesus' ministry to the public to His final moments with His disciples, leading up to His passion, death, and burial. Therefore, this latter part of the Gospel has been aptly called the "book of Jesus' glory" or "the book of Jesus' hour." It concentrates on the hour in which Jesus was to be glorified through the cross.
4. "And go to the Father."
The final two chapters of the Gospel record events

following the Lord's resurrection, particularly His appearances to Mary and His disciples. Jesus bid Mary to tell the disciples, "I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God" (20:17). Jesus' ascension into glory underlies the significance of His post-resurrection appearances. Having completed His work in the world, and before returning to His Father, Jesus prepared the disciples for the commission that the church would carry out on His behalf.

THEMES

Jesus, the Christ and the Son of God

The author sums up the purpose of the book with the words "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (20:31). Jesus' identity as the Anointed of God sent into the world stands as the center of the entire gospel. He declared Himself as the Son of God whom the Father loves but gives to the world (3:16–18; 5:20; 10:36; 11:4). The Father has given Him all authority, especially the authority to grant eternal life, so that whoever believes in the Son should have life (5:21, 24; 13:3; 17:2). Being the only begotten of the Father, Jesus is the only way to the Father and the only one who can fully reveal the Father (1:18; 14:6, 9). He is one with the Father (10:30; 14:11, 20; 17:21, 22). He speaks and does whatever He has seen with His Father and has been commanded by the Father (5:30; 6:38; 7:16; 8:38; 10:37, 38; 12:49, 50; 14:10). Therefore, to receive the Lord Jesus is to receive the Father who had sent Him (3:33; 5:24; 12:44; 13:20).

"I am"

Among the most distinguishing features of John are Jesus' "I am" statements. Through the seven "I am" declarations, the Lord Jesus made known to the world His identity in relation to those who believe in Him: "I am the bread of life" (6:35); "I am the bread which came down from heaven" (6:41); "I am the light of the world" (9:5); "I am the door" (10:7, 9); "I am the good shepherd" (10:11); "I am the resurrection and

the life” (11:25); “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (14:6). Besides these declarations, Jesus also identified Himself as the “I AM” (8:24, 28, 58), which was God’s self-revelation in the Old Testament (Isa 43:10). He also told the disciples that they would believe that “I AM” when His words come true (Jn 13:19). In essence, the Lord was making Himself known as the eternal LORD God, and for this reason the Jews tried to kill Him. In reality, Jesus is indeed God Himself manifested in the flesh (1 Tim 3:16). True faith in Jesus entails believing that He is none other than the true God Himself.

Believe

The Gospel according to John uses the word “believe” far more than any other book in the Bible. This should not come as a surprise, since the purpose for the writing of this book is a call to faith (20:31). Faith determines a person’s eternal destiny. Everyone who believes in the Lord Jesus has eternal life, but those who do not believe stand condemned (3:14–19, 36; 6:47; 8:24; 11:25).

Through His teachings and the signs He performed, Jesus time and again urged the people to believe that He had been sent from the Father and that He was the “I AM.” He also warned them of the consequence of unbelief. On numerous occasions we read how individuals or a multitude believed in Him (4:39–42; 4:53; 7:31; 8:30; 9:35–38; 11:45). Yet at the same time, many others, including His brothers, refused to believe (3:12; 5:38, 44, 47; 6:36; 7:5; 8:45, 46). In fact, the Gospel concludes that the Lord Jesus was rejected by His own (1:11), and that the people did not believe Him although He had done so many signs before them (12:37). In the end, Jesus was handed over to the Jewish leaders, who put Jesus on the cross out of their utter unbelief (cf. 19:7, 15).

Nevertheless, the Lord’s sheep listen to His voice and know Him (10:4, 14, 16). These are the believers who follow the Lord to the end, and the Gospel gives particular attention to their faith in Christ (2:11, 22; 6:66–69; 13:19; 14:1, 10–12,

29; 16:27; 17:8, 20; 20:8). They are given to the Lord Jesus by the Father and are kept by the Lord in His love (6:39; 13:1; 17:6, 9). They have received the right to be children of God (1:12, 13), have a part in Christ (13:8), and have the abiding presence of the Lord through the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:15–18; 26, 27). The glorious promises that await the disciples extend to believers of all ages whose faith does not rest on sight (17:20; 20:29). Just as they have passed from death into life through faith in Christ, they will be raised to everlasting life (5:24–29) and be with the Lord forever in glory (17:24).

Signs

Signs in the Gospel according to John are pointers that reveal Jesus’ identity. Through Jesus’ signs, Nicodemus concluded that Jesus was a teacher come from God (3:2). Through the miracle of feeding the great multitude, the Lord demonstrated that He is the bread from heaven (6:35). Jesus’ healing of the blind man occasioned the teaching about Him being the light of the world (9:5). When asked to show a sign as proof of His authority, the Lord pointed to the ultimate sign, which is His own resurrection (2:19, 21, 22).

Because of their revelatory function, signs serve to lead people to faith in the Lord. The disciples believed in Jesus after witnessing the sign of turning water into wine (2:11). The nobleman and his household believed at the sign of his son’s healing (4:46–54). The man healed of his blindness believed in the Lord and worshipped Him (9:35–38). Many of the Jews believed in Jesus when they witnessed His raising of Lazarus from the dead (11:45). At the end of the book, the author makes it explicit that he recorded all these signs so that we the readers may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God (20:30, 31).

Glory

One manifestation of Jesus’ identity as the Son of God is His divine glory (1:14). Unlike the glory that men seek, the glory that Jesus sought was from the Father (5:41, 44; 7:18; 8:50,

54). Through His signs and works, the Lord revealed His glory and brought glory to God (2:11; 11:4; 17:4).

As appointed by the Father, the hour in which Jesus was glorified came when He was facing death on the cross and the final exaltation (12:23–33; cf. 7:39). The moment when darkness seemed to prevail turned out to be the moment of glory for the Son of Man (13:31). When exhorting His disciples, Jesus spoke of the glory He shall receive from the Holy Spirit (16:13, 14). He also taught them that the Father would be glorified when the disciples bear much fruit and when Jesus would do whatever they ask in His name (15:7, 8). In His prayer to the Father, Jesus declared that He had glorified the Father, and He now asked the Father to glorify Him (17:1, 5). He further asked that those who believe in Him may be with Him where He is, that they may behold His glory (17:24).

Submission to the Father’s Will

While Jesus was one with His Father, He also made it clear that His Father was greater than He (14:28). As the One sent from His Father (8:42), He obeyed His Father unconditionally by completing the work for which He had been sent (4:34; 5:30). He honored His Father (8:49), spoke as His Father had commanded Him (7:16; 12:49), and sought the will of His Father (5:30; 6:38). He lost none of those whom the Father had given Him (6:39; 10:28, 29). According to the command of His Father, He laid down His life in order to take it again (10:18).

The surpassing will of the Father can be seen in the use of the word “hour” in the Gospel to represent the timing God had foreordained. Jesus honored the hour established for Him and acted accordingly (2:4). No one could take His life before His hour had come (7:30; 8:20). The saving works of Christ as well as what the disciples must encounter are also in accord with God’s appointed time (4:21, 23; 5:25, 28; 16:2, 4, 21, 25, 32). The very hour for which the Lord Jesus came was the hour of His death, exaltation, and return to the

Father (12:23, 27; 13:1). Even in the moments of great suffering, Jesus acknowledged and obeyed the Father’s will (18:8, 9, 11; 19:11). His words on the cross, “It is finished!” (Jn 19:30) perfectly summed up His total devotion to completing His Father’s will.

KEY WORDS/PHRASE

Believe, world, know, glorify, “my Father,” “truly, truly” (amen, amen), I am, Jew, abide, “abide in Me,” life, light, love, judgment, name, his own, see/sight, sign, spirit, testify, truth, water, witness, send, word

MODERN RELEVANCE

Although the figurative language of the Gospel according to John may seem abstract, again and again the Gospel expounds profound spiritual truths in tangible ways we can relate to. The bread, the light, the door, and the good shepherd are all concrete things that help us understand who Jesus is. Just as the Word became flesh and dwelt among us so that we may know the God whom we cannot see, the words written in the Gospel have made the essential doctrines of salvation accessible to us all.

The claims Jesus made about who He is and the many promises He offered to those who believe in Him are just as true today as they were back then. The hope of the gospel lies in our transformation, and Jesus is the source of our transformation. Jesus alone can change water into wine, sorrow into joy, death into life. So at its heart, the good news of John is that Jesus is the source of everlasting life, joy, and fulfillment. We may draw freely from this fountain when we come to Him in faith. We who believe in the Lord Jesus can also personally experience the promised indwelling Spirit today because Jesus has been glorified (7:37–39). We have the Lord’s continual presence through the Helper, and we are able to understand the words of Jesus because we have the Spirit as our personal teacher (14:16–18, 25, 26).

The Gospel according to John is also applicable to the church as a whole. Important truths about the sacraments of baptism, footwashing, and the Holy Communion are all explained in John. The True Jesus Church, having been sent by the Holy Spirit (cf. 20:20–23), administers the sacraments through faith in the words of Christ. The Gospel also reminds us that the Lord Jesus has also equipped us to carry out His mission. Because He has returned to the Father, we as believers will do greater works than what Jesus did (14:12). Whatever we ask in His name, it will be done for us (14:14; 15:7, 16). Jesus’ prayer concerning the unity of believers is especially relevant for life within the church (17:20–23). When we love one another as commanded by our Lord Jesus, all will know that we are Christ’s disciples (13:34, 35).

1:1-18			
1:19-51		Public Ministry	Jesus' Signs
2:1-12			
2:13-25			
3:1-21			
3:22-36			
4:1-42			
4:43-54			
5:1-47			
6:1-71			
7:1-53			
8:1-59			
9:1-41			
10:1-42			
11:1-44			
11:45-12:19			
12:20-50		Ministry to the Disciples	Jesus' Hour
13:1-30			
13:31-14:31			
15:1-16:4a			
16:4b-33			
17:1-26			
18:1-27			
18:28-19:16a			
19:16b-42			
20:1-18			
21:1-25			

CHART B SURVEY OF JOHN

JOHN

1:1-18

2 The Word Became Flesh

SETTING

The Gospel according to John takes us back to the beginning, reminding us of the creation account in Genesis. The first eighteen verses are the prologue to the gospel. Many of the themes and concepts developed later in the gospel are previewed here. A careful reading of the prologue will richly reward the reader with insights into the heart of the Gospel.

KEY VERSE

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

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **The Word** (1:1, 14): The use of “the Word” as a designation for God in John is unique in the Bible. While Greek philosophers also employed this word (*logos* in Greek) to refer to an eternal all-pervading principle of reason and order, the doctrine as presented in this Gospel about “the Word” is not to be associated with Greek philosophy. Instead, hints of this marvelous truth may be found even in the Old Testament, in which we learn that God revealed His will, His power, and even His identity through His word (cf. Ps 33:6; Deut 32:47; Ps 107:20; 119:50; Isa 55:10, 11).

OUTLINE

(1:1-5)




(1:6-9)

(1:10-13)

(1:14-18)

KEY WORDS/PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. List key concepts or themes you see in the prologue. 
2. What pairs of opposites or contrasts do you find in this passage? 
3. The focus of this passage is “the Word.” Carefully pick out everything that the passage has to say about the Word. 

4. Why is it important for us to understand that Jesus is the Word? 🔑 🌟

5. What was John's role and function? 👁

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1:1-5

1. What is "the beginning" in verse 1? 🔑

2. How can the Word be God and with God at the same time (1)? 🔑 🌟

3. Why does the author use the theme of creation to express the message found in this segment? 🌟

4. What does the contrast between light and darkness teach us about God and His relationship with us? 🔑 🌟

1:6-9

5. What was the purpose of John's witnessing? 👁

6. What do these verses tell us about the extent of Jesus' salvation? 👁 🔑 🌟

1:10-13

7. What is the sad irony conveyed in verses 10 and 11? 👁 🔑

8. How can we "receive" the Light? 🔑 🌟

9. What does it mean to be born of God? How can we become children of God? 🔑 🖊️

10. What does “believe in Jesus’ name” imply? 🔑 🖊️

1:14-18

11. For the first time in the prologue, the author switches to the first-person pronoun “us,” inviting the reader to reflect on the truth of verse 14. What does the fact that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us mean to you personally? 🖊️

12. Read the following verses in the Gospel about Jesus’ glory and write down what you have learned: Jn 2:11; 5:41, 44; 7:18; 8:54; 11:4, 40; 17:5, 22, 24. 👁️ 🔑 🖊️

13. What does verse 16 mean by “of His fullness we have all received”? 👁️ 🔑 🖊️

14. “Grace for grace” expresses the fullness and boundlessness of God’s grace. How have you experienced grace for grace in Christ? 🖊️

15. How is the law through Moses a contrast with the grace and truth through Jesus Christ (17)? 🔑

16. What does verse 18 tell us about why Jesus is called “the Word”? 👁️ 🔑

3 The Lamb of God

SETTING

The geographical setting at the beginning of this passage is Bethabara (or Bethany) beyond the Jordan, which was somewhere in the Judean wilderness (Jn 1:28). In the wilderness, John the Baptist carries out his ministry of baptizing and teaching in preparation of the one “coming after me” (Jn 1:27). First introduced in John 1:6–8, John the Baptist serves primarily in this Gospel as the witness for Jesus Christ. Here, his witnessing reaches its climax with his testimony of Jesus as the Lamb of God and the Son of God.

KEY VERSE

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

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **Priests and Levites** (1:19) served in and around the temple in Jerusalem under the direction of the high priests, who made up the ruling party of the Sanhedrin, the central religious authority of the Jews.
2. **“The Christ”** (1:20, 25) means “the anointed.” In the Old Testament, this title was given to the king. Over time, the term (“Messiah” in Hebrew) came to designate the future king who would come from the line of David and bring salvation to the nation of Israel.^{9/9:492}
3. **Pharisees** (1:24): The Pharisees were a religious group marked by separation from ritual uncleanness and strict

observance of the laws of Moses. They exerted great influence during the New Testament period.

4. The exact location of **“Bethabara beyond the Jordan”** (1:28) is unknown despite various attempts to identify this place.
5. **The Lamb of God** (1:29, 36): This expression is found in the Bible only in the first chapter of John. However, we may trace its roots back to the Passover lamb, which was slain to protect the Israelites from death on the eve of the Exodus (Ex 12:1–28). It is with this background in mind that Paul writes, “Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us” (1 Cor 5:7). Another reference to the Messiah as a lamb is found in Isaiah’s prophecy of the suffering Servant (Isa 53:7). This simile has likewise been applied to the Lord Jesus (Acts 8:32–35; 1 Pet 1:19).

OUTLINE

(1:19–28)

(19–23)

(24–27)

(1:29–34)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. How is the theme of “identity” central to this passage? 

2. How is “identity” important in this world? How do you identify yourself? How do you identify Jesus? 🦶

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1:19–28

1. What questions did the delegation of the Jews ask John? 👁

2. Why do you think they pressed John for his identity? 🔑

3. The wording “He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed...” in verse 20 is emphatic. John was unequivocal about who he was not. Why are we sometimes hesitant to confess who we are not? 🦶

4. Explain John’s words about who he was. What can we learn from John’s view of himself? 🔑 🦶

5. What can we learn about John’s baptism from the question posed by the delegates of the Pharisees (25)? 👁 🦶

6. How does John the Baptist compare himself to the coming One? 👁 🔑

7. What can you learn from John with respect to your attitude toward the Lord Jesus? 🦶

8. John denied that he was the Elijah. Why, then, did Jesus say that John was actually the Elijah (Mt 17:10–13)? 🔑

9. In what ways do we also share a similar role as John the Baptist? 🦶

1:29-34

10. How is “the Lamb of God” a fitting metaphor for the Lord Jesus? 🗝️

11. What was the purpose of John’s baptism? 👁️🗝️

12. How is the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus related to His identity as the Son of God? 🗝️

13. How do the children of God also follow Christ’s pattern in this respect? 🗝️🦶

14. What does it mean that Jesus baptizes with the Holy Spirit? What does it mean for us to be baptized with the Holy Spirit? 🗝️🦶

4 Son of God, King of Israel

SETTING

Geographically, this passage begins somewhere in the Judean wilderness (Jn 1:28), and as the narrative develops, Jesus is heading towards Galilee (Jn 1:43). In this passage, Jesus reveals Himself to His first disciples as He calls them into discipleship. Through John's testimony, personal witnessing, and more importantly, Jesus' revelations, the disciples see Jesus for who He is, and Jesus promises that they will see even greater things.

KEY VERSE

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

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

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **The tenth hour** (1:39) was 4 P.M. Because daylight was soon running out, people refrained from major outdoor activities past that hour and started to make preparations for lodging if necessary.^{1/2:18}
2. **Messiah** (1:41) is a transliteration of the Aramaic word meaning "the anointed one."
3. **Christ** (1:41) is the Greek equivalent of "Messiah."
4. **Bethsaida** (1:44) means "place of the fishery." It is probably to be identified with et-Tell, located east of the

Jordan about one and a half miles before it enters the north shore of the Sea of Galilee.^{1/2:20}

5. **Nazareth** (1:46) was a town about fifteen miles west of the Sea of Galilee.

OUTLINE

(1:35-39)


(1:40-42)


(1:43-44)

(1:45-51)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

- 1a. Identify in this passage the different ways through which Jesus' first disciples became His followers. 

- 1b. What can you learn from these examples about witnessing and conversion? 

2. What titles were applied to Jesus in this passage? What do they tell us about Jesus' identity? 👁️ 🔑

3. What can we learn from the theme of "identity" in this passage? 👁️ 🔑 👣

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1:35-39

1. What made you decide to follow Jesus? What made the two disciples of John decide to follow Jesus? Why is this reason so important for us as well? 👁️ 👣

2a. Jesus, knowing the heart of the two disciples, asked them, "What do you seek?" If He were to ask you the same question, what would you answer? 👣

2b. The two disciples sought to know where Jesus was staying. Why do you think they asked the question? In what ways can we also have the same desire today? 🔑 👣

2c. Why is it important to establish the right goal in our discipleship? 👣

3. Jesus answered the disciples' question with the words: "Come and see." How are these words significant? 🔑 👣

1:40-42

4. Andrew found his brother Simon and told him about Jesus. What can we learn from Andrew about witnessing? 👣

- 5. Jesus looked at Simon and told him that he would be called Cephas. What is the significance of this giving of a new name? 🔑

1:43-44

- 6. Jesus personally found Philip and called him to follow Him. Have you ever experienced being found or called by the Lord? Briefly write down or share your experience. 🗣️

1:45-51

- 7. What was Nathanael's initial reaction when Philip told him about Jesus? How does his reaction reflect a common human tendency? 👁️ 🔑 🗣️

- 8. Compare the way Nathanael evaluated Jesus and the way Jesus evaluated Nathanael. 👁️

- 9. What can we learn from what Jesus deemed as a "true Israelite"? 🔑 🗣️

- 10. What was it in Jesus' words that elicited such a drastic change in Nathanael's view of Jesus? 🔑

- 11. Jesus promised Nathanael that he would see even greater things. Explain the Lord's solemn declaration in verse 51. 🔑

5 Turning Water to Wine

SETTING

The Lord Jesus has promised His disciples that they would see great things in the Son of Man. The present narrative builds on this preface and begins to unfold the theme of signs in the Gospel. Along with Jesus' mother, Jesus and His disciples are invited to a wedding in Cana of Galilee. When the wine has run out, the Lord turns water into wine. The disciples, seeing the glory of the Lord through this first sign, put their faith in Him.

KEY VERSE

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

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. Wedding celebrations lasted for a week. Usually, guests were expected to contribute toward the materials used in the celebration (e.g., the wine).
2. **Cana** (2:1): Several sites have been proposed for ancient Cana. The probable location is Khirbet Qânam in the Plain of Asochis, about eight miles northeast of Nazareth.^{1/2:24}
3. **Six waterpots of stone** (2:6) could hold approximately 20–30 gallons apiece. The Jewish rites of purification required each guest to wash their hands before eating, so a lot of water was needed for this.

4. **Master of the feast** (2:8) was a position of honor, and one of his primary duties was the regulation of the distribution of wine. At times, guests were asked to assume this role.
5. **Capernaum** (2:12), located on the northwest corner of the Sea of Galilee, is about sixteen miles to the northeast of Cana.^{1/2:27}

OUTLINE

(2:1–2)

(2:3–11)

(2:12)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. How does this passage relate to the previous chapter? 



SEGMENT ANALYSIS

2:1–2

1. This first recorded sign of Jesus took place when Jesus and His disciples were being part of a wedding celebration, an unlikely place to expect a display of spectacular

divine power. What lesson can we learn from this in terms of our own lives? 🍷

2:3-11

2. Consider the issue at hand in this story and its implications. Can you think of a similar predicament in your life? What was it like? 🍷

3. What can we learn from the way Jesus' mother presented the problem to Jesus? 🍷

4a. How do you understand Jesus' response to his mother in verse 4? What did He mean by "My hour"? 🍷



4b. What lesson can we learn from Jesus' response? 🍷


5. Note Mary's words to the servants. How are they an appropriate response to what Jesus had just said to her? 🍷


6. How do the words, "Whatever He says to you, do it" apply to us? What are their implications? 🍷

7. Why is this readiness to obey so crucial to accomplishing God's will? 🍷



8. Jesus could have miraculously filled the jars with wine without any human agent, but He used the servants to do the work. What lesson can we learn from this? 🍷

9. Consider how Jesus turned stone jars for purification into containers of wine. What does this tell you about God's choice of vessels for His purpose?  

10. What did the words of the master of the feast to the bridegroom tell us about the wine Jesus had made? 

11. How was the wine that Jesus provided analogous to His grace in our lives? 

12. From the author's perspective, who were the primary beneficiaries of the sign Jesus had just done? 

13. The author calls the miracle "the beginning of signs" (2:11). What was accomplished through the sign, and what does this say about the meaning of the word "sign"?  

6 Cleansing the Temple

SETTING

From Capernaum, Jesus travels to Jerusalem for the Passover feast in accordance with the law (cf. Deut 16:16). He drives out the merchants and the money-changers in the temple, and His actions prompt the Jews to ask Him for a sign. The synoptic accounts inform us that this incident took place at the end of Jesus' ministry, upon His final entry into Jerusalem. But the Gospel according to John presents this event early on in the book probably because the significance of the event fits well with the themes that the Gospel is developing at this point (unless the Gospel according to John and the synoptic Gospels record two distinct but similar events).

KEY VERSE

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

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **The Passover** (2:13) was a major Jewish feast commemorating God's deliverance from Egypt (cf. Ex 12).
2. **Temple** (2:14, 19): The current passage uses two different Greek words, both of which the NKJV translates as "temple." The word in verse 14 typically denotes the courts surrounding the temple. This was where Jesus found the merchants and money changers conducting business. In verse 19, however, where Jesus says, "Destroy this temple," He uses another word, referring to the temple building proper.

3. **Those who sold oxen and sheep and doves** (2:14) rendered a service to those who traveled to the Passover from afar, allowing them to buy the sacrificial animals on site rather than having to carry them for long distances.^{1/2:29}
4. **Money changers** (2:14) in the temple sat in the court of the Gentiles (or in its porch) and converted foreign currency into the coins allowed in the temple (Roman coins had Caesar's image). Every Israelite that reached the age of 20 had to pay a half shekel (unit of money) into the Temple treasury (Ex 30:13, 14). The money changers usually assessed a fixed charge for their services.
5. **This temple** (2:20) was the second temple, built in the sixth century B.C. (Ezra chaps. 1, 3; 5-6; Hag chaps. 1-2; Zech 6:9-15). King Herod the Great began renovations around 20 B.C., and the resulting structure was well-known for its magnificence.

OUTLINE

(2:13-17)

(2:18-22)

(2:23-25)


KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. In what ways does this story stand in contrast with the previous story of turning water into wine?  


SEGMENT ANALYSIS

2:13-17

- 1a. According to Jesus, what wrong had the merchants and money changers committed? 

- 1b. Explain why their conduct was objectionable. 

- 1c. In what ways could a person possibly turn God's house into a house of merchandise today? 

- 1d. Selling animals and exchanging money was supposed to aid in the worship of God. Think of a present-day scenario or personal experience where a good intention or a seemingly acceptable behavior could turn into something offensive in God's eyes. 

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2. Why is it so important for the house of God to be free of all personal gains and selfish motives? 🗝️
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3. Jesus called the house of God “My Father’s house.” Why is this significant? 🗝️
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4. What could be the meaning behind the prophecy that Jesus’ zeal would “eat Him up”? 🗝️
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5. How can we imitate Jesus’ zeal for the house of God? 🗝️
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6. If we consider that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19), how does the story of the cleansing of the temple apply to us? 🗝️
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2:18-22

7. Why did the Jews ask Jesus for a sign? 🗝️
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8. Consider also the similar account in Mt 12:38-40. How is what Jesus predicted a sign? 🗝️
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9. Jesus used a language which the Jews could not understand. Why did He speak of His body as the temple? 🗝️
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10. What does it mean to you personally that Jesus’ body is the temple of God? 🗝️
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-
-

11. What does verse 22 teach us about faith?
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-
-

2:23–25

12. What is the sharp contrast presented here? 👁

13. How do you explain Jesus' response to the people's faith? 🔑

14. What does this say about our faith in the Lord Jesus? 🐾

15. How is Jesus' omniscience sobering as well as comforting for us? 🐾

7 The Birth from Above

SETTING

The close connection between the opening of this passage and the concluding verses of the previous passage tells us that the scene of Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus is set in Jerusalem. Many believed in Jesus' name when they saw the signs Jesus had done, and Nicodemus, likewise, seeks for Jesus because of the signs. Nicodemus comes to Jesus by night—a fact by which he will later be identified (Jn 7:50; 19:39). While Nicodemus considers Jesus as a teacher from God, Jesus directs Nicodemus to the deeper and essential truth of spiritual rebirth and eternal life through the Son of God.

KEY VERSE

“Jesus answered, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God’” (3:5).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **A ruler of the Jews** (3:1): Since Jesus describes Nicodemus as “*the* teacher” of Israel, it is fair to assume that Nicodemus was a prominent rabbi in the Sanhedrin, the highest national council overseeing Jewish affairs. We may also infer from the Gospel according to John that he was a wealthy and just man (7:50, 51; 19:39).
2. “**Wind**” and “**spirit**” translate the same Greek word: *pneuma* (3:5–8).

3. **“You must be born again”** (3:7): The pronoun “you” here, as well as in verses 11 and 12, is in the plural.


OUTLINE

(3:1-12)

(3:13-21)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES



GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. One striking feature of this passage is the numerous contrasts the Lord speaks of. List these pairs of contrast. 

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1:1-12

1. Why is Nicodemus commendable? What is the lesson for us?  

2. Compare what Nicodemus knew and testified (v. 1) with what Jesus knew and testified (v. 11).  



3. How is the birth Jesus spoke of different from the birth Nicodemus had in mind?



4. What does it mean to be “born of water and the Spirit”?

5. Many attempts have been made to detach verse 5 from baptism. Explain why the following interpretations of “water” are incorrect: 


- 5a. “Water” means embryonic fluid. Everyone must be born of the Spirit after having been born naturally.


- 5b. Using “water” as a symbol of the Spirit, Jesus was teaching the necessity of being born of water, that is, the Spirit. “Water” is not to be taken literally.


6. According to Jesus, why is it necessary to be born from above to enter the kingdom of God? What other teachings in the Bible support this explanation?  

7. In what ways is spiritual birth like the blowing of the wind? Can you relate this to your own experience as a believer?  

8. What distinction is Jesus drawing in verses 10 to 12? Who is Jesus referring to?  

9. What are the “earthly things” and “heavenly things” in verse 12? 

10a. Nicodemus could not grasp the important truth Jesus was conveying. According to Jesus, what was the reason for his slowness of understanding? 

10b. What does this teach us about understanding God’s word? 

3:13-21

11. What must we do to have eternal life?   



12. How has God revealed His love for us?   

13. How is the lifting up of the Son of Man like Moses’ lifting up the serpent in the wilderness (Num 21:4-9)? 

14. Why can only the Son of God bring us eternal life?  

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15. How does the message of this segment relate to the teaching about spiritual birth in the previous segment?



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16. What motivates a person to come to Christ? What keeps him away?   
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-
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8 Final Testimony of the Baptist

JOHN
3:22-36

SETTING

The events of the present passage take place after Jesus' visit to Jerusalem and his discussion with Nicodemus. The geographical setting is Judea, where John the Baptist and Jesus work concurrently for a period of time. This sets the background for the final recorded testimony of the Baptist in the Gospel.

KEY VERSE

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

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **Aenon** (3:23) means "springs." Its location is disputed.

OUTLINE



(3:22-24)

(3:25-26)

(3:27-36)


KEY WORDS AND PHRASES


SEGMENT ANALYSIS**3:22-24**

1. We are given little information about Jesus' baptism (v. 22). But on what basis do we know that this baptism is different from the baptism the disciples were to perform later after the descent of the Holy Spirit?  

2. What does the fact that John continued to baptize at this time say about the nature of Jesus' baptism? 



3:25-26

3. Reading between the lines and looking at the context, what do you think was the point of the report in verse 26? 

4. How do issues like these get in the way of the ministry today? 

3:27-36

5. Identify pairs of contrasts in this segment. 

6. Why, according to John the Baptist, was he not surprised at Jesus' increasing greatness?  

7. What was the understanding of John the Baptist about his own role?  


8. What can we learn from John the Baptist about the attitude in serving God? 


9. What does this segment teach about the testimony of Jesus Christ in terms of:

- 9a. Its origin?  

9b. Its trustworthiness?  

9c. Its reception and outcome?  

10. How did you come to hear the testimony of the Son of God? What made you believe the testimony? 

11. Both John the Baptist and Jesus had been sent to do the work of God (3:28, 34), although their roles were so different. What have you learned from this passage about serving as a witness sent by God? 

Revelation to the 9 Samaritans (1)

JOHN
4:1-30

SETTING

Jesus and His disciples have remained in Judea and baptized. Knowing what the Pharisees have heard about His baptizing ministry, Jesus leaves Judea to return to Galilee. The story of the present passage takes place while Jesus and His disciples are passing through Samaria.

KEY VERSE

“But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him” (4:23).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **“Through Samaria”** (4:4): This was the usual route from Judea to Galilee.
2. **Sychar** (4:5): Several sites have been suggested, one of which is modern Askar, about 1 km (0.6 mi) north of Jacob’s well on the eastern slope of Mt. Ebal.^{S/4:674}
3. **The plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph** (4:5) was probably the land at Shechem which Jacob had bought from the Sons of Hamor (Gen 33:18, 19; cf. Gen 48:21, 22; Josh 24:32).
4. **Jacob’s well** (4:6) was measured at 41 meters (135 feet) deep.^{S/2:955}
5. **The sixth hour** (4:6) probably means noontime.
6. **“Jews have no dealings with Samaritans”** (4:9): The Jews and Samaritans were divided primarily over

religious differences. While the Samaritans claimed to be descendants of Ephraim and Manasseh and keepers of the faith, the Jews viewed them as descendants of Assyrian colonists brought into the region (cf. 2 Kgs 17:24-41).^{5/4:303} Jews would not associate with Samaritans because Samaritans were thought to be continually unclean.^{1/2:44} Samaritans, likewise, did not look favorably upon Jews (cf. Lk 9:51-56).

7. **“Our fathers worshiped on this mountain”** (4:20): The Samaritans regarded Mt. Gerizim as sacred because they believed that many significant events in the life of the patriarchs were associated with this mountain. According to Josephus, the Samaritans built a temple in 332 B.C., but it was destroyed by John Hyrcanus and the Jews in 129 B.C.^{1/2:44}

OUTLINE

	(4:1-6)
	(4:7-26)
	(7-15)
	(16-19)
	(20-24)
	(25-26)
	(4:27-30)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. How is Jesus’ human and divine nature evident in this story?

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

4:1-6

1. What prompted Jesus to leave Judea?

4:7-26

- 2a. What kinds of barriers lay between Jesus and the Samaritan woman?

- 2b. Jesus broke all these barriers in order to reach out to this woman. What does this say about the Lord Jesus and about winning souls?

3. Observe the progression in the dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan woman.

3a. How did Jesus start His conversation with the Samaritan woman? 👁

3b. What was the final note on which the conversation ended? 👁

3c. What can we learn from the Lord in the way we share the gospel with others? 🗨️

4a. What is the gift of God and the living water Jesus spoke about? 🔑

4b. Explain the spiritual effect that results from drinking the living water. 🔑 🗨️

4c. What do we need to do to receive this living water? 👁

5. Why did Jesus reveal the woman's personal life? 🔑

6. Concluding that Jesus was a prophet, the Samaritan woman shifted the subject to the religious differences between Samaritans and Jews.

6a. What distinction did Jesus draw in verse 22? 👁 🔑

6b. In response to the woman's comment, what did Jesus teach about the place of worship? 👁

6c. What does it mean to worship God the Father in Spirit and truth? 🔑

6d. How do you worship the Father in your daily life? 🦋

7. How does the discussion on true worship relate to Jesus' final revelation that He is the Christ? 🔑

4:27-30

8. Observe the woman's actions upon learning that Jesus was the Christ. What lessons can we learn from this? 👁️ 🦋

SETTING

After Jesus' revelation to the Samaritan woman that He is the Christ, the woman went back into the city to report about Jesus. The present passage records Jesus' words with the disciples in the interim as well as the enthusiastic acceptance of Jesus by the Samaritans after they come out to meet Him. In the following narrative, the scene switches to Cana of Galilee, where Jesus has turned water to wine. Now, He performs yet another sign—healing the nobleman's son.

KEY VERSE

“Then they said to the woman, ‘Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world’” (4:42).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **Nobleman** (4:46): The term usually refers to someone in the service of a king^{1/2:52} (in this instance, Herod Antipas, Tetrarch of Galilee and Perea).
2. **Capernaum** (4:46): The distance between Capernaum and Cana is at least 23 kilometers (14 miles).
3. **Seventh hour** (4:52) was probably equivalent to 1 p.m.

OUTLINE

(4:31-38)

(4:39-42)

(4:43-45)

(4:46-54)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

- 1. Compare and contrast how the Samaritans and the Galileans received Jesus. 👁

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

4:31-38

- 1. Is doing the work of God as food to you? What does the metaphor of food suggest? 🔑 🍌

- 2a. Consider the context of Jesus' message to the disciples. What is the harvest Jesus referred to? 👁 🔑

- 2b. Where do you see yourself in this grand work of harvest?



- 3. What is Jesus' point in quoting the saying in verse 37? 🔑

4:39-42

- 4. What was the final outcome of Jesus' encounter with the Samaritan woman? 👁

- 5. Observe the Samaritans' progression of faith. Why is this significant? 👁 🔑

- 6. Have you also reached the same conviction about Jesus?



7. How is the title the Samaritans ascribed to Jesus appropriate in light of how the Jews viewed Samaritans as Gentiles? 🔑

4:43-45

8. Explain the seeming contradiction between verses 44 and 45. 🔑

4:46-54

9. In what ways was this sign remarkable? 👁️ 🔑

10. What does this sign show about Jesus? 🔑

11. What was the response to the sign? 👁️

12a. Why did Jesus make the comment in verse 48? 🔑

12b. What does this say about what He expects of us? 🙏

11 Jesus' Life-Giving Works

JOHN
5:1-47

SETTING

The events and discourse recorded in this passage took place in Jerusalem at the time of a feast. The beginnings of Jesus' revelations were primarily in Galilee. These included the first and second signs he did in Cana (2:11; 4:54). Now, the scene shifts to Jerusalem, and we begin to see the vehement reaction of the Jews after Jesus heals the man with infirmity. The opposition from the Jews will only intensify starting from this point in the Gospel.

KEY VERSE

"But Jesus answered them, 'My Father has been working until now, and I have been working'" (5:17).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **The Sheep Gate** (5:2), originally in the wall north or northeast of Jerusalem, was mentioned in Nehemiah (Neh 3:1, 32; 12:39) and was restored during the rebuilding of the city walls. In Jesus' day, this was apparently a small opening in the north wall of the temple. The sheep would have been washed in the pool before being taken to the sanctuary.^{1/2:54}
2. **A pool called Bethesda** (5:2): Early traditions speak of twin pools having five porticoes. Archeological excavations have confirmed that the pool was at the foot of Mt. Bezetha. The name Bethesda means "house of mercy."^{5/1:467-468}

3. **Your bed** (5:8): A mat (*krabattos*) was the poor man's bedding. The term is used in distinction from "bed" (*klinarion*; Acts 5:15). Normally made of straw, it was light and could be rolled up and carried about by any healthy person.^{1/2:55-56}
4. **"It is not lawful for you to carry your bed"** (5:10): Carrying the bed on the Sabbath was not specifically forbidden in the Old Testament Bible. But according to Jewish tradition, carrying an object "from one domain into another" was considered a violation of the Sabbath.^{1/2:56}

OUTLINE

(5:1-9)


(5:10-15)


(5:16-30)


(5:31-47)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS



1. How did the healing of the man with infirmity lead to the Jews' intent to kill Jesus? 



2. How did the healing relate to Jesus' words about receiving life?  

3. List the main teachings in this passage about the relationship between the Father and the Son. 


SEGMENT ANALYSIS


5:1-15

1. In what ways was Jesus' miracle of healing this man remarkable?  

2. How did the man view Jesus' question, "Do you want to be made well?"  

3. Have you ever experienced God's power when all hopes have died? Share your experience with the group. 

4. How had the Jews missed the much more important matter? What does this say about what was in their hearts? 

5. What does Jesus' warning to the man in verse 14 teach us about mercy and repentance? 

5:16-30

6. What were the two charges the Jews leveled against Jesus? 

7. Explain Jesus' response to the Jews' persecution and to the accusation pertaining to the Sabbath (v. 17). 🔑

8. How can we receive life, according to the Lord Jesus? 👁️ 🦶

9. Why does Jesus speak of judgment side by side with life? 🔑

10. How do life and judgment apply to both the present and the future? 👁️

- 11a. What is the primary claim of Jesus in this section in terms of His identity? 👁️ 🔑

- 11b. What should we do in view of His identity? 👁️ 🦶

5:31-47

12. What witnesses does Jesus call on to testify of Him? 👁️

13. Along with studying the Scriptures, how can we let God's word abide in us? 👁️ 🔑 🦶

14. What sins did Jesus reveal about the unbelieving Jews? 👁️

- 15a. What does it mean to seek honor from men instead of from God? 🔑 🦶

- 15b. How does this hinder faith in Christ? 🦶

12 Jesus the Bread of Life (1)

JOHN
6:1-40

SETTING

The present passage narrates in detail a sign the Lord performed in Galilee—the feeding of the multitude. Although Jesus withdraws from the crowd when He knows that the people are about to make Him king by force, the multitude goes in fervent pursuit of Him until they find Him in Capernaum. In response, Jesus teaches them to believe in Him as the bread of life from heaven.

KEY VERSE

“And Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst’” (6:35).

DID YOU KNOW...?


1. **Two hundred denarii** (6:7): One denarius was approximately one day’s wage (Mt 20:2).

OUTLINE

_____	(6:1-15)
_____	(6:16-21)
_____	(6:22-25)
_____	(6:26-29)
_____	(6:30-40)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. What two miracles are narrated in this passage? 

2. Compare the two miracles in terms of the following: 



- 2a. The setting

- 2b. The need

- 2c. Who witnessed the miracle

2d. The response to the miracle

2e. What each miracle teaches us about Jesus

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

6:1-15

1a. Why did the great multitude follow Jesus? 👁

1b. Is it right for us to follow the Lord Jesus for this reason?
Please explain. 🗨

2. In what ways does the passage convey to us how great of a miracle it was for Jesus to feed the multitude? 👁

3. Why did Jesus test Philip with the question? 🔑

4. Why was this miracle called a sign? 🔑

5. What can you tell about the people by looking at their reaction to the sign (14, 15)? 👁 🔑

6:16-21

6. Describe an experience in which you toiled without success until the Lord came to your aid. 🗨

7. What is so reassuring about Jesus' words, "It is I"? 🔑

8. Recall a similar circumstance in which you also gladly received the Lord (21). 🗨

6:22-29

9. Explain if verse 26 contradicts with verse 2. What was the underlying reason the people followed Jesus? 🔑

10a. What is the food that endures to everlasting life? 👁️ 🔑

10b. How do we labor for the food which endures to everlasting life? 🔑 🧑🏫

6:30-40

11a. What does the people's question in verse 30 say about them? 👁️ 🔑

11b. What does this say about the right attitude in believing the Lord? 🔑 🧑🏫

12. How is Jesus the bread of life? 🔑

13. What promises does the Lord Jesus make here? 👁️

14. How have you experienced the fullness that the Lord has promised? 🧑🏫

15. What does Jesus teach about the Father in this segment?



13 Jesus the Bread of Life (2)

JOHN
6:41-71

SETTING

Seeing that the people seek Him only to be satisfied with bread, the Lord Jesus begins teaching them to believe in Him as the bread of life. This study continues with the rest of Jesus' discourse in Capernaum. At the same time, a significant part of the passage directs our attention to the diverging responses of the unbelievers and true disciples.

KEY VERSE

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world" (6:51).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. "And they shall all be taught by God" (6:45): This quotation is from Isa 54:13, and possibly also alludes to Jer 31:34.

OUTLINE

(6:41-51)


(6:52-59)



(6:60-66)

(6:67-71)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES


GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. Record the responses of the Jews and unbelieving disciples to Jesus' discourse. 

2. What kinds of hurdles kept them from believing in the Lord?  

3. Note the repeated mention of manna in the passage. What is Jesus' purpose for making reference to manna?



4. Record the promises Jesus makes for the present as well as for the future. 


SEGMENT ANALYSIS**6:41-51**

1. How are Jesus' words in 44-46 a response to the complaint of the Jews? 

2. What does it mean that Jesus is the "living" bread (51)? 


6:52-59

3. How can we eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood?  


4. Reflect on how we can feed on the Lord Jesus (57) in our daily lives. 

6:60-66

5. Do you also sometimes find Jesus' words "offensive"? Give some examples. 

6. Why does the Lord ask the question in verse 62? 

7. Explain the contrast between Spirit and flesh (63). 

8. If the flesh profits nothing (63), why does our Lord teach us to eat His flesh? 

9. How are Jesus' spoken words spirit and life? 🔑

10. What was Jesus' view about the people's unbelief? 👁️ 🔑

6:67-71

11. What makes you stay when you see other followers leave the Lord? 🚶

12. How does the mention of the betrayer fit into the context of this passage? 🔑

14 Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles (1)

JOHN
7:1-24

SETTING

Although this chapter begins with the note that Jesus did not want to walk in Judea because the Jews sought to kill Him, the setting for the greater part of the chapter is in Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles. When Jesus' brothers have gone up to the feast, Jesus also goes up. He teaches in the temple during the feast, and opinions about Him are sharply divided.

KEY VERSE

“If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority” (Jn 7:17).

DID YOU KNOW...?

- 1 **The Feast of Tabernacles** (7:2) was one of three annual feasts in which all Israelite males were required to participate (Deut 16:16, 17). The feast was associated with the harvest at the end of the year (Ex 34:22). It lasted for one week, starting on the fifteenth of the seventh month (mid-October). It was a feast of rejoicing, and the people must live in booths for the entire week (Lev 23:40-42; Deut 16:14). The purpose of the feast was to teach future generations that the Lord made the children of Israel dwell in booths when He brought them out of the land of Egypt (Lev 23:43).

OUTLINE

(7:1-9)

(7:10-13)

(7:14-24)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

7:1-9

1. Why did the Jews seek to kill Jesus? 🔑

2a. What were the brothers of Jesus urging Him to do? 👁

2b. How did their words show their disbelief? 🔑

3. Explain Jesus' response concerning "His time." 🔑

4. What do Jesus words say about the different principles believers and unbelievers operate by? 🔑 👁

5. In what ways are believers of Christ today also hated by the world? 👁


7:10-13

6. Why did Jesus go up to the feast, when He had just told His brothers that His time had not yet fully come? 🔑




7:14-24

7. What did the Jews' question in verse 15 say about them? 

8. What did Jesus say here about Him and the One who sent Him?  

9. How can we apply Jesus' words about discerning God's words versus man's words? 

10a. What did Jesus teach about keeping the law?   

10b. What did He teach about judging?   

Jesus at the Feast of 15 Tabernacles (2)

JOHN
7:25-53

SETTING

Jesus has gone up in secret to the feast in Jerusalem. Feelings toward Jesus are mixed. While the Jews, presumably the religious leaders, are seeking to take Him, there is much complaining among the people concerning Him. In the midst of such polarizing attitudes, Jesus continues to teach in the temple, keeping the way open for anyone who wishes to put their faith in Him. After Jesus' offer of living water on the last day of the feast, the rift between opposite opinions about Jesus deepens even further.

KEY VERSE

“On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, ‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water’” (7:37, 38).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **The chief priests** (7:32) were the principal priests, the higher temple officials, including, besides the high priest himself, the captain of the temple, the temple overseer and the treasurers.^{6:160-181}
2. **Officers** (7:32) refer to the police force of the Sanhedrin used to maintain public order in town and country.^{4/62-63}
3. **The Dispersion** (7:35), also known as the Diaspora, denotes the large number of Jews living outside of Palestine in various parts of the empire and beyond.

- 4. **The last day, that great day of the feast** (7:37) was either the seventh day of the feast, marked by a water-pouring rite that had developed before the first century, or the eighth day, on which a sacred assembly was held (cf. Lev. 23:36; Num. 29:35; Neh. 8:18).
- 5. **“As the Scripture has said”** (7:38): Jesus’ statement about living water is not a word-for-word quotation of a particular passage. Instead, it encapsulates the message of different Old Testament prophecies, such as Isa 12:3; 43:20; 44:3; 55:1; 58:11; Zech 14:8..

OUTLINE

	(7:25-31)
	(7:32-36)
	(7:37-39)
	(7:40-44)
	(7:45-53)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

- 1. Identify the things by which the various people in the narrative determined their attitude toward Jesus. 👁
-
-
-
-

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

7:25-31

- 1. What did Jesus mean by “You both know Me, and you know where I am from”? 🔑

- 2. To what extent do you know Jesus and where He is from? 👣

- 3. Why is Jesus’ origin important? 🗝️ 👣

- 4a. What distinction did Jesus make between Him and His hearers? 👁 🔑

4b. What is the point of the distinction? 🔑

7:32-36

5. What message did Jesus convey to the people by speaking about His impending departure? 🔑

6. What does the reaction of the Jews tell us? 🔑

7:37-39

7. What is the reference to the Holy Spirit that was not yet given (39)? When was the Holy Spirit actually poured out for the first time? 🔑

8. How is the Holy Spirit like rivers of living water? 🔑 🌊

9. What does it mean to thirst? How do we come to Jesus to drink? 🔑 🌊

7:40-44



10. What prompted some of the people to proclaim that Jesus was the Prophet and the Christ? 👁

11. What made the rest unable to accept Jesus? 👁

12. What irony is embedded in verse 42? 👁 🔑

7:45-53

13. In what ways can we see in this segment the extent of the Pharisees' stubborn unbelief?

14. What recurring issue also made the Pharisees stumble here?  

15. How is verse 53 a dramatic summary of the people's reactions to Jesus in this chapter?

16 The Light of the World (1)

SETTING

Jesus has gone up to Jerusalem and taught at the Feast of Tabernacles. Opinions about Him were divided. The setting of the present passage is still the temple precincts. The scene opens with a test designed to trap Jesus which in the end only serves to bring out Jesus' authority as the righteous divine judge. The incident is then followed by Jesus' declaration as the light of the world. Through the subsequent lengthy exchange between Jesus and His hearers, Jesus enters into the sharpest confrontation with His opponents.

KEY VERSE

“Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life’” (8:12).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. “**Moses, in the law, commanded us**” (8:5): The reference is to Lev 20:10 and Deut 22:23, 24.
2. **The treasury** (8:20) was an area of the temple in the Women's Court (cf. Mk 12:41–44). Thirteen trumpet-shaped receptacles stood there, each with an inscription specifying the intended use of the respective offerings (The Women's Court was where the celebration of lights took place during the Feast of Tabernacles).^{1/2:84}

OUTLINE

(8:1-2)

(8:3-11)

(8:12-20)

(8:21-30)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

- 1. Cite the verses that speak about the unity of Jesus with His Father. 👁

- 2. Record the opposite concepts in this passage. 👁

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

8:1-11

- 1. How was the case presented before Jesus a trap? 🔑

- 2. What has this story taught you about ...

- 2a. Your own sins? 🦿

- 2b. How you should act toward someone in sin? 🦿

- 3a. How has the Lord Jesus brought grace and truth to this woman? 🔑

- 3b. How has He done the same for you? 🦿

8:12-20



4a. How is Jesus the light in your life? 

4b. What is "the light of life"? 


5. Why was Jesus able to bear witness of Himself?  

6. What does it mean to judge "according to the flesh"? 

8:21-30

7. What does it mean for us to believe that "I am" (24)?  

8a. What does it mean for the Son of Man to be lifted up? 

8b. How will His being lifted up make the people know that "He is"? 

17 The Light of the World (2)

JOHN
8:31-59

(8:48-59)

SETTING

Jesus declared that He was the light of the world, but the Pharisees could not accept His message. Jesus thus warned them of the deadly consequence of refusing to believe the One sent by God. Many, however, believed Jesus because of His words. The focus of this study is Jesus' discourse with this particular group. Sadly, these people also rejected Jesus in the end despite their initial acceptance. This chapter concludes with the murderous resistance of Jesus' audience as well as the height of Jesus' self-revelation.

KEY VERSE

“And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (8:32).

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

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **“You are a Samaritan”** (8:48): The Jews despised the Samaritans because of their mixed ancestry.
2. **“You are not yet fifty years old”** (8:57): The age of fifty was viewed as the end of a man's working life and attainment to full maturity (cf. Num 4:3, 39; 8:24, 25).^{1/2:90}

OUTLINE

(8:31-36)

(8:37-47)



KEY WORDS AND PHRASES



GENERAL ANALYSIS




1. Record the things Jesus said about “His word” in this passage. 




SEGMENT ANALYSIS

8:31-36

1. What does the Lord expect of a believer?  

2. What does it mean to abide in Jesus' word?  


3. How does the popular concept of “truth” today differ from the Biblical concept of truth?   


4. Explain the meaning of slavery and freedom in this passage, in contrast to a secular notion of slavery and freedom.   

5. In practical terms, what is it like to live as a slave? As a son? (see v. 35)


6. How does Jesus make us free?  

8:37-47

7. Jesus both conceded to and denied the claim of His hearers as descendants of Abraham (37, 39). What was Jesus' point? 

8. Why did Jesus' listeners respond with the words “We were not born of fornication?” 




9. What characterizes



- 9a. a child of the devil? 



- 9b. a child of God? 

10. What does it mean to be “of God” (47)? 

8:48-59

- 11a. How does keeping of Jesus' word save us from death?   

11b. What does it mean to “keep” His word?  

12. What can we learn from Jesus to be a true child of God (54, 55)?  

13. What did Jesus mean by “Abraham rejoiced to see My day”?

14. What claim was Jesus making with the “I AM” statement in verse 58?

18 The Light of the World (3)

SETTING

The exchange between Jesus and the Jews at the temple ended in stiff opposition. Jesus exited the temple and was hidden from the Jews who had attempted to stone Him. The present chapter, which is a masterpiece of narrative, begins with Jesus’ healing of a man, born blind. This miracle prompts a series of interrogations that widens the divide between faith and unbelief. In the end, Jesus comes back on the scene to reveal His identity to the blind man and to declare His judgment on the unbelievers.

KEY VERSE

“And Jesus said, ‘For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind’” (9:39).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **“Made clay”** (9:6, 14): The act of making clay, or kneading, was listed in the Talmud as one of the thirty-nine kinds of activities forbidden on the Sabbath.
2. **The pool of Siloam** (9:7) was part of the major water system Hezekiah built. Its water was “sent” (hence the name) via Hezekiah’s aqueduct from the spring Gihon down the Kidron Valley (2 Chron 32:30; Neh 3:15; Isa 8:6).
3. **“Give glory to God”** (9:24): This imperative was given in situations where a person was urged to confess his guilt (cf. Josh 7:19; 1 Sam 6:5; Jer 13:16).

OUTLINE



- _____ (9:1-7)
- _____ (9:8-34)
- _____ (8-12)
- _____ (13-17)
- _____ (18-23)
- _____ (24-34)
- _____ (9:35-41)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS


1. Who in this story were viewed, whether correctly or incorrectly, as sinners? 


2. What are the various criteria found in this passage by which sin is judged?  

3. Record the progression in the healed man's understanding of Jesus.  

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

9:1-7

1. What does this story tell us about sickness, sin, and God's works? 

2. Share an experience in which your misfortune turned out to be for the service of God. 

3. How does Jesus' healing of the blind man function as a sign? 

9:8-34

4. Record each time inquiries were made about how the man's eyes were opened. 👁

5. What was the purpose of the Pharisees' interrogation? 🔑

6. Observe the perplexity of the Pharisees and their increasing vehemence. What does this say about them? 👁 🔑

7. How does this dramatic scene in which Jesus was absent serve to speak for Jesus? 🔑

8. The parents of the blind man did not want to acknowledge Jesus out of fear of expulsion. What are some of the present-day "risks" that make people afraid to confess Jesus? 🦶

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-
9. What was the one thing that the healed man was very sure about? How can this knowledge also help us remain unwavering when we face questions and doubts? 🔑 🦶

9:35-41

10. From Jesus' dialogue with the man He had healed, what do we know about the purpose of Jesus' miraculous signs? 👁 🔑 🦶

11. Explain the two opposite results Jesus, the light of the world, brings to the world. 🔑

12. How has the Lord Jesus opened your eyes? 🦶

13. What are the two kinds of blindness according to verse 41? 🗝️

14. What do you think attributes to the attitude of the Pharisees in Jesus' day and of unbelievers today? 🗝️ 🗝️

19 The Good Shepherd

SETTING

After Jesus had healed the man of his blindness, the man was harassed and cast out by the Pharisees on account of Jesus. Jesus found this man and brought him to a saving faith in Him. This narrative is a fitting backdrop of Jesus' teachings on the good shepherd in this chapter. The mention of the Feast of Dedication places the events of this passage about two months after the Feast of Tabernacles (7:2).

KEY VERSE

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep" (10:11)

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **The Sheepfold** (10:1) "may have been a courtyard (cf. 18:15) near or bordering a house, surrounded by a stone wall and topped by briars, where one or several families kept their sheep. The gate, which probably could be locked, would have been guarded by a doorkeeper (cf. 10:3), who was hired to stand watch."^{1/2:98}
2. **The door of the sheep** (10:7): "When the sheep were out on the hills in the warm season and did not return at night to the village at all, they were collected into sheepfolds on the hillside. These hillside sheepfolds were just open spaces enclosed by a wall. In them, there was an opening by which the sheep came in and went out; but there was no door of any kind. What happened was that at night the shepherd himself lay down across the

opening, and no sheep could get out or in except over his body. In the most literal sense, the shepherd was the door."^{2/2:67-68}

- 3. **The Feast of Dedication** (10:22) was an eight-day celebration commemorating the cleansing of the temple and dedication of the altar by Judas Maccabeus in December, 164 B.C. It is also called Hanukkah or the Feast of Lights.
- 4. **Solomon's porch** (10:23) was a colonnade on the east side of the temple which made up part of the temple complex built by Herod.

OUTLINE

	(10:1-6)
	(10:7-18)
	(10:19-21)
	(10:22-39)
	(10:40-42)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

10:1-6

- 1. What distinguishes a shepherd from thieves, robbers, and strangers? 👁
-
-
-

- 2. The shepherd calls his own sheep by name. What does this illustrate? 🔑

- 3a. How does the Lord Jesus go before His sheep? 🔑

- 3b. What does it mean for you to follow your shepherd? 👣

10:7-18

- 4. What does Jesus mean that He is the door? How do we enter by Him? 🔑 👣

- 5a. How is the good shepherd different from the thieves? 👁

- 5b. How is he different from the hireling? 👁

5c. What are some present-day examples of thieves and hirelings? 🐾

6. What does the image of “go in and out and find pasture” suggest? 🔑

7. How have you found abundant life through the Lord Jesus? 🐾

8. What message is conveyed by the words “I know My sheep, and am known by My own” (14)? 🔑

9. What do the “other sheep” not of this fold refer to (16)? 🔑

10. Why does Jesus speak of His power and authority to take His life again? 🔑

10:22-39

11. What did Jesus cite repeatedly to authenticate His claim as the Son of God? Why? 👁️ 🔑

12. Record what Jesus taught about His unity with His Father. 👁️

10:40-42

13. What did Jesus do beyond the Jordan that led many to believe in Him? 👁️ 🔑

20 The Resurrection and the Life

JOHN
11:1-44

SETTING

Jesus had escaped out of the hand of the Jews who attempted to seize Him, and He remained in the region beyond the Jordan where John had been baptizing at first. Many people, recalling John's testimony about Him, came and believed in Jesus. News of Lazarus' sickness reaches Jesus, and it brings Jesus back to Judea again. Here, in Bethany, Jesus performs the last sign before His death, a sign that results in His own glorification.

KEY VERSE

"Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live'" (11:25).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **Bethany** (11:1) was a village less than 2 miles (3 kilometers) from Jerusalem (Jn 11:18). Jesus would spend the night here when He came to Jerusalem (Mt 21:17; Mk 11:11). It is to be distinguished from the Bethany beyond the Jordan (cf. Jn 1:28).
2. **"In the tomb four days"** (11:17): "Later Jewish sources attest the rabbinic belief that death was irrevocable three days after a person had died."^{1/2:108-109}
3. **"The Jews who came with her weeping"** (11:33): "The present heart-breaking scene would have been preceded by a formal funeral procession including burial, in which wailing women and flute-players as well as shouts of grief from the men in the procession punctuated laments sung

in the house of death, on the way to the tomb, and during the burial itself" (cf. Mt 9:23).^{1/2:111}

OUTLINE

(11:1-6)

(11:7-16)

(11:17-27)



(11:28-37)

(11:38-44)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS



1. Record the statements of Jesus that revealed His supernatural knowledge.  


2. Identify each of the instances in which Jesus was concerned about the faith of people.  

3. Why does the narrative highlight Jesus' late arrival and the fact that Lazarus had been dead for four days (17, 21, 32, 39)?

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

11:1-6

- 1a. Observe the comments about Jesus' love for this particular family. How is this love different from the love we usually associate with?  

- 1b. What does this teach you about the Lord's love for you when you are suffering? 

2. How did Lazarus' sickness serve a higher purpose? 

11:7-16


3. What does Jesus mean by walking in the day?  




4. How is the light of the world also in a person (10)?  


5. How does the analogy of day and night relate to the context of this story? 


6. Explain why Jesus was glad (15). 


11:17-27

- 7a. What did Martha believe about Jesus? 



7b. What was lacking in her faith (cf. 40)? What can we learn from this?   


8. What kinds of life and death did Jesus speak about in verses 25 and 26? 


9. What kinds of resurrection can we infer from the words, “I am the resurrection and the life”? 

10. What does it mean to you personally that Jesus is the resurrection and the life? 


11:28-37


11. The word for “groan” (33, 38) connotes indignation or displeasure. What was troubling Jesus?  

12. Why do you think Jesus wept? 

13. How does the fact that Jesus wept say about His relationship with us? 

11:38-44

14. What did Jesus’ prayer to the Father reveal about Him? 

15. What did the resurrection of Lazarus reveal about Jesus? 

21 From Bethany to Jerusalem

JOHN

11:45–12:19

SETTING

Through the climactic sign of raising Lazarus from the dead, Jesus revealed Himself to the people as the giver of eternal life. This miracle led many to believe in Jesus, but also drove the Pharisees and chief priests to plot for His death. All these were within God's council, just as Jesus anticipated when He said that the Son of God would be glorified through the sickness of Lazarus. The raising of Lazarus brought Jesus glory, and its outcome, leading to His exaltation, would bring Him even greater glory. As the Passover is drawing near, Jesus leaves Bethany for Jerusalem with full awareness of His mission ahead and His destiny for glory.

KEY VERSE

“But Jesus said, ‘Let her alone; she has kept this for the day of My burial. For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always’” (12:7–8).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **Caiaphas** (11:49) filled the post of high priest about A.D. 18–36.
2. **Ephraim** (11:54) was probably the town near Baal Hazor (2 Sam 13:23), 13 miles (21 km) north-northeast of Jerusalem.
3. “**To purify themselves**” (11:55): Ceremonial purity was required for participation in the Passover (Num 9:6; 2 Chron 30:17–18; Jn 18:28).

4. **Supper** (12:2) was the main meal of the day. The word is also used to denote a banquet (e.g. Mt 23:6).
5. **Spikenard** (12:3) “was native to northern India and was a favorite perfume in antiquity... The best spikenard was imported from India in sealed alabaster boxes, which were opened only on very special occasions.”^{5/3:490}
6. **Three hundred denarii** (12:5) were about a year's wages for a laboring man.
7. **Palm branches** (12:13) were symbols of victory among the Jews as well as in the Greco-Roman world.^{1/2:122}
8. **Hosanna** (12:13) is a transliteration of the Hebrew expression, found in Ps 118:25, meaning “save, I pray!” (Ps 118:25)^{10/1106}

OUTLINE

 (11:45–54)

 (11:55–57)


 (12:1–11)

 (12:12–19)


KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

11:45–54

1. What reactions did Jesus' raising of Lazarus result in? 
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-
-


2. What was the basis of Caiaphas' agenda?  

3a. Caiaphas' words turned out to be an involuntary prophecy. What does the author want to convey to us between the lines? 

3b. What did these words of prophecy say about the effect of Jesus' death?  


4. What was Jesus' response to the death sentence? 


11:55–57


5. What can we learn from this segment about the situation Jesus was in? 



12:1–11

6. What did Mary's actions say about her attitude toward Jesus? 

7. In contrast, what did Judas' words say about his attitude toward Jesus? 

8. How does what we offer to the Lord reflect what is in our heart? 

9. If someone criticizes you about your offering to the Lord, how should you react? 

10. According to Jesus, what was the significance of Mary's actions?  

12:12–19

11. What was the meaning of Jesus' grand entry into Jerusalem? 🔑

12. What does Jesus' riding on a young donkey say about Him? 🔑

13. Explain what was happening according to 12:17–18. 👁️🔑

22 The Hour of Glory**SETTING**

Jesus has entered Jerusalem as the triumphant King of Israel. But His kingdom is not of this world, and thus His mission is not what the multitudes have in mind. As Jesus' public ministry is coming to a close, He speaks to the people about His death and its glorious outcome. For the final time, He reveals Himself to the world as the light of the world, urges the people to put their faith in Him, and warns of the judgment on unbelievers.

KEY VERSE

“While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.’ These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them” (Jn 12:36).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **Greeks** (12:20): This term in the broader sense applied to all Gentiles who came under the influence of Greek culture.^{10/318}
2. **Philip** (12:21) and Andrew were the only two members of the Twelve with Greek names (with the possible exception of Thomas).^{1/2:124}
3. **“The Christ remains forever”** (12:34): The notion might have been based on passages such as Ps 89:35–37.

OUTLINE

(12:20-36)

(12:37-43)


(12:44-50)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES**GENERAL ANALYSIS**




1. How is “the hour” a central idea in this passage?  


2. What does this passage teach about judgment? 


SEGMENT ANALYSIS**12:20-36**


1. How is the significance of the term “the Son of Man” fully expressed here (23, 34)? 



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2. How did Jesus words relate to the Greeks who had come to see Him? 

3. How does Jesus expect us to serve Him?   

4. In verses 27 and 28, how did Jesus exemplify what He expected of His followers? 

- 5a. Why did the hour in which the Son was glorified also glorify the Father’s name? 

- 5b. Why is it also the hour of judgment? 

6. How is Jesus able to draw all peoples to Himself by being lifted up?  

7. Explain Jesus' appeal in verses 35 and 36. 

12:37-43


8. According to this segment, why did the people not believe in Jesus?  



9. In what sense did Isaiah see Jesus' glory (41)? 

10. What was lacking in the rulers who believed in Jesus? 

11. Have you ever been afraid to confess your beliefs? Why? 

12:44-50

12. Why does Jesus stress in this segment His unity with the One who sent Him? 

13. What does Jesus teach us here about His words?  

23 Washing the Disciples' Feet (1)

JOHN
13:1-11

SETTING

Jesus ended His public ministry with a final revelatory message. He now turns His attention to His disciples exclusively, as He is about to leave them for a while to go to the Father. At the beginning of the lengthy section recording His discourses with His disciples and His prayer to the Father stands a crucial event—the washing of the disciples' feet. This event is profoundly significant in the saving relationship between the Lord and His disciples. It also lays the foundation for the rest of the section on Jesus' final hours in this world.

KEY VERSE

“...having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end” (13:1).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **“During supper”** (13:2): The NKJV reads, “supper being ended,” based on a different variant reading. In either case, Jesus' footwashing was decidedly different from the customary washing of hospitality, since such washing would have taken place before the meal, not during or after it.
2. **“Began to wash the disciples' feet”** (13:5): The washing of one's feet for personal comfort and hygiene was quite common (cf. 2 Sam 11:8; Song 5:3). As a form of hospitality, either water was offered to the guest, or the slaves of the host washed the feet of the guest (cf. Gen 18:3-5; 19:2; 24:32, 33; 43:24). Touching another person's

feet was considered by Jews to be such a menial task that it is among the works that Jewish slaves should not be required to perform. Therefore, except in extraordinary circumstances, only the lowest slaves would wash another person's feet (cf. 1 Sam 25:41).

3. **“He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet”** (13:10): The word for “wash” represents partial washing, such as the washing of face, hands, or feet (cf. Mt 6:17; 15:2; Jn 9:7). The word for “bathe,” on the other hand, means the washing of the whole body.


OUTLINE

(13:1-5)

(13:6-11)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

- 1a. Record instances in 13:1-20 with the word “know.” 

1b. What truths did you learn from the use of this word? 



2. How do we know that Jesus' footwashing transcended the customs of those days?



SEGMENT ANALYSIS


13:1-5

1. What does this segment tell us about

1a. The timing of Jesus' footwashing? 

1b. What Jesus knew that prompted the footwashing? 

1c. The action of Jesus' footwashing?  


1d. The recipients of Jesus' footwashing?  

2a. What does it mean that the Father had given all things into His hands (13:3)? 

2b. Why was this fact important to Jesus' footwashing? 


3. Why was the timing of Jesus' footwashing significant? 

4a. How was Jesus' footwashing an act of love? 

4b. Why was this act of love only for "Jesus' own," and not for the whole world? 

5. Carefully observe and contemplate on the depiction of Jesus' actions in verses 4 and 5.

5a. What can we learn here about Jesus?  



5b. What can you learn from Him? 

13:6-11

6. Explain Peter's staunch refusal to let Jesus wash him. 

7. What would have been the consequence for Peter if Jesus did not wash him?  



8a. How does Peter's response in verse 9 reflect the severity of the consequence? 


8b. What does this say about the necessity and effect of receiving Jesus' footwashing?  

8c. What does it mean to have a part with Jesus?  

9a. What is the bath that Jesus speaks of in verse 10? 

9b. How does the need for footwashing relate to the status of having been bathed? 

10. How do we have our feet washed today?  

11. What does the fact that your feet have been washed by the Lord remind you about your daily walk? 

24 Washing the Disciples' Feet (2)

JOHN
13:12-38

(13:31-35)

(13:36-38)

SETTING

During the supper with His disciples, the Lord rose up, assumed the role of a slave, and washed His disciples' feet. Through Peter's staunch refusal, Jesus' declaration, and Peter's complete reversal, the narrative brings out the uniqueness of Jesus' footwashing as well as its profound saving significance. This lesson continues to examine the meaning of footwashing as well as what is expected of believers by looking at Jesus' words to the disciples after the footwashing. Additionally, we shall study the events and words described in the same setting, including Jesus' exposure of Judas' betrayal and His prediction of Peter's denial.

KEY VERSE

"If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet" (13:14).

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (13:34).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. "He who is sent" (13:16) may be translated literally as "apostle."



OUTLINE

(13:12-20)

(13:21-30)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES



GENERAL ANALYSIS



1. Why is it incorrect to understand Jesus' command of footwashing only figuratively?  



SEGMENT ANALYSIS

13:12-20



- 1a. What was Jesus' command here to His disciples? 



- 1b. What is the basis of this command?  

2. What teachings lie behind the act of washing one another's feet?  



3. How do we know that the sacrament of footwashing is to be carried out by the church today?  

4. What is the message of Jesus' words in verse 16?  



5. What was the purpose of Jesus' foretelling of His betrayal?  

6. How does Jesus' declaration in verse 20 relate to His footwashing?  

13:21-30

7. Why was Jesus troubled in spirit at this moment?  

8. What constitutes a betrayal? 

9. Compare the disciple whom Jesus loved with Judas Iscariot.  

13:31-35

10. How was the Son of Man glorified "now" (31)? 

11. How is the Lord's commandment to love one another a new commandment? 

12. Why does loving one another make it known to all that we are Jesus' disciples? 🔑

13:36-38

13. What is the meaning of Jesus' words in verse 36? 🔑

14. Compare what Peter thought and what the Lord told him (37-38). How are we sometimes like the Peter at this moment? 👁️ 🖐️

25 Farewell Discourses (1)

SETTING

According to His foreordained hour, Jesus loved His disciples with one final act of love: He washed His disciples' feet. He then commanded them to do the same, thereby establishing the sacrament of footwashing as the means to have a part with Him. He also bid them to wash one another's feet, an action that reminds them to love one another. Through the exposure of Judas' betrayal and the prediction of Peter's denial, Jesus has made it plain to the disciples that His departure was at hand. To prepare them for the trial ahead, Jesus repeatedly reassures them that He will not leave them alone, but that He will come to them again. This lesson studies the first part of the lengthy discourses that span to the end of chapter 16.

KEY VERSE

"I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you" (14:18).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **Mansions** (14:2): This word, which is literally, "dwellings," is the same word as "home" in verse 23. It is from the verb, "dwell," which is found in verses 10, 17, and 25.
2. **Helper** (14:16) denotes a person who appears in another's behalf, and may also be translated as "mediator" or "intercessor."^{10/766} The NKJV renders the word "advocate" in 1 Jn 2:1.
3. **Judas** (14:22): This was probably Judas, the son of James (Lk 6:16; Acts 1:13).

OUTLINE

(14:1-4)


(14:5-14)


(14:15-24)


(14:25-31)


KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

- 1. What promises did Jesus make in this passage? 

- 2. Record what this passage teaches about the unity of Jesus with the Father. 

- 3. What connections can you make between these key ideas in the passage: “dwell,” “love,” and “keep the commandments”? 

- 4. What does Jesus teach about the Holy Spirit? 

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

14:1-4

- 1. How are Jesus' words here a source of comfort and strength for you? 🦶

14:5-14

- 2. How does Jesus' proclamation in verse 6 contradict the popular notion that all religions are essentially the same? 🦶🦶

- 3. How do we walk on Jesus the way? 👁️🔑🦶

- 4. In what sense will believers do greater works than what Jesus had done? 🦶🦶

- 5. What is the context of the promise that the Lord will do whatever we ask in His name? 👁️🔑

14:15-24

- 6a. What is the thought behind the word "keep"? 🦶

- 6b. What does this teach us about our attitude in keeping Jesus' commandments? 🦶

- 7. How is the Holy Spirit our Helper? 🦶🦶

- 8. In what sense do we see the Lord today (18, 19, 21)? 🦶🦶

9. Jesus promised, “Because I live, you will live also.” How is this a great encouragement for you? 🙏

10. How is Jesus’ promise that we would dwell with Him (verses 2-4) already beginning to be a reality for believers? 🙏

14:25-31

11. Share your experience of how the Holy Spirit teaches you and reminds you of Jesus’ words. 🙏

12. How is the peace which Jesus gives us different from the peace the world gives? 🙏

13. How has Jesus Himself demonstrated to us how we are to love God? 👁️ 🙏

26 Farewell Discourses (2)

15:1-16:4a

SETTING

Jesus’ exhortations as recorded in the present passage are part of His lengthy discourses given in His final moments with the disciples. As we have seen in chapter 14, He first comforted their hearts and assured them of His return and abidance. When He had finished His first farewell discourse, He led the disciples away from where they were (14:31). The words of Jesus which this study focuses on build on the preceding farewell discourse. On the one hand, the disciples must remain in the Lord and go forth and be fruitful as a result. On the other hand, they also need to be prepared for the hostilities of the world against them.

KEY VERSE

“You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you” (15:16).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **“He takes away... He prunes”** (15:2): “The vinedresser does two things to ensure maximum fruit production. In the winter, he cuts off the dry and withered branches. This may involve pruning the vines to the extent that only the stalks remain. Later, when the vine has sprouted leaves, he removes the smaller shoots so that the main fruitbearing branches receive adequate

nourishment.”^{1/2:144} According to Leviticus 25:3, the pruning of vineyards is a part of the agricultural cycle.

OUTLINE

(15:1–11)

(15:12–17)

(15:18–16:4a)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

15:1–11

1. How are the vine and the branches an apt analogy of our relationship to the Lord Jesus? 🗝️ 🌿

2. In what sense is Jesus the “true” vine? 🗝️

3. What does our Father expect of us who are believers of Christ? 👁️ 🌿

4. In what ways does our Father “prune” us? 🗝️ 🌿

5. What enables us to bear fruit? 👁️



6. How do we abide in Jesus and in His love? 👁️ 🗝️ 🌿



15:12–17



7. How does this segment elaborate on the meaning of bearing fruit? 👁️ 🗝️

8. What makes Jesus’ joy remain in us and complete our joy? 👁️ 🗝️ 🌿

9. What is the basis of the commandment to love one another? 👁️ 🗝️

10. How does the contrast between servant and friend teach us about our relationship with the Lord?  


11. What truths are behind Jesus' statement "You did not choose me, but I chose you"?  

12. How does bearing fruit relate to the promise of 15:16?  


15:18–16:4a

13. How does this segment sharply contrast with the previous? 

14. What does "the world" represent? 

15a. According to Jesus, why would the world hate the disciples? 



15b. What are some ways in which you have experienced such hatred from the world? 

16. How has Jesus' coming revealed the sin of the world?  

17. How does the Holy Spirit testify of Jesus?  

18. How does the role of the Holy Spirit relate to the context of this segment?  

19. What would lead someone to such a misguided zeal as described in 16:2?  

20. Why did the Lord emphasize the fact that He had told the disciples what was coming?  

27 Farewell Discourses (3)

16:4b–33

SETTING

The Lord Jesus has been speaking extensively to the disciples about His going away. He assured them of the coming of the Holy Spirit and of an unhindered fellowship with Him and the Father. He also commanded the disciples to bear fruit to the Father’s glory by loving one another. Having prepared the disciples with the knowledge that they would be hated by the world, He now returns to a consolatory tone in this last discourse. He tells them that while sorrow fills their hearts now, their sorrow will soon turn into joy when He sees them again.

KEY VERSE

“Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you” (16:22).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. “**Convict**” (16:8): This word in the New Testament means “to show someone his sin and to summon him to repentance.”^{9/2:474}

OUTLINE

(16:4b–15)


(16:16–24)

(16:25–33)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. What does the Lord Jesus teach about


1a. Him and the Father? 

1b. Him and the Holy Spirit? 

SEGMENT ANALYSIS


16:4b-15

1a. What are “these things” in verse 4?  


1b. What was the response of the disciples after hearing “these things”? 

2. Explain the work of conviction by the Holy Spirit. 

3. How is not believing in Jesus a sin? 

4. Why does Jesus’ going to the Father pertain to “righteousness”? 

5. What does it mean that the Holy Spirit will convict the world of judgment? 

6. In what ways have you felt the conviction by the Holy Spirit? 

7. How does the Holy Spirit declare to us today the things of Jesus? 🗝️ 👣

16:16-24

8. How would the disciples see Jesus in a little while? 🗝️

9. Why would the world rejoice after Jesus' departure? 🗝️

10. How was the sorrow of the disciples analogous to the pains of a woman in labor? 🗝️

11. What does it mean to ask the Father in Jesus' name? 🗝️

12. How have you experienced the joy that the Lord speaks of here? 👣

16:25-33

13. How does our Lord speak plainly to us today about the Father? 🗝️ 👣

14. What is the teaching in the words of verses 26 and 27? 👁️ 🗝️

15. What does the disciples' response say about them? 👁️ 🗝️

16. What kind of peace can we have in Jesus? 🗝️ 👣


17. Jesus proclaimed victory over the world even as He was about to face suffering and death. How does this help us in times of tribulation? 👣

28 The Prayer of the Savior

JOHN
17:1-26

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. According to Jesus' prayer, record all that He has done or continues to do for believers. 

2. Record the teachings in this chapter related to these key words: 

- 2a. "Glory"

- 2b. "Know"

SETTING

The hour has come for Jesus to leave the world and to return to the Father. He has spoken at length to the disciples to console them and to prepare them for what is ahead. Following a series of final discourses with His disciples, the Lord Jesus lifts up His eyes to heaven and utters a prayer to His Father for His disciples. As we can see from the passage that ensues, the Lord's prayer will be followed immediately by His arrest in the garden.

KEY VERSE

"I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours" (17:9).

OUTLINE

_____	(17:1-5)
_____	(17:6-11a)
_____	(17:11b-16)
_____	(17:17-19)
_____	(17:20-23)
_____	(17:24-26)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES


17:6-11a



4. What has the Lord Jesus accomplished, according to this paragraph? 

5. What does this paragraph teach us about what we as disciples must do?  

17:11b-16

6. What is Jesus' petition here? 

7. The preferred reading for verse 11 is "keep them through Your name which You have given Me." How has the Father given Jesus His name? 

- 8a. What does Jesus' prayer teach us about our attitude toward and relationship with the world?  

- 8b. How has our Lord Jesus set an example for us in this regard?



17:17-19


9. In what sense did Jesus sanctify Himself? 

10. What does it mean for us to be sanctified by the truth?



17:20-23

11. Why does Jesus deem the unity of believers to be so important?  

12. What does Jesus want the world to know? Why?  

17:24–26

13. What is Jesus' desire for believers? 👁

14. What does the prayer teach about the present and future abiding presence of Jesus for believers? 👁 🙌

15. How will Jesus continue to declare the Father's name to His disciples? 🔑

29 The King on Trial (1)

SETTING

After His prayer of consecration (Jn 17), and knowing the hour of His sacrifice has come, Jesus travels with his disciples over the Kidron Valley to a place that has become known as the Garden of Gethsemane. Here, Jesus is arrested, having been betrayed by one of His own. He is then taken before Annas and Caiaphas for interrogation. Throughout this time, Peter has been faithfully attempting to follow his Lord. But in the end, he will deny Jesus three times before the rooster crows (see Jn 13:38).

KEY VERSE

“So Jesus said to Peter, ‘Put your sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink the cup which My Father has given Me?’” (18:11)

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **The Brook Kidron** (18:1): Kidron is the name of a valley east of Jerusalem, separating it from the Mt. of Olives. It only carries water in the rainy season, and is hence called a *cheimárrous* (“winter-flowing”) in the Septuagint and the Gospel of John.^{5/3:14–15}
2. **A detachment of troops** (18:3) consisted of “a cohort of Roman soldiers. A full cohort was led by a *chiliarchos* (lit., ‘leader of a thousand,’ rendered ‘tribune’ or ‘commander’) and consisted of one thousand men, though in practice it often numbered only six hundred. The Romans could use surprisingly large numbers of soldiers even for a single

person (like the 470 men protecting Paul in Acts 23:23), especially if they feared a riot.”^{1/2:157}

3. **Officers from the chief priests and Pharisees** (18:3) represented the temple police, the primary arresting officers.^{1/2:157}
4. **“Shall I not drink the cup”** (18:11): “Cup” is used figuratively in the Bible to represent sufferings and the outpouring of God’s wrath (cf. Ps. 75:8; Isa. 51:17, 22; Jer. 25:15-17; Ezek. 23:31-34; Hab. 2:16; Rev 14:10; 16:19).
5. **Annas** (18:13) held the office of high priest from A.D. 6 to 15 and was the father-in-law of Caiaphas. He retained great power even after his removal from office.

OUTLINE

_____	(18:1-11)
_____	(18:12-14)
_____	(18:15-18)
_____	(18:19-24)
_____	(18:25-27)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

- 1a. What time of day did the arrest of Jesus and hearing by Annas take place?

- 1b. What does this and the haste with which the hearing was conducted tell you about the nature of the proceedings?



SEGMENT ANALYSIS

18:1-11

1. What do we learn about Jesus from the way He faced those who came to arrest Him?

2. How does Jesus’ concern for His disciples serve as an example for us?

3. Judas, a former disciple of Jesus, chose to stand on the side of the soldiers who were arresting Jesus (5). When you have to choose a side, what do you base your choice on?

- 4a. What do you think Peter was attempting to do?

4b. How did Jesus view the situation differently from Peter?



4c. What can we learn from this about the sufferings in our lives?



18:12-14

5. Jesus was arrested and bound by His captors (12).

5a. Why was this ironic?



5b. Was Jesus a victim without a choice? What can we learn from Jesus about this?



6. Why do you think the author reminds us of Caiaphas' prediction (cf. 11:49-52)?



18:15-18

7a. Can you relate in any way to Peter's denial of association with Jesus?



7b. What truth does this teach us about following Jesus?



18:19-24

8a. What was the main point of Jesus' reply to Annas?



8b. What does it say about the trial itself?



9a. Considering Jesus' responses to Annas and to the officer who struck Him, how did Jesus stand as faultless before His interrogators?

- 9b. What can you learn from Jesus about being treated unjustly?

18:25-27

10. Compare Peter's denial of Jesus with John 13:37. What is the lesson here?

11. The author pays special attention to the rooster's crow, and adds the word "immediately." What do you think is his point (cf. Jn 13:38)?

30 The King on Trial (2)

18:28-19:16a

SETTING

Jesus stood on trial through the night before Annas and Caiaphas the high priest. Annas' fruitless attempt to interrogate Jesus could only confirm Jesus' innocence and expose the illegitimacy of the trial by the Jewish authorities. They then lead Jesus to Pilate, the governor of Judea, with the intent of putting Jesus to death. Pilate, being a Roman official, has no interest in the religious dispute of the Jews and finds no fault in Jesus. Through Jesus' own revelation and the accusations of the Jews, Pilate begins to realize that Jesus is no ordinary man and attempts to release Him. But eventually he bows to the political pressure exerted by the Jews and sentences Jesus to death by crucifixion.

KEY VERSE

"...Jesus answered, 'You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice'" (18:37).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **The Praetorium** (18:28) was the headquarters of the Roman governor.
2. **Early morning** (18:28) by Roman reckoning would be from 3 to 6 a.m.
3. **"Lest they should be defiled"** (18:28): According to Jewish law, dwelling places of gentiles are unclean (The Mishnah. 'Ohol. 18:7 B).

4. **Pilate** (18:29) was appointed by the emperor Tiberius as the prefect of Judea and served from A.D. 26 to 36.
5. **Scourged** (19:1): “The Romans used three forms of corporal punishment: beating (Lat *fustigatio*), flogging (*flagellatio*), and scourging (*verberatio*). Freeman received punishments inflicted by either rods of birch or elm that were often bound together in a bundle. Slaves or non-Romans could be punished with whips made of leather straps or knotted cords often weighted with pieces of metal or bone. Roman law allowed their use in four situations: as a torture to promote the questioning of a prisoner, as a self-standing punishment, as a capital punishment (people were sentenced to death by beating), or as a preparation for execution. On some occasions these beatings were so severe that bones and organs were left exposed (Josephus BJ ii.21.5 [612]; vi.5.3 [304]).”^{s/4:359}
6. **A crown of thorns** (19:2): “These thorns, up to several inches long, would sink into the victim’s skull, which caused blood to gush out and distort a person’s face, resulting in considerable pain.”^{1/2:169}
7. **The Pavement** (19:13): “The Greek word is an adjective meaning ‘paved with stoneblock,’ ‘made of tesserae,’ hence, of a mosaic or tessellated pavement ... The public trial of Jesus could not be conducted in the palace proper lest the Jews defile themselves before the feast. Hence Pilate located his judgment seat outside in the courtyard where this pavement was.”^{s/3:730}
8. **Preparation Day of the Passover** (19:14): Various views have been proposed regarding the meaning of this term in this context, depending on one’s position on the dating of Jesus’ crucifixion: 1) The day preceding Passover; 2) The day preceding the weekly Sabbath of the Passover week; 3) The day preceding the festival Sabbath (Lev 23:7).

OUTLINE

(18:28–32)

(18:33–38a)

(18:38b–40)

(19:1–3)


(19:4–7)



(19:8–12)


(19:13–16a)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

- 1a. Observe and record the seven scenes in this passage that alternate between the outside and inside of the Praetorium. 

- 1b. How did Pilate’s attitude toward Jesus change progressively through the repeated actions of going out of and coming back into the Praetorium?  

2. What do you detect about the tone and feelings in these questions? 

2a. “Am I a Jew?” (18:35)



2b. “Are you a king then?” (18:37)

2c. “What is truth?” (18:38)

2d. “Where are You from?” (19:9)

2e. “Are You not speaking to me?” (19:10)

3. Record how the narrative increasingly conveys

3a. Jesus’ innocence  

3b. The accusers’ guilt  


3c. Pilate’s predicament  

4. How do the different parts of the narrative build on the theme of Jesus’ kingship?  

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

18:28–32

1. What was ironic about the Jews’ carefully avoiding being defiled? 

2. What do you think was wrong about the Jews’ reply to Pilate’s question (30, 31)? 

3. How did the plot of the Jews fulfill Jesus’ words (cf. Jn 12:32, 33)?  

18:33–38a

4a. What is surprising about Pilate's question to Jesus in verse 33? 👁️ 🔑

4b. How does this relate to Jesus' question to Pilate in verse 34? 👁️ 🔑

4c. What was the intent behind Jesus' question? 🔑

5a. Jesus' kingdom is not of this world. How did this fact determine the course of events for Jesus? 👁️ 🔑

5b. How does this understanding help define your relationship with Him in your life today? 🔑 🦶

6. What does it mean to you that Jesus is King? 🔑 🦶

7. How did Jesus bear witness to the truth? 🔑

8. What does it mean to hear His voice? 🔑 🦶



9. What things in our lives could show that we are "of the truth"? 🦶

18:38b-40



10. What did Pilate's question, "What is truth?" say about him? 👁️ 🔑

11. What did the Jews' demand reveal about them? 🔑

19:1-7

12. Why did Pilate scourge Jesus and present Him to the Jews?  

13. When you are unjustly wounded, what helps you to bear it? 


14. How did the accusation of the Jews all the more incriminate them?  



19:8-12


15. How was there a role reversal in this segment

15a. between Pilate and Jesus?  



15b. between the Jews and Jesus?  

15c. between Pilate and the Jews?  



16. How did Jesus indirectly answer Pilate's question, "Where are you from?"  


17. Explain the reason for the Jews' greater sin. 


18. How is our conduct determined by whether we know the ultimate source of power? 

19. What threat were the Jews making?  

19:13–16a

20. What considerations finally made Pilate go against his own judgment about Jesus?  

21. In what situations might we likewise close our eyes to the truth and act against our conscience? 

22. The chief priests answered Pilate, “We have no king but Caesar!” What does this acclamation of loyalty reveal about the heart of the chief priests? 

31 Jesus' Death and Burial

19:16b–42

SETTING

Pilate conceded to the demand of the Jews for Jesus' death and handed Him over to be crucified. From man's viewpoint, Jesus suffers an utterly humiliating death. However, through His death, Jesus is exalted and accomplishes God's most noble purpose (cf. Jn 12:23, 24, 32). Everything that happens at the cross takes place according to divine plan, which the Scripture has already foretold. Thus, the entire passion narrative clearly presents the crucified Christ as the King and the Savior.

KEY VERSE

“So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished!’ And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit” (19:30).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **“Bearing His cross”** (19:17): The person who was executed would carry his own cross on his back to the site of the crucifixion.^{1/2:175}
2. **“Went out”** (19:17): According to custom, executions took place outside of the city (cf. Lev 24:14, 23; Num 15:35, 36; Heb 13:12).
3. **“They crucified Him”** (19:18): “In ancient times, crucifixion was synonymous with horror and shame, a death inflicted on slaves, bandits, prisoners of war, and revolutionaries... For hours (if not days), the person would hang in the heat of the sun, stripped naked and struggling to breathe. In order to avoid asphyxiation, he must push

himself up with his legs and pull with his arms, triggering muscle spasms causing unimaginable pain. The end would come through heart failure, brain damage caused by reduced oxygen supply, suffocation, or shock. Atrocious physical agony, length of torment, and public shame combined to make crucifixion a most terrible form of death.”^{1/2:176}

4. **Title** (19:19): “It was not unusual for a tablet identifying the crime to be hung on the condemned as he went to the execution site, then attached to his cross for all to see.”^{5/1:829}
5. **Hebrew, Greek, and Latin** (19:20): Hebrew (or Aramaic) was the vernacular language of Judea; Latin was the official language of the government; and Greek was the international language of trade and commerce.
6. **Sour wine** (19:29) was used by soldiers to quench their thirst.^{1/2:175}
7. **Hyssop** (19:29) was “a small bushy plant that can grow out of cracks in walls... the branches at the end of the stalk would have formed a little ‘nest’ into which the soggy sponge is placed.”^{1/2:179}
8. **“That Sabbath was a high day”** (19:31): It was a special Sabbath because it was also the Sabbath of the Passover week.
9. **“The Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken”** (19:31): “In order to hasten death, the crucifieds’ legs (and sometimes other bones) would be smashed with an iron mallet, a practice called *crurifragium* (“breaking of bones”). This prevented the person from prolonging his life by pushing himself up with his legs to be able to breathe. Arm strength soon failed, and asphyxiation ensued.”^{1/2:180}
10. **“A hundred pounds”** (19:39): This is literally a hundred *litrai*, which is equivalent to 65.45 pounds. This was a large amount of spices that befitted royal burials.^{3/359}

OUTLINE

(19:16b-22)

(19:23-24)

(19:25-27)



(19:28-30)


(19:31-37)


(19:38-42)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS


1. Take a moment to read the passages in the Old Testament that are alluded to in this passage: Ps 22:15, 18; 69:21; Ex 12:46; Num 9:12; Ps 34:20; Zech 12:10. Looking at their contexts, what were some of the themes in these passages?  
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2. Why does the writer repeatedly point out the fulfillment of Scripture in retelling the crucifixion of Jesus? 
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-
-

3. What sharp contrast between two types of people at the cross does the narrative present to us? 

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

19:16b-22

1. How did each of these people perceive the words “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews”? 



1a. Pilate

1b. Chief priests


1c. Soldiers


2. How do you account for the attention the narrative gives to the title on the cross? 



19:23-24


3. What does this segment teach us about man’s actions and God’s purpose?  

19:25-27

4. This segment records the last thing Jesus accomplished in His life on earth. What can you learn from Jesus here? 

5. If you were that disciple, what concerns or reservations might have come to your mind? 


6. Why do you think the descriptive term “the disciple whom He loved” is significant here? What does it teach us about being loved by the Lord and receiving His commission?  

7. What can you learn from the response of the disciple? 




19:28-30


8a. What did Jesus mean by “It is finished!”? 



8b. What can we learn here about how we ought to live our lives? 

19:31-37

9. Why did one of the soldiers pierce Jesus’ side? 

10. What is the significance of the flow of blood and water from Jesus’ side? See Zech 12:10; 13:1. 


11. Why did the writer stress the truthfulness of his testimony? 



12. How should we respond to this true testimony?  

13. Why is this event significant for you personally? 

19:38-42

14. What did the descriptions of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus have in common? 

15. Why were these two men commendable? 

16. Based on the narrative, in what ways was Jesus’ burial special?  

32 The Lord's Appearance to Mary

JOHN
20:1-31

SETTING

Upon Jesus' death, Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus came forward to ask for Jesus' body and gave the Lord a stately burial. Yet Jesus' death is not the end of the gospel message. What is about to occur three days after His death—His resurrection and His ascension—is what brings a living hope to all Jesus' followers. If Jesus is not raised to life, then the prophecies of Scripture and the claims of Jesus would be in vain, and Jesus would be no more than a charismatic and powerful teacher. But being the Lord of life, Jesus is not confined by death. He takes up His life just as He willingly laid it down. In this lesson, we will read the accounts surrounding Jesus' post-resurrection appearance to the disciples through which all the disciples may come to believe that Jesus is truly Lord and Savior.

KEY VERSE

“Jesus said to her, ‘Do not cling to Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God’” (20:17).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **“The stone had been taken away”** (20:1): The entrance of the tomb “was often closed with a large circular stone, set up on edge and rolled in its groove to the mouth of the tomb so as to close it securely.”^{5/1:559}
2. **“Raboni”** (20:16) is Aramaic for “my lord.”

OUTLINE

(20:1-10)

(1-2)

(3-10)

(20:11-18)

(11-13)

(14-18)

(20:19-23)

(20:24-29)

(20:30-31)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. Observe and record Mary's actions. What do they tell you about her?  

2. Why is Jesus' resurrection so important? 🔑 🗝️

3. Observe the crucial role of the following two words in the passage 👁️ 🔑

3a. "see"

3b. "believe"

4. In which verses does the Bible record Jesus' greeting, "Peace to you"? Why is such a form of greeting important in the context of the story?

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

20:1–10

1. Identify the progression in what Mary, the other disciple, and Peter saw in turn. 👁️

2. Explain the significance of what Peter saw. 🔑

3a. What did the other disciple believe? 🔑

3b. How do you relate your answer to verse 9? 🔑

20:11–18

4a. What is the meaning of the message Jesus asked Mary to convey? 👁️ 🔑

4b. Why did the Lord Jesus call the disciples “My brethren”?



4c. Explain the significance of the words “My Father and your Father” and “My God and your God.”



20:19-23

5. What change took place in the disciples after seeing the Lord?



6a. What did the Lord Jesus send the disciples to do?



6b. How would the disciples exercise the authority to forgive and retain sins?



6c. Why is receiving the Holy Spirit necessary for the commission?



20:24-29

7. Jesus answered Thomas’ specific demand (see verses 25 and 27). What does this tell us about Jesus?



8. What brought about the complete change in Thomas?



9. Recall a personal encounter you had with the Lord that led to the confession, “My Lord, My God!”



10a. Is it wrong to believe upon seeing evidence?



10b. What was wrong with Thomas’ demand for evidence?



33 Jesus' Third Appearance to the Disciples

JOHN
21:1–25

10c. Explain the Lord's message to Thomas (vv. 27, 29).

11. How is the story of Thomas written for us today? 🔑 🗝️

20:30–31

12. What do these two verses tell us about the nature and purpose of Jesus' signs? 👁️ 🔑

13. What does it mean to you to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God? 🔑 🗝️

SETTING

Jesus first appeared to Mary after His resurrection. Then He appeared twice to the disciples while they were behind closed doors, the second time particularly for the benefit of Thomas. Chapter 21, the epilogue of the Gospel, narrates yet another appearance of Jesus to the disciples. The setting now is the Sea of Tiberias, where the disciples have gone fishing. After the disciples have toiled all night without catching anything, Jesus manifests His power and gives them a miraculous catch. On this occasion, the Lord Jesus entrusts Peter the important pastoral commission and renews Peter's commitment to follow the Lord.

KEY VERSE

“Most assuredly, I say to you, when you were younger, you girded yourself and walked where you wished; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will gird you and carry you where you do not wish.’ This He spoke, signifying by what death he would glorify God. And when He had spoken this, He said to him, ‘Follow Me’” (21:18–19).

DID YOU KNOW...?

1. **Sea of Tiberias** (21:1) is another name for the Sea of Galilee (Jn 6:1).
2. **Put on** (21:7): The Greek verb means to “tie around.” We may infer from this word that Peter probably put a belt around his garment so he could swim ashore.
3. **Two hundred cubits** (21:8) is about one hundred yards.

OUTLINE

(21:1-14)

(21:15-19)

(21:20-23)

(21:24-25)

KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

GENERAL ANALYSIS

- 1. Compare this story with Lk 5:1-11. What similarities and contrasts do you see? 👁

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

21:1-14

- 1. What feelings do you get out of verse 3? 👁 🔑

- 2. What do you think made the disciple whom Jesus loved realize that it was the Lord? What does his recognition of the Lord tell you about him? 🔑

- 3. What is the point of the comment in verse 11? 🔑

- 4. Why do you think the disciples dared not ask Jesus who He was? 🔑

- 5. What did you learn about the Lord Jesus from what He said and did in this segment? 👁 🔑 🦶

21:15-19

- 6a. Why did the Lord Jesus ask Peter if he loved Him? 🔑

6b. What was Jesus' point for repeating His question and command three times? 🔑

7. What does it mean to feed or tend the Lord's sheep? 🐑 🔑

8. What essential qualities are required to care for the Lord's sheep? 🐑 🐑 🔑

9. Why is it important to remind ourselves that the sheep and lambs we care for are the Lord's? 🐑 🐑 🔑

10a. What difference in tone can you discern between "You know that I love you" (15-17) and "I will lay down my life for Your sake" (Jn 13:37)? 🔑

10b. What lesson can we learn from this change in attitude? 🐑

11. How does Jesus' prediction concerning Peter's old age relate to what He had entrusted Peter with? 🔑


12. Peter's death would bring glory to God. What does this reveal about the sufferings that come our way? 🐑

13. What do you learn from this passage about the meaning of following the Lord Jesus? 👁️ 🔑 🐑

21:20-23

14. What lesson did the Lord teach Peter here about discipleship? 👁️ 🔑 🐑

21:24-25

15. Why is the testimony of the disciple important to this book? 

Suggested Answers

Lesson 2

OBSERVATION

Outline

The Word of Life and Light (1:1–5)

John's Witness of the True Light (1:6–9)

Rejection and Reception of the Word (1:10–13)

The Word Became Flesh and Brought God's Fullness (1:14–18)

Key Words/Phrases

Beginning, Word, life, made, light, darkness, John, witness, world, receive, children of God, became flesh, glory, full/fullness, grace, truth, born, only begotten, dwelt among us, law, declared.

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. Some themes/concepts: the divinity of Jesus Christ; life; light; witness; new birth; being children of God; the incarnation; grace and truth through Jesus Christ.
2. Light and darkness; those who did not receive the Word and those who did; being born of blood, or the will of the flesh, or the will of man versus those being born of God; Moses' law in contrast to Jesus' grace and truth (The point here is not to condemn the Mosaic law but to point out the superiority of the grace and truth of Christ; cf. Heb 8:1–6; 9:11, 22, 23).
4. By identifying Jesus as the eternal Word through whom all created things are made, the author wants us to recognize and believe that Jesus is God. This truth is essential to salvation, for God alone may grant the authority to become children of God. Because Jesus is God, through Him we may receive grace, truth, and life.

Furthermore, the designation of Jesus as the Word also teaches us about the purpose for Him to become flesh—to declare to

us the Father whom no one has ever seen. Just as God's words revealed His will and power in the Old Testament, the Word reveals God to the human race (Heb 1:1–2). Only Jesus, who is God Himself, is able to know and reveal to us who God truly is.

5. He was sent from God to be the witness of the Light (6, 15).

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. The beginning in John 1:1 refers to the eternity before time and creation. John 1:1 and Genesis 1:1 are comparable, but the point of reference differs in the two verses. Genesis 1:1 refers to the beginning of physical creation, while the Gospel according to John refers to the pre-existence of Jesus Christ, who precedes physical creation (Rev 1:8, 11; 22:13; cf. Eph 1:3, 4; Col 1:17; 1 Pet 1:20; Rev 13:8).
2. God is Spirit (Jn 4:24). He is not confined to the limitations of time and space we are in. For the Word to be God and be with God defies our understanding, and herein lies the mystery of the incarnation as taught in 1 Tim 3:16 (How could Jesus be in the flesh and yet remain the eternal God?). The divinity of Christ is one of the revealed truths in the Bible which we must accept in faith even when it is beyond our understanding.
3. He does so to show that the new work and new life that God was effecting through Jesus Christ was much like the work of God's creation. Spiritual birth and the new life are key themes found throughout the Gospel.
4. God is light and in Him is no darkness at all (1 Jn 1:5). Jesus, being God Himself, has brought light into the world because He is the true Light (Jn 1:6–9). But everyone who practices evil loves darkness rather than light (Jn 3:19). He walks in darkness and does not know where he is going (1 Jn 2:11). “Darkness,” therefore, is a metaphor for everything that is opposed to God and His goodness.

If we choose to live by principles that are contrary to God, then we are still under the sway of the evil one and we are spiritually ignorant. On the other hand, if we believe and follow the Lord Jesus, we will not walk in darkness but will come

to the saving knowledge of God (Jn 8:12; 12:35, 36, 46). We will not stand condemned but have everlasting life.

Light and darkness are mutually exclusive. We are either in the light or in the darkness, and we must make that choice in our belief and in our conduct. Having fellowship with God means leaving darkness (1 Jn 1:6, 7). There is simply no middle ground (2 Cor 6:14).

5. That all might believe through him (7).
6. The words “all” (7) and “every” (9) indicate the universal reach of the light of salvation. No one is excluded from God’s love, although men have the choice to reject it (Jn 3:16–18).
7. Here, the Bible calls the world, particularly the people of the world, “His own.” This term suggests ownership. We are Christ’s own because we were made through Him, and He is our Creator and Lord. Not only so, the term also implies God’s love. We are His own in the sense that we are dear to Him, so much so that He was willing to come into the world for our sake. However, our Lord was rejected by the very people He had made and loved so dearly.
8. To receive the light is to welcome Jesus into our hearts and our lives, embracing Him as our own just as He considers us His own, giving Him His rightful place, and yielding to His rule. Receiving the Light means trusting that the Lord Jesus is our source of all goodness, the way to everlasting life. In our daily lives, this attitude translates into godly thoughts and conduct that are obedient to Christ’s commands and free from the darkness of evil.
9. We do not become the children of God by simply declaring that we are children of God. This change of identity involves a spiritual birth, the beginning of a new life. As verse 12 teaches, the pre-condition of being born of God is to receive the Light and to believe in His name. Having made this choice, we are given the right to become children of God. “Right” is also translated as “authority.”^{10/353} Only God can grant this authority. The outcome is a new birth.

From other parts of the Bible, we understand that this birth is granted through the washing of regeneration during baptism

(Jn 3:5; Tit 3:5; Acts 22:16). This is how we “become” children of God (“become” signals a real transformation). By the universal authority of our Lord Jesus, our old man dies in baptism and we are raised to a new life in Christ and become heirs according to God’s promise (Mt 28:18–20; Rom 6:3,4; Gal 3:26–29; Col 2:11–13).

10. “Name” represents ownership. God’s people were called by His name in the sense that they were His (2 Chron 7:14). God’s house and His city were likewise called by His name (Jer 7:10, 11, 14, 30; 25:29; 32:34; 34:15). This concept is carried into the New Testament. Those who are saved are called by God’s name (Acts 15:12–17). Thus, to believe in Jesus’ name means to accept Jesus’ offer to become His own.

Secondly, “name” implies authority. Jesus taught that He had come in His Father’s name (Jn 5:43) and that He acted in His Father’s name (Jn 10:25). This means that He did everything with the authority given by His Father. To hallow God’s name involves acknowledging His kingship and obedience to His will (Mt 6:9, 10). In the same way, to believe in Jesus’ name is to submit to His authority as our Lord. As we have learned in the same verse (Jn 1:12), this authority enables us to be born of God and become children of God.

Both aspects of Jesus’ name, i.e., His ownership and His authority, are found in our baptism. When we are baptized, we come under Christ’s ownership and His authority. That is the meaning of putting on Christ (Gal 3:27). That is why the Bible repeatedly underscores the fact that baptism is performed in the name of the Lord Jesus (Mt 28:19; Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; cf. 1 Cor 1:13; Acts 22:16). Having been baptized, we assume a new identity, and our daily lives ought to also reflect that name by which we have been called (cf. Jas 2:7; Col 3:17).

12. Glory can come either from men or from God. When it is from men, the word carries the sense of honor or admiration. The glory of our Lord Jesus is not from men but from God the Father, and He also gives His glory to His believers. His divine glory displays God’s being and His attributes, such as His righteousness and power, and it was revealed through the signs that He performed. The result of seeing Jesus’ glory is that people

put their faith in Him. While the Lord exhibits His glory in His own time and according to His own will, He also expects us to trust in His words in order to witness His glory.

13. In verse 14 we are told that the incarnate Word is full of grace and truth. Therefore, the “fullness” here means the abundant grace and truth Christ has brought to us. Col 1:19 and 2:9 teach us that in Christ dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily. By coming to Christ, we can experience and receive all the spiritual blessings that are found in God, including the remission of sins, spiritual eyesight to see what is lasting, the hope of eternal life, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the peace in Christ, and an abundant life. This is made possible because the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.
15. The law teaches us to discern right from wrong and how to live a life pleasing to God. But because of the weakness of the flesh, we are unable to keep the requirements of the law. Instead, we become condemned by the law. Christ came to pay the penalty of sin and to enable us to become children of God and heirs of the promise (Rom 8:3; Gal 3:13–14). This is the grace of God—to be justified freely even though we do not deserve it (Eph 1:1–13). Now, having been forgiven and received the promised Holy Spirit, we may know and abide by the truth. This new relationship with God is the true fulfillment of what the law required (Rom 8:4; Heb 8:7–13).
16. Jesus is “the Word” because He has declared the Father whom no one has ever seen. In the past, God made Himself known through His spoken words. But now, Jesus, who was with God in the beginning and who is God Himself, has fully revealed to us God’s being and the way to Him (Heb 1:1,2). To hear the Son is to hear the Father, and to know the Son is to know the Father (Jn 5:37, 38; 14:24; 15:15; 17:14, 25, 26).

Lesson 3

OBSERVATION

Outline

John’s Testimony before the Delegation from Jerusalem (1:19–28)
 Questioned by the priests and Levites (19–23)
 Questioned by the Pharisees (24–27)
 John’s Testimony to Israel (1:29–34)

Key Words/Phrases

Testimony, Christ, Elijah, Prophet, baptize, know, Lamb of God, Holy Spirit, dove, witness, Son of God.

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. Twice the delegates from the Jews asked John, “Who are you?” (1:19, 22). The works of John the Baptist were so well-known that they were getting the attention of the religious authorities, who wanted to know John’s identity. John, however, made it clear that He was not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet. Instead, he was only the voice in the wilderness. In contrast, he loudly testified to the identity of Jesus Christ, proclaiming that Jesus was preferred before him (27), far greater than him (27), the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (29), He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit (33), and the Son of God (34).

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

2. “The Jews” in this context represented the religious authority of the day. While the people in general were also wondering if John was the Christ (Lk 3:15), the religious figures demanded to know the answer out of very different interests. They were not genuinely seeking the truth. Instead, they probably interrogated John because they feared that their own authority might be jeopardized (cf. Mt 21:23–26; Lk 7:29, 30; 20:1–7). It was with this motivation that the religious leaders would later also question Jesus about the source of His authority.

4. John quoted the prophecy in Isaiah 40:3, which was the Lord's promise of the people's return from exile. He saw himself as the harbinger who prepared the way for the arrival of the Messiah. A "voice" has no identity of its own. Instead of focusing on his own identity, which the Jewish delegates eagerly inquired about, John turned the people's attention away from himself to the One who was coming after him. In his mind, the function of his ministry was more important than who he was.
5. Apparently, they considered baptism to be associated with the Messiah. In other words, they expected that when the Messiah comes, He would baptize the people. This anticipation may have derived from prophecies about the eschatological washing such as found in Ezek 36:25 and Zech 13:1. John's baptism, unlike other ritual washings, was accompanied with a call to repentance and warning of the coming judgment (Mt 3:4–10). Therefore, it was natural for his contemporaries to recognize the unprecedented authoritative nature of his baptism and wondered if it was indeed the fulfillment of the Messianic hope.
6. Three times the Gospel records that John spoke concerning the Christ: "He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me" (1:15, 27, 30). Historically, Jesus' arrival on the scene was after John's. But Jesus is in fact the eternal Word who was from the beginning and therefore preceded John. Therefore, Jesus was far superior to John. John added that he was not worthy to untie Jesus' sandal strap. In other words, he was so much inferior to Jesus that even a menial gesture done upon Jesus was considered too lofty.
8. John denied that he was the Elijah because the people's anticipation that Elijah would come as some great and mighty eschatological figure, and he did not want them to view him in that light. It was also possible that he had never received any divine instructions that he would fill that role. However, Jesus pointed out that John was in fact the Elijah spoken of in the prophetic writings (Mal 4:5, 6). John was Elijah in the sense that he was the messenger sent by God to prepare the way for the coming of the Christ.
9. Like John the Baptist, we are ambassadors for Christ, leading people to reconcile with God (cf. 2 Cor 5:18–20; Col 1:28, 29).
10. Like a lamb led to the slaughter, Jesus did not resist His captors nor revile in return, even though He was innocent (Isa 53:5–7; 1 Pet 2:21–24). He committed Himself to the will of the Father and bore our sins on His body. Like the Passover lamb or the lamb for a sin offering, our Lord Jesus was without blemish (cf. Ex 12:5; Lev 4:32; 1 Pet 1:19). Having offered Himself without spot to God, Jesus is able to cleanse us with His blood (Heb 9:14). This perfect sacrifice was prepared by God for our redemption before the foundation of the world (Heb 10:5; 1 Pet 1:18–20). Therefore, Jesus Christ is rightly called the Lamb of God.
11. According to John, he came baptizing with water that the Christ might be revealed to Israel (1:31). As the subsequent verses show, this revealing took place during Jesus' baptism, when the Holy Spirit descended and remained on Jesus (Mt 3:16, 17; Mk 1:9–11; Lk 3:21, 22). This fact tells us that while John's baptism led people to repentance and confession of sins, it also pointed them to Jesus Christ. His baptism culminated in the baptism of Jesus Christ, through which Jesus' identity was made known to Israel. It was in Jesus that redemption would come to the people of God. That is why John's baptizing ministry was crucial to the introduction of the Messiah.
12. According to the Messianic prophecies, God would put His Spirit upon His Elect whom He delights (Isa 11:1, 2; 42:1; cf. Lk 4:16–21). He would anoint Him with the Spirit of God so He could bring good tidings to those in need (Isa 61:1). Putting God's own Spirit upon Jesus served as a direct seal of Jesus' divinity. This was made visible to all when Jesus was baptized by John, and this sign was accompanied by the voice from heaven declaring Jesus as God's beloved Son. Not only so, the Spirit of God empowered Jesus to carry out His mission, through which God testified to His divine sonship (Lk 4:1; Acts 10:38; Rom 1:4).
13. Today, the Holy Spirit who dwells in us also testifies with our spirit that we are children of God and heirs of God's inheritance (Rom 8:9–17; Gal 4:6; Eph 1:13, 14). Because the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is so crucial to believers, John the Baptist emphasizes Jesus' role as the One who "baptizes with the Holy Spirit" (Jn 1:33). He upon whom the Spirit

descended and remained would Himself baptize with the Holy Spirit.

14. After His resurrection, the Lord Jesus reminded the disciples of His promise and told them, “For John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now” (Acts 1:5). These words came true when the Holy Spirit fell on the disciples on the Day of Pentecost, enabling them to speak with other tongues (Acts 2:1–4, 32, 33). When the Holy Spirit likewise fell upon Cornelius and the rest who heard the word just as He fell on the disciples on Pentecost, Peter remembered the Lord’s promise concerning the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 11:15–17). This same promise is given to every believer who has repented and been baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38, 39). Every believer should boldly and persistently ask the heavenly Father to give him the Holy Spirit, and the Lord Jesus would baptize him with the Holy Spirit the same way He did during the days of the apostles.

Lesson 4

OBSERVATION

Outline

John’s Disciples Followed and Remained with Jesus (1:35–39)
 Andrew Brought Peter to Jesus (1:40–42)
 Jesus Called Philip (1:43–44)
 Nathanael Met Jesus (1:45–51)

Key Words/Phrases

Lamb of God, follow, Rabbi, come, see, stay, found, Messiah, Israelite, Son of God, King of Israel, heaven open, Son of Man.

GENERAL ANALYSIS

- 1a. 1. John witnessed about Jesus
 2. Andrew brought his brother Simon to Jesus.

3. Jesus found Philip and asked him to follow Him.
 4. Philip introduced Nathanael to Jesus, and Nathanael experienced Jesus’ miraculous insight.
2. 1. The Lamb of God (1:36): Jesus is appointed by God to bear the sin of the world upon Himself (cf. Jn 1:29).
 2. Rabbi (1:38, 49): Jesus was generally recognized as a teacher of God’s truth (cf. Lk 20:21). This was also the way for a disciple to address his master as well as a term of deference (cf. Jn 3:2, 26; 4:31; 6:25; 9:2; 11:8)
 3. Messiah or Christ (1:41): Jesus is the King the people had put their hope in. He is the universal ruler who brings salvation to His people (cf. Ps 2:6–9; 110:1; Isa 9:6, 7; Mt 22:42–45)
 4. Son of God (1:49): Jesus is the image of the invisible God whom God has appointed heir of all things (Col 1:15; Heb 1:2, 3).
 5. King of Israel (1:49): As the Messiah, Jesus is the Davidic ruler as prophesied in the Scriptures (Jn 18:37). He rules over believers with justice and peace and shepherds them with kindness (Ezek 34:23, 24; Jn 10:11; Col 3:15; 1 Pet 5:4).
 6. Son of Man (1:51): Jesus is the redeemer and judge who has come down from heaven and ascended there again (Jn 3:13, 14; 5:27; 6:27, 53, 62; 8:28; 12:23, 34; Mk 13:26; Isa 52:13).
3. Continuing the theme of “knowing” and “identification” from John 1:1–34, this passage reveals Jesus as the Lamb of God, Christ, Son of God, King of Israel, and Son of Man. The focus on Jesus’ identity is important, as it paves the way for the reader to develop a saving faith in Jesus. But Jesus is not the only one identified in this passage. Jesus also identifies Simon Peter and Nathanael. From all this identifying, we learn the importance of our identity in Christ as well as our identification of Jesus. Think about this: if Jesus were to look at you today, how do you think he would identify you? How would you identify Jesus? Do you see Jesus as a teacher or do you see him as a friend? You could learn a lot about your relationship to Jesus Christ by looking at how you identify Jesus and vice versa.

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. The two disciples of John followed Jesus because John proclaimed that Jesus was the Lamb of God (1:35–37). Likewise, we have chosen to follow the Lord Jesus today because He is our only Savior and Redeemer who can deliver us from sin and the final judgment. Only if we follow Jesus for the right reasons and stay the course will we not let anything or anyone make us forsake our commitment along the way.
- 2b. The disciples' question shows their desire to know the Lord more. It was a respectful way to ask for more time with the Lord—to get to know Him better. If the tenth hour is equivalent to 4 p.m., that means they wanted to stay with the Lord starting that very evening. By remaining with the Lord, they expressed their desire to be His disciples to the end, deepen their knowledge of the Lord by being with Him continuously, and finally become one with Him. From Andrew's description of Jesus as the Messiah in verse 41, we may infer that these two disciples had come to some important personal knowledge of the Lord after staying with Him.

The best way to know the heart of a person is to live with him and to spend time with him, to talk with him and interact with him. The same is true of our relationship with the Lord. Instead of seeking the pleasures and gratifications this world offers and making that our goal in life, we ought to have a constant desire to be with the Lord. By spending time to learn His word, meditate on His example, obey His will, and seek the guidance of His Spirit, we can grow daily in our knowledge of Him. That is what it means when the Bible teaches us to abide in the Lord.
- 2c. The Lord Jesus asked the two disciples the important question: "What do you seek?" This question is a reminder to us in our walk with the Lord. It is often all too easy to forget what our priorities are. Like the multitude that seemed to follow the Lord but was actually laboring for food that perishes (Jn 6:26, 27), we may likewise follow the Lord for the wrong reasons, such as for material gains or a trouble-free life. The result of having the wrong motivation is that we may forsake the Lord when we do not receive what we are after, as many of Jesus'

disciples did (Jn 6:66). But if we are clear from the start that our desire is to remain with the Lord and to receive from Him words of eternal life (cf. Jn 6:68–69), we will continue on with the Lord regardless of the changing circumstances we face.

3.
 1. The words "Come and [you shall] see" imply Jesus' acceptance and acknowledgement of their heart's desire. The Lord knows our hearts and will help us know Him and experience Him if we seek Him with our hearts.
 2. Jesus' response also expresses, in a prophetic manner, that the disciples would see something they could not fathom (Jn 1:51). Jesus once told His disciples, "Blessed are your eyes for they see..." (Mt 13:16). By accepting the Lord's invitation, we may see, through eyes of faith, the Lord's glory.
 3. The ability to see is by divine grace and revelation. But we must also have the heart to come and seek to know the Lord. It is like the two parts to filling a jar. First, the jar must be empty, which is our desire to seek (be filled by) the Lord. Second, someone must fill it, which is God's grace and divine revelation. We need both parts. In the same way, "come" is Jesus' command for us to be with Him; "you shall see" represents God's grace and revelation.
4. As soon as Andrew realized that he had found the Messiah, he went and shared this great news with his brother. The best gift we can give to our loved ones is the good news about the Lord Jesus. Like Andrew, we should also be eager to share this wonderful news with our family.

Andrew simply brought his brother to Jesus. Often, we worry about complex strategies for bringing people to Christ, when we simply need to tell them about what we have found and bring them to the church to hear the words of the Lord and to witness the works of the Spirit. We just do our part, and let the Lord Himself touch the hearts of the people we bring to Him.

The fact that Andrew was formerly a disciple of John the Baptist means that he had always been serious about the things of God. It was also for the same reason that he was so eager to tell his brother about his encounter with the Messiah. This teaches us that the effectiveness of our witnessing often reflects

how we conduct ourselves on a daily basis. Actions tend to speak louder than words, and it is our lives, not just our words, that truly speak to our family members (cf. 1 Pet 3:1, 2). People will trust what we tell them if we first prove to be trustworthy.

5. When Jesus looked at Simon, He was not only looking at his outward appearance. More importantly, He saw Simon's heart as well as his future. Therefore, Jesus' naming him as "a stone" was prophetic of the future. It also means that Jesus had fully received him as a disciple and promised that He would transform him into a vessel for God. Just as Jesus had promised him in Matthew 4:19 that He would make Simon and Andrew fishers of men, here He also promised that Simon will become Peter. This new name indicates that the Lord would build Him up to be a faithful servant of God for His glory (cf. Lk 22:31, 32; Jn 21:18, 19). The Lord also called Peter's name when He promised that He would build His church upon the rock (Mt 16:17–19). In short, Jesus' naming of Peter here in John chapter 1 reveals His divine knowledge and power.
7. Man looks at the outward appearance (1 Sam 16:7), and this is often how we judge others (cf. Jas 2:1–4). People likewise apply such stereotypes to matters of faith (e.g. "How can such a small church coming from China be the true church?") God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty (1 Cor 1:27). If we do not measure things by their real values or humble ourselves to see things from God's perspective, our prejudice can blind us from seeing what is truly important.
8. Nathanael judged Jesus externally based on Jesus' place of origin. But Jesus looked within Nathanael's heart and praised him as a true Israelite in whom was no deceit.
9. We must be the people of God from within (cf. Rom 2:28, 29; 9:6). While others may measure us by some outward criteria, the Lord carefully weighs each person's heart and marks out those who are truly His (cf. 2 Tim 2:19). Our inward devotion to God will not go unnoticed by Him.
10. To Nathanael's astonishment, Jesus revealed what was in Nathanael's heart and commended him for it. When Nathanael

inquired of Jesus about His source of knowledge, Jesus furthered revealed His omniscience, saying that He had seen Nathanael under the fig tree even before Philip called him. Being under the fig tree could be an allusion to the hope of peace and security under the Messianic rule (cf. Mic 4:4; Zech 3:10). It is possible, in light of Nathanael's final acclamation, that he was under the fig tree meditating on the coming of the Messiah.

11. Here, Jesus switches to the second personal plural, addressing all of His disciples. The opening of heaven in the Bible connotes God's personal revelation or bestowment of divine favor (cf. Deut 28:12; Ps 78:23–25; Isa 64:1; Ezek 1:1; Mal 3:10; Acts 7:56; 10:11; Rev 4:1; 19:11). Jesus is the Son of Man who came down from heaven and remains in heaven (Jn 3:13). Nothing stands between Him and heaven. In fact, He Himself is the way to heaven (Jn 14:6; Heb 10:19–22). Angels ascend and descend on the Son of Man to carry out His will. In language that is reminiscent of Jacob's dream of the heavenly ladder (Gen 28:12), the Lord's words teach us that Jesus has brought the very presence of God down to earth. Everyone who believes in Him will behold the glory of God and find the way to heaven.

Lesson 5

OBSERVATION

Outline

The Setting (2:1–2)
 The Sign of Turning Water into Wine (2:3–11)
 Down to Capernaum (2:12)

Key Words/Phrases

Wedding, disciples, water, wine, waterpot, signs, glory, believed

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. Several key ideas from the previous passages are carried forward and made concrete in the present passage, including “believe,” “see,” and “glory.”

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. We can witness the glory of God even in the mundane and little things in life, and God often works wonders in our lives beyond our expectation. There is nothing about us that is too unimportant in God’s eyes. If we allow the Lord to be present everyday in our lives, every moment could be a moment of encounter with God.

While a wedding may generally seem like an ordinary event, every wedding is the most important day to the couple getting married. The Lord Jesus also deemed it important enough to attend it as a guest. Marriage is a divine institution, and it is to be honored by all (Mt 19:4–6; Heb 13:4). Thus, it should not be surprising that the Lord Jesus accepted the invitation to the wedding and even chose it to be the occasion for His first sign. What we care deeply about also matters to God, and this is especially true when our hearts are aligned with His will.

3.
 1. Regardless of the role of Jesus’ mother at the wedding, the fact that she alerted Jesus that there was no more wine shows that she cared about the matter. Like Mary, we ought to empathize with those around us and lend a helping hand when we see the need.
 2. Jesus was the first and only person Mary approached about the problem. This implies that she was well aware of Jesus’ identity and power. She knew that Jesus had the answer. In the same way, if we fully believe that the Lord has the answer to all our problems, we would certainly come to Him and tell Him that we need His help.
 3. Mary brought the problem to Jesus without giving Him any instructions. In this we see her wisdom and humility. God knows the best solution to our problem, and He also has His timing. We are not in the place to teach Him what to do. We just need to come to God with our need and trust

that He will take care of our problems in His way and in His time.

- 4a. The words “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me?” have been variously translated, and this indicates the difficulty in pinpointing their exact meaning. Addressing one’s mother as “woman” was not necessarily disrespectful, but was unusual. “What does your concern have to do with Me?” connotes that Jesus was drawing a respectful distance and distinction between His mother and Himself. The following words build on this distinction: “My hour has not yet come.” Whereas a human being considers things and makes decisions from a human perspective and according to a time he deems appropriate, Jesus, being the Son of God and the Incarnate Word, operates on a different level altogether (cf. Jn 7:6). His “hour” denotes not the ordinary sense of time, but the sovereign will determined by the Father, which no human being can dictate (cf. Jn 8:20; 13:1; 17:1).

In short, Jesus’ words were a reminder to His mother that if He were to act, He would do so based on divine will rather than on her prompting as a mother. Jesus’ purpose on earth was to reveal God’s glory (Jn 17:4), not to fulfill man’s desire or will (cf. Jn 1:13). The sign of turning water into wine occurred, therefore, not out of Mary’s concern (although it addressed that concern) but for God’s higher purpose.

- 4b While the Bible teaches us to make our requests known to God, it also reminds us to wait for God. The Lord is our Master. We just need to place ourselves in His care and honor His sovereign timing and purpose. In doing so, we allow God to reveal His glory and accomplish His will.
5. If we have properly interpreted Jesus’ words, we would understand that Jesus was not refusing to address the predicament at hand but was reminding Mary of His divine identity. With this in mind, we observe that Mary’s response was again one of humility and wisdom. She did not take offense at Jesus’ startling comment and walk away. Nor did she press Jesus to agree to her request. She simply prepared the servants to be ready to act on Jesus’ word. Her actions show that she had surrendered to Jesus’ timing and decision.

6. It takes faith in the Lord to do whatever He says to us. This complete faith is accompanied by total obedience, even when we do not understand or when we have to endure sufferings.
7. Since God's way is always the best way, the wisest response to God's will is to obey it. If we are reluctant to obey God, our paths are often troubled by grumblings, doubts, and discouragement. But if we obey God in faith, we can fully experience His love and guidance even through the most difficult circumstances, and will reap the blessings that God has intended (cf. Heb 12:1, 2).
8. There is nothing that God cannot do without human assistance (cf. Rom 11:34, 35). Yet, God often involves us in accomplishing His purpose because He wants us to be a part of His work so that we may grow in our faith and witness God's glory. When the water had turned into wine, the servants who took part in filling the jars knew what had just happened whereas the master of the feast did not. Similarly, serving God affords us the opportunity to personally experience God's grace and power.
10. The wine that Jesus had turned from water was superior to the wine that had run out. Not only could it not be detected that the wine was originally water, it was wine of an even better quality. These details underscore the greatness of the sign.
11. The Lord gives His grace freely out of His will and His love. It meets our need and lifts us out of our predicament. It is so perfect that it surpasses what we think or ask, just as the wine turned out to be superior. It is so abundant that we are not lacking, just as the wine was filled to the brim.
12. The disciples (v. 11).
13. Jesus manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.
Signs as used in the context of the Bible typically are miraculous in nature, but the word "sign" indicates that the miracle in question serves as a pointer. In the Gospel according to John, the signs Jesus did served the purpose of revealing Jesus' identity and His glory as the Son of God. Such revelations lead us to put our faith in the Lord for eternal life (Jn 20:30, 31).

The fact that attention was given specifically to the disciples tells us that the Lord's ultimate concern was the faith of His disciples. He did not perform miracles only to meet the needs of the wedding or to impress the people who were present. Rather, He wanted the disciples to see His glory as He had promised them (cf. Jn 1:51) and believe in Him as a result.

Lesson 6

OBSERVATION

Outline

Zeal for God's House (2:13–17)

The Temple of Jesus' Body (2:18–22)

Jesus' Knowledge of All Men (2:23–25)

Key Words/Phrases

Passover, the Jews, temple, "My Father's house," remembered, sign, body, believed/commit (both "believe" and "commit" translate the same Greek word)

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. 1. The previous event was at a wedding in a common local community. The current event took place at the temple, the national religious center, at the time of the feast, when pilgrims flocked to Jerusalem.
2. In the previous story, Jesus acted quietly behind the scene. In Jerusalem, however, he openly caused a great commotion and disturbed the sentiments of the Jews.
3. The outcome of the sign in Cana was that the disciples put their faith in Jesus. Jesus' actions at the temple, on the other hand, led many people to believe in His name. But the Gospel also gives a further comment that Jesus did not commit Himself to them.

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

- 1a. They had made God's house a house of merchandise (2:16).

- 1b. While the merchants and money changers seemed to be offering the worshippers a valuable service, they were not exactly interested in doing a charitable deed because their service was not free of charge. They used the worship of God as a means for profit, and they even did this on temple grounds (cf. 1 Tim 6:5).
3. “My Father” (as opposed to “our Father”) implied that Jesus stood in a unique relationship with the Father. He was the “only begotten” of the Father, the Son of God who had become flesh to declare the Father. This claim became a sticking point for the Jews because it was essentially a claim to being divine (Jn 5:18).

By calling God’s house “My Father’s house,” Jesus was speaking as God, taking the defilement of the temple personally. Thus He acted on God’s behalf, taking charge to ensure the sanctity of God’s dwelling.

Jesus’ actions could be viewed as a fulfillment of passages such as Zechariah 14:21 and Malachi 3:1 (in addition to Ps 69:9), where the Scriptures prophesied that the Lord Himself would ensure the purity of His own house.

4. The more obvious meaning is that Jesus’ zeal was burning within Him, which was made manifest in His vehement acts of driving out all the business activities. However, verse 22 indicates that the Scripture’s prophecy became clear after Jesus’ death and resurrection. With that in mind, the words “eat Me up” may have had a deeper reference to His death.
5. cf. Num 25:11; Rom 12:9; 2 Cor 11:28–29
6. Our bodies have been redeemed by Christ and therefore belong to God (1 Cor 6:20). We ought to no longer live for ourselves but for Him who died for us and rose again (2 Cor 5:15), surrendering our entire being to doing God’s will rather than the desires of the flesh (1 Pet 2:1–12).
7. The demand for a sign was a demand for Jesus’ source of authority. Because Jesus called the temple His Father’s house and took it upon Himself to remove all the business activities from the temple, the Jews wanted to see a sign, i.e., something

miraculous to authenticate that He was indeed who He claimed to be.

8. Jesus’ resurrection is the ultimate sign in the sense that it manifests His authority to take up His own life after laying it down (Jn 10:15–18). This power, which no human being can wield, indicates that Jesus was indeed from the Father.
9. 1. Jesus is God become flesh, through whom we may behold God’s glory and receive His grace and truth (Jn 1:14). He is the bodily presence of God (Jn 1:51; Col 2:9) and thus the new temple.
2. The limited access to God by way of the earthly sanctuary prefigured the offering of Jesus’ body and blood, through which we now may enter the Holiest (Heb 10:19, 20). It was therefore appropriate for the Lord to speak of His body as the temple.
11. The works of Jesus, including His signs, lead to faith in Him (Jn 2:11), and the ultimate sign is Jesus’ resurrection from the dead. This personal faith in the Lord Jesus is founded on what is spoken by the Scriptures and by the Lord Himself, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit (cf. Jn 14:26). Therefore, it is important to know the Scriptures and the words of the Lord Jesus, and thereby build up our faith in the Lord (cf. Jn 5:39, 46, 47).
12. “Commit” in verse 24 is the same word as “believe” in verse 23. While many people in Jerusalem believed in Jesus’ name, Jesus was not entrusting Himself to them.
13. Jesus did not entrust Himself to them in the sense that He did not expect a lasting relationship with them. He also did not need the testimony of human beings to prove who He was (cf. Jn 5:32, 34). These people believed in His name while they saw the many signs which He did. But faith based on seeing signs alone cannot endure. Many who followed Jesus because of the signs Jesus had performed eventually forsook Him when they could not accept Jesus’ words (Jn 6:66).
14. Our faith must not remain on the level of believing only when we experience something miraculous. Neither should our faith depend on receiving tangible things such as possessions,

health, and deliverance from trouble. True faith needs to go on from witnessing signs to acceptance of the Lord's words and His identity as the Christ, the Son of God (cf. Jn 6:68, 69).

15. Other people may not know what is in our heart, but everything is laid bare before the Lord's eyes, and to Him we must give account (Heb 4:13; 2 Cor 5:9–11). The Lord also knows who are truly devoted to Him (2 Tim 2:19); our sincere heart and service toward Him will not be unnoticed.

Lesson 7

OBSERVATION

Outline

Jesus' Dialogue with Nicodemus (3:1–12)

Discourse on Eternal Life (3:13–21)

Key Words/Phrases

Teacher, most assuredly, born again (may also be translated as “born from above”), kingdom of God, Spirit, flesh, witness, earthly things, heaven, lifted up, life, everlasting, saved, condemned, light, darkness

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. Spirit and flesh; earthly things and heavenly things; ascent and descent; belief and unbelief; perishing and everlasting life; condemnation and salvation; darkness and light.

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. Jesus came from a relatively unknown town (cf. 1:46; 7:52) and did not undergo rabbinical training (7:15). But Nicodemus, being a prominent teacher himself, humbly sought out Jesus after concluding that Jesus must be from God. Furthermore, the growing opposition of the Jewish authorities toward Jesus also meant that it took courage for Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, to stand on Jesus' side. Various inferences have been

offered on why Nicodemus came to Jesus “by night,” but whatever motivated his timing, Nicodemus' attitude and action are praiseworthy.

It takes much humility for us to admit our insufficiency and seek help, especially when people look up to us. Unless we are willing to remove the pride within us, we can easily become our own obstacle to spiritual growth. Many people reject the message of salvation because they value the wisdom of this world more than the will of God (1 Cor 1:18–20). We can only receive God's grace if we are willing to humble ourselves (Jas 4:6).

2. The extent of Nicodemus' knowledge, having contemplated on the signs Jesus did, was that Jesus was a teacher come from God. But the Lord Jesus did not need such a testimony, as much as it was a great compliment from a human perspective (cf. 2:25). Without even acknowledging Nicodemus' confession, Jesus went straight to the essential truth of salvation and taught Nicodemus the necessity of being born from above through faith in the Son of God. This knowledge and testimony, spoken by the One who had come down from and ascended to heaven, was far more important. Unfortunately, the people could not accept the Lord's witness.
3. Jesus was speaking about spiritual birth, whereas Nicodemus was thinking of natural birth.
4. 1. “Water” is a reference to baptism. This can be inferred from the context in the Gospel of John (1:26, 31, 33; 3:23). Peter also refers to baptism as “water” (Acts 10:47) and considers the water at the time of Noah a prefiguration of baptism (1 Pet 3:20, 21). Ananias commanded Saul to be baptized to *wash* away his sins (Acts 22:16; emphasis added). In other words, the water in baptism carries the spiritual effect of washing. For this reason, the washing that takes place in baptism is also called the washing of regeneration (Tit 3:5). Baptism affords a new life because our sins are washed away in baptism and we undergo a spiritual resurrection (Acts 2:38; Rom 6:3, 4; Col 2:12–13). No reference to water other than the baptismal passages in the Bible connects water so closely with salvation, the remission of sins, and the beginning of a new life. Therefore, when Jesus speaks of water as

being a necessary part of spiritual birth and requirement for entrance into God's kingdom, we cannot avoid the understanding that "water" is the water of baptism. For a fuller explanation, see *The Doctrine of Baptism* published by the True Jesus Church.

2. The water in baptism alone cannot effect spiritual birth, for baptism is not about the removal of the filth of the flesh (1 Pet 3:21). The effect of the remission of sins in baptism comes from the commissioning of Christ through the Holy Spirit (Jn 20:21–23; cf. Mt 28:18–20). Only the true church, being sent by the Lord Himself and having the presence of the Holy Spirit, has the authority to administer baptism for the remission of sins. By the witness of the Holy Spirit, the blood of Christ washes away our sins when we are baptized in water (1 Jn 5:6–8). For this reason, being born from above involves water and Spirit.
 3. In short, being born of water and the Spirit means receiving a new life given by the Spirit of God through the washing in baptism.
- 5a.
1. "Born of water and Spirit" is one thought. The Lord tells Nicodemus that unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. This means that water is part of the very spiritual birth that is required for salvation. There is nothing in the language that suggests anything like "born of Spirit in addition to born of water."
 2. Verse 6 clearly contrasts natural birth (born of the flesh) and spiritual birth (born of the Spirit). Making natural birth part of the requirement for entrance into God's kingdom in verse 5 would directly contradict the very next statement in verse 6.
 3. Lastly, the standard expression for natural birth is "born of a woman," (Mt 11:11; Gal 4:4), not "born of water."
- 5b. In John 7:38, 39, where water is symbolic of the Holy Spirit, the water is called "living water," and it is explained by the Bible as representing the Spirit. However, in John 3:5, "water" is unqualified and unexplained, and thus we may not assume that it is referring to the Spirit. If all Jesus wanted to say is "unless one is born of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God,"
- without having anything else related to water in mind, He would have had no reason to even add "water" in such a succinct and crucial statement.
6. The Lord says in verse 6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." This is the fundamental reason why a new birth is necessary to enter God's kingdom. God's kingdom is spiritual, and therefore flesh and blood, which is subject to corruption, cannot inherit this incorruptible kingdom (1 Cor 15:50). The human race is spiritually dead in trespasses and sins and by nature children of wrath (Eph 2:1–3); everyone stands condemned and is bound to perish (cf., Jn 3:16, 18). Unless a person receives the spiritual birth from above and becomes a child of God again (made possible through faith in Christ and through baptism; Rom 6:3–11; Col 2:12–13; Gal 3:26–29), he has no part in God's kingdom.
 7. The spiritual birth that God gives us is beyond what we can see with our eyes. God grants us His life by His will (Jn 1:13; Jas 1:18), which far surpasses our thoughts and our ways. We are not able to point with our fingers at our new life or explain how this spiritual birth from above works. Nevertheless, just as we can hear the sound of the wind even though we do not know where it comes from or where it goes, our lives become living proof of the Spirit's marvelous workings. We have been made free from the law of sin and death to live according to God and the fruit of the Spirit (Rom 8:1–4; Gal 5:16–25)
 8. Jesus draws a sharp distinction between "we" and "you" (in the Greek text, the second "you" in verse 11 and all the "you"s in verse 12 are plural). By "we," the Lord included believers who stand with him to testify of heavenly things. Those who are of God, both the Son of God from heaven as well as the sons of God born from above, testify what they have seen, i.e., the spiritual life in God (cf. 1 Jn 1:1–3). But those who are of the flesh, i.e., the unbelievers, do not know these things and do not receive their witness (cf. Jn 1:5; 3:19, 20).
 9. What the Lord Jesus taught the people, including the truth about being born from above, are the "earthly things" in the sense that the Lord Jesus has come to this world to declare to

- us the things of God in ways that are accessible to us, for He is the way between heaven and earth (Jn 1:51; 14:6). However, many people still do not believe the words of Jesus. If, despite the signs the Lord Jesus performed and the teachings He expounded, people do not believe what Jesus said, it would be impossible for them to even begin to comprehend “heavenly things,” i.e., the glorious things of heaven God has in store for believers (cf. 1 Cor 2:6–16; Eph 1:3; Heb 3:1; 11:16; 1 Pet 1:4).
- 10a. Nicodemus asked the question of “How can ...” twice. While they may seem like innocent inquiries to gain further understanding, the Lord attributed his misunderstanding to unbelief (v. 12). Although the Lord was speaking to a larger class of people in verse 12 (“you” is plural in the Greek text), he did not exclude Nicodemus from it because he was speaking to Nicodemus (the first “you” in verse 11 is singular).
 - 10b. Oftentimes, we are unable to understand the word of God because we are slow of heart to trust what God says (Lk 24:25; cf. Mt 22:29; 2 Cor 3:14–16).
 11. We must believe in the Son of God (3:13–18).
 12. God loves the world by giving us His only begotten Son (Jn 3:16; Rom 8:32). This “giving” required that the Son be “lifted up” for our sake, i.e., that He be crucified and exalted (Jn 3:14–15; 8:28; 12:32).
 13. The expression “lift up” is a crucial one in the Gospel according to John. It represents the death, exaltation, and glorification of the Son of Man (cf., Jn 8:28; 12:32). The fiery serpents in the wilderness were God’s punishment. But God told Moses to make a fiery serpent—a replica of the very instrument of death—and set it on a pole. Everyone who was bitten may look at it and live. In the same way, our Lord Jesus, by His death, underwent the punishment for sin that we deserve and was therefore exalted to the highest. By trusting Him as our Savior, we may have eternal life.
 14. Only the Son of God, who came down from heaven, has ascended to heaven (Jn 3:13). That is why He alone can be the way to heaven (Jn 1:51; 14:6).
 15. Jesus’ teachings about faith in the Son for eternal life in the second segment (3:13–21) closely parallels and elaborates on His words to Nicodemus in the first segment (3:1–12). Jesus, the Son of God, is the only way to the heavenly kingdom. We must believe in Him to have eternal life. Believing in the Son of God involves being born of water and Spirit—the spiritual birth made possible by the sacrifice of the Son of God and made effective by His name. That is why the washing in baptism is founded on the death, resurrection, and universal authority of Christ (Mt 28:18, 19; Rom 6:3, 4; Col 2:12–13; 1 Pet 3:21, 22).
 16. Our evil deeds make us love darkness rather than light (Jn 3:19–21). We would not want to come to Christ if we enjoy our lives in sin because coming to Christ demands giving up what we enjoy and facing our own guilt. But if we are willing to humbly submit to God’s truth, we would be drawn to the light, which the Son of God has brought into this world (Jn 1:4, 5), because God Himself is that light and is the source of all goodness (1 Jn 1:5; Jas 1:17).

Lesson 8

OBSERVATION

Outline

The baptism ministries of Jesus and John (3:22–24)
 The complaint of John’s disciples (3:25–26)
 John’s testimony about Christ (3:27–36)

Key Words/Phrases

Baptized, testify, Christ, bride, bridegroom, heaven, earth, Father, Son, sent, believe, life

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. 1. The baptism the disciples performed after the exaltation of Christ and coming of the Holy Spirit was based on the commission of the resurrected Christ (Mt 28:18, 19). The authority behind this commission, which is crucial for the

- remission of sins, lies with the Holy Spirit (Jn 20:21–23), and the disciples did not receive the Holy Spirit until the Day of Pentecost (Jn 7:39; Acts 1:5; 2:1–4). That is why it was only after the Holy Spirit was poured out that the disciples began to carry out the commission to baptize. On the contrary, the baptism Jesus administered (or more accurately, His disciples administered; Jn 4:2) while He was on earth was performed prior to the coming of the Holy Spirit—a very different stage in salvation-history.
2. Unlike the baptism performed under Jesus’ supervision while He was on earth, which was mostly restricted in its extent, the baptism the Lord Jesus commanded after His resurrection was to be administered to believers of all nations (Mt 28:19).
 2. The fact that John continued to baptize even while Jesus was baptizing shows that the baptism Jesus administered was not opposed to the baptism of John or meant to supplant it. Instead, we ought to think of John and Jesus as working side by side for the expansion of God’s kingdom. The ministry of John the Baptist transitioned smoothly to that of Christ, up until John was thrown into prison (cf. Jn 3:24). The harmony of the two ministries implies that the baptism administered or supervised by Jesus focused on the call to repentance for the remission of sin, which was also the goal of John’s baptism (cf. Mk 1:4).
 3. From the reply of John the Baptist, we may infer that those who reported the matter to John meant to raise concern that Jesus’ ministry was drawing a greater following than John’s. Whether intended or not, the reporters’ observation promoted a feeling of rivalry.
 5. The bridegroom and his friend; increase and decrease; heaven and earth; no one receives and he who has received; he who believes in the Son and he who does not believe in the Son; having eternal life and having the wrath of God.
 6. If Jesus was indeed the Christ and His authority given from heaven (3:27), people would be drawn to Him. This was the Father’s will. As far as John could see, it was only right for people to follow Christ.
 7. He was well aware of his role as a servant, just as the friend of the bridegroom serves the bridegroom. The spotlight is on the bridegroom, not the friend. The time had come. Christ must increase, and he must decrease. That was the way it ought to be. Not only so, as the friend of the bridegroom rejoices for the bridegroom, John rejoiced because the Lord was getting the attention He deserved.
 8. Knowing our identity and our role is basic to serving God. Without this proper attitude, we will eventually serve ourselves instead of God. Also, joy in serving derives from a genuine and selfless interest in the work of God. As we can see so perfectly exemplified in the Baptist, his sole purpose and interest was to faithfully carry out God’s mission. With this attitude, we would gladly give thanks to God when we see the growth of believers and the ministry, even if people do not appreciate or recognize our contribution (cf. Php 1:15–18).
 - 9a. It is from heaven (v. 31). The Father Himself has sent the Son to testify to the world (v. 34).
 - 9b. Jesus’ testimony is trustworthy for two reasons. First, he testifies what He has seen and heard. He has firsthand knowledge of the Father and the things of heaven. Second, He has the Spirit of God without measure and the Father has given all things into His hand (vv. 32, 34, 35). In other words, He has full authority to speak for the Father.
 - 9c. Verse 32 tells us that no one receives Jesus’ testimony despite the truthfulness of the testimony. But the following verse also indicates that there are still some who believe in the testimony. “He who believes in the Son has everlasting life. He who does not believe in the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him” (v. 36).

Lesson 9

OBSERVATION

Outline

- Coming to Samaria (4:1–6)
- Jesus' Dialogue with the Samaritan Woman (4:7–26)
 - Offer of living water (7–15)
 - The woman's past (16–19)
 - True worship (20–24)
 - Jesus' self-revelation (25–26)
- Jesus' Disciples Return and the Woman Goes into the City (4:27–30)

Key Words/Phrases

Samaria, well, drink, water, living water, thirst, everlasting life, worship, Spirit, truth, Messiah/Christ

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. Jesus, being in the flesh, also experienced weariness like us (4:6). On the other hand, He displayed His divine knowledge when He revealed the woman's sinful life (4:17).

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. He knew that the Pharisees had heard that He made and baptized more disciples than John (4:1). Jesus' reaction probably indicated that the time had not yet come for Him to enter into confrontation with the Pharisees (cf. Jn 2:4; 7:1–8; 12:23).
- 2a. The most obvious barrier was that Jesus was a Jew and the woman a Samaritan. With the longstanding rift between the two ethnic groups, Jesus was in hostile territory (cf. Lk 9:51–53). No wonder the Samaritan woman was astonished when Jesus, a Jew, asked her for a drink. Not only so, for a man to talk with a woman while being alone could easily have raised eyebrows (cf. the disciples' curiosity in Jn 4:27). Furthermore, people would not have looked favorably on the fact that Jesus, being a rabbi, chose to converse with a sexually immoral Gentile woman.

- 2b. Our Lord Jesus came to this world to offer salvation for all who believe regardless of their race or social standing (Jn 3:16; 4:42). He is not confined by boundaries men establish. This is a reminder to us not to let any social expectations that run contrary to the truth of God's word inhibit us from loving all people and making the effort to reach out to them. Breaking barriers takes courage, humility, and patience; but the love of Christ in us motivates us to face and overcome such challenges (1 Cor 9:19–23).
- 3c. Jesus' goal was clear—He wanted the woman to know His identity as the Messiah and to put her faith in Him. But rather than declare His identity immediately, He started by asking her for a drink. We can learn from Jesus' approach in evangelizing to people who may feel alienated from us. It is often hard to break ground when the person you want to reach holds a certain prejudice or is guarded from the start. We face many divides in preaching the gospel: religious, cultural, age, etc. But all these divides can be broken down if we have the heart to reach out and find a common ground. In the case of Jesus, He began with the subject of water and drink, something that the woman could immediately relate to. This opened the way for Him to share the message of salvation.
- 4a. The word for “gift” in the New Testament, in a general sense, denotes the inner workings which God bestows upon believers freely for their salvation, ministry, or spiritual growth (Rom 5:15, 17; 2 Cor 9:15; Eph 3:7; 4:7; Heb 6:4). In Acts, the gift of God refers specifically to the promised Holy Spirit, poured out on believers with the evidence of speaking in tongues (Acts 2:38; 8:20; 10:45; 11:17).

In Isaiah 44:3 and John 7:37–39, the Bible makes it explicit that the water that God gives to His people is in fact the Holy Spirit (note the similarity between Jn 7:37 and Jn 4:14). The fact that numerous references use the verb “pour out” to depict God's granting of His Holy Spirit further suggests that the image of water is an allusion to the promised Holy Spirit (Isa 32:15; Isa 44:3; Ezek 39:29; Joel 2:28, 29; Zech 12:10; Acts 2:17, 18, 33; 10:45; Tit 3:6).

In light of the above, while the gift of living water that Jesus spoke of could mean in a broad sense God's grace of eternal life, it refers more specifically to the promised Holy Spirit whom the Lord would pour out on believers and who would fashion a new life in them.

- 4b. Jesus told the woman that whoever drinks of the water that He shall give him will never thirst. The water that He shall give the believer will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life (Jn 4:14). Jesus, being by the Spring of Jacob and weary from the journey (Jn 4:6), used physical water and bodily thirst as metaphors to convey spiritual truths. To be thirsty in a spiritual sense means to be empty and weary in our soul as a result of being alienated from God's life (cf. Ps 23:1–3; Isa 55:1–2). The Holy Spirit is the living water that quenches our spiritual thirst. He invigorates our souls with joyful hope and satisfies us with God's love (Rom 5:1–5). As the Lord said, the Holy Spirit is a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life. Having given us a new life, He continues to renew us and sanctify us. All of this is God's saving work in us until the day we receive final redemption (2 Thess 2:13; Tit 3:5).
- 4c. We need to ask the Lord Jesus for the living water (Jn 4:10; Lk 11:13). Asking presupposes knowing the Lord (Jn 4:10) and having faith in Him (Rom 10:14).
5. Jesus' goal in conversing with the Samaritan woman was to lead her to believe that He is the Messiah. Revealing her private life was part of the process of reaching this goal. When the woman realized that Jesus possessed divine knowledge, she concluded that He was a prophet (Jn 4:19; cf. 29). Although she had not yet reached complete knowledge of the Lord, she had gone much further than when she first thought of Jesus as an ordinary Jew.

While it is not explicit, it is possible that the Lord also wanted the woman to come to terms with her sins as she began to recognize who He really is. True faith in the Lord requires leaving darkness and coming to the light (Jn 3:19–21). By revealing her sins, the Lord was in fact setting her free (cf. Jn 8:31, 32).

- 6a. Jesus pointed out that the Samaritans worshiped what they did not know, but the Jews worshiped what they knew. This

does not mean that the Jews were more diligent in seeking the knowledge of God. The Lord explained, "For salvation is of the Jews." The Jews knew what they worshiped because God had revealed Himself to them (Deut 4:7, 8) and had foreordained that the Messiah should come from this race (Deut 18:15). This is why Jesus was born as a Jew (Gal 4:4; Rom 9:4, 5) and preached salvation first to the Jews (cf. Mt 10:5, 6; 15:24; Rom 1:16).

- 6b. The time has come in which the distinction in the location of worship is no longer relevant. Since God is Spirit, He seeks true worshippers who worship in Spirit and truth.
- 6c. God is Spirit. Worshipping God the Father in Spirit and truth means to come to God not just with outward formality, but through communion with and submission to His Spirit and truth. This new and living way of worship is possible only through the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Heb 10:19–22). He is the One who can bring us into the Spirit and truth, enabling us to have access to the Father (Eph 2:18). He baptizes us with the Holy Spirit (Mt 3:11; Mk 1:8; Lk 3:16; Jn 1:33; 1 Cor 12:13), gives us a new life in the Spirit (Jn 3:5; Tit 3:5), pours out the Holy Spirit to dwell in us so that we may be "in the Spirit" (Acts 2:33; Rom 8:9), and quenches our souls with the Spirit (Jn 4:13, 14; 7:37–39). In Him we can also find the truth (Jn 1:17; Eph 4:21), for He Himself is the truth (Jn 14:6), and He recreates us to become righteous and holy in truth (Eph 4:24). Consequently, we can be a genuine worshipper from the heart, living a life that is truly pleasing to the Father (Rom 2:29; 12:1, 2).
7. Jesus made the Samaritan woman face squarely the fact that He was the Christ that the Samaritans had been waiting for. This was the perfect climactic ending to the discussion on true worship because the One who enables worship in Spirit and truth was already here now—a fact that Jesus indicated earlier with the words "the hour is coming, and now is" (4:21, 23). The woman as well as everyone who reads of Jesus' words must make a personal decision to believe in Jesus in order to enter the realm of spiritual worship.

8. The woman left the water pot, the very reason she had come to the well in the first place. She was filled with joy and excitement, as if she had found some treasure. No longer caring about how others might view her, she rushed back to the city to witness about Jesus. When a person has found Christ, all former pursuits, cares, and ambitions are no longer nearly as important (cf. Mt 13:44, 45; Php 3:7, 8). Have we stopped witnessing about the Lord Jesus because we have lost sight of the incomparable riches of knowing Him?

Lesson 10

OBSERVATION

Outline

Doing the Work of the Father (4:31–38)
 Many of the Samaritans Believed (4:39–42)
 The Galileans Received Jesus (4:43–45)
 The Second Sign Jesus Did (4:46–54)

Key Words/Phrases

Food, harvest, sow, reap, believe, Christ, Savior of the world, Galilee, Cana, nobleman, “your son lives,” sign

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. The Samaritans came to believe in Jesus first through the testimony of the woman and ultimately because they heard Jesus’ own word. Subsequently they developed a conviction in Christ (4:39–42). Their faith did not depend on seeing signs and wonders.

On the contrary, the Galileans received Jesus only after seeing all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast (4:45). The passage does not indicate that they put their faith in Jesus. Their reception of Jesus based on what they saw did not translate into whole-hearted commitment nor knowledge of the Savior (cf. 4:48).

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. The metaphor of food suggests how doing God’s work is so essential to our being and satisfying to our soul.
- 2a. Jesus was speaking about the harvest of souls for eternal life (4:36). Because of the work begun by the Lord Himself, the hearts of people were ready for harvest. His message was timely because the disciples were about to witness the conversion of many Samaritans. Just as the Lord Jesus was a winner of souls, He had sent the disciples to win souls by preaching the good news of salvation.
3. The work of saving souls into God’s kingdom involves the efforts of many servants of God over time. Those who sowed and labored would be the many workers of God, including John the Baptist, who paved the way for the final harvest (cf. Mt 23:34). Jesus’ point is that the time has come to see the cumulative labor of God’s workers come to fruition, and the disciples are indeed blessed to take part in the work of the harvest.
4. Many Samaritans put their faith in Jesus (4:39–41).
5. Initially, the Samaritans believed in Jesus because of the word of the woman who testified (4:39). After Jesus had stayed with them two days, many more believed. In the end, they no longer believed just because of the woman’s words, but because of Jesus’ own word (41–42). They also came to know that Jesus was the Christ, the Savior of the world (42).

Jesus’ presence and interaction with the Samaritans had a transforming impact on the Samaritans. Jesus’ words are spirit and life (6:63). As a result of hearing Jesus’ words, they came to the knowledge that He was not only a prophet, but the Christ and the Savior. It is through this faith that a person may receive eternal life.

7. Jesus is the Savior of the world, not just of the Jews. His ministry in Samaria is a wonderful testimony of the fact that He had come to bring salvation to the whole humanity, regardless of race. The conversion of the many Samaritans confirmed that through faith, they, too, could receive the gift of eternal life.

8. The Galileans received the Lord Jesus initially because they had seen the signs Jesus did in Jerusalem (45). This superficial reception was not based on lasting faith in the Lord Jesus (cf. 48). As we shall see later, many of the Galileans rejected Jesus in the end (Jn 6:59–66; cf. 7:5).
9.
 1. The Lord was able to save the nobleman's son even though he was at the point of death.
 2. The Lord healed the nobleman's son from a distance. The fever was gone at the very hour Jesus assured the nobleman that his son would live (50–53).
10. Jesus is the Lord of life, and His words carry authority and power.
- 12a. Jesus used the occasion of the nobleman's plea to expose the people's inadequacy of faith. They would not believe in Him unless they saw Him perform some miraculous deeds. In the story, however, the nobleman took Jesus at His word (50) even before witnessing the miracle. We may thus say that the nobleman's faith in the Lord's command stands in contrast to the general unbelief of the people.

Lesson 11

OBSERVATION

Outline

The Healing of the Invalid (5:1–9)

Jesus Enters into Conflict with the Jews (5:10–15)

Jesus' Authority to Give Life and to Judge (5:16–30)

Testimony of the Father (5:31–47)

Key Words/Phrases

Sick, infirmity, thirty-eight years, made well, "take up your bed," walk, Sabbath, Father, Son work, dead, life, resurrection, honor, judge, hear, voice, witness, true, believe

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. The day on which Jesus healed the man was the Sabbath. When the Jews saw the man carrying his bed, they stopped him. As soon as they learned that it was Jesus who had made the man well and had commanded him to take up his bed and walk, the Jews sought to kill Jesus.
2. While the miracle did not involve the raising of the dead to life, the restoration of the health of the sick man unveiled Jesus' divine authority to grant life to those who are dead in sin. Jesus' life-giving power would become even more evident in the 'greater works' that Jesus would perform later in His ministry (5:20), culminating in the raising of Lazarus to life (chapter 11).
3.
 1. The Son can do nothing of Himself, but does whatever the Father does (5:17, 19, 21, 30).
 2. The Father loves the Son and shows Him all things that He Himself does (5:20).
 3. The Father has committed all judgment to the Son (5:22).
 4. The Father has granted the Son to have life in Himself (5:26).
 5. Jesus as the Son seeks the will of the Father who sent Him (5:30).
 6. The Father bears witness of the Son (5:32, 36, 37).
 7. The Father has given the Son works to finish (5:36).
 8. The Son has come in His Father's name (5:43).

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1.
 1. This miracle was completely out of Jesus' initiative (5:6).
 2. The long duration of the infirmity had made the man given up all hope of being cured (5:5, 7). Therefore, the healing from such a long term illness that had no cure is remarkable.
 3. Jesus healed the man with His words, revealing the authority of His words (5:8).
 4. The effect of the healing was immediate (5:9), in stark contrast to the thirty-eight years the man had been sick.
2. The man's response indicates that he took Jesus' question as a useless inquiry, since he simply had no hope of being the

first to get into the pool. All he could see was the impossible. Compare his response to that of the Samaritan woman in 4:11.

4. They were completely blind to the great miracle that Jesus had performed. They only focused on what they thought was a violation of the Sabbath. All this goes to show that they had no compassion for the sick man's plight (cf. 5:42). They seemed to be faithful to God's word (when in fact they were not; cf. 5:38); in reality, they were quick to condemn the man because they wanted to appear righteous before men, not because their hearts were on God (cf. 5:44).
5. We do not know what sins the sick man had committed or whether his sickness was the result of his sins. But we should bear in mind that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23). As such, we all, like the sick man, must heed Jesus' warning. Despite the man's sin, the Lord Jesus reached out to him and delivered him from his years of infirmity. But He also reminded the man of the even more terrible consequence if he remained in sin. Likewise, God had mercy on us and delivered us despite our sins. But this does not mean that He condones our sins. Having received the grace of salvation, we ought to live a life worthy of our repentance so that we will not fall under God's fiery judgment (Heb 10:26–31).
6. See 5:18.
7. Jesus justified His work of healing by saying that He was acting on behalf of God the Father, even though they thought that He had violated the Sabbath. Their accusation was false because God's law never forbade doing good on the Sabbath. Jesus did exactly what God the Father would do and had been doing, i.e., to show His love and mercy, and He would not cease to do so just because it was a Sabbath day.

The Jews who opposed Jesus distorted the spirit of the command to rest. Instead, they laid external prohibitions that God had not intended. If they had recognized that Jesus was God and that He Himself was the Lord of the Sabbath, they would not have condemned the guiltless but would have given glory to Him for His wonderful works (cf. Mt 12:1–8).

8. We need to hear the Lord's word and believe in the Father (5:24, 25).
9. Judgment is the flip side of everlasting life. Whoever does not accept the word of Christ and cross over from death into life comes under judgment (5:24; cf. Jn 3:18).
10. Judgment is present in the sense that whoever does not accept the word of the Lord already comes into judgment (5:24; the verb "come" is in the present tense in Greek), for God's wrath abides on the unbeliever (Jn 3:36). Jesus also declares that now is the hour when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and live (5:25). This means that those who are spiritually dead are raised to a new life through faith in the word of the Lord Jesus. Thus, the result of believing or rejecting Christ takes place even in the present.

But the final outcome of the judgment will be fully revealed at the future resurrection. Those who have done good will resurrect to life, whereas evildoers will resurrect to condemnation (5:28, 29).
- 11a. He, being the Son, is in complete unity with the Father and carries total divine authority. By calling God His Father and Himself the Son, Jesus claims to be in a unique relationship with God. That is why the Jews interpreted His words as making Himself equal with God (5:18).
- 11b. We need to honor Jesus as God by hearing His word and trusting in Him (5:23, 24).
12. Jesus makes mention of John (5:33), His own works (5:36), and the Scriptures (5:39) as His witnesses. He also cites Moses as an accuser of the unbelieving Jews (5:45, 46). But above all, the greatest witness and one who carries ultimate authority is the Father (5:36).
13. The attitude and actions of the unbelieving Jews showed that God's word did not abide in them (5:38), even though they diligently studied the Scriptures (5:39). If we wish to have God's word abiding in us, we need to have a sincere desire to seek and obey God's will (5:30, 44). Then the words in the Scriptures will truly speak to us and work within us to carry out God's will.

14. 1. God's word did not abide in them (5:38).
 2. They did not have the love of God in them (5:42).
 3. They received honor from one another but did not seek the honor from God (5:44).
- 15a. When a person is after honor from men, his superficial good deeds are motivated by the praise of men (cf. Mt 6:1, 2, 5, 16). He does not make an effort to search his heart and deeds to find out what God thinks of him.
- 15b. If our motive is after glory from men, then we will be blind to the truth. Naturally, we cannot accept the word of God nor be in tune with His works, because we measure the things we hear and see by the standards of men, not of God. This was what was happening to the Jews. They seemed to be so careful to keep the Sabbath, only to appear righteous before men, but they were oblivious to God's desire for mercy and to His great work of salvation.

Lesson 12

OBSERVATION

Outline

The Sign of Feeding the Great Multitude (6:1–15)
 Jesus Walks on the Sea (6:16–21)
 The People Seek Jesus (6:22–25)
 Working for the Food that Endures (6:26–29)
 Jesus the Bread of Life (6:30–40)

Key Words/Phrases

Sea, sign, filled, "It is I," Labor, food, everlasting life, work of God, believe, bread, heaven, Father, will, raise up at the last day

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. 1. The feeding of the great multitude (6:5–15)
2. Jesus walking on water and enabling the boat to reach the destination immediately (6:16–21)

- 2a. The feeding of the multitude took place on the mountain (6:2), whereas the walking on water took place on the Sea of Galilee (6:1, 16).
- 2b. The first miracle was to provide food for the followers of Jesus (6:5), whereas Jesus walked on the water to the disciples because they were having difficulty rowing against the wind.
- 2c. The multitude and Jesus' disciples witnessed the great feeding, whereas only the disciples witnessed Jesus walking on the sea.
- 2d. The men who saw the sign intended to make Jesus king by force (6:14, 15). The disciples wanted to receive (literal translation) Jesus into the boat (6:21).
- 2e. The miracle of the feeding demonstrates that the Lord Jesus is our ultimate provider, whereas the miracle of walking on water demonstrates that He holds power over all things, sees our struggles, and is able and willing to carry us through.

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

- 1a. They followed Jesus because they saw His signs which He performed on those who were diseased (6:2).
- 1b. It is not wrong to be drawn to the Lord because we have seen His miraculous signs. However, the purpose of signs is for us to develop faith in the Lord Himself (cf. 2:11; 4:53, 54). As we can see later on in the story, the crowd did not believe in the Lord Jesus as the giver of eternal life, but simply wanted to be always fed and satisfied in the flesh. If we seek Jesus only for present benefits in life but are not willing to trust and obey Him as our Savior, then we are following Him for the wrong reason.
2. 1. Philip's answer indicates that even with a large sum of money, it would have been impossible to give even a little to each person (6:7).
2. Andrew's comment about the five loaves and two fish, "What are they among so many?" (6:9) underscores how miraculous it was for Jesus to feed thousands of people with such a small amount of food.
3. Jesus and the disciples allowed everyone to have "as much as they wanted" (6:11). This shows that Jesus was not concerned that the food might run out.

4. Not only did the multitude have enough, the leftover was so much that it filled twelve baskets (6:12, 13).
3. Jesus wanted the disciples to recognize and trust that He was the sovereign Lord. Philip's response tells us that it had not yet occurred to him to turn to the Lord for solution when facing an impossible situation. But the fact that the Lord tested him with this question as well as the repeated focus on the twelve disciples in the chapter (cf. 6:16–21; 66–71) tell us that one of Jesus' greatest concerns was to help the disciples grow in their faith in Him.
4. A sign, by definition, is a pointer or indicator. Jesus' miracle served a greater purpose beyond the miracle itself. Its ultimate aim is to lead us to believe in Him so that we may have eternal life (Jn 20:30, 31). The feeding of the multitude was not only to satisfy the people's hunger, but to move them to believe that the Lord Jesus is the bread of life, as the subsequent discourse reveals.
5. Although they considered Jesus as the Prophet from God (cf. Deut 18:15), they expected Him to be an earthly ruler. They wanted to make Jesus king, to the extent that they were ready to use force. Their fervor shows that the miracle convinced them of Jesus' power to protect and provide for them, and they eagerly wanted such a powerful leader over them. But clearly, they did not believe in Him as the redeemer and giver of eternal life. Jesus, knowing their grave misconception of His identity and mission, did not comply with their wish but departed to the mountain by Himself alone.
7. 1. "It is I" is literally "I AM"—a unique declaration of Jesus that reveals His identity as God (cf. Jn 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5, 6, 8; Ex 3:14; Isa 43:10, 11). Because He is the sovereign Lord, His presence itself was the disciples' greatest assurance.
2. Perhaps the more immediate reason was that Jesus was simply calming their fear. The disciples were terrified at the sight of someone walking on the sea, for they thought they had seen a ghost (cf. Mt 14:26; Mk 6:49). Jesus put their fear to rest by letting them know that it was Him, their Lord, whom they were seeing.
9. The immediate reason that the multitude followed Jesus was that they saw the signs Jesus had performed (6:2). However, when the crowd earnestly sought for Jesus after the sign of feeding, Jesus revealed an even deeper motive in them. They were seeking to be filled of their hunger. In a sense, they were still seeking Jesus because of signs. But Jesus pointed out in 6:26 that their desire to be fed physically had kept them from realizing that the signs were to lead them to faith in Him as the giver of eternal life.
- 10a. 1. The words of the Lord Jesus (6:63, 68)
2. The flesh and blood of our Lord Jesus (6:51, 53–58; see the explanation of this expression in the next lesson)
- 10b. We need to come to the Lord Jesus and believe in Him (6:29, 40, 44, 47). Believing in the Lord Jesus encompasses trusting and obeying His words, knowing that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God (6:67–70; cf. 1 Jn 2:6, 24; Mt 28:20). Unlike those who only worry about and toil for their present physical needs, we ought to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Mt 6:31–33). The world is passing away, and the lust of it, but he who does the will of God abides forever (1 Jn 2:17).
- 11a. Their hearts were still dull even after Jesus had performed many signs, including the feeding that just took place. The Lord wanted them to understand that the sign of feeding the multitude pointed to Himself as the giver of the food that endures to eternal life. Yet, they completely missed the Lord's message and could not believe in Him. Their words in verse 31 imply that they were probably expecting the Lord to give them a continuous food supply as a sign to convince them to believe in Him.
- 11b. We need to believe in the Lord Jesus on His terms, not on our terms. These are two completely different attitudes. The multitude would only believe if their demand is satisfied and if Jesus would continue to feed them. This amounts to testing the Lord, and is not true belief. On the contrary, true belief requires that we humbly entrust ourselves to the Lord Jesus and that we willingly obey Him to the end.

12. Through His personal sacrifice, the Lord Jesus has become the source of eternal salvation for those who obey Him (Heb 5:9). Just as bread sustains a person's life, our Lord Jesus and all that He gives us can sustain our spiritual lives (Jn 6:35; 14:19; Rom 6:23; Col 3:4; 2 Tim 1:10; 1 Jn 5:12). One specific example of this is that the Holy Spirit He has given to us continually renews us and strengthens us so that we would not be wanting in our walk of faith (Jn 7:37–39; Eph 3:16; Tit 3:5).
13. 1. “He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst” (6:35).
 2. “The one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out” (6:37).
 3. “Everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him [has] everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day” (6:40).
15. 1. It is the Father who gives the true bread from heaven (6:32).
 2. All that the Father gives to Jesus will come to Jesus (6:37).
 3. Jesus has come down from heaven to do the Father's will (6:38).
 4. The will of the Father is that of all He has given Jesus, Jesus should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day (6:39).
 5. The will of the Father is that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life (6:40).

Lesson 13

OBSERVATION

Outline

Jesus the Living Bread from Heaven (6:41–51)
 Feeding on Jesus for Eternal Life (6:52–59)
 Many Disciples Rejected Jesus (6:60–66)
 Jesus' Words to the Twelve (6:67–71)

Key Words/Phrases

Bread, everlasting/forever, life/live, heaven, Father, flesh, blood, Son of Man, abide, feeds on, Spirit, believe, Christ, Son of the living God

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. 1. They complained about Him and murmured among themselves because He said, “I am the bread which came down from heaven” (6:41, 43).
 2. The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, “How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?” (6:52)
 3. After hearing Jesus teach about eating His flesh and drinking His blood, many of His disciples found it offensive and complained (6:60, 61).
 4. In the end, many of Jesus' disciples went back and walked with Him no more (6:66).
2. 1. They knew Jesus' earthly parents, and thus could not accept Jesus' claim to have come down from heaven (6:42).
 2. They could not understand the teaching about eating His flesh and drinking His blood and found it difficult to accept (6:52, 60). What the Lord had taught them was against their common sense, and probably even seemed repulsive to them.
3. The people cited the miracle of manna (6:31), implying that they expected Jesus to do what they thought Moses had done for their forefathers (cf. 6:32). In reply, the Lord Jesus made a contrast between the manna that could not give eternal life to the Israelites and Himself as the true bread from heaven which He shall give for the life of the world (6:48–51, 58).
4. 1. Those who come to Him He will raise up on the last day (6:44).
 2. He who believes in Jesus has everlasting life (6:47).
 3. He who eats of the bread which comes down from heaven does not die but will live forever (6:50, 51).
 4. Whoever eats His flesh and drinks His blood has eternal life, and the Lord will raise him up at the last day (6:54).

5. Those who eat His flesh and drink His blood abide in Him, and He in them (6:56).

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. Jesus' words were directed at the murmuring of the Jews regarding His true origin. They could not accept Jesus' claim of heavenly origin because they thought they knew His origin. In response, the Lord Jesus spoke about the gulf between the unbelievers and heaven that underlay their unbelief. Jesus is from the Father and has seen the Father (6:46). He is one with the Father (cf. 10:30). Consequently, unless the Father draws a person, this person could not possibly come to Jesus (6:44, 65). On the other hand, everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Jesus (6:45). The Jews had no knowledge of Jesus' true origin and could not accept Him because they had neither been drawn by the Father nor taught by Him.
 2. Jesus is "living" in the sense that He always lives (14:19) and has life in Himself (5:26). He has no beginning or end of life and does not derive His existence from anyone else, since He is the author of life (1:4). Thus the bread of life is characterized by His eternal being. Because He is "living," He can be the giver of life.
 3. In a broad sense and as the first step, eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of Man means to believe in Him as the Savior who has sacrificed Himself for the world. This is what the Lord meant when He said, "the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world" (6:51). The Lord teaches us to trust Him with our being and receive Him as our Lord of life instead of seeking Him for external benefits as the multitude did. Figuratively speaking, He wants us to "feed on" Him rather than "feed on" the things He gives.
- Trusting in the risen Lord Himself also encompasses partaking of His body and His blood through the Lord's supper (Holy Communion) which He has given us. On the same night in which He was betrayed, the Lord Jesus gave the bread and the cup to the disciples to eat and drink, saying that they were His body and His blood (Mt 26:26–29; Mk 14:22–25; Lk 22:19, 20; 1 Cor 11:24, 25). This command uses the same language as

seen in John 6:53–58. The meaning of the Lord's supper (Holy Communion) lies in the fact that the Lord Jesus is our Passover (1 Cor 5:7) who has laid down His life for us and risen to life again. Today, as we partake of the bread and cup of the communion, we are in fact having communion with the body and blood of the living Lord (1 Cor 10:16, 17). If we believe that the Lord has risen and accept Him as our Redeemer, we would believe in the sacrament He has established and receive it with the recognition that we are partaking of the Lord Himself.

4. Rather than come to the Lord only with our demands, wishes, and predicaments, we must continually follow everything He commands us to do with the conviction that our eternal life depends on Him, who is our Redeemer and Savior.
6. The words "the Son of Man ascend where He was before" pertain to the fact that the Lord Jesus is from heaven. Jesus wanted the disciples who could not accept His teaching to recognize that His flesh is food indeed and His blood drink indeed because He is from God and will return to God (cf. Jn 3:13; 8:42; 13:3; 16:28). Because He Himself is the Word who had become flesh, He is able to give life to those who feed on Him.
7. Continuing with the thought of His heavenly origin, the Lord explained that only the Spirit of God can give life. The Lord Jesus Himself is the life-giving Spirit (2 Cor 3:17; 1 Cor 15:45), and His words are Spirit (Jn 6:63). He is not the mortal flesh and blood like us, who are subject to corruption (cf. 1 Cor 15:50).
8. The "flesh" in verse 63 is the flesh of the natural man, not the flesh of our Lord Jesus, who is the life-giving Spirit (1 Cor 15:45). Thus, the Lord Jesus is not teaching the disciples about eating the flesh and drinking the blood of an ordinary human being.
9. Jesus' words are God's very words, for Jesus speaks only what He has heard from His Father (Jn 8:26, 28). His words are not of the will of man but are of the Spirit of God. Just as God's words carry life (Deut 32:47; Ps 119:50), so Jesus' words also impart life to all who believe in Him (Jn 5:24; 8:51, 52).

10. Jesus was not surprised or discouraged. He knew from the beginning who did not believe and who would betray Him (6:64). He was also fully aware that only those who have been granted by His Father would come to Him (6:65). While an unbeliever stands condemned for his unbelief (Jn 3:18), his unbelief is nevertheless under God's foreknowledge and sovereign will.
12. From the narrative, we learn that many people could not believe in Jesus' words of life. As a result, they complained, murmured, quarreled, and stopped following Jesus. These unbelievers were disciples at first, but were not part of the twelve disciples the Lord had chosen. From verse 67 forward, Jesus turned His attention to the twelve, whose belief in Jesus was captured by Simon Peter's confession (6:68, 69). However, even in the midst of the twelve was an unbeliever, a betrayer in fact. Betrayal constitutes the worst form of unbelief, and that this should come from the closest followers of Jesus is startling. Nevertheless, even this did not escape Jesus' divine knowledge or election (6:70, 71).

Lesson 14

OBSERVATION

Outline

Jesus' Brothers' Words of Unbelief (7:1–9)

The Jews' Search for Jesus and the People's Complaint Concerning Him (7:10–13)

Jesus Teaching in the Temple (7:14–24)

Key Words/Phrases

Feast of Tabernacles, secret(ly), openly, believe, "My time," sought, complaining, marveled, doctrine, sent, glory, true, righteous, judge

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. See Jn 5:18; 7:23

- 2a. They told Jesus to depart from Galilee and go into Judea that His disciples may see the works that He was doing (7:3).
- 2b. Their words were sarcastic. They mistakenly thought that Jesus was seeking to be well known by performing all the works He had been doing. Seeing that Jesus chose to remain in Galilee, they challenged Him to make Himself known to a potentially greater audience in Jerusalem.
3. Jesus would not make any decision on His own without submitting to the timing and arrangement of His Father. He would not go up to Jerusalem just to meet the challenge of His unbelieving brothers. God's time had not fully come for Jesus to be delivered to those who were plotting for His life.
4. The time of unbelievers "is always ready" in the sense that they do as they wish without any respect for God's will or guidance. The world also cannot hate them because they are in complete conformity with the sinful world. On the contrary, believers do not conduct their lives as they wish, but always seek the Lord's will (Eph 5:17) and strive to carry out His will (2 Cor 5:9; cf. 1 Cor 6:19, 20).
5. While citing examples of how believers are hated by the world, see also Jn 15:18–25.
6. According to verse 10, Jesus went up to the feast, not openly, but in secret. With this in mind, we may interpret Jesus' words in verse 8 as indicating that He would not go up to the feast in the open, i.e., in a way to prove His worth to the world according to His brothers' challenge. The time would eventually come when He would complete all His works before the people, leading up to His death. But that time foreordained by God had not yet come, and so He would not reveal Himself in Jerusalem in such a manner at this juncture. It was in this sense that Jesus said He was not going up to this feast (the word "yet" in verse 8, not found in some of the more reliable manuscripts, was probably the copyist's addition in an attempt to resolve the apparent inconsistency with verse 10).
7. Rather than pay attention to the message of Jesus' teaching, they only cared about His credentials. The fact that they marveled at Jesus' abilities tells us that outward performance

was important to them. If the “Jews” here refers to the religious leaders, they probably also felt threatened that someone who had not been trained in the rabbinical school like them was able to teach with such power.

8. As someone who was sent on a mission, Jesus was faithful to the One who sent Him. He only taught according to what His Father had willed for Him to speak. He also only sought the glory of His Father, not His own glory. Because of His complete submission to and dependence on His Father in both the content of His teaching and in His motivation, His teachings were trustworthy.
9. In verse 17, the Lord gives us a crucial principle in discerning whether a teaching is the word of God. The condition for knowing whether a teaching is from God is that we ourselves resolve to do the Heavenly Father’s will. This pure and sincere desire to obey God enables us to know the voice of God when we hear it (cf. Jn 10:1–5). Therefore, having the heart to obey God is the surest way to understanding the will of God.
- 10a. 1. In verse 19, the Lord Jesus exposes the irony of those who claimed to be heirs of the law but do not practice the law. Those who accused and persecuted Jesus seemed to be zealous for God, but their murderous intent shows that God’s law was not truly in them. God cares much more about how we live by His commandments than about how much we claim to know His law.
2. From verses 22 and 23, we learn that if a person ignores God’s intent behind His laws, he may misapply God’s laws. For example, God gave the Sabbath commandment to man for his good. So when Jesus made a man completely well, it was in agreement with the spirit of the law of the Sabbath (cf. Mt 12:11, 12). The Jews, who considered it acceptable to circumcise a child on the Sabbath so that the law of circumcision would not be broken, neglected God’s law of love and condemned Jesus’ healing as a violation of the law. Therefore, while it is important for us to observe every detail of God’s law, it is also important to know the purpose and spirit of God’s law so that we do not act in ignorance against God’s intent.

- 10b. The Lord teaches us not to judge according to appearance, but to judge with righteous judgment. This reinforces the need for us to understand the heart of God and live by God’s will. Only if we always make it our goal to conform to God’s righteousness can we make a righteous judgment. That means we discern from God’s perspective, not man’s perspective. Man looks at appearance and judges based on appearance, but God looks at the heart (1 Sam 16:7). Judging things by external criteria may earn us respect or popularity, but only if we judge them from a heart that is true to God can we please God. The Jews condemned Jesus for healing the man on the Sabbath. Their zeal helped boost their position as religious authorities, but they did not have the heart of God to show the slightest concern for the sick man. Their judgment about Jesus, therefore, was based on outward appearance, not on God’s righteousness.

Lesson 15

OBSERVATION

Outline

Jesus’ Origin (7:25–31)

Jesus’ Departure (7:32–36)

Jesus’ Promise of Living Water (7:37–39)

Division among the People (7:40–44)

Failed Attempt to Arrest Jesus (7:45–53)

Key Words/Phrases

Where... from, cried out, sent, signs thirsts, come, drink, believes, rivers of living water, the Prophet, the Christ, division

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. 1. “We know where this Man is from; but when the Christ comes, no one knows where He is from” (7:27).
2. “When the Christ comes, will He do more signs than these which this Man has done?” (7:31).

3. “Therefore many from the crowd, when they heard this saying (i.e., Jesus’ saying in vv. 37–38), said, ‘Truly this is the Prophet’” (7:40).
4. “Will the Christ come out of Galilee?” (7:41, 52)
5. “No man ever spoke like this Man!” (7:46)
6. “Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him?” (7:48)
7. “No prophet has arisen out of Galilee” (7:52).

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. Jesus spoke these words when the people were discussing His identity and His origin (7:25–27). On the one hand, Jesus concurred with His audience that they knew Him and where He was from. On the other hand, they only knew Him and His origin to a very limited extent. What they thought they knew was only from an earthly point of view, i.e., Jesus was from Galilee. But they knew nothing about Jesus’ heavenly origin or His identity as the Son of God. That is why Jesus continued to say in verse 28 that they did not know the One who sent Him. If they had truly known Jesus, they would have known His Father also (cf. Jn 8:19).
3. Eternal life is founded on the knowledge that Jesus is from God and on the belief that He is sent by God (Jn 17:3, 8). Unless a person is convinced that Jesus is the incarnate word and the only way to the Father, he would not believe in Him as His Lord and Savior.
- 4a. Jesus stated that the people did not know the One who sent Him but He knew Him.
- 4b. Jesus underscored the fact that He was sent by His Father in order to show that He was not the ordinary man they thought He was. They were ignorant of God the Father. But only He had first-hand knowledge of God. Now that Jesus had told them His identity as the divine ambassador, they must decide whether to believe in Him or to reject Him. Jesus’ words thus resulted in two opposite reactions (7:30, 31).
5. Like His declaration about His origin (7:28, 29), Jesus’ statement about His departure was also an appeal to faith. Jesus would not remain in the world for long, and the people must therefore make the decision to believe in Him before He is gone from them (cf. Jn 8:21).
6. As was often the case in John, Jesus’ listeners failed to grasp the meaning of Jesus’ words.
7. The Lord Jesus was speaking concerning the promise of the Holy Spirit, whom He would pour out on believers after His exaltation (Acts 2:32, 33). This was the Holy Spirit whom the Lord promised the disciples while He was still with them, the Spirit who would be given to believers to dwell in them (Jn 14:16, 17, 26; 16:7, 13, 14). This promise came true on the Day of Pentecost when the Lord Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit on the disciples and they began to speak with other tongues (Acts 2:1–4).
8. A sinner feels empty because he is estranged from God. But God is able to fill that inner void by dwelling in us through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit satisfies our soul with the love of God, hope, and joy (Rom 5:1–5). He continues to renew us, sanctify us, edify us, comfort us, and strengthen us (Tit 3:5, 6; 2 Thess 2:13; Rom 8:26; Acts 9:31; Eph 3:14–16; cf. Jn 14:26). Unlike the temporary satisfaction derived from material things, the Holy Spirit fills our souls by transforming us into God’s likeness (cf. Eph 5:18). As long as we walk in the Spirit, the Holy Spirit will be for us like rivers of living water that quench us and never run dry.
9. Being thirsty is a spiritual condition of separation from God. Jesus’ invitation, however, is extended to those who not only are in this spiritual condition (in fact, everyone who is under sin is in this condition), but also those who seek to be filled. “Coming to” Jesus in the Gospel according to John is another way of saying believing in Him. By trusting in Jesus as our Savior and His promise of eternal life and asking Him to quench us (cf. Jn 4:10), we can receive the indwelling of Jesus Himself through the Holy Spirit.
10. Jesus’ saying about the Holy Spirit and Him being the source of living water (7:40).

11. Those who could not accept Jesus stumbled over their own assumption about the Christ (7:41, 42).
12. Those who could not believe in Jesus were correct in saying that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, but they were ignorant of the fact that Jesus was indeed the Son of David and was born in Bethlehem. If they had only opened their hearts to what Jesus was revealing to them through His teachings and His signs, they would not have let their own ignorance get in the way of faith.
13. They refused to consider if there was any truth in Jesus' words or if the signs He had done meant anything. They judged Jesus by the fact that none of the rulers or the Pharisees believed in Him (again, a misjudgment because Nicodemus was both a ruler and a believer in Jesus). They even resorted to calling the crowd accursed as a way to justify their own unbelief. Even when Nicodemus tried to defend Jesus, these Pharisees used the fact that no prophet had arisen out of Galilee to prove that they were right. Their criteria, which were based on external things that men value, such as status, place of birth, or social acceptance, had blinded them from seeing who Jesus really was.
14. Like the people who thought that Jesus could not be the Christ because He was from Galilee, the Pharisees here made the same mistake. In fact, the mistake of the Pharisees was even worse because it was based on their contempt for Galilee rather than on the prophecy of Scripture.
15. After recording the many murmuring, confusion, and debate among the people and the Pharisees, the chapter ends with the note that everyone went to his own house. The implication of this concluding remark is that by the end of the feast, the public remained divided in their attitude toward Jesus.

Lesson 16

OBSERVATION

Outline

The Setting (8:1–2)

The Case of the Adulterous Woman (8:3–11)

Jesus' Revelation as the Light of the World (8:12–20)

Jesus' Origin (8:21–30)

Key Words/Phrases

Testing, accuse, sin, condemn, the light of the world, darkness, witness, “where I came from,” “where I am going,” “My Father,” beneath, above, believe, “I AM”

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. “I am with the Father who sent me” (8:16).
 “The Father who sent Me bears witness of Me” (8:18).
 “If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also” (8:19).
 “I speak to the world those things which I heard from Him” (8:26).
 “As My Father taught Me, I speak these things” (8:28).
 “He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him” (8:29).
2. Light and darkness (8:12)
 Life and death (8:12, 21, 24)
 “I know” and “You do not know” (8:14, 19, 27)
 “Where I go you cannot come” (8:21)
 Beneath and above (8:23)

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. Had Jesus endorsed the stoning, He would have been accused of violating Roman laws, and He would have been viewed as one who condemns rather than saves (cf. Jn 3:17). On the other hand, if He had permitted the woman to go free, He would have been accused of breaking God's law.
- 2a.
 1. We ought to be aware of our own sins and acknowledge that we are not any less guilty than anyone else.
 2. Having been justified, we ought to sin no more (cf. Rom 6:1-4).
- 2b. We, being sinners ourselves, are not worthy to cast a stone at another sinner. Instead of being accusers, we should learn from the Lord Jesus to help set others free from their sins.
- 3a. He freed her from condemnation even though she deserved punishment. Not only so, He directed her into a new life that is free from sin. Through both grace and truth the Lord Jesus saves a person from sin and death.
- 3b. Even though we deserve to die, we have been forgiven of our sins through God's grace in Christ (Rom 3:24; Eph 1:7; 2:5; Tit 3:7). Coupled with this grace is the truth in Jesus Christ, which is the way to life (Jn 14:6; Eph 1:13; 2 Thess 2:13; 1 Tim 2:4). By means of the truth revealed by the Lord Jesus, our eyes have been enlightened to see sin for what it is and be set free from its power (Jn 8:32; Eph 4:20-24).
- 4b. The expression "the light of life" tells us that the language of light and darkness is symbolic of life and death. The life that is in the Lord Jesus is the light of men (Jn 1:4). Jesus' coming brought hope to the whole world, which is under the shadow of death as a result of sin (Mt 4:16). By following this light of life, our spiritual eyes are opened, and we can leave our former lives of sin to walk on the way of salvation (cf. Jn 3:21; 12:35, 46).
5. Jesus' witness of Himself is true because He knows where He came from and where He is going (8:14). This means that His identity as God's messenger made His testimony trustworthy. The Lord Jesus then adds that the Father who sent Him is also with Him to bear witness of Him (8:17, 18). This additional

testimony reinforces Jesus' testimony about Himself. In short, because of Jesus' divine nature, His testimony was trustworthy.

6. Based on what Jesus states in the previous verse (14), to judge according to the flesh is to measure a person from a purely human, as opposed to divine, perspective. The Pharisees were ignorant of Jesus' heavenly origin, and so they could only judge Jesus "according to appearance" (cf. 7:24), such as whether He was as educated as the Pharisees or whether He kept every letter of the law. When a person judges according to the flesh, he tends to be motivated to win praise and admiration from men but becomes blind to what is right in God's eyes.
7. "I AM" was the LORD's self-revelation to His people in the Old Testament declaring that He is the only everlasting God and Savior (Ex 3:14; Isa 43:10-11, 25; 45:18, 19; 46:4, 9; 48:12; 51:12; 52:6). To believe Jesus' declaration of "I AM," therefore, is to believe that He is the everlasting God who has come in the flesh for our salvation, and that He is our only way to eternal life.
- 8a. The lifting up of the Son of Man encompasses two related concepts, namely, Jesus' death and exaltation (Jn 12:32, 33; Acts 2:33; 5:31). The purpose for the Son of Man to be lifted up is to bring salvation to those who believe in Him (Jn 3:14, 15).
- 8b.
 1. Upon Jesus' glorification, He would pour out the promised Holy Spirit (Jn 7:39). This came true on the day of Pentecost. The visible outpouring of the Holy Spirit led the people to realize that the man they had crucified was now made by God to be both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36, 37). Believers who receive the Holy Spirit also recognize the unity of Jesus with His Father (Jn 14:20).
 2. In addition, people can also know that Jesus is the everlasting God through the powerful works done in His name. The miraculous deeds the followers of Jesus performed after His resurrection served as a powerful witness that brought many people to faith and repentance (Acts 3:16; 8:5-8; 9:33-35; 36-42, etc.).

Lesson 17

OBSERVATION

Outline

True Freedom (8:31–36)

Descendants of Abraham, Children of the Devil (8:37–47)

Unity with the Father and Precedence over Abraham (8:48–59)

Key Words/Phrases

Abide, my word, truth, free, Abraham, “Most assuredly, I say to you,” sin, father/Father, lie, know, “I AM”

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed” (8:31).
 “... My word has no place in you” (8:37).
 “I speak what I have seen with My Father” (8:38).
 “... a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God” (8:40).
 “You are not able to listen to My word” (8:43).
 “... I tell the truth...” (8:45, 46).
 “Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word he shall never see death” (8:51).

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. He wants us to truly be His disciple by abiding in His word. This means that being a disciple of Christ is not simply a matter of momentary conviction, but a lasting commitment.
2. The word for “abide” is also translated “remain.” It connotes permanence. Therefore, abiding in Jesus’ word means to remain true to what He tells us. According to this passage, it includes giving Jesus’ word a place in us (cf. 37), listening to His word (cf. 43, 47), believing His word (cf. 45), and keeping His word (cf. 52). Simon Peter set an example for us of what it means to abide in Jesus’ words when he chose to remain with

Jesus because he held firmly to Jesus’ words of eternal life (Jn 6:66–68).

3. In the academic world, Jesus’ statement, “the truth shall set you free,” has been used in quite a different sense from what Jesus intended. “Truth” is thus often viewed as knowledge of various subject matters as a result of study and education. Morally speaking, “truth” in today’s society has also become relative: “What is true for you may not be true for me.”

 However, the truth according to Jesus is absolute, and it is not merely knowledge of things in this created world. God’s word is truth (Jn 17:17). Since Jesus speaks whatever He has heard and seen from His Father, and He is from the Father, Jesus’ word is also truth (Jn 8:38, 45, 46). Apart from Jesus Christ, we cannot possibly obtain the truth (Jn 14:6). Therefore, the biblical concept of “truth” is essentially the revelation of God through Jesus Christ, which shows us the way to the Father.
4. While freedom in a secular sense means not having to answer to anyone else, freedom and slavery according to Jesus pertain to sin. Whoever commits sin is a slave of sin (8:34). On the surface, a sinner seems to enjoy freedom because he can choose to do as he pleases without the burden of God’s commandments. In reality, the person who sins has sold himself to sin to be under its power, making sin his master (Rom 7:14–17). That is why we are often powerless to put an end to our sinful behavior. The final outcome of being a slave to sin is death (Rom 6:23). This is certainly not freedom. True freedom is to be free from the sway of sin and its deadly consequence, and only the Lord Jesus can grant us this freedom (Jn 8:36).
5. A slave must obey his master. Likewise, a sinner is subject to sin’s control, even when he wishes to stop sinning. A believer who does not abide in Jesus’ word is like a slave, who cannot abide in the house. Without enduring faith in Christ, he will not remain in God but will die in his sins (cf. Rom 8:13).

On the contrary, he who is a true disciple of Christ is like a son who abides forever because he always has Christ in Him as the light of life. He has been transferred into the kingdom of God and therefore does not fear the power of darkness. He is able

- to live a life according to what pleases God rather than according to the demands of sin.
6. Jesus makes us free through the word of truth He speaks (8:32). His word shows us the way out of death and carries life-giving power (cf. 6:63). By trusting and submitting to His word, we abide in God and are no longer obligated to obey sin and its desires (8:51).
 7. Jesus used two different words to refer to His hearers' relation to Abraham. In verse 37, he called them Abraham's "descendants" (literally "seeds"). He was speaking of their physical descent from Abraham. In verse 39, however, He chose the word "children," and implied that they were not Abraham's children. Here, He was referring to a spiritual lineage. Only those who follow the footsteps of Abraham are considered his children. Thus the Bible repeatedly makes a distinction between a true Israelite and one who is an Israelite only outwardly (Rom 2:28–29; Jer 4:4; 9:25; Ezek 36:26–27).
 8. The claim "we were not born of fornication," which was followed by "we have one Father—God," was the listeners' reply to Jesus' words that they were doing the deeds of their father. In this context, "fornication" is figurative of unfaithfulness towards God, and being born of fornication means having a father other than the true God. The language of marital infidelity is prominent in the Bible, especially in the Old Testament where God accused His people of committing fornication by following other gods (Jer 2:20; 3:2, 9; 13:27; Ezek 16:15–43; 23:1–35; Hos 2:1–4; 4:12; Mic 1:7). In response to Jesus, the Jews borrowed this language to argue that they were faithful to no one but God.
 - 9a.
 1. Jesus' word has no place in him (8:37, 43, 45–47).
 2. He lies and opposes the truth, even to the point of murder (8:37–41, 44, 45).
 3. He wants to do the desires of the devil (8:44).
 4. He dishonors Jesus (8:49).
 5. He does not know God (8:55).
 - 9b.
 1. He loves Jesus (8:42).
 2. He hears God's words (8:47).
 10. To be "of God" means to belong wholly to God and to bear His nature. This status begins with receiving Christ (Jn 1:12, 13). The outward manifestation of this includes hearing the word of God (Jn 8:47; 1 Jn 4:6), practicing righteousness (1 Jn 3:10), and being free from the sway of the evil one (1 Jn 5:18, 19).
 - 11a. Jesus is the light of life, and His words are spirit and life (Jn 8:12; 6:63). Whoever follows this light by trusting in Him as His word teaches is saved from the darkness of spiritual death (Jn 8:12).
 - 11b. The word for "keep" can be translated as "guard" or "hold." It carries the idea of faithful perseverance. Keeping Jesus' word means continuing to trust Jesus as our Lord and Savior no matter what obstacles may come along in our Christian walk.
 12. Jesus the Son of God is the model for those who want to be children of God. Although Jesus was God, He humbled Himself and kept God's word to the end (Jn 8:55; Php 2:5–8; Heb 5:8, 9). We ought to imitate our Lord by also keeping God's word (Jn 8:51).
 13. Even Abraham, who lived long before Jesus came in the flesh, gladly looked forward to Jesus' coming into the world. Although no account in the Bible mentions explicitly Abraham's rejoicing at seeing the day of Christ, we are told that Abraham embraced God's promise, which he did not yet receive but could only see from afar (Heb 11:13–15; cf. Rom 4:19, 20). This promise is about the "seed," the promise that Jesus would fulfill (cf. Gal 3:16–19; Gen 12:7; 13:15; 24:7).
 14. "I AM" was the LORD's self-revelation in the Old Testament. It was a declaration of God's eternal existence, His uniqueness, and His salvation (Ex 3:14; Isa 43:10–11, 25; 45:18, 19; 46:4, 9; 48:12; 51:12; 52:6). By saying, "Before Abraham was, I AM," Jesus was not only implying that He was greater than Abraham, but was proclaiming to be the only everlasting God who had once revealed Himself to His people. As He had promised in the past, God Himself has now come into the world to save His people through Jesus the incarnate word. The Jews, realizing that Jesus was claiming to be God, wanted to stone Jesus (8:59).

Lesson 18

OBSERVATION

Outline

The Healing (9:1–7)

Discussions and Interrogations (9:8–34)

Remarks of neighbors and acquaintances (8–12)

First interrogation of the man (13–17)

Questioning the parents (18–23)

Second interrogation of the man (24–34)

Faith and Judgment (9:35–41)

Key Words/Phrases

Blind, sin, works of God, revealed, light of the world, see, eyes, open, where ... from, believe, Son of Man, judgment

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. The blind man (9:2, 34); the man's parents (9:2); Jesus (9:16); the Pharisees (9:41).
2.
 1. The disciples assumed that the man's blindness was due to either his own sins or his parents' sins (9:2).
 2. Some of the Pharisees judged that Jesus was a sinner because He did not keep the Sabbath (9:16).
 3. The Pharisees condemned the healed man with the words, "You were completely born in sins" (9:34). Their judgment was out of contempt for this uneducated man born in blindness and living as a beggar.
 4. Jesus judged the sin of the Pharisees based on the fact that they said they were seeing (9:41).
3.
 1. When first asked how his eyes opened, the man referred to Jesus as "a Man called Jesus" (9:11).
 2. When the Pharisees asked for his opinion, he said that Jesus was a prophet (9:17, 27). He used the term "prophet" in the sense of someone with extraordinary knowledge or power (cf. Mt 21:46; Mk 6:15; Lk 7:49; 24:19; Jn 4:19).
3. Later, being confronted again by the Pharisees, the man concluded that Jesus must be from God, or else He could not have opened his eyes (9:31–33).
4. Finally, when Jesus found him and revealed Himself as the Son of Man, the man believed Jesus and worshiped Him (9:35–38).

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. Sickness or disability is not necessarily the result of sin. While everyone needs to examine himself of his sins and ask for forgiveness, we cannot presume to know the cause of other people's suffering and hold a prejudice against those who are suffering. Only God has full knowledge of the reason and purpose of a person's plight. In fact, a condition that may seem pitiable to men could in fact serve God's higher purpose.
3. Through the healing, Jesus revealed that He is the light of the world who gives sight to the spiritually blind (9:5, 39).
4.
 1. The initial questions from the neighbors and those who knew him to be blind (9:10)
 2. The Pharisees' first round of questioning (9:15)
 3. The Jews' questions to the parents of the man (9:19)
 4. The second round of questioning (9:26)
5. The immediate reason for the interrogation was that the man's neighbors and acquaintances had brought him to the Pharisees. But the deeper motive of the Pharisees was complex. On the one hand, they had to face the fact that this man who was born blind had been healed by Jesus. But at the same time, some of them were already convinced that Jesus was a sinner. Therefore, in their confusion, they had to find some indisputable evidence to build a case against Jesus.
6. The incontestable fact of Jesus' miraculous healing threw the Pharisees into confusion, as can be seen in their repeated interrogation about how the man was healed. They were puzzled by how a sinner could open the eyes of a blind man, but they were unwilling to face the truth. They tried to exert their authority by conducting what appeared to be a formal trial, but they were not able to get the answer they wanted because neither

the man nor his parents were willing to incriminate Jesus. Their frustration became evident when they began to revile the man and finally expelled him. The perplexity of these Pharisees revealed their arrogance and stubbornness in the light of Jesus' powerful revelation.

7. Although Jesus was absent in this scene, the miraculous sign He had just performed spoke for Him. The man who had received Jesus' healing also became more vocal in his stance for Jesus through the rounds of questioning by the Pharisees. The implicit verdict was in Jesus' favor, and the Pharisees' attempt to condemn Jesus ironically turned into a judgment on themselves.
9. Under interrogation, the man healed of blindness could not form a conclusion at first about whether Jesus was a sinner. But he said, "One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see" (9:25). He did not have all the answers, but he was certain that he had received Jesus' miraculous healing.

In a similar way, when we meet with situations in life that may make us question God, and we are unable to find answers to such questions, it is important for us to recall how God has brought us where we are by His grace and His power. Our personal experience of God's marvelous works in the past can help us wade through difficult moments of doubt and uncertainty.

10. Jesus found the man He had healed in order to reveal to him that He is the Son of Man (i.e., the One who had come down from heaven to be lifted up for the salvation of the world; cf. Jn 3:13–15). By means of His healing, He wanted both the man and everyone who heard him to come to this saving faith. Therefore, the purpose of Jesus' miraculous signs is for all to believe that He is the Son of God, and in believing, they may have eternal life (Jn 20:30, 31).
11. Jesus makes the spiritually blind see by showing those living in the darkness of sin and death the truth of eternal life. But those who are wise in their own eyes and refuse to believe in the Lord Jesus become blind to the truth (cf. Mt 11:25, 26).

13. Jesus' words "If you were blind" allude to those in the darkness of sin and death who are willing to acknowledge their need for the Lord when the light of Jesus shines on them. Because they humbly confess their sin and accept the grace of God, their sin is forgiven. On the contrary, there are those who are blind but think that they are seeing (cf. 2 Cor 4:3, 4). They do not confess their need for salvation. As a result, their sin remains.

Lesson 19

OBSERVATION

Outline

Illustration of the Shepherd and His Sheep (10:1–6)
 Jesus as the Door and the Good Shepherd (10:7–18)
 Division among the Jews (10:19–21)
 Dispute over Jesus' Identity (10:22–39)
 Beyond the Jordan (10:40–42)

Key Words/Phrases

Sheepfold, door, shepherd, sheep, voice, follow, know, saved, life, abundantly, good, My own, My Father, power, believe, works

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. 1. The shepherd enters the sheepfold by the door, but a thief or a robber climbs up some other way (10:1, 2).
2. The sheep hear the shepherd's voice and follow him. But they will flee from a stranger because they do not know the voice of strangers (10:3–5).
2. The shepherd has intimate knowledge of every sheep, and He relates to each individually.
- 3a 1. He has led the way to heaven by suffering and laying down His life for us (Heb 2:10, 18; 10:19, 20; Jn 14:2, 3).
2. He leads us by His own example (Jn 13:15, 34; 15:10, 12; 1 Pet 2:21–23).

- 3b. Following our shepherd begins with believing that He is our only Savior (cf. Jn 10:25–27). Our trust in Him enables us to obey everything He commands and follow His footsteps wherever He goes (cf. Jn 12:26).
4. Jesus is the only way of eternal life (10:10, 28; 14:6). We enter this door by believing in Him, acknowledging Him as our Lord and Savior, and receiving the grace of eternal life from Him (this includes being baptized into Him for the remission of sins, letting our feet be washed to have a part with Him, and partaking of His body and His blood).
- 5a. The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy, but the good shepherd comes to bring life to the sheep (10:9, 10).
- 5b. The hireling does not care about the sheep because they are not his own, and he flees in the face of danger. But the good shepherd gives his life for the sheep because they are His own (10:11–14).
6. Freedom, safety, and satisfaction
7. cf. Jn 4:14; 6:35; 7:37, 38
8. The verse in Greek is literally, “... I know mine, and mine know me.” The shepherd’s ownership of his sheep is emphasized. Therefore, the reciprocal knowledge of the shepherd and his sheep is based on an affection of belonging. It is much more than theoretical knowledge, but encompasses mutual acknowledgment, understanding, and communion.
9. According to the prediction in Jn 11:49–51, Jesus would not only die for the whole nation, but also gather together in one the children of God who were scattered abroad. The salvation that Jesus accomplishes goes beyond the boundaries of the Jews and reaches people universally (cf. Acts 2:38, 39). This saying of Jesus has also been interpreted as being prophetic of the future gathering of God’s people who are not yet in His true church.
10. If Jesus had no authority to take up His own life, His death would have been a noble act of self-sacrifice but ineffective for our salvation (1 Cor 15:14–18). On the contrary, Jesus is able to bring us abundant life and we can be assured that we shall

- never perish because He is God Himself, the author and lord of life (Jn 6:57; 14:19; Rev 1:18).
11. Time and again Jesus spoke about His works as His witness (10:25, 31, 37, 38). These were the signs He performed, which revealed His identity as the Christ. In this passage, He urged the people to consider the works He had done because they bear visible testimony that He had indeed been sent by His Father (cf. 14:10, 11). Only the One sent by God could have done such great works (cf. 9:32, 33).
12. 1. He did works in His Father’s name (10:25, 32).
2. His Father has given His sheep to Him (10:29).
3. He and His Father are one (10:30).
4. The Father sanctified Him and sent Him into the world (10:36).
5. The Father is in Him, and He in His Father (10:38).
13. Jesus stayed there (10:40). Although the passage does not explicitly explain how His stay resulted in such a great impact, we can recall how Jesus led the Samaritans to faith in Him through His word when He stayed with them (Jn 4:41, 42). The words of the people, “John performed no sign” also suggest that Jesus performed signs among them, demonstrating that He was indeed the greater One whom John had preached about (Jn 1:15; 27, 30).

Lesson 20

OBSERVATION

Outline

- Report of the Illness of Lazarus (11:1–6)
Jesus’ Conversation with His Disciples (11:7–16)
Martha Met Jesus (11:17–27)
Mary Met Jesus (11:28–37)
Raising Lazarus to Life (11:38–44)

Key Words/Phrases

Lazarus, Mary, Martha, sick, love, death/die, glory, light, believe, resurrection, life, groaned, wept

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. See verses 4, 14, and 23.
2.
 1. Jesus delayed His trip to Bethany for the sake of His disciples, that they might believe (14, 15).
 2. Jesus proclaimed the promise of life to whoever believes in Him, and He asked Martha, “Do you believe this?” (26).
 3. Jesus reminded Martha of the necessity of faith in order to see the glory of God (40).
 4. Jesus prayed to the Father so that the people might believe that the Father had sent Him (42).
3. From a human standpoint, had Jesus arrived sooner, He would have been able to save Lazarus; now that Lazarus had died for four days, it was already too late for Jesus to do anything. But this is precisely what the author wants to impress upon the reader—Jesus is able to do what is humanly impossible. He has power over even death, something no human being can ever prevail against (cf. Ecc 8:8).

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

- 1a. We see at least two contradictory thoughts. First, the one whom Jesus loved was sick. Ordinarily, if we have the power to prevent sickness, we use that power to protect our loved ones. But Jesus, who had authority over illnesses, did not do anything to prevent Lazarus from getting sick.

What is even more startling is that, right after it states that Jesus loved Martha, Mary, and Lazarus (5), the narrative tells us, “So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days...” (6). In other words, Jesus deliberately delayed His journey to Bethany because He loved them. This is contrary to how we normally define love, i.e., we rush to the aid of the person we love.

Whereas human love is shown in caring for the present and physical needs, Jesus’ love for this family is seen on a deeper

level. He loved them by letting Lazarus die so that they may all take part in God’s greater plan and grow in faith as a result.

- 1b. As difficult as it may be for us to grasp, God sometimes lets us suffer because He loves us. God has a greater purpose which we may not be able to perceive, but His concern is always the ultimate good of those He loves (Isa 43:1–4; Jer 29:11; Rom 8:35–39; Heb 12:5–11; Jas 5:10, 11).
2. Jesus stated explicitly that Lazarus’ sickness was for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it (11:4). By raising Lazarus to life, Jesus revealed Himself as the Son of God who had power to grant eternal life. This great sign also led to Jesus’ death, through which He would be exalted and receive even greater glory (Jn 12:23, 24). Therefore, on the surface, Lazarus appeared at first to be a victim of misfortune, but in reality, he was chosen to participate in God’s glorious work of salvation. In the process, many came to believe in the Lord, and the faith of those who already believed in Him also increased.
3. There is light during the day. Jesus is the light of the world (Jn 8:12; 9:5; 12:46). To walk in the day means to trust the Lord Jesus as our guide and follow His word (Isa 2:3–5; 50:10; Jn 8:12; Rom 13:12, 13; 1 Jn 1:5–7).
4. The light that shines in the world of darkness must be grasped and received (cf. Jn 1:5, 11). If we receive the Lord Jesus Christ into our hearts and our lives, He will illuminate our inner being, give us a new life, and enlighten our spiritual eyes so we may know God and see the way of life (Jn 1:12, 13; Acts 26:18; 2 Cor 4:6).
5. The disciples were surprised that Jesus chose to return to the vicinity of Jerusalem when the Jews there had just wanted to stone Him. The point of Jesus’ reply is twofold:
 1. Despite the forces of darkness ahead of them, it was necessary for them to follow the will and guidance of the Lord. Doing so would ensure their spiritual well-being. On the other hand, those who choose rather to practice ungodly deeds (such as those who persecuted Jesus) would do so to their own ruin.

2. While Jesus was still with them, the disciples ought to submit to the will of God and join the Lord in carrying out His mission (cf. Jn 9:4, 5). For the same reason, everyone must heed Jesus' voice and make a decision to accept Him before He returns to His Father.
6. Jesus' deliberate delay was to manifest His glory by calling Lazarus back to life even after his body had begun to decay. His aim was to lead the people to believe in Him and to strengthen the disciple's faith in Him as the Lord of life. Jesus was glad that He yielded to the Father's plan and timing, an act of obedience that would greatly benefit the disciples.
- 7a. 1. Jesus would have been able to prevent Lazarus' death (21).
2. God would give Jesus whatever He asked (22).
3. Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world (27).
- 7b. Although Martha believed that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God, she was not able to fully trust Jesus. When He commanded that the stone be removed from the tomb, she tried to deter Him. This is often the irony we see in ourselves. We confess that Jesus is Lord and that He is able to do all things, but when His word contradicts our common sense, rationale, or desires, we are unable to take that step to trust that He is always right.
8. By "though he may die" (25), Jesus was speaking about natural death. Believers also go through physical death. On the contrary, he who believes in Jesus shall never die (26) in the sense that they will never experience the second death, i.e., the final, spiritual death.
- "Whoever lives" (26) refer to those who are physically alive, whereas the words "he shall live" (25) are with respect to eternal life.
- Combining these thoughts, we understand that if we believe in the Lord Jesus in this life, the death we experience will be only physical and temporary, and the spiritual life we receive as a result will last to eternity.
9. Jesus' raising of Lazarus demonstrated that He was able to resurrect those who are physically dead. On the last day, even

the wicked will be raised from the grave at Jesus' command (Jn 5:28). But the deeper significance of the sign is that Jesus will raise believers to life spiritually now and grant them the life that will not end (Jn 5:25). At the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked on the last day, those who have believed in the Lord Jesus while they were alive would be transformed and caught up to be with the Lord forever (Rom 6:5, 8; 8:21-23; 1 Cor 15:50-57; 2 Cor 5:1-5; Php 3:20, 21; Col 3:4; 1 Thess 4:16, 17). This is the eternal life promised by Jesus that is given today and will be fulfilled on the last day (Jn 5:29).

11. Mary said the same words as her sister, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." Then Jesus groaned in the spirit when He saw Mary and the Jews weeping (33). Later, He groaned again in Himself after some of the people asked if Jesus could not have prevented Lazarus' death (37, 38).

Although the passage is not explicit, we may infer that Jesus was disturbed by the people's lack of faith in Him. They, including Mary, believed Jesus only as far as reckoning that He could heal the sick, but did not recognize that He was the Lord of life who had the power to restore even the dead to life. It is also probable that Jesus was indignant of seeing the despair and spiritual wretchedness of the unbelieving world.

12. Jesus was not weeping the same way Mary and the Jews were weeping (the Bible uses two different Greek words to distinguish Jesus' action and that of Mary and the Jews). He was not weeping over the death of Lazarus, for He knew all along that his sickness was not unto death, but that Lazarus would rise again. Rather, He empathized with the human race, which is under the shadow of the power of sin and death. The lament of Mary and the Jews who were with her vividly portrayed this common plight of men. Jesus wept with them because He felt their pain and knew the helpless state of human beings.
13. Our Lord Jesus, who was once in the flesh, understands and feels the sorrow that we experience (Heb 2:14-18).
14. The Father always hears Jesus because Jesus is one with His Father (Jn 10:30). Even though He had taken on the form of a man, Jesus was in constant union with the Father in a way which no other human being can lay claim to. This shows that

He was indeed the Son of God, whom God had sent into the world (cf. Jn 11:27).

15. By raising Lazarus to life, Jesus substantiated His proclamation, “I am the resurrection and the life” (v. 25). Because He has life in Himself and has power over death, we may have complete trust in His promise that through Him we shall live forever (11:25, 26).

Lesson 21

OBSERVATION

Outline

The Plot to Put Jesus to Death (11:45–54)

The Search for Jesus before the Passover (11:55–57)

Mary Anoints Jesus’ Feet (12:1–11)

The Multitude Welcomes Jesus into Jerusalem (12:12–19)

Key Words/Phrases

Believed, Pharisees, die, nation, Passover, Jerusalem, Mary, feet, “My burial,” branches of palm trees, Hosanna, King of Israel, young donkey

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. Many of the Jews believed in Jesus. But some of them went to the Pharisees to report Him (11:45–46).
2. Caiaphas’ calculations were based on expediency (“it is expedient for you”; 11:50). He reckoned that it was wise to put one person to death to protect the interest of the whole nation. But he showed no concern whatsoever over the murder of an innocent man. Even his words about the welfare of the nation could very well have been simply a disguise of self-interest (cf. Mt 27:18).
- 3a. Man’s plans and schemes, no matter how wicked, are still under God’s sovereign control. Sometimes, man’s actions may turn out to serve God’s purpose despite man’s evil intent (cf. Rom 9:14–18). This was the case with Caiaphas’ proposal. Caiaphas’ role as the high priest also played a part. Although he did not live up to this sacred office, God still made use of him in his position to speak prophecy on behalf of the nation.
- 3b. Although Caiaphas did not intend it, his words were prophetic of Jesus’ expiatory death. Jesus would die for the sins of not only the Jewish race but of the whole world. Consequently, children of God throughout the world would be saved through Him and be gathered as one (cf. Jn 10:16; 12:32; Eph 2:13–18; 1 Jn 2:2; Rev 5:9)
4. See 11:54. As it drew near to the end of His public ministry, Jesus shifted almost all His attention to His disciples.
5. Jesus had become the center of attention at the Passover in Jerusalem. While the multitude anxiously expected Him as some public spectacle, the chief priests and Pharisees were also seeking to arrest Him. This heightened awareness presaged Jesus’ impending death.
6. Anointing the body with oil was a luxury. Instead of keeping it for herself, Mary prepared the very costly oil for the Lord because she deemed Jesus as worthy of the greatest honor. Touching another person’s feet was a most humbling action (cf. Mt 3:11). But she anointed Jesus’ feet with this valuable oil. Not only so, she even wiped His feet with her hair. These actions further suggested that even though she had offered so much, she viewed herself as the lowliest of servants before the Lord.
7. Judas cared only about the cost of the oil and how he could use that money for himself. He judged Mary’s action as a mistake because he did not believe that Jesus was important enough to receive the anointing. He also failed to recognize the solemnity of the occasion, which the Lord Jesus pointed out in 12:7–8.
10. Mary had kept the oil for His burial. This means that what Mary had done signified Jesus’ death, which was soon to come, and was a preparation for the coming of that hour. Jesus said, “For the poor you have with you always, but Me you do not have always” (12:8; “Me” is emphatic). Jesus was about to depart from this world to go to the Father. Therefore, His presence during these final hours was all the more precious. Mary

cherished Jesus' presence in their midst—something the rest had taken for granted (cf. Jn 12:35). This was a sign of her faith in the Lord.

11. With palm branches the great multitude lauded Jesus as “He who comes in the name of the LORD” and “the King of Israel.” This means that they were publicly acknowledging Jesus as their victorious king. While they were falsely expecting Jesus to be their political ruler, their actions unwittingly fulfilled what was written in the Scriptures and extolled Jesus' kingship on a deeper level. This was all happening according to God's plan, as the disciples realized later.
12. According to prophecy, the king from Judah would come on a donkey (Gen 49:11; Zech 9:9). As Zechariah 9:9 states, riding on a donkey is a sign of the king's lowliness. Jesus did not come to crush the Roman rule with military power, but to destroy him who had the power of death (Heb 2:14). His conquest would be won by His own humiliating death in submission to the Father's will.
13. Two groups of multitudes seemed to be in view here. Verse 17 depicts those who were present when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. These people bore witness of what they had seen, proclaiming the mighty deed that Jesus had done while they accompanied Him on the way toward Jerusalem. Verse 18 informs us that a throng of people also came out of Jerusalem to meet Jesus because they had heard about the sign Jesus had done. Jesus' entry into Jerusalem caused such a stir among the people that the Pharisees felt hopelessly defeated.

Lesson 22

OBSERVATION

Outline

Arrival of the Hour of Glory (12:20–36)

Fulfillment of Isaiah's Prophecy (12:37–43)

Final Call of the Divine Ambassador (12:44–50)

Key Words/Phrases

Greeks, hour, Son of Man, glorify, life, serve, follow, judge, lifted up, light/darkness, believe, Him who sent Me, speak, word

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. The theme of “the hour” weaves through the passage. The Lord first announced that the hour had come that the Son of Man should be glorified (23). As He was speaking about His death, He expressed the anguish in His soul because of what this hour would bring. But at the same time He was determined to face this very hour for which He had come into the world (27, 28). This hour of glory was also the hour in which the world would be judged and the ruler of the world would be cast out (30, 31). For once the Son of Man was lifted up and glorified, He would draw all peoples to Himself (32). Since the hour had arrived, the Lord Jesus also urged the people to believe in the light while the light was still with them (35, 36).
2.
 1. Jesus' hour of glory was also the time of judgment (31).
 2. Jesus did not judge unbelievers, for He did not come to judge but to save the world (47, 48).
 3. The word that Jesus had spoken would judge unbelievers in the last day (48).

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. Jesus used the term “Son of Man” to refer to Himself, although the identity of “the Son of Man” was veiled to the people, as can be seen in Jn 12:34. The term in the Bible is associated with two main ideas. The first is His humility and suffering (Mt 8:20; 12:40; 17:12, 22; 20:18, 28; 26:2, 24, 45; Mk 8:31; 9:12, 31; 10:33, 45; 14:21, 41; Lk 9:22, 44, 58; 18:31; 22:22; 24:7; Jn 3:14; 12:34). The second is His heavenly origin, glory, and authority (Mt 9:6; 10:23; 12:8; 13:41; 16:27, 28; 19:28; 24:30; 24:44; 25:31; 26:64; Mk 2:10; 2:28; 8:38; 13:26; 14:62; Lk 5:24; 6:5; 9:26; 12:8; 17:24; 21:27; 22:69; Jn 1:51; 3:13, 14; 5:27; 6:27, 53, 62; 8:28; 12:23; 13:31; Acts 7:56). These two ideas are closely related, for the suffering and death of the Son of Man would fully manifest His heavenly glory and power. The Gospel according to John unites these two ideas. As we can see in the present passage,

the lifting up of the Son of Man signifies the kind of death that He would die (Jn 12:33). But it also meant His ascension (cf. Jn 6:62; 8:28), through which He would receive glory and power (Jn 12:23, 31, 32).

2. These Greeks were probably God-fearing Gentiles who had come to Jerusalem for the Passover. Their request to see the Lord Jesus provided Jesus the occasion to speak about the universal nature of His atoning death and of the salvation that would be accomplished. Embedded in the analogy of the seed that dies and produces much grain is the idea that through His death, the Lord Jesus would draw all peoples, Jews and Gentiles alike, to Himself (12:32; cf. 11:49–52).
3. In verse 25, which immediately precedes the statement about serving Him, Jesus teaches that serving Him involves hating one's life in this world. This means that we need to deny ourselves, including our own desires, comfort, and will, as we obey Jesus' commands and follow His example in our daily lives (Mt 16:24; Mk 8:34; Lk 9:23, 57, 58).
4. "Soul" in verse 27 is the same word as the "life" that one either loves or hates in verse 25. While the teaching in verse 25 applies to followers of Jesus and not to Jesus Himself, Jesus' anguish, denial of His own will, and laying down of His own life (Jn 10:17) certainly serves as the ultimate example for us to follow.
- 5a. Jesus is God become flesh. Although He is the Son, He is one with the Father (Jn 10:30). As the One sent by the Father, everything He did and spoke fully represented what the Father did and said (Jn 5:19, 30; 7:16; 12:49). Therefore, the Father had already glorified His name through the works of Jesus on earth (Jn 12:28).

Furthermore, He would also glorify it again when Jesus accomplished the Father's purpose through His death and exaltation. In this sense, the glorification of the Son was also the glorification of the name of the Father (cf. Jn 13:31, 32). Therefore, we who have been redeemed give thanks and praise to our Father because of the salvation accomplished in Jesus Christ (cf. Eph 1:3–6; 1 Cor 15:57).

- 5b. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus conquered death and the prince of the world, the devil (1 Cor 15:45, 54–57; Heb 2:14). Therefore, the hour in which the Lord Jesus was glorified was also a judgment on the world and its prince ("the world" represents the unbelieving world that is under the influence of the devil; cf. Jn 1:10, 11; 15:18; 16:20).
6. The death of Jesus manifests God's great love for the world (Jn 3:14–16; Rom 5:6–8). This incomparable love compels us to live for Him (2 Cor 5:14, 15). Furthermore, the death of Jesus broke down the barrier between Jews and Gentiles, thereby gathering together believers of all races under His name (Gal 3:26–29; Eph 2:11–18).
7. Here, the Lord Jesus referred to Himself as the light, which was soon to depart from the world to return to the Father (cf. Jn 9:4, 5; 11:9, 10; 13:1, 3). He urged the people to believe Him while He was still in the world. But if they refuse to believe in Him, they would be consumed by the power of evil, stumble, and die in their sin (Jn 8:21). On the contrary, if they believe in the light, they would become sons of light. They would have the light of life in them, guiding them on the path of life so that they would not stumble (cf. Jn 11:9).
8. They did not believe in Jesus because they could not believe (39). God had blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts (40). On its own, this statement may seem to make God solely responsible for man's unbelief and absolve men of any guilt. But verse 42 speaks to the contrary with the word "nevertheless." The fact that many rulers believed in Jesus despite the unbelief of the people in general tells us that men are not without a choice.

Man does have the capacity to choose faith. That is why the Lord urged the people to believe in the light. But if a person forsakes the opportunity to believe, God gives them over to a debased mind (Rom 1:21–28). It appears, therefore, that the blinding and hardening of hearts is judgment of God upon those who choose to reject Jesus (cf. 2 Thess 1:9–12). Once thus blinded and hardened, the unbeliever loses even the capacity to believe.

9. Verse 40 quotes from Isaiah 6:10. In that passage, Isaiah saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up (Isa 6:1). Therefore, the statement in John equates the Lord in Isaiah's vision with Jesus. This means that Jesus is the eternal God who existed even before His incarnation. The glory that Isaiah saw was in fact the glory of Jesus. This is consistent with the teachings in the Bible concerning Jesus' divinity (cf. Jn 8:56, 58).
10. Out of fear of the Pharisees, they did not confess Jesus despite their belief in Him (42). This was because they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God (43).
12. Jesus' oneness with the Father authenticates and gives weight to everything He had done and said. Accepting Him was accepting the Father, and coming to Him was coming to the Father. On the contrary, rejecting Jesus was rejecting the Father. Man cannot avoid coming face to face with the everlasting God when he makes a choice about Jesus.
13. All of Jesus' words came directly from the Father. Anyone rejecting Jesus' words rejects the Father. That is why Jesus' word itself would judge the unbeliever in the last day. On the other hand, through faith in Jesus' word we may receive eternal life because His word is the Father's command.

Lesson 23

OBSERVATION

Outline

Setting and Depiction of Jesus' Footwashing (13:1–5)
Dialogue with Peter (13:6–11)

Key Words/Phrases

Passover, His hour, depart, loved, His own, to the end, know, hands, wash, feet, part, clean

GENERAL ANALYSIS

- 1a.
 1. Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father (13:1).
 2. He knew that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God (13:3).
 3. When Peter protested, Jesus told him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this" (13:7).
 4. Jesus knew who would betray Him (13:11).
 5. After He had washed His disciples' feet, Jesus asked them, "Do you know what I have done to you?" (13:12) (Grammatically, this question in Greek could also be read as a command: "Know what I have done to you.")
 6. Jesus promised the disciples, "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them" (13:17).
 7. When speaking of His betrayal, Jesus said, "I know whom I have chosen" (13:18).
- 1b. Jesus' knowledge revealed His divine identity. The mention of His knowledge indicates that He was not a helpless victim of circumstances, but the Lord over all things. The timing of things was according to "His hour," i.e., God's foreordained time. Even His betrayal was under His all pervading knowledge. Therefore, Jesus' footwashing was a deliberate act according to His sovereign will and timing. This tells us that the meaning of footwashing was closely linked to Jesus' heavenly origin, His departure, His return to glory, and His sovereign will.

In contrast, Peter, who represented the disciples in the narrative, did not know the meaning of Jesus' footwashing. But Jesus promised him that he would know it afterwards. Nevertheless, Jesus commanded the disciples to wash one another's feet and to do as He had done to them. Jesus had told them what they needed to know. If they would carry out what they knew, they would be blessed. As human beings, we do not have full knowledge of God's timing or purpose. But He has revealed to

us what we need to know. We need to act on this knowledge, and if we do, we would be blessed.

2. 1. Whether it was for hospitality or personal hygiene and comfort, footwashing was not done by someone in a higher status. But our Lord Jesus, being Teacher and Lord, washed His disciples' feet (13:13, 14). It is no wonder that Peter insisted that Jesus must never wash his feet (13:6, 8).
2. Ordinarily, the guest washed his feet before a meal. But in this story, Jesus, being the Master, washed the feet of those partaking in the banquet while the banquet was underway (13:2).
3. Jesus told Peter, "What I am doing you do not understand now" (13:7). If Jesus' actions were customary, Peter would have understood what He was doing (cf. 13:12).
4. If Jesus' footwashing was a gesture of hospitality, Peter's refusal to let his master wash him would have been applauded rather than resulted in being severed from Jesus (13:8).
5. Jesus asked the disciples if they knew what He had done, and pointed out the reversal of roles in the footwashing (13:12–14).
6. Jesus' footwashing, while being an example of humility, also carried divine authority. Hence He spoke about the concept of sending in verses 16 and 20.

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

- 1a. It was before the feast of the Passover (13:1), and it was during the supper, when the devil had already put into the heart of Judas to betray the Lord (13:2).
- 1b. He knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father (13:1). He also knew that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God (13:3).
- 1c. See verses 4 and 5.
- 1d. Those who received Jesus' footwashing were "Jesus' own who were in the world" (13:1), namely, Jesus' disciples (13:5; cf. Jn 10:4).

- 2a. The Father had given to Jesus authority over all things. This universal authority that Jesus held in His hands pertained specifically to His authority to save (Jn 3:35, 36; 17:2).
- 2b. Jesus' sovereign authority to save is the basis for the saving significance of His footwashing. Just as He prefaced the command to baptize with the declaration of His universal authority (Mt 28:18, 19), in John 13, the depiction of Jesus' footwashing was prefaced by the remark that Jesus had received authority over all things from the Father. Therefore, footwashing is closely related to Jesus' power to grant eternal life. Through His footwashing, the Lord Jesus imparts to believers salvation and eternal life.
3. The timing of Jesus' footwashing was connected to His departure from the world. The mention of the Passover reminds us of Jesus' impending death, through which He would be exalted to glory.

In this final moment with His disciples, the Lord Jesus wished to love the disciples with one final act of love. Not only so, the meaning and effect of Jesus' footwashing were rooted in Jesus' death and glorification. For this reason, sacraments (i.e., institutions by Christ involving physical actions and elements through which He gives His grace of salvation), which include baptism, the Holy Communion, and footwashing, were established in connection with Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. In the case of footwashing, Jesus instituted this sacrament before He died and returned to glory. This indicates that underlying His footwashing were both His lowly death and His exaltation, and that through these footwashing receives its saving significance.

- 4a. The Bible tells us that Jesus "loved" the disciples by washing their feet. It does not say that His actions were symbolic of His love for them. In other words, the washing itself was an act of love, and it was a final, ultimate act of love. This can only be understood if we accept that Jesus' footwashing was effective for the salvation of His disciples. Through footwashing, Jesus granted His disciples a part in Him. If, on the contrary, Jesus' footwashing was strictly an illustration of humility or

merely an external washing, this act itself could not have been described by the words “He loved them to the end.”

- 4b. Only believers may have the privilege of having a part with Jesus. Jesus’ footwashing revealed His love that is especially for those who belong to Him. Those who do not belong to Christ cannot be partakers of this grace. See the discussion below about the relationship between being bathed and the washing of feet.
- 5a. Jesus assumed the role of a slave and performed an utterly humbling act on His disciples. The putting aside of His garments, girding of the towel, and the actions surrounding the footwashing, all portray His lowliness. He chose to love His disciples by means of self-sacrifice and humble service.
6. From a human point of view, Jesus’ action was incomprehensible. It was unacceptable by any social norm for a disciple to let his master wash his feet. Peter, out of respect for the Lord Jesus, simply could not let the Lord go through with such a self-debasing act.
7. Peter would have no part with the Lord Jesus. To have a part with someone is to be identified with that person and to share in his destiny (Mt 24:50–51; Lk 12:46). By the same token, having a share in the father’s inheritance means to receive the portion that is given to the son (Lk 15:12). Therefore, that Peter would not have a part with Jesus implies that he would be severed from the Lord. He would not be identified with Jesus or relate to Him in any manner. Such a state of final separation would be the complete opposite of being a member of “His own” mentioned in 13:1. The consequence of not receiving Jesus’ footwashing could not have been more severe.
- 8a. Peter’s response was a complete reversal of his refusal to let the Lord wash his feet. Jesus’ ultimatum was unambiguous. Peter immediately requested not only the washing of his feet but also his hands and his head because he understood the severity of Jesus’ warning. He did not want to risk the slightest chance of being cut off from the Lord.
- 8b. In light of the foregoing study, we can understand that footwashing is essential and necessary. Furthermore, we also

understand that the purpose and effect of Jesus’ footwashing is for us to have a part with Him.

- 8c. From the meaning of the expression “have a part” (Mt 24:51; Lk 12:46; 15:12; Rev 20:6; 21:8; 22:19), we understand that having a part with Jesus is being identified with Him and having a share in Him. Accepting Jesus’ footwashing is accepting Him in faith (cf. Jn 13:20). The outcome of this is being where He is (Jn 14:2, 3; 17:22, 24), receiving His eternal life (Jn 14:19; 15:1–5; 17:2, 3, 7, 8, 25), and having a place in His kingdom (cf. Lk 22:29, 30).
- 9a. The word for “bath” denotes the washing of the entire body. Jesus’ words may be translated as “He who is washed . . .” Here, as well as in most of the other instances of this word in the New Testament, this word is an allusion to baptism (Heb 10:22; Acts 22:16; 1 Cor 6:11; Eph 5:26; Tit 3:5). According to our Lord Jesus, the person who is bathed does not need to wash his hands and his head; rather, he is completely clean. This corresponds with the teaching of the Bible that the effect of baptism is the cleansing of the believer from sin (Acts 2:38; 22:16).
- 9b. The Lord replied Peter that a person who is bathed does not have a need [for additional washing] except the washing of the feet (Jn 13:10). Therefore, a believer who has been baptized and cleansed of his sins in baptism needs no other washing than the washing of his feet. This need applies to everyone who has been baptized into Christ. By receiving footwashing, the believer would have a part with the Lord Jesus.
10. While the Lord Jesus is not physically present with us today, He has commissioned His disciples to do as He has done to them (Jn 13:15). By accepting those whom the Lord Jesus has sent, we receive the Lord Jesus Himself (13:20). Therefore, today, for us to have a part with Christ, we need to accept the sacrament of footwashing administered by the True Jesus Church, the church in the end time that has received the commission of the Lord Jesus through the Holy Spirit (cf. Jn 20:21–23).

11. 1. Walk in the Lord (Col 1:10; 2:6; Rom 13:13; Eph 4:1; 5:8; 1 Thess 2:12; cf. Ps 119:105), and not as the Gentiles walk (Eph 4:17).
2. Be watchful (1 Cor 10:12; 2 Pet 3:17; Eph 5:11–13, 16) and overcome the devil by God’s power (Rom 16:20).
3. Live a disciplined and purposeful life (1 Cor 9:24; Rom 10:15; Isa 52:7; 2 Tim 4:7; 2 Pet 1:10, 11).

Lesson 24

OBSERVATION

Outline

Elaboration and Command on Footwashing (13:12–20)
 Exposure of the Betrayer and Judas’ Departure (13:21–30)
 Announcement of Jesus’ Departure (13:31–35)
 Prediction of Peter’s Denial (13:36–38)

Key Words/Phrases

Betray, Judas, Satan, night, glorified, going, new commandment, love one another, follow, deny

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. 1. Jesus commanded His disciples to do as He had done to them (Jn 13:15). Nowhere in the Gospels is there any instance of Jesus performing a symbolic action as an example and then asking the disciples to do the same figuratively. When He commanded footwashing, He wanted the disciples to actually carry out the washing literally.
2. Jesus said to Peter, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me” (Jn 13:8). What Peter needed to have a part with Jesus was Jesus’ washing. Without Jesus’ washing, he would have no part with Him. Jesus was not asking Peter to imitate Him in His humility and love in order to have a part with Him. If Jesus was speaking only figuratively, Peter’s refusal to accept a demonstration could not have amounted to a complete severance from Christ. It was through the

act of washing that Jesus granted Peter a part with Him. Therefore, His command to His disciples to do as He had done must be understood as actual washing with water.

3. When Jesus instituted the Holy Communion, He said, “Take this and divide it among yourselves” (Lk 22:17) and “Do this in remembrance of Me” (Lk 22:19). The early church understood the command not as a figure of speech, but as an instruction to follow what Jesus did literally (1 Cor 11:23–29).

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

- 1a. They ought to wash one another’s feet (13:14).
- 1b. The command to wash one another’s feet was based on the example Jesus gave the disciples (13:15). Jesus was the Lord and Teacher, and He washed His disciples’ feet. This implies two things. First, He has demonstrated by example what it means to love with humility and service. Second, His command carries authority, since He is the disciples’ Lord and Teacher.
2. Through the most humbling means, our Lord Jesus loved the disciples. He washed their feet so they may have a part with Him. He wants us to also love one another in the same manner (Jn 13:34, 35; 15:17). This is why He commands us to wash one another’s feet. Only with humility and love would we be willing to wash the feet of another person.

This act of washing vividly reminds us to also give ourselves to one another by serving each other in love, just as our Lord loved, served, and gave Himself for us (Eph 5:2; Mt 20:28; Mk 10:45).

Washing one another’s feet also teaches us to accept one another in love. Love does not seek its own (1 Cor 13:5). Therefore, we ought to receive one another and bear one another’s weaknesses. We ought not to please ourselves, for even Christ did not please Himself (Rom 15:1–3, 7).

3. Before the disciples carried out Jesus’ command to wash one another’s feet, they had to first receive Jesus’ footwashing. In the same way, before we wash one another’s feet, we also need

to first receive Jesus' footwashing. After commanding the disciples to wash one another's feet (Jn 13:14), Jesus turned the disciples' attention again to His footwashing, saying, "For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you (Jn 13:15). Today, we need to first let the Lord Jesus wash our feet in the sacrament of footwashing through the hands of the ministers in the church, who wash us according to Jesus' example. After our feet have been thus washed by the Lord, we may wash each other's feet among believers and put the teachings behind footwashing into practice in our daily lives.

4. The repeated mention of the key word "not greater" may seem out of place in the context. But it is central to the understanding of the nature of the sacrament of footwashing. The slave and the apostle ("he who is sent") in verse 16 refer to the one who has been given the commission to administer footwashing. He performs footwashing on behalf of the Lord Jesus, who is his master and the one who has sent him. Hence, the sovereign authority of the Lord Jesus is seen throughout the footwashing narrative, and with His authority He commissioned His disciples to do what He had done. Without the divine commission, footwashing could not be considered a sacrament. Only if the messenger has been sent can he act on behalf of the one who had sent him. By virtue of the authority from the Lord Himself, footwashing administered by the church are effective for salvation, enabling the recipients to have a part with the Lord.
5. According to verse 19, the Lord Jesus told the disciples about the betrayal in advance so that when it did come to pass, they might believe "that I AM." The expression "I AM," when spoken in an absolute sense, revealed Jesus Himself as the only everlasting God who is over all things (Jn 8:24, 28, 58). The Lord wanted the disciples to believe in due course that He was the sovereign God who controlled everything, including His betrayal. Everything that had happened was in accord with His plan and will.
6. The key words in this verse are "receive" and "send." The focus has shifted from the administration (13:16, 17) to the reception of footwashing. In verse 16, we have seen that those who are

sent to perform footwashing (the slaves and apostles) do so based on a higher authority. Now, Jesus lays His emphasis on the reception of this divine commission. Every disciple who accepts footwashing from the one sent by Jesus acknowledges Jesus' divinity and yields to His authority.

7. The reason Jesus was troubled in spirit is revealed in His words, "One of you will betray Me" (13:21). Out of His closest followers, whom Jesus had loved from the beginning, came His betrayer.
8. A betrayal is when someone takes advantage of the trust of another person to the hurt of that person. This was the case with Judas, who had been chosen by the Lord and followed Him from the beginning yet turned into the liaison with the enemies who had been seeking to kill Jesus.
9. The disciple whom Jesus loved leaned on Jesus' bosom (v. 23), an action that reveals closeness and mutual trust. His heart was one with the heart of Jesus. Judas, on the contrary, had turned against his Lord. His heart had been occupied by Satan (13:2, 27). Finally, he went out into the night (13:30). These two figures in the narrative exemplify two extremes in their distances from the Lord.
10. This statement echoes Jn 12:23. The words "now" (13:31) and "immediately" (13:32) lay stress on God's sovereign timing. Although on the surface, Judas' betrayal had brought a terrible end upon Jesus, it would be through this very hour of suffering and death that the Lord should receive glory and be exalted. It was through His sacrifice that Jesus would draw all people to Himself (Jn 12:32).
11. The commandment from the Lord Jesus for us to love one another is a step deeper than the general command of loving our neighbors as ourselves. This is because our Lord Jesus Himself has personally opened this way of love by coming into this world to serve and to become our ransom. And because He has loved us first, we are able to love one another (cf. 1 Jn 4:7-11, 19). Also, this love is found foremost among believers of Christ, for the very reason this spiritual community exists is the love of Christ. Thus, our Lord commands us to put this

new kind of love, which is rooted in Him, into practice within this community.

12. The Lord Jesus Himself was the example of ultimate love (Jn 15:13). By imitating this love, we become imitators of Christ.
13. The Lord's words to Peter may have a double meaning. Peter would not follow Jesus now, but would do so afterward, in the sense that he would eventually follow the Lord unto death (cf. Jn 21:18, 19). But beyond the physical meaning, Peter would also follow the Lord into eternal glory (cf. 1 Pet 5:1).
14. Peter vowed that he would follow the Lord even to the point of laying down his life. But the Lord knew that Peter would not be able to keep his promise. We sometimes likewise overestimate ourselves, despite our good intentions. As the Lord said, "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Mt 26:41). Therefore, we cannot afford to count on our own determination in our commitment to Christ, but must depend on the help of God through watchful prayer and walking in the truth so that we may stand in the face of trials (Mt 26:41; Lk 21:36; Eph 6:10–18).

Lesson 25

OBSERVATION

Outline

Comfort and Promise (14:1–4)

Jesus as the Way, the Truth, and the Life (14:5–14)

Loving Jesus by Keeping His Commandments (14:15–24)

Concluding Words (14:25–31)

Key Words/Phrases

Believe, Father, mansions, go, come, receive, way, know, truth, life, see, dwell, in, works, My name, love, keep, commandments, Helper, Spirit of truth, Holy Spirit, peace

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. 1. "I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also" (3).
2. "He who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do" (12).
3. "Whatever you ask in My name, that I will do" (13).
4. "If you ask anything in My name, I will do it" (14).
5. "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever" (16).
6. "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you" (18).
7. "You will see me" (19).
8. "Because I live, you will live also" (19).
9. "At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you" (20).
10. "He who loves me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him" (21).
11. "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with Him" (23).
12. "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you" (26).
13. "Peace I leave with you" (27).
2. 1. "No one comes to the Father except through Me" (6).
2. "If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also" (7).
3. "He who has seen Me has seen the Father" (9).
4. "Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works" (10).
5. "Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me" (11).
6. "And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (13).

7. “At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you” (20).
 8. “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him” (23).
 9. “The word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me” (24).
 10. “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things...” (26).
3. Love is the basis of dwelling together. Only with mutual love would two individuals yearn to be together. What the Lord Jesus promises about the many dwellings in His Father’s house (2), preparing a place for believers (3), and coming to receive them so they may be where He is (3), all express the deep love between Him and the believers. His assurance that the Holy Spirit would abide with the believers forever (16, 17) and that He would not leave them orphans (18) likewise issues out of His love for them. The Lord Jesus makes it even more explicit when He said that His Father would love those who love Him, and He and the Father would come to him and make their home with him (23). On the part of the disciples, they would rejoice at the thought of the Lord’s return if they loved the Lord (28).

Love also motivates us to keep the Lord’s commandments (15, 21, 23). Without love, obedience is compulsory and burdensome. On the part of Christ, it is also out of His love for us that He gives us His commandments. That is why He said, “He who *has* My commandments” (21; emphasis added), since His commandments are for our good and are precious. It is a privilege to have the commandments of Christ because they are given out of love. The Lord further promised that if we love the Lord by keeping His word, His Father would love us, and He and His Father would come to us and make Their home with us (23). Therefore, keeping the commandments of God is a concrete act built on love, and this loving relationship deepens even more when God abides with us as a result of our obedience.

4.
 1. He is “another Helper” whom the Father gives us to abide with us forever (16).
 2. He is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But we know Him, for He dwells with us and is in us (17).
 3. The Holy Spirit, whom the Father sends in Jesus’ name, teaches us all things, and brings to our remembrance all things that Jesus has said to us (26).

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

2. Even though many religions encourage people to do good, none other than faith in Jesus can give us access to God the Father. Jesus is the only way because in Him alone is the truth—truth about God, the sinful condition of man, and the redemption that God gives (Jn 1:14, 17; 5:30–32; 7:16–18; 8:26, 31, 32, 40; 18:37). What is more, in Him alone is life, for He, as the Son of God, is the only Savior who has the authority to grant eternal life (Jn 3:14–17; 5:24–26; 6:40, 47, 51, 54, 63; 8:51; 10:27, 28).
3. According to the Lord Jesus’ words to Philip, knowing Jesus as the way involves believing His words (14:9–11). Further in the passage, the Lord Jesus also teaches us that keeping Jesus’ commandments enables union with the Father (14:21, 23). Therefore, in short, to walk on Jesus the way means to believe in Him and to keep His commandments.
4. Those who believe in Jesus will do even greater works than what Jesus had done when He was on earth because the risen Lord will do for them whatever they ask in His name (14:12–14). When the Lord Jesus is exalted, He will continue His works through the believers. The scope of their works will be even greater than what Jesus had accomplished when He was in this world (cf. Jn 12:24, 32).
5. To have a proper understanding of the Lord’s promise, we need to see it in its context. As mentioned in the above question, the Lord Jesus was speaking concerning the works that the believers would do. These works are of the same nature as the works that Jesus did in the world (14:12). The works of Jesus were what the Father had shown Him and sent Him to complete (Jn

- 4:34; 5:20, 36; 7:21; 9:3, 4; 10:25, 32, 37, 38; 14:10, 11; 15:24; 17:4). They were good works for the purpose of bringing men back to God. Therefore, Jesus' promise must be interpreted in light of the commission entrusted by the Father. Those who believe in Jesus would continue His works to an even greater extent by asking the Father in Jesus' name. However, His promise does not pertain to our personal demands stemming from selfish desires (cf. Jas 4:3; 1 Jn 5:14, 15).
- 6a. Keeping Jesus' commandment is based on our love for Him (14:15, 21, 23). The word for "keep" may also be translated "preserve" or "guard." It is a word that connotes holding on to something valuable and dear.
 - 6b. If we love Jesus, everything He commands us would be close to our heart. That is the attitude with which we would have in carrying out His words. Consequently, we would be careful to do all that He commands us with our utmost effort.
 7. Having the Holy Spirit dwelling in us is having the very presence of God with us. This in itself is our help. More specifically, the Holy Spirit helps us in our Christian walk by teaching us (Jn 14:26; 16:13), reminding us of Jesus' words (Jn 14:26), interceding for us (Rom 8:26; Jude 20), sanctifying us (2 Thess 2:13), and enabling us to live a new life (Tit 3:5, 6; Gal 5:22–25).
 8. In this chapter the Lord Jesus explains in various terms the way through which we as believers see the Lord. If we love the Lord by keeping His commandments, Jesus and His Father will come to us and make Their home with us (14:23). This divine presence and manifestation come to us through the Holy Spirit who lives in us to help us and to teach us the truth (14:16, 17, 26). Because the Holy Spirit is in fact the Spirit of Jesus and the Spirit of the Father (cf. Mt 10:20; Lk 4:18; Acts 8:39; 16:6, 7; Rom 8:9; 2 Cor 3:17; Gal 4:6), the Lord Jesus could speak interchangeably of the coming of Himself, of His Father, and of the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:18). Through a living experience of God's workings in our lives, we are able to see the Lord. This abiding presence of God is something that unbelievers (i.e., "the world" in Jn 14:19) are unable to see (cf. Jn 14:17).
 9. Although we are often weak and easily troubled by many things, we do not despair because we have our living Lord to depend on. He is living, and is therefore sovereign over all things. By being united to Him in love, we are confident that nothing can ever take away our everlasting hope (cf. Rom 8:18–39; 2 Cor 4:7–18)
 10. The abiding presence of God in our lives, as described so richly in this chapter, is the beginning of the fulfillment of dwelling together with God. The life we share in God is already a reality even now, and will last through eternity when the Lord finally receives us into the many dwellings in the Father's house (Jn 14:2).
 12. The kind of peace that the world gives is outward and temporary. The illusory sense of security comes and goes along with the gains and losses of this life. The peace that Jesus gives, on the contrary, causes an inward change and calms our hearts. Through trusting in the Lord, abiding in His commandments, and the inner workings of the Holy Spirit, we are at rest no matter what may come our way. Because our Lord lives, we live also (14:19). The personal fellowship we have with our Savior sustains our souls even through the most difficult trials.
 13. The Lord Jesus demonstrated His love for the Father by doing the commandment He had received from the Father (14:31). In turn, we are to imitate His total submission as we learn to love our Lord.

Lesson 26

OBSERVATION

Outline

- Relationship of Believers to Jesus (15:1–11)
- Relationship of Believers to One another (15:12–17)
- Relationship of Believers to the World (15:18–16:4a)

Key Words/Phrases

Vine, branch, bear fruit, word(s), abide, ask, disciples, love, commandments, friends, choose, the world, hate, the Helper, the Spirit of truth, testify, bear witness, “these things I have said”

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. Just as the vine sustains its branches, the Lord Jesus is our source of life. Our very spiritual existence and all the good works we do depend on Him. We are intimately connected to Him. Apart from Him, we can do nothing (15:5); we become completely useless, and are cast out from the Father’s presence like withered branches that are severed from the vine (15:6).
2. The word for “true” denotes more than being real or genuine as opposed to being only imaginary, but also includes a sense of trustworthiness or certainty. It had also come to represent that which is eternal (e.g. The “true tabernacle” in Hebrews 8:2 and Hebrews 9:24 is heaven; “true” in this context is the opposite of being man-made and temporary). God is “true” (Jn 17:3; 1 Thess 1:9; 1 Jn 5:20) not simply in the sense that He is different from false gods, but also in contrast to what is human and earthly. This usage helps us better understand the descriptions in John of Jesus as the “true Light” (Jn 1:9) and the “true bread from heaven” (Jn 6:32). In Him alone can we find eternal life and put our trust. In the present passage, we learn further that He is the “true vine.” The word “true” emphasizes the divine and eternal nature of Jesus as the sole source of believers’ spiritual life.
3. He wants us to bear much fruit, by which He is glorified (15:2, 8).
4. The word for “prune” is literally “cleanse,” and is the verb form of “clean” in 15:3. This tells us that the Father prunes us through the word of our Lord Jesus. His word penetrates our soul and spirit to expose the thoughts and intents of our hearts, enabling us to see any impurities within us (Heb 4:12, 13). Also, when we meet with obstacles and trials as we carry out the Lord’s word, the suffering we experience in the process can be considered a form of pruning. Although it is painful, the

pruning by God shapes our character and trains us to bear fruit of righteousness (Heb 12:1–11).

5. The only way for us to bear fruit is to abide in Jesus the true vine (15:4–6).
6. We are to abide in Jesus’ love and keep His commandments in the same way that Jesus kept His Father’s commandments and abided in His love (15:9, 10; cf. 1 Jn 2:24; 3:6, 24). Jesus knew that everything the Father entrusted Him to do was out of the Father’s love for Him (Jn 3:35; 5:20). Because of this understanding, He willingly and totally committed Himself to keeping His Father’s will. Likewise, we ought to view Jesus’ commandments with the same attitude, recognizing that His words to us are out of His love for us. Then we will gladly keep His words as if we are preserving and guarding something dear to us.
7. Looking at the parallel between verses 16 and 17, it is clear that bearing fruit, in concrete terms, means obeying Jesus’ commandment to love one another.
8. The Lord Jesus said, “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full” (15:11). By “these things,” Jesus was alluding to what He had said in the previous segment, i.e., that the disciples ought to abide in His love by keeping His commandments. In other words, keeping Jesus’ commandments is the way to abide in Jesus’ love, and its outcome is being filled with Jesus’ joy.
9. Jesus loved His disciples and laid down His life for them (15:12, 13). Jesus’ unsurpassable love for His own brings the community of believers together, and therefore serves as the motivation and foundation of love within this community.
10. A servant, in this context, represents a person who obeys out of coercion because of his subservient status (cf. Jn 8:35). A friend, on the other hand, gladly does the wish of his friend out of love and trust. Through His death for us, the Lord Jesus has given us the love of a dearest friend. We, in turn, ought to obey Him, not because we fear His punishment, but because we honor Him and love Him.

11. Jesus' statement to the disciples that they did not choose Him, but He chose them, first of all expresses the Lord's sovereign choice over man's will. It is by God's grace, not by our works, that we have been chosen (cf. Rom 9:11; Eph 1:5). Because it is the Lord who chose us and appointed us, He would also empower us to accomplish the purpose for which He chose us if we abide in Him (Jn 15:16).
12. Jesus' promise that whatever His disciples ask the Father in His name the Father would give them was spoken in connection to His choosing and appointing the disciples to bear fruit. In other words, when we seem unable to keep Jesus' commandments, we may ask help from the Father in Jesus' name. Whatever we ask Him will be given to us on account of Jesus. Nothing is insurmountable for believers who make it their goal to love others.
13. Whereas the previous segment speaks of the love among believers on the basis of Jesus' love for them, this segment turns to the topic of the hatred of the world against believers.
14. In the Gospel according to John, the term "world" refers to the world God created and loves (Jn 1:10; 3:16, 17; 4:42; 6:33, 51, etc.). However, because of the general unbelieving attitude of the people, "the world" had increasingly come to also represent unbelievers (Jn 7:7; 8:23; 12:31; 14:17; 16:20; 17:14). It is in this latter sense that the Lord Jesus spoke of the hatred of the world.
- 15a. The world would hate the disciples of Jesus because they are not of the world but have been chosen by the Lord out of the world (15:19).
16. The Lord Jesus had proclaimed the truth and shown His works to the world. But the world refused to accept Him despite what it had seen and heard. The world's unbelief became its own condemnation and revealed its sinfulness (cf. Jn 6:36–38; 8:43, 44; 10:37, 38).
17. The Holy Spirit testifies of Jesus through the witnessing of the disciples (15:27). Our Lord Jesus has given us the Holy Spirit in order to empower us to be His witnesses (Acts 1:8). The Holy Spirit teaches us all things and reminds us of the words

- of the Lord (Jn 14:26). He would give us the words to speak, especially when faced with the hostility of the world (Mt 10:16–20; Mk 13:9–11; Acts 6:9–10).
18. In this segment, the Lord Jesus foretold of the hatred from the world against the disciples. When placed in such a situation, the Holy Spirit, who is their advocate and helper, will speak through them when they are confronted with the opposition from unbelievers (Mt 10:16–20; Mk 13:9–11). Thus, the Holy Spirit will testify of Jesus to an unbelieving world through the words of the disciples.
 19. A person who is devoted to a religion but does not know the Father or Jesus His Son may persecute believers of Jesus (16:2). Paul was formerly in such a camp when He persecuted Christians (Acts 26:9–11; 1 Tim 1:13).
 20. By remembering that the Lord Jesus had already foretold of the persecutions that would face believers, the disciples would not stumble but be assured that Jesus was indeed the sovereign Lord (16:1, 4; cf. Jn 13:19). Even though they may suffer persecution now for Christ's sake, they can take heart knowing that He had overcome the world (Jn 16:33).

Lesson 27

OBSERVATION

Outline

The Coming of the Helper (16:4b–15)
 From Sorrow to Joy (16:16–24)
 Proclamation of Victory (16:25–33)

Key Words/Phrases

"I go away," sorrow, Helper, convict, sin, righteousness, judgment, Spirit of truth, glorify, Mine, declare, a little while, see, joy, ask, "in My name," figurative language, plainly, love, peace, tribulation, "be of good cheer," overcome

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. 1. Jesus is going away to the Father who sent Him (16:5, 16, 28).
2. All things that the Father has belong to Jesus (16:15).
3. Whatever the disciples ask the Father in Jesus' name the Father will give them (16:23).
4. Jesus will tell the disciples plainly about the Father (16:25).
5. The Father Himself loves the disciples because they have loved Jesus and have believed that He came forth from God (16:27).
6. Jesus came forth from the Father and has come into the world. Again He leaves the world and goes to the Father (16:28).
7. Jesus is not alone because the Father is with Him (16:32).
- 1b. 1. If Jesus does not go away, the Helper will not come to the disciples; but if He departs, He will send the Helper to them (16:7).
2. The Holy Spirit will convict the world of sin because they do not believe in Jesus (16:8–9).
3. The Holy Spirit will convict the world of righteousness because Jesus goes to the Father (16:10).
4. The Holy Spirit will glorify Jesus, for He will take of what is Jesus' and declare it to the disciples (16:13, 14).

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

- 1a. "These things" are the words of Jesus that precede the present passage. In particular, they refer to the hatred and persecution by the world which the disciples would endure (15:18–16:3).
- 1b. Sorrow filled their heart (16:6).
2. As we have seen previously in 15:26–27, the Holy Spirit testifies of Jesus through Jesus' disciples. The exalted Jesus now dwells in believers and enables them to speak the truth concerning Him. In so doing, He brings to light the guilt of the unbelieving world.

3. Jesus' coming into the world, His preaching, and His works directly confront the world about its evil. Whoever believes in Jesus has eternal life, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already (Jn 3:18–19). Not only so, the unbeliever has no excuse now because he refuses to believe even after hearing Jesus' words and seeing His works. This makes him all the more guilty (Jn 10:37, 38; 12:48; 15:22–25).
4. "Righteousness" can be understood in a legal sense in terms of God's judgment (cf. Jn 5:30; 7:24). In this respect, Jesus is proved right (or justified) when He goes to the Father because His return to God validates His claim to be the Son of God and Savior of the world (cf. 1 Tim 3:16).

Furthermore, Christ, who is righteous, imparts the righteousness of God to those who believe through His resurrection (Rom 10:4–13; 1 Cor 1:30; 2 Cor 5:21; Php 3:9). This righteousness from Christ unto believers is a sharp contrast to the sin of unbelievers mentioned in the previous verse (Jn 16:9). That is why the righteousness in Jesus forms yet another basis for the Holy Spirit's conviction of the world.

5. Through the words and lives of believers, the Holy Spirit will show the world that the ruler of the world has indeed been judged. Jesus, who has overcome the world and its ruler through His exaltation (Jn 12:31; 16:33) also enables believers to do the same through the Holy Spirit (1 Jn 2:13–14). Those who believe in Jesus and walk in the Spirit are victorious over sin (Rom 8:1; Eph 2:1–10; Gal 5:16, 17). Their living testimony is in itself a judgment on the unbelieving world.
7. The Holy Spirit reminds us of what the Lord Jesus has spoken (Jn 14:26) and gives us insight and understanding concerning the spiritual things of Christ (1 Cor 2:9–16; Eph 1:15–21; 3:8–19). Without the guidance of the Spirit, our capacity to know Jesus Christ is very limited, and hence the Lord told the disciples that they would not be able to bear the many things He had to tell them (Jn 16:12). But the Holy Spirit who dwells within us is able to teach us, guide us, and unveil to us the spiritual things that we would not otherwise perceive.
8. They would see Jesus when He comes to them after His exaltation to manifest Himself to them and to abide with them

- (Jn 14:21, 23). He would do so through His Holy Spirit (Jn 14:16–18), for the Lord Himself is the Spirit (2 Cor 3:17; cf. Lk 21:15, where Jesus said, “I will give you ...” when speaking of what the Holy Spirit would do, as the parallel statement in Mk 13:11 indicates).
9. The world would rejoice out of its hatred for Jesus, for Jesus testified of its evil (Jn 3:19, 20; 7:7).
 10. The pains of a woman in labor, although extremely hard to bear, are a necessary process that leads to the final moment of joy. When she sees and holds her newborn, she does not remember her pain anymore. In the same way, Jesus’ departure, which causes the disciples to weep and lament, is necessary but temporary. For in yet a little while, they will be filled with joy when they see the Lord again and when they receive from the Father whatever they ask in Jesus’ name.
 11. When a person acts or speaks in someone’s name, he claims to have been sent by the latter to do so (cf. Deut 18:19, 20). Therefore, “in Jesus’ name” implies commission from Jesus. The expression encompasses obedience to Jesus’ command as well as acting with His authority. This same thought is found in Jesus’ promise that whatever we ask the Father in His name the Father will give us. When we ask in Jesus’ name, we are doing so as His representatives. We are granted direct access to the Father and we ask the Father to accomplish what our Lord Jesus has entrusted us to do. This promise is consistent with Jn 14:12–14 and Jn 15:7, 16; it is for the purpose of carrying out Jesus’ works and bearing fruit as Jesus has commanded. As such, asking “in the name of Jesus” is to be distinguished from asking to satisfy our own desires (cf. Jas 4:3).
 13. The Lord speaks plainly to us today through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us (Jn 16:13, 14).
 14. The Father loves those who love and believe in Jesus Christ. Because they are favored by God, believers in Christ may boldly pray to the Father directly, and have the confidence that the Father will do for them what they ask.
 15. While the disciples’ declaration of faith in the fact that Jesus was from God (v. 30) is commendable, their response to Jesus’

speech shows that they did not understand what Jesus was saying. They have misunderstood His words on two counts. First, they commented that Jesus was speaking to them plainly, echoing Jesus’ words in 16:25. But what Jesus was referring to was the day when the Holy Spirit would come and guide them into all truth. Second, the disciples’ response that Jesus had no need that anyone should question Him was a misinterpretation of Jesus’ words in 16:23, that in that day they would ask Him nothing (“ask” and “question” are the same word in Greek). Nevertheless, the disciples’ lack of understanding was expected, since the day that Jesus spoke of had not yet come.

16. The peace believers have in Jesus is not like the peace the world gives (Jn 14:27). While the peace that the world gives is temporary and comes and goes with circumstances, the peace that we have in Jesus is rooted in the fact that Jesus is alive and has overcome the world. In other words, nothing in life can defeat us because we are in the One who holds power over all things. Our trust in Him, as well as the marvelous workings of Christ in us, gives us an inward stability that guards our hearts and minds (Php 4:7).
17. Our Lord Jesus, according to the hour set forth by His Father, courageously faced the sufferings ahead as a victor, not as a victim. Today, as children of God, we are not removed from tribulations in this world. But we can face them knowing that we are doing the will of our Father in heaven and that our sufferings are achieving for us an eternal glory (2 Cor 4:17; Heb 12:1–3). Because our Lord Jesus has opened the way, we, like Him, are more than conquerors even in the midst of tribulation in this world (Rom 8:31–39).

Lesson 28

OBSERVATION

Outline

- “Glorify Your Son” (17:1–5)
 “They are Yours” (17:6–11a)

“Keep them” (17:11b-16)

“Sanctify them” (17:17-19)

“That they all may be one” (17:20-23)

“That they... may be with Me” (17:24-26)

Key Words/Phrases

Father, glorify, give, know, name, word, pray, the world, one, keep, sanctify, love

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. 1. He gives them eternal life (17:2).
2. He has manifested the Father’s name to them (17:6).
3. He prays for them (17:9, 20).
4. He kept them in the Father’s name (17:12).
5. He has given them the Father’s word (17:14).
6. He has sent them into the world (17:18).
7. He sanctified Himself for their sake (17:19).
8. He has given them glory (17:22).
9. He has declared to them the Father’s name, and He will declare it (17:26).
- 2a. 1. Jesus asks the Father to glorify Him, that He may glorify the Father (17:1).
2. Jesus has glorified the Father on the earth (17:4).
3. Jesus asks the Father to now glorify Him together with Himself, with the glory which He had with the Father before the world was (17:5).
4. Jesus is glorified in whom the Father has given Him (17:10).
5. Jesus has given the believers the glory which the Father gave Him (17:22).
6. Jesus desires that the believers may behold His glory (17:24).
- 2b. 1. This is eternal life, to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom the Father has sent (17:3).
2. Jesus’ disciples have known that all things which the Father has given Jesus are from the Father (17:7).
3. Jesus’ disciples have known surely that He came forth from the Father (17:8).
4. Jesus prays that the believers may be made perfect in one and that the world may know that the Father has sent Him, and has loved the disciples as He has loved Jesus (17:23).
5. The world has not known the Father, but Jesus has known Him (17:25).
6. Believers have known that the Father has sent Jesus (17:25).
- 2c. 1. Jesus had glory with the Father before the world was (17:5).
2. Jesus has manifested the Father’s name to the men whom the Father has given Him out of the world (17:6).
3. Jesus does not pray for the world but for those whom the Father has given Him (17:9).
4. Jesus is no longer in the world, but those whom the Father has given Him are in the world (17:11).
5. Jesus speaks these things in the world that the believers may have His joy fulfilled in themselves (17:13).
6. The world has hated the believers because they are not of the world (17:14).
7. Jesus does not pray that the Father should take the believers out of the world (17:15).
8. Believers are not of the world, just as Jesus is not of the world (17:16).
9. As the Father has sent Jesus into the world, Jesus also has sent the believers into the world (17:18).
10. Jesus asks for unity so that the world may believe that the Father sent Jesus (17:21).
11. Jesus asks that the believers may be made perfect in one and that the world may know that the Father has sent Him, and has loved the believers as the Father has loved Him (17:23).
12. The Father loved Jesus before the foundation of the world (17:24).
13. The world has not known the Father (17:25).
- 2d. 1. Jesus’ disciples have kept the Father’s word (17:6).

2. Jesus has given His disciples the Father's word (17:14).
3. The Father's word is truth (17:17).
4. Jesus does not pray for the disciples alone, but also for those who will believe in Him through their word (17:20).
- 2e. 1. Jesus asks the Father to keep through the Father's name those whom the Father has given Him, that they may be one as He and the Father are one (17:11).
2. Jesus ask the Father that the believers may be one in Him and the Father (17:21).
3. Jesus has given glory to the believers that they may be one just as He and the Father are one (17:22).
4. Jesus prays that the believers may be made perfect in one (17:23).
- 3a. Those whom the Father has given Him (17:2, 6, 9, 12, 24).
- 3b. This expression indicates that believers are under the special care of the Father and the Lord Jesus. Because they have been entrusted to Jesus by the Father, Jesus deems it His responsibility to guard and preserve them (Jn 17:12). Now that Jesus has returned to heaven, the Father Himself continues to keep watch over them (Jn 17:11).

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. Jesus prays that the Father may glorify the Son (17:1, 5).
2. Jesus faithfully fulfilled His mission when He was in the world by glorifying the Father and finishing the work the Father had given Him to do (17:4). After completing His work in the world, the hour had come for Jesus to be lifted up. His ultimate submission, even to the point of death, was the pre-condition for the hour of glory (Jn 12:27, 28).
3. According to 17:2, the Father granted Jesus authority over all flesh in order that He should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given Him. This was the work entrusted to Jesus.
4. He has manifested the Father's name to the men whom the Father has given Him out of the world (17:6). The name of a person often identified his qualities or character (cf. Gen 17:5; 25:25, 26). It could also carry that person's authority, power,

or legacy (cf. Gen 48:16). Likewise, the name of God represents His glory and majesty, even His very presence (cf. Ex 9:16; 23:21; Josh 9:9; 1 Kgs 9:3; Ps 20:1; 48:10). Jesus, through His incarnation and through His words and works, made the Father known to the world, particularly to those who put their trust in Him (Jn 1:18; 14:7).

As part of the revelation of the Father's name, Jesus has also given the believers the words which the Father has given them (Jn 17:8). While He was in the world, He declared and taught all that He had heard and seen from the Father (Jn 8:28, 38, 40).

5. 1. Keep and receive God's word (17:6, 8).
2. Know that Jesus came forth from the Father and believe that the Father had sent Him (17:8).
6. Jesus asks the Father to keep those whom the Father has given Him (17:11, 15).
7. The Father has given Jesus His name in the sense that the Father has sent Jesus into the world to reveal Himself to the world. Jesus, the incarnate Word, is the express image of the Father (Heb 1:3). Seeing Jesus is seeing the Father (Jn 14:9), and everything Jesus speaks and does, He does so in exact accordance with the Father (Jn 5:19). He has also received from the Father authority over all flesh (Jn 17:2). As the Father's ambassador (cf. Heb 3:1), Jesus fully possessed the name of the Father.

The fact that Jesus has received the name of His Father is also manifest in the name by which He was called—"Jesus," which is literally "the LORD is salvation" (cf. Mt 1:21). While "Jesus" was a common name at the time, only the Lord Jesus fully embodied the meaning of this name, for through Him the love and salvation of the Father have come to us. Therefore, salvation is found in no other name than that of Jesus (Acts 4:12). It is also in this sense that the Father has given Jesus His name.

- 8a. It is not God's will to take us out of the world (17:15), for we have a mission to preach the word to the world (17:18, 20). However, while living in this world, we need to be clearly aware that we are not of this world, just as our Lord was not

- of this world (17:14). This means that we have no part in the godless and sinful patterns of the people of the world, who are under the sway of the evil one (17:15; Rom 12:2; Eph 2:1–3; 1 Jn 5:19). As a result of this separation, the world hates us (Jn 15:19; 17:14).
- 8b. Jesus Himself came into this world to accomplish the work of God so that the world might believe through Him, yet He was not of the world (17:14). The ruler of this world had nothing in Him (Jn 14:30). Since the world did not know Him nor the Father, it hated Jesus and persecuted Him (Jn 15:20, 24). In Jesus we see the perfect example of having no part with the evil of the world and yet loving the world by dwelling in it and by offering Himself for the world (cf. Jn 1:14; 6:33).
9. “Sanctify” generally means to set apart for God. Whereas the sanctification of human beings or common things involves purification, the sanctification of Jesus is on a whole different level, for Jesus Himself is the holy God and has no need of purification. According to Jn 10:36, the Father sanctified Jesus and sent Him into the world. This means that the Father commissioned Jesus with a divine purpose. Likewise here, in Jesus’ prayer, He says that He sanctifies Himself for the sakes of the disciples. It is also spoken in the context of being sent into the world (17:18). Therefore, we are to understand the sanctification of Jesus in the same sense as Jn 10:36. Just as the Father sanctified Jesus, Jesus also sanctified Himself.
10. The truth is the very word of God (17:17) which leads us to the Father (Jn 14:6). Jesus has come into the world to proclaim the truth (Jn 1:17; 8:45; 18:37). Whoever accepts the truth is sanctified by the truth because he has left darkness and now belongs to God (Jn 3:21).
11. The unity of believers reflects the unity of Jesus and His Father (17:21, 22). This unity is founded on love (17:23, 26). The loving unity among believers is a living testimony that Jesus has brought the love of the Father into the world.
12. He wants the world to know that the Father has sent Him and has loved the believers as He has loved Jesus (17:23). Such knowledge leads to eternal life (17:3).
13. He desires that they may be with Him where He is, that they may behold His glory which the Father has given Him (17:24).
14. It is Jesus’ will that believers will be with Him ultimately in the future (17:24), and even now, while they are still in the world, He already lives in them (17:26). He certainly does not leave us as orphans (Jn 14:18), but continually abides with us.
15. The Holy Spirit continues the work of Jesus after Jesus leaves the world to go to the Father (Jn 14:26). He takes what is Jesus’ and declares it to Jesus’ disciples (Jn 16:12–14). Thus, Jesus Himself continues to declare the Father’s name through the Holy Spirit. The inner workings of the Holy Spirit in us enables us to gain an even more intimate knowledge of the Father (Jn 14:20, 21).

Lesson 29

OBSERVATION

Outline

Arrest in the Garden (18:1–11)

Jesus Brought before Annas (18:12–14)

Peter’s First Denial of Jesus (18:15–18)

Jesus Questioned by Annas and Sent to Caiaphas (18:19–24)

Peter’s Second and Third Denials of Jesus (18:25–27)

Key Words/Phrases

Jesus, disciples, Judas, betrayed, knowing, “Whom are you seeking?” “I am,” Simon Peter, sword, “drink the cup which my Father has given me,” arrested, bound, Annas, Caiaphas, high priest, another disciple, spoke openly, the world, secret, witness, doctrine, denied, a rooster crowed.

GENERAL ANALYSIS

- 1a. The fact that the detachment and officers came with lanterns and torches indicates that the arrest and subsequent interrogation took place at night. Other parallel accounts in the

Synoptic Gospels also confirm this (cf. Mt 27:1; Mk 15:1). The presence of fire for warming (Jn 18:18, 25) and the mention of the rooster crow following Peter's denials of Jesus (Jn 18:27) are further clues that the trial by Annas took place in the night.

- 1b. The chief priests sent soldiers to arrest Jesus at night probably to avoid public outrage (cf. Mt 26:3–5; Mk 14:2; Lk 22:2) and to allow the questioning to begin before daytime comes. According to Jewish law, cases are to be tried only in the daytime.¹¹ Hence, Annas' interrogation of Jesus at night was illegitimate.

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. The account in this passage portrays Jesus as commanding the entire situation rather than being a helpless victim at the mercy of the soldiers. He initiated the question to His arresters, "Whom are you seeking?" (18:4, 7). His declaration, "I am" (18:5, 6), which echoes the revelation of His divine identity (cf. Jn 8:58), carried such authority and force that it hurled His captors to the ground. He also gave the order that His disciples be let go and instructed Peter to put his sword back into the sheath. These were all extraordinary actions and words that remind us that Jesus was the sovereign Lord.
- 4b. Whereas Peter viewed the danger as something he must eliminate, Jesus knew that what had befallen Him was according to the will of His Father (11).
- 4c. We can see repeatedly in the Gospel according to John that what seems to be the works of human beings or occurrences of nature in fact served God's higher purpose (e.g. Jn 6:65; 9:1–3; 11:4, 49–51). Even sufferings and the plans of the wicked are within God's sovereign knowledge and control (cf. Jn 6:70, 71; 12:27, 32, 33; 13:2, 3, 18, 19). Without God's permission and before God's time has come, no one could lay his hand on Jesus (Jn 7:30; 8:20; 10:17–18). This important truth reminds us to not only look at the immediate causes of the hardships we undergo, be they natural consequences or the result of man's doing. If we do, we would always resist them or run from them. Rather, we ought to consider whether God has a higher purpose that He wants us to serve by enduring the sufferings that come our way.
- 5a. First, Jesus was a man of peace. Never in His ministry did He commit violence or stage a riot. Binding Him was completely unnecessary. Second, His word alone could make the company of armed men fall to the ground (18:6). It would have been impossible for them to bind Him if He did not voluntarily yield Himself to them.
- 5b. Obedience to God is actually a choice. When it is God's will that we should suffer for doing what is right, we ought to submit ourselves to God's will even if we have a choice not to. For example, when it is to our disadvantage to tell the truth, instead of speaking lies and taking the easy way out, we should still choose to be honest and accept the unpleasant or even painful consequences.
6. The sufferings that Jesus endured served to fulfill God's grand purpose of redemption.
- 7b. Sheer determination is inadequate if we want to faithfully follow the Lord Jesus to the end. That is why our Lord Himself prayed to the Father in the face of overwhelming trial and taught the disciples to also watch and pray (Mt 26:36–41).
- 8a. Everything Jesus had said and done, He did so in the light. He had not done anything in secret that Annas had to examine Him about. Jesus' words further point out the nature of His ministry. Jesus came to reveal the Father, and He had spoken openly to the world. As the light that shines in darkness, Jesus reached out to everyone through His teaching, and everyone has a choice to either come to the light or remain in darkness (Jn 12:44–48).
- 8b. Jesus' response exposes the trickery behind the trial. While Jesus had nothing to hide, the interrogation had to be conducted in the dark because of the wickedness of those who plotted to kill Him.
- 9a. Neither Annas nor the officer who struck Jesus could produce any true testimony against Jesus. Jesus was completely on the side of truth, whereas His captors could only resort to force.

That is why the arrest and interrogation only validated Jesus' innocence.

- 9b. When we are treated unjustly, it is difficult for us to see beyond the injustice itself as well as the deeds of the wrongdoers. We may even complain to God and question His love or power. But the example of our Lord Jesus has taught us that God may sometimes also place us in a situation where we are treated unfairly because He has a good purpose (Heb 12:3–11). Turning our eyes to the Lord Jesus helps us not to lose heart when injustice seems to rule.
10. In our zeal, it is all too easy to overestimate ourselves. It is when we are placed in hardship that we are humbled and we realize how much we need God's help and mercy. How often have we also disowned the Lord in our own ways when we are under pressure?
11. The remark about the timing of the rooster crow underscores the prediction of Jesus in Jn 13:38. It implicitly reminds us the readers once again the sovereign knowledge of Jesus.

Lesson 30

OBSERVATION

Outline

Pilate and the Jews (18:28–32)
 Pilate and Jesus (18:33–38a)
 Pilate and the Jews; Release of Barabbas (18:38b–40)
 Scouring, Crown of Thorns, Insult (19:1–3)
 Pilate Presenting Jesus (19:4–7)
 Pilate and Jesus (19:8–12)
 Jesus Delivered to Be Crucified (19:13–16a)

Key Words/Phrases

Praetorium, Passover, delivered, law, fulfilled, death/die, again, King, Jews, kingdom, world, not from here, bear witness, truth, "I find no fault in Him," scourged, crown of thorns, purple robe,

crucify, Son of God, "Where are You from?," power, from above, sin, Caesar

GENERAL ANALYSIS

- 1a. Outside (18:28–32)
 Inside (18:33–38a)
 Outside (18:38b–40)
 Inside (19:1–3)
 Outside (19:4–8)
 Inside (19:9–12)
 Outside (19:13–16a)
- 1b. Pilate at first had little interest in the case brought before him and in who Jesus was. He simply viewed Jesus as a man who had done something to offend Jewish law (Jn 18:31, 35). When Jesus spoke to Pilate about His kingdom and revealed His kingdom, Jesus' words rang in Pilate's ears (Jn 18:38). But Pilate did not pursue the matter further. Instead, he went back and forth between the outside and inside the Praetorium to make negotiations with the Jews in the hope that they would drop the case, but to no avail. The increasing vehemence with which the chief priests and officers demanded Jesus' crucifixion and their charge that Jesus had made Himself the Son of God caused Pilate to become more afraid of Jesus (Jn 18:38–19:8). At this, Pilate sought in earnest to know Jesus' true identity, only to realize that Jesus indeed laid claim to a higher authority and could not therefore be coerced to make any further confession (Jn 19:8–11). Pilate's final exchange with Jesus must have instilled even greater fear in Pilate, and he became convinced that he must find a way to release Jesus (Jn 19:12).
- 2a. Nonchalant and indifferent, somewhat condescending.
 2b. Curious, and maybe a little amused.
 2c. Intrigued, but uninterested.
 2d. Afraid and serious.
 2e. Annoyed and even desperate.

- 3a. Jesus' accusers could produce no concrete charge or evidence against Jesus. Pilate's investigation could only revolve around Jesus' identity, and that in fact allowed Jesus to reveal Himself as the witness for the truth. Jesus had always spoken the truth to the world. It is not surprising, therefore, that Pilate could not find any guilt in Jesus. Thus he declared repeatedly, "I find no fault in Him" (Jn 18:38; 19:4, 6). The accusation from the Jews that Jesus had made Himself the Son of God, Jesus' claim before Pilate to the power from above, and Pilate's final resolution to release Jesus all the more served to highlight Jesus' complete innocence.
- 3b. The Jews initially simply accused Jesus as an evildoer but could not spell out what crime He had committed. When Pilate refused to take the case, their true murderous intent became evident (Jn 18:31). Jesus' statement that He was of the truth also implicated His enemies. They were not of the truth, and therefore would not hear His voice (18:37). They were bent on putting Jesus to death, even to the extent of demanding the release of a robber instead of Jesus (18:40). Pilate's repeated declaration of Jesus' innocence only made Jesus' accusers even guiltier. From their own mouths they indirectly betrayed themselves as murderers of the Son of God (19:7). Finally, Jesus spoke and passed judgment on those who had delivered Him to Pilate (as well as on Pilate), declaring that they had greater sin than Pilate (19:11).
- 3c. As Pilate gradually realized that Jesus was not only innocent of any crime, but that He had in fact power from beyond this world, he made more earnest effort to let Jesus go. But the pressures from the Jews also increased, going from accusation to shouts and to personal threats against Pilate in the end. Pilate found himself hemmed in between the forces of good and evil.
4. The entire narrative portrays Jesus as the King by using various literary devices. Pilate's first round of interrogation revolved around the question of Jesus' kingship. Jesus made it plain that He was indeed a king and spoke about the nature of His kingship and His kingdom (Jn 18:33–37). Although he did not personally believe Jesus' kingship, Pilate more than once referred to Jesus as the King of the Jews (18:39; 19:14, 15; cf.

19:19). Even through the mocking of the soldiers, with the crown of thorns and purple robe placed on Jesus, Jesus' kingship stands as central to the story (19:3). The concluding words of the chief priests, "We have no king but Caesar!" spelled their final and ultimate rejection of Jesus as their King (19:15). Therefore, while Jesus was rejected by His own and suffered the greatest humiliation, we see through the Gospel account of the trial before Pilate that Jesus was exalted as a king of a different kind—the King from heaven.

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. They were scrupulous about not being defiled outwardly, but what they were doing to Jesus shows that inwardly they were utterly defiled with unbelief, jealousy, and murderous thoughts (cf. Mt 15:17–20).
2. They could not pinpoint what crime Jesus had committed. They evaded Pilate's question with a vague answer.
3. In John 12:32, the Lord Jesus foretold that He would be "lifted up from the earth," and the following verse explains the statement as signifying what kind of death He would die. Had the Jews succeeded in stoning Jesus to death (cf. Jn 8:59), Jesus' words would not have been fulfilled. However, by God's will and according to Jesus' sovereign knowledge, the Jews delivered Jesus to the Romans to be put to death. This course of events led to Jesus' death by crucifixion. This was an exact fulfillment of Jesus' words.
- 4a. The Jews who had delivered Jesus to Pilate had not mentioned Jesus' kingship at all.
- 4b. Pilate probably asked Jesus about the title "King of the Jews" because he had heard about Jesus through the mouths of the Jews in Jerusalem, since Jesus' name and deeds had become so well known (cf. Jn 12:19). When Jesus entered Jerusalem just a few days prior to His arrest, the multitude had hailed Him as "The King of Israel" (Jn 12:13). As such, it would have been quite natural for even the Romans to have heard about this "king" among the Jews. Jesus' question to Pilate, "Are you speaking for yourself about this, or did others tell you this concerning Me?" is to be understood in this context.

- 4c. It was important for Jesus to set His response to Pilate in the proper frame. If the question had come from Pilate himself, perhaps Jesus would have answered that He was not a political insurgent the way a Roman would understand the epithet “the King of the Jews.” But Pilate removed himself from any interest in the question and made the Jews responsible for the epithet. Coming from the Jews, “the King of the Jews” had a Messianic overtone. Therefore, Jesus must not deny that He was indeed their King, but He also needed to clarify at the same time that His kingship was of a different nature than that of an earthly king.
- 5a. Jesus was handed over to the wishes of the evil doers and subjected to the authority of Pilate because His kingdom was not of this world. Had He come to rule by means of the political powers the world normally associates kingship with, Jesus would have crushed His enemies without effort. But Jesus had come to rule as the King of peace by reconciling the world to God through His death. So He would not resist those who had plotted for His life or those who had come to arrest Him. It was necessary for Him to bear all these afflictions and die on the cross to fulfill His purpose as the King from above.
- 5b. Our Lord Jesus is not a king to whom we come and beg to remove every hardship in our lives. He is our heavenly King who has in store for us the glorious and everlasting inheritance in heaven. Just as He Himself had endured the greatest pain to fulfill God’s purpose, we also need to follow His footsteps while we go through trials of various kinds in this life (1 Pet 1:3–9). In our suffering and in our struggles, we can come before the throne of grace to obtain mercy and grace from our King who had Himself suffered (Heb 4:16).
7. Jesus is the Word who had become flesh to declare the Father, and He was full of grace and truth (Jn 1:14, 18). In other words, Jesus bore witness to the truth in the sense that in Him we see the Father for who He truly is, and He declared all that He had received from the One who is true (Jn 8:26, 40). Jesus also gave to those who believe in Him the word of the Father, which is truth (Jn 17:14, 17). In fact, Jesus Himself is the truth because in Him alone can a person find the way back to the Father (Jn 14:6). On the contrary, anyone who does not accept the truth spoken by the Lord Jesus is not of the truth but belongs to the devil, the father of lies (Jn 8:43–47).
8. See Jn 5:24; 8:43, 47; 10:3–5, 16, 27; Mt 7:24, 26; 13:9, 13, 15; Lk 10:16; Heb 3:7, 8; 4:6, 7.
10. While Pilate was intrigued by Jesus’ words about the truth, he had no interest to learn of the truth from the Lord Jesus. He simply asked the question indifferently and went out again of the Praetorium. He thereby missed the opportunity presented before him to come to know the Savior.
11. The Jews were so determined to kill Jesus that they were willing to set a criminal free. They certainly did not have love for the truth in their heart. From this example, we can see the extent a person living in darkness is ready to go to gratify his selfish desires.
12. After Pilate had scourged Jesus and the soldiers had placed on His head a crown of thorns and put on Him a purple robe, Pilate presented Jesus to the Jews. We can picture this appalling scene, where Jesus was covered in blood from the scouring and the thorns and yet being adorned mockingly as a king. Pilate’s intention was to let Jesus go free by showing the Jews that he had already punished Jesus (even though Jesus had committed no crime). Perhaps he had hoped that the sight of the humiliated king would suffice for the accusing Jews so that they would no longer pursue a death sentence.
14. Through their words of accusation, the Jews had unwittingly acknowledged Jesus for who He truly is—the Son of God. Their murderous acts stemmed from their obstinate refusal to believe in the Son of God. They had spelled out their own crime, that they were demanding the death of God’s Son.
- 15a. Pilate at first attempted to use his authority as governor to make Jesus talk. But in the end Jesus revealed His far greater authority.
- 15b. Although He was accused by the Jews, the Lord Jesus now pronounced judgment on His accusers.
- 15c. Initially the Jews seemed to be at the mercy of Pilate, and on a few occasions we can sense an air of superiority in Pilate’s

words (e.g. Jn 18:31; 19:6). In the end, however, Pilate found himself in a predicament and eventually bowed to the pressure and threat from the Jews.

16. Jesus remained silent when Pilate asked Him, “Where are You from?” But when Pilate attempted to exert pressure on Jesus with his authority, Jesus responded, “You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above” (Jn 19:11). This response indirectly answered the question about Jesus’ origin. Along with Jesus’ words earlier in the trial that His kingdom was not of this world, Jesus’ reply to Pilate made it quite plain that Jesus was claiming to have come from above.
17. Pilate thought that he had total power to crucify and release Jesus, but Jesus corrected him and pointed out that his power over Jesus was granted by God. Pilate would still be responsible to some extent for Jesus’ death (“greater sin” implies “lesser sin”) because in the end, Pilate still needed to make a choice. However, since Pilate had no personal interest in crucifying Jesus but was for the most part an acting agent in God’s greater purpose, he would not be as guilty before God as those who had planned to murder Jesus out of their unbelief and jealousy.
19. They were threatening Pilate with the suggestion that releasing Jesus would be disloyalty to Caesar.
20. The threat from the Jews had a decisive effect on Pilate (Jn 19:13). Pilate could not risk losing the favor of Caesar even though he had come to see Jesus as someone to be revered. His fear of Caesar’s power prevailed over his fear of who Jesus might be.
22. On the surface, the chief priests acted and spoke as if they wanted to put Jesus to death out of loyalty to God. They appeared to keep God’s law and honor no one but God (Jn 19:7). However, when the chief priests declared they had no king but Caesar, they revealed their true intent. They were willing to go so far as expediently sacrificing their supposed loyalty to God in order to carry out their murderous plot against Jesus. In their hearts, they were servants of their own sinful desires. They were not servants of God.

Lesson 31

OBSERVATION

Outline

Jesus’ Crucifixion and the Inscription on the Cross (19:16b-22)
 Dividing Jesus’ Garments and Casting Lot for His Tunic (19:23-24)
 Jesus’ Words to His Mother and to the Disciple (19:25-27)
 Jesus’ Last Words and Death (19:28-30)
 Piercing Jesus’ Side (19:31-37)
 Jesus’ Burial (19:38-42)

Key Words/Phrases

Bearing His cross, crucified, King of the Jews, garments, tunic, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, His mother, the disciple whom He loved, accomplished, “I thirst,” “It is finished,” bowing His head, He gave up His spirit, pierced, blood and water, testified/testimony, true/truth, Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, body of Jesus, laid

GENERAL ANALYSIS

2. It is important to know that Jesus’ death on the cross was not an unforeseen tragedy but the fulfillment of God’s greatest plan. The fulfillment of Scripture in the various events surrounding Jesus’ death underscores the truth that He is the One whom the Scriptures have written about (Lk 24:44; Jn 5:39). Just as God had guided the writers of Scripture to foretell of the coming of the King of Israel, He likewise guided the course of every event during Jesus’ work of redemption on earth in accordance with all that had been prophesied. God’s sovereign rule, so visibly demonstrated even in the suffering and death of Jesus, assures us that Jesus is indeed the Lord and the Savior appointed by God (cf. Acts 2:36)
3. It is clear in the Greek that the last sentence of verse 24 and the beginning of verse 25 form a contrast between the soldiers and the women below the cross. Even without knowledge of Greek, we can still discern the juxtaposition of unbelievers (chief priests, soldiers) and believers (the women and the disciple whom Jesus loved). A similar contrast can also be seen later

on between the Jews and the soldiers (representing unbelievers) on the one hand and Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (representing believers) on the other.

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

- 1c. See Jn 19:2, 3.
2. Although Pilate probably wrote the title out of spite for the chief priests and certainly not out of a sincere faith in the Lord Jesus, the title actually served as a proclamation to all that Jesus was truly the King of the Jews. The narrative does not spell out that this was due to God's guiding hand, but the fact that the author goes into such detail to record the dialogue between the chief priests and Pilate indicates that what took place was significant and not a coincidence. As much as the chief priests detested the title given to Jesus, they were not able to change what Pilate had written. We are also told that subsequently, many of the Jews read this title because where Jesus was crucified was near the city (20), i.e., it was near a populated area. Whatever human intentions were at play, God's will prevailed, and Jesus was exalted on the cross as a King.
3. It is horrifying to read that right after they had crucified someone, the soldiers began to take possession of the person's clothes (23). They were desensitized to the agony of crucifixion and completely oblivious to the fact that the Son of God was dying for the sins of mankind. Yet, even in such an appalling scene, we see the work of God. The Bible points out that the soldiers' actions in fact fulfilled what was spoken in the Scripture. Following that, the passage adds, "Therefore the soldiers did these things" (24), emphasizing that they had unwittingly carried out the prophetic words of Scripture.

As we have seen repeatedly in the Gospel according to John, God always has sovereign control over the events of history. He uses even the sinful deeds of wicked doers to accomplish His will. Therefore, our hearts may rest securely in the conviction that even when we suffer unjustly we can never fall out of the reach of God's almighty and loving arms (Rom 8:28).

6. The term "the disciple whom He loved" suggests a special relationship with the Lord Jesus. In the Gospel according to John,

we learn that God's love towards man is manifested on different levels. While God's love is towards the whole world (Jn 3:16), the Bible also speaks of Jesus' love for certain individuals (Jn 11:5; 13:1). The Lord Jesus Himself teaches us that he who loves Him by keeping His word will be loved by His Father, and this love from God is to be distinguished from God's love for the world (Jn 14:21-23).

Therefore, when Jesus entrusted His mother to the disciple whom He loved, He was giving an important commission to the disciple who loved Him and was thus especially close to Him (cf. Jn 13:23-25). This disciple had won the Lord's complete trust and his heart was one with the Lord's. It was to such a disciple that the Lord gave the weighty responsibility of caring for His mother.

Likewise, when the Lord entrusts us to do His work, it is a mark of His love toward us. It is because we are His beloved disciples that we have the privilege to be at His service. Rather than only look at how burdensome our tasks are, we ought to appreciate the fact that He deems us worthy of the responsibility.

- 8a. The word "finish" here relates to the fulfillment of the prophecies of the Scriptures concerning Jesus (cf. Lk 18:31; 22:37; Jn 19:28; Acts 13:29). At the same time, the word also denotes the completion of one's duty (cf. Lk 2:39; 12:50). Combining these two notions of the word, we understand that Jesus' words, "It is finished!" were a proclamation that God's grand purpose of salvation through Jesus' atoning death has been accomplished just as the Scriptures had foretold (cf. Lk 24:46; 1 Cor 15:3). All that Jesus had faithfully labored for and humbly suffered has now come to fruition. He now finally reached His hour of glory.
9. The soldier did not pierce Jesus' side to see if He had died, for verse 33 tells us that they saw that He was already dead. The only explanation the Bible gives us for the soldier's action is this: "For these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled" (Jn 19:36). Once again, we read of an account of someone unwittingly carrying out God's higher purpose.

10. Through His death, Jesus became the ultimate Passover lamb who was slain for the sins of the world (Jn 1:35, 36; 1 Cor 5:7; 1 Pet 1:18, 19). The prophecy that “not one of His bones shall be broken” alludes to the Passover lamb (Ex 12:46; Num 9:12), which now found its fulfillment in the Lord Jesus on the cross. Furthermore, just as the blood of the Passover lamb kept the Israelites from death, Jesus’ blood now flowed from His side for the salvation of God’s people through the remission of sins (cf. Mt 26:28; Rom 3:25; 5:8, 9; Eph 1:7; 2:13; Heb 9:14; 13:12).

Yet, when Jesus’ side was pierced, water also came out along with blood. According to 1 John 5:6, Jesus Christ came by water and blood, and the Spirit bears witness. The “water” is a reference to baptism (cf. Acts 10:47; 1 Pet 3:20, 21). Today, our Lord Jesus Christ washes us with His blood through the water of baptism under the Spirit’s witness. That is why the Bible calls Christian baptism a washing (Acts 22:16; cf. Eph 5:25, 26; Tit 3:5) and teaches us that it is necessary for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16) and for salvation (Mk 16:16; 1 Pet 3:21).

This coincides with the prophecy in Zechariah about the One who is pierced (Jn 19:37; Zech 12:10). As stated in the prophecy, the people of God will look on Him whom they pierced. This promise of salvation through the crucified Savior was fulfilled on the cross. People of all nations would look upon the One who had been “lifted up from the earth” (Jn 3:14; 8:28; 12:32, 33) and pierced for their sins. In Zechariah 13:1, the prophet declares, “In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.” Relating this prophecy to the flow of blood and water from Jesus’ side, it becomes clear that this event at the cross marked the opening of the spiritual fountain for the remission of sins, and this is available to us today in baptism. Just as Eve was made from Adam’s side (Gen 2:21, 22), out of the side of the Lord Jesus believers today enter into a new life through the washing in baptism (cf. Jn 3:5; Rom 6:4; Eph 5:25, 26; Col 2:11–13; Tit 3:5).

11. The writer’s emphatic testimony about the truthfulness of his eye-witness account underscores the great significance of the event. From the side of the Lord Jesus a fountain for cleansing

- was indeed opened. In this miraculous event, the Scripture’s promise of salvation was accomplished.
12. We are to believe (19:35), i.e., believe the testimony, and, more importantly, that the Lord Jesus is the Son of God and our Savior.
14. Both of them had kept their faith in Jesus a secret (19:38, 39; cf. Jn 3:2; 7:50), although the Bible does not state so explicitly with respect to Nicodemus.
15. While they had formerly been followers of Jesus secretly, they now stepped forward to take Jesus’ body and bury Him in the tomb. In view of the atrocity that the Jews had committed against Jesus and the great danger upon the followers of Jesus, what Joseph and Nicodemus did was an act of great courage (Mk 15:43).
16. 1. Jesus was buried by Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, both men of prominence and authority (Lk 23:50; Jn 3:1).
2. The amount of myrrh and aloes was comparable to what was used for royal burials (Jn 19:39).
3. They laid Jesus in a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid (Jn 19:41; Lk 23:53).

Such a stately and dignified burial was far different from how a crucified man would normally have been buried.

Lesson 32

OBSERVATION

Outline

Visits to the Empty Tomb (20:1–10)

Mary found the tomb empty and reported it to Peter and the other disciple (1–2)

Peter and the other disciple ran to the tomb and saw it for themselves (3–10)

Jesus’ Appearance to Mary (20:11–18)

Mary saw and spoke with the two angels (11–13)

Jesus appeared and spoke to Mary (14–18)
 Jesus' Appearance to the Disciples (20:19–23)
 Jesus' Appearance to Thomas (20:24–29)
 Epilogue: Purpose of the Recorded Signs (20:30–31)

Key Words/Phrases

Mary Magdalene, tomb, ran, Simon Peter, the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, see, believe/believing, weeping, ascend, “My Father and your Father,” “My God and your God,” “Peace to you,” Holy Spirit, forgive/retain sins, Thomas, “My Lord and my God,” unbelieving, signs, Christ, Son of God, life

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. Mary went to the tomb early (1), ran and came to Peter and the other disciple (2), stood outside by the tomb weeping (11), stooped down and looked into the tomb (11), turned (16), and clung to the Lord (17). Many of these actions expressed Mary's deep love for the Lord Jesus.
2. Jesus' resurrection validates His own prediction (Mt 17:23; 28:6; Mk 8:31; 9:31; 10:34; Lk 18:33; 24:6–7; Jn 2:19, 22). It is the sure evidence that He is Lord and Christ as foretold by the Scripture and that He has power over death (Acts 2:32–36; Jn 10:17–18; Rom 6:9; cf. Jn 11:25, 26). By His resurrection we can be sure that His death indeed paid for our sins and that we can truly be justified through Him (Acts 10:42, 43; 13:33–39; Rom 4:24, 25). Because God has raised up Jesus from the dead, we have a firm hope that we will also one day be raised to eternal life (1 Cor 6:14; 15:1–58; 1 Thess 4:14–16).
- 3a. At the beginning of the narrative, Mary, Simon Peter, and the disciple whom Jesus loved saw the empty tomb (1, 5, 6). Out of these three, only the disciple whom Jesus loved believed after he saw (8). Afterwards, Mary also saw two angels sitting where the body of Jesus had lain (12). When Jesus appeared to Mary, Mary saw Jesus standing there but could not recognize Him (14). Having been entrusted with a message to the disciples, Mary went and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord (18).

That evening, Jesus came, stood in the midst of the disciples, and showed them His hands and His side. The disciples were glad when they saw the Lord (20). Thomas, who was absent, refused to believe when the disciples told him they had seen the Lord (25), and he insisted on not believing unless he sees the print of the nails in Jesus' hand, puts his finger into the print of the nails, and puts his hand into Jesus' side (25). Eight days later, Jesus appeared to the disciples and asked Thomas to reach his finger and look at His hand (27). When Thomas proclaimed his confession in the Lord, Jesus taught Thomas an important lesson on seeing and believing (29).

- 3b. In the first part of the story, before Jesus appeared to Mary and the disciples, the belief of the disciple whom Jesus loved is quite remarkable (8) and functions as the climax of that part of the narrative. The theme of believing becomes even more prominent in the Thomas story. The Lord Jesus deliberately addressed Thomas' unbelief when He spoke to Thomas and He further promised His blessing to those who believe without seeing (24–29).
4. In both appearances to the disciples, the Lord's first words were “Peace be with you” or “Peace to you!” (19, 26; the two greetings are identical in Greek). When the Lord was about to give His commission to the disciples, He again said to them, “Peace to you!” (21).

The disciples had shut the doors out of fear of the Jews, but the Lord Jesus brought them the much needed inner peace. His words, not to mention His very presence among them, must have been a great comfort for the disciples. As the Lord had promised before His departure, He would not leave the disciples orphans, but would come to them (Jn 14:18). He would also give them His peace even through the tribulations they would undergo in the world (Jn 14:27; 16:33). Jesus' appearance was concrete evidence that the disciples' faith had not been in vain and that they could be confident in the promise that they would have peace in the Lord.

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. Mary saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb (1). The other disciple, whom Jesus loved, did not go into the tomb at first, but stooped down and looked in. He saw the linen cloths from where he was standing (4, 5). Simon Peter went into the tomb, and he saw the linen cloths lying there as well as the handkerchief that had been around Jesus' head, not lying with the linen cloths, but folded together in a place by itself (6, 7).
2. Peter saw the linen cloths that had been wrapped around Jesus' body and the handkerchief that had been around His head. Clearly, Jesus' body was not there not because someone had taken Him away as Mary had supposed. Anyone who might have attempted to carry away a corpse would not have first removed the handkerchief and the linen cloths which had been covered with a huge amount of spices. What Peter saw was proof that Jesus had resurrected.
- 3a. It may seem that the most straightforward reading of verse 8 is that the other disciple believed Mary's report that someone had taken away the Lord out of the tomb (cf. v. 2). The narrator's comment in verse 9 also appears to support this. Nevertheless, the verb "believe," a key word in the Gospel according to John, is always used in the context of faith in the Lord Jesus. Where the verb is used without an explicit object, as is the case in this verse, it is always understood to mean believing in Jesus (Jn 1:7, 50; 3:12; 4:41, 42, 48; 5:44; 6:36, 64; 9:38; 10:25, 26; 11:40; 16:31; 19:35). In the present passage, the word 'believe' is likewise referring to belief in the Lord Jesus and His resurrection (Jn 20:25, 27, 29, 31). It is unlikely, therefore, that the writer would use the word "believe" in verse 8 to mean belief in the report that Jesus' body had been taken away, especially when this key word pertained to the disciple whom Jesus loved. We should interpret it as expressing the faith of the disciple in the Lord Jesus after he had seen the things left behind in the empty tomb. He understood the significance of what he had seen.
- 3b. The statement in verse 9 seems to contradict the interpretation that the other disciple believed that Jesus had resurrected.

However, we may understand verse 9 in one of the following two ways:

1. The verse may be referring to the lack of understanding on the part of Simon Peter and Mary.
2. The statement may refer to the state of all the disciples up to the point when the disciple whom Jesus loved saw and believed.

A question remains concerning verse 10, which states that the disciples went away again to their own homes. One may ask why the disciple whom Jesus loved did not go and proclaim what he had seen if he believed that the Lord had risen from the dead. But the same question would hold if he and Simon Peter realized that the Lord's body had been taken away but did nothing about their finding. To address this question, we may take verse 10 as simply a closure to the story of the visit to the tomb by Peter and the other disciple, especially when the story has reached its climax in verse 8. If we read the narrative in this light, questions about why we do not read further actions on the part of the two disciples would be irrelevant.

- 4a. Jesus told Mary to convey to the disciples that He was ascending to His Father. For the disciples, this meant that Jesus had indeed come from God and was returning to God in glory (cf. Jn 13:3). It also meant that what the Lord Jesus had promised the disciples, including the sending of the Holy Spirit, answering their prayers, preparing a place for them in His Father's house, and coming again to receive them, would all come true (cf. Jn 14:1–3, 19–21, 23–28; 16:7, 16, 22–28).
- 4b. Jesus Christ became flesh in order to give to believers the right to become children of God (Jn 1:12, 13). He took on flesh and blood like us so that through death He may destroy the power of death and to set us free from bondage. Believers are Jesus' brethren because He had become like them in order to deliver them from sin and to lead all the sons of God into glory (Heb 2:10–18). God has also predestined them to conform to the image of His Son, thereby making Jesus the firstborn among many brethren (Rom 8:29). Jesus' victory over death and His glorification qualified Him as the firstborn among God's children. It was therefore particularly significant that Jesus called

His disciples His brethren at this moment, as He was about to ascend to His Father.

- 4c. Jesus, being the firstborn among the children of God, has brought believers into a new relationship with the heavenly Father. Through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have received the new identity as God's children (Jn 1:12; Gal 3:26). God also sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, by whom we cry out "Abba, Father!" (Gal 4:6; Rom 8:15) By the salvation of our Lord Jesus, we may now address God as our Father and our God the same way Jesus addressed God as His Father and His God.
5. Their fear turned to joy (19, 20).
- 6a. The passage itself does not state directly what the Lord Jesus was sending the disciples to do, although the commission was connected with the forgiveness and retaining of sins (21–23). If we compare this passage with the parallel commission passages in the synoptic gospels (Mt 28:18–20; Mk 16:15–18; Lk 24:46–49; cf. Acts 26:17, 18), we understand that the Lord Jesus was sending the disciples to witness for the Lord to the ends of the earth, preach repentance and remission of sins in Jesus' name, and make disciples of all nations.
- 6b. A crucial part of fulfilling Jesus' commission is to baptize believers for the remission of sins. That is why baptism is included in Jesus' commission statements (Mt 28:19; Mk 16:16). Those who believe in the Lord Jesus and are baptized will be saved, but those who do not believe will be condemned. Therefore, when the apostles carried out the Lord's commission, they administered baptism to the converts for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). On the other hand, they also testified against those who refused to accept the gospel, declaring their guilt (Acts 13:51; 18:6; cf. Mk 6:11).
- 6c. While it is the disciples of the Lord Jesus who administer baptism for the remission of sins, on the spiritual level it is the Holy Spirit who baptizes believers and brings them into the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13). In baptism, the Spirit, who is truth, bears witness to the fact that Jesus Christ has come by water and blood (1 Jn 5:6). Therefore, the water in baptism carries the cleansing power of Jesus' blood through the presence

of the Spirit among the disciples. That is why the Lord Jesus called the spiritual birth that is necessary for entrance into God's kingdom a birth "of water and the Spirit" (Jn 3:5). Baptism is not merely immersion in water but a spiritual birth. This involves the work of God's Spirit. It is for this reason that when He sent the disciples to forgive and retain sins, the Lord Jesus first breathed on them and commanded them, saying, "Receive the Holy Spirit" (Jn 20:22). In obedience to the Lord's command, the disciples waited in Jerusalem for the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Lk 24:49; Acts 1:5). It was when the Holy Spirit was poured out on them on the Day of Pentecost that the disciples began to baptize for the remission of sins (Acts 2:1–4; 38–41).

7. 1. Although He was not visibly in the midst of the disciples when Thomas uttered words of unbelief, the Lord Jesus, being the all-knowing and all-present God, was fully aware of what Thomas had said.
2. Jesus cared about Thomas and was compassionate toward him. He met Thomas' exact demands even though He was under no obligation to prove Himself to Thomas. Out of love for Thomas, He appeared again eight days later just for Thomas. He knew Thomas' needs and came to him in order to restore his faith.
8. The sight of the risen Lord certainly convinced Thomas and removed his skepticism and unbelief. But more than that, Thomas must have been deeply moved by the fact that the Lord spoke to him personally and even graciously met his exact demands, which he had uttered arrogantly in disbelief (27). Coming face to face with the Lord who loved him so, Thomas humbly confessed his faith in his personal Savior, "My Lord and My God!" (28).
- 10a. Jesus' words to Thomas, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" may seem to suggest that believing based on seeing evidence is not acceptable to Him. But this is not true. The disciple whom Jesus loved "saw and believed" (8). The very fact that the Lord Jesus appeared to Mary and the disciples tells us that He wanted them to see Him with their own eyes. He would not have expected the disciples to come to faith in the resurrection without any evidence at all. On the

contrary, He presented Himself alive to the apostles by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days (Acts 1:1–3; cf. Jn 20:30). Our Lord Jesus came to this world to reveal the God whom we cannot see so that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life (Jn 1:18; 6:40). Therefore, not only does God not condemn belief upon seeing, He provides ways for man to see and believe.

- 10b. Thomas' error was that he refused to believe unless the terms he had set down were met. The words, "I will not believe," expressed the strongest form of negation in Greek, and may be translated "I will by no means believe." In other words, even if evidence was presented before him, he would still not believe as long as the evidence did not match his conditions. As human beings, we are not in the position to demand God to prove Himself on our terms. Nevertheless, God in His great mercy reveals Himself to us and speaks to us in many ways (cf. Heb 1:1; 2:1–4). When the Lord Jesus was in the world, He also performed many signs to lead people to believe in Him. We need to open ourselves to God's revelation and not insist on our own demands.
- 10c. The Lord told Thomas, "Do not be unbelieving, but believing." "Unbelieving" and "believing" indicate the state of a person rather than particular actions at a given moment. Jesus was telling Thomas not to remain in the state of unbelief, but continue to walk in faith. While our faith may initially be the result of seeing evidence, we should not always expect proofs from God before we trust Him and obey His words. We must go from seeing to believing, and live a life of faith that is not dependent on sight. That is why Paul reminds us believers, "We do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen," (2 Cor 4:18) and "We walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor 5:7). Thus the Lord Jesus said, "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed" (Jn 20:29). These are they who have come to live by faith in God and do not demand God to constantly prove Himself with visible evidence.
11. Jesus' appearance to Thomas serves as a valuable lesson for believers of all ages. Perhaps part of us is still unbelieving like Thomas, and we set our own expectations on God. Even then, God still often helps us in our weakness and answers us

according to our needs in order to strengthen us. However, He does not want us to remain in the state where we would only believe Him when we are blessed with material goods, health, success, or when He removes our difficulties. Instead, even in the face of tribulations and hardships, or when there seems to be no tangible reward for trusting God, we must continue to walk by faith in Him. This is a mature faith that is most precious in God's eyes.

12. The signs Jesus performed revealed that He is the Christ, the Son of God, and their purpose is for us to believe in Him and have eternal life.
13. The title "the Christ" literally means "the anointed." The roots of this term are in the Old Testament, and it was used of the king anointed by God (1 Sam 2:10; 2 Sam 22:51; Ps 2:2; 18:50). Furthermore, it had become a designation for the future king who would be a descendant of David and who would rule on the throne of David over Israel (cf. Mt 22:41–44; Mk 15:32). The title "the Son of God" is likewise associated with this kingly figure (2 Sam 7:14; Ps 2:7; Lk 1:32, 33; Jn 1:49). Not only so, being the Son of God implied equality with God (Jn 5:18). In short, to believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, means believing that Jesus has come from God into this world to save His own people from their sins and to bring them into His everlasting kingdom.

Lesson 33

OBSERVATION

Outline

- Jesus' Third Appearance to the Disciples (21:1–14)
- Jesus' Commission to Peter (21:15–19)
- The Disciple Whom Jesus Loved (21:20–23)
- The Writing of the Gospel (21:24–25)

Key Words/Phrases

Showed, Simon Peter, fishing/fish, the disciple whom Jesus loved, raised from the dead, “Do you love me?” “Feed my lambs,” “Tend/Feed My sheep,” “Follow Me,” testifies/testimony, wrote/written, true

GENERAL ANALYSIS

1. In both stories the disciples had toiled all night and caught nothing, but at Jesus’ instructions they let down the net and caught a great number of fish. In Luke 5, the disciples forsook all and followed Jesus after the miracle. In John 21, the Lord Jesus commanded Peter to follow Him after the miracle. In both stories there was also some form of sudden realization (Lk 5:8,9 and Jn 21:7).

In terms of contrast between the two stories, we read in Luke 5 that they left their profession as fishermen and followed the Lord Jesus. In John 21, those who had already been following the Lord had gone fishing.

SEGMENT ANALYSIS

1. Simon Peter’s announcement that he was going fishing turns our attention to the fishing expedition. As readers we anticipate some outcome to this undertaking. At the same time, it appears that none of the disciples had a clear sense of purpose. They simply followed along when Peter told them his intention. The result of their group effort was disappointing. The fact that there were experienced fishermen among them did not help. Even just this one task they thought they could engage in turned out to be fruitless.
2. The miraculous catch of fish at Jesus’ instructions must have been the point of the disciple’s realization. The fact that he was so quick to recognize the Lord and the first to do so is a sign that he was intimately acquainted with the ways of the Lord and that the grace of the Lord had been deeply impressed in his heart. Furthermore, the Lord’s resurrection must have had such a profound significance for him (cf. Jn 20:8) that it helped him readily recognize the Lord this time.

3. The comment that the net was not broken underscores the greatness of the miracle. The Lord Jesus not only gave them such a great catch, He also kept the net from breaking.
4. The passage itself does not explain the reason for the disciples’ timidity in the presence of Jesus. Their behavior forms a rather sharp contrast with their first encounter with the risen Lord (cf. Jn 20:20). If what the disciples were doing was resuming an occupation they had once left behind, it is possible that they were embarrassed by, if not ashamed of, what they were doing. But it could also be that the disciples found it difficult to grasp the fact that it was indeed their risen Lord who had just performed such a great miracle and was now preparing breakfast for them. Thus we sense a tension between their wanting to ask who He was and not daring to do so.
5. The Lord Jesus had a higher purpose for manifesting Himself to the disciples than giving them a great catch of fish. He had an important commission for Peter that pertained to the spiritual wellbeing of believers in Christ. Nevertheless, He did not ignore the disciples’ immediate physical and emotional needs. He did not come to them as a fearsome taskmaster, but as One who cared about them when they had toiled to no avail and had nothing to eat after a long night on the sea. He exemplified the loving shepherd that He wanted Peter to be.

Sometimes, in our eagerness to see the accomplishment of God’s work or some positive change in others, we might have neglected their needs and forgotten to provide for those needs. When guiding someone who is going through low points, our acts of kindness may be much more needed and far more encouraging than long lectures or words of rebuke.

- 6a. Taking care of the Lord’s sheep is ultimately done for the sake of the Lord, who is the Chief Shepherd (cf. 1 Pet 5:4). Love for the Lord, therefore, is the basic motivation for loving His flock.
- 6b. Jesus’ repeated questions were deeply penetrating, so much so that Peter was grieved (v. 17). They served to make Peter reflect on the weight of the commission that the Lord was entrusting him with and on his commitment to this cause. The Lord cares about His flock, and He needs shepherds who can feed and tend His lambs and sheep. But being a shepherd on the Lord’s

behalf is no easy task; it involves much attentiveness, patience, and sacrifice. To do this work, one needs to have an unceasing love for the Lord and to constantly remember the importance of this duty. The repetitions underscored the solemnity of this important duty.

7. Feeding and tending the Lord's sheep means watching over the spiritual wellbeing of believers. This includes teaching them to observe the word of the Lord (cf. Mt 28:20; Acts 20:27, 32; Ezek 37:24); guarding them against false doctrines (cf. Acts 20:29–31); seeking those who are lost (cf. Ezek 34:11, 12, 16; Lk 15:4–6; Gal 6:1); and leading the flock by example (cf. 1 Pet 5:3).
8. The qualifications of an overseer laid down in the Bible delineate the qualities required of a spiritual shepherd, since the function of overseers was to shepherd the flock of God (Acts 20:28; 1 Pet 5:2). An overseer must be blameless, as a steward of God, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, a lover of what is good, just, holy, self-controlled, able to teach, holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous, one who rules his house well, having his children in submission with all reverence, not a novice, and has a good testimony among those who are outside (1 Tim 3:2–7; Tit 1:6–9).
9. Our Lord Jesus loves His sheep and died for them. When we remember how precious the flock we shepherd is to Him, we will do our utmost to take good care of it because we are doing so for Him. As shepherds, we are accountable to the Lord. To love His sheep and to care for them is to love the Lord (Jn 21:15–17; cf. Mt 25:40; 1 Cor 8:9–13; 1 Jn 4:20, 21).
- 10a. When Peter said, "I will lay down my life for Your sake," he had not gone through the test. He spoke with resolve and self-confidence, not realizing his weaknesses and limitations. Now, having denied the Lord three times, he could no longer speak as a hero about his love for the Lord, but could only humbly entrust himself to the Lord's knowledge of him. Although Peter had failed to keep his vows in the face of danger, he

trusted that the Lord who knows all things knew that Peter truly loved Him in his heart.

- 10b. If we have true love for the Lord in our hearts, the Lord knows, even if we do not declare it out loud. Self-confidence and determination can only take us so far, but the grace of the Lord will see us through to the end. The Lord knows what is in our hearts and what our limitations are, and He will help us if we come before Him in humility and sincerity while we do our best to serve Him. Walking closely with our Lord and entrusting ourselves to Him in this manner will enable us to faithfully carry out His commission.
11. The Lord's commission demanded that Peter live no longer for himself but for the Lord. As a shepherd of the Lord's flock, he would have to surrender himself completely to the Lord's will, even if it means suffering the persecution of men as a result.
12. As believers of Christ, our sufferings are not without meaning. When we suffer according to God's will (i.e., rather than suffer for wrongdoing), we are glorifying God (1 Pet 2:11, 12; 4:12–16). Therefore, we ought not view our sufferings as a curse but accept them as from our Father's hand (Heb 12:5–11).
13. Following Christ means not only experiencing miraculous providence or receiving the good things we ask for, but also participating in His sufferings according to His example. As followers of Christ, we should not let our lives be centered on ourselves. We must love the Lord and put Him first by doing His will and caring for the sheep of His flock. This takes humility, dedication, patience, and endurance. To attain this goal, we cannot just rely on our commitment the way Peter vouched to follow Jesus till death (cf. Jn 13:37), but we need to place our trust in the Lord, who knows our hearts and graciously supplies us with the strength we need.
14. The Lord may have different plans and paths for each disciple, yet every follower of Christ is personally accountable to the Lord. We should not compare what we may go through with the lot others have received from the Lord. Regardless of the specific purpose God has assigned us, our call is the same, which is to follow the Lord Jesus to the end. If our focus is on Christ Jesus and His will for us, then we would not be proud of

the better things we have received or complain of the trials that others do not seem to have to bear. We would just faithfully take up our cross daily and follow the Lord (Lk 9:23).

15. Since the Gospel is written essentially as a call to faith (Jn 20:31), the author lays particular stress on credible testimony of what Jesus taught and did. Faith must rest on something that is true, and reliable testimony lends weight to the truths written in the book.

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