



following **Jesus**
through John

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Horizon Baptist Church
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OUTLINE OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

- 1.) Introduction (1:1-18)
 - A.) The Identity of Jesus (1:1-5)
 - (1) He is eternal God (1:1-2)
 - (2) He is creator to the creation (1:3)
 - (3) He is life to the lifeless (1:4)
 - (4) He is light to the darkness (1:4-5)
 - B.) The Testimony of Jesus (1:6-9)
 - (1) John the Baptist was sent from God (1:6)
 - (2) John the Baptist bore witness of the Light (1:7)
 - (3) John the Baptist was not the Light (1:8-9)
 - C.) The Incarnation of Jesus (1:10-15)
 - (1) He was rejected by many (1:10-11)
 - (2) He was received by some (1:12-13)
 - (3) He was among humanity in the flesh (1:14)
 - (4) He was the one of whom John spoke (1:15)
 - D.) The Impact of Jesus (1:16-18)
 - (1) He gave out of His fulness (1:16)
 - (2) He brought grace and truth (1:17)
 - (3) He revealed God to mankind (1:18)
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 - A.) John's Testimony of Jesus (1:19-28)
 - B.) John's Encounter with Jesus (1:29-34)
 - C.) John's Disciples Follow Jesus (1:35-39)
 - D.) Andrew Brings Peter to Jesus (1:40-42)
 - E.) Jesus Finds Philip (1:43-44)
 - F.) Philip Brings Nathanael to Jesus (1:45-51)
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 - (2) The problem (2:3-4)
 - (3) The solution (2:5-11)
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 - (1) The wrath of Christ (2:12-22)
 - (2) The knowledge of Christ (2:23-25)
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 - (1) He made time for Nicodemus (3:1-2)
 - (2) He confronted Nicodemus with his need to be born again (3:3-4)
 - (3) He explained to Nicodemus what it means to be born again (3:5-9)
 - (4) He marveled at Nicodemus' lack of understanding (3:10-14)
 - (5) He told Nicodemus how to be born again (3:14-21)
 - J.) The Waning of John the Baptist (3:22-36)
 - (1) The rise of Jesus' ministry (3:22-24)
 - (2) The concern of John's disciples (3:25-26)
 - (3) The response of John the Baptist (3:27-36)

- a.) My ministry success has been a gift from God (3:27)
 - b.) It has never been about me (3:28-29)
 - c.) It has always been about Jesus (3:30-36)
- K.) Jesus and the Woman at the Well (4:1-42)
 - (1) He was intentional (4:1-6)
 - (2) He engaged her by finding common ground (4:7-8)
 - (3) He looked beyond cultural prejudice (4:9)
 - (4) He transitioned from the physical to the spiritual (4:10-12)
 - (5) He spoke of ultimate fulfillment (4:13-15)
 - (6) He spoke of her sin (4:16-19)
 - (7) He answered her questions (4:20-24)
 - (8) He spoke of Himself (4:25-27)
 - (9) She immediately became an evangelist for Jesus (4:28)
 - (10) She shared her story (4:29)
 - (11) She brought people to a place where they could experience Jesus (4:30)
 - (12) He found purpose in God's will and work (4:31-34)
 - (13) He taught the disciples the urgency of evangelism (4:35)
 - (14) He taught the disciples teamwork in evangelism (4:36-38)
 - (15) There was a great spiritual harvest (4:39-42)
- L.) The Second Sign: The Nobleman's Son (4:43-54)
 - (1) The setting (4:43-46)
 - (2) The confrontation (4:47-49)
 - (3) The climax (4:50-54)
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 - (2) The confrontation (5:6-9)
 - (3) The controversy (5:10-15)
 - (4) The conflict (5:16-18)
 - B.) The Sabbath Controversy (5:19-47)
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 - a.) Unified in the greater work of resurrection (5:21)
 - b.) Unified in the greater work of judgment (5:22)
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 - ii.) Who will receive life and who will receive judgment? (5:24)
 - iii.) When will resurrection and judgment take place? (5:25-27)
 - iv.) How will resurrection and judgment take place? (5:28-30)
 - (2) The witnesses for the Son (5:31-40)
 - a.) The witness of Himself (5:31-32)
 - b.) The witness of John the Baptist (5:33-35)
 - c.) The witness of His miracles (5:36)
 - d.) The witness of His Father (5:37)
 - e.) The witness of the Scripture (5:38-40)
 - (3) The rebuke of the religious leaders (5:41-47)
 - C.) The Fourth Sign: The Feeding of the 5000 (6:1-15)
 - (1) The setting (6:1-4)

- (2) The need (6:5-9)
- (3) The miracle (6:10-13)
- (4) The response (6:14-15)
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 - (2) The storm upon the sea (6:18-19)
 - (3) The sustainer within the storm (6:20-21)
 - (4) The following of the crowd (6:22-24)
- E.) The Bread of Life Discourse (6:25-71)
 - (1) Question 1 from the crowd– How did you get here? (6:25)
 - (2) Answer 1 from Jesus – Pursue the bread of life. (6:26-27)
 - (3) Question 2 from the crowd – How do we receive the bread of life? (6:28)
 - (4) Answer 2 from Jesus - Believe on me. (6:29)
 - (5) Question 3 from the crowd - What miracle will you show us so that we might believe? (6:30-31)
 - (6) Answer 3 from Jesus – I have a better bread from heaven than Moses provided. (6:32-33)
 - (7) Question 4 from the crowd – Will you give us this bread? (6:34)
 - (8) Answer 4 from Jesus – I am the bread of life. (6:35-40)
 - (9) Question 5 from the crowd– We know His parents. How can He claim to come from heaven? (6:41-42)
 - (10) Answer 5 from Jesus– You must learn of the Father to partake of me as the bread of life (6:43-51)
 - (11) Question 6 from the crowd – How can we eat His flesh? (6:52)
 - (12) Answer 6 from Jesus– You must eat my flesh and drink my blood to have life (6:53-59)
 - (13) Question 7 from the crowd – This is a difficult teaching. Who can listen to it? (6:60)
 - (14) Answer 7 from Jesus – My teaching is spiritual and living giving, but some of you don't believe. (6:61-66)
 - (15) Question 8 from Jesus – Will you twelve also go away? (6:67)
 - (16) Answer 8 from Peter – No. You have the words of eternal life, and we believe on you. (6:68-69)
 - (17) Question 9 from Jesus – Though I have chosen the twelve you, is not one of you a devil? (6:70-71)
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John 20:19-23 – Jesus' First Appearance to the Disciples

John 20:24-31 – Jesus' Second Appearance to the Disciples (including Thomas)

John 21:1-14 – Jesus' Third Appearance to the Disciples

John 21:15-25 – Jesus' Restoration of Peter

Appendix 1 – The Case For and Against the Woman Caught in Adultery

Appendix 2 - Bibliography

JOHN 1:1-18

Sermon

1.) INTRODUCTION

Who wrote it?

From the very beginning, the gospel of John claims to be the eye witness testimony of the apostles regarding Jesus' earthly life and ministry. See John 1:14 & 2:11. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 351-352)

However, the author of the book actually never identifies himself by name. He refers to himself as that disciple or the disciple whom Jesus loved. Nevertheless, through process of elimination with those who are named in the gospel, we can conclude that the author of the book was the disciple John. This is who the early church fathers claimed was the author as well.

The author of the Gospel of John is the disciple whom Jesus loved (21:20, 24).

- The disciple whom Jesus loved was reclining next to Jesus at the last supper in the upper room. Therefore, he must have been one of the twelve disciples (13:23).
- The unnamed disciple whom Jesus loved is not one of the disciples named in chapters 13-16: Peter, Philip, Thomas, Judas Iscariot, or Judas the son of James. (Kostenberger, 2013, p. Loc 358)
- The unnamed disciple was with Peter following Jesus' arrest (18:15).
- Jesus gave this unnamed disciple charge of his mother during his death on the cross (19:26-27).
- The unnamed disciple was an early eye witness with Peter of the empty tomb (20:1-8).
- The unnamed disciple is one of seven disciples that Jesus appeared to on the shore of the Sea of Galilee (21:2, 7).
 - o Peter, Thomas, and Nathaniel are all named, thus ruling them out.
 - o If he is one of the sons of Zebedee (James & John), he could not be James. There was a rumor that the disciple whom Jesus loved would not die (21:23), but James was martyred early on in AD 42 (Acts 12:2). (Kostenberger, 2013, p. Loc 370)
- "From the apostolic lists found in the Synoptics and Acts, only the following apostles remain (Andrew, Peter's brother, is an unlikely candidate owing to 1: 40; see below):"
 - o Matthew (Levi)

- He authored one of the other gospels. It is improbable that he would author another gospel anonymously in a completely different writing style.
- Simon the Zealot
 - He is an obscure, unlikely figure that has never been suggested as the author.
- James the son of Alphaeus
 - He is an obscure, unlikely figure that has never been suggested as the author.
- John the son of Zebedee (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. 375-377)
 - He is the traditionally accepted author of the fourth gospel.
 - He is closely connected with Peter in the other gospels and in the early New Testament (Luke 22:8; Acts 3-4; Acts 8:14-25; Gal. 2:9).
 - The earthly church fathers unanimously ascribed the fourth gospel to John. (Kostenberger, 2013, p. Loc 382)
 - Irenaeus (citing Polycarp, John's disciple, as his source) attributes this gospel to John. (*Adv. Haer.* 3.1.2)
 - Clement of Alexandria (cited by Eusebius) attributes this gospel to John (*H.E.* 6.14.7).
 - "It is remarkable that the apostle John, mentioned some twenty times in the Synoptic Gospels, is not named once in his gospel. Leon Morris observes, 'It is not easy to think of a reason why any early Christian, other than John himself, should have completely omitted all mention of such a prominent Apostle'" (Morris, John, 11). (MacArthur, 2006, p. 17)

"At the same time, it is not surprising that John would seek to avoid doing anything that would steal the spotlight from Jesus. Thus he invented the self-designation "the disciple whom Jesus loved," an epithet of authorial modesty." (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 407-408)

Who was John?

- John referred to himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved.
- He was the son of a prominent fisherman named Zebedee and a woman named Salome (Mark 1:20) (c.f. Mark 15:40 with Matt. 27:56). (MacArthur, 2006, p. 18).
- He had a brother named James who was also a disciple of Jesus.
 - Not to be confused with James the son of Alphaeus who was also a disciple of Jesus (Mark 15:40)

- Not to be confused with Jesus' half-brother James, who would become a leader in the church at Jerusalem (Acts 15:13) and who wrote the book of James in the New Testament.
- John and his brother James were nicknamed the "sons of thunder" by Jesus in Mark 3:16, hinting at a fiery temperament. Angered at a Samaritan village that refused Jesus, the two brothers asked the Lord if they should call down fire from heaven to consume the village (Luke 9:54).
- James and John cornered Jesus in Mark 10 and asked Him if they could sit his right hand and left hand in glory (Mark 10:37). Jesus told them that persecution precedes glory and that they would share in that. Of course when the other ten heard about James and John's request, they were upset.
- John, James, and Peter formed Jesus inner circle (Mark 5; Matthew 17:1-9), and they would be pillars in the early church (Gal. 2:9).
 - In fact, Peter and John were attached at the hip in ministry early on in the book of Acts (3:1; 4:13; 8:14).
 - James would be the first of the apostles to be killed for their faith following Jesus' resurrection (Acts 12:2). He was martyred by Herod.
- John wrote four other books in the New Testament (1, 2, 3 John and Revelation), and he would ultimately be exiled by the Romans to the island of Patmos.

When and where was it written?

John's gospel was likely written from Ephesus in the A.D. 80s to Jews and Gentiles attracted to the Jewish faith, but ultimately to the church as a whole.

According to Irenaeus, John wrote this gospel while at Ephesus (*Adv. Haer.* 3.1.2).

We don't know for sure when the gospel of John was written. For several reasons, a date of somewhere between A.D. 80-90 is plausible.

- The gospel was written long enough after Peter's death (c. A.D. 67-68) for the rumor that John would live to Christ's return to have developed. This rumor would have made more sense with John as an older man. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 20)
- John doesn't mention the destruction of the temple. If the gospel was written more than 10 years following the events, they may not have been significant to his readers.
- John's gospel was aware of the synoptics. A later date would provide time for them to be written and circulated.
- Church tradition supports the idea that John's gospel was the last one written. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 20)

Why was it written?

There is a significant amount of information in John that is not found in Matthew, Mark, or Luke. Further, there is a good amount of information in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, that John left out of his gospel. "John was both dependent and independent; like a master composer, he creatively transposed some of the material in the Synoptics in order to tell the story of Jesus, as it were, in a different key." (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 774-775)

More than 90 percent of the gospel of John is not found in Matthew, Mark, or Luke. However, the differences between John and the synoptic gospels are not contradictions. They complement one another. John fills in the gaps with a good deal of information about Jesus that had not previously been recorded. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 12)

- Writing many years after the completion of the synoptic gospels, John more than likely assumed that his readers were familiar with those gospels and the events recorded within them. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 13)

John 20:30-31 reveals the purpose of the gospel:

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

The gospel of John is a case for Christ. It is a case for Jesus.

- Throughout the gospel, John presents seven "I am" statements to clarify who Jesus claims to be.
- He also presents seven signs as evidence of who Jesus is, culminating in His resurrection.
- John's contention is that Jesus is no mere man. He is God in the flesh, and He calls his readers to put their faith and trust in Jesus.

"In keeping with his evangelistic purpose, John used the verb 'to believe' nearly one hundred times—more than twice as much as the Synoptics, emphasizing that those who savingly believe in Jesus will receive eternal life (3:15–16, 36; 4:14; 5:24, 39–40; 6:27, 33, 35, 40, 47–48, 54, 63, 68; 10:10, 28; 12:50; 14:6; 17:2–3; 20:31)... In short, John presents Jesus as the eternal Word, Messiah, and Son of God who, through His death and resurrection, brings the gift of salvation to mankind. People respond by either accepting or rejecting the salvation that comes only through believing in Him. John makes the case for accepting Him in faith. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 21)

We have John, this close confidant of Jesus, this member of His inner circle, recording the story of Jesus. You might imagine him trying to think through where to start the story. We believe that God led/inspired him to write the book without error, but we also see his unique writing style and personality in his gospel as well.

Matthew – begins with Jesus’ family tree and birth

Mark – begins with the ministry of John the Baptist and Jesus’ baptism as an adult

Luke – begins with the birth of Jesus’ forerunner, John the Baptist

Where would John start?

John begins his gospel with a unique 18 verse introduction that serves an entry way into his gospel. In it, he reveals the most important themes of the gospel, and he starts the story of Jesus further back than any other gospel does. (Kostenberger, 2013, p. Loc 1063)

A.) The Identity of Jesus

What no one knew when they first met Jesus, the readers are told from the very beginning of the Gospel of John: that Jesus is the eternal, divine Word of God. (Kostenberger, 2013, p. Loc 1111)

The striking opening of John’s gospel establishes a connection between God’s act of creation through his spoken Word and his act of providing salvation through the incarnate Word, Jesus. The background for this logos Christology is probably the Old Testament understanding that God sends his Word to accomplish his purposes (cf. Isa. 55: 10– 11). (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 849-851)

In verses 1-5 of John’s prologue we see three evidences of the deity of the incarnate Word: His pre-existence, His creative power, and His self-existence. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 27)

Where does he start his account of Jesus?

He goes all the way back to Genesis 1:1.

Genesis 1:1-3 - 1 **In the beginning God** created the heaven and the earth. 2 And the earth was without form, and void; and **darkness** was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. 3 And God said (**Word of God**), Let there be light: and there was **light**.

John begins his gospel paralleling Genesis 1 in describing who Jesus is.

John 1:1-5 - **In the beginning** was the Word, and the Word was with **God**, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 **All things were made by him**; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was **life**; and the life was the **light** of men. 5 And the light shineth in **darkness**; and the darkness comprehended it not.

In the beginning was the Word –

- Jesus is only referred to as the Word in John's prologue.
- In Stoic thought, logos was reason, the impersonal rational principle governing the universe. (Kostenberger, 2013, p. Loc 1218)
 - Illustration – writing a paper on the parallels between John's introduction and Plato
- Nevertheless, I believe that the proper context for understanding John's usage of the title "The Word" is not in Greek philosophy, but rather the Old Testament Scriptures.
- If you go all the way back to Genesis 1, do you know what you find?
 - You find God.
 - You find the audible word/speech of God.
 - You find God creating through His Word.
 - You find light shining in the midst of darkness.
- You know what John is saying when he calls Jesus the Word of God?
 - Just like God's audible word/speech in Genesis 1, Jesus was there in the beginning involved in the process of creation.
 - God created through His word. God has revealed himself through his word. The words of God literally brought light and life into a dark and lifeless universe.
 - God has created through Jesus. God has revealed himself through Jesus. Jesus is literally the source of light and life in a dark and lifeless world.

Isaiah 55:9-11 - 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. 10 For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: 11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

- Just as is the case in Isaiah 55, Jesus is the Word of God that is:
 - Sent by God to accomplish His purposes
 - Is unfailing in accomplishing what it is sent to do
 - Returns to God after accomplishing His purposes (Kostenberger, 2013, p. Loc 1287)
 - Compare with 4:34 & 17:4

John presented Jesus to his Jewish readers as the ultimate and final revelation or word from God the Father to mankind. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 29)

- Hebrews 1:1-2 - God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son

In the beginning – in the beginning of the universe

Was the Word – it does not say that He came into being. It does not say that He was created. It affirms that at the beginning, Jesus was there.

And the Word was with God – Jesus was there with the Father in intimate fellowship. What does that tell us? It tells us that He was not the Father.

- The Bible affirms that the Father is God, that Jesus is God, and that the Holy Spirit is God. Those three are one being, one God, and yet three persons.
 - This is the doctrine of the trinity.

And The Word was God – *Theos en ho logos* -> literally translated means God was the Word

- This is perhaps the clearest and simplest reference to the deity of Jesus Christ in the New Testament.
- Yet cults like the Jehovah's Witness have sought to twist the clear teaching of Scripture to deny that Jesus is God.
 - In their convoluted New World Translation of the Bible, they translate this verse as "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god."
 - They claim that the reason it should be translated this way is because it says "God" and not "The God".
 - There's a reason for that in the Greek. The definite article differentiates the subject of the sentence from the noun used to describe the subject. John wanted 'Word' to be the subject, so he put the definite article 'the' before 'Word' (Craig, 2008).
 - Did you realize there are four other instances in John 1 where "God" is used without "the" prior to it? Verses 6, 12, 13, and 18. In every other instance, except for verse 1, the Jehovah's Witnesses translate it as "God" and not "a god".
 - 6 - There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.
 - 12 - But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:
 - 13 - Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
 - 18 - No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.
 - Not only that, but there are three other instances in the New Testament in which "God" is used without "the" prior to it, and it's in the exact same grammatical case as is in John 1:1 (Luke

20:38; John 8:54; Philippians 2:13). In each of those verses, excluding John 1:1, the Jehovah's Witness translate it "God" and not "a god".

- Why do the Jehovah's Witness translate it "a god" and not "God"? Because they are committed to doing whatever it takes to justify their claim that Jesus was not God.
- John could have said "The Word was the God", but this would have been an incorrect identity statement. Remember, he just said that the Word and the Father were distinct.
 - He could have said that "The Word had divine characteristics", but he didn't say that. Why? Because Jesus was more than just a being with some sort of divine characteristics.
 - He wanted to affirm the deity of Christ without falsely saying that Jesus and the Father were the same person. How did he do that? "The Word was God."

Colossians 1:17 - And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Revelation 1:8 - I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

1 John 1:1-2 - That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

1 John 5:7 - For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

John 17:5 - And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

Isaiah 7:14 - Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Isaiah 9:6 - For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Philippians 2:5-6 - 5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

Hebrews 1:1-3, 8 - 1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high: 8 But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.

Colossians 1:19, 2:9 - 19 For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; ...9 For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

The same was in the beginning with God - Here John repeats himself. If the Word was in the beginning, and if the Word was with God, then the Word was in the beginning with God.

Jesus is eternal God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

All things were made by him -

- Him - The Word is not a thing, but a person, and verses 11-18 make it clear that person is Jesus.
- All things - if all things were created by Jesus, then He Himself must be uncreated. If someone else had created Him, then He would not be the Creator of all things.

And without him was not any thing made that was made -

- Hold on, I thought the Father created all things. He did. It was a tag team. He created all things through the Son.

Ephesians 3:9 - And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in **God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:**

Colossians 1:16-17 - **For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:** And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

- Jesus is eternal God.
- He is Creator to the creation.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men. (Barnes, 1834)

In him was life – Jesus was and is the source of both physical and spiritual life

- Physical life - Genesis 2:7 - And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul
- Spiritual life - 1 John 5:11 - And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.
- He is life to the lifeless.

And the life was the light of men – Jesus was not just the Creator. He was not just life. He was also the light of the world that revealed truth and showed forth God's holiness.

- John 8:12 - Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.
- He is light to the darkness.

John 5:26 - For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

John 11:25 - Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

John 14:6 - Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

And the light shineth in darkness – the revelation of Christ is shown forth into the sinfulness and ignorance of this dark, lost world

and the darkness comprehended it not – Jesus came to bring the dead to life. He came to shine forth as light in the darkness. He came for the dead and the dark, but by and large the darkness did not receive Him.

It's not that He wasn't there. It's that they didn't want Him.

Illustration – why doesn't God just show Himself to the world? He did, and we killed Him.

John 3:19-20 - And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.

THE IDENTITY OF JESUS

He is eternal God.

He is creator to creation.

He is life to the lifeless.

He is light to the darkness.

B.) The Testimony of Jesus

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

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John – the emphasis abruptly shifts from the heavenly Word to His earthly herald – crazy John the Baptist (clothed in camel hair and ate locust and honey in the wilderness; Jesus' relative,)... (MacArthur, 2006, p. 42)

Isaiah 40:3-5 - The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

Malachi 3:1 - Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light – God sent Him to testify of Jesus (the light of the world). Why?

That all men through him might believe – so that through his testimony people might put their faith and trust Jesus Christ.

- John 1:26-27 - John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.
- John 1:29 - The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

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

He was not hat Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light – His role was to point people to Jesus, not to himself

Application – that is our role as well

John 1:20 - And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

John 3:28 - Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.

Acts 19:4 - Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

9 That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

That was the true light – true – real deal; when it comes to light, Jesus is the real deal

Which lighteth every man that cometh into the world – the truth of God is revealed to each of us by Jesus through creation and conscience (Romans 1 & 2)

- Creation points us to a Creator
- Our conscience points us to a moral law giver

1 John 5:20 - And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

Romans 1:18-21 - 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; 19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. 22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools,

C.) The Incarnation of Jesus

The eternal God that created the universe, who is the ultimate source of life and light came down to earth in human flesh.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

He was in the world– The Word of God, the life, the light of the world was in the world

And the world was made by him – The Creator was among his creation. The life walked among the dead. The light shined within the darkness.

And the world knew him not – They didn't even know it. But even worse than that...

1 Corinthians 2:8 - Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

1 John 3:1 - Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

He came unto his own – He came to the Jews who not only had creation and conscience, but also the Old Testament Scriptures that testified of Jesus over and over again

and his own received him not – by and large the Jews rejected Jesus

- Acts 2:22-23 - 22 Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: 23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

Acts 13:46 - Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles.

Isaiah 53:2-3 - For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Luke 20:13-15 - For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

But as many as received him...even to them that believe on his name – those who took hold of Jesus, who received Him as their personal Savior, who believed and trusted on his name

To them gave he power to become the sons of God – to them he gave the authorization/the ability to become the children of God: to become a part of the family of God Almighty

- not on their own accord
- not through their own righteousness
- through Jesus

Matthew 10:40 - He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

Hosea 1:10 - Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God.

2 Corinthians 6:17-18 - Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

Galatians 3:26 - For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

1 John 3:1 - Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

John 3:18 - He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man – this isn't a physical birth that is brought about by man

But of God – when we put our faith and trust in Jesus, we are born spiritually (born again). That spiritual birth is something only God can do and does do for those who receive Him in faith.

John 3:3 - Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

1 Peter 1:23 - Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

1 Peter 2:2 - As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:

1 John 4:7 - Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

James 1:18 - Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

Matthew 3:9 - And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

1 Corinthians 3:6 - I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

John 3:6-8 - That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

And the Word was made flesh – the Word of God, the Creator of everything, the source of true life and light, Jesus Christ Himself became a man. He was God in the flesh.

And dwelt among us – He took up residence among us

and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father - we the apostles, His disciples, those who knew Him saw His divine glory (His greatness), as the unique one and only Son of god

- We saw it in the miracles. We saw it in His transfiguration. We saw it in His teaching. We saw it in the way He lived His life.
- Only begotten – unique, one of a kind
 - Hebrews 11:17 - 17 By faith Abraham, when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

Full of grace and truth – Jesus was the ultimate expression of God's grace to humanity. Man was drowning in sin. Jesus was the lifesaver God graciously provided to humanity.

- As God in the flesh, Jesus was the ultimate expression of truth. Everything He ever said and did was true.

Matthew 1:20-23 - But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save

his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

1 John 4:2-3 - Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.

John 2:11 - This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

Matthew 17:1-5 - And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

Hebrews 1:3 - Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Psalms 2:7 - I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee

Hebrews 1:5 - For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?

1 John 4:9 - In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.

15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.

John bare witness of him – Once again, the author mentions John's testimony of Jesus

and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me – Jesus is the one John the Baptist was talking about when he said that there was one who would come after me (John was 6 months older than Jesus and started his public ministry before Jesus) that was greater than me because He existed before me.

- John may have been born 6 months before Jesus, but Jesus existed from eternity past. (Sorenson, 2007)

Jesus (God in the flesh) came down to earth to make a way for those who receive Him to become the children of God, to be reconciled to God out of our sin.

D) The Impact of Jesus

What sort of impact did Jesus make while He was here?

16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

(1) He gave out of His fulness

And of his fulness have all we received – John, speaking of those who had received Christ, says we have been blessed out of the abundant fulness of Jesus

and grace for grace - abundant grace; we have received abundant grace out of the fulness of who Jesus is

1 Cor. 1:4-5 - I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge;

Colossians 2:9-10 - For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

Romans 5:2 - By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God

17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

(2) He brough grace and truth

For the law was given by Moses – Moses wrote the first five books of the Old Testament containing the law. The law of God saves no one. The commandments in the Bible can't save you because no one can perfectly keep them. The purpose of the law was to show us our guilt before God and our need for a Savior.

- Romans 3:19-20 - Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.
- Galatians 2:16 - 16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

But grace and truth came by Jesus Christ – In Jesus, the truth about salvation through grace was manifested.

- Ephesians 2:8-9 - 8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.
- Titus 3:5 - Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Romans 5:20 - Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:

Ephesians 2:5-10 - Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Galatians 3:10-13 - For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

Psalms 85:10 - Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.

Romans 3:21-26 - But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified

freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

18 No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

(3) He revealed God to mankind

Not only did Jesus bring fulness, grace and truth. In Himself, He also brought the ultimate final revelation of God to mankind.

John ends the introduction to his book the same way that he began it: by describing Jesus as the Word of God, the ultimate expression of God to us.

No man hath seen God at any time – God is a Spirit. You can't see a Spirit.

the only begotten Son – the one and only unique Son of God, Jesus

which is in the bosom of the Father – a phrase that expresses the intimate closeness of the Father and the Son

He hath declared him – Jesus as the divine Word of God is the ultimate and final revelation of God to mankind. He has declared Him to us.

Exodus 33:20 - And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live

1 John 4:12 - No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

John 3:16-18 - For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

Isaiah 40:11 - He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

John 14:9 - Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

- The remainder of John's gospel is the story of that revelation. It is the story of the God who became flesh to reveal Himself to us and to save us from our sin by grace through faith.
- Starting next week, John is going to take us on a journey with Jesus (a journey he literally lived himself), retracing His footsteps, hearing His teaching, seeing His miracles, witnessing His death, burial, and resurrection (as if we were literally along for the ride)
- He's going to do so for a very specific purpose:
 - o John 20:31 - But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.
- What will you do with Jesus?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 1 – JOHN 1:1-18

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 1:1-5</p>	<p>How is Jesus described in these verses? What do these descriptions tell us about Jesus?</p>
<p>T Read John 1:6-9, 15</p>	<p>What did John the Baptist testify about Jesus?</p>
<p>W Read John 1:10-14, 16-18</p>	<p>How did people react to Jesus when He came down to earth in the form of a man? What happens to those who receive Him? Why did He come?</p>
<p>T Read John 1:19-34</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 1:19-34</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 1:19-34

Sermon

JESUS' EARLY MINISTRY

Illustration – who was the first disciple of Jesus?

- Josh and I were talking about this the other day
- Outside of his mother and father, the first true disciple of Jesus as Messiah was none other than John the Baptist

Question – where do I start the story of Jesus now that I've given my introduction?

- John the Baptist: the first disciple of Jesus
 - o Several of Jesus' 12 disciples came directly from John the Baptist
- John the Baptist is such an important character that he is highlighted in every gospel account of Jesus' life

Keep in mind that the Gospel of John is really a case for Jesus. The first witness that John the Apostle calls to the stand to support the claim that Jesus is the Son of God is John the Baptist.

Who was John the Baptist?

Illustration – have you ever wondered what it would be like if one of the Old Testament prophets lived during the time of Jesus?

- Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah or Jeremiah
- Do you understand that that is exactly what John the Baptist was? He was a legit bona fide prophet of God living during the time of Jesus.
 - o All the other prophets spoke about the coming of Messiah, but John the Baptist had the privilege of pointing people to the coming of Messiah knowing that He would come during his lifetime.

“After his magnificent introduction, John gets down to earth and sets Jesus’s ministry in historical perspective. Like the Synoptic Gospels, he links the beginning of Jesus’s ministry with that of John the Baptist.” (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 1489-1490)

John the Baptist is the last of the Old Testament prophets. Jesus said he was greater than anyone that came before Him (Moses, Elijah, Abraham). He wandered in the deserts until the start of his preaching ministry (Luke 1:80). The Word of God came to John in the wilderness, and he immediately began preaching repentance because the kingdom of heaven was at hand. For those who repented, He publicly baptized them as a symbol of their spiritual cleansing (Luke 3:2-3; John 1:23, Mark 1:2-3). Israel had been waiting for a

prophet for a long period of time, so his preaching drew large amounts of interest. People from Jerusalem, Judaea and all the region around Jordan came to hear him (Matt. 3:5). Eventually, he would be beheaded by Herod of Antipas for preaching against sin and speaking truth to power. He saw Jesus and pointed people to Jesus, but he died on the other side of the cross and resurrection. (MacArthur, 2006, pp. 63-64)

John the Baptist's ministry

- He called men to repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (the kingdom and the king are on their way)
- He baptized by immersion those who repented (Sorenson, 2007)

John

- Sent from God (1:6)
- Bore witness of the Light (1:7)
- Was not the Light (1:8)
- Acknowledged the greatness and eternity of Jesus (1:15)

John is going to open his gospel with an account of Jesus' first week of ministry.

- Day 1: John's testimony of Jesus (1:19-28)
- Day 2: John's encounter with Jesus (1:29-34) (vs. 29 - "the next day")
- Day 3: John's referral of his disciples to Jesus (1:35-39) (vs. 35 - "the next day")
- Day 4: Andrew's introduction of Peter to Jesus (1:40-42)
- Day 5: Philip and Nathaniel's encounter with Jesus (1:43-51) (vs. 43 - "the day following")
- Day 7: Wedding at Cana (2:1-11) (vs. 1 - "on the third day") (Kostenberger, 2013, p. Loc 1539)

1.) John's Testimony of Jesus (Day 1)

19 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

And this is the record of John – John the Baptist was the first witness called upon to testify of Jesus. This is his testimony.

when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? – in response to John the Baptist's ministry, the religious authorities (probably from Jerusalem) sent a delegation to investigate him.

Who was part of the delegation?

- Levites (Numbers 3:6-10, 21-26; 18:2-4, 8-14, 20)
 - o Descendants of Jacob's son Levi
 - o Selected to serve God in the tabernacle and temple
 - Played music, opened and closed the gates, stood guard

- During the tabernacle years in the wilderness, whenever Israel moved camp, they deconstructed, transported, and reconstructed the Tabernacle. (like is done with a fair set up)
- Priests (Ex. 28:1-3)
 - Levites who descended from Aaron and met certain requirements
 - Performed the most sacred tasks, such as the offering of the sacrifices.
 - They also ministered as judges (Deut. 17:8-13) and teachers of God's law (Deut. 33:10). (Posner) (Got Questions)

Why was the delegation sent?

- Because of his growing following and influence
- Because of his disdain for the religious elite
 - Matthew 3:5-9 - 5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, 6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. 7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: 9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.
- To ascertain who he thought he was
 - They were trying to sniff out how much of a problem this guy was going to be

Deuteronomy 17:9-11 - And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and enquire; and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment: And thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place which the LORD shall choose shall shew thee; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee: According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee, to the right hand, nor to the left.

Matthew 21:23-32 - And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things. But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. He

answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

Acts 19:4 - Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

John the Baptist responded by directly denying that he was the Messiah.

It's not as if the priests and Levites thought he might be. They were trying to feel out if he thought he was the Messiah...politics (MacArthur, 2006, p. 66)

21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

What then? Art thou Elias? – Based on Malachi's prophecies, the Jews expected Elijah to bodily return just prior to the coming of Messiah and establishment of his earthly kingdom. (Malachi 3:1; 4:5). (Sorenson, 2007) Keep in mind that Elijah never died. He was taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire (2 Kings 2:11).

- Malachi 3:1 - Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts.
- Malachi 4:5 - Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:
 - o Mark 1:6 describes John the Baptist as clothed with camel hair and wore a leather belt around his waist.
 - o 2 Kings 1:8 describes Elijah as a hairy man that wore a leather belt around his waist.

And he saith, I am not – John was not physical Elijah returned to earth (as his questioners implied). Nonetheless, in Matthew 17, Jesus confirmed that John was Elijah like as he had come and ministered in the spirit and power of Elijah.

Matthew 11:14 - 14 And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.

Matthew 17:10-12 - And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall

first come, and restore all things. But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

Art thou that prophet? – This question arose out of the prophet spoken of in Deuteronomy 18:15: a prophet that would be like Moses and proclaim the Word of God

Deuteronomy 18:15-18 - The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

- This prophecy was actually referring to the Messiah (Acts 3:22-23; 7:37), but many of Jesus' day thought it referred to Elijah or to some other forerunner that would come before the Messiah. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 67)

And he answered, No – once again, John replied in the negative.

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

The delegation grew tired of playing with 20 questions with John.

They need a positive answer to bring back to those who sent them.

They asked him, “Who are you? What do you say about yourself?”

23 He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness... - John answered their question by quoting Isaiah 40:3-5.

Isaiah 40:3-5 - The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain: And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it.

He said, “I’m no one special. I’m just a voice crying out in the wilderness, calling men to prepare themselves for the coming of one greater than myself.” (Sorenson, 2007)

The king and kingdom are on their way. We must prepare the way for their arrival.

Application

- There is nothing I can't stand more in religious people than pride
- There are those who think that because they know more, or have been Christians for longer, or hold positions of authority in the church that they think they are God's gift to everyone else
- That pompousness reeks like the devil it comes from
- Don't you dare act like that
- Illustration
 - o On the one hand you have the prideful, pompous Levites and priests that thought they were something
 - o On the other hand you have John, who says, "I'm just a voice."

Luke 1:76-79 - And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

Malachi 3:1 - Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts.

24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.

And they which were sent were of the Pharisees – the delegation was composed of Pharisees and may have been sent from the Pharisees.

Why would John say this?

- This is mentioned in connection with the question that followed as the Pharisees were quite conservative and cared greatly about customs and traditions. (Barnes, 1834)

25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

And they asked him, and said unto him – they asked him a pointed question

Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet – if you are not the Messiah, Elijah, or that Prophet, then by what authority are you baptizing?

- Old Testament passages like Zechariah 13:1, Ezekiel 36:25, 33 & 37:23 speak of spiritual cleansing in association with the coming of Messiah. (Ellicott,

1905) (Spence & Exell, 1883) There are indications that prior to the ministry of John the Baptist, some Jews baptized Gentile converts to Judaism.

- John wasn't baptizing Gentiles. John was baptizing Jews. This was quite unorthodox and surprising to the religious leaders who viewed Jews as already being a part of God's kingdom community and not in need of baptism. (See Matthew 3:6-8)
- Yet John called upon all to repent, and he baptized anyone who repented of their sin as a public expression of their repentance in anticipation of the coming of Messiah. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 69)
 - o Matthew 3:7-10 - 7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: 9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. 10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Matthew 21:23 - And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

Daniel 9:24-26 - Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

John answered them, saying, I baptize with water – He acknowledged what He was doing, but then quickly shifted His emphasis back to the one He was preparing the way for.

But there standeth one among you, whom ye know not – You're all caught up in what I'm doing, but I'm just the herald for someone much greater than myself that's going to do much greater things and make much greater changes than I am.

- humility

Malachi 3:1-2 - Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap:

John 1:10-11 - He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me – Though he's coming after me, He is much greater than I am.

- humility

Whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose – the latchet was the strap by which the sandal was fastened to the foot. Unloosing that strap and removing the sandal was the task of a servant. (Barnes, 1834)

- John was saying, "I'm not even worthy to perform the most lowly task of the most lowly office for Jesus."
 - o humility
- Application – If there is anything too low for you to do in the name of Jesus, you better check your priorities
 - o Illustration – my first week on the job as an intern at LBC
 - Weeding 8 hours a day in the Lancaster heat every single day
 - Why?
 - It needed to be done
 - Humility
 - o Romans 12:1 - I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Acts 19:4 - Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

Matthew 3:11 - I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

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

These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing – these events took place in the town of Bethabara, east of and right next to the Jordan River, where John was baptizing.

- This is where Gideon drove the Midianites into the hands of the Ephraimites at the crossings of the Jordan. (See Judges 7:24)



- (Kostenberger, 2013, p. Loc 1533)
- Why would John locate himself next to a body of water to baptize? So he could do it by immersion.
 - Every single reference we have to baptism in the New Testament is by immersion.

Judges 7:24 - And Gideon sent messengers throughout all mount Ephraim, saying, Come down against the Midianites, and take before them the waters unto Bethbarah and Jordan. Then all the men of Ephraim gathered themselves together, and took the waters unto Bethbarah and Jordan.

John 3:23 - And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.

2.) John's Encounter with Jesus (Day 2)

29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him – John sees Jesus heading towards him

And saith, Behold the Lamb of God – John the Baptist calls Jesus the Lamb of God, and this is a title that John the Apostle will use for Jesus throughout his gospel. Outside of an indirect reference in 1 Peter 1:19, John is the only New Testament author to call Jesus the “Lamb of God”. Yet it is an important and descriptive title.

- As the lamb of God, Jesus fulfills the picture of the Passover lamb, the daily sacrificial lambs, and the sin offering lamb all of which were slain for the sake

of the people (see Exodus 12:3-13, Exodus 29:38-42, Leviticus 5:5-7, & Numbers 28:3-10). (Sorenson, 2007)

Which taketh away the sin of the world – carries the idea of “taking upon oneself a burden to thus carry it away” (Sorenson, 2007)

- Illustration – this is an excellent place to illustrate the difference between the Mormon and the Christian view of grace and our sin debt.
 - o The LDS church says that Jesus graciously died so that He could acquire our sin debt and we could pay it off to Him through faith in Him and the keeping of the commandments and the Mormon sacraments.
 - Our debt has not been forgiven. It’s been transferred to a new creditor, but it’s still our responsibility to pay it off.
 - o The Bible says that Jesus graciously died so that He could pay off our sin debt (take away the sins of the world), and that we could receive forgiveness of sins not through what we have done, but through faith in what He did for us on the cross.
 - John doesn’t say, “Behold the Lamb of God to whom the world pays off its sin.” He says, “Behold the Lamb of God which takes away the sins of the world.”

Genesis 22:7-8 - And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.

- Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac

Exodus 12:3-13 - Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it. Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast with fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof. And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire. And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD’S

passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.

- The Passover Lamb

Leviticus 5:5-7 - 5 And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing: 6 And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the Lord for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin. 7 And if he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass, which he hath committed, two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, unto the Lord; one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering.

- The sin offering

Numbers 28:3-10 - And thou shalt say unto them, This is the offering made by fire which ye shall offer unto the LORD; two lambs of the first year without spot day by day, for a continual burnt offering. The one lamb shalt thou offer in the morning, and the other lamb shalt thou offer at even; And a tenth part of an ephah of flour for a meat offering, mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil. It is a continual burnt offering, which was ordained in mount Sinai for a sweet savour, a sacrifice made by fire unto the LORD. And the drink offering thereof shall be the fourth part of an hin for the one lamb: in the holy place shalt thou cause the strong wine to be poured unto the LORD for a drink offering. And the other lamb shalt thou offer at even: as the meat offering of the morning, and as the drink offering thereof, thou shalt offer it, a sacrifice made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD. And on the sabbath day two lambs of the first year without spot, and two tenth deals of flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and the drink offering thereof: This is the burnt offering of every sabbath, beside the continual burnt offering, and his drink offering.

- The daily lamb offering

Isaiah 53:7 - He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

- Isaiah's prophecy compared Messiah to a lamb brought to the slaughter
- Israel wanted a king, a champion, and deliverer. God sent them a lamb.
(MacArthur, 2006, p. 71)

Isaiah 53:11 - He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

Hebrews 9:28 - So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.

Once again, John repeats humbly how much greater Jesus was than him.

- Humility
- Application
 - o One of the easiest ways you can tell the difference between a pompous Christian and a humble Christian
 - Humble Christians talk about Jesus
 - Pompous Christians talk about themselves

31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

And I knew him not – though he was related to Jesus (his mother and Jesus’ mother were cousins), he did not recognize that Jesus was the Messiah until an important event.

but that he should be manifested to Israel, - but for the purpose of revealing him to Israel

therefore am I come baptizing with water – this is the whole reason I’m baptizing people

- I’m doing so to prepare people for Him
- But in the next few verses, we’re also going to see him say, “I’m doing so because God told me that it would be a sign connected to my practice of baptize that the Messiah would be revealed to me and then by extension to Israel.”

Luke 1:80 - And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

Luke 1:17 - And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

Luke 3:3-4 - And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

And John bare record, saying, - John testified saying, when I baptized Jesus

I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him – I saw the Spirit of God come down from heaven in the form of a dove and it remained on Him

Matthew 3:16 - And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

Luke 3:22 - And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

And I knew him not – I didn't know for sure He was the Messiah

But he that sent me to baptize with water – God

The same said unto me – God told me

Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost – God told me that as I was baptizing there would be one that when I baptized Him, the Holy Ghost like a dove would descend upon Him. That person would be the Messiah...the one that would baptize others with the Holy Ghost.

- Illustration – imagine how many people John baptized in expectation of the Messiah, never knowing if this would be the one
 - o Matthew 3 hints that even as Jesus walked up, John had a sense that this was the one. John told Jesus, “I need to be baptized of you.” After he had baptized him, and the Spirit of God descended on Him, he knew for sure.

Matthew 3:13-15 - Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

Acts 1:5 - For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

Acts 2:4 - And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 10:44-47 - While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

Acts 11:15-16 - And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

Acts 19:2-6 - He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

1 Corinthians 12:13 - For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Titus 3:5-6 - Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;

34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

And I saw, and bare record – John the Baptists says, “I saw with my own two eyes, and I testified publicly that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God.”

John the Baptist – the first disciple, but not last disciple of Jesus

John 1:18 - No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

Psalms 2:7 - I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

Hebrews 1:5-6 - For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.

Conclusion

John the Baptist was greater than Moses, greater than Elijah, greater than Abraham, greater than Elisha. Yet, when he spoke, he didn't speak of his greatness. He spoke of his unworthiness, and he spoke of another.

He was probably closer to God than you and I will ever be. Despite that fact, John humbly lived his life with the understanding that his sole purpose was to lift up Jesus and debase himself.

John 3:30 - He must increase, but I must decrease.

As you look at your own life:

- Do you speak more of Jesus, or do you speak more of yourself?
- Do you look down on those less religious than you as the Pharisees did, or do you look up to Jesus as John did?
- Are there things that you would not do for Jesus because they're beneath you?
- Are you pompous and prideful, or are you humble and lowly?

Matthew 23:11-12 - 11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. 12 And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

Synoptic Accounts of John the Baptist's Ministry

Matthew 3:1-17

1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,

2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan,

6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.

14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Mark 1:1-11

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;

2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;

7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:

11 And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Luke 1:5-25, 39-45, 57-80; 3:1-23

5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.

6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.

8 And it came to pass, that while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course,

9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

12 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.

15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.

20 And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.

22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple: for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.

23 And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

24 And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying,

25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men.

...

39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda;

40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.

41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:

42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

45 And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

...

57 Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.

58 And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.

59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.

60 And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John.

61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.

63 And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.

64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.

65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea.

66 And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David;

70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

73 The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,

74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,

75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;

77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,

78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us,

79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.

...

1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;

4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways shall be made smooth;

6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

8 Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

9 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

10 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

11 He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

12 Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.

15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;

16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

17 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

18 And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

19 But Herod the tetrarch, being reprov'd by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,

20 Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

21 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

23 And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, which was the son of Heli,



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 2 – JOHN 1:19-34

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read Matthew 3:1-17, Mark 1:1-11, and Luke 3:1-23</p>	<p>How is John the Baptist described in the gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, and Luke?</p>
<p>T Read John 1:19-28</p>	<p>What is significant about the way that John the Baptist answers the delegation's questions about his identity? Who is John the Baptist pointing his followers to?</p>
<p>W Read John 1:29-34</p>	<p>In this encounter with Jesus, what information does John the Baptist share about when he baptized Jesus? Why is this significant?</p>
<p>T Read John 1:35-51</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 1:35-51</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 1:35-51

Review

The First Week of Jesus' Ministry

The First Disciple: John the Baptist

- He testified of Jesus to the delegation of Levites and priests (Day 1)
- He encountered Jesus (Day 2)
 - o Behold the Lamb of God. Guys, this is the guy!

Sermon

The Movement Begins (days 3-5)

3.) John's Disciples Follow Jesus (Day 3)

35 Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples;

The next day after- Day 3

John stood and two of his disciples - John is there standing by the banks of the Jordan with two of his disciples

- One is Andrew
- The other is left unnamed as was the author's custom when referring to himself. It is for this reason that most commentators assume, the second disciple was none other than John himself.

36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

Witness 1 - John the Baptist

And looking upon Jesus as he walked - Here comes Jesus again walking by (as He had the day prior). John the Baptist fixates his gaze upon him. (Plummer, 1902)

He saith, Behold the Lamb of God - John the Baptist repeats to his two disciples what he had said to the crowds on the day prior.

- The simple repetition of what he had said the day prior without further explanation leads us to believe that they were most likely there the day prior when John spoke in more detail about Jesus. (Spence & Exell, 1883)
- Not only that, but John's words here seem to be a subtle encouragement for his disciples to follow Jesus.
 - o Behold...the lamb of God.

1 Peter 1:19-20 - But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

And the two disciples heard him speak – they got the message

And they followed Jesus – John’s selflessness and humility is seen in his willingness to let them go. He understood that his purpose was not to build his own following. It was to help others follow Jesus.

Illustration – there can be this really unhealthy dynamic that develops in churches where the pastors and leaders make it all about them and their church and not about Christ’s kingdom

Illustration – you can do this with your kids too. Your children are God’s gift to you. Your responsibility is to steward them for Him.

Outside of a brief reference in John 3:23, John the Baptist fades from the scene in John’s gospel, which is probably what he would have wanted.

38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?

Then Jesus turned, and saw them following – Andrew and probably John are physically following behind Jesus. Some time passes. Jesus turns around and sees them just there walking. He asks them a question.

And saith unto them, What seek ye? – in John’s gospel, this the first time Jesus speaks. These are the first words out of his mouth. What’s he going to say?!

- What are you guys looking for?
 - o Keep in mind these guys were followers of John the Baptist which meant they had more than likely repented, been baptized, and were looking for the Messiah and the kingdom He would bring.
 - o Jesus isn’t asking because He doesn’t know. He’s asking so as to invite them to share the contents of their heart with him.
 - Application – wouldn’t it be cool if Jesus invited you to share your heart with Him?
 - He does. He invites you to share your heart with Him every day in prayer.
 - When’s the last time you did?
- Illustration – sometimes I’ll ask this question to visitors
 - o What brought you here today? What made you decide to come?

They said unto him – they replied to his question, perhaps taken back, by addressing him as rabbi and then asking a question of their own

Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, Master) – Rabbi is a Hebrew that can also be translated “teacher”. John’s explanation of the word into Greek indicates that He did not expect all of his readers to be familiar with Hebrew terms. (Sorenson, 2007)

- Master is a basic word for teacher. (Sorenson, 2007)

John 18:4 - Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

John 3:2 - The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

John 6:25 - And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

Where dwellest thou? – in so answering Andrew and John were not evading Jesus' question. Rather, they were expressing their desire to sit down with Him for a more extended conversation.

- Illustration – has anyone ever asked you a loaded question that you didn't really have the time to answer? ...It's like, "Hey, why don't we grab some coffee and talk about it?"

39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.

He saith unto them, Come and see – He doesn't put them off until some future time period. He says, "Why don't you guys come and see right now and let's sit down and talk?"

- Here Jesus graciously extended an offer for them to not just know where He was staying, but to come and stay there as well.
- Illustration – Loaded question -> why don't we discuss that over coffee? -> Sure, how about right now?

John 4:40 - So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.

They came and saw where he dwelt, abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour – the tenth hour would have been about 4 pm, with perhaps two hours of sunlight remaining.

- Illustration – we don't think too much about sunset and nighttime in our modern-day world because we have so much artificial light. However, back in the first century, as night was drawing near, it was important for people to have plans in place for where they would take shelter for the darkness of the night. (Gill, 1811)
- They came and stayed with Jesus that night. We don't know what all they talked about that evening, but we do know that it made enough of an impact that the following day Andrew was convinced that Jesus was the Messiah and determined to introduce his brother Peter to Him. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 81)

4.) Andrew Brings Peter to Jesus (Day 4)

40 One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew – Andrew is by name identified as one of the two disciples of John the Baptist. Once again, we are led to believe that the other unnamed disciple was more than likely John himself who throughout his gospel does not refer to himself by name.

Simon Peter's brother – Andrew is referred to as Simon Peter's brother because, to his readers, and even to us, Peter would have been a more familiar figure than Andrew. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 82)

- Simon is a Hebrew name derived from Simeon. Peter is a Greek word that means a stone/rock. Simon is his surname. The stone is his nickname. He was known as Simon the stone/the rock. (Sorenson, 2007)

Matthew 4:18 - And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

Matthew 10:2-4 - 2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; 3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus; 4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him – what does it mean “he first found his own brother”? Why doesn't it just say, “he found his brother”? If John is the other disciple, then it may have been that both Andrew and John went looking for their brothers (Peter and James) to tell them about Jesus. If such were the case, then what John is saying is that Andrew found his brother first. (Plummer, 1902) It could also be that they both went looking for Peter, and Andrew found him before John did. It could also mean that he was the first person that Andrew found and told about Jesus. Regardless, Andrew finds Peter to share with him about Jesus.

We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ – John the Apostle once again interprets the Jewish term “Messiah” into the Greek “Christ”. Both terms basically mean “the anointed one”. The term originated in the Jewish practice of kings being anointed with olive oil during their coronation. (Sorenson, 2007)

- “In the Old Testament ‘the anointed one’ was a phrase used of the high priest (Lev. 4:3, 5, 16; 6:22), the king (1 Sam. 12:3, 5; 16:6; 24:6; 26:9; 2 Sam. 1:14; 22:51; 23:1), the patriarchs (Ps. 105:15), and the people of God (Ps. 28:8). But supremely, the term referred to the prophesied (e.g., Dan. 9:25–26) Coming or Expected One (Matt. 11:3), God's anointed Deliverer and King.” (MacArthur, 2006, p. 82)

Witness #2 – Andrew

Luke 2:17 - And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

Luke 2:38 - And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

John 4:28-29 - The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.

And he brought him to Jesus – Andrew physically brought his brother Peter to Jesus

And when Jesus beheld him, he said – when Jesus saw him, He said

Thou art Simon the son of Jona – This is who you are (Simon Bar Jonah or Simon, the son of Jonah) (Sorenson, 2007)

Thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone – This is who you will be. I'm going to call you (nickname) Cephas or Peter. Cephas is Aramaic. Peter is the Greek equivalent. They both mean "a stone or rock". (Sorenson, 2007)

- Illustration – imagine being nicknamed the rock; that was Peter
 - o Why did Jesus nickname Peter the rock?
- Simon throughout his life was unstable, impulsive, and often overeager. He consistently bit off more than he could chew. He stuck his foot in his mouth on numerous occasions.
 - o Often when he was acting like his old self in the gospels, Jesus addresses him not as "Rock" or Peter, but as Simon.
 - o His nickname "The Rock" would be an ever-present reminder of the new man Jesus wanted him to become...not one who was unstable and impulsive...but one who was steady, like a rock, that would become one of the pillars upon which the church was built. (MacArthur, 2006, pp. 82-86)

John 1:47-48 - Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

Matthew 16:17 - And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

For Cephas in the NT, see 1 Cor. 1:12, 3:22, 9:5, 15:5, and Galatians 2:9.

For Peter in the NT, see John 21:2, Matthew 10:2, Matthew 16:18, Mark 3:16, Luke 5:8, and Luke 6:14.

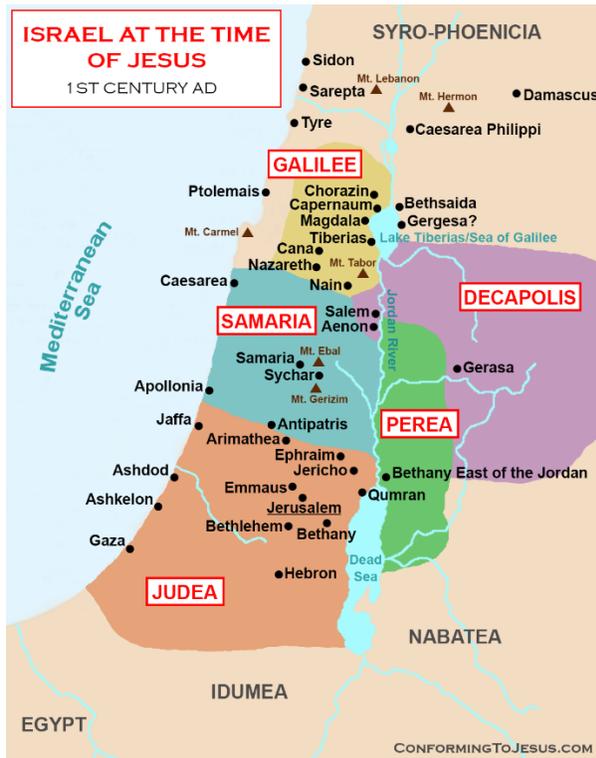
Hold on. I thought that Peter and Andrew were called on the shore when they were fishing. Matthew 4 talks about that right. You're right. This was these disciples first exposure to Jesus. This is where they are called to faith in Jesus. It's in Matthew 4 when they're fishing Jesus calls them to be His permanent disciples. (Matt. 4:18–22). (MacArthur, 2006, p. 73)

"The difference between this narrative and that of the Synoptists (Matthew 4:18; Mark 1:16; Luke 5:2) is satisfactorily explained by supposing this to refer to an earlier and less formal call of these first four disciples, John and Andrew, Peter and James. Their call to be Apostles was a very gradual one. Two of them, and perhaps all four, began by being disciples of the Baptist, who directs them to the Lamb of God (John 1:36), Who invites them to His abode (John 1:39): they then witness His miracles (John 2:2, &c.); are next called to be 'fishers of men' (Matthew 4:19); and are finally enrolled with the rest of the Twelve as Apostles (Mark 3:13)." (Plummer, 1902)

5.) Jesus finds Philip (Day 5)

43 The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee – on day 5 Jesus desires to begin heading north to Galilee. He's been down in the South along the area of the Jordan where John was baptizing.



And findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me – Andrew, Peter, and possibly John, were all introduced to Jesus by somebody else. They are following him. Philip would be different because Jesus personally sought him out on the way to Galilee (MacArthur, 2006, p. 86)

- Where exactly did Jesus find Philip?
 - o We don't know. It doesn't mention this specifically. We just know that He did.

Matthew 4:18-21 - And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him. And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.

Matthew 9:9 - And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter – Bethsaida was a small fishing village positioned along the northwest side of the Sea of Galilee. It means “House of Fish” in Hebrew. (Sorenson, 2007) This is where Philip, Andrew, and Peter were all from, though there is some conjecture that Andrew and Peter had moved to Capernaum (c.f. Mark 1:21, 29).

- Why does it mention that Philip was from the city as Andrew and Peter? Philip may have been heading in the same direction as Jesus and his disciples. It’s also possible that having grown up in the same village, Andrew, Peter, and Philip knew each other.
- So you have Jesus, with Andrew and Peter, possibly John, finding Philip (who very well may already know Andrew and Peter) and Jesus saying to Philip, “Follow me.”
 - o What happened next? Was there further conversation? Did Andrew and Peter share with Philip about Jesus? Maybe. We don’t know because it doesn’t tell us. But we do know that whatever followed: Philip believed.
 - o How do you know that? Look at the next verse.

Mark 1:21, 29 - **21** And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the sabbath day he entered into the synagogue, and taught. **29** And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

John 12:21-23 - **21** The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. **22** Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. **23** And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

John 14:8-9 - Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

Mark 3:14-19 - **14** And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, **15** And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils: **16** And Simon he surnamed Peter; **17** And James the son of Zebedee, and John the brother of James; and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder: **18** And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus, and Simon the Canaanite, **19** And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into an house.

Luke 6:13-16 - **13** And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles; **14** Simon, (whom he also named Peter,) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew, **15** Matthew and Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called Zelotes, **16** And Judas the brother of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

Acts 1:13 - And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James.

Matthew 11:21 - Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

Mark 8:22 - And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him.

6.) Philip brings Nathanael to Jesus

45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

Witness #3 - Philip

Philip findeth Nathanael – As was the case with Andrew, Philip could not keep the good news to himself. He went and found his friend Nathanael, who was also known as Bartholomew (c.f. Matt. 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:14). Nathanael was from Cana in Galilee (c.f. John 21:2).

Philip brings Nathanael (1: 45– 51), who is probably identical with the Bartholomew linked with Philip in the Synoptic apostolic lists (Matt. 10: 3; Mark 3: 18; Luke 6: 14). (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 1554-1555)

- Nathaniel is not found in the synoptic gospels, and Bartholomew is not found in John. (Sorenson, 2007)

We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph – me and these other guys have found the one that the Scriptures prophesy of. We have found the Messiah. It is Jesus from Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

- Application – when you have truly met Jesus and believe that He is who He says He is, you cannot help but tell others about Him
 - o How could you not?
 - o If you believe that He is the Son of God, Anointed One, King of Kings, etc., how could you not want to share that with other people?
 - o You know what happens when a community of Christians gets on fire about telling other people about Jesus? Explosive multiplication
 - Application – We don't want to just be a church that scavenges members from other congregations. We want to help the lost find Jesus, help the blind to see.
- You know what you see here? Explosive multiplication.
 - o John the Baptist
 - Andrew & John
 - Peter
 - o Philip
 - Nathaniel

John 21:2 - There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

John 5:45-46 - Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.

Luke 24:27 - And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

Luke 24:44 - And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me.

Mark 6:3 - Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? – Nazareth was an obscure town in Galilee. The town is never mentioned in the Old Testament, the Talmud, or the Midrash. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 88)

John 7:41-42 - Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

Luke 4:28-29 - And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

Philip saith unto him, Come and see – Philip replies to Nathanael the same way that Jesus replied to Andrew and John when they asked him where he was staying... Come and see.

- Application: I love it when people of different faiths come and visit our services with a friend. You know what that is? It's a friend saying, "Come and see."

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him – just as he saw Peter approaching him

And said unto him Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile – Behold a true Israelite, who is honest (Sorenson, 2007)

- You can Nathanael's honesty in his initial reply to Philip. Philip says, "We found the Messiah. He's Jesus from Nazareth." How does Nathanael reply? Honestly and bluntly. "Can anything good come from Nazareth?"

John 8:39 - They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

Romans 9:6 - Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:

Psalms 32:2 - Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

1 Peter 2:22 - Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.

Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? – do I know you? How do you know me?

Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee – not only did Jesus know Nathanael's character without having ever met him, but He also knew private information about him with no natural explanation for how He knew it.

- What was he doing under the fig tree?
 - o Was he studying the Scriptures?
 - o Was he praying to God?
 - o Did he have some kind of crisis of faith where he called out to God?
 - o We don't know. But whatever it was, Jesus knowing about it and pinpointing it was enough to convince Nathanael that He was who He said He was.

Genesis 32:24-30 - And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.

Psalms 139:1-2 - O LORD, thou hast searched me, and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thought afar off.

Isaiah 65:24 - And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel – Nathanael affirms Jesus as both Son of God and King of Israel, just as the Scripture does in Psalm 2. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 90)

Psalms 2:6-7 - 6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. 7 I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.

Witness #4 - Nathanael

50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

- If you thought that was good Nathanael, we're just getting started.
- In fact, very soon after this Nathanael would bear witness to the first of some thirty plus miracles of Jesus recorded in the gospels. That first miracle would take place in the town he was from, Cana of Galilee.

51 And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you – Truly, truly I tell you

Hereafter ye shall heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man -what in the world is this talking about?

- Jesus is alluding to Jacob's dream back in Genesis 28:12 in which he saw angels going up and down a ladder to heaven.
- Looking at the life of Jesus, angels were ministering spirits and they consistently came to Jesus' aid during his life and ministry.
- Jesus is saying, "Nathanael you're going to see much greater things throughout the course of our time together. You'll routinely see the manifestations of the working of God the Father in and with and through me." (Ellicott, 1905)

In the present case, the "greater things" Jesus promises to Nathanael are bound up with greater revelation: "You will see 'heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending' on the Son of Man." 4 An "open heaven" was the dream of every Jewish apocalyptic. In the Second Temple period this craving for greater insight into the supernatural spawned an entire genre of literature, in which enigmatic figures such as Enoch (who, according to Gen. 5: 24, was translated to heaven without dying) are depicted as traversing heaven and reporting what they see (1 Enoch is quoted in Jude 14– 15). (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 1616-1622)

This Son of Man, in turn, is none other than the mysterious figure of Daniel 7: 13, "one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven." What Jesus claims is that he is that Son of Man prophesied in Daniel, the one who has seen God and has made him known (cf. John 1: 18), the one who was "lifted up" at the cross (John 3: 14; cf. 8: 28; 12: 32), and the one who will return in all his glory (Matt. 26: 64). (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 1622-1625)

Jesus's words to Nathanael echo Genesis 28: 12, the passage regarding Jacob's ladder, "with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God . . . ascending and descending on it." When Jacob awoke from his dream, he exclaimed, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven" (Gen. 28: 17). And "he called that place Bethel" (v. 19), which means "house of God." What Jesus tells Nathanael, then, is that he himself will be the place of much greater divine revelation than that given on previous occasions. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 1627-1631)

Genesis 28:12 - And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

Matthew 4:11 - Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

Luke 22:43 - And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

Application

John the Baptist -> Andrew and John -> Peter -> Philip -> Nathanael

When is the last time you got that excited about Jesus?

When is the last time that because of who He is to you, you couldn't help but tell others?

You want to see a revival in our church, it starts there. It starts with returning to the awe of who Jesus and living it out of His presence.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 3 – JOHN 1:35-51

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 1:35-39</p>	<p>Who begins following Jesus in these verses? Why do they begin following? What sticks out to you about their interaction with Jesus?</p>
<p>T Read John 1:40-42</p>	<p>Who begins following Jesus in these verses? Why does he begin following? What sticks out to you about his interaction with Jesus?</p>
<p>W Read John 1:43-51</p>	<p>Who begins following Jesus in these verses? Why do they begin following? What sticks out to you about their interaction with Jesus?</p>
<p>T Read John 2:1-11</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 2:1-11</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 2:1-11

Introduction

I have had my eye on this passage of Scripture since before we started the series. This passage has really become a battleground passage on the issue of Christians drinking in moderation, which is ironic, because that was never John's intention in recording this miracle.

John's purpose here is to lift up Christ and share His first recorded miracle, and I want that to be our focus here today as well. To that end, I'm going to start off by sharing the blue print that the Bible gives for navigating areas of our lives where the Bible doesn't speak as definitively...and then we are going to shift of our focus to Jesus and his first miracle.

The Bible is incredibly crystal clear that drunkenness is a sin that Christians ought to have no part in.

- Eph. 5:18 - And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;
- Gal. 5:21 – drunkenness is a sinful manifestation of the flesh
- Rom 13:13 – let us not walk in drunkenness
- Proverbs 23:29-30 - 29 Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? 30 They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine.
- Proverbs 20:1 - Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.

How do you make decisions on issues, such as drinking in moderation, where the Bible doesn't speak as directly?

There are two passages of Scripture that give us the Biblical prescription:

Romans 14

1 Corinthians 8-10

Three Questions

- Will this cause my brother in Christ to stumble?
 - o I Cor. 8:9, 12-13 - 9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak. 12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. 13 Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.
- Will this damage my witness to the lost?

- 1 Cor. 9:19-22 - 19 For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. 20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; 21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. 22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.
- Will this glorify God?
 - 1 Cor. 10:31 - Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

What's important is that whether it's with this issue or any other issue like it, we follow the Biblical blueprint for making that decision.... we honestly factor in those three questions into the decision that we make.

I say all of this by way of introduction because I don't want the focus of John 2 to be the wine. Why? Because John isn't writing about the wine. He's writing about Jesus.

Sermon

In chapters 2-4 of John, we're going to see Jesus' first ministry circuit. It begins with him performing this miracle of turning the water into wine in the northern area of Galilee. Then He makes His way down to Judaea where He cleanses the temple, has a private meeting with this Pharisee named Nicodemus, and baptizes with His disciples. Following this, Jesus travels up through Samaria where He encounters the woman at the well and ends up back in Galilee where He performs His second miracle: the healing of a nobleman's son.

This miracle, as is the case with each sign that Jesus performs, is pointing towards a greater miracle, the whole point for which Jesus came. It is pointing towards a broader setting, a bigger need, and a more miraculous solution that only Jesus could provide. Jesus did not come to provide a physical solution to a physical problem. He came to provide a spiritual solution to a spiritual problem. He came to see and save the spiritually lost.

Let's keep that in mind as we examine Jesus' first miracle.

1.) The First Sign: Water into Wine

A.) The Setting

1 And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee – it is now the third day since Jesus called Philip and Nathanael in chapter 1.

- Day 1: John testifies of Jesus
- Day 2: John's encounter with Jesus
- Day 3: John's disciples follow Jesus
- Day 4: Andrew brings Peter to Jesus
- Day 5: Philip and Nathanael follow Jesus
- Day 7: Jesus' first miracle in Cana of Galilee
 - o It would have been quite doable for Jesus and His disciples to reach Cana of Galilee from Judaea in a three-day span. (MacArthur, John Volumes 1&2 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2006, p. 95)

There was a marriage – weddings were really big ordeals in first century Palestine. Typically the whole village would come. Say that there were 500 people in a village, you might have 500 people at the wedding, and the wedding might last as long as a week. Imagine having to plan that event!

- Not only that, but weddings marked the end of a betrothal/engagement period in which the two parties were considered husband and wife without having moved in together or consummating the marriage.
- On the night of the wedding, the groom and his friends would go to the home of the bride and escort her and her party back to the groom's home where the ceremony and banquet would take place. (MacArthur, John Volumes 1&2 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2006, p. 95)

And the mother of Jesus was there – Mary, Jesus' mother, was at this wedding.

- Interestingly, John never refers to Mary by name in His gospel. (MacArthur, 2012, p. 96)

John 4:46 - So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

John 21:2 - There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage – there's a few things we know about the setting in a general sense

- The wedding was in Cana. This is the home town of Nathanael. Cana was very near to Nazareth, within 10 miles. (God's Word First)
- Mary was at the wedding
- Jesus as well as His disciples were invited to the wedding.

- The fact that Mary, Jesus, and his disciples were all invited to the wedding tells us that they probably knew or had some kind of relationship with the bride and groom.
- Joseph is not mentioned. The last time we hear about Joseph in the gospels was when Jesus was 12 at the temple. This has led some to believe that by this point in time, Joseph had passed away.

B.) The Problem

3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

And when they wanted wine – when they lacked/ran out of wine

The mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine – The fact that Mary knew about this crisis before word of it spread throughout the whole party tells us that she probably had some kind of role in helping behind the scenes with the wedding.

- This situation would have been incredibly embarrassing to the bride, groom, and the groom's family who paid for the celebration. It would have brought incredible shame on them (Illustration – difference between guilt/innocence and honor/shame cultures)
 - Illustration –
 - Imagine the power getting shut off at the reception of a wedding today.
 - Imagine the caterer doesn't show.
- By the way, there was no unlimited supply of wine as there is today with global production processes and distribution. It was limited. This was one of the reasons they significantly diluted wine with water (typically 3 parts water one part wine).
 - As an antiseptic for the water
 - They didn't have Aquafina back in the first century. In fact, the poor quality of the water was one of the reasons why they didn't drink as much plain water.
 - When you combined the water with the wine, it helped with cleansing the bacteria.
 - To prevent drunkenness
 - The alcoholic content of a typical glass of wine back in the first century would have been less than 25% the alcoholic content of a typical glass of wine today.
 - That's important when your hydration options are limited, and you don't want to be walking around in a constant state of drunkenness.
 - To make their supply go further
 - Illustration – Liz and I do this all the time with our juice in general. We dilute it with water to make it less sugary and it turns one bottle into two. (MacArthur, 2012)

- Despite this, they ran out of wine, and it was a big, big deal in this first century cultural context.
- What does Mary do? She goes to the one person that could fix the problem.
 - o She does not look to herself. She does not look to others. She looks to one person: Jesus.

4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? – miss or ma’am, what is that to you and me? What does that have to do with us?

Mine hour is not yet come – this a recurring theme throughout the gospels in reference to Jesus’ death and subsequent glorification. He knew that as He began performing miracles and revealed Himself as the Messiah, it would set him down a path of fame, rejection, and death. He tells her that it’s not yet time for him to head down that path.

- Although it was not yet the time for Jesus to reveal Himself as the Messiah, yet He did not say no to His mother’s request. He will meet the need, but He will do it in His own way, form behind the scenes, so as not to blow his cover or steal the spotlight from the bride and groom. (Kostenberger, 2013, p. Loc 1669)

“The tone changes dramatically at the end of chapter 12 with Jesus’ solemn announcement that his ‘hour’ has no come (12:23).” (Kostenberger, 2013, p. Loc 1697)

John 7:6, 30; 8:20 – my hour is not yet come

John 12:23 - And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

John 13:1 - Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

C.) The Solution

5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.

His mother saith unto the servants – these would have been those who were helping with the banquet

Whatever he saith unto you, do it – once again, though Jesus did tell His mother that his hour was not yet come, He also did not say no to her request to meet the need.

- So she plods forward and instructs the servants to do whatever Jesus says.

Application: You won’t see God work if you’re not willing to obey.

- o Illustration: in our culture today, everybody wants the rewards, but no one is willing to put the work in to make it happen.

- In Christianity, everyone wants to see God work in their life, but you know what it takes? It takes obedience in faith (e.g. giving, evangelism, holy living)

Luke 5:5-6 - And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

Hebrews 11:8 - By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.

6 And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

And there were set there six waterpots of stones - there were these six stone waterpots

After the manner of the purifying of the Jews – John provides this explanation for his non-Jewish readers like us. The stone waterpots were used for Jewish purification. They would wash their hands and utensils in these pots.

Mark 7:2-5 - And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brassen vessels, and of tables. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

Containing two or three firkins apiece – twenty or thirty gallons each (MacArthur, John Volumes 1&2 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2006, p. 99)

- These would have each been about the size of a large trash can
- Illustration – 23-gallon trash can on the stage

Hebrews 6:2 - Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

Hebrews 9:10 - Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.

7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water – Jesus commands the servants to fill the water pots with water (150-180 gallons). How do they respond?

And they filled them up to the brim – They responded in obedience. The fact that they were filled up to the brim is significant because it means that nothing could have been added to waterpots.

- For instance, it is not as if the pots were mostly full, and Jesus had a secret stash of wine that was mixed with the water. (MacArthur, John Volumes 1&2 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2006, p. 99)
- This amount of wine would have been more than enough to last the remainder of the wedding feast.

Numbers 21:6-9 – Moses lifting up a brass serpent on a pole in the middle of the camp to save the Israelites from a multitude of snakes

Joshua 6:3-5 – Joshua and the Israelites marching 7 times around Jericho

1 Kings 17:13 – the starving woman baking Elijah bread before her and her son

2 Kings 4:2-6 – the woman without oil borrowing pots per Elisha’s instructions

2 Kings 5:10-14 – Naaman bathing 7 times in the Jordan

8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it.

And he saith unto them – Jesus commands the servants

Draw out now – draw some out of the containers

And bear unto the governor of the feast – and take it to the one presiding over the wedding feast (Barnes, 1834)

And they bare it – The servants did as Jesus had commanded

9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine – To ensure that the wine was acceptable before serving it to the guests, the one presiding over the feast tasted it

And knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) – he had no idea where it was from. In fact, from the comment he makes in the following verse, he may not have even known that they had run out of wine.

- He may not have known where the wine came from, but the servants did

The governor of the feast called the bridegroom – after he had tasted the wine, the one presiding over the feast calls over the groom. He was shocked, amazed, assuming that this fresh batch of wine had been held in reserve by the family.

10 And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.

And saith unto him – what’s important to keep in mind here is that the governor of the feast is making a general statement from his own past experience. His comments do not mean that this particular feast had turned into a drunken ordeal.

Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine – most people set out their best wine first

And when men have well drunk – when people have drunk freely, become drunk (Luke 12:45; Eph. 5:18; 1 Thess. 5:17; Rev. 17:2)

Then that which is worse – then they set out their poorer quality wine...because no one knows the difference

- Once again, the governor’s comments do not mean that this particular wedding feast had turned into a drunken ordeal
- He’s making a general statement from common knowledge and past experience
 - o He’s saying, “In my past experience, the best wine is served, people senses are dulled, and then they set out the poor wine.”

But thou hast kept the good wine until now – you’ve saved the best for last; that wine was probably the sweetest, freshest wine that governor had ever tasted in his life

- It did not come about by natural processes. There was no vineyard. There were no grapes. There was no waiting period or fermentation process. It was a miracle.

11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee – so marked the beginning of the miracles Jesus would do

And manifested forth his glory – this miracles showed forth His glory (how great He was)

And his disciples believed on him – John the Baptist pointed them to Him. They followed Him. They heard Him. They believed Him. They saw Him, and it further confirmed to them that He was who He said He was.

John 20:30-31 - And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that

Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

1 John 5:13 - These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

This physical miracle points us to a much greater miracle that was as the center of the reason Jesus came to earth.

- The wine did not come about by human effort. The servants did not bring about that wine. The governor did not bring about that wine. The family did not bring about that wine. It was a miracle.
- It met a need for those who would freely receive it. In that way, just as is the case with every miracle Jesus performed, it is a picture of the greatest miracle ever performed: the miracle of salvation.
 - Setting: God and man. God desires a relationship with us, not because of what we do for Him, but because He created us, and He loves us as a Father.
 - Problem: The representatives of the human race sinned (Adam and Eve). That sin nature has been passed down from generation to generation for thousands of years. We have broken God's moral laws and placed this massive wedge between us and put Him in an impossible situation because He is both our Father and our Judge. He loves us so much and yet we are guilty, deserving of spiritual death.
 - Solution: Jesus. At that wedding feast, Jesus did for those people what none of them could have done for themselves. Through His death on the cross and resurrection, Jesus has done for us what we could not do for ourselves. Jesus died on that cross for our sins. He took on Himself the penalty of our sins. On that cross, the justice of God our judge and the love of God our Father met in the sacrifice of Jesus our Savior.
 - Jesus Christ is the miraculous solution to the biggest problem in your life. Through what He did for you on the cross, you can have forgiveness of sins and an eternal relationship with God your Father. But you have to receive it in faith.
 - Illustration – sending a gift card to someone, but they have to receive it
 - What does it mean to receive what Jesus has done for me? You must put your full and complete faith in Him.
 - Stop trusting in other things.
 - Jesus alone is the solution to your sin problem.
 - What will you do with Jesus?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 4 – JOHN 2:1-11

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 2:1-2</p>	<p>Describe the setting in these verses. Where are the events taking place? Who is there? What is happening?</p>
<p>T Read John 2:3-4</p>	<p>Describe the problem that arises in these verses. What is the problem? Why is it a problem? Who is aware of the problem?</p>
<p>W Read John 2:5-11</p>	<p>Describe the miraculous solution that occurs. How does it come about? Why does Jesus perform the miracle? What is its significance?</p>
<p>T Read John 2:12-25</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 2:12-25</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 2:12-25

Introduction

The purpose of this gospel is apologetic and evangelistic.

John 20:30-31, "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

John records these miracles to give evidence for the deity of Jesus, and for the work of Jesus. Ultimately, John wrote this gospel so that the people who would read it would believe in Jesus and receive eternal life.

Last time we were in John, we looked at the first miracle of Jesus on this earth, which was when Jesus turned the water into wine. Jesus did this miracle to point to the deeper reason why he came to earth. The wedding party had a problem, which was they ran out of wine. Jesus was the solution to that problem. In the same way, mankind has a problem, which is called sin. We have broken a holy God's commandments, and are now guilty before God and deserving of punishment. Jesus, through his death, burial, and resurrection, is the solution to the problem of sin. Through his blood our sins can be washed away, and we can receive eternal life. Jesus is the solution to our problem.

And this week we are going to pick up our story right after Jesus first miracle, which is the cleansing of the temple and Jesus' ministry in Jerusalem. And out of this story we are going to focus on two attributes of Jesus Christ.

Read John 2:12-25

1.) The Wrath of Christ

vs. 12-13

12 After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.

13 And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

After Jesus does his first miracle, he went down to Capernaum to spend a couple days with his family and disciples.

Not long after that, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover. And it is at the Passover that Jesus performs a miracle, that if you aren't careful, is easy to miss.

The purpose of the Passover was for the people of Israel to remember how God delivered them from Egypt.

Exodus 12:7-8 and 12-14, "And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening. 7 And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it. 8 And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it...For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. 13 And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. 14 And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever."

According to Exodus 12, every house in Israel would slaughter a lamb, which didn't have any spot or blemish. They would take the blood and they would put it on the sides of the door frame and on the top. Then they would cook the entire lamb and eat it that evening. This was set in the plagues of Egypt, and God was about to inflict his final plague on them. God was going to kill all of the firstborn in Egypt in order to get Pharaoh to let his people go. The children of Israel were to put blood on the doorposts, so that when God saw the blood, he would pass over their house and not smite the firstborn. Hence the name of the Passover Feast.

God delivered Israel from Egypt, and they were to remember that fact. Exodus 12:26-27 says, "And it shall come to pass, when your children shall say unto you, What mean ye by this service? That ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the LORD's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses."

This is the day that Jesus is celebrating in the Gospel of John; he is going up to Jerusalem to celebrate the deliverance of the people of Israel from Egypt. But when Jesus gets to the temple in Jerusalem, his wrath is kindled because of the corruption of the temple.

14 And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:

15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

Now, before we dive into this, it is debated among commentators whether there were two temple cleansings, or just one. The synoptic gospels, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, all record a temple cleansing at the end of Jesus' ministry, after his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on a donkey. John records a temple cleansing at the beginning. I believe that Jesus cleansed the temple twice, once at the beginning of his ministry, and once at the end. There are a couple reasons to believe this.

The timeline of John at face value seems to place this cleansing soon after his first miracle in Cana. Read vs. 12-13.

At Hand - near, of place and position, "Passover was just around the corner, Passover is coming up soon."

The Synoptic gospels do not mention an earlier temple cleansing, but this may be because they do not explicitly record Jesus' early ministry in Judea and Jerusalem.

Some theologians who argue that there is only one temple cleansing argue that John moves this story to the beginning of his gospel for theological reasons. Specifically, because John wants to show theologically that Jesus is the replacement of the Jewish temple. But this interpretation fails to give a reason why John would need to move this story to make it an early theme of Jesus' ministry.

The synoptics record this story in Matt. 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-16; Luke 19:45-46 (BKC, Vol. 2, p. 279).

Here is what commentaries have to say about whether or not there were two cleansings or one...

"John recorded a cleansing of the temple at the beginning of Jesus' ministry whereas the three Synoptics recorded a temple cleansing toward the end of His public ministry (Matt. 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-16; Luke 19:45-46). Probably there were two cleansings, for there are differences in the narrations. John was undoubtedly aware of the Synoptics, and he supplemented them. The first cleansing caught the people by surprise. The second cleansing, about three years later, was one of the immediate causes of His death (cf. Mark 11:15-18)." (Ibid., p. 279).

"There has been much debate about whether there were one or two cleansings, since the synoptic gospels place the event at the end of Jesus' ministry. It is generally supposed that John has brought it forward for symbolic purposes. But it is not impossible that there may have been another cleansing after some two or three years. The specific time references here would be in support of that. But John seems more concerned with deeper meanings in the events of Jesus' ministry and arranges his material to highlight them; in this case Jesus' mission to cleanse out the abuses of Judaism. V 17 shows that only later did the disciples see the relevance of the OT text of Ps. 69:9 to this incident." (NBC, p. 1030)

"In John, that this encounter takes place at the first of three (possibly four) Passover festivals reported in the Gospel suggests that Jesus' ministry lasted between two-and-a-half to three and-a-half years. Since the synoptic Gospels mention only the Passover of passion week, they locate Jesus' cleansing of the temple at the close of his ministry, rather than at its outset. Note also in John's account the more comprehensive and aggressive nature of Jesus' actions (making a whip, driving out the animals as well as the sellers, spilling their coins), which trigger the disciples' memory of the "zeal for [God's] house" in Ps. 69:9." (ECB, p. 586)

"(Title) Many scholars consider this the same incident as that in the Synoptic Gospels and placed by them in Passion Week (§ 129) probably on Monday. It is urged that Jesus would not have repeated such an act and hence one must follow either the order of John or of the Synoptics. But there is no inherent difficulty in the repetition of such an act when one reflects on the natural indignation of Jesus at the desecration of the temple on his visit during his ministry and considers that Jesus may have wished to make one last protest at the close of his ministry. Certainty, of course, is not possible in such an argument one way or the other." (Robertson, Jn 2:13-22)

"Those are miracles of kindness and compassion. But at the beginning of His ministry and the end of His ministry, He did two miracles, essentially the same thing—He threw the entire mass of humanity at Passover out of the temple. He did it at the beginning and did it at the end. Those were not miracles of compassion, those

were miracles of holy anger and they were previews of future judgment..."
(MacArthur)

"In fact, His ministry begins at a Passover, and it ends at a Passover. And at both of those Passovers, the first and the last, He does the same action against the Temple. At the first Passover, He cleanses the Temple to publicly begin His ministry. At the last, He cleanses the Temple to publicly end His ministry; then becomes the Passover Lamb. And in between during His ministry, there will be two other Passovers. John tells us about one in chapter 6, and another in chapter 11. He always kept the Passover, always." (Ibid.)

DA Carson argues for two temple cleansings for the following reasons: "Certainly we have ample evidence that the evangelists arranged some materials topically; yet there are, in this instance, numerous reasons for the possibility, indeed the likelihood, of two separate cleansings—something most commentators never seriously consider.

1. Leon Morris (John, pp. 288ff.) has shown the striking differences between the details John provides and those the Synoptics provide. If there was but one cleansing, some of these differences became surprising; if two cleansings, they became quite reasonable.
2. Those who hold that John's placing of the cleansing is topical usually assume that he does so to lead up to the saying, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days" (John 2:19), part of his "replacement" theme—viz., that Jesus himself replaces much of the Jewish cultic milieu. But this view fails to provide any reason for shifting the temple's cleansing so as to make it an early theme in Jesus' ministry. Moreover in this particular case the temple-replacement theme is reflected in the trial of Jesus in two of the Synoptics (Matt 26:61; Mark 14:58)
3. If the Synoptics fail to mention the earlier cleansing, this may go back to their omission of Jesus' entire early Judean ministry.
4. Some hold that if Jesus had inaugurated his ministry by cleansing the temple, the authorities would not have let him do it a second time. But two or three years have elapsed. The money changers and merchants, protected by the temple police doubtless returned the day after the first cleansing. But it is doubtful that tight security would have been kept up for months and years. This second cleansing took a few dramatic minutes and could not have been prevented, and its prophetic symbolism quickly spread throughout Jerusalem.
5. It is difficult to tell from the Gospels how much the cleansing(s) of the temple contributed to official action against Jesus, and to overstate the evidence is easy (cf. E. Troeme, "L'expulsion des marchands du Temple," NTS 15 [1968-69]: 1-22). But a

second cleansing as Passover drew near was far more likely to have led to the authorities' violent reaction than the first one." (Carson, p. 441)

It seems reasonable to believe that Jesus had two temple cleansings, one at the beginning of his ministry, and one at the end.

Jesus walks into the temple, probably into the temple courtyard. This was called the Court of the Gentiles (BKC, 279). When Jesus walks in he sees that the temple has been turned into a marketplace. There were people there selling oxen, sheep, and doves. There were men who were "changers of money" in the temple as well. The people would come into the temple, and exchange their money for money for coins that were appropriate for giving in the temple.

Jesus is infuriated by what he sees; his wrath is kindled against them. Jesus makes a scourge of small cords, which was basically a whip, and goes into the temple to cleanse it. He runs out all of the people selling animals, he also drives out all of the oxen and sheep. He then tips over the money changers tables, takes the bags of money and spills them out on the floor. Jesus decimates this market in the temple courtyard.

Now what can easily be missed is how much of a miracle this was. Jerusalem at this time of the Passover was completely packed out, because they were only allowed to observe the Passover in Jerusalem (Deut. 16). There were probably hundreds, maybe even thousands, of people going in and out of the temple during the time that Jesus walked in to cleanse it. Not only that, but there were also temple police stationed inside of the temple. And Jesus is able to drive the merchants and their animals out the temple, tip over the money changers tables and spill their money on the ground, without being stopped by anyone.

Now, why did Jesus do this miracle? Why did he come into the temple to cleanse it?

16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

Jesus says to them "Make not my Father's house an house of merchandise." The reason Jesus did this miracle was to execute judgement on the people of Israel for corrupting the temple of God. This fits right into the theme of the gospel of John.

Jesus did miracles to prove that he was the Messiah, the Son of God. Jesus' wrath was kindled against them because they had corrupted the temple of God by making it into a market. This miracle was done to execute judgement on the people of Israel, to punish them for their sin in order to show the people of Israel that he was the divine authority over the temple. To show that he was God.

The disciples, in vs. 17, remember a Psalm of David. "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." This is a reference to Psalm 69:9, "For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me." David was trying to get people to truly worship the Lord, but all he got in return was hatred. (MacArthur) And David was feeling pain over the fact that people were dishonoring the Lord. When God was dishonored, David felt the pain.

And in the same way, Jesus' felt pain because they dishonored his Father in the temple. The disciples recognized why Jesus did what he did. He cleansed the temple because he was grieved over the corruption of his Father's house.

Now this miracle was not enough for the people of Israel. After Jesus is done wreaking havoc in the temple, the Jews ask him for a sign.

18 Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

21 But he spake of the temple of his body.

22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

The Jews then come to Christ and ask him for a sign to show them a since he did these things. By asking this, they were basically asking him to prove that he had the authority to cleanse the temple.

Jesus responds with a very interesting statement. Jesus says, "destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Now Jesus would often speak in parables and in

mysterious statements. The disciples even asked him on one occasion to speak more clearly about who he was! Jesus primarily did this in order to get the Jews to think about what he said, and to discern what he was teaching.

But the Jews misunderstand him completely. They say to him, "It took 46 years to build this temple, and you're going to build up in three days?" But, as John comments, Jesus was not talking about the temple in Jerusalem, but the temple of his body.

Jesus, in speaking about this, was pointing to his future death, burial, and resurrection. He was saying that the sign he would give them to prove that he had the authority to cleanse the temple was his resurrection from the dead. The sign would be that they would destroy the temple of his body, and that he would raise it from the dead.

Verse 22 has an interesting comment about the disciples. It says that after the resurrection, the disciples remembered this moment. They remembered what Jesus said, and they believed the scripture, and the words of Christ. They believed in the sign of the resurrection, that it proved that Jesus was the divine authority over the temple of God, and because he had the divine authority, he had the right to cleanse the temple in his divine wrath. He had the right to judge the people of Israel in the temple. In other words they believed he was the Messiah the Son of God.

Application

Would Jesus be happy with your worship? As you come to church, as you sing with the congregation, as you pray in the morning, as you read your Bible, do you have a clean heart? Jesus is not pleased when we come to him in worship, and act like everything is fine, but we know in our heart of hearts that there is unconfessed sin. When we come to God we need to make sure that we are holy on the inside. Keep short accounts with God. Regularly confess your sin. And the amazing thing is that God will forgive you! 1 John 1:9 says, "if we confess our sin..."

Respond with repentance to God's chastisement. Just like he cleansed the temple, Jesus likes to cleanse us every once in a while. And when that happens, remember that is because he loves you, as Hebrews says, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth." Realize it is in his love, and repent, "Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the

way; but let it rather be healed.” Remember God’s chastening is from his love, and repent of the sin.

Make sure when you come to the Lord in worship, that your heart is clean before him.

And as we continue on this story, not only is Jesus’ wrath highlighted, but also his knowledge.

2.) The Knowledge of Christ

23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men,

25 And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

Now Jesus stayed in Jerusalem, and he continued to do miracles in Jerusalem. And the Bible tells us that many believed in him because of the miracles that he did in their midst. But what is so interesting is the response of Jesus to their belief. Jesus did not commit himself to them, because he knew their heart. In his divine knowledge, Jesus knew what was going on in their heart, and because of this, as the passage says, he didn't need anyone to tell him what was going on in their heart.

Jesus did not entrust himself to them because they did not fully entrust themselves to him. It is obvious at this point that their faith in Jesus was superficial, it lacked substance. It was a temporary excitement about the miracles that he did. Jesus did not commit himself to them because of their superficial belief. The call of Christ is not a superficial belief, a temporary excitement about the miracles of Christ. Jesus is calling each one of us to believe that he is the Son of God, to believe in him, to fully trust in him to receive eternal life.

Application

Have you fully trusted in who Jesus is and what he did for you? The entire purpose of the gospel of John is to point to the deity of Jesus, and his death burial and resurrection. It is to show that only through believing on his name can you receive eternal life.

God created you to know him and spend eternity with him.

Mankind's problem, sin.

Man can't solve his problem through works.

Jesus is the only solution to the problem of sin. Through his death burial and resurrection Jesu has done everything necessary for you to receive forgiveness for your sin, and to be brought back into a relationship with God.

And the way you apply what Jesus did for you is by trusting in what he did for us rather than our good works.

A superficial Christian is someone who walks the walk, talks the talk, gives in the offering, checks all of the right boxes, but they haven't placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ. And you know what, Jesus knows who you are. He does not need anyone to tell him the condition of your heart. He knows that you have not placed your faith and trust in him. Does this describe you? Are you a superficial Christian, or have you believed in who Jesus says he was, and what he did for you on the cross?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 5 – JOHN 2:12-25

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 2:12-17 and Psalm 69:9</p>	<p>Why did Jesus cleanse the temple? What is the difference between righteous anger and sinful anger?</p>
<p>T Read John 2:18-22</p>	<p>What did Jesus mean when he claimed that he could rebuild the temple in three days?</p>
<p>W Read John 2:23-25</p>	<p>What does Jesus' knowledge of the hearts of men tell us about His nature?</p>
<p>T Read John 3:1-21</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 3:1-21</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

John 3:1-21

Introduction

Open up your Bible to John 3:1-21.



Judaea (south) – calls several of his disciples

Cana of Galilee (north) – attends the wedding feast and turns the water into wine

Jerusalem (south) – goes for Passover, purges the temple and performs miracles (2:23)

Jesus & the Religious Jew (Nicodemus)

- We're going to see Jesus share the good news of salvation with Nicodemus in one of the most well-known passages of Scripture in the Bible

“Chapters 3 and 4 of John’s gospel feature Jesus’s encounters with two individuals who could not be more different: he a Jew, she a Samaritan; he a respected member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council, she ostracized from society to the extent that she must draw water at the communal well in the heat of the noon hour when no one else would be there (cf. Gen. 24: 11); he a rabbi, a Jewish religious teacher, she steeped in folklore and ignorant about religion; he a man, she a woman. The sheer fact that John chooses to place these two encounters side by side has a powerful impact on the reader.” (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 1906-1910)

1.) He made time for Nicodemus

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

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews –

- He was religious
 - o He was a Pharisee (e.g. like a pastor)

- The Pharisees were a denomination of Judaism that accepted the authority of both the Old Testament and religious tradition. They were conservative and incredibly pious, committed to keeping the 600 plus laws of the Torah.
- They were leaders in the synagogues, and although they were a minority in the Sanhedrin (the Jewish supreme court), they had great power due to their popular support among the common man. They were mostly middle class. (Got Questions)
- He was a ruler (e.g. like a city councilman)
 - He was a member of the Sanhedrin
 - This was the Jewish supreme court made up of 70 men and the high priest. They met every day excluding festivals and Sabbath, and they were the final authority on issues pertaining to the Jewish law. (Got Questions)
- He was respected
 - As a Pharisee (he was a pious, religious teacher)
 - As a member of the Sanhedrin (he was powerful)

Illustration – a well-known good, religious, successful member of the community (perhaps someone on the city council or a pastor)

2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

The same came to Jesus by night – we are not told why he came by night.

- Perhaps to avoid being seen
- Perhaps because Jesus' days were eventful
- Perhaps because his schedule was crammed
- Regardless, we know he came by night

And said unto him, Rabbi – It is significant that Nicodemus called Jesus “Rabbi”. This was a term reserved for formally schooled Jewish teachers. Jesus, coming from rural Galilee, did not meet the technical requirements, and yet Nicodemus addressed Him as such. He addressed him as an equal. (Sorenson, 2007)

- In his following statements we see why he addressed him as such

We know that thou art a teacher come from God – How?

For no man can do these miracles that thou doest except God be with him – Nicodemus had either seen or heard of the miracles that Jesus had done.

- John 2:1-11 tells us of Jesus' first miracle (turning the water into wine)
- John 2:23 - Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

- Nicodemus may also have been familiar with the preaching ministry of John the Baptist and his comments regarding Jesus. This may have made him wonder if Jesus were indeed the Messiah.

John 7:50-52 - 50 Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) 51 Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? 52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

John 19:38-39 - And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.

Nicodemus as a religious, respected ruler starts by affirming that Jesus was a teacher from God.

But then Jesus responds by getting straight to the heart of this issue with Nicodemus.

2.) He confronted Nicodemus with his need to be born again

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Verily, verily – truly, truly; the “double amen” here is Jesus’ way of indicating to Nicodemus that what He is about to say is of the utmost importance (Kostenberger, 2013, p. Loc 1935)

Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God – As a religious Jew, Nicodemus would have been very familiar with the concept of God’s kingdom and would have expected to be a part of it. For Jesus to claim that “being born again” was a necessary prerequisite for entry must have been shocking to Nicodemus. He had built his life on the idea that his religion and good works/the keeping of the law would save Him, and Jesus said, “You’ve completely missed the mark.”

(Kostenberger, 2013, p. Loc 1951)

- Illustration – Nicodemus was religious, successful, and respected. He was a good person, and here Jesus is saying to him, “Nicodemus, it’s not enough. Nicodemus, you can be religious. You can be successful. You can be respected all you want, but if you’ve never been born again you won’t step one foot in God’s kingdom.”
 - Application – the same is true for each and every one of us in this room
- Although the requirement for spiritual rebirth may have been surprising news to Nicodemus, it should not be to us as readers of John’s gospel. Recall what John wrote in chapter 1 verses 12-13: “12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: 13

Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

It is not the religious or successful or famous that inherit God’s kingdom. It is those who have been spiritually born in the family of God.

James 1:18 - Of his own will begat he us **with the word of truth**, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

1 Peter 1:23-25 - **Being born again**, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, **by the word of God**, which liveth and abideth for ever. For all flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

1 John 5:1 - Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is **born of God**: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is **begotten of him**.

The kingdom of God – this is one of only two times in John’s gospel that he uses this phrase (i.e. John 18:36). It is much more common in the Matthew, Mark, and Luke. John more often uses the term eternal life (Kostenberger, 2013, p. Loc 1935).

4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

How can a man be born when he is old? – The phrase of being “born again” was in common use in that time. However, it was used of when Gentiles would convert to Judaism. The idea of a Jew needing to be born again was patently absurd to Nicodemus. (Barnes, 1834)

- Application: for many in the world today, Jesus’ words are just as absurd. What do you mean I need to be born again? I’m a good person. I’m religious. I’m a member of a church. I read the Bible. It’s not like I’m some kind of vile heathen.
- What do you mean that I need to be saved? That I need to be born again?

Can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born – what? You mean like literally Jesus? Is a Jew to somehow come out of his mother’s womb a second time? Makes no sense.

John 4:11-12 -The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water? Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

John 6:53 - Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

3.) He explained what it means to be born again

5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

Verily verily – truly, truly

Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit – Nicodemus, I'm not talking about a physical birth. I'm talking about a spiritual birth (regeneration)...being cleansed by God of your sin and being born into the family of God as His child.

- In fact, this phrase “water and Spirit” is often used metaphorically in the Old and New Testament to describe this spiritual cleansing from sin, being born into the family of God. (Kostenberger, 2013, p. Loc 1998)

Ezekiel 11:19-20 - And I will give them one heart, and **I will put a new spirit within you**; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

Ezekiel 36:25-27 - Then will I **sprinkle clean water upon you**, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and **from all your idols, will I cleanse you**. A new heart also will I give you, **and a new spirit will I put within you**: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

Ephesians 5:26 - That he might sanctify and **cleanse it with the washing of water by the word**,

Titus 3:4-5 - But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, **but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost**;

- It is not enough to be religious on the outside! It is enough to be moral or to try to live a good life.
- Regeneration/spiritual birth/salvation/cleansing from sin is a requirement for entry into God's kingdom.

Nicodemus, no matter how religious or well educated or wealthy you are, you cannot cleanse yourself from sin. That's something that only God can do, and unless you have been cleansed, unless you have been spiritually born into the family of God, you will not step one foot in God's kingdom.

6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh – when you are born, you share in the physical nature of the physical parents that gave birth to you.

Illustration – when I was born, I was a combination of my parents’ humanity. I am like my parents physically, but I am also like them spiritually. I share in their sin nature.

Psalm 51:5 – Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Job 15:14-16 – What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Behold, he putteth no trust in his saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight. How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?

I am a sinner just as my parents were sinners just as their parents were sinners all the way back to Adam and Eve.

Romans 5:12 – Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:

Physical beings can only produce physical birth, not spiritual birth.

And that which is born of the Spirit is spirit – if we are to be spiritually born again, if we are to be spiritually cleansed, it cannot come about through physical birth. It cannot come about through my efforts. That kind of spiritual cleansing/spiritual rebirth can only come from the one who is truly spiritual: God Himself.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again – Don’t be shocked. Don’t be amazed that I’ve told you that you must be born again.

Jesus says, “Let me give you an illustration of what this looks like.”

8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

The wind bloweth where it listeth – the wind blows where it wants

And thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and where it goeth – you can’t really tell where it’s going or where it came from, but you can hear it. You can see the effects that it brings. Being born again, being saved is like that.

- Doing good things can never cleanse us from our sin. Only God can do that. And yet when we have been cleansed us of our sin, when we have been spiritually born into the family of God, it should result in us doing good works...not so that we can be saved from our sin, but rather because we have been saved from our sin.

Luke 6:43-44 - For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

Jesus has flipped Nicodemus' works based, religious world upside down. Perhaps shellshocked by the gravity of what Jesus is saying, he further asks how this could be.

4.) He marveled at Nicodemus' lack of understanding

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things? – Nicodemus, you are a certified teacher of the Old Testament in Israel. You are a Pharisee. You are a member of the Sanhedrin. How can you not know this? How can you have taught Ezekiel and Jeremiah and other books that testify of spiritual cleansing by God and not understand what I'm saying?

Nicodemus is an example of the spiritual bankruptcy that permeated much of Israel and permeates much of religion today.

Romans 10:1-3 - 1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

Ezekiel 11:19-20 - And I will give them one heart, and **I will put a new spirit within you**; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

Ezekiel 36:25-27 - Then will I **sprinkle clean water upon you**, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and **from all your idols, will I cleanse you**. A new heart also will I give you, **and a new spirit will I put within you**: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.

Jeremiah 31:33 - But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.

Romans 2:28 - For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

Philippians 3:3 - For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

Verily, verily I say unto thee – truly, truly I’m telling you

We– probably referring to Himself, His disciples, and John the Baptist (possibly even the testimony of God the Father as well)

Speak that we do know - We teach this truth of spiritual rebirth that we know to be true

And we testify that we have seen – we’ve seen the change in the lives of those who have been born again, spiritually cleansed by God

And ye – probably referring to the teachers, the Pharisees, the rulers in Israel

Receive not our witness – you don’t believe what we teach. You’re caught up in this man-made system of trying to cleanse yourself through religion and good works.

John 1:11 - He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

John 5:31-40 - If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true. Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved. He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?

If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not – if I have spoken to you of things like being born again which happen here on the earth, and you don’t believe me

How shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things – how will you believe if I tell you of things that occur in the heavenly realm? (Ellicott, 1905)

1 Cor. 3:1-2 - And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

Oh and by the way, I’m qualified to tell you of heavenly things because I’m from there. I know what I’m talking about.

13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.

And no man hath ascended up to heaven, But he that came down from heaven, even the son of man which is in heaven. - there's no person, no teacher who has gone up to heaven and returned so as to teach of the things he saw there. There's only one that's qualified to speak of such things and it's me, the one that God the Father sent to you from heaven, the one that although I'm here with you, I'm also there with Him. (Barnes, 1834)

- Talk about mind blown.

John 1:18 - No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

John 6:46 - Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

John 6:33 - For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

John 6:62 - What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

And Nicodemus, the Father sent me down from heaven for a purpose. He sent me down so that humanity might be born again.

5.) He told Nicodemus how to be born again

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness – this is a description of an occurrence in Numbers 21:7-9. Israel's camp had been infiltrated by poisonous snakes because of their sinfulness and unbelief. People were dying left and right. As a result, the people repented and told Moses to beg God to take the serpents away. God instructed Moses to fashion a serpent of brass and put it on a pole...and every Israelite that looked upon it in faith, even if he were bitten would live.

Numbers 21:7-9 - Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

Even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life – Nicodemus, do you remember that story of the poisonous snakes and the bronze serpent? People were dying left and right. They were hopeless. They were in desperate need. So what did God do? He instructed Moses to lift something up that if looked upon in faith, would save them.

- Nicodemus that's why I'm here. The world is lost in sin. It is spiritually dead, and like those Israelites in the wilderness, it cannot save itself. And it is for that reason that God sent me to earth to be lifted up on the cross so that those who stop trusting in themselves and look to me in faith will be saved from their hopeless condition and have everlasting life.

John 8:28 - Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

John 12:32-34 - And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die. The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

John 3:36 - He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

John 20:31 - But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

1 John 5:11-13 - And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

You might be wondering, "Why would God do that?"

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

World – humanity (c.f. 2 Cor. 5:19)

Only begotten Son – unique, one of a kind. He is the Son of God in a way that you and I will never be.

That whosoever believeth in him – so that anyone who looks to Jesus in faith to be their Savior

Will not perish – in hell; spiritual death

But have everlasting life – but live forever with God in His kingdom

1 John 4:9-10 - In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Application – how can I be born again? How can I be spiritually cleansed? How can I have everlasting life?

- Stop trying to be your own Savior and look to Jesus in faith.

1 Timothy 1:15-16 - This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world – God will judge those who die in their sin, but Nicodemus, that's not why God has sent me to the earth.

But that the world through him might be saved – I have come to make a way for humanity to be saved from its sin through faith in me and my death and resurrection to come

John 5:45 - Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.

John 12:47-48 - And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

Luke 19:10 - For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

1 John 2:2 - And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

He that believeth on him is not condemned – the one who trusts in me is not condemned before God. He is forgiven, spiritually cleansed from sin.

But he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God – but the one who rejects salvation through me remains hopelessly condemned before God, with nothing to look forward to but His judgment

Illustration – Why would a good God send people to Hell?

- God doesn't send people to Hell. Actually we are already on our way to Hell. And what God did is He gave us a way out. It's like being on a ship that's sinking, and someone is like, "Hey there is a life boat." You can choose to get on the life boat, but if you reject the lifeboat, you automatically go down with the ship. It's the same thing. Our sin was already taking us to hell, and God gave us Jesus and said, "This is the lifeboat." But if you reject the lifeboat, you're automatically going where you were already headed. God didn't send you there.

1 John 5:12 - He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

Hebrews 2:3 - How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

1 John 5:10 - He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

And this is the condemnation – Nicodemus, here is their condemnation

That light is come into the world – I have been sent from God to the darkness to save men from the darkness

And men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil – but humanity wants their sin more than they want salvation from it

John 1:9-11 - That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.

For every one that doeth evil hateth the light – and those that love the darkness of their sin by extension hate the light of me

Neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd – and so they avoid the light, they avoid me, so that their sin will not be exposed

John 7:7 - The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

Ephesians 5:12-13 - For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

But he that doeth truth cometh to the light – the one who practices truth, who wants the truth is not afraid of me, but rather comes to me

That his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God – that his works may be made known as having been done in God's power

“Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

Jesus told Nicodemus of his need to be born again

- He was religious. He was a ruler. He was respected.
- “Nicodemus, it doesn't matter who you are. No one goes to heaven that hasn't been born again.”

Jesus explained to Nicodemus what it mean to be born again

- To be cleansed from sin and spiritually born into the family of God

Jesus explained to Nicodemus how to be born again

- It's not about self-effort, religion, baptism, confirmation, church membership. It's about one thing: putting my faith in Jesus to save me from my sin through His death, burial, and resurrection.
- “Lord I know that I'm a sinner. I know that because of my sin I don't deserve heaven and I do deserve Hell. But you died for my sins and rose again three days later. I believe that, and based on that I ask you to forgive me of my sins once and for all.”

Application

How did Nicodemus respond to Jesus' invitation?

- There is nothing said here of a response.
- In John 7:50-51 Nicodemus publicly defended Jesus in the Sanhedrin
- In John 19:38-42 it is Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea that bury the body of Jesus.

How will you respond to Jesus' invitation?

- Have you been born again?
 - o “I'm a good person” – doesn't matter
 - o “I read my bible and pray” – didn't ask you that

- “I’ve been baptized. I’ve been confirmed. I give to the church.” – doesn’t matter
- Have you been born again?
 - If the answer is no, you won’t step one foot in God’s kingdom.
 - “That’s harsh” – take it up with Jesus. He’s the one that said it, not me.
 - If the answer is no, wouldn’t you like to make that decision today? Wouldn’t you like to be able to say yes.
- If that’s you, I want to encourage you to make that decision today, and I’m going to give you an opportunity to do that in the invitation today.

If you have been born again, will you tell others how they can be too?

- I want to be like Jesus. Whether it’s with someone like Nicodemus or the Samaritan woman at the well, I want to share the gospel with people this summer.

Invitation

I’ve been born again. I’ve been saved. I’m 100% certain that if I died right now heaven would be my home.

I don’t know that I’ve been born again. I don’t know that I’ve been saved. I’m not 100% certain that heaven would be my home, but I would like to know.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 6 – JOHN 3:1-21

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 3:1-2</p>	<p>What do we know about Nicodemus from these verses?</p>
<p>T Read John 3:3-9, Titus 3:4-7, and John 1:12</p>	<p>What does it mean to be born again, and why do we need to be born again?</p>
<p>W Read John 3:10-21</p>	<p>How does one become born again into the family of God?</p>
<p>T Read John 3:22-36</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 3:22-36</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 3:22-36

Introduction

Judea in the South (chapter 1)

- John the Baptist testifies of Jesus
- Jesus calls several of His disciples
 - o Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathanael, possibly John

Galilee in the North (specifically Cana) (chapter 2:1-12)

- First Sign: Water into Wine
- Brief pit stop in Capernaum

Judea in the South (specifically Jerusalem for Passover) (chapter 2:13-3:21)

- Cleansing of the temple
- Miracles
- Private encounter with the Pharisee Nicodemus

THE WANING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

1.) The Rise of Jesus' Ministry

22 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.

After these things – sometime after Jesus' cleansing of the temple, miracle working, and meeting with Nicodemus in Jerusalem (Benson, 1857)

Came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea – Jesus and His disciples departed from the "city" of Jerusalem (which is in Judaea) into the Judaeian "countryside" (Gill, 1811)

And there he tarried with them, and baptized – they remained in the countryside for an period of time and the disciples baptized on Jesus' authority (John 4:1-2) those who heeded His call to repent in anticipation of the kingdom of God

Matthew 4:17 – From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

John 4:1-2 – When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, 2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)

As this is transpiring, Jesus' ministry, popularity, and following is growing.

23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.

Aenon – name of a city that means “fountain/spring”, probably named after a water source that the location was known for

Near to Salim – it would seem that the location of Salim was more common knowledge than the location of Aenon during the first century. However, we are not sure today exactly where this site was. (Barnes, 1834)

Because there was much water there – because there was an abundance of water. This is important if you’re practicing baptism by immersion, which is the only method of baptism we see in the New Testament.

And they came, and were baptized – the people came and were baptized (Ellicott, 1905)

Jesus is baptizing. John is baptizing.

Then in verse 24 we’re given an important piece of information.

24 For John was not yet cast into prison.

For John was not yet cast into prison – well no duh, he’s not in prison. Obviously he wouldn’t be preaching or baptizing if he were in prison. Why does the author, John the apostle, include this? It seems redundant.

- John would be cast in prison. Remember, he calls out the tetrarch/ruler of Galilee, Herod for marrying his brother Philip’s ex-wife, Herodias. John the Baptist calls out Herod, and tells him the union isn’t lawful. Herod doesn’t like that, so he initially throws him in prison. Later, due to his wife’s influence (who’s no fan of John’s), Herod beheads John the Baptist.
 - o However, none of this has happened yet.
- Why does the author tell us that at this point John had not yet been cast into prison?
 - o It’s a time indicator.
 - o Matthew, Mark, and Luke all really begin their accounts of Jesus’ public ministry after John’s imprisonment. So that everything before that, there’s really no record of it in the other gospels.
 - John’s gospel up to this point has sort of been a prequel to Matthew, Mark and Luke. (Matt. 4:12; Mark 1:14; Luke 3:19-20; Luke 4:14). (Ellicott, 1905)
 - You know from Matthew, Mark, and Luke about Jesus’ ministry after John’s imprisonment. Let me tell you about some of the things that happened before that

- That's actually a lot of what John's gospel is. He's providing additional information to supplement what we already know from the other three gospels.

Jesus' ministry is thriving in the Judean countryside where He is preaching and baptizing.

John's ministry is continuing in Aenon where he is preaching and baptizing.

All of this is happening prior to where Matthew, Mark, and Luke begin their story of Jesus' public ministry.

Matt. 4:12 - Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee;

Mark 6:17-29 - 17 For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. 18 For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife. 19 Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not: 20 For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and an holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly. 21 And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief estates of Galilee; 22 And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee. 23 And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom. 24 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist. 25 And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist. 26 And the king was exceeding sorry; yet for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her. 27 And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison, 28 And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel: and the damsel gave it to her mother. 29 And when his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

2.) The Concern of John's Disciples

25 Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.

Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews –during John's ministry at Aenon, a dispute arose between some of those who followed John and other Jews (Barnes, 1834)

About purifying – we don't know exactly what the dispute was, but from the comments of John the Baptist that follow, it seems that the dispute may have centered around the

validity of the baptisms performed by Jesus' disciples (seeing that Jesus' Judaeen ministry was in close proximity to John's) (Barnes, 1834)

- Perhaps it was something along the lines of: Are Jesus' baptisms as valid as John's baptisms?

26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.

And they came unto John, and said unto him – John's disciples came to him

Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan – Master, he who was with you in Bethabara beyond Jordan (c.f. John 1:19-37), referring to Jesus (but not naming Him)

To whom thou barest witness – the one you bore witness of; which John did when he said that Jesus was before him and yet greater than him and that He was the lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world (Gill, 1811)

Behold, the same baptizeth and all men come to him – Master, Jesus is now baptizing, and people are flocking to him. It's like everyone is following Him!

- It seems as if John's disciples are concerned that with Jesus' rise in popularity, John's popularity and ministry would suffer. (Barnes, 1834)
- They saw Jesus as a competitor to what they thought was important (MacArthur, 1985)

Application: by the way if you're not careful, you will too. If you're not careful, you'll see Jesus as a competitor to your life and your plans and your success.

- I like Jesus, but to come to church every Sunday, make a real priority of it, commit my time to Him.
 - o I'd like to, but I just don't have the time with everything going on in my life.
- I like Jesus, but to tell other people about Him.
 - o I don't know. That could be kind of embarrassing. I'm not really great with people. I don't know that that's for me.
- I like Jesus, but to live a holy life that makes me stand out at work as a Christian...to not talk or drink or joke like my coworkers do.
 - o I've got to do what I've got to do to get ahead in my career. Jesus would understand. It's not a big deal.
- It's a huge deal. If you see Jesus and His calling on your life as competition to what's really important in your life, you've got it all completely wrong.
 - o There is not my life's purpose on the one hand and what Jesus has called me to do on the other hand. There is only my life's purpose which is what Jesus has called me to do.
 - If you ever find yourself sacrificing what Jesus has called you to do on the altar of "success", you need to rethink your definition of success.

- Jesus is not your competitor. He is your life's purpose.

Illustration – Following Jesus isn't like joining the gym. You're either all in, or you're all out. He asks for total life commitment in every area of your life. And here's the craziest thing about it. It's good for you. The safest and most joyful and purposeful is in the center of God's will for your life. What's God's will for my life? It's right here in this book.

Master, Jesus is baptizing, and people are flocking to Him. What if people stop following you? What are we going to do?

3.) The Response of John the Baptist

A.) My ministry success has been a gift from God

27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven – in both my ministry and Jesus' ministry, our calling and fruitfulness have come as a gift from God (Spence & Exell, 1883)

- My success came from God, and His success has come from God.
- God chose to use me, and if God has now decided to fade my ministry into the background, I'm okay with that.
- Application: you are not the hero of your life story. Your story is not about you. It's about Him. John realized that, and the sooner you realize that the sooner you'll get your life's priorities in order.

Illustration – surrendering my life to the Lord at teen camp

Philippians 1:21 – for to me to live is Christ and to die is gain.

Philippians 3:7-8 - 7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

Philippians 3:13-14 - 13 Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, 14 I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Everything in your life is a gift from God that He has given you as a tool to use for His glory. Are you living your life like the story is about you, or are you living your life like the story is about Him?

Guys, my ministry and its fruitfulness has been nothing more than a gift from God as part of His story.

B.) It's never been about me

28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.

Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, - guys you were there when I said

I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him – that I was not the Messiah, but rather that I was here to prepare the way for Him.

- Wouldn't you expect that the Christ would have greater success than the one who came to point others to the Christ? (Barnes, 1834)
- Guys, Jesus' popularity doesn't upset me. It makes me happy. This is the fulfillment of what God called me to do. (MacArthur, 1985)

Application: You and I are not the Christ. We are not the Messiah. We are not the King of kings and Lord of lords. We act like we are sometimes, but we're not. You know what we are? We are the ones whose role it is to point others to the one who is the Christ, who is the King of kings and Lord of lords. Our role is not to take the glory for ourselves, but to point others to Jesus. It's never been about us. It's always been about Him.

He goes and gives an illustration.

John 1:20 - And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

John 1:23 - He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias

29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

“In Jewish culture, the friend of the bridegroom (kind of like the best man) was charged with the preliminaries of the marriage. He arranged the contract, acted for the bridegroom during the betrothal, and arranged for, and presided at, the festivities of the wedding-day itself. It was a position of honour and was given to his chief friend. That friend then partook in the groom's joy, and there was none happier on the wedding day than that best man.” (Ellicott, 1905)

Guys, it's not my wedding. I'm not the groom. I'm the best man that preparing the way for the groom.

Illustration – have you ever been to a wedding where someone stole the spotlight from the bride and groom?

- How awful is that...where someone is so conceited that they have to be the center of attention, even at someone else's wedding.
- They give a really long speech that's more about them than the bride and groom
- They act like a fool

- They cause drama, family drama
- It's pretty off putting isn't it? It's like, "Are you kidding me right now?"
 - o Application: when we make our lives about us and our goals and our definition of success at Jesus' expense, that's exactly what we're doing. We are stealing the spotlight from the groom, and making someone else's wedding all about us.

He that hath the bride is the bridegroom – The bride belongs to her husband...Of course the people are flocking to Him. (Barnes, 1834)

But the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him – the one whose job it is to coordinate the ceremony and attend to the groom (Barnes, 1834)

Rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice – is honored and glad to receive the groom's requests and attend to them (Barnes, 1834)

This my joy therefore is fulfilled – Guys, I'm not the Messiah. I'm not the groom. I'm the friend of the groom, and I have no greater satisfaction than attending to Him and seeing people flock to Him. (Poole, 1990)

Application: as a Christian, we ought to have no greater joy than to see Jesus lifted up and glorified in and through our lives.

C.) It's always been about Jesus

30 He must increase, but I must decrease.

He must increase – His ministry and following must increase. He's the Messiah. He's the Savior of the world. Of course His following is going to expand. He must increase.

But I must decrease – as one commissioned to prepare the way for Him, my ministry and following must decrease. This is the way it was always going to be. As He increases, I must decrease.

Colossians 1:18 - And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.

Application: there is only room for one person on the pedestal of your life. He will not share His glory with you. If Jesus is going to be glorified in your life, if Jesus is going to be lifted up in your life, it's going to mean that you take a backseat to Him.

31 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.

He that cometh from above is above all – the one who comes down from heaven (Jesus) is greater than and above all (including me – John) (Gill, 1811)

He that is of the earth – as I, John, am (as we are)

Is earthly – has an earthly, frail, human nature (we're only human)

And speaketh of the earth – and speaks of earthly, inferior things. Why? Because that's all he knows. (Poole, 1990) (that's all we know)

He that cometh from heaven is above all – he repeats himself

John 6:33 - For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

John 8:23 - And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

John 1:30 - This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.

1 Cor. 15:47-48 - The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.

32 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.

And what he hath seen and heard – the things that He has witnessed firsthand in heaven (where He is from)

That he testifieth – He shares in His teaching

Hebrews 1:1-2 – 1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

And no man receiveth his testimony – and, although many follow Him, relatively speaking it's as if no one accepts and believes His doctrine (Barnes, 1834)

John 3:11 - Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

33 He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.

He that hath received his testimony – the one who has received his doctrine

Hath set to his seal – has personally certified and attested to the fact

That God is true – that God is truthful

“In the ancient world, people set their seal to something (often with a signet ring; Gen. 41:42; Est. 3:10, 12; 8:2, 8, 10; Dan. 6:17) as a sign of complete acceptance and approval. In today's jargon, they signed off on it.” (MacArthur, 1985)

- Those who have received the testimony of Jesus have personally signed off on their belief that God is truthful.

1 John 5:9-10 - If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

Why?

34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.

For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God – Why do those who accept Jesus certify their belief that God is truthful? Because God sent Jesus as His ambassador to the world. God sent Jesus so as to declare Himself to humanity. If you believe the words of Jesus, then you believe the words of God, for He is the visible image of the invisible God.

For God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him – Since the fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in Him, there were no limits to the Spirit's power working through Him. (MacArthur, 1985)

John 8:26-28 - I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. They understood not that he spake to them of the Father. Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

John 5:26 - For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

John 7:37-39 - In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Colossians 2:9 - For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.

The Father loveth the Son – this messenger, this ambassador from the Father to humanity is no ordinary messenger. It is His Son, whom He loves and whom He has given all things into his hand.

And hath given all things into his hand – The Father has delegated to the Son all power in heaven and in earth...absolute authority (cf. Matthew 28:18)

John 5:20 - For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

John 13:3 - Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

John 17:2 - As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

Matthew 28:18 - And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life – the one who receives the Son in faith has life eternal as a present possession (not just a future hope) ... and will spend all of eternity in God's kingdom with both the Father and the Son

And he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him – However, the one who rejects the Son (Jesus) as God's messenger to humanity will not experience eternal life, but remains in their sin is condemned before God. Just as eternal life is the present possession of believers, so also is condemnation the present condition of unbelievers. (MacArthur, 1985)

John 3:15-16 - That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 5:24 - Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

John 3:3 - Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Romans 5:9 - Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

Invitation

What is your life about? It is about you or is it about Him?

Are you more like the disciples of John that saw Jesus as a competitor to their life's purpose, or are you more like John who saw Jesus as his life's purpose?

How would your life answer that question?

- Does your time revolve around yourself or Him?
- Do your finances revolve around yourself or Him?
- Does your lifestyle revolve around yourself or Him?
- Does your speech revolve around yourself or Him?
- Do your fears revolve around yourself or Him?
- Does your conversation revolve around yourself or Him?
- Do your life goals revolve around yourself or Him?
- Does your daily living revolve around yourself or Him?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 7 – JOHN 3:22-36

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 3:22-24</p>	<p>Why are these verses important context for understanding the controversy among John’s disciples that develops in verses 25-26?</p>
<p>T Read John 3:25-26</p>	<p>What was the controversy that developed among the disciples of John? Why were they concerned?</p>
<p>W Read John 3:27-37</p>	<p>How did John the Baptist respond to his disciples? In what way did he explain that the waning of his ministry and the growth of Jesus’ ministry was not a bad development?</p>
<p>T Read John 4:1-27</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 4:1-27</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 4:1-27

Review

Here at Horizon Baptist we follow Jesus by

- Growing Up: in the Scriptures & prayer
- Giving Back: through service & financial giving
- Going Forth: through missions and evangelism

It's on the doors. It's on the walls. Most importantly, it's in the Bible, and that's why we do these things. That's why it's in our DNA as a church.

We do all of these things throughout the year, but at different times we will take some time to focus on each of them.

- Small Groups Sign Ups: Growing Up
- Building Offering: Giving Back
- Easter: Going Forth
 - April 4th
 - Show the new tract
 - Show the yard sign
 - Two Dynamic Services at 8:30 & 10:00
 - We won't have an evening service that night. We'll be putting all our emphasis onto the morning services and launching new volunteer teams that day.
 - We're going to worship. We're going to pray. We're going to preach the Word. We're going to present the gospel.
 - It is one of the easiest times of year to invite someone to church, to have a spiritual conversation. It is vital that we do.

You say, Jacob, I'm not a people person. I can't talk to people about Jesus. But can I tell you something: did you know that every single one of us in this room is an evangelist?

- Kirk & Terri Smith: pickleball
- Flying
- Fishing
- Eating
- Sightseeing
- Jaguars
- There ought to be nothing that we are more of an evangelist for than Jesus.

How? I don't even know where to start. Well, I think one of the best examples in Scripture is Jesus, and this morning we're going to begin taking a look at His spiritual conversation with the Samaritan woman at the well.

Open up your Bible to John 4. As we look at this encounter, we're going to see 8 principles from this interaction that can help us as we go forth.

Sermon

JESUS & THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

1.) He Was Intentional

3 He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.

4 And he must needs go through Samaria.

And he must needs go - it was necessary that Jesus go through Samaria.

On Jesus' journey from Judea and into Galilee, He passed through Samaria. It was the most direct of several routes.

The road through Samaria was shorter than the coastal road or the road on the east side of the Jordan, which is why many Jews traveled on it, especially at the time of the major religious festivals. But so great was their disdain for the Samaritans that the stricter Jews avoided traveling through Samaria altogether.

But the Lord was compelled to pass through Samaria and stop in a certain village, not to save time and steps, but because He had a divine appointment there. He was intentional.

5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

Samaria was the capital city of the northern kingdom, called Israel. The nation split in two after Solomon's reign. King Omri named the city the capital of the northern kingdom (1 Kings 16:24). The name came to refer to the whole region and sometimes to the whole northern kingdom, which went into captivity in 722 B.C. (2 Kings 17:1-6) at the hands of the Assyrians. Sychar, a town in the district of Samaria, was near the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

Joshua 24:32 - And the bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.

Jacob's Well - half a mile south of Sychar; the well sits today near an unfinished Orthodox church; it was a deep well (approx. 100 ft) fed by a running spring

Jesus is sitting on this well waiting for this woman at the 6th hour (noon). He was intentional. Are you intentional in going forth? When is the last time you invited

someone to church? When is the last time you talked with an unsaved friend about Jesus, about what Jesus has done in your life?

Sixth hour - sixth hour from sunrise at 6 am means the time of day would have been noon

John 11:9 - Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

Illustration - coming back from the Wilds burdened for lost people

- Didn't really know what I was doing
- So scared of people
- But I was so convicted because
 - I knew people needed Jesus
 - I knew the Bible told me I was supposed to tell them

How can we be intentional?

- Start praying for opportunities every day
 - When you start praying for opportunities, you will start noticing them
 - Start praying by name for the people God puts on your heart
- Carry invites with you (in your car(s), in your purse, in your pocket)
 - Easter invites
 - Generic invites

2.) He Engaged Her by Finding Common Ground

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.
8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat - this explains why Jesus was sitting at the well by Himself

What was the common ground that Jesus found with the woman at the well? the water

- Jesus starts by talking about physical water, but He's not really interested in talking with her about physical water. It's a means to an end. In fact, as far as we know, Jesus never got physical water from the woman. At the end of their encounter, she leaves her waterpot and goes back to the city to tell everyone about her encounter with Jesus.

When you're trying to connect with someone for the purpose of telling them about Jesus, you're looking for anything, anything at all that you have in common with that person.

Illustration

- Neighbors: parking issues, patio inspections, yard
- Coworkers: project, event, goals
- This comes really naturally to people persons, but the rest of us probably not so much.

B-O-R

Background - what's your story?

Occupation - what do you do?

Recreation - what do you love to do?

3.) He Looked Beyond Cultural Prejudice

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

How is it that thou, being a Jew askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. - Jesus' request for water was a shocking breach of social customs in three ways

- Men did not speak with women in public, not even their wives
- Rabbis did not associate with immoral women (Luke 7:39)
- Jews wanted nothing to do with Samaritans
 - Yet here Jesus is striking up a conversation with an immoral Samaritan woman.
- Rivalry had been going on for centuries between Jews and Samaritans
 - Similar to the animosity between Republicans and Democrats today but worse.
- After the fall of the Northern Kingdom, the 10 tribes were carried away into captivity in Assyria
- The king of Assyria brought men from Babylon and other areas and placed them in Samaria to settle the land and live in the cities
- The foreign non-Jews intermarried with the population of Jews who had not been deported, forming a mixed race known as the Samaritans
- This led to a mix of paganism and Judaism
- In time, however, the Samaritans abandoned their idols and worshipped the true God but in their own way.
 - They only accepted the first 5 books of the OT
 - They worshipped God on Mount Gerizim, not at Jerusalem
- When the Jewish exiles from the Southern Kingdom returned to Jerusalem under Ezra and Nehemiah, their first priority was to rebuild the temple.
- Professing loyalty to Israel's God, the Samaritans offered their assistance (Ezra 4:1-2). The Jews' blunt refusal (Ezra 4:3) enraged the Samaritans, who then became their bitter enemies (Ezra 4:4ff.; Neh. 4:1-3, 7ff.).

- Rebuffed in their attempt to worship at Jerusalem, the Samaritans built their own temple on Mount Gerizim (c. 400 B.C.).
- The Jews later destroyed that temple during the intertestamental period, further worsening relations between the two groups.
- After centuries of mistrust, there was a deep animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans.
- One Jewish writer referred to the Samaritans as the stupid people living at Shechem.
- The Jewish leaders of Jesus' day manifested this same prejudice. In fact, when they wanted to insult Jesus, the worst they could do was to call Him a Samaritan (8:48).

There was incredible ethnic prejudice and disdain between the Jews and Samaritans, and yet Jesus saw beyond that. He saw beyond the politics of the day. He saw a woman made in the image of God, trapped in sin, and in need of a Savior. He saw the bigger picture.

Application - if we're to follow in Jesus steps we'll see people the same way

- We won't harbor prejudice against people because of the color of their skin, their country of origin, or their bank account balance.
- We'll see them as a person made in the image of God, trapped in sin, in need of Savior.
 - That kind of mentality is essential for evangelism.

4.) He Transitioned from the Physical to the Spiritual

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

If thou knewest the gift of God and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, though wouldest have asked of him and he would have given thee living water - The Lord's reply turned the table on her. When the conversation began, He was the thirsty one, and she the one with the water. Now He spoke as if she were the thirsty one and He the one with the water.

Illustration - transitioning to a spiritual conversation

- You can do this if you're intentional about it and looking for opportunities
- The ocean is beautiful this time of year
 - Isn't God's creation beautiful
- It is so windy today
 - Sometimes when those winds are gusting, you know what it reminds me of? How big and powerful God is.
- Man I'm just so stressed out about this work project.
 - I feel you. It's moments like that that I'm so thankful I can lean on the Lord.

- I really messed up bad.
 - Well, you know we're all sinners, but I've found that God's a great forgiver.
- My family is falling apart.
 - You ought to come to church with me sometime. There are all some really great resources that I think would be a help to you all.

Illustration - transitioning to a spiritual conversation with the funeral director

- The goal is not to save the person. God doesn't need you to sell the gospel. He just wants you to tell it. It's just to have the conversation. It's just to give them an opportunity.

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

The woman's reply reflected her confusion. She was still thinking in terms of physical water (her response is similar in tone to Nicodemus' response)

John 3:4 - Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

In her question, she is obviously anticipating a negative answer from Jesus. She was skeptical of this stranger's ability to provide the living water.

Illustration - if it's too good to be true, it's too good to be true

Even the revered patriarch Jacob could not provide water without expending the effort to dig this well, and in her mind this random guy was not greater than Jacob.

And yet, ironically, Jesus was greater than Jacob, and the living water Jesus spoke of was not physical water. He's going to explain that next.

5.) He Spoke of Ultimate Fulfillment (Eternal Life)

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:

Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again - Jacob was rightly accorded a place of honor by both Jews and Samaritans, yet, as Jesus pointed out, everyone who drank of the water from his well would thirst again.

Application - you'll never find fulfillment in things; you ever notice that the people with the most seem incredibly unhappy?

14 But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life - It is a measure of Jesus' incomparable greatness that he could provide fulfillment through such living water...and the source of such fulfillment and such water was Himself.

Living water - salvation in all its fulness, including forgiveness of sin and the ability and desire to live an obedient life that glorifies God

- The Old Testament uses the metaphor of living water to describe the spiritual cleansing and new life that comes at salvation through the transforming power of the Holy Spirit

Exodus 17:6 - Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

Isaiah 55:1 - Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.

Jeremiah 2:13 - For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.

1 Corinthians 10:4 - And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw - still thinking primarily on the physical level she replied eagerly wanting the water (almost like the fountain of youth) ...if I can drink this water and avoid this trip and have everlasting life, that sounds like a great package.

- His response is similar to that of the Galilean crowd, who responded to Jesus' teaching about the bread from heaven by wanting Jesus to give them the bread
- Illustration - this is how people approach Jesus today. They look for satisfaction from Jesus, and not in Jesus.

If you're going to share Jesus with others, a great place to start is talking about is heaven, everlasting life, ultimate fulfillment in Jesus.

Jesus had peaked this woman's interest, and gotten her attention. Now it was time to confront the heart of her problem (which is the heart of humanity's problem as well): sin.

6.) He Spoke of Her Sin

16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.

17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

His command here exposed the heart of the issue - her sin.

Jesus knew exactly where His request would lead, and it was exactly where He wanted to go. She needed to be confronted with her sin.

When we come to Christ in salvation, we turn from our sin to faith in Jesus Christ. Sin is the problem. Faith in Christ is the solution. Before we can be found, we must be lost. Before we can be saved, we must understand our need for salvation.

I have no husband - taken back and ashamed the woman replies evasively, "I have no husband". She wasn't lying, but she wasn't really telling the truth either. She was trying to conceal her sin.

Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hadst had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly - Jesus devastating reply forced her to confront her sin face on. He unmasked her sin.

19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

By calling Jesus a prophet, she affirmed that His knowledge of her sinful lifestyle was accurate. No longer did she attempt to hide her sin; rather, this statement constituted an acknowledgment of her sin to Jesus.

7.) He Answered Her Questions

She wanted the well of everlasting life. She recognized her sinfulness. She wondered where she should go to seek God and His grace.

20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

Her comment highlighted a major point of contention between Jews and Samaritans. Both believed that under the old covenant God directed His people to worship Him in a specific location (cf. Deut. 12:5; 16:2; 26:2).

- The Samaritans, accepting only the Pentateuch as canonical, chose Mount Gerizim. It was at nearby Shechem that Abraham first built an altar to God (Gen. 12:6–7), and it was from Mount Gerizim that the Israelites proclaimed the blessings of obedience to God's commandments (Deut. 11:29).
- The Jews, accepting the complete Old Testament canon, recognized that God had chosen Jerusalem as the place where He was to be worshiped (2 Chron. 6:6; cf. Pss.48:1–2; 78:68–69; 132:13).

Genesis 33:18-20 - And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padanaram; and pitched his tent before the city. And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of the children of Hamor, Shechem's father, for an hundred pieces of money. And he erected there an altar, and called it Elelohe-Israel.

2 Chronicles 6:6 - But I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have chosen David to be over my people Israel.

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

Jesus reply is fascinating. He says that the issue would soon be irrelevant. True worship would not take place in Mount Gerizim or in Jerusalem.

- Jesus death and resurrection would make both obsolete.
- During the Jewish revolt against Rome in AD 70, the temple would be destroyed, and thousands of Samaritans would be slaughtered on Mount Gerizim.

22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews.

Nevertheless, at the time of Jesus' dialogue with the woman (since He hadn't been crucified yet), the Jews were right, and the Samaritans were wrong about worshipping in Jerusalem.

Ye worship ye know not what; we worship what we know - because the Samaritans rejected most of the Old Testament, the Samaritans lacked the full revelation that it contained

For salvation is of the Jews - in two senses

- The revelation of salvation came first to them and then to the rest of the world (Romans 3:1-2; 9:3-5)
- The source of salvation (the Messiah) was Himself a Jew (Romans 9:5)

Zechariah 9:9 - Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

Luke 24:47 - And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

But the hour cometh, and now is - There's coming a day and in a sense it's already here

When the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth - there's coming a day in which the location of worship is not really the issue, but rather the nature of worship

- What is the right nature of worship?
 - Truth - it needs to be doctrinally right, based in the Word
 - Spirit - internal, not just external conformity to ceremonies and rituals (as it was for many in the first century)

For the Father seeketh such to worship Him - this is who and how the Father wants to be worshipped

Isaiah 29:13 - Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:

Philippians 3:3 - For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

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

Proverbs 15:8 - The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

24 God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

God is a Spirit - this is the classical biblical definition of the nature of God; at the core of His nature, He is a Spirit

And they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth - True worship does not consist of mere outward conformity to religious standards and duties, but

emanates from the inside and is consistent with the truth God has revealed about Himself in His Word

1 Samuel 16:7 - But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.

Psalms 51:17 - The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

8.) He Spoke of Himself

25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.

The woman saith unto him, - still confused (she doesn't know the cross or the church age is coming), she says

I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things - She's still confused, but she still expresses her hope that one day the Messiah would clarify all of these vexing religious questions. She was putting her hope and trust in Messiah.

Deuteronomy 18:15-18 - The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken; According to all that thou desiredst of the LORD thy God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, neither let me see this great fire any more, that I die not. And the LORD said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he - Jesus says, "I am the one you are looking for."

- Jesus' words would have rocked the woman to the core of her being.
- The man who just a few minutes earlier had made a simple request for a drink of water now claimed to be the long-awaited Messiah.
- How does she respond to his incredible claim that Jesus made? Faith.
 - We'll see this next week, but she went and proclaimed Jesus to her entire village, a fact that strongly suggests she had genuinely put her faith and trust in Jesus as Messiah.
 - She recognized her need for spiritual life.
 - She recognized her sin.

- She embraced Jesus as her Messiah and Saviour.

27 And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?

And yet, for Jesus, this is what it was all about.

Jesus was come to seek and to save the lost.

Just as Jesus went forth, God has called us to go forth...to have spiritual conversations with lost people, to tell people about Jesus, to invite people to church.

Coming out of today's sermon, I'm going to challenge you to do two things leading into Easter

- a. Pray - Between now and Easter (14 days), I want to ask you to pray to God for opportunities and for specific people by name
 - i. Illustration - bring people's names to your group prayer time
- b. Invite
 - i. In the kitchen area we have stacks of Easter invite cards (stacks of 5). I want to encourage you to take at least one of those stacks and invite 5 people that you know.
 1. Illustration - pairing them with cookies and handing them out to our neighbors
 2. You might grab a lot more invite cards. Go for it. But I want to encourage you to at least take one.
 3. Some might want to canvas a street. Packets for that will be in the back.
 - ii. We also have yard signs in the kitchen as well. I'd encourage you to grab one and put it up at your home.
 1. In your yard, on your door, in your window, back seat of your car

You are an evangelist. You are spreading the good news of something.

- Favorite restaurant
- Nature hike
- Hobby

My question for you today is this: will you be an evangelist for Jesus? Oh that we would come together as a church this Easter and go forth.

Invitation

Lord help us to pray for the lost.

Lord help us to invite the lost.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 8 – JOHN 4:1-27

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 4:1-8</p>	<p>How did Jesus interact with the Samaritan woman at the well in these verses? How can we follow His example in talking with others about Jesus today?</p>
<p>T Read John 4:9-15</p>	<p>How did Jesus interact with the Samaritan woman at the well in these verses? How can we follow His example in talking with others about Jesus today?</p>
<p>W Read John 4:16-27</p>	<p>How did Jesus interact with the Samaritan woman at the well in these verses? How can we follow His example in talking with others about Jesus today?</p>
<p>T Read John 4:28-42</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 4:28-42</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 4:28-42

Review

He was intentional

He engaged her by finding common ground (the water)

He looked beyond cultural prejudice (he saw her as a person in need of a Savior)

He transitioned from the physical to the spiritual

He spoke of ultimate fulfillment (eternal life)

He spoke of her sin

He answered her questions

He spoke of Himself (I am the one you're looking for)

This passage is the first recorded instance of cross-cultural evangelism in the New Testament. It foreshadows the later spread of the gospel to the Samaritans and the Gentiles after Israel rejected salvation and the Savior (cf. Matt. 22:1–14; Luke 14:16–24).

Sermon

9.) She Immediately Became an Evangelist for Jesus

28 The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

The woman then left her waterpot - Why the woman left her waterpot behind is not stated. It may be that in her haste to tell the others about her conversation with Jesus she forgot it. Or she may not have filled it yet, and not wanted to carry the empty pot to the village and back. Whatever the reason may have been, she left her waterpot.

What did she do next?

And went her way into the city, and saith to the men - So profound was Jesus' impact on her that she did not hesitate to share the news about Him—even with those familiar with her awful, sinful reputation. Jesus had read her heart and forced her to face who she really was. She had already recognized her need (4:15), her sin (4:19), her true condition (4:26) and that He was the source of her eternal life. Now she eagerly desired to communicate her discovery to others.

Application - there is a myth in Christianity today that says in order to be an evangelist for Jesus (one who spreads the good news of Jesus), you need to be a mature, knowledgeable, experienced Christian

- The idea that you need some kind of a class or certificate or something.
- You know what that is? It's a load of bologna.
- After Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, you know what happened when people got saved?

- They got baptized. That's the outward demonstration of the decision you made.
 - Illustration - marriage and wedding ring
 - I'm excited that we have baptisms scheduled in both services next Sunday morning at 8:30 and 10. If you're interested in getting baptized, Easter is an awesome day to take that step.
- They got plugged in with the community of believers
- They just started telling people about Jesus
 - Acts 8:3-4 - 3 As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. 4 Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.
- It's ironic because sometimes it's those who have been saved the longest that are the stalest and most hesitant about telling others about Jesus.
- "Pastor I don't know all the verses. I wouldn't even know where to start with telling someone about Jesus."
 - First off, our summer groups are going to be all about evangelism and equipping you in that way.
 - Secondly, you might not know all the verses and everything, but do you know what you can share? You can share exactly what this woman shared. Your story.

10.) She Shared Her Story

29 Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

Come see a man which told me all things that ever I did: Is not this the Christ? - The woman immediately wanted to give testimony to others of what she had found. She more than likely didn't know the finer points of theology, but she knew what had happened to her, and she knew who did it. It would have been unseemly, presumptuous, and probably ineffective for this woman to attempt to teach the men of the city regarding spiritual truth. Her background hardly qualified her to speak with authority on religious and spiritual matters.

What does it mean to share your testimony?

- It means sharing what has happened to you.
- It means sharing who has done it.

When it comes to sharing your testimony of Jesus working in your life, there's a couple ways you can do this:

- Share your salvation testimony
 - My testimony is how I transition into telling people about the gospel.

- Small Talk
- Talk a little about my church/how important it is to me
- Do you have any kind of a spiritual background or anything like that?
- Salvation Testimony
- Share your testimony of how God is currently working in your life
 - God's provision in your life
 - What you got out of the sermon
 - How God is speaking to you through your study of the Bible
- The common denominator is how God has and is working in your life.
 - The woman at the well immediately became an evangelist for Jesus, and she shared her story with the men of the city.

11.) She Brought People to a Place Where They Could Experience Jesus Themselves

30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

Then they went out of the city and came unto him - she brought them with her to Jesus

Go - go somewhere that I am not

Come - come with me to somewhere that I am

Where is a place that we can bring people where they can experience Jesus for themselves?

- Church
 - Small groups too

Application

- One of the best things you can do with a friend, coworker, neighbor is share them what God has done in your life, and then invite them to come to church and get a taste of it for themselves.
 - When an unsaved person comes to a service, our desire ought to be for them to come a place where
 - They feel loved
 - They experience community/family
 - That takes each of us determining to not just be friendly to others, but to be a friend
 - Illustration - what's the difference?
 - Glad you're here versus
 - Connecting with that person

- They see passionate worship
 - Is worship important? Yes or no.
 - Do you sing like it is?
 - If a lost person sat next to you and they watched you sing to the God you claim to worship, would they come away thinking that worship was important to you.
- They hear the preaching and teaching of the Word of God
 - That's on me, and that's a responsibility I take so seriously.
 - Pray for me with that for the sermon next week.
 - Illustration - bringing visitors as a teen and praying, "Lord, help the Pastor to have a good one today."

Meanwhile, the Scripture pans over to the scene of Jesus and the disciples at the well and we get a birds eye view of some dialogue going on.

12.) He Found Purpose in God's Will and Work

31 In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat - This is happening as the woman is gathering men from the village.

- Having brought back food from Sychar, knowing that Jesus would be hungry from his long day's journey, the disciples urged Jesus to eat.

32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of - I have food to eat and sustain me that you don't know about

Job 23:12 - Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.

What is Jesus talking about?

33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat?

Hath any man brought him ought to eat - Just as the Samaritan woman had misunderstood Jesus' comments on living water, the disciples misunderstood Jesus' comments on food. They wondered if anyone had brought him food to eat, perhaps while they were gone.

34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work - Doing God's will by proclaiming the truth to a lost sinner gave the Lord far more satisfaction than any physical food could provide

- Illustration - skipping a meal because you are up against the clock; it's not that the food isn't important. It's just not as important as what's going on in that moment.
 - Illustration - managing the Hunt and not eating until after it was all over
- What was the work of God? The work of salvation
 - John 6:38-40 - 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. 40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

13.) He Taught the Disciples the Urgency of Evangelism

35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? - Spring harvest was in April. This probably places the events of this passage around December.

Behold I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields - Using the grain growing in the surrounding fields as an object lesson, Jesus impressed on the disciples the urgency of reaching the lost

For they are white already to harvest - Jesus here is using a physical illustration for a spiritual application. Physical harvest time may be in four months, but the spiritual harvest time is right now.

- The disciples had only to lift up their eyes and look at the Samaritans coming toward them, their white clothing forming a striking contrast against the brilliant green of the ripening grain and looking like white heads on the stalks that indicated the time for harvest.

Matthew 9:37-38 - Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

Application - folks the time for us to be involved in the work of evangelism is now.

- Evangelism is not something that we did in the past.
- It is not something that we will do in the future.
- It is something that we must always be conscious of and participating in, in the present.
 - Application - we're emphasizing it leading into Easter, but we ought to be praying, inviting and sharing Jesus with lost people 52 weeks/year.

14.) He Taught the Disciples the Teamwork in Evangelism

36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.

And he that reapeth receiveth wages - when harvest time comes, the one who reaps (gathers the crops) receives wages. They are rewarded for their work. Such is also true in the work of evangelism. What is the reward that we receive in the work of evangelism?

And gathereth fruit unto life eternal - the one who gathers the harvest in evangelism (sees people come to Jesus), receives the joy of gathering fruit for eternity

- Application - to be a part of seeing someone accept Jesus as their Savior and receive everlasting life in heaven is one of the most awesome things you'll ever experience in your life
- And when that happens...

That both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together - in the agricultural realm the same farmer who sows (plants) the seed usually reaps the harvest. But that is not often the case in the spiritual realm.

- Not everyone that you share your story with or invite to Jesus or share the gospel with is going to get saved (far from it)
- Sometimes you're just planting a seed in that person's heart
- At other times, the seed has already been planted by someone else, and they are ready to accept Christ, and you get to a part of the harvest.
- Nevertheless, in the work of evangelism, when someone gets saved everyone involved in the process rejoices together. It's a team effort.

Application - this will free you if you understand it

- God has not called you to sell the gospel. He just wants you to tell it.
- If you talk with someone about Jesus (regardless of how they react), you have done what God has called you to do.
- Illustration - I'm not a big fan of participation trophies in sports, but evangelism is the one area where you win just by participating.

Proverbs 11:30 - The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.

Daniel 12:3 - And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

1 Corinthians 9:19-23 - For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you.

37 And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

Herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth - in this instance (with the Samaritans), the saying is true that one sows, and another reaps

- Others had sowed the seed in the Samaritans' hearts (e.g., The Patriarchs, Moses, and Jesus Himself). Yet the disciples would have the privilege of sharing in the resulting harvest.

38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured, and ye are entered into their labours.

I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour - Jesus had commissioned and appointed his disciples to reap a great spiritual harvest that they had not labored in preparing the way for (during His life and following His resurrection, the disciples were commissioned to tell others about Jesus and they were going to be a part of seeing a lot of people saved) They would reap a harvest that those who had gone before them had prepared the way for. Who prepared the way?

Other men laboured - such as the prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus himself

And ye are entered into their labours - you will reap the spiritual harvest of the spiritual seeds they have sown

Application - God has given us the blessing of being able to be a part of a spiritual harvest in people's lives even today (it's a team effort)

15.) There Was a Great Spiritual Harvest

A.) Because of Her Testimony

39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him - the Samaritans reenter the narrative as the story builds to a powerful conclusion.

For the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that I ever did - The woman shared the details of Jesus' knowledge of her past. Her specific testimony settled for many that He was in fact the Messiah.

40 So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.

So when the Samaritans were come unto him - when they came to Jesus at the well

They besought him that he would tarry with them - they urged constantly to stay longer with them

And he abode there two days - and he did

B.) Because of Their Experience of Him

41 And many more believed because of his own word;

Though they were influenced by the woman's testimony, for many, hearing from Jesus Himself was the clincher.

42 And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world - Such words were not intended to belittle her testimony, but rather to indicate that their time with Jesus confirmed it

And know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world - The Samaritans' confession of Jesus as the Saviour of the world was especially significant because they were not Jewish. Had He only come to save Israel as the Jews preferred to think (and not the whole world), the Samaritans would have been excluded. But the Lord did not come to save Israel alone.

His saving mission extended far beyond the borders of Judea and Galilee, encompassing men and women from every nation on earth. Through His conversation with a non-Jewish woman, Jesus gave an entire non-Jewish village the opportunity to receive salvation. In so doing, He set the precedent for the worldwide impact of His saving work. As His forerunner John the Baptist had earlier exclaimed, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (1:29).

I'm so excited because next week is an incredible opportunity to be a part of a great spiritual harvest.

- Some that we invite will come. Others won't.
- Some that come will be ready to be saved. Others won't.
- Here's the great thing. It's not our responsibility to bring the harvest. It's just our responsibility to spread the seed and give people an opportunity to respond to the Holy Spirit.
- There's all kinds of resources at our disposal.
 - Easter invite cards
 - Yard signs
 - Easter page on the website
 - Digital tract
 - FB Easter event
 - Will you be a part of going forth this Easter?

Invitation

Will you be a part of going forth this Easter?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 9 – JOHN 4:28-42

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 4:28-30</p>	<p>How did the woman at the well react to meeting Jesus? In what ways can we follow her example with those God has placed in our lives?</p>
<p>T Read John 4:31-38</p>	<p>What did Jesus teach His disciples in these verses about purpose, evangelism, and teamwork? How does this apply to my life today?</p>
<p>W Read John 4:39-42</p>	<p>What were the two reasons that many of the Samaritans believed on Jesus? How does this apply to my life today?</p>
<p>T Read John 4:43-54</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 4:43-54</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

John 4:43-54

Review

Calling of the Disciples in Judea

Water into Wine in Cana of Galilee

Cleansing of the temple, miracles, Nicodemus, wilderness ministry in Jerusalem and Judea

John 4:1-4 – 1 When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, 2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) 3 He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee. 4 And he must needs go through Samaria.

In chapter 3, Jesus had an encounter with a religious Jew in Jerusalem, but in chapter 4, on the way to Galilee He had an encounter with a sinful woman in Samaria.

“Chapters 3 and 4 of John’s gospel feature Jesus’s encounters with two individuals who could not be more different: he a Jew, she a Samaritan; he a respected member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish ruling council, she ostracized from society to the extent that she must draw water at the communal well in the heat of the noon hour when no one else would be there (cf. Gen. 24: 11); he a rabbi, a Jewish religious teacher, she steeped in folklore and ignorant about religion; he a man, she a woman. The sheer fact that John chooses to place these two encounters side by side has a powerful impact on the reader.” (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 1906-1910)

- He was intentional (vs. 3-6)
- He engaged her by finding common ground (water) (vs. 7-8)
- He looked beyond cultural prejudice (though she was a Samaritan) (vs. 9)
- He transitioned from the physical to the spiritual (living water) (vs. 10-12)
- He spoke of ultimate fulfillment (eternal life) (vs. 13-15)
- He spoke of her sin (she had had 5 husbands and was now living with a man) (vs. 16-19)
- He answered her questions (vs. 20-24)
- He spoke of Himself (vs. 25-27)
- She immediately became an evangelist for Jesus (vs. 28)
- She shared her story (vs. 29)
 - o Application: How do I tell people about Jesus? Start with your story.
- She brought people to a place where they could experience Jesus themselves (vs. 30)
 - o Application: Take a handful of church tracts and keep them with you.
 - To a friend: Hey, are you going to church anywhere right now? The Lord’s been really growing me and there’s been some awesome stuff going on at my church. You ought to come with me sometime. What are you doing this Sunday?

- To a cashier: I don't know if you have a church, but if you're ever free on a Sunday morning, I'd love to have you visit mine. OR I don't know how you're doing spiritually with everything that's going on, but if you're looking for some spiritual encouragement, I'd love to have you visit my church sometime.
- He found purpose in God's will and work (vs. 31-34)
- He taught the disciples the urgency of evangelism (vs. 35) (the time is now)
- He taught the disciples the teamwork in evangelism (vs. 36-38)
- There was a great spiritual harvest (vs. 39-42)
 - 39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.
 - 40 So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.
 - 41 And many more believed because of his own word;
 - 42 And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.
 - Take note of the difference of the response of the woman at the well and the Samaritans to the gospel versus the non-response of Nicodemus in chapter 3.

Sermon

The Second Sign: The Healing of the Nobleman's Son

1.) The Setting

43 Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee.

- Jesus and the disciples stayed with the Samaritans in Sychar for two days. Then they resumed their journey north to Galilee.

44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.

- Why would Jesus say this, and it be recorded here by John as He on His way back into Galilee (which was sort of His home state)?
 - We live in Camarillo, California. Jesus lived in Nazareth, Galilee.
- "He went into his 'home state' of Galilee, but not, as might have been expected to His 'home town' of Nazareth, for He acted on the saying which He often repeated, that 'a prophet hath no honour in his own country.'" (Gill, 1811)
- Sometimes it's hardest to talk about what God has done in your life with those who know you best, who've known you your whole life.
 - Those in Nazareth knew Jesus as a kid. They knew His parents, His siblings. In their minds, He was only a carpenter, not some great prophet with teaching credentials.

- In Mark 6, the Bible records an instance of Jesus teaching in the synagogue at Nazareth. In response to His teaching, the people were shocked.
 - Mark 6:3-4 – 3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him. 4 But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house. 5 And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. 6 And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.
- Illustration – Jesus own brother James didn't even believe in Him until after Jesus rose from the dead and appeared to him. James would eventually become the pastor of the church at Jerusalem.
- Application: Don't get disheartened by those who belittle your faith. Don't get discouraged by those who can't see past who you used to be. Don't let their criticism shape who you are today. You are a new creation. You are a child of God. Just know, if they criticized Jesus, they'll criticize you.

45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.

Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him – when he arrived in the region of Galilee, presumably not stopping at Nazareth, the Galilaeans in the North welcomed Him. Why?

Having seen all the things that He did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast - Because many of them had made the trip to Jerusalem for Passover and they saw firsthand the cleansing of the temple and the miracles He did while residing in the city (cf. John 2:23)

John 2:23 - Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

Illustration – For many, it would have almost been like meeting a celebrity.

Deuteronomy 16:16 - Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty:

46 So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine – Jesus returns to the location where Nathanael was from and where His first recorded miracle occurred. It is in Cana that John is going to tell us of a second sign/miracle.

And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum – the word for “nobleman” literally means “royal”. This man was most likely either a member of the royal family (connected by birth to Herod Antipas) or an officer of the court. (Barnes, 1834)

- This nobleman’s son was sick at Capernaum, which is probably where they were from. It was about a day’s journey away from Cana.
- As a nobleman, he would have had all kinds of resources at his disposal, and yet, as we will see in a second, he was out of options.
 - o Illustration – Matt (an atheist) becoming a Christian after God took everything from him and broke him.

Capernaum – where Jesus and the disciples made a pit stop after the wedding at Cana

2.) The Confrontation

47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him – the distance between Capernaum and Cana was about twenty to twenty-five miles. It’s actually pretty remarkable how quickly and far the news of Jesus’ return to the region had spread. (keep in mind there is no internet; there is no social media; there are no phones)(Ellicott, 1905)

- He was desperate.
- He was out of options.
- He was in the midst of a situation where he was powerless to fix it.
 - o His money, power, and influence could do nothing for him.
 - o Application: you ever been in a situation like that? Where you had nowhere else to turn but God?
 - We’ve all been there with the problem of our sin. That’s a problem no one but God can fix.
 - Often times, we find ourselves in situations like that in life as well.
- Having heard this news of Jesus’ arrival in Cana and desperate to save his son, the nobleman made the journey to Jesus in Cana.

And besought him that he would come down. - from Cana to Capernaum, seeing that it was down on the north west shore of the Sea of Galilee (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884)

and heal his son: for he was at the point of death – He, though a person of position and honor and wealth, personally made the journey to see Jesus in a last-ditch effort to save his son’s life, who was about to die.

- Illustration – people have a certain air about them when they’re near to death
- Illustration – imagine that your kid is dying. What would you do to save him or her?
 - o Drugs
 - o Treatments

- Diet
- Money
- Chandler's pneumonia and stay at Kaiser Sunset
 - When your kid is suffering and dying, and you can't fix it, it is the most terrifying thing in the world.
- There's nothing wrong with any of these treatments and options, and yet the option we often forget about is bringing our situation to Jesus. We tend to forget about Him until He's our last option. We tend to underestimate how great and powerful our God is as well.
- Illustration – flat tire -> new tires & brakes -> check in the mail -> close encounter in the McPeters' neighborhood
 - God does not always answer our prayers the way we'd like him to, but He is always able to answer our prayers. Too often, we have not because we ask not.
- The nobleman asked Jesus to make the journey with him, assuming that Jesus needed to be there physically to perform such a miracle.
 - Just like we often do, he underestimated how powerful Jesus is.

48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

Then Jesus said unto him – he's speaking directly to the nobleman, but he's addressing others around as well

Except ye (plural) see signs and wonders, ye (plural) will not believe – having just come from Samaria, there's this contrast in Jesus' mind between the Samaritans and the Jews.

- The Samaritans (who were messed up in all kinds of ways) received the Lord in faith without any miracles, and yet the Jews (who were God's chosen people, who had already heard and seen him do plenty of miracles) would not believe unless they saw more

John 2:18 - Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

John 2:23-24 - 23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. 24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men,

John 4:41-42 - And many more believed because of his own word; And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

Undeterred by Jesus' rebuke the nobleman says:

Sir – master, Lord

Come down ere my child die – I'm begging you to come down before my child dies. He could die any moment. Please, we must hurry. I'm begging you.

- He continues in His request.
 - o Jesus had not told him no. So, he kept asking.
- Application: sometimes in prayer, we interpret God's delays as denials, and we just stop praying.
 - o James 5:16 – the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much
 - o Luke 11:5-13 – parable of the friend at midnight
 - He knocks repeatedly on his friend's door and receives what he requests because he stays persistent in knocking.
 - The parable is an illustration of persistent and expectant prayer with God.
 - o Luke 18:1-7 – parable of the widow and judge
 - She consistently insisted that he enact justice in her case, and eventually he did because she wouldn't leave him alone.
 - He told this parable so that men would always pray and not give up.
 - o Too often in prayer, we give up too soon. We don't pray fervently or consistently enough.
 - o And yet when we talk about prayer, God is not a genie in a bottle. He's a Father. There's a major distinction between the two.
 - Genie – grants your wishes regardless of what they are and regardless of how they'll affect the lives of those around you (usually those requests end up causing more harm than good)
 - Father – if a kid asks his dad for something good, that's in his power to provide, and that's in the best interest of his kid, what dad isn't going to want to answer that request? And yet there are other times where dad's say no. Why? Because unlike a genie, dad's don't just care about what their kids want. They care about what is in their best interest, and such is also the case with God.
 - Sometimes we ask God for a good thing we think we need, and the answer is no. But in such cases, God does not answer no because He hates us, but because He loves us, and He sees things from a much higher and much more long term perspective.
- And yet in the case of the nobleman and his son, we see a great example of a passionate, persistent request.
 - o When's the last time you really prayed for something passionately and persistently?

3.) The Climax

50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth – Go back home. Your son lives.

And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way – when he approached Jesus at first, he believed that Jesus could heal his son if he would come down to see him.

- Having been told that his son lived and to return back home, the nobleman's faith was stretched. Jesus was calling on him to believe that not only could He heal his son, but that he could do it from twenty-five miles away, and that he already had.
- How did he respond? Did he have faith? Did He trust God? He did. How do you know? He left. We are told that the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him and went his way. The following day, he began his journey back to Capernaum (cf. vs 52).
- Application: this is how God often works. He works to grow our faith. He leads us by faith one step at a time, each step of faith being bigger than the last.
 - o Why? Because He's trying to teach us to rely on Him outside of our comfort zone of self-reliance.
 - o That's not easy for me. I like control. I like plans. I like order.
 - Sometimes God takes our plans, throws them off to the side, and says, "Do you trust me?" Then take this step of faith.

51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.

And as he was now going down – that must have been the longest 20–25-mile journey of his life

His servants met him – apparently, as soon as the child somehow miraculously recovered, several servants were dispatched to find and tell the nobleman of the news, perhaps even to prevent Jesus from making the journey since the child had already recovered (Gill, 1811)

And told him, saying, Thy son liveth – imagine how excited those servants must have been to deliver that news. This would have been almost the exact opposite of what happened with Jairus' daughter.

Mark 5:35-38 - 35 While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's house certain which said, Thy daughter is dead: why troublest thou the Master any further? 36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe. 37 And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James. 38 And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.

52 Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.

Then he enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend – having heard the good news from his servants, he asked when his son got better.

And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him – it was yesterday at 1 pm. The fever was just gone.

53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.

So the father knew that it was at the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth – that was the exact moment Jesus told him to go home because his son lived

And himself believed, and his whole house – he believed in Jesus and when he returned home, he told his family of what Jesus had done, and they believed too. The nobleman had become a disciple of Jesus.

Matthew 8:8-9, 13 - The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.

54 This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee.

This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee – this is the second specific miracle that John the Apostle record, and it's the second miracle that Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee.

Application: when is the last time you saw God answer a prayer request of yours? Something you persistently, passionately prayed for. Do you have a prayer life? Are you persistently, passionately praying for anything?

James 4:3 – ye have not, because ye ask not

- How do I start?
 - o Start with two lists
 - Requests
 - Answers

- Start with a time

Invitation

The nobleman's son would have never been healed if the man didn't take the time to ask, and we are never going to see God work in amazing ways in our lives if we don't take the time to pray.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 10 – JOHN 4:43-54

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 4:43-46</p>	<p>Describe the setting that is described in these verses. Describe the who, what, when, and where of the situation.</p>
<p>T Read John 4:47-49</p>	<p>In what way did the nobleman exhibit faith in coming to Jesus? In what way did he exhibit a lack of faith in his request?</p>
<p>W Read John 4:50-54</p>	<p>In what way did Jesus' response call the nobleman to greater faith? How do we know that the nobleman took that step of faith?</p>
<p>T Read John 5:1-18</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 5:1-18</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 5:1-18

Review

Jesus' First Ministry Circuit (chapters 1-4) prequel to the other gospels account of Jesus

- Calling of the Disciples in Judea
- Water into Wine in Cana of Galilee
- Cleansing of the Temple, Miracles, and Nicodemus Encounter in Jerusalem
- Preaching and Baptizing Ministry in the Judean Wilderness
- Woman at the Well in Samaria
- Healing of the Nobleman's Son in Galilee

OPPOSITION TO JESUS' MINISTRY

- John 5-12 presents the remainder of Jesus' public ministry following His first ministry circuit, up to His crucifixion.
- Jesus' cleansing of the temple had stirred up antagonism (2:13-22), which only grew as His ministry gained popularity (4:1-3). The outbreak of hostility toward Christ was triggered by an incident at a pool in Jerusalem known as Bethesda. His rejection of self-righteous Jews and His violation of the Jewish traditional regulations concerning the Sabbath fanned the flames of resentment into open opposition. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 196)

For, it was at this pool of Bethesda that Jesus was going to perform His third miracle, but He was going to do so in a quite controversial way.

The Third Sign: The Healing of the Lame Man

1.) The Context

1 After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

After this – indicates that the incident took place at an unspecified time after Christ's ministry in Galilee had concluded.

- John only recorded one event from that period: the healing of the Nobleman's Son (John 4:43-54).
- However, the Synoptic Gospels relate many more events:
 - o Luke 4:14-9:50 and Mark 1:14-9:50 are both related to Jesus' Galilean ministry.
 - o Jesus' rejection at Nazareth (Luke 4:16-31)
 - o Jesus' extended preaching tour (Matt. 4:23-24)
 - o Jesus' healings of a demon possessed man (Mark 1:21-28), Peter's mother-in-law (Matt. 8:14-17), a leper (Luke 5:12-16), and a paralytic (Mark 2:1-12). (MacArthur, 2006, p. 196)

There was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem - After an extended stay in Galilee, Jesus returns to Jerusalem to attend an unspecified Jewish festival. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2213-2214)

- Since Jesus went to Jerusalem for the festival, It likely would have been one of the three Jewish festivals that all Jewish males were required to attend: Passover, Tabernacles, or Pentecost (cf. Deut. 16:16 and Ex. 23:14-17).

John 2:13 - And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,

Exodus 23:14-17 - Three times thou shalt keep a feast unto me in the year. Thou shalt keep the feast of unleavened bread: (thou shalt eat unleavened bread seven days, as I commanded thee, in the time appointed of the month Abib; for in it thou camest out from Egypt: and none shall appear before me empty:) And the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labours, which thou hast sown in the field: and the feast of ingathering, which is in the end of the year, when thou hast gathered in thy labours out of the field. Three times in the year all thy males shall appear before the Lord GOD.

Deuteronomy 16:16 - Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty:

2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.

By the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches - Since many of John's readers (including us) may be unfamiliar with the Palestinian landscape, he sets the stage by describing the scene: the Pool of Bethesda, located near an area pertaining to sheep (perhaps the sheep market for the temple sacrifices and/or the sheep gate into the city...either of which would have probably been near the temple) and surrounded by five porches supported by columns. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2214-2215)

Nehemiah 3:1 - Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests, and they builded the sheep gate; they sanctified it, and set up the doors of it; even unto the tower of Meah they sanctified it, unto the tower of Hananeel.

3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

In these - in these porches (which would have provided protection from the elements such as the sun)

Lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water - there were a crowd of sick, helpless people.

- It would have been quite the scene of destitution. It would have looked, and felt, and smelt like somewhere between a homeless encampment and the ICU unit of a hospital. It would have been quite the heartbreaking sight.
- Some were blind. Some were unable to walk. Some were paralyzed. But they all had one thing in common. They were waiting for the moving/bubbling of the waters in the pool. Why?

4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

An angel would periodically stir up the water resulting in a bubbling in the pool. Whoever was first into the water after the bubbling occurred was healed of whatever disease he or she had.

Many modern versions place doubt on the authenticity of the end of verse 3 and all of verse 4. Some omit these verses from the text. Others will place a footnote next to them indicating that the best and earliest manuscripts don't have these verses. We'll run into this issue again in John's account of the woman caught in adultery in John 7:53-8:11.

- Why is that? Why do some versions accept these verses and others cast doubt on them?
- It comes down to the ancient manuscripts/copies of the New Testament that the version is based on. On the one hand you have the vast majority of Greek manuscripts/copies of the New Testament that were accepted, copied, and transmitted down throughout church history and that Bible versions such as the King James Version are based off of. On the other hand, you have a relatively small number of very old manuscripts/copies of the New Testament that the early church did not decide to accept, copy, and transmit down through church history. These were recently discovered (in the last couple hundred years) primarily in Egypt and they disagree widely with one another. In passages like John 5 and John 7-8, modern versions follow the lead of those recently discovered manuscripts, whereas, for instance, the King James Version of the Bible follows the lead of the majority of manuscripts/Greek copies of the Bible that the church has accepted and used for nearly 2000 years.
 - o This is one of the reasons why our church uses the King James Version of the Bible.
- Furthermore, in the specific case of John 5:3-4, we have very early testimony from church leaders on this specific text that includes verses 3 and 4.
 - o Tertullian (3rd century) - "An angel used to do things when he moved the Pool of Bethesda. Those who complained of ill-health used to watch out for him, for anyone who got down there before the others, after washing had no further reason to complain." (On Baptism, Chapter 5)
 - o Ambrose (4th century) - ""Therefore it is said: "An angel of the Lord went down according to the season into the pool, and the water was troubled; and he who

first after the troubling of the water went down into the pool was healed of whatsoever disease he was holden." This pool was at Jerusalem, in which one was healed every year, but no one was healed before the angel had descended." (On the Mysteries, Chapter 4, 22)"

- Chrysostom (late 4th century) - "And "an Angel came down and troubled the water," and endued it with a healing power, that the Jews might learn that much more could the Lord of Angels heal the diseases of the soul. Yet as here it was not simply the nature of the water that healed, (for then this would have always taken place,) but water joined to the operation of the Angel; so in our case, it is not merely the water that works, but when it has received the grace of the Spirit, then it puts away all our sins. Around this pool "lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water"; but then infirmity was a hindrance to him who desired to be healed, now each has power to approach, for now it is not an Angel that troubles, it is the Lord of Angels who works all." (Homilies 36 on the Gospel of John, John 5:2-3)
- The earliest Greek manuscript in which these words appear in their entirety is 078 from the 6th century. The earliest Latin manuscript with all of the words is the Old Latin from the 4th century. The earliest Greek manuscript with verse 4 without verse 3 is Alexandrinus from the 5th century. In contrast, the earliest manuscripts to omit the words in their entirety are P66 and P75 from the 3rd century. (KJV Today)
- Additionally, in regards to the claim that verses 3-4 contain wording not typical of John, it should be pointed out that "this passage is not a unique divine revelation conveyed through John but a mere retelling of an existing oral tradition in Jerusalem, perhaps formulated as a "saying". The author of such a tale was obviously not John. The words, "εκδεχομενων την του υδατος κινησιw" in verse 3 were part of John's own narrative, but all of verse 4 is a retelling of an existing oral tale. If John simply cited the oral tale verbatim, there is no reason to expect Johannine vocabulary and style in verse 4." (KJV Today)
 - For further treatment of the vocabulary in John 5:3-4, see Maurice Robinson's *New Testament Textual Criticism: The Case for Byzantine Priority* 101-103.

I say all of this to say we can be confident in the Word of God, including verses 3-4 which provide important context for the miracle that Jesus is about to perform.

- There is a pool surrounded by five porches
- There are a multitude of physically impaired people
- They are there waiting for the bubbling of the waters so that they might be the first one in the water and be healed of their infirmity

5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

Which had an infirmity thirty and eight years – there was a specific man there waiting under the porches who had suffered from a condition for 38 years

- We're not told exactly of his condition, but from what we're told in verse 7, he would have been paralyzed or too physically weak to move on his own (MacArthur, 2006)

2.) The Confrontation

6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

When Jesus saw him lie – Jesus, amongst the crowd, spotted this helpless man. He saw him.

And knew that he had been now a long time in that case – Jesus knew supernaturally that the man had been suffering from such an ailment for such a long time

He saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? – Do you want to be healed?

Illustration – what are you doing Jesus? Why are you walking up to this guy and asking a question like that?

- Personally, I prefer to avoid confrontation over things that aren't a big deal (although as a leader I have to confront on important things).
 - o Example – being overcharged at IHOP and Liz going back in and making sure that we got our two dollars back
- Here's Jesus, and He just out of the blue walks straight up to this guy, and says, "Do you want to be healed?"
 - o Um, first off, who are you? And second, no duh, I want to be healed. Here's why I haven't been.
- Why does Jesus ask such an obvious question? It seems that the point of Jesus's question is not so much to elicit a yes, but to draw out the man's own perception of the obstacle that had kept him from being healed up to this point. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2223-2225)
 - o What was the obstacle? Listen to his response.

7 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

The impotent man answered him – implied in his answer here to Jesus, is "No duh, I want to be healed, but"

Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me in the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me – I sit here and wait and wait and wait, and when the water finally bubbles, I try to get into the water, but because of my condition I can't get down fast enough. Perhaps if I had a servant or a friend to help me get down, I could reach the water first, but, sir, I am not only diseased, but also poor and without a friend.

- Illustration – You can only imagine how many times over perhaps the years he had seen the water bubble and rushed down to the pool, only to be beaten out time and time again by someone else.
 - Have you ever been in a situation where you were so close to getting something, but you just couldn't get it? For example, have you ever played those claw games? At first there's hope, but then gradually with repeated failure, hope gives way to hopelessness.
 - Such was the case with this man.
 - He found himself in the midst of a hopeless situation that He just couldn't fix.

Application – Have you ever been there before?

- Sin Problem
- Work Problems
- Family Drama
- Health Issues
- Financial Difficulties
- Relationship Troubles
- Addiction
- I think all of us at some point in our lives have felt that like man sitting near that pool who just couldn't see the light at the end of the tunnel...but then came Jesus. And what did Jesus do?

8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk – Get up, pick up your bed mat, and walk.

- Imagine being that man. Imagine not walking for 40 years, and some random guy comes up to you, asks you if you'd like to be healed, and then tells you to stand up, pick up your stuff, and go.
 - You know what Jesus is really saying? You don't need the pool. You just need me. He spoke and the man was healed.
 - Jesus heals the man by his mere word (5: 8), totally apart from the pool's waters from which the man expected healing. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2227-2228)

9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

And immediately the man was made whole – Just as God spoke and brought the universe into being, Jesus' words made this man's body like new. He was healed immediately.

And took up his bed, and walked – Imagine what it would have been like for that man as he made the effort to stand and slowly began to realize that he could, that whatever state he was in before he met Jesus, he no longer was in that state.

- As he rose to his feet and perhaps did a little happy dance, he believed in what Jesus told him to do and obeyed. In so doing, he left behind his hopeless condition and the chains on his life that it imposed.

Application – I don't know what trial you are facing in your life, but I know that Jesus is the answer to it.

Matthew 11:28-30 - 28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

Hebrews 13:5-6 - 5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

Romans 8:28 - 28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

- There are some difficulties He delivers us from, like this man at the pool.
- There are some difficulties He sustains us through, like Paul and his chronic health condition.
- But the one thing we can be sure of is that in our time of need, He is there for us and has promised us that He will never leave us nor forsake us...and that there is coming a day for His followers where there will be no more sickness, pain and death.
 - o Revelation 21:4 - And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.
 - o God's answer to our prayers for deliverance from difficulties is never no. Sometimes it's just not yet.

And on the same day was the sabbath – And boy oh boy is that going to stir up some controversy. Why was that a big deal?

- In fact, the Lord deliberately chose to heal this man on the Sabbath to confront superficial and bankrupt Jewish legalism. The man's condition was not life threatening, and he was constantly at the pool. Jesus could have easily chosen another day to heal him. But the Lord not only wanted to show mercy to this man; He also wanted to call the nation to repentance by confronting the self-righteous and unbiblical stipulations that led to their illusion of spiritual life. They had become experts at substituting their traditions for God's commands (Matt. 15:9). (MacArthur, 2006, pp. 200-201)

Mark 3:2-4 - And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him. And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth. And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.

John 7:23 - If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?

Matthew 12:2-8 - But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day. But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him; How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests? Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless? But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple. But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.

Matthew 12:10-13 - And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him. And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days. Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.

3.) The Controversy

10 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.

The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured – The Jews, probably referring to the religious authorities, confronted this man who was carrying his bed mat around (which was against their oral tradition)

- People didn't carry bed mats around on the Sabbath. This guy would have stuck out like a sore thumb, but this guy was walking for the first time in 40 years. He probably had the biggest grin on his face you've ever seen.
- The authorities spot him. They turn on their sirens, pull him over, and say:

It is the sabbath day: It is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed – What are you doing? It's against God's law to carry your bed on the Sabbath day.

- Now the Old Testament commanded the Jews in Exodus 20 to rest and refrain from work on the Sabbath Day. Jeremiah 17 instructed them not to bear burdens on the Sabbath Day.
 - o Where in the Old Testament does it say not to carry your bed on the Sabbath? It doesn't. It was part of the Jewish leaders' religious traditions that they had elevated to the same level as God's Word. So that in their minds, to disobey their traditions was to disobey God. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2235-2236)

- Application – be very careful that you don't elevate your religious traditions, preferences, application of the Scripture to the level of the Word of God.
 - Your word is not God's word.
- The picture John paints of Jewish sensibilities regarding oral traditions pertaining to the Law shows a religiously shortsighted people who have forgotten the true intent of the Law and, more important still, of the God who gave it to them. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2241-2243)
- Those were the people who tithed even spices— mint, dill, cumin— but neglected “the more important matters of the law— justice, mercy and faithfulness” (Matt. 23: 23). (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2245-2246)

Exodus 20:8-11 - Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Nehemiah 13:15-21 - In those days saw I in Judah some treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sheaves, and lading asses; as also wine, grapes, and figs, and all manner of burdens, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath day: and I testified against them in the day wherein they sold victuals. There dwelt men of Tyre also therein, which brought fish, and all manner of ware, and sold on the sabbath unto the children of Judah, and in Jerusalem. Then I contended with the nobles of Judah, and said unto them, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the sabbath day? Did not your fathers thus, and did not our God bring all this evil upon us, and upon this city? yet ye bring more wrath upon Israel by profaning the sabbath. And it came to pass, that when the gates of Jerusalem began to be dark before the sabbath, I commanded that the gates should be shut, and charged that they should not be opened till after the sabbath: and some of my servants set I at the gates, that there should no burden be brought in on the sabbath day. So the merchants and sellers of all kind of ware lodged without Jerusalem once or twice. Then I testified against them, and said unto them, Why lodge ye about the wall? if ye do so again, I will lay hands on you. From that time forth came they no more on the sabbath.

Jeremiah 17:21 - Thus saith the LORD; Take heed to yourselves, and bear no burden on the sabbath day, nor bring it in by the gates of Jerusalem;

11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, take up thy bed, and walk – Guys, I was at the pool. I've been handicapped for 38 years, and this guy, this guy, this guy, he made me whole, and He told me to pick up my bed and walk away.

12 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

Then asked they him – they further inquired

What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk? – they didn't ask him who healed him...they asked him who told him to break the Jewish oral tradition regarding the Sabbath

- They were more concerned with the keeping of their man-made regulations than they were with the miraculous healing of a man who had suffered for 40 years. (Ellicott, 1905)
 - o Have you ever met someone that just looks for the negative in any situation?
Don't be that person.

13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place.

And he that was healed wist not who it was – he said, “I don't know”

For Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in that place – “I was so excited. I couldn't believe I had been healed. Next thing I know, I look up and He's gone.” Jesus had healed him and then disappeared into the crowd. (Barnes, 1834)

14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple – it seems as if the man had gone immediately to the temple following his healing and encounter with the Jewish authorities, perhaps to say thanks to God for the miraculous healing he had just received and the strange man who had been the conveyor of it.

- And although he likely went to the temple seeking God, while in the temple, God sought out him. Jesus found him. (Barnes, 1834)

And said unto him – and He said

Behold thou art made whole – you have been healed

Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee – Don't keep sinning

- Not all disease and suffering is the result of sin, and yet such certainly can be the case. Jesus' words here seem to imply that this man's suffering may have been connected to past sin in his life.
- Jesus words here serve as a warning not to revert back into continual sin lest a worse situation come upon him, whether in this life or the next. (Barnes, 1834)
John 8:11 - She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.

The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole – in eagerness to share with the religious leaders of the nation the identity of this great teacher

who healed him, the man returns to them. They wanted the identity of the man who told him to pick up his bed on the Sabbath. He told them the identity of the man who healed him. In finding them and telling the Jesus, perhaps the man supposed that they might desire to know Him as well. (Ellicott, 1905)

However, he supposed wrong.

John 4:29 - Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

John 9:15 - Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

4.) The Conflict

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus – they did not follow Him. They did not make inquiry into how He performed such a miracle. They assumed that He was wrong and dangerous. So they persecuted Him. (Barnes, 1834)

And sought to slay Him – and they desired to execute him as the law required for those who broke the Sabbath. Why?

Exodus 31:15 - Six days may work be done; but in the seventh is the sabbath of rest, holy to the Lord: whosoever doeth any work in the sabbath day, he shall surely be put to death.

Because he had done these things on the Sabbath – Because not only had He broken the Sabbath by healing this man on the Sabbath, but He had also incited another to do so in telling the man to carry his bed mat.

17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work – the Sabbath restrictions don't apply to God, and they don't apply to me. He put Himself on equal footing with God the Father.

- Further, although God did rest from creating (Heb. 4:9-10), His work of sustaining the universe is unceasing. In that sense, God is always working (Heb. 1:3).
- Not only is Jesus saying that, but He's also implying that the Father worked through Him in performing the miracle. If the Father provided the power for performing this miracle, then obviously He approves of Jesus performing it on the Sabbath.
- Jesus' statement that He worked on the Sabbath just like the Father was nothing less than a claim to full deity and equality with God (Matt. 12:8). (MacArthur, 2006)

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him – having grasped the seriousness of the claim that Jesus had made, they sought to kill him even more so. Why?

Because he not only had broken the sabbath – not only did he break the Sabbath and incite another to do so

But said also that God was His Father, making himself equal with God - In contrast to the Jews' collective reference to God as "our Father," Jesus called God "My Father". The clear implication, which His opponents readily understood, was that He was claiming to be fully equal with God in nature (cf. 1:1; 8:58; 20:28; Phil. 2:6). (MacArthur, 2006)

- The son of a dog is canine in nature.
- The son of a man is human in nature.
- The Son of God is divine in nature.

John 5:23 - That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

John 8:54 - Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:

John 8:58 - Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

John 14:9 - Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

Application

Like the handicapped man at the Pool of Bethesda, I don't know what troubles are facing you today, but I do know who the answer to them is. It's Jesus. He's always with us in the midst of our troubles. Sometimes He delivers us from them. Sometimes He delivers us through them, but there is coming a day when He will deliver us from trouble altogether. May we look forward in faith and comfort to that day.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 11 – JOHN 5:1-18

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 5:1-5</p>	<p>Describe the setting that is discussed in these verses. Describe the who, what, when, and where of the situation.</p>
<p>T Read John 5:6-9</p>	<p>Why did Jesus ask the man if He wanted to be healed? What is significant about the way in which Jesus healed the man?</p>
<p>W Read John 5:10-18</p>	<p>Why was it significant that Jesus healed this man on the Sabbath? How did Jesus defend Himself? How did the authorities react?</p>
<p>T Read John 5:19-30</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 5:19-30</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 5:19-30

Review

John 5:1-15

Jesus healed the lame man at the Pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath (Jewish day of rest) and told him to pick up his bed and walk.

The Jews confront the man for carrying his bed.

- He tells them that the man who healed him told him to carry his bed, but he didn't know who it was.

Later, Jesus finds the healed man in the temple. They talk.

The healed man relays Jesus' identity as his healer to the Jewish authorities, and they were not happy.

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

- The Sabbath restrictions don't apply to God and, they don't apply to me.
 - o The answer is this: the one who created the Sabbath has authority over it; he determines its purpose, its use, and its limitations. As Jesus would point out later, even the Jews made exceptions to the rule of refraining from work on the Sabbath, as in the case of circumcision (cf. m. Šabb. 18.3; 19.2- 3). (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2271-2274)
 - o Jesus seizes upon this precedent: if it was deemed appropriate to override the Sabbath command in order to perform a circumcision, was it not equally permissible to heal an entire man on the Sabbath (7: 23)? (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2276-2278)
- I did this miracle through the power of the Father. If He provided the power, then He obviously approves of the miracle.
- By calling God "His Father" Jesus was claiming to share the same nature as the Father.
 - o The son of a dog is canine in nature.
 - o The son of a man is human in nature.
 - o The Son of God is divine in nature.
- The Father and I are equal teammates (to say so was radical).

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

- Having grasped the seriousness of the claims that Jesus just made in making Himself equal with Father, the Jewish religious leaders wanted to kill Him even more.

All of this sets the stage for a lengthier response from Jesus to the Jews. He primarily has a couple of options here. He can backtrack what He had said and explain how the Jews were misinterpreting His words (e.g. I'm not actually claiming to be equal with God). On the other hand, He could double down and go into more detail about His equality with God. Guess which one He chooses?

- He doubles down.
- And we're going to look at the first half of His response this morning which focuses in on His unity with the Father

Sermon

1.) The Unity of the Father and Son

19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

Then Jesus answered and said unto them – the claim to be God is a serious one. In virtue of Jesus' response to the Sabbath controversy, the Jews "sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." Now, had Jesus not meant to imply His deity, He certainly would have taken the opportunity to clarify Himself and correct their misunderstanding. Yet, Jesus does not do that here. (MacArthur, John Volumes 1&2 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2006, p. 211)

Verily, verily, I say unto you – truly, truly

The Son can do nothing of himself. - I cannot do anything independent of or in opposition to the Father (which is what the religious leaders were claiming He did in the breaking of the Sabbath) (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884). I cannot do anything outside of the will and direction of the Father (Barnes, 1834). We are perfectly unified.

but what he seeth the Father do -I'm doing what I see God the Father doing.

- Jesus has coexisted with the Father from eternity past. He's seen the extent and character of the Father's actions, and Jesus acts in the same manner.
- Jesus claims that everything he (the Son) does he is able to do only because he has seen the Father do it first. This "apprenticeship analogy" may well be rooted in

Jesus's own earthly experience of learning the craftsman's trade from his adoptive father, Joseph. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2266-2268)

For whatsoever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise – the stuff that God does: I do that too.

- Illustration – imagine if some random guy visited the church and made that claim
- If one does "all" that another does or can do, then there must be equality. If the Son does all that the Father does, then, like him, he must be almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, and infinite; or, in other words, he must be God. (Barnes, 1834)
- Unique relationships
 - o Jesus intimately knows the Father, sees the Father, and does what the Father does.

John 8:28 - Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

John 9:4 - I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

John 14:10, 20 - Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works...At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

For the Father loveth the Son – God loves Jesus

And sheweth him all things that himself doeth – God shows Jesus all that He is presently doing because they are working together (full disclosure)

And he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel – The Father will share with and direct Jesus to do greater works than, for instance, the healing of the lame man at Bethesda (Barnes, 1834)

That ye may marvel – that you would be amazed

- What are these greater works that the Father and Son would be unified in as they were with the healing of the lame man at the Pool of Bethesda?

John 3:35 - The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.

John 17:26 - And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

Matthew 11:27 - All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

A.) Unified in the Greater Work of Resurrection (raising people to life)

21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

- Illustration - You know how God raises the dead? I do that too.

For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them – as God has power to resurrect the dead and make them alive

- Illustrations

- Elijah raising from the dead the son of the widow of Sarepta (1 Kings 17:22)
- Elisha raising from the dead the son of the Shunamite woman (2 Kings 4:32-35)
- Deut. 32:39 - See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; ...
- 1 Samuel 2:6 - The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

Even so the Son quickeneth whom he will – in the same way, by the same power and authority, the Son gives life to whomever He chooses.

- He is able to give physical life to the physically dead.

- Illustration

- Raising Jairus' daughter from the dead (Luke 8:54-55)
- Raising the widow's son from the dead (Luke 7:14)
- Raising Lazarus from the dead (John 11:43) (Poole, 1990)
- He will raise the dead to appear before Him in the end times.
 - John 11:25 - Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.

- He is also able to give spiritual life to the spiritually dead.

- We are born spiritually dead. We are born lost in our sin. And yet, just as God breathed life into the original creation, it was granted to Jesus to award eternal life to those who believe in him. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2283-2285)
- This may be called “rebirth” (Titus 3: 5) or “new birth” (1 Pet. 1: 3; cf. v. 23); “birth from God” (John 1: 13), “birth from above” (John 3: 3, 7) or “birth of [water and] spirit” (i.e., spiritual birth; John 3: 5, 8); “adoption” (Rom. 8: 15, 23; Gal. 4: 5; Eph. 1: 5); or “new creation” (2 Cor. 5: 17; Gal. 6: 15). Whatever the specific terminology used, Jesus’s

words to Nicodemus retain their truthfulness: without such coming-to-life-again people will remain in “death” (John 5: 24), in “darkness” (3: 19), and under the wrath of God (3: 36). And the only mediator and giver of this life is Jesus Christ. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2285-2289)

- He is able to give spiritual life to the spiritual dead.

2 Kings 4:32-35 - And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed. He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the LORD. And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm. Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.

John 11:43-44 - And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

Luke 7:14-15 - And he came and touched the bier: and they that bare him stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

Luke 8:54-55 - And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat.

B.) Unified in the Greater Work of Judgment

22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

Illustration – You know how God is going to judge the world? Well, actually that’s me. He’s going to do that through me. All of you guys will stand before me one day.

For the Father judgeth no man – The Father judges no man apart from the Son. Why?

Since God is the “judge of all the earth” (Gen. 18:25; cf. 1 Sam. 2:10; 1 Chron. 16:33; Ps. 82:8; 94:2; 96:13; 98:9), the fact that the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son further attests to Christ’s deity. (MacArthur, John Volumes 1&2 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2006, p. 214)

But hath committed all judgment unto the Son – Because the Father has committed the office of judge to the Son and will judge the world through the Son.

- Acts 17:31 - Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man (Jesus) whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.
 - Once again, in these verses, Jesus is showing His equality with God. In verse 17, He affirmed that He had the same power over the Sabbath that His Father did. In verse 19, He affirmed that He did the same things as His Father. In verse 21, He affirmed that He had the same power as the Father to raise the dead. In verse 22, He affirmed that He Had the same power as the Father to judge humanity. (Barnes, 1834)

4 Judgments

- Judgment Seat of Christ
 - At the rapture or shortly thereafter.
 - Based on works performed after the individual was saved.
 - Good works - rewarded
 - Vain works - burnt up (1 Cor. 3:12-15)
- Israel (Jew)
 - At the second coming
 - He will take them alone into the wilderness where He will plead with them face to face (Ez. 20:33-38)
 - They will be judged as to whether they will truly turn to God and accept His King. The result will be the purging of the nation, with many entering into the land to enjoy the long-awaited kingdom of the Son of David.
- Nations (Gentile)
 - At the second coming, all nations will be brought before the Lord (Matt. 25:31-46).
 - Nations will be judged as to their treatment of the Jewish remnant during the Tribulation period, which will be an indication of the general heart attitude of the individual toward God and His purposes.
 - The Gentiles at this judgment were received or rejected on the basis of their reception or rejection of the gospel that was preached by the brethren. Those who accepted their gospel accepted the messenger and those who rejected their gospel rejected the messenger. The Lord had said, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven". (Matt. 18:3). This gospel of the kingdom required personal faith and the new birth. Such faith and new birth were best evidenced by the works which they produced. (Pentecost, 2010, p. Loc 7576)
 - Sheep nations will be granted entrance into the kingdom. Goat nations will be denied participation in the kingdom and will go away into eternal punishment.

- Great White Throne
 - After the millennial kingdom and the second resurrection, the unregenerate dead will be judged. (Rev. 20:11-15)
 - It will take place before the Great White Throne after heaven and earth have fled away.
 - Participants will be judged as to whether their names are in the book of life and then according to their works. (Feinberg, 1985, pp. 360-361)

Acts 10:42 - And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.

2 Tim. 4:1 - I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

Romans 14:10-12 - But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.

2 Cor. 5:10 - For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Revelation 20:11-12 - And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

Matthew 25:31-46

i.) Why?

Why does the Father share with the Son His power and authority to raise the dead and issue judgment?

23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

That – in order that

All men should honor the Son, even as they honour the Father – God's purpose in entrusting all of His works and judgment to the Son is that we would honor the Son as we honor the Father.

- Illustration – imagine someone walked in the back door of the church and said, “What God does, I do that too. We’re in perfect sync. We’re on the same level. Like He raises the dead, I raise the dead. He’s actually going to judge all of you through me. And the reason for that is because He wants you to honor me the same way you honor Him. Whoa!
- It is only fitting that those equal in nature (vv. 17-18), works (vv. 19-20), power (vs. 21), and judgment (vs. 22) would be given equal honor as well. (MacArthur, John Volumes 1&2 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2006, p. 214)

Isaiah 42:8 - I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images.

Isaiah 44:6 - Thus saith the LORD the King of Israel, and his redeemer the LORD of hosts; I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.

- If there is one God, that one God will not share his glory with another, and yet the Father shares His glory with Jesus, then Jesus must be God.

He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him – those who do not receive the Son in faith and honor Him as equal with God the Father (such as Jews, Muslims, Jehovah’s Witnesses), do not honor God the Father who sent the Son to humanity.

- Some people say, “We all worship the same God. Why can’t we just get along?” That is not true.
- You cannot worship God and reject Jesus at the same time. To reject Jesus is to reject God because Jesus is God.

Matthew 28:19 - Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

2 Corinthians 13:14 - The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen.

John 15:23-24 - He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

ii.) Who?

Jesus has the power to make alive who He wills. Who has Christ chosen to give life to, and who will be judged?

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Verily, verily I say unto you – truly, truly I'm telling you

He that heareth my word – He that listens to and comprehends my word, my doctrine, my teaching

and believeth on Him that sent me – believes on God the Father by accepting the One He has sent

hath everlasting life – presently possesses everlasting life (immediately receives it from Jesus)

- Jesus has chosen to give life to those who put their faith and trust in Him and the one who sent Him.

Romans 10:17 - So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

- Salvation comes when the Word of God is heard and believed. That's actually what Jesus is saying here in verse 24.
 - He that **heareth** my **Word** and **believeth** on Him that sent me hath everlasting life.

And shall not come into condemnation – Those who receive Jesus in faith will be given everlasting life. The rest will be judged.

John 3:16, 18, 36 – 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

- There is life and there is judgment and what distinguishes between the two is what you do with Jesus. Will you receive Him in faith, or will you reject Him?

But is passed from death unto life – that one who receives Jesus though he was dead spiritually is now spiritually alive. They have been raised to spiritual life through Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:1 - And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

Who does Jesus to give life to? Those who receive Him in faith.

- We were all destined for judgment from Christ because we were spiritually dead in our sin, but through faith in Jesus Christ's death, burial, and resurrection we can be saved from our sins, made spiritually alive, and delivered from the judgment we deserved.
- Jesus has chosen to give life to those who receive Him in faith.
John 6:40 - And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 11:26 - And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

John 20:31 - But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

1 John 5:11-13 - And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

John 10:27-30 - My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one.

Romans 8:1 - There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

1 John 3:14 - We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.

iii.) When?

Jesus gives life to those who receive Him in faith. When does that take place? When does the judgment take place?

25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

Verily, verily I say unto you – Truly, truly, I'm telling you

The hour is coming and now is – there is a future time period and yet also a present time period in which

when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live – those who hear Jesus' word and receive it will live

- Jesus here is talking about two different types of resurrection: one present and one future. (Wright, 2003, p. 442)
 - In the present those who receive Jesus' words in faith, though they were spiritually dead in their sin, are made spiritually alive right here and now.
 - Ephesians 2:1, 5 – 1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)
 - Colossians 2:13 - And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;
 - In the future those same people who have been spiritually resurrected will also be physically raised from the dead to live with God forever and ever.
 - 1 Cor. 15:51-53 - 51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.
 - What does that mean? How does that happen? We'll talk about that in a moment. But for now I want you to understand the when. There is spiritual resurrection in the present. There is physical resurrection in the future.

Ephesians 5:14 - Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

26 For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

- The Son can give life (spiritually and physically) (vs. 21) because, like the Father, He has life in Himself.
 - Some people try to twist Jesus' words here to say that God created Jesus and gave Him life, but we already know from John's introduction to the book that Jesus is uncreated, eternal

God who possessed life within Himself from the very beginning.

- What Jesus is saying is that in His condescended human state during His incarnation, the Father granted Him the authority to give both physical and spiritual life. (MacArthur, John Volumes 1&2 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2006, p. 222)

Exodus 3:14 - And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

John 1:4 - In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

John 14:6 - Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

John 17:2-3 - As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

And hath given him authority to execute judgment also – the Father has appointed the Son as judge over all to execute judgment

Because he is the Son of man – As God in human flesh, a man who was tempted in all things like we are, yet without sin, Jesus is uniquely qualified to be mankind's judge (Heb. 4:15).

- The phrase Son of Man, one of Jesus' favorite titles for Himself, comes from Daniel's messianic description of the Son of Man as one who was given "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed." (MacArthur, John Volumes 1&2 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2006, p. 223)

Daniel 7:13-14 - I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

Hebrews 2:7-9 - Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands: Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

iv.) How?

You talk about resurrection and judgment in the future. How will that take place?

28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

Marvel not at this – don't be astonished at my teachings to be the giver of life and judge of the world

for the hour is coming – there is coming a time period

- The word "hour" can refer to an extended period of time (cf. John 4:21-23; 5:25)
 - Paul uses the word "day" in the same way in 2 Cor. 6:2 (Feinberg, 1985, p. 348)

In the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice – Christ will command every person who has ever lived to resurrect bodily, and they will. (Poole, 1990)

- It's important to remember that when someone dies, their body is here, and their soul goes to one of two places: heaven or hell. However, there is coming a day in the end times when those bodies will be resurrected and reunited with their souls, and that's how we will exist for eternity. When that time for resurrection comes to pass, those who are saved are united with a perfect, eternal, glorified body unto life eternal. Further, for those who are lost, they are raised for final judgment at the Great White Throne Judgment and then cast into the Lake of Fire forever. (Sorenson, 2007)
- Once again, there is coming a time period in which Christ will command every person who has ever lived to resurrect bodily. John 6:39-40 - And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

1 Thessalonians 4:14-17 - For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Revelation 20:5-6 - 5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Revelation 20:11-15 - 11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

1 Cor. 15:42-54

29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

And shall come forth – the dead will be resurrected although not in one resurrection. In verse 29, Jesus clearly distinguishes between the resurrection unto life and the resurrection of judgment as does Daniel 12:2-3.

Daniel 12:2 - 2 And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

- Furthermore, Revelation 20:4-6 also speaks about how these two resurrections will take place at different times with the resurrection of the lost for judgment taking place later at the end of the world.

- The resurrection of the righteous take place in connection with Christ's coming.
 - Christians from the church age will be resurrected at the rapture (1 Thess. 4:16-17; John 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:50-58)
 - Old Testament saints as well as those saved during the Tribulation will be resurrected at the second coming (Rev. 20:4, 6; Daniel 12:1-2; Job 19:25-27).
- 1 Cor. 15:22-24 also teaches us that the resurrections take place in stages. (1) Christ (2) Believers in connection with His coming (3) The unsaved dead at the end of the age
 - "But every man in his own order"(vs. 23) - suggests that there will be a division in the resurrection program
 - Christ is the "first fruits" of the resurrection. This phase of the program was accomplished at the time of Christ's resurrection on the third day.
 - A second group is introduced by the word "afterward" in reference to the resurrection of those that are Christ's at His coming. This word signifies a lapse of time of undesignated duration.
 - It seems better to take the alternative view that the expression they that are Christ's is a non-technical reference to all the redeemed, both of the church, of the Old Testament period, and the tribulation period, all of whom will be raised at the coming of Christ. The word coming would be taken in its widest sense as applying to the second advent and its program and not to the rapture only.
 - "Then cometh the end" (Vs. 24) - Paul is speaking either of the termination of the resurrection program with the resurrection of the unsaved dead at the end of the thousand years or of the end of the age.
 - Your conclusion will depend on whether you believe the second "all" in verse 22 to refer to all humanity or all in Christ. (Pentecost, 2010, pp. Loc 7282-7305)

they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation. – here Jesus distinguishes between the participants of the resurrection unto life and the resurrection unto judgment. He refers to believers as “those who have done good” and unbelievers as “those who have done evil”. This does not mean that resurrection to eternal life or condemnation is dependent upon our good works. Rather it means that those who are saved are known by the changed life that faith should produce.

John 3:19-21 - 19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. 21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Acts 24:15 - And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust.

Romans 2:6-10 - Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

I can of mine own self do nothing - I cannot do anything independent of or in opposition to the Father (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884). I cannot do anything outside of the will and direction of the Father (Barnes, 1834). We are perfectly unified.

As I hear, I judge - I'm judging based on what I'm hearing from the Father and how He is directing me

and my judgment is just - why?

Because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father who sent me - because my will is aligned with the Father's will, and His will is always just. (Gill, 1811)

John 8:15-16 - Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

John 4:34 - Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

John 6:38 - For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

John 17:4 - I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

Application

Here's what Jesus is saying today: there is life and there is judgment. You will receive one of them from me, and it all depends on if you will receive me in faith or not. Have you accepted Jesus in faith? Have you put your faith in trust in His death, burial and resurrection as the payment for your sins?

Christian, you've been passed from death to life. You are no longer a slave to sin. You are a child of God. Are you living in accordance with your new nature in Christ?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 12 – JOHN 5:19-30

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 5:19-22</p>	<p>In what ways are the Father and the Son unified? What are the two greater works that the Father and Son are unified in?</p>
<p>T Read John 5:23-24</p>	<p>Why are the Father and Son unified in these greater works (vs. 23)? Who has Christ chosen to give life to, and who will be judged (vs. 24)?</p>
<p>W Read John 5:25-30</p>	<p>Jesus gives life to those who receive Him in faith. When does that take place (vs. 25-27)? How will the future resurrection and judgment take place (vs. 28-30)?</p>
<p>T Read John 5:31-47</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 5:31-47</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 5:31-47

Review

This all started with Jesus' healing of the lame man at the Pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath.

"Hey, you acted in defiance to God the Father in healing that man on the Sabbath and telling him to pick up his mat."

No I didn't. The Father and I did that together. We were perfectly unified in that action. And not only that but we will be perfectly unified in some greater works.

- In resurrection (giving life)
- In judgment (judging the world)
 - o Why?
 - That everyone would treat the Son as they treat the Father
 - o Who?
 - Those who receive Jesus in faith will be given life. Those who do not will remain in judgment.
 - o When & How?
 - Those who receive Jesus receive spiritual life now and will also be raised physically at Christ's coming to be with God forever. Those who do not receive Jesus in faith, remain condemned before God now and will be raised for final judgment at the end of the world.

In verses 19-30, Jesus emphasized the unity of Him and His Father, but then in verses 31-47, He's going to call on some witnesses in His defense.

1.) The Witnesses for the Son

A.) The witness of Himself

31 If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.

If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true – If I alone testify about myself, then my testimony is insufficient, unreliable and untrue. (MacArthur, 2006)

Illustration – If I told you that yesterday I did a behind the back 360 slam dunk, with a back flip, would you believe me? You would want more than just my word. "Was anyone there?" "Do you have a video?" You wouldn't just take me at my word. I believe this is what Jesus is getting at here.

- If I alone testify about myself, then, from your perspective, my testimony is insufficient, unreliable and untrue.

However, I'm not the only testifying about Myself.

John 8:13-14 - The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true. Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

32 There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

There is another that beareth witness of me – there is someone else that testifies of me

And I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true – and I am 100% certain that His testimony regarding me is true.

- In fact, His testimony is undeniable, uncontradictable, and undefeatable. (Poole, 1990)
- Who is this sure-fire witness? We'll find out in a minute, but for the time being Jesus diverts His attention to another witness.

John 8:17-18 - It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

B.) The Witness of John the Baptist

33 Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.

Ye sent unto John – this is in reference to the events of John 1:19-27 when the Jews sent a delegation of priests and Levites to ask John, “Who are you?”.

- Do you remember how he responded?
 - o I'm not the Christ..." Are you Elijah?" ...I am not..."Are you the prophet?" ...No...."Who are you?" ...I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord. I'm just baptizing with water, but there's another that you don't know yet. Though He's younger than me, He's greater than me, and I'm not even worthy of unlatching His sandals.
 - o You know what He did?

And her bare witness unto the truth – He bore witness of the truth. He testified of Jesus.

John 1:19-27 - And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias. And they which were sent were of the Pharisees. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is,

who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

34 But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.

But I receive not testimony from man – But I'm not depending on John's testimony to establish my identity as the Messiah, the divine Son of God.

- Why not? Because as we'll see shortly, He has a much stronger witness in His case to be the Messiah, the divine Son of God. (Barnes, 1834)
- Then why mention John at all?

But these things I say, that ye might be saved – But I mention John for your sake. Because perhaps you would receive his testimony and be saved. (Ellicott, 1905)

John 20:31 - But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

35 He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

He was a burning and shining light – His inner zeal led him to shine as a bright lamp in a dark world. Just as lamps light the way for people, so John lit the way to Jesus. (MacArthur, 2006)

John 1:7-8 - The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

And ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light – John's ministry came to them as a light in the darkness. It was attractive to them, and they went to it. For a period of time, they rejoiced in his light. They saw him as a prophet until the light pointed them in a direction they wished not to go. (Ellicott, 1905)

C.) The witness of His miracles

36 But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

But I have greater witness than that of John – I have a much more credible and convincing witness of my identity and mission than John the Baptist. Who or what is this witness?

For the works which the Father hath given me to finish – the miraculous works that the Father has commissioned me to accomplish (of which the gospels record at least 36) (MacArthur, 2006)

The same works that I do – the miracles that I am doing before your very eyes

Bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me – they testify in my defense that the Father has sent me because I do them in His name.

John 3:2 - The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

John 7:31 - And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?

John 10:25 - Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

You walk talks and your talk talks, but your walk talks louder than your talk talks. Jesus put His money where His mouth was. He didn't just claim to be the Messiah. He did the miracles to prove it. It's easy to claim to be the Messiah. It's not easy to back it up with miraculous works.

Illustration

- Water into wine at Cana
- Miracles in Jerusalem
- Healing of the Nobleman's Son
- Miracles in Galilee
- Healing of the Lame Man at Bethesda

John 10:37-38 - If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

John 14:10-11 - Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

D.) The witness of His Father

37 And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me -Not only that, but God the Father testifies on my behalf.

- Through the miracles He performed
 - o Jesus did them in the name of and through the power of the Father
- At his baptism, where He publicly called Jesus "His beloved Son in whom He was well pleased"
- Through the prophecies of the Old Testament which spoke of Him (Barnes, 1834)

1 John 5:9-13 - 9 If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. 10 He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar;

because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. 11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. 13 These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

- Illustration: Engaging with Mormons study
- I could care less about what you say about Jesus. What does the Father say about Jesus?

Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape – You have never truly heard the voice of God or otherwise perceived Him. You don't know God. (Sorenson, 2007)

John 1:18 - No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

John 14:9 - Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

1 John 4:12 - No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

E.) The Witness of the Scripture

38 And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

And ye have not his word abiding in you – They had the Word of God in their synagogues and homes, but not in their hearts. (Ellicott, 1905)

Application – I could care less if you have the Word of God in your lap. I could care less if you have the Word of God on your phone. I could care less if you have the Word of God in your home. Do you have the Word of God in your heart?

- It won't do you any good until you've received it in your heart. Jesus says, "The Word is not abiding in you." How do you know that?

For whom he hath sent, him ye believe not – Because they rejected the one that the Father had sent, the one that the Scriptures testified of

John 5:46-47 - For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

Deuteronomy 6:6-9 - And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.

Joshua 1:8 - This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.

39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life – You think there is eternal life in the Scriptures. Therefore, search and study them, and you know what you will find?

They are they which testify of me – you will find that they testify of me (Sorenson, 2007)

Colossians 3:16 - **Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly** in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

2 Timothy 3:14-17 - But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

2 Peter 1:19-21 - We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Luke 24:44-45 - 44 And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. 45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

The Word of God contains everything that we need to know God, heaven, hell, and our spiritual life, but it does you no good unless you know what's in it?

Illustration

- Poor woman in Russia received the Lord at a revival
- Afterwards she was presented with a free Bible
 - o Tears streaming down her face, she said, "I can't afford this. I don't have enough rubles."
 - It would have cost her 2 months of her salary

- "This is a gift from us to you now that you have received Jesus Christ."
 - She kissed it.
 - She cradled it like a baby.
 - Tears rolling down her cheeks, she said, "Thank you Jesus for the first Bible I've ever held in my hands."

Friend, do you hunger and thirst after the Word of God? Do you search the Scriptures? When's the last time you picked up a Bible, read its word, applied its truths, and it wasn't a Sunday or a Thursday?

Jesus said, "Search the Scriptures. They testify of me."

40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

And despite the fact that the Scriptures testify of me...

Ye will not come to me – yet these religious Jews would not come to Jesus. They were not lost because Jesus willed them to be lost. They were lost because they would not come to Jesus themselves. (Sorenson, 2007)

- God wills that all men would come to Him in faith. He has made the first move. He sent Jesus to the cross. He draws mankind to Himself through the moving of the Holy Spirit...but you still must make a decision of your own free will.
 - Will you receive Him, or will you reject Him?

That ye might have life – which is the result of receiving Jesus in faith

John 1:11 - He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

John 12:37-41 - But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

Matthew 23:37 - O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

The Witness for the Son

- Himself
- John the Baptist
- His Miracles

- His Father
- The Word of God

Jesus is calling out to you as well.

- He is testifying of Himself to you.
- I am testifying of Him to you.
- His resurrection and miracles are testifying of Himself to you.
- The Holy Spirit is testifying of Him to you.
- The Word of God is testifying of Him to you.

Oh that you would come to Him and have life. May it not be said of anyone listening to this sermon today that like the Pharisees, Jesus was calling them to faith, and they would not come to Him that they might have life.

2.) The Rebuke of the Religious Leaders

41 I receive not honour from men.

I receive not honour from men- I am not seeking man's approval or honor. I'm not saying these things for my sake, but for yours. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

John 7:18 - He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

John 8:50 - And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

John 8:54 - Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:

42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.

But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you – Nevertheless, I know you guys. I know you won't receive me because I know you don't love God.

John 1:47-49 - Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile! Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee. Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

John 8:42 - Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not – Jesus came in the name of the Father, guided only by His will, doing only His work and they rejected Him. However, ...

If another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive – if another makes a false claim to be the Messiah coming in his own name, doing his own will, seeking his own glory, him you would receive. (Ellicott, 1905)

Application – many people today reject Jesus in favor of a God created in their own image

- They didn't want Jesus as He was. They wanted Jesus as they imagined He should be. John 6:38 - For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

Matthew 24:24 - For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?

How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another – how can you believe which seek and receive the praise of men?

And seek not the honour that cometh from God only – and seek not the approval and praise of God.

- Do you understand that you cannot be saved without humility? You cannot be saved without humbling yourself before God in your sinful state and receiving His Son in faith as the payment for your sin.
 - o You can't be saved until you realize you can't save yourself.
 - o What Jesus is saying to these religious leaders is that "You guys are so consumed with pride and the praise of men that it's not even possible for you to believe in me because you'd have to humble yourself to do so and that word is not even in your vocabulary." (MacArthur, 2006)

John 12:43 - For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

Matthew 23:5 - But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

1 Corinthians 4:5 - Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.

2 Corinthians 10:18 - For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.

Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust – In lieu of your rejection of me, don't think that I will be the one to accuse you to the Father. You already have an accuser. It's Moses, the one in whom you have hoped and trusted.

- He will accuse you to the Father because you didn't listen to his words.
- For those who don't know, Moses wrote the first five books of the Old Testament. The Jews poured over these books and built their lives around them.
John 7:19 - Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

Romans 3:19-20 - Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Romans 10:5-10 - For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me.

For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me – if you would have truly believed the writings of Moses (Genesis – Deuteronomy), you would have received me. Why?

For he wrote of me – Where did Moses write of Jesus?

Genesis 3:15 - And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Genesis 12:3 - And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Genesis 49:10 - The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Numbers 21:8-9 - And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

Numbers 24:17-18 - I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And Edom shall be a possession, Seir also shall be a possession for his enemies; and Israel shall do valiantly.

Deuteronomy 18:15 - The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

Deuteronomy 18:18-19 - I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words? – but if you don't even really believe what he wrote, how will you believe what I say?

Luke 16:29-31 - 29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. 30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. 31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Application

My friend, are you saved? Have you been saved through faith in Jesus?

- This morning I, the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit have all publicly testified to your heart of the need you have for Jesus.
 - o Sin separates us from God.
 - Keeps us from heaven
 - Condemns us to Hell
 - You can't save yourself
 - o Jesus died on the cross for our sin
 - o Through faith in His death, burial, and resurrection we can be saved.
- Wouldn't you like to be saved this morning?

Christian, you have the Word of God, but does the Word of God have you? Christian, the Word of God may be in your home, but is it in your heart? Do you search the Scriptures? Do you hunger and thirst after the Word? When is the last time you were in the Word on your own?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 13 – JOHN 5:31-47

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 5:31-36 Memorize John 5:36</p>	<p>What are the first three witnesses that Jesus mentions in this passage? What does He say specifically about each witness?</p>
<p>T Read John 5:37-40 Recite John 5:36</p>	<p>What are the last two witnesses that Jesus mentions in this passage? What does He say specifically about each witness?</p>
<p>W Read John 5:41-47 Recite John 5:36</p>	<p>Why wouldn't the religious leaders receive Jesus? What does Jesus mean when He says that the words of Moses would accuse them before God?</p>
<p>T Read John 6:1-15 Recite John 5:36</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 6:1-15 Recite John 5:36</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 6:1-15

Review

John 5:31-47

The Witness for the Son

- Himself
- John the Baptist
- His Miracles
- His Father
- The Word of God

1.) The Setting

John 6:1, "After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias."

The feeding of the 5,000 did not happen immediately after the story in John five. When you look at the same story in the Synoptics, there were several things that happened before this story and after the healing of the lame man in chapter five.

"Though **some time after this** is indefinite, it can be learned from the Synoptics that Herod Antipas had killed John the Baptist (Mark 6:14–29; cf. John 3:24), the disciples had preached throughout Galilee (Mark 6:7–13, 30–31), multitudes of people were curious about Jesus, and Herod Antipas was seeking Jesus (Luke 9:7–9). So the time between the events in John 5 and 6 was probably six months." (John F. Walvoord, 1983)

Sermon

"After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias." Jesus went to that part of the Sea of Galilee because he needed to rest with his disciples. Jesus had been so busy that he didn't even have time to eat.

- Mark 6:31, "And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat."

So, Jesus went into a desert place with disciples and went up onto a mountain. (vs. 3)

Jesus had been doing miracles for quite a while at this point, and his popularity was growing. As noted earlier, he was getting so popular that he literally had to go out into the wilderness to catch a moments rest.

But the people noticed, and they followed him out into the wilderness because they wanted him to heal their sick.

John 6:2, “² And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased”

“² And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased” The Bible tells us that there were 5,000 men who followed Jesus that day, and another gospel includes that was 5,000 men besides women and children. There could have easily been 10,000 people who followed Jesus out to the wilderness.

John 6:4, “⁴ And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.”

“And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.” This story is set in the section of John often known as the “Festival Cycle”. This is where John sets the stories in the context of the Jewish feasts. (Kim, The Christological And Eschatological Significance Of Jesus’ Passover Signs In John 6, July 2007)

- John sets his stories in the context of Jewish feasts simply to provide a timeline for his gospel.

2.) The Need

John 6:5, “⁵ When Jesus then lifted up *his* eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? ⁶ And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.”

“When Jesus then lifted up *his* eyes, and saw a great company come unto him,” Jesus looks up, and he sees the crowd coming toward him. Now, when comparing this gospel to the other gospels, it is evident that John cuts the middle out of this story.

- Luke 9:11, “¹¹ And the people, when they knew *it*, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.”
- Mark 6:34, “And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.”
- Jesus saw the multitudes, and he, as Mark puts it, was moved with compassion on them. And instead of telling them to go away because he needed to rest, Jesus began to heal their sick and to preach to them about the kingdom of God.

When the evening came around, the disciples came to Jesus and told him that he needed to send the crowd away so they could get themselves food. The crowd had not brought food with them.

- Mark 6:35-36, “And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time *is* far passed: ³⁶Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat.”

And Jesus, as we will see, takes this opportunity to do a miracle. Now this miracle, just like all of Jesus miracles, had a purpose behind it. Jesus does this miracle to teach two different groups of people a lesson.

The Lesson for the Disciples

Jesus, instead of sending them away, asks Philip a question.

John 6:5, “Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?”

“Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?” He asks Philip where they could buy some bread to feed this large crowd. What is so fascinating is that Jesus was asking Philip this for a very specific purpose.

John 6:6 “And this he said to prove him; for he himself knew what he would do.”

- Now, Jesus was not singling Philip out. John is simply using Philip as a stand-in, or representation, of the other disciples.

“And this he said to prove him; for he himself knew what he would do.” The word prove means “to test, to put to the test” Jesus was not asking Philip about this because he wanted to know where they could buy food for everyone, but to test the faith of his disciples. Jesus put them in a situation that, humanly speaking, it was impossible for the disciples to do anything about it. This circumstance was one in which only Jesus could do something about. He put them in this situation to show himself strong, to show them that even though humanly speaking it was impossible, with God all things are possible. He was going to perform a miracle to strengthen their faith in him, to strengthen their belief that as God the Son, the miracle worker, he could do the impossible. (John F. Walvoord, 1983)

“Jesus’ question **to Philip—Where shall we buy bread for these people to eat?** —was not for information but was part of His program of educating the disciples. Philip was from Bethsaida (1:44) which was the closest town, and he would know the local resources. The answer to Jesus’ question was that it was impossible, humanly speaking, for thousands of people to get bread late in the day from the little neighboring villages. John wrote, as he thought back on the incident, that Jesus was asking this **to test** Philip. God tests people to refine their faith, never to tempt them to do evil (cf. Gen. 22:1–18; James 1:2, 13–15; 1 Peter 1:7).” (John F. Walvoord, 1983)

- Either they were going to put their faith in Christ and believe that he was going to perform a miracle, or they were going to look away from Christ and focus on the obstacles they faced.
- Instead of putting their faith in him, instead of believing that he as the Son of God will perform a miracle, they focused on their obstacles.

John 6:7-9, “⁷ Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little. ⁸ One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, saith unto him, ⁹ There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?”

“Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.” Pennyworth is a translation of the Greek word denarii. One denarii was a day’s wage back in those times. (Ibid.) Two hundred denarii would be about six and a half months of pay. What Philip is saying is that you wouldn’t even be able to buy enough food for all these people with six months of pay! Philip focused on the obstacle instead of Christ.

- Andrew then came up to Jesus with a boy’s lunch.

John 6:8-9 “Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, saith unto him, There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?”

“...but what are they among so many?” Just like Philip, Andrew focused on the obstacle instead of focusing on Jesus.

- The disciples faith in Jesus was weak.

3.) The Miracle

And Jesus, to strengthen their faith in him, performs an awesome miracle!

John 6:10-13, “And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. ¹¹ And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. ¹² When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. ¹³ Therefore they gathered *them* together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten”

“And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.” Jesus takes the lunch, only five loaves and two small fish, and he feeds ten thousand people! This was an amazing miracle!

“When they were filled...” It is important to note that Jesus gave the people enough food so that they were “filled”. This wasn’t a little snack that Jesus gave them, it was a hearty meal.

“When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. ¹³ Therefore they gathered *them* together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.” He commands his disciples to go gather up the leftovers from the crowd. Jesus created so much food, that there were twelve baskets left over! Jesus didn’t just squeak by with the food, he had an abundance of food.

Jesus put his disciples in an impossible situation to show himself strong. And when he performs this miracle, when he did the impossible, he was pointing the disciples back to himself. He was pointing the disciples back to himself. He did this to strengthen their faith in him, the belief that he was the Son of God and that he could perform the impossible.

Application - And sometimes, Jesus puts us in impossible situations, where humanly speaking there is no way to work it out. And he does this to strengthen our faith in him as the miracle working God. He puts us in this situation to show himself strong. And in his timing, to perform the impossible, to work that situation out, to do a miracle to strengthen our faith in him.

- And in those moments, we have a choice. Either we are going to turn and place our faith in Jesus, or we are going to focus on the obstacles around us.

This could be a trial that we are going through.

- During a trial, it is easy to focus on the trials around us rather than focus on Jesus.
- “God, I don’t know how you are going to turn this death in my family into something good.”
- “God, I don’t know how I am going to pay rent!”
- “God, my son or daughter is rebelling against me, how are they going to come back to you!”
- In those situations, God wants to show himself strong, he in his timing will work it out. He is putting you through this to strengthen you faith in him. Don’t focus on the obstacles around you, place your trust in him, that he will work it out in his time.
 - o Illustration – I wrecked my car and didn’t have enough money to pay for a new one. We prayed for a car, and a church in Texas gave us \$8,000.00.

This could also be God calling you to do something, where it seems impossible to do.

- He might want you to witness to that family member who wants nothing to do with God.
- To the teens and young adults out there, he might want you to become a missionary to a foreign field.

- You might be a new parent in here, and you might be wondering “How in the world am I going to raise this child to follow after Christ?!”
- Jesus calls us to do some things sometime, where only he can accomplish it. And he puts us in them so he can show himself strong, so when it is done, our faith in God is strengthened.
 - o Illustration – We prayed for a decade for my grandpa Trentam to be saved. It seemed impossible, but after years of praying and witnessing to him he finally trusted Christ.

Sometimes God puts us in circumstances that, humanly speaking, there is no way that it is going to work out. And God puts us in those situations to show himself strong, to do the impossible, to strengthen our faith in him. Whatever you are going through, do not look at the obstacles around you, look to Jesus! Trust in him and let him do a miracle.

- Now I do need to mention, sometimes God doesn't work it out like this. Many of the apostles were martyred, a good portion of the apostle Paul's ministry was just one bad circumstance after another. And even in those situations when it seems like God isn't doing anything to help, his plan is still good. He still has a purpose in that time, and we will have to make the choice. We will either allow him to strengthen our faith in him during this time, or we will turn away from him, and focus on our circumstances.

But in this story, there is another group of people that Jesus wants to teach a lesson to through this miracle. This is the multitude that had come to see him.

The Lesson for the Multitude

John 6:11-15, “And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. ¹² When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost. ¹³ Therefore they gathered *them* together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. ¹⁴ Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.”

Now you remember, the entire purpose of the Gospel of John was to record the miracles of Christ to provide evidence that Jesus was the Son of God, and that if you believe on him you will receive eternal life.

- John 20:30-31, “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: ³¹ But these are written, that ye might believe

that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”

This miracle is no different. Jesus made a meal for 10,000 people out of five loaves and two fish, to prove that he was the Son of God, to point people to his future death burial and resurrection, and to point them to believe in him to receive eternal life.

4.) The Response

The people do not respond in the way that Jesus was wanting them to. Instead of believing on Jesus to receive eternal life, they misuse him to receive personal gain. (MacArthur J. F., 2013)

“They came for temporal miracles, not the eternal words. When He started to speak eternal words by the end of chapter 6, they’re running. Even those who were His followers, many of His disciples walked no more with Him, verse 66. They just bailed out. Drawn by His miracles and sent away by His words. You know, they were wanting physical wellness, physical fulfillment, physical satisfaction. You could put it simply this way, they wanted what all unregenerate people want. These weren’t noble aspirations, they wanted what their lusts demanded.” (MacArthur, 2013)

John 6:14-15, “Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.”

“Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.” What is interesting is that it seems the people, at least in part, understand that this man is the Messiah. When the people see the miracle, they say Jesus is the prophet that should come into the world. This is a reference to Deuteronomy 18:15. (John F. Walvoord, 1983)

- Deut. 18:15, “¹⁵ The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;”

They were starting in a very small way to understand who Jesus was. The problem was not believing that he was the Messiah, the problem was that they misused the Messiah. They, as mentioned above, wanted to use him for their own personal gain.

“When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.” They wanted to make Jesus the king. And really, they wanted to make Jesus king in order to use him for their own personal gain and desires.

“So what do they do? Do they say, “Let’s listen to what He has to say? Let’s hear His message since He’s a prophet from God.” No. They try to take Him by force, that’s what they want to do and make Him King because He can have the ultimate welfare state. He can do all the miracles, heal everybody and feed everybody. And Jesus withdrew, whist, into the mountain. The other writers say He sent His disciples into a boat, told Him to go across the other side of the lake, dismiss the crowd, went into the mountain. Jesus isn’t willing to be a temporal provider. He’s not willing to do that. It’s astonishing to think about it, if He wanted to be Messiah, this would have been His moment if He was just a man with ambition. But He would not allow them to push Him to become the kind of King that they wanted. And that’s the way it is today. The Jesus of the prosperity preachers is the false Jesus because the true Jesus isn’t there. He’s left. He’s left. He will not be treated in that way. He withdrew into a mountain alone.” (MacArthur, 2013)

They misused the Messiah. They wanted to make him king to get the food that they wanted. This is confirmed later by Christ in the passage when he rebukes them for wanting the physical food but not the spiritual food from himself.

- John 6:26-27, “Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. ²⁷ Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.”

Instead of coming to Jesus to receive eternal life, they wanted to use him to meet their physical needs only. To use him for their own personal gain.

Application - This is still a problem we face in our modern day and age. People want to use Jesus for their own personal gain rather than come to him to receive eternal life. This is what is commonly called the “prosperity gospel”. The gospel is nothing more than a message of health, wealth, and prosperity. Come to Jesus and your problems will go away, or come to Jesus and you will have nothing but prosperity. This is a shallow, weak, heretical view of the gospel!

The prosperity gospel misunderstands two different sides of Christianity.

- Salvation
 - o Jesus did not come die on a cross to make you prosper. The true gospel of Jesus is so much better than that! Jesus came, not to make you prosper, but to provide the solution to your biggest problem, which is sin. Sin separates us from God, here in this life, and if we die in our sins, we will be separated from

him eternally! And there was no way by our good works that we could save ourselves. But God loved us so much he sent Jesus to this earth. Jesus took all our sins on himself, took the punishment for our sins, and shed his blood so that we could receive forgiveness for our sins. He then was buried, and rose again the third day to conquer death and prove that he was the Son of God. In short, Jesus did everything necessary to restore our relationship with God, and give us an eternal home in heaven! It is a free gift that Jesus offers to us.

- Discipleship

- Being a disciple of Christ is not about being wealthy, or even healthy, it is about denying yourself, taking up your cross, and following Jesus.
 - Matt. 16:24, “Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. ²⁵ For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.”
 - Jesus did not come for your personal gain; he came for you to deny yourself.
- Jesus also tells us that if we follow him we will face suffering!
 - John 14:19-20, “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. ²⁰ Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you;”

The prosperity gospel misses the point of salvation and discipleship. Are you misusing Jesus? If you view Jesus as only an avenue for personal gain, then you have believed a false gospel. And Jesus loves you too much to leave you in that! Today, if you are believing in a prosperity gospel, turn from it and believe on Christ! Jesus wants to forgive you of your sin, and give you an eternal home in heaven, which is so much greater than anything we could ever receive here on this earth. Trust in Jesus to forgive you of your sin and take you to heaven, and you know what? He will.

Conclusion

So Christian, if you are in difficult situation, and it is humanely impossible to do anything about it, turn to Jesus! Jesus wants to remind you that with him, all things are possible. He wants to take that situation, do a miracle, work it out for his glory, so that your faith will be strengthened in him. Don't look at all of the obstacles around you, look to Christ, and trust in him.

And if you are sitting in here, and you have believed a prosperity gospel, that Jesus is there for your personal, selfish gain, today is the day to turn from it. Trust, depend on the real gospel, which is Jesus, by dying for our sins and rising from the dead, did everything necessary for us to go to heaven. It is a free gift that he offers to you, and you don't have to work for it. You just have to take it.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 14 – JOHN 6:1-15

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 6:1-7 Memorize John 6:5-7</p>	<p>What does the passage mean by “this he said to prove him:” in verse six? What was Philip’s response, and why was it not a good response?</p>
<p>T Read John 6:8-13 Recite John 6:5-7</p>	<p>What is the miracle that Jesus does in this passage? Why is the phrase “When they were filled...” in verse twelve important?</p>
<p>W Read John 6:13-15 Recite John 6:5-7</p>	<p>What was the response of the Jews to Jesus’s miracle? Why didn’t Jesus want them to make him king?</p>
<p>T Read John 6:16-24 Recite John 6:5-7</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 6:16-24 Recite John 6:5-7</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 6:16-24

Review



(Bible Atlas)

Feeding of the 5000

- Jesus crosses over the Sea of Galilee with His disciples.
- A great multitude follows Him because of the miracles they saw Him do.
- Jesus is burdened for them because they have no food to eat.
- He takes a boy's five loaves of barley bread and two fishes, blesses it, and uses it to feed 10,000+ people.
- In time of need, Jesus provided.

The disciples have just experienced a mountain top experience with Jesus, but they are about to undergo a terrifying valley without Him. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Location 2344-2346)

- Like the other evangelists (except Luke), John follows the feeding of the multitudes with Jesus' walking on the water.

Compare John 6:16-21 with Matthew 14:22-33 and Mark 6:45-52.

- Matthew and Mark tell us that the disciples thought Jesus was a ghost (Matt. 14:26; Mark 6:49).
- Matthew adds the episode with Peter and the response of worship when Jesus got into the boat (Matt. 14:33)
- Mark also informs us that they had not understood about the loaves because their hearts were hardened (Mark 6:52).
- Luke doesn't mention the event.
- John is more succinct, emphasizing how Jesus' presence calmed the disciples (vs. 20). (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Location 2332-2344)

Sermon

As we take a look at the storm on the Sea of Galilee, Jesus' walking on water, and Jesus' calming of the storm, we're going to be looking at this story from three different perspectives this morning to get a more complete understanding of what exactly happened and what the scene was like.

Application: the gospels are four unique eye witness accounts of the same thing: the life of Jesus. Three of the four record eye witness testimony of the storm on the Sea of Galilee.

These three perspectives are recorded in John 6:16-21 (which is our text this morning), Matthew 14:22-33, and Mark 6:45-52. They're three different accounts of the same thing. They don't contradict one another, but they do supplement one another with additional information.

1.) The Journey Across the Sea

16 And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea,

And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea – following the feeding of the 5000, several events transpire

- Twelve baskets of left-over barley loaves were gathered (John 6:13)
- Matthew 14:22-23 - And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.
- Jesus compelled His disciples, at the end of the day, to get in a boat ahead of Him and cross the Sea of Galilee (with the implication being that He would find them and join them later on) (Matthew 14:22; Mark 6:45)
 - Jesus sent the multitudes away (Matthew 14:23; Mark 6:45)
 - Jesus went up into a mountain to pray (Matthew 14:23; Mark 6:46)
- John here recalls the events that transpired, and we pick up the story with the disciples at night time making their way down to the sea.

Even – refers to the time period between sunset and dark (6-9pm) as the feeding of the 5000 would have taken place sometime between 3-6pm. At that time the disciples go down unto the Sea of Galilee.

- This must have been the "second evening;" for the miracle itself was said to be wrought when the day began to decline (Matthew 14:15; Luke 9:12). The first evening (ὄψια) lasted from three to six p.m., the "second evening" stretched from sundown to darkness (σκοτία). (Spence & Exell, 1883)
- John 6:15 - When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

Matthew 14:22-24 - 22 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. 23

And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. 24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.

Mark 6:45-47 - 45 And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people. 46 And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray. 47 And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.

17 And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.

And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum – The area near Capernaum and Gennesaret (on the western side of the Sea of Galilee) was the ultimate destination for the disciples. Keep in mind that they are on the North Eastern side of the Sea of Galilee close to Bethsaida (cf. Luke 9:10-12). Furthermore, Mark’s account of their sea journey provides us with some interesting information that may help us to understand what is happening in this verse when it says, “And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.”

Mark 6:45 - And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.

- Hold on, I thought they were near Bethsaida?
- Are they going to the western shore (Capernaum, Gennesaret) or are they sailing to Bethsaida on the eastern shore?
 - o The answer to both of those questions very well may be yes. It’s quite possible that were going to sail towards Bethsaida on the way over to the western side of the Sea of Galilee.
 - o Further, some believe that they were planning to meet Jesus upon arriving in Bethsaida and then sail to the other side of the Sea of Galilee together. (Matt. 14:34; Mark 6:53) (MacArthur, 2006)
- For further discussion on possible solutions to the differing locations mentioned by Mark (Bethsaida) and Matthew and John (the western shore), see Lydia McGrew’s blogpost “But wait! There’s more! Refuting a claim of discrepancy in the gospels” (McGrew, 2016) or Mike Licona’s article “Was Mark Confused Pertaining to the Location of the Feeding of the 5,000?” (Licona, 2016)

And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them – nevertheless, it was dark, and Jesus wasn’t anywhere to be found. So they begin to make this journey across the Sea of Galilee from the Eastern shore to the Western shore in the darkness of night.

Mark 6:45 - And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.

Matthew 14:34 – And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret.

Mark 6:53 - 53 And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore.

John 2:12- After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.

John 4:46 - So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

But things do not go according to plan.

2.) The Storm Upon the Sea

18 And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew.

19 So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.

The Sea of Galilee lies nearly 700 feet below sea level in the Jordan Rift, while the surrounding hills rise abruptly to about 2,000 feet above sea level. The sharp drop of nearly 3,000 feet from the tops of the hills to the surface of the lake creates ideal conditions for the sudden, violent storms for which the Sea of Galilee is notorious (cf. Matt. 8:23–27). The cooler air rushes down the slopes and strikes the surface of the lake with great force, churning the water into whitecaps and creating dangerous conditions for small boats. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 259)

- That's exactly what we see here

And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew – a great strong wind came down into the Sea of Galilee in the night and stirred up the Sea. But not only that...

- Matthew 14:24-26 – 24 But the ship was now **in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.**
 - o This great strong wind which they were rowing against drove them into the middle of the Sea where they are being battered by the waves.
- We know from John 6:16 that the disciples had left for Capernaum on the boat sometime between 6:00 and 9:00pm. What time is it now?
 - o Matthew 14:25 - And in **the fourth watch of the night** Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.
 - o Fourth watch – 3:00am to 6:00am
 - o They have been battling the Sea, just trying to survive and get to land for the entire night (somewhere between 6-12 hours; e.g. .9 hours).
 - Illustration – traveling several hours on a boat for deep sea fishing with Tony
 - Illustration – imagine being on a 9-hour flight where the plane is in constant turbulence, masks are down, one of the engine's is on fire, and you're flying over the Atlantic Ocean

- For those disciples, it probably felt like 9 days.

How much progress had they made?

So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs – they had rowed about 3-4 miles over the course of 9 hours. They had traveled 1/3 mile per hour over the course of 9 hours, and they were not at their destination. They were now in the middle of the Sea. They still had a great distance to go to reach Capernaum. (Plummer, 1902)

- No doubt the disciples are exhausted (they've been physically at this all night). They are scared (scared of drowning, scared of dying). They feel helpless, they don't see a way out of this thing, and Jesus is nowhere in sight. They are in the middle of a storm.

Application – Have you ever been there before? I have. I don't know about you, but I find myself frequently in the midst of hard situations that I don't know how to fix...situations where you're just tired because you've been struggling with something for so long. Situations where you're scared. You look at your surroundings and you're terrified of what might be if a couple things don't break your way. You feel helpless. You're in the middle of it. You're looking for a way out. You're looking for a path to shore, but it's pitch black, and the wind is beating in your face and the waves are insurmountable and it seems like you are paddling and paddling and paddling and going nowhere. And worst of all, you look around the boat and it seems like God is nowhere to be found.

I bet you one of the recurring thoughts in those disciples' minds that evening was, "Where is Jesus?"

Where was Jesus?

- Mark 6:47-48 – 47 And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.
 - The disciples are on the boat in the middle of the Sea. Jesus is alone on the land. Recall that he was up in the mountain praying.
- 48 And he saw them toiling in rowing; for the wind was contrary unto them: and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them.
 - From where Jesus was at, He could see them.
 - Friend, you might not see Jesus through the storm, but Jesus sees you through the storm.
 - In His timing, He makes His way out to them on the water making the several mile trek through the storm to find them. And, not only that, but He is walking so effortlessly and rapidly that it appears to the disciples that He is just going to walk right by them (cf. Luke 24:28). (Gill, 1811)

they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship – Imagine this scenario. You have been up all night fighting the sea. You are physically exhausted. You are soaking wet. It is dark. It is stormy. There are tumultuous waves, water flying everywhere. You are scared for your life...and then you see in the distance the outline of a being making its way

closer and closer to your ship. And you know what that did to their already petrified state of mind? It terrified them even more!

Illustration – have you ever been on edge before and everything little thing just terrifies you?

- Going to a haunted house as a kid, coming back to the hotel room and being terrified of every little noise and every small movement.

And they were afraid – they were scared out of their minds.

Matthew 14:26 - ...they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

- o They thought He was a ghost or some kind of spirit or something. Keep in mind that it's pitch black, they're physically exhausted and a moment's notice from death.
- o And yet the object of their fear was actually going to be the object of their deliverance.

3.) The Sustainer Within the Storm

20 But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid.

But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid – He says, “Have some courage (Matt. 14:27; Mark 6:50). It's me. Don't be afraid.”

- He doesn't immediately calm the storm. He doesn't say anything about the storm or their circumstances. You know what He says? “It's me. I'm here. Don't be afraid.”
 - o Deut. 31:8 - And the Lord, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.
 - o If Jesus is with you, then no matter how bad the storm, no matter how crazy the turbulence, you can breathe a sigh of relief and take comfort that everything is going to be okay.
- Application: God never promises us that we won't have storms in life, but He promises us that He will sustain us through the storms, and He promises that there will be no storms at our final destination.
 - o 2 Cor. 12:7-10 - 7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. 8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

Something happens between verses 20 and 21 that is only recorded in Matthew's gospel. Do you know what that is?

- Mark (Peter's disciple) may have omitted this occurrence as it may have been that Peter did not wish to recall. (Ellicott, 1905)

Matthew 14:27-33 - 27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

- Lord, assuming it is you, invite me into your presence out in the storm (sustain me in the storm and invite me into your presence)
- That's pretty bold, but that's kind of how Peter is (bold and brash)

29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

- Jesus miraculously empowers Peter to walk on the water and through the storm as he looks to Jesus and relies on him.
- Application: when we keep our eyes fixed on Christ, God can enable us to navigate through the hardest times in life in miraculous ways

30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

- When Peter's attention moved from God to his surroundings, his surroundings began to swallow him.
- Application: the same is true with us. You can either have your eyes on Jesus or your eyes on the storms.
 - o When our eyes are on Jesus, the storms sink away.
 - o When our eyes drift to the storms, we sink away.
- He cried out to the Lord to save him. What did the Lord do?

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

- He saved him from drowning in the storm.
- He asked him a question that I've asked myself so many times after being delivered from a trial, "Jacob, you person of little faith. Why did you doubt?"

32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

- This is the third of four miracles in this story.
 - o Miracle 1 – Jesus walking on the water
 - o Miracle 2 – Peter walking on the water
 - o Miracle 3 – the wind ceasing when Jesus and Peter got into the boat
 - o Miracle 4 – we will see in John 6:21
 - Jesus' walking on the water is the fifth of John's seven signs that He emphasizes in His gospel.

33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

- This ought to be our natural response when God delivers us through the storms of life.
 - o Jesus didn't deliver His disciples from the storm. He knew it was coming. He sent them into it. Why? He wanted to deliver them through it so that they would learn to trust Him not only for provision but for their problems as well.
 - Application – He knew what was coming for them, and He was preparing them for it.
 - He was teaching them that not only could He provide their needs in time of want, but that He could also sustain them in times of great difficulty.

Psalms 93:4 - The LORD on high is mightier than the noise of many waters, yea, than the mighty waves of the sea.

Isaiah 41:10 - Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness.

21 Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

Then they willingly received him into the ship – Jesus comes into the boat

And immediately the ship was at the land whither they went – Miracle 4: the boat instantly arrived at the western shore of the Sea of Galilee (MacArthur, 2006)

Matthew 14:32-33 - And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

4.) The Following of the Crowd

22 The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples were gone away alone;

- The next day, many of the people who had seen Jesus' healings (6:2) and been miraculously fed (6:3-13) stood on the Eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. Apparently, they had spent the night there, and in the morning they were looking for Jesus, hoping for another meal or perhaps still desiring to make Him their king.
- Eventually, it occurred to them that something strange had happened. There were no other boats there except for the one that the disciples had left on, and Jesus was not on that boat. The question was: if Jesus hadn't left with His disciples on the boat, then where was He?

- Of course the crowd was completely oblivious to the events that had transpired the previous night with the storm and Jesus walking on the water to join the disciples on the boat. (MacArthur, 2006)

23 (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:)

Verse 23 is a parenthesis, explaining where the small boats that transported the crowd back to Capernaum came from. Tiberias was an important city on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee (see the discussion of 6:1 in chapter 18 of this volume). Why the flotilla came to the place where the thousands ate the bread after the Lord had given thanks is not clear. Perhaps the owners of the boats had heard of the miraculous feeding and had come to investigate. Or they may have come to pick up their friends and loved ones, or to act as water taxis, seeking to cash in on the large numbers of people in need of transportation. Or they may have been forced to seek shelter from the same storm in which the disciples had been caught the night before. (MacArthur, 2006)

John 6:11-12 - And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would. When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

24 When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.

When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples – when the people realized neither Jesus nor His disciples were on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee

They also took shipping - they themselves sailed across the sea

And came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus – perhaps some of them had overheard Jesus telling His disciples to set sail for there. (MacArthur, 2006)

Application

Are you in a storm?

- Get your eyes off of the storm.
- Get your eyes on Jesus.
 - You may not feel like you see Him, but He sees you.
 - If you have Jesus, then no matter how bad the storm is, you can rest assured that things are going to be okay.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 14 – JOHN 6:16-24

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 6:16-19 Memorize John 6:20</p>	<p>Compare John 6:16-19 with Matthew 14:22-26 and Mark 6:45-49. What unique information does each of these three accounts reveal to us about this story?</p>
<p>T Read John 6:20-24 Recite John 6:20</p>	<p>Compare John 6:20 with Matthew 14:27 and Mark 6:50. How can we apply what Jesus said to the disciples to our own lives as we navigate through hard times?</p>
<p>W Read Matthew 14:27-33 Recite John 6:20</p>	<p>This happens inbetween John 6:20 and 21. What lessons can we learn from the story Peter’s walking on the water to Jesus?</p>
<p>T Read John 6:25-40</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 6:25-40</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 6:25-40

Review

The crowd had followed Jesus across the Sea of Galilee to near Bethsaida. They had seen the miraculous feeding of the 5000. They wished to make Jesus their king. What did He do? He sent the disciples away on a boat. He sent the multitude away. He went up into a mountain to pray.

The disciples sail across the Sea and sail right into a storm. They battle the storm all night long and just when it seems like all hope is lost, there comes Jesus walking on the water up to the boat. He calms their fears. He calms the storms. Next thing you know, they have crossed the Sea of Galilee and arrived in Capernaum.

The next day the crowd followed Him back across the Sea of Galilee to Capernaum where they found Him and began to talk with Him in the synagogue...but as we will see from the conversation that follows, the majority of this crowd were never true followers of Jesus Christ.

They liked the idea of Jesus. They liked the miracles that Jesus did, but they didn't really like who Jesus was or what He actually taught.

This morning we're going to take a look at the beginning of this conversation that follows between Jesus and the crowd. We're going to see four questions they asked, and four answers Jesus gave.

Sermon

1.) Question 1 – How did you get here?

25 And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

And when they had found him on the other side of the sea – the crowd sailed across the Sea, arrived in Capernaum, went searching for Jesus, and found Him apparently in the synagogue, where He was teaching (according to vs. 59). This back-and-forth conversation seemingly took place in such a setting.

John 6:59 - 59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

Rabbi, when camest thou hither? – master, when did you come here? ...and by implication, how did you get here?

- They ask this question because, as Jesus did not go on the preceding evening with his disciples, they expected to have found him on the other side of the sea, and could not conceive when he could come, or what imaginable means he could have of crossing the water. (Benson, 1857)

2.) Answer 1 – Pursue the bread of life

26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

Jesus answered them and said - Jesus purposely did not answer their question. He's going to take the conversation in a whole different direction. Why?

- Perhaps He had something more important in mind to discuss: namely the bread of life.
- Or perhaps He was mindful that just the day before they had tried to make Him king by force after He miraculously fed them; telling them of another, even more spectacular miracle (walking across the water) may only have fueled their misguided messianic fervor. (MacArthur, 2006)

Verily, verily, I say unto you – truly, truly I'm telling you

- This is the first of three “verily, verily” in this discourse (cf. 6:47 and 6:53).

Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles – You are not seeking me because of the miracles that I've done and what they say about who I am and who sent me.

- John 5:36 - But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

But because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled – You're not concerned with what my miracles say about me. You're only concerned about what my miracles did for you.

- They were more concerned with the physical implications of Jesus' miracles than the spiritual implications.

Illustration – social gospel: our primary purpose as Christians is to bring about social reform (feed the hungry, help the sick, clothe the poor)

- o By the way we should do those things. Jesus did those things.
- o But our primary purpose here on this earth is not to spread social reform, but to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Romans 1:18 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Philippians 1:27 - Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

These Jews in the crowd didn't care for what Jesus said. They just wanted to reap the benefits of what Jesus did. He rebuked them for that.

John 6:15 - When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

Philippians 3:18-19 - 18 (For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: 19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

James 4:3-4 - Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

Labour not – work not/pursue not

For the meat which perisheth – for the temporal food which is decaying

- Illustration: loaf of bread
 - o Don't live your life centered on this.
 - o This does not mean that we don't work to provide for our families (cf. 1 Tim. 5:1; 2 Thess. 3:10). This means that we don't make physical food the main focal point of our existence. Don't live to eat. Eat to live. (Barnes, 1834)

But for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life – work for/pursue the food that endures forever/never decays and that leads to everlasting life (Sorenson, 2007)

Illustration: the woman at the well and living water

John 4:13-14 - Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Which the Son of man shall give unto you – The Son of Man, Jesus, has this food of eternal life, and He'll give it to you if you want it

Matthew 6:31-33 - Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

John 6:51 - I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

For him hath God the Father sealed – God the Father had set His seal of approval on Jesus through His baptism, works, and word

Question 1 – When did you get here?

Answer 1 – Stop obsessing over the physical bread I provided, and work for/pursue the bread that leads eternal life.

3.) Question 2 – How do we receive the bread of life?

28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

Then said they unto him – ok, we'll bite

What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? – what works do we need to do to receive this bread of life that never perishes?

- Matthew 19:16 - And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?

Application – this is the same question that many ask today

- Religion answers this question the same way: do.
Acts 2:37 - Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?
Acts 16:30 - And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

4.) Answer 2 – Believe on me.

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

Jesus answered and said unto them – Jesus replied

This is the work of God – this is the one thing you must do to receive the bread of life, to receive eternal life.

- They spoke of “works” plural. Jesus spoke of “work” singular. (Ellicott, 1905)

That ye believe on him whom he hath sent – You must believe on me, the one whom God has sent.

- John 1:12 - But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

- John 3:16 - 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.
 - o You're either saved by faith in Jesus, or you're saved through your good works and religion. You can't have it both ways.
- John 3:36 - He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.
- John 5:24 - 24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Question 1 – when did you get here?

Answer 1 – stop pursuing physical bread and work for the bread that leads to everlasting life?

Question 2 – what must we do to receive that bread of life?

Answer 2 – believe on me

Hebrews 11:6 - But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Deuteronomy 18:18-19 - I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.

Romans 4:4-5 - Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Romans 9:30-31 - What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.

5.) Question 3 – What miracle will you show us so that we might believe?

30 They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

They said therefore unto him – they replied to Him

What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee – what miracle do you to back up your claim to be the Messiah? He had just fed the 10,000 across the sea near Bethsaida, and they ask Him for another sign.

- Unbelief is never satisfied.
- Illustration – there will never be enough evidence to satisfy the one who doesn't wish to believe
 - o Adam and Eve rebelled
 - o Noah's family rebelled
 - o Israel rebelled
 - o People rebelled against Jesus during His life
 - o People rebelled against Jesus following His resurrection
 - o People in the millennial kingdom will rebel
- Unbelief is never satisfied because it's not about the evidence. It's about that person's heart.
- Application – there is remarkable evidence for Christianity.
 - o The Bible is filled with prophecies that have all come true.
 - o There is solid historical evidence that Jesus physically rose from the dead vindicating His claims to be God in the flesh.
 - o But there comes a point in time in your pursuit of the truth, where you have to make up your mind and take a step of faith.
 - If you're looking for the truth, you'll find it.
 - If you're looking to reject Jesus, you'll find some means of convincing yourself of that too.
 - Unbelief is never satisfied.
- Perhaps there were others in the synagogue who had not witnessed the feeding of the 5000 chiming in on this conversation. (Barnes, 1834)
John 2:18 - 18 Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

1 Corinthians 1:22 - For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom:

What dost thou work? – what work do you perform?

- In proposing to make Him a king, it was for far other purposes than dispensing to the world the bread of an everlasting life; and when He seemed to raise His claims even higher still, by representing it as the grand "work of God," that they should believe on Himself as His Sent One, they saw very clearly that He was making a demand upon them beyond anything they were prepared to accord to Him, and beyond all that man had ever before made. Hence their question, "What dost Thou work?" (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884)

31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

Our fathers did eat manna in the desert – manna was the food God provided for Israel during their 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. Manna was white (Ex. 16:31; Num. 11:7), small like frost (Ex. 16:14), round like a seed (Ex. 16:14), and tasted like honey (Ex. 16:31). It fell from the skies at night (Numbers 11:9). It miraculously fed millions of people for decades.

As it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat – this is a quotation of either Psalm 78:24-25 or Nehemiah 9:15.

Psalm 78:24-25 - 24 And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven. 25 Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.

Nehemiah 9:15 - And gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and promisedst them that they should go in to possess the land which thou hadst sworn to give them.

The Jews are claiming that the “He” in these passages refers to Moses...that Moses did such things, even though in every reference to this miracle, God is always the causative agent.

- There almost seems to be this underlying insinuation of the inferiority of Jesus' miracles. It's not that He hadn't done miracles. It's that He hadn't done enough in their minds to establish His superiority to Moses.
- “The feeding of the 5000 was great Jesus, but let's not kid ourselves. Moses rained down manna from heaven for 40 years to feed all of Israel. Can you do that? Can you top that?”
 - o Unbelief is never satisfied.

Exodus 16:4-15 - Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily. And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At even, then ye shall know that the LORD hath brought you out from the land of Egypt: And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the LORD; for that he heareth your murmurings against the LORD: and what are we, that ye murmur against us? And Moses said, This shall be, when the LORD shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that the LORD heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him: and what are we? your murmurings are not against us, but against the LORD. And Moses spake unto Aaron, Say unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, Come near before the LORD: for he hath heard your murmurings. And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God. And it came to pass, that at

even the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat.

Exodus 16:35 - And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.

Question 3 – what miracle will you show us that we might believe?

6.) Answer 3 – I have a better bread from heaven than Moses provided

32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you – Jesus responds, “Truly, truly, I’m telling you.”

MOSES DIDN’T GIVE THE MANNA

Moses gave you not that bread from heaven – It wasn’t Moses that gave you that bread. It was God the Father.

- Exodus 16:4 Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you;
- Psalm 78:24-25 - 24 And had rained down manna upon them to eat, and had given them of the corn of heaven. 25 Man did eat angels' food: he sent them meat to the full.
- Nehemiah 9:14-15 - 14 And madest known unto them thy holy sabbath, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant: 15 And gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and promisedst them that they should go in to possess the land which thou hadst sworn to give them.

THE MANNA WASN’T THE TRUE BREAD

But my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven – my Father gives (present tense) the true, genuine, real bread from heaven. The manna, though it was truly bread supplied from God, was merely a foreshadowing of the true bread that God would send down from heaven to provide spiritual sustenance for the world.

John 1:9 - That was the **true** Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

John 15:1 - I am the **true** vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven – The true bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven

And giveth life – spiritual sustenance, spiritual life, abundant life, everlasting life (cf. 1:4; 5:29, 40; 6:53; 10:10; 14:6; 20:31)

Unto the world – this bread of life was not just for the Jews in the wilderness. It was for all peoples regardless of race, ethnicity, or national background. (MacArthur, 2006)

- Jesus says, “God, through Moses, sent down bread from heaven to feed a million Jews for 40 years, but I’ve got something better. I have the true bread of life, and the true bread of life doesn’t provide physical sustenance, but spiritual sustenance. It doesn’t provide physical life, but everlasting life. It’s not just for a million people. It’s for the world.”

This peaks their interest.

7.) Question 4 – Will you give us this bread?

34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

Then said they unto him – they replied to Jesus

Lord, evermore give us this bread – Lord give us this bread at all times

- They are still thinking in physical terms, and their response echoes what the Samaritan woman at the well said in John 4:15 “Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.”
- “Lord, rain down this physical bread from heaven at all times for us.”
John 6:26 - Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

8.) Answer 4 – I am the bread of life

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

And Jesus said unto them – Jesus replied

I am the bread of life – The bread that you ask for is standing right in front of you. God has sent me down from heaven to you.

- This is the first of Jesus’ 7 I am statements.

- I am the light of the world – John 8:12
- I am the door of the sheep – John 10:7, 9
- I am the good Shepherd – John 10:11, 14
- I am the resurrection and the life – John 11:25
- I am the way, the truth, and the life – John 14:6
- I am the true vine – John 15:1

- My friend, Jesus is everything that you need in your life.

He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst – the one who comes to me and believes will never hunger nor thirst

- He speaks here, not of the body, but of the soul. (MacArthur, 2006)
 - Psalm 42:1-2 - As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. 2 My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?
 - Psalm 63:1 - O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;
- The one who comes to me looking for spiritual sustenance will find it
- The one who comes to me looking for everlasting life will find it
- Every spiritual longing in that person's life will be satisfied. They will never hunger or thirst again.

1 Corinthians 10:16-18 - The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread. Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?

1 Corinthians 11:23-29 - For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come. Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

36 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

But I said unto you. - But (word of contrast) I told you

That ye also have seen me, and believe not - that you have seen me (you have seen the bread of life sent down from heaven) and yet you do not believe

- This seems to be a paraphrased summary of what Jesus told to them in John 6:26 (Barnes, 1834)
- He's going to explain why they wouldn't believe.
John 6:30 - They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me -

- God draws us to salvation. He draws humanity to salvation.
 - o John 6:44 - No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him
 - o John 6:65 - ...Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.
 - o John 12:32 - And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.
- We can receive that drawing, or we can reject that drawing, but God is the one who makes the first move ("we love Him because He first loved us"). He draws us to salvation through the working of the Holy Spirit in our heart. He draws us through the demonstration of His love on the cross.
- God is working in our hearts to draw us to salvation. If we receive God's working in our heart, then we will come to Jesus. We will put our faith in Him. "All those" (the collective group) who receive God's working in their hearts are given from the Father to the Son to save and be with forever and ever.
- As we receive God's working in our hearts, God gives us to Jesus to save, to be with, and to resurrect us one day as well.
 - o John 6:45 - It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.
 - o Those who reject God's working in their heart remain in unbelief and reject Jesus as well.
 - o Those who receive God's working in their heart through faith receive Jesus as well and are given from the Father to the Son to be saved, to be with, and to be raised up at the last day.
- Here's what Jesus is saying: You've seen me, and you don't believe in me so as to receive eternal life...and the reason you don't have eternal life is not because I'm unwilling to give it to you...and it's not because the Father isn't drawing you to me. It's because you've rejected the Father and as a result you've rejected me too. (Klein, 2015, pp. 110-112)

“A veiled reference is made here to the broader matter of election. The church as a whole is chosen (elect) by God as the bride for His Son. That body will in fact come to Christ. Of course, the entrance to the body is by faith—whosoever will, may come. One key to understanding the principle of election is to view the elect as a collective whole rather than on focusing on individuals. That body of believers (i.e., the church), which God has given to Christ, indeed shall come to Him.”
(Sorenson, 2007)

And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out – and those who come to me for salvation, I will under no circumstances turn away (Barnes, 1834)

- It's not that the Father's not drawing you. It's not that I'm rejecting you. It's that you're rejecting the Father and a result you're rejecting me too.
 - o It's a package deal.

John 17:2 - As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

John 17:6 - I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

John 17:8-9 - For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

John 17:12 - While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

John 18:7-9 - 7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. 8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: 9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.

John 10:28-29 - And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me – As the bread of life, I didn't come down from heaven to accomplish my own agenda. I am operating in lockstep with the Father.

- That's why you can't receive Him and reject me. He sent me to do His will. To reject me is to reject Him.

What is the Father's will?

39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

And this is the Father's will which hath sent me – Here is what God's will is.... particularly as it pertains to salvation

That of all which he hath given me – that of all the people who respond to God's working in their heart and come to me in faith for salvation

I should lose nothing – none of them will perish

But should raise it up again at the last day – but I will physically raise them from the dead at the end times.

- This is a fantastic passage for the eternal security of the believer. We saw earlier that of those who come to Jesus, He won't turn any of them away. We see here that of those who come to Jesus, He won't lose any of them along the way. Once you're saved, you're saved. Once you're a child of God, you're a child of God forever. Once you have eternal life, you can't lose it. Otherwise it wouldn't be eternal life.
John 10:27-29 - My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

1 Peter 1:5 - Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

John 11:24-26 - Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

Romans 8:11 - But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

God's will in salvation is that once someone is saved, they stay saved forever, but who does God will to save?

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

And this is the will of him that sent me – here it is

That everyone which seeth the Son – “seeth” has the idea of perception or understanding as opposed to physically seeing (Sorenson, 2007)...that everyone who perceives or understands who the Son is

And believeth on him – and puts their faith and trust in Him

May have everlasting life – may presently possess everlasting life (right here and right now)

And I will raise him up at the last day – and I will physically raise him up from the dead in the end times at my coming

- He possesses eternal life now. He will be raised physically in the future, and between now and then he will not lose his salvation.
John 6:36-37 - But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

1 John 5:11-13 - And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

Who does God will to save? Those who put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as their Savior. The crowd trusted in religion. The crowd trusted in their good deeds. Jesus was calling them to abandon that and put their complete trust in Him.

Application

Friend, have you made that decision to put your faith and trust in Jesus as your Savior?

- The crowd had heard Jesus speak
- The crowd had seen Jesus do miracles
- The crowd was religious
- But the crowd was unwilling to stop putting their faith and trust in religion and put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ alone.

Christian, is your soul spiritually satisfied in Jesus?

- Are you resting in the peace that He provides, or is anxiety ruining your life?
- Are you fed through His words, or have you been starving yourself of the Scriptures?
- Are you nourishing through communing with Him in prayer, or has it been so long that you're malnourished?
- Are you plugged into the body of Christ here in Camarillo? Are you really connected to and encouraged in this local congregation? Or have you drifted?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 15 – JOHN 6:25-40

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 6:25-29 Memorize John 6:28-29</p>	<p>What are the first two questions that the crowd asks Jesus? How does He answer the questions?</p>
<p>T Read John 6:30-34 Recite John 6:28-29</p>	<p>What is the third question that the crowd asks Jesus? How does He answer the question?</p>
<p>W Read John 6:35-40 Recite John 6:28-29</p>	<p>What is the fourth request that the crowd makes to Jesus? How does Jesus respond to this request?</p>
<p>T Read John 6:41-59</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 6:41-59</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 6:41-59

Review

Jesus is in a synagogue in Capernaum. Some of the crowd that partook in the feeding of the 5000 on the other side of the Sea of Galilee have found him. Jesus and the crowd are having a conversation.

Question – how did you get here?

Answer – pursue the bread of life.

Question – how do we receive the bread of life?

Answer – believe on me.

Question – what miracle will you show us that we might believe?

Answer – I have a better bread from heaven than Moses provided.

Question – will you give us this bread?

Answer – I am the bread of life.

Sermon

1.) Question 5 – We know His parents. How can He claim to come from heaven?

41 The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.

The Jews then murmured at him – they began to complain among themselves about Him and gripe at Him

Because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven – He had peaked their interest when He had talked about a true bread of life from heaven, but His claim to be that bread of life disappointed and frustrated them

- “Oh, you’re the bread of life come down from heaven. Well that’s disappointing. I thought you were being serious about this awesome bread that you had.”
- The Jews here react to the true bread of life the same way that the Jews in the wilderness reacted to the manna from heaven: by complaining (cf. Numbers 11:4-6).

Numbers 11:4-6 - 4 And the mixt multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat? 5 We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: 6 But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes.

42 And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? – We know His family. We know who His mom and dad are. We know how He came into this world (the same way that every newborn child comes into the world).

- We cannot argue from this passage whether Joseph was living still or had died. The murmuring is explicable on either hypothesis. The traditionary impression is that "Joseph" had fallen asleep. Either hypothesis is compatible with the language. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven? – if that's the case, then how can He claim to have come down from heaven?

- They are unaware of His eternal preexistence, miraculous conception, and virgin birth. (Gill, 1811)

Matthew 13:55-56 - Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?

Luke 4:22 - And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

Question 5 – We know His parents. How can He claim to come from heaven?

2.) Answer 5 – You must learn of the Father to partake of me as the bread of life.

43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves – they were complaining and criticizing quietly one to another, assuming that Jesus could not hear...but Jesus could hear past their words even to their heart. He tells them to stop griping among themselves.

- Once again, Christ does not answer their objection. He doesn't address the question of his birth and coming down from heaven.
- He's really going to continue on with His discourse that He ended in verse 40 about how He is the bread of life.

Answer 5 – You must learn of the Father to partake of me as the bread of life

44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him – everyone who comes to me in faith has been drawn by the Father. It is the Father who works in hearts to

bring people to Jesus. It does not say that all that the Father draws to me come. (Hunt, 2013, p. 420)

- The Greek word for draw (*helko*) occurs eight times in the NT with the sense of drag, draw, or attract. (John 18:10; John 21:6; John 21:11; Acts 16:19; Acts 21:30; James 2:6; cf. Jer. 31:3)
 - Literally being dragged (non-voluntary)
 - Figuratively being drawn (voluntary) (Klein, 2015, pp. 113-115)
 - As it is used here and as it is used in John 12:32 as well.
- Take note of what this verse doesn't say. It doesn't say that God only draws some. It says that apart from God's working in man's heart, man doesn't come to Jesus. It doesn't say that God only works in some people's hearts. God desires the salvation of all.
 - John 12:32 - And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.
 - 2 Peter 3:9 - The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.
 - 1 Timothy 2:4 - Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.
 - God desires the salvation of all, and He beckons all to come to Jesus.
- This verse also doesn't say that this drawing of God is irresistible. God beckons, God draws, God invites, but you have to choose whether you will receive or reject Him
 - John 12:32 - And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.
 - Despite the fact that Jesus draws all men, not all men are saved. Why? Not because He hasn't drawn them to Himself, but because they've rejected His drawing.
 - Matthew 23:37 - "37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and **ye would not!**"
 - John 5:39-40 - "39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. 40 And **ye will not** come to me, that ye might have life."
 - Acts 7:51 - "51 Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always **resist the Holy Ghost:** as your fathers did, so do ye."
 - Isaiah 5:4 - Isaiah 5:4 (alluding to Israel, God says) - "4 What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" (Israel's rebellions was a function of their choosing to reject God, not God's choosing to reject them or passively not allowing them to repent)
- God draws us to salvation. He draws us to Jesus. We can receive that drawing, or we can reject that drawing, but God is the one who makes the first move. What happens to those who receive God's drawing and come to Jesus?

John 5:44 - How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?

John 6:45 - It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

Matthew 11:25-27 - At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.

And I will raise him up at the last day – I will physically raise him from the dead in the end times

- who is this referring to? It's referring to the one who comes to Jesus in faith. (cf. John 6:37, 39-40)

What does it mean that God draws us?

45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

It is written in the prophets – it is written in the book of the prophets (referring to Isaiah 54:13 in the Septuagint; similar sentiments are found in Micah 4:1-4 and Jeremiah 31:34)

Isaiah 54:13 - And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children.

Jeremiah 31:33-34 - But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

Micah 4:2 - And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

And they shall be all taught of God – This explains the drawing of the preceding verse. It is by the teaching of God's Word and God's Spirit that men are drawn by God. (Barnes, 1834) We are taught outwardly by the Word of God and inwardly by the Spirit of God.

Isaiah 55:11 - So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

Romans 10:17 - So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

John 14:26 - 26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

John 15:26 - But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

John 16:8 - 8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me – those who not only hear, but also learn or receive God’s working/teaching in their heart, come to Christ in faith.

- Jesus clarifies the "drawing" of 6:44 by the invitation He issues in 6:45: everyone who listens and learns from God comes to Jesus. The Father is testifying of Jesus. The question is whether these Jews will really listen and learn from God. The question is whether you will really listen and learn from God. (Klein, 2015, pp. 113-115)

Illustration – Imagine that your son is failing history and as a result you schedule a sit-down meeting with his teacher.

- “Why is my son failing your class?”
- Sir, in my class in order to learn history the students need to be taught. No one learns history apart from my teaching. The problem is not that I’m failing to teach your son. The problem is that your son isn’t listening.
 - That’s precisely what Jesus is saying here. No one comes to me unless the Father teaches them. Your problem is not that the Father is failing to teach you to follow me. Your problem is that you’re not being taught. Your problem is that you’re not listening.

Isaiah 2:3 - And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

Ephesians 4:21-22 - If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

Hebrews 8:10-11 - For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.

46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

Not that any man hath seen the Father – But I don't want my words to be twisted. When I say that you must hear and learn of the Father to come to me, I don't mean that you must see God visibly and hear God audibly to come to me. No man has seen God.

Save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father – except for me who am from God (who was with God prior to my incarnation). I have seen the Father.

John 1:18 - No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

John 7:29 - But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

Verily, verily, I say unto you – Truly, truly I'm telling you

He that believeth on me hath everlasting life – The one who presently puts their faith in Jesus Christ presently possesses everlasting life.

John 1:12 - But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

John 3:16 - 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. 18 He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 3:36 - He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

John 5:24 - 24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

John 6:40 - And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

48 I am that bread of life.

I am that bread of life – why is it true that those who believe in Jesus have everlasting life? Because Jesus is the bread of life that provides spiritual sustenance to those who partake in Him.

49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead – the manna that God gave your fathers in the wilderness was life sustaining, but only temporarily. It was not the antidote to death. They all died in the wilderness long ago. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

Numbers 26:65 - For the LORD had said of them, They shall surely die in the wilderness. And there was not left a man of them, save Caleb the son of Jephunneh, and Joshua the son of Nun.

Hebrews 3:17-19 - But with whom was he grieved forty years? was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not? So we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief.

- For what it's worth, the Jews in the wilderness who received the manna from heaven were also people of unbelief.

50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

This – referring to Himself

Is the bread of life which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die – as the true bread of life from the Father in heaven, I am the antidote to death. The one who eats me (metaphorically receives me) will not die.

John 11:25-26 - Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever – Jesus is not merely the bread that gives life. He is the living Bread, that has life in and of itself, a life that is imparted to those who partake of Him. (Plummer, 1902)

John 5:26 – for as the Father hath life in Himself, so has He given to the Son to have life in Himself

And this bread that I will give is my flesh – alluding to the future day when He would truly give His body as a payment for the sins of the world on the cross of Calvary. (Barnes, 1834)

Luke 22:19 - And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

1 Corinthians 11:24 - And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.

Which I give for the life of the world – this sacrifice of His body would be given not just for the sins of a few, not just so that some might have the opportunity to come to Him for spiritual life, but so that all might have that opportunity to receive everlasting life.

1 John 2:2 - And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Matthew 20:28 - Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: **if any man eat of this bread**, he shall live for ever: **and the bread that I will give is my flesh**, which I will give for the life of the world.

Illustration – if a man walked in the back doors of the church and said that if you took a bit of his arm, you would have everlasting life, you would be pretty freaked out. Where’s Officer Brady? Where’s Brother Rich?

3.) Question 6 – how can we eat His flesh?

52 The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

The Jews therefore strove among themselves – they were murmuring quietly amongst themselves in verse 41. Now they are full on arguing amongst themselves. (Ellicott, 1905)

Saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat – this guy sounds crazy. How can this man give us his body to eat? This is patently absurd.

John 3:4 - Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

John 4:11 - The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

John 6:34 - 34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

What does Jesus do? He doubles down.

4.) Answer 6 – You must eat my flesh and drink my blood to have life

53 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

- Jesus is speaking metaphorically here, but He answers them in a very confrontational way that feeds into their misperceptions. Why does He do that? Why doesn’t He do a better job of clarifying?
 - That’s going to be the main thrust of the question that we’re going to answer next week. But for now, let’s break down His response.

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you – truly, truly, I’m telling you

Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you – Christ did not mean that this should be understood literally but spiritually.

John 6:63 - ...the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

Nevertheless, there are those today who still teach that this should be understood literally.

Illustration – demonstrate a communion cup

Application – the Catholic church teaches that when its members partake of the bread and wine in communion, the bread and wine literally turn into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, which is absurd, and an incorrect interpretation of this passage. They're making the same mistake of interpretation that the crowd made 2000 years go.

- Think about the first communion at the Last Supper where Jesus is physically present as He distributes the elements. Are we to believe that the bread and wine literally turned into His body and blood as He was still physically alive and sitting there?

Christ's body and blood would be given for us on the cross of Calvary. The way to partake in His sacrifice on the cross for sin is through faith. It is through faith in Christ's death on the cross that we partake in His body and blood. This can be seen in the parallel usage of Jesus' insistence on faith as the means of eternal life in this discourse. Further, when we partake in communion as believers, it is a reminder of what Christ did for us and it is symbolic of when we initially partook of Christ through faith at salvation. (Barnes, 1834)

- That is why only believers are to partake in communion.

54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life – the one who partakes of me through faith presently possesses everlasting life

And I will raise him up at the last day – and I will physically raise Him from the dead in the end times

55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

For my flesh is meat indeed – my flesh is true food

And my blood is drink indeed – my blood is true drink (Ellicott, 1905)

- What food and drink are to physical life (essential), Christ's body and blood are to spiritual life (essential). (Spence & Exell, 1883)

56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood – the one who spiritually partakes of me
Dwelleth in me and I in him – is truly and intimately connected with me (like a vine to a branch; c.f. John 15:1-5)

John 15:4-5 - 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. 5 I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

Lamentations 3:24 - The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him.

1 John 3:24 - And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

As the living Father hath sent me – as God the Father who is the source of all life has sent me (Poole, 1990)

And I live by the Father – in His condescended human state, Jesus was sustained by His Father and was granted authority by the Father to give both physical and spiritual life (cf. John 5:26)

So he that eateth me – the one who partakes in me spiritually by faith (Gill, 1811)

Shall live by me – will live spiritually by me

Jeremiah 10:10 - But the LORD is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king: at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation.

John 5:26 - For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

John 11:25-26 - Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

Galatians 2:20 - I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.

This is that bread which came down from heaven – speaking of Himself

Not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead – unlike your fathers who ate manna in the wilderness and still died

He that eateth of this bread shall live forever – the one who partakes of me will never die

59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum – He spoke these things openly in the hearing of all the people who attended at public worship in the synagogue (Benson, 1857)

Why did Jesus use such strong, divisive language here? Why would He word that in such a seemingly offensive way? Why did He continue to antagonize the crowd?

- We're going to talk a lot about that next week.

How did the crowd react? What was their response like?

- You've got to come back next week to find out...or you can read ahead!

Application

Have you partaken of the bread of life? Communion won't save from your sins. Baptism won't save you from your sins. Church attendance won't save you from your sins. Only putting your faith and trust in Jesus Christ can save you from your sins.

Christian, you have the bread of life at your disposal. There are people all around you starving to death. Will you share it with them?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 16 – JOHN 6:41-59

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 6:41-42 Memorize John 6:45</p>	<p>What is the fifth question that the crowd asks Jesus in this discourse?</p>
<p>T Read John 6:43-51 Recite John 6:45</p>	<p>How does Jesus answer the question the crowd murmured about among themselves?</p>
<p>W Read John 6:52-59 Recite John 6:45</p>	<p>What is the sixth question that the crowd argues about amongst themselves? How does Jesus answer this question?</p>
<p>T Read John 6:60-71</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 6:60-71</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

John 6:60-71

Review

Question – how did you get here?

Answer – pursue the bread of life.

Question – how do we receive the bread of life?

Answer – believe on me.

Question – what miracle will you show us that we might believe?

- You know what you see here? Unbelief.

Answer – I have a better bread from heaven than Moses provided.

Question – will you give us this bread?

Answer – I am the bread of life.

Question – we know His parents. How can He claim to come from heaven?

- You know what you see here? Unbelief.

Answer – you must learn of the Father to partake of me as the bread of life.

Question – how can we eat His flesh?

- You know what you see here? Unbelief.

Answer – you must eat my flesh and drink my blood to have life

Last week we left off with two questions that we are going to answer this week.

1. Why did Jesus use such strong, divisive language here? Why would He word that in such a seemingly offensive way? Why did He continue to antagonize the crowd?
2. How did the crowd react? What was their response like?

Let's start by looking at the crowd's reaction.

Sermon

Question 7 from the crowd – This is a difficult teaching. Who can listen to it?

60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?

Many therefore of his disciples – in this usage the word “disciples” is not in reference to the twelve and it is not in reference to those who were true followers of Christ (“Christians”).

The word disciple means learner and it here refers to those who were under Christ's teaching. (Barnes, 1834)

When they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it? – this is a difficult teaching. Who can listen to it?

- This is the reaction of many false believers, many pretenders today. They like Jesus for His miracles. They like Jesus for some of the things He says about caring for the poor, helping the needy, and loving others. But when Jesus states definitively that He is THE revelation of God to man, that eternal life is found in faith in Him alone, and that apart from Him the world is destined for judgment, their tone changes.
- When we look at these “followers of Jesus” who would end up leaving Him, what we see is telling. Jesus' difficult teachings did not cause them to lose their faith in Him. Jesus's difficult teachings revealed that they never truly had any faith in Him to begin with. It almost served like a fork on the road. “Ok, you've been hanging around for a while because of the miracles and the bread, but now you've got to put your money where your mouth is. Do you really believe?”
 - o For a lot of His followers, do you know how they responded? “This is a hard saying. Who can listen to this?”
 - John 6:66-69 - 66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. 67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? 68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

Why does Jesus often employ difficult teachings? Why does He speak in mysterious parables? Why does He say controversial things?

1. To reveal people's underlying unbelief.
 - a. Jesus' difficult teachings drove away those who would not believe.
 - b. In Mark 4:11-12, Jesus told His disciples that the reason He spoke in parables to the multitudes was so that they wouldn't believe. That doesn't sound right. What does that mean?
 - i. Jesus difficult teachings revealed the multitudes underlying unbelief and drove them away in greater unbelief.
2. As judgment on people's unbelief.
 - a. In Matthew 13:11-15, Jesus told His disciples that the reason He spoke in parables to the multitudes was because of their unbelief. It was judgment on them because they had closed their eyes and hardened their hearts to the clear teachings He had already given.
 - b. “If you're not going to accept the clear truth you've been given, then why am I going to give you more?”
 - i. Illustration – my daughter asking for more chicken when she keeps throwing the chicken on the floor

Why does Jesus employ difficult teachings and mysterious parables?

1. To reveal people's underlying belief and drive away those who would not believe.
2. As judgment on people's unbelief.

This is exactly what we see happening here. Many of the "followers of Jesus" responded to His confrontational teaching by saying, "This is a difficult teaching. Who can listen to this?"

How does Jesus respond?

Matthew 13:11-15 - 11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

- There are some to whom greater truth is given. There are some from which it is withheld.
- Jesus here divides His hearers into two groups:
 - o The disciples to whom the mysteries of the kingdom (i.e. truth) are given
 - o Others (those outside – as Mark calls them) to whom the mysteries (i.e. truth) are not given.
- What determines which group someone is in?

12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

- The one who has/holds onto/stewards truth, will be given more truth, and he will have an abundance of truth.
- The one who does not have/hold onto/steward truth, will not be given more truth, but will have the truth that he has been given taken away. (Barnes, 1834)

13 Therefore speak I to them in parables (mysterious stories): because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

- This is the reason I speak to unbelievers/outsideers in parables. I'm not going to give them greater truth because they've rejected the truth that they've already been given. The truth is standing right in front of them and yet despite that, they don't see it, hear it, or understand it.

14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall - hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

- Jesus quotes Isaiah 6:9-10 to confirm what He is saying and describe the condition of those who reject Him, those who have only themselves to blame. Why? Because these hardhearted rejecters have brought judgment on

themselves because seeing, they do not see and hearing, they do not hear. (Klein, 2015, p. 51)

- Jesus says, "I speak in parables to unbelievers as judgment because they've already rejected the truth they've previously been given."
 - o They've rejected what they've been given. Why would I give them more?
 - o The key word is because in verse 13.

However, in Mark and Luke's account it's phrase a little differently.

Mark 4:11-12 - 11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: 12 That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them.

- In Matthew's account Jesus says, "I speak in parables to unbelievers because they've rejected the truth."
- In Mark and Luke's account Jesus says, "I speak in parables to unbelievers so that they reject the truth."
- Which is it?
 - o It's both.
 - o If people reject the truth that they've been given, why would Jesus give them more?
 - o In addition, Jesus' parables and difficult teachings serve to reveal what people truly are. That's why Jesus often keeps pushing people's buttons, keeps pushing on the pain point. It's to separate the true believers from the unbelievers. (Klein, 2015, pp. 52-54) And beyond that, hardening is God's judgment on unbelief. God says come. Man says no. God says come. Man says no. God says no.
 - Further, Jesus' difficult teachings and parables are given to bring the ensuing conflict between Jesus and unbelievers to a climax, an event that God foreknew, and God planned to use to bring redemption to the world. You know what that climax was? The cross.
 - Acts 2:23 - Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

Luke 19:41-42 - 41 And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, 42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

- Judicial blindness is God's judgment on unbelief.

John 12:40-41 - 40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. 41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

- Judicial hardening is God's response to unbelief.
 - John found an unfortunate precedent in Isaiah 53:1, where the prophet laments over the people who rejected God's word. John agrees with the prophet that to reject God's word inevitably incurs a divine response. Because they have spurned God's message (John 12:37-38), "for this reason they could not believe . . ." (vv. 39-40). It seems coherent to conclude that John means not that God prevents the faith of any, but that when people continually reject the truth, God may act to make faith an impossibility by blinding their eyes and hardening their hearts.
 - The solution is to understand that continual rejection of Christ may incur God's hardening, so that faith becomes impossible. This can explain the "impossibility of repentance" mentioned in Hebrews 6:4-6, and it may account for some people's obduracy in spiritual matters.
 - Important in John's text here is Jesus' ongoing call for his hearers to believe. God's hardening and blinding may be a result of human rejection of Jesus, but belief is always the call. For the evangelist, the invitation is still to be extended to those in the darkness of blindness to believe and be healed (cf. also v. 46)
 - We concur that the scriptural pattern is clear: if one persists in unbelief, no healing is possible; blindness is inevitable; and hearts are calcified. (Klein, 2015, pp. 120-124)

Acts 28:27 - For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

Romans 11:7-11 - 7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. 8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. 9 And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: 10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway. 11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.

Isaiah 6:10 - Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

Answer 7 from Jesus – My teaching is spiritual and life giving, but some of you don't believe.

61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it – knowing because of His omniscience that His followers were grumbling at His teaching

He said unto them, Doth this offend you – Does this cause you to stumble? Does this trip you up? Does this make you to turn away?

62 What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? – if you saw me ascend to heaven, would you no longer be offended that I said I came down from heaven? Would you believe what I said then? Not only that, but if you saw me ascend to heaven, then would you still be offended at what I said about eating my flesh and drinking my blood? Would not my bodily ascension prove that I was speaking figuratively when I said such things? (Clarke, 1831)

John 16:28 - I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

Acts 1:9 - And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

1 Peter 3:22 - Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing – It is the spirit of a man that makes him physically alive. The body without the spirit is dead. It is the Spirit of God that makes us spiritually alive, that regenerates us. Our flesh can do nothing to save us. It is a spiritual partaking of Jesus that brings life. Physically eating his body and drinking his blood will accomplish nothing. (Gill, 1811)

- Genesis 2:7 - And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life – The teaching that I have given to you regarding partaking of my body and blood is spiritual. One partakes of me through faith. And further, when one partakes of me, their faith produces everlasting life. (Gill, 1811)

- Even though Jesus does give a difficult teaching in this passage, at the end of His discourse, He still does clarify what He means.

2 Corinthians 3:6 - Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

1 Peter 3:18 - For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

Romans 2:25 - For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision.

Galatians 5:6 - For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

Romans 10:17 - So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

1 Peter 1:23 - Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

But there are some of you that believe not – though my words are life giving, you cannot receive that everlasting life apart from faith...and there are some of you that do not believe

- Here Jesus emphasizes their personal responsibility to respond to His doctrine. They did not have life because they did not believe (and Jesus knew exactly who they were).
- speaking to Judas and those disciples who would leave Him (cf. 6:66) (Clarke, 1831)

For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not and who should betray Him –this is a parenthesis explanation. Jesus doesn't say this. It's John's commentary on what Jesus was saying.

- What John explains is that the reason Jesus can say that some of His followers did not truly believe in Him is because Jesus could see people's hearts. He knew from the beginning of His ministry which followers truly believed and which didn't. He even knew from the moment that He met him that one of his followers would betray him: a man we have not been introduced to yet but will be shortly. Though He knew the spiritual status of His unsaved followers, He did not determine it. (Klein, 2015, pp. 116-121)

John 15:27 - 27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

John 16:4 - 4 But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you

John 5:42 - But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.

John 10:26 - But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

John 13:18 - I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

- From among His disciples, He knew that He had chosen a betrayer.

2 Timothy 2:19 - Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

In verse 64, Jesus emphasizes man's personal responsibility. In verse 65, Jesus emphasizes God's enabling.

65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

Therefore I said unto you – because some of you don't believe, "That is the reason I said..."

- He's going to refer to what He said in verse 44 (with allusions to verse 37)
- John 6:37 - All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.
- John 6:44-45 - No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

That no man can come unto me. - no man can come to me in faith

except it were given unto him of my Father – unless God enables him by drawing him to me. There are some that would take this verse and interpret it to mean that God only enables/draws some people to come to Jesus, and the reason that people aren't saved is because God didn't choose to save them. But this verse does not say that. It says that apart from God's drawing, we wouldn't come to Jesus. But God doesn't just draw a select few. He draws all of us to salvation. The question is, "How will you respond?"

- Here's what Jesus is saying: "There are some of you that don't truly believe in me. This is the reason I said no one can come to me outside of the Father's drawing. I didn't say that to absolve you of your guilt for your unbelief. I said that to urge you to listen and learn from the Father because He's pointing you to me." (Klein, 2015, pp. 116-121)
- The drawing of God is not something that limits people from being saved. Rather, it is that which enables people to be saved through faith in Jesus Christ.

- God's enabling makes us responsible for how we respond to Jesus, and how did these respond to Jesus?

Ephesians 2:8-9 - For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

2 Timothy 2:25 - In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;

66 From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

From that time many of his disciples – many of those who had “followed Him”, though not truly believed in him

went back, - turned away from him; they apostasized from following Jesus

and walked no more with him – they no longer traveled with Him from place to place as before

Illustration – lost family that started coming to church and Sunday school and listening to the words of Jesus until they were confronted with the gospel.

- The wife said, “I will never bow my knee to that man.”

Illustration – Christian school classmate that is into drugs, death metal, vulgarity, sexual promiscuity

- He didn't lose his salvation. His falling away shows that he never truly believed. He was never truly a Christian.
- 1 John 2:19 - They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

Jesus' interaction with the crowd ends with many of them leaving Him.

Matthew 12:40-45 - For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here. The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

Matthew 13:20-21 - But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

John 12:37-41 - But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

Hebrews 10:38 - Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

2 Peter 2:20-22 - For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

Question 8 from Jesus – Will you twelve also go away?

67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

Will ye also go away – in the Greek Jesus' question is framed negatively: "You won't also go away, will you?" (MacArthur, 2006)

Application – this is a question that will be asked of each of us at different points in our lives

- When someone we know leaves the faith
- When someone we respect falls into immorality
- When we don't understand why God is working in a certain way

Luke 14:25-33 - And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be

able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace. So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

Answer 8 from Peter – No. You have the words of eternal life, and we believe on you.

68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

Then Simon Peter answered him – as the spokesperson for the Twelve (cf. 13:36-37; Matt. 14:28; 15:15; 16:16, 22; 17:4; 18:21; 19:27; 26:33, 35; Mark 11:21; Luke 5:8; 8:45; 12:41) (MacArthur, 2006)

To whom shall we go? – if not you, what teacher would we go to? There is no one but you.

Thou hast the words of eternal life – you teach the doctrines that lead to eternal life

- They believed what Jesus said in verse 63 when he claimed that His words were spirit and life.
- They believed what He said, and they believed in who He was.

John 6:63 - It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

John 5:24 - Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

Acts 4:12 - Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

And we believe and dare sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God – while the crowd was only willing to accept Jesus as a kind of second Moses whom they hoped would supply their material needs, the Twelve saw Him for who He really is: The Messiah, the Son of God, the provider of everlasting life. (MacArthur, 2006)

- Or at least Peter assumed that they all did. How shocking it must have been for them when Jesus pointed out that not even all of the Twelve truly believed in Him and that there was a traitor in the ranks. (MacArthur, 2006)

John 20:31 - But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name

1 John 5:20 - And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

Question 9 from Jesus – Though I have chosen the twelve of you, is not one of you a devil?

70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

Have not I chosen you, and one of you is a devil – though I have chosen the twelve of you, is not one of you a devil?

- Jesus had chosen these twelve men to serve him as apostles and yet He knew that one of them did not truly believe in Him, and He also knew that that one would betray Him in the most terrible way.
- Who was it? Once again, John provides us with some commentary in verse 71. John 13:18 - I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

John 17:12 - While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

John 13:2 - And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

John 13:27 - And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

71 He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon – You can imagine John writing this later in his life thinking back to this moment, thinking back to his friend, Judas...a fellow disciple that he ate, drank, camped, traveled, and ministered with for years during Jesus' ministry.

- John writes, "He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon."
 - o In that moment, John didn't know who or what Jesus was talking about but looking back he did.
- We don't know too much about Judas, but the word "Iscariot" gives us a clue to his background. Iscariot most likely means "of Kerioth" which was a town in Judah. If that's true, then Judas would have been the only one of the apostles that was not a Galilean, but a Judaeen. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

For he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve – he was the one that would betray Jesus even though He was one of the twelve, that he was one of us, or at least so we thought.

- Imagine that. Judas is standing there as Jesus says this.
 - o Judas was there for the feeding of the 5000.
 - o He saw Jesus walk on water.
 - o He witnessed Jesus do miracles.

- He heard Jesus teach.
- He was commissioned by Jesus to preach and do miracles.
- And yet, he was not a true believer.
 - Application – it's easy to fake being a follower of Jesus. It's easy to put on a front, to go through the motions, to fit in...but as was the case with Judas, there will come a day when the true believers will be separated from the pretenders.

Psalm 109:6-8 - Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand. When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin. Let his days be few; and let another take his office.

Psalm 41:9 - Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

Acts 1:16-20 - Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take.

Acts 2:23 - Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

Matthew 27:3-5 - Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

Application

When confronted with the truth of Jesus' teachings, many of the crowd turned away. They left, and in leaving they made the biggest mistake of their life. Their mistake was not that they didn't stay. Their mistake was that they didn't turn to Christ in faith.

When confronted with the truth of Jesus' teaching, Judas did not turn away. He stayed. He blended in. He played the part, and in doing so, he made the biggest mistake of his life. His mistake was not that he stayed. His mistake was that he did not turn to Christ in faith.

- Friend, I don't know where you're at today, but I beg you if you're not truly saved to avoid making the biggest mistake of your life as well. Turn to Christ in faith.

His death on the cross and resurrection has the power to save you from your sins.

For those of you who are a part of this church, I ask you the same question that Jesus asked the twelve 2000 years ago: "Will you also go away?"

- I implore you to say no.
- When life is hard, when people fail you, when friends turn away from Jesus, continue in the faith. Keep your eyes on the Lord. Rest in him.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 17 – JOHN 6:60-71

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 6:60-66 Memorize John 6:68</p>	<p>What is the seventh question that the crowd asks Jesus in this discourse? How does he answer, and what does the crowd do in response?</p>
<p>T Read John 6:67-69 Recite John 6:68</p>	<p>What question does Jesus ask the disciples, and how does Peter (as the twelve's representative) respond?</p>
<p>W Read John 6:70-71 Recite John 6:68</p>	<p>Though Jesus had chosen the twelve to help him minister, one of them would betray Him. Who was it, and how would he betray Jesus?</p>
<p>T Read John 7:1-24</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 7:1-24</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 7:1-24

Review



Jesus' Early Ministry

- Jesus called His first disciples (Judea)
- Jesus turned the water into wine (Galilee)
- Jesus cleansed the temple (Judea)
- Jesus met with Nicodemus (Judea)
- Jesus preaches and baptizes in the Judean wilderness (Judea)
- Jesus met with the Samaritan woman at the well (Samaria)
- Jesus healed the nobleman's son (Galilee)

Opposition to Jesus' Ministry

- Jesus healed a lame man on the Sabbath Day (Jerusalem)
 - o The Sabbath restrictions don't apply to God, and they don't apply to me. He placed Himself on equal footing with God the Father.
 - o The Father and I are perfectly unified.
 - We healed that man together.
 - We will judge the world together.
 - We will give everlasting life together to those who believe on me.
 - o The Jewish leaders wanted to kill Him.
- Jesus feeds the 5000 (Galilee)
- Jesus teaches on being the bread of life (Capernaum)
 - o Many of Jesus' followers abandon Him

Sermon

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

1.) Jesus' Rejection by His Brothers

1 After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

After these things – refers to the events described in chapter 6, which took place around the time of Passover in April (6:4). Since chapter 7 opens at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles in October (7:2), there is a gap of about six months between chapters 6 and 7. (MacArthur, 2006)



- The other gospel writers note that during those six months, Jesus traveled the length of Galilee, from Tyre and Sidon, northwest of Galilee (Matt. 15:21–28) to Decapolis, in the southeast (Mark 7:31–37). During that time He performed miracles, including healing (Matt. 15:29–31; Mark 8:22–26), casting out demons (Matt. 15:21–28; 17:14–18), and feeding the four thousand (Matt. 15:32–38). Most of the six months, however, was spent discipling the Twelve. The Lord taught them extensively (Matt. 16:13–27; 17:19–23; 18:1–35), including telling them for the first time of His impending rejection, crucifixion, and resurrection (Matt. 16:21; cf. 17:22–23). He also revealed to the inner circle (Peter, James, and John) a glimpse of His divine glory (Matt. 17:1–8). (MacArthur, 2006)

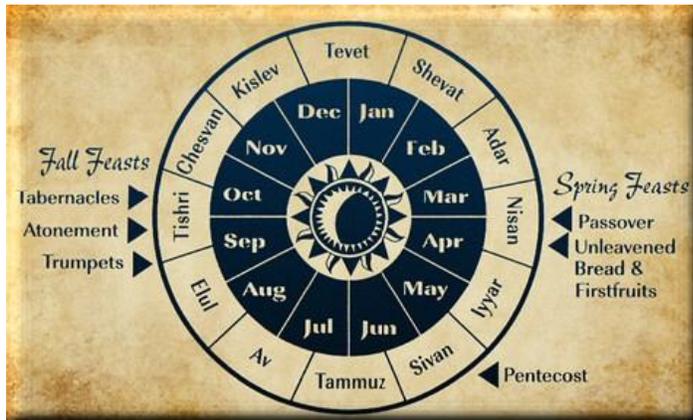
Jesus walked in Galilee – He traveled and ministered in the region of Galilee (MacArthur, 2006)

For he would not walk in Jewry – Jesus would not travel and minister openly in the region of Judea

Because the Jews sought to kill him – because the Jewish leaders wanted to kill him, but it was not time for that yet

John 5:16-18 - And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day. But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

2 Now the Jew's feast of tabernacles was at hand.



(Ervin, 2014)

Now the Jew's feast of tabernacles was at hand – There were seven major Jewish festivals prescribed in the Bible. Four of them were in the spring: Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, and Pentecost. Three of them were in the fall: Trumpets, Atonement, and Tabernacles.

The Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated in the September/ October, whereas the next festival mentioned in John's gospel, the Feast of Dedication, fell in the winter (10: 22) and was followed by Passover, Jesus's last Passover being recorded beginning in 13:1. Thus with John 7 we enter the latter half year of Jesus's public ministry. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2486-2489)

- The Feast of Dedication, which was once also called the Feast of the Maccabees, was an eight-day winter festival celebrated by the Jews in the month of December or sometimes late November. Today, this festival is called Hanukkah or the Festival of Lights. The history of the Feast of Dedication goes back to the intertestamental period and the Maccabean Revolt. After the Seleucid king Antiochus Epiphanes profaned the Jewish temple and forced the Jews to abandon their sacrifices and adopt pagan rituals, a group of Jewish freedom fighters rose up, defied the oppressive pagan regime, and overthrew the Seleucids. The temple in Jerusalem was re-dedicated to God; ever since then, the Feast of Dedication has been celebrated to commemorate this meaningful event in Jewish history. (Got Questions)



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- During the feast, the people built and lived in shelters made of branches (Lev. 23:42), as their ancestors had done after leaving Egypt (v. 43). City dwellers built their booths on the roofs of their houses, and in the streets and squares (Neh. 8:14–17). According to the first-century Jewish historian Josephus, the Feast of Tabernacles was the most popular of the major Jewish feasts. It was marked by celebrations and parties, and featured water-drawing and lamp-lighting ceremonies (cf. John 7:37–38; 8:12). In the millennial kingdom, the Feast of Tabernacles will again be celebrated, in honor of Messiah’s dwelling with His people, and the ingathering of the nations into His kingdom (Zech. 14:16–19). (MacArthur, 2006) Leviticus 23:34-43- Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, The fifteenth day of this seventh month shall be the feast of tabernacles for seven days unto the LORD. On the first day shall be an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein. These are the feasts of the LORD, which ye shall proclaim to be holy convocations, to offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, and a meat offering, a sacrifice, and drink offerings, every thing upon his day: Beside the sabbaths of the LORD, and beside your gifts, and beside all your vows, and beside all your freewill offerings, which ye give unto the LORD. Also in the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when ye have gathered in the fruit of the land, ye shall keep a feast unto the LORD seven days: on the first day shall be a sabbath, and on the eighth day shall be a sabbath. And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days. And ye shall keep it a feast unto the LORD seven days in the year. It shall be a statute for ever in your generations: ye shall celebrate it in the seventh month. Ye shall dwell in booths seven days; all that are Israelites born shall dwell in booths: That your generations may know that I made the children of Israel to dwell in booths, when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.

His brethren therefore said unto him – his half-brothers names were James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas (cf. Matt. 13:55). They did not believe in Jesus at this point in time, but they would after his resurrection (cf. Acts 1:14).

- Two of His brothers, James and Jude, penned the epistles that bear their names, and James became the head of the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; cf. Gal. 1:19; 2:9). (MacArthur, 2006)

Depart hence, and go into Judaea – since the feast of tabernacles was near, and it was one of the three feasts that all Jewish males were required to attend (Passover, Pentecost, and

Tabernacles) (Deut. 16:16; cf. Ex. 23:14-17; 34:22-24), Jesus' brothers assumed He would soon leave Galilee and go into Judea to celebrate it. (MacArthur, 2006)

That thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest – His brothers challenged him upon arriving in Judea to publicly perform His miracles at the feast for all to see

4 For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world.

For there is no man that doeth anything in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly – For no one who wants to be known openly does things in secret. This would have been true if Jesus were the political Messiah that the Jews sought. For Him to remain relatively secluded in Galilee seems inconsistent with His messianic claims. (MacArthur, 2006)

If you do these things, shew thyself to the world – if you really do perform miracles, then show yourself and your miracles openly to the world (Gill, 1811)

5 For neither did his brethren believe in him.

For neither did his brethren believe in him – In John 4:44, Jesus was rejected by those in His hometown. In John 5, Jesus was rejected by the religious authorities. In John 6, Jesus was rejected by His followers (including one of the twelve). In John 7, we see that Jesus was rejected by His own family. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2498-2500)

- That his brothers are found in the first chapter of Acts joining with the Apostles and the women and Mary with one accord in prayer (Acts 1:14) is one of the most striking instances of the hardened ground of human hearts passing into the fruitful ground receptive of the seed. What happened in between? The resurrection (cf. 1 Cor. 15:7). (Ellicott, 1905)

John 1:11-13 - He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

6 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready.

Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come – it's not time yet for me to manifest myself to the world. Jesus did not operate on His brothers' time table, and He does not operate on ours either.

- In its fullest sense, the divine time would not come until the next great feast, Passover, the following spring (6 months later). Though He would minister in Judea for most of the intervening months (cf. Luke 9:51-19:11), the Lord would not enter Jerusalem publicly and openly declare Himself to be the Messiah until then (Matt.

21:1-11; cf. Luke 19:37-40). And just as He had predicted (Matt. 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:17-19; 26:2), that final manifestation would lead to His death. (MacArthur, 2006)

John 13:1 - Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

But your time is always ready – you can go and manifest yourself at any time. Your life is not in danger, and it makes no difference when you go. (Gill, 1811)

7 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

The world cannot hate you – why? Because you are part of it and because you express no opposition to it in your actions or demeanor. (Barnes, 1834)

But me it hateth – the world hates me. Why?

Because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil – Because I publicly proclaim that its works are evil...because I speak against the sinfulness of the world. (Barnes, 1834)

John 3:19 - And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

John 15:19 - If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

1 John 3:12-13 - Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous. Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast: for my time is not yet full come.

Go ye up unto this feast – you guys go ahead

- Here Jesus chooses to not go with them in what would have probably been a large caravan of people (cf. Luke 2:44). (MacArthur, 2006)

I go not up yet unto this feast – I'm not going to go right now

For my time is not yet full come – the timing isn't right (Poole, 1990)

9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee.

When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee – having said these things to His brothers, Jesus remained in Galilee. But He would not remain there for long.

2.) Jesus' Arrival at the Feast of Tabernacles

The Feast of Tabernacles, celebrated, as mentioned, in the fall, was originally a harvest festival, recalling God's provision for his people during the wilderness wanderings (cf. Lev. 23: 42- 43). Immensely popular, it was simply called "the Feast" by the Jews (e.g., 1 Kings 8: 2, 65; 12: 32; 2 Chron. 5: 3; 7: 8; Neh. 8: 14, 18; Ps. 81: 3; Ezek. 45: 25). The Jewish first-century historian Josephus calls it the holiest and greatest feast of the Jews (Ant. 8.100). It followed shortly after the Day of Atonement and concluded the annual cycle of religious festivals that began with Passover and Unleavened Bread six months earlier. The Feast of Tabernacles lasted seven days, culminating in an eighth day of special celebration and festive assembly. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2520-2526)

10 But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast – we don't know exactly when He arrived in Jerusalem. He may have gone up that first day and kept a low profile until He went up into the temple to teach at the half way point of the festival, or He may have waited several days and arrived in Jerusalem at the halfway point of the festival.

Not openly, but as it were in secret – not in the caravan, but perhaps by some other route and/or in a way not to attract notice (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884)

11 Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?

Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he? – The Jewish leaders, who wanted to kill him (cf. John 5), were looking for Him at the festival and asking where He was. (cf. John 7:13, 15). (Ellicott, 1905)

12 And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.

And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him – there was much grumbling and secret debate among the people about Jesus. He was the topic of the town gossip.

For some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people – and both sets of people were wrong. Jesus was no mere man, and Jesus was not deceiving the people.

- Application – many today argue for the same faulty positions
- A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God: or else a madman or something

worse. You can shut Him up for a fool, you can spit at Him and kill Him as a demon; or you can fall at His feet and call Him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about His being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. – C. S. Lewis (Lewis, 1971, p. 56)

13 Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.

Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews – Nevertheless, no one spoke boldly or openly about Jesus because of their fear of the Jewish authorities. No one wanted to contradict the authorities. (MacArthur, 2006)

3.) Jesus' Teaching at the Feast of Tabernacles

14 Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.

Now about the midst of the feast – about halfway through the festival, when Jerusalem would have been inundated with pilgrims from all over Judaea and the surrounding areas

Jesus went up into the temple, and taught – Jesus went up into the temple (the customary place for Jewish rabbis to teach) and began to teach.

- His public appearance would have thwarted any plans of the authorities arresting him upon his arrival to Jerusalem. Many still had a positive view of Jesus which made it difficult for the authorities to arrest Him in public. (MacArthur, 2006)

15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

And the Jews marvelled – the Jews (religious authorities) were amazed at the depth of His teaching

- “Jews” here is probably still being used in reference to the religious authorities (Spence & Exell, 1883)

How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? – How does this man have such a grasp of the Scriptures, having never attended formal rabbinical school? (Gill, 1811)

- Illustration - He's never been to seminary. He's never been ordained. How does this man know anything about the Scriptures?
Amos 7:14-15 - Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdman, and a gatherer of sycomore fruit: And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.

4.) Jesus' Defense at the Feast of Tabernacles

A.) The Source of His Teaching

16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me -Though I have not been trained in your schools and though my teaching opposes you, that does not mean that my doctrine is devised by me. The source of my teaching is God, and I teach that which He has sent me to teach. (Barnes, 1834)

John 6:38-40 - For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

But how can one know that Jesus' teaching is truly from God and not from Himself?

17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

If any man will do his will – if any one truly desires to do the will of God

- He listens to the teaching of the Father (cf. 6:44-45; 8:47)
- He searches the Scriptures and believes them (cf. 5:39, 46)

John 8:47 - He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

John 5:46 - For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me.

John 18:37 - Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

He shall know of the doctrine – He will know of the teaching that I give

Whether it be of God – whether it is from God (as I claim)

Or whether I speak of myself – or whether it is from me (as you assume)

But not only that, one can also know that my teaching is truly from God because I don't seek my glory. I seek His.

18 He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

He that speaketh of himself – the one who teaches by his own authority and of his own accord, without being sent by God (Barnes, 1834)

Seeketh his own glory – does so for his own glory/benefit (for applause, recognition, praise)

But he that seeketh his glory that sent him – but the one who has been truly sent by God and seeks to glorify Him (to lift Him up)

The same is true – that man is trustworthy

And no unrighteousness in him – and there is no unrighteousness/deception/falsehood in him (cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12) (Barnes, 1834)

Jesus defends the source of His teaching, and then He throws in a comment that strikes at the heart of the underlying tension between Him and the Jewish authorities. No one has mentioned yet the healing of the lame man on the Sabbath (the elephant in the room), and yet Jesus is going to go there with this striking comment.

B.) The Hypocrisy of their Vendetta

19 Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

Did not Moses give you the law, - to which all of the Jews would have replied, “Yes.”

and yet none of you keepeth the law? – and yet there is not a single person among you who has perfectly kept the law of God (Plummer, 1902)

John 5:45 - Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.

Galatians 3:19 - Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

Romans 3:10-23 - As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes. Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them

that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Why go ye about to kill me? – Here is the incredible irony of the Jewish authorities' vendetta against Jesus. Sinful men were accusing sinless God incarnate of violating the law that He had created, and they wanted to kill Him for it.

- Mankind in general has an incredible ability to see the worst in others while being blind to their own sin. We see a vivid illustration of that in this passage.
- The Jewish authorities had accused Jesus of violating the law by healing a man on the Sabbath and they had sought to execute Him for the act (cf. John 5:10-16). Jesus references this and shows them that though they pretended great reverence for the law, as law breakers themselves, they were in no position to seek his life. (Barnes, 1834)

20 The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?

The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee? – Perhaps some of the people who were not aware of the plans of authorities reply back to Jesus. (Barnes, 1834)

- You are possessed by a devil. Who is trying to kill you?
- They charge him with being possessed by a demon, the most serious charge leveled against Jesus in the gospel thus far (v. 20). Jesus' response reveals that the major issue is still his healing of the lame man on the Sabbath, narrated in John 5 (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2530-2532)

C.) The Acceptability of His Miracle

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.

Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, - Jesus had obviously done more than one miracle, but there was one particular miracle that was at the center of the conflict between Him and the Jewish authorities: the healing of the lame man at the Pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath.

and ye all marvel – and you are all amazed as if, in doing so, I had committed the unpardonable sin

Illustration – Have you ever been in a situation where someone did something so outrageous, it made your jaw drop? “Oh no he didn't.”

- Guest speaker walking off the stage mid sermon.
John 5:9-11 - And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath. The Jews therefore said unto him that

was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

22 Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.

In His earlier dialogue with the Jewish leaders, Jesus had defended His right to heal the sick man on the Sabbath because of His absolute equality with the Father. Now He defended that healing by pointing out their misinterpretation of the Sabbath regulations. (MacArthur, 2006)

Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision – Jesus reminded them that Moses had in the law instructed them to circumcise their children on the eighth day

(not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) – although it didn't technically originate with Moses. It was instituted with Abraham and his family (Gen. 17:10-14), but Moses later included it in the law (Lev. 12:3).

And ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man – There was an issue that arose with circumcision. Babies were to be circumcised on the eighth day. Jews were not supposed to do any work on the Sabbath, but what if the eighth day, fell on the Sabbath?

- Well, the Jews would circumcise the baby anyway. Why? Because that righteous action of circumcision took precedence over the Sabbath.
- Do you see where Jesus is going with His argument?
Genesis 17:10-14 - This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

Leviticus 12:3 - And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.

23 If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?

If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken, Are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day– If it's acceptable for you to "break"/sidestep the Sabbath to perform the higher good

of circumcision, then it's acceptable for me to "break"/sidestep the Sabbath perform the higher good of healing a man. If I'm in the wrong, then so are you.

- If they did not object to the ceremonial cleansing of one part of the body on the Sabbath, how could they object to His healing the entire body on the Sabbath? Jesus not only exposed their rank hypocrisy (cf. Matt. 12:11–12; Luke 13:10–16), but He also demonstrated that it was permissible to do good on the Sabbath. (MacArthur, 2006)

Matthew 12:5 - Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?

Numbers 28:9-10 - 9 And on the sabbath day two lambs of the first year without spot, and two tenth deals of flour for a meat offering, mingled with oil, and the drink offering thereof: 10 This is the burnt offering of every sabbath, beside the continual burnt offering, and his drink offering.

John 5:8-9 - Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

Judge not according to the appearance – abandon your superficial judgment of me. Abandon your misconceptions regarding me.

But judge righteous judgment – rather, judge me and my claims with righteous judgment. (MacArthur, 2006)

Deuteronomy 16:18-19 - Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment. Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.

Isaiah 11:3-4 - And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

Application

You and I are so good at seeing the worst in others and ignoring our own faults. In that way, we are like the religious authorities who were so self-righteous that they would end up crucifying the God that created them.

God calls us to humility.

God calls us to holiness.

God calls us not to judge people or situations by how things appear on the surface, but to judge righteous judgment.

Illustration – There was once a Pastor named Bishop Potter. He was sailing for Europe on one of the great transatlantic ocean liners. When he went on board, he found that another passenger was to share the cabin with him. After going to see the accommodations, he came up to the purser's desk (naval officer principally responsible for handling money on board the ship) and inquired if he could leave his gold watch and other valuables in the ship's safe. He explained that ordinarily he wouldn't make this request, but he had been to his cabin and had met the man who was to occupy the other bed. Judging from his appearance, he was afraid that he might not be a very trustworthy person. The purser accepted the responsibility for the valuables and remarked, 'It's all right, bishop, I'll be very glad to take care of them for you. The other man has been up here and left his for the same reason!' (Ironsides, 2014)



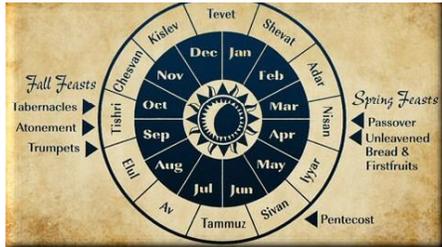
Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 18 – JOHN 7:1-24

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 7:1-5 and Acts 1:14 Memorize John 7:24</p>	<p>Why do you think Jesus’ brothers did not believe on Him? What happened between John 7 and Acts 1 that caused them to become His followers?</p>
<p>T Read John 7:6-13 & John 5:16-18 Recite John 7:24</p>	<p>Why was Jesus hesitant to make the trip to Jerusalem? What was the attitude of the Jewish authorities towards Him and why?</p>
<p>W Read John 7:14-24 Recite John 7:24</p>	<p>How did Jesus go about defending His teaching (vs. 14-18) and His healing of the lame man (vs. 19-24)?</p>
<p>T Read John 7:25-39</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 7:25-39</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 7:25-39

Review



There were seven major Jewish festivals throughout the year. Three of those seven all Jews were required to attend: Feast of Passover in early spring, Feast of Pentecost in the late spring, and the Feast of Tabernacles (booths) in the fall. Our story began last week with the Feast of Tabernacles just around the corner.



Even though the authorities in Jerusalem want Jesus dead (because He healed the lame man on the Sabbath), Jesus made His way down to Jerusalem for the feast, but He kept a low profile in doing so.

At least, He did so until the middle of the festival at which point He made His way to the temple to teach.

Jesus publicly taught in the temple.

- The religious authorities questioned his knowledge due to his lack of formal training.

Jesus defended Himself by discussing the source of His teaching (God), the hypocrisy of their vendetta (sinful man is condemning sinless God for breaking the law He created), and the acceptability of His miracle (if it's a higher good to circumcise a child on the Sabbath than it is to keep it, then it's a higher good to heal a man on the Sabbath, than it is to keep it).

- Well how did the religious authorities respond to what Jesus said?
- The religious authorities did not respond, but some of the people did.

Sermon

1.) Jesus' Defense at the Feast of Tabernacles

A.) The Source of His Teaching

B.) The Hypocrisy of their Vendetta

C.) The Acceptability of His Miracle (continued)

25 Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill?

Then said some of them of Jerusalem – the Jerusalem locals were more in tune with the true desires of the authorities (Spence & Exell, 1883) in contrast to those pilgrims that traveled from other areas to the feast

Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? – is not this the one that the authorities desire to kill?

- Though the people at large may have been ignorant of the authorities' plot, apparently not everyone was. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

26 But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?

But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him – Jesus taught publicly and then replied boldly to the religious authorities' challenge. Well, apparently they responded by doing nothing. They did not reply. They did not dispute with Him. They did not arrest Him. This confused the locals.

Illustration – a wanted terrorist appearing publicly challenging the authorities and the authorities doing nothing about it

Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? – The rulers don't really know that Jesus is the Christ, do they? (anticipating a negative answer) ...they don't think that, do they?

John 9:22 - These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

John 11:47-53 - Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.

John 12:42 - Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

27 Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.

Howbeit we know this man whence he is – Nevertheless, we know where this man comes from. They knew His parents, His brothers, His sisters, and the place of His upbringing. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

But when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is – a tradition had gathered (perhaps originated in Daniel 7:13 or Malachi 3:1) that the Messiah would make a sudden descent on the temple (Mal. 3:1), and that he would make a dazzling appearance at His Messianic enthronement coming in the clouds of heaven (Dan. 7:13), so that no one would declare his generation (know where He came from) (Is. 53:8). (Spence & Exell, 1883)

Based on a misinterpretation of Scripture, this tradition held that the Messiah would be unknown until He suddenly appeared to redeem Israel.

Trypho, the Jewish opponent of the second-century Christian apologist Justin Martyr, said to Justin, “But Christ—if He has indeed been born, and exists anywhere—is unknown, and does not even know Himself, and has no power until Elias come to anoint Him, and make Him manifest to all” (Dialogue with Trypho 8). Since they knew Jesus’ background (cf. Matt. 13:55–56), they assumed that meant He could not be the Messiah. (MacArthur, 2006)

Malachi 3:1

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple...

- Of course they didn't realize that Jesus was taken suddenly to the temple as an infant in fulfillment of Malachi 3:1 (cf. Luke 2:22).

Daniel 7:13

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven...



- They didn't realize that the Messiah would come twice: the first time to save the world and the second time to judge it in power as Daniel 7:13 describes.

Isaiah 53:8

...and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

- They didn't realize that when Isaiah asked, "who will declare his generation?", he wasn't talking about the Messiah's hometown, but the generation of people He dwelled among. (Ellicott, 1905)
- Due to a faulty understanding of Scripture, they arrived at the wrong conclusion about Jesus' identity.
 - o Application: We must be careful we don't make the same kind of error. Matthew 13:54-57 - And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works? Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things? And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.

D.) The Origin of His Ministry

28 Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.

Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying – Jesus raised his voice in the temple complex for all to hear

You both know me, and ye know whence I am – Sure. I will grant you that you have a surface level knowledge of me, my family, and the place of my upbringing. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

And I am not come of myself – and yet I am not come to you of my own accord. There is an aspect of my coming to you that you are unaware of.

But he that sent me is true – I have been sent by the true God. (MacArthur, 2006)

- I may come from Mary in one sense, but in a greater sense I come from God.

Whom ye know not – whom you don't know

- You might know the town of my upbringing, but you don't know the God you claim to profess...the God that sent me to you.

John 1:46 - And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

John 3:33 - He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.

29 But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

But I know him – in contrast to you, I do know the Father. How?

For I am from him – Because I am from Him. I was with Him.

Illustration – man trying to talk himself out of a ticket with Officer Fary by namedropping Officer Fary (he claimed to know him, but he didn't really know. Jesus was saying that the same was true of many in this crowd)

And he hath sent me - and the reason I am here is because He sent me here.

30 Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

Then they sought to take him – some in the crowd desired to seize/arrest Him due to His blasphemous claims

But no man laid hands on him – but no man had the courage to act on these desires and lay a hand on Him

Illustration – wanting to deescalate a complex situation

- Having to call the police on the girl in the bus ministry who attacked a teacher and other kids

Because his hour was not yet come – the immediate reason for their not seizing Jesus was probably because of their fear of escalating the situation and yet John reminds us that the sovereignty of God was also at play, and it was not yet the right time for Christ's arrest, crucifixion, and resurrection. (Plummer, 1902)

Isaiah 46:10 - Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

31 And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?

And many of the people believed on him – in contrast to those who wanted to arrest Jesus, there were many who believed in His claim to be the Messiah

And said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done? – Jesus has done so many miracles. If He's not the Messiah, would we really expect another to come along later and do more miracles than He has?

Isaiah 35:5-6 - 5 Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. 6 Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

John 2:23-24 - Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men,

John 8:30-32 - As he spake these words, many believed on him. Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

32 The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him – the religious authorities heard many of the people muttering to one another about Jesus as the Messiah and it gravely concerned them. The whole situation concerned them.

And the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him - The Pharisees were so distressed by the popularity of Jesus that they joined forces with their archrivals the Sadducees. This would be like the Republicans and the Democrats in Congress calling for an emergency meeting to work together on something.

Though the two groups historically were at opposite ends of the theological spectrum, the mutual hatred they felt for Jesus drove them together (cf. v. 45; 11:47, 57; 18:3; Matt. 21:45–46; 27:62). After consulting with each other (possibly in a formal meeting of the Sanhedrin), the chief priests (Sadducees who were former high priests and members of important priestly families) and the Pharisees sent officers to seize Jesus. The officers (temple guards) were a kind of police force consisting of Levites, who were responsible for maintaining order in the busy temple grounds (especially at feast times). (MacArthur, 2006)

- The officers would fail to arrest Jesus (cf. vv. 45-46)

John 12:35-36 - Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

E.) The Warning of His Departure

33 Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me.

Then said Jesus unto them – Based on the officers being sent to arrest Him, Jesus said to the crowd (Plummer, 1902)

Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me – Jesus here spoke of the 6-month period between this feast and his impending death, burial, resurrection and ascension. He would be with them for a short time period and then return back to the Father in heaven.

John 16:16-22 - A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father. Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father? They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith. Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me? Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

34 Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come.

Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me – Following His resurrection and ascension the Jews would continue to seek for the Messiah, and they would not find Him. (Barnes, 1834)

- Such is always true for those who seek salvation apart from Christ
And where I am, thither ye cannot come – and because of their rejection of the true Messiah, they would die in their sins and spend eternity separated from God in Hell. (Barnes, 1834)

John 8:21 - Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.

John 13:33-36 - 33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. 34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. 36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.

35 Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?

Then said the Jews among themselves – the religious authorities said one to another (likely in sarcasm)

Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? – Ignoring His clear statement that He would return to His Father, the religious authorities mocked Him by saying among themselves, “Where will he go that we won’t be able to find Him?”

Will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles - the dispersed among the Gentiles refers to the Jews who were scattered among the Gentiles outside of Palestine. There were three major colonies of these scattered Jews in Babylonia, Egypt, and Syria from which they spread over the whole world.

- The Jews mocked Jesus by suggesting that He intended to go to the Jews scattered among the Gentiles so that He might teach the Gentiles. (Plummer, 1902)
- There is irony in this statement because this is exactly what His disciples would do following His resurrection.

Isaiah 11:12 - And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth.

Isaiah 49:6 - And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

John 8:21-24 - Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

36 What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?

What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come? – What does His statement mean?

John 3:4 - Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

John 6:41 - The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.

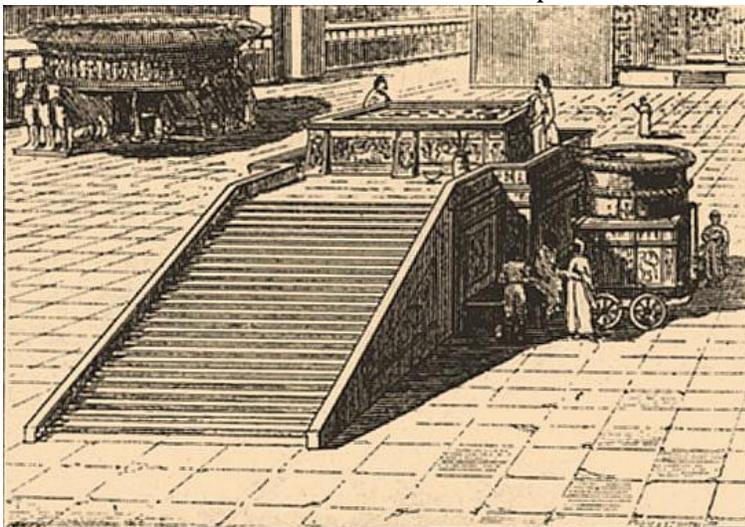
John 6:52 - The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?

2.) Jesus' Invitation at the Feast of Tabernacles

37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

In the last day, that great day of the feast – This may have been the seventh day of the feast, or it may have been the eighth day in which a special festive assembly was held (cf. Lev. 23:36). Either way, we know that time has passed between verses 36 and 37. (MacArthur, 2006)

- Jesus capitalized on a very prominent ceremony that was happening at the feast. The major feature of the Feast of Tabernacles was the booths (shelters) which the people prepared (Lev. 23:42; Neh. 8:14). But on each of its seven days there was also an important water ritual. That ceremony was not prescribed in the Old Testament, but had become a tradition in the centuries just before Jesus' time. It commemorated God's miraculous provision of water during Israel's wilderness wandering (Ex. 17:6; Num. 20:8–11; Deut. 8:15; Neh. 9:15; Ps. 105:41; 114:8; Isa. 48:21), and anticipated the blessings of the messianic age (cf. Isa. 30:25; 35:6–7; 43:19–20; 44:3–4; 49:10; Ezek. 47:1–9; Joel 3:18; Zech. 14:8). It was also a symbolic prayer for rain. Each day of the feast the high priest drew water from the pool of Siloam in a golden pitcher and carried it in a procession back to the temple. At the Water Gate (on the south side of the inner court of the temple), three blasts were sounded on a shofar (a trumpet made out of a rams' horn) to mark the joy of the occasion. Isaiah 12:3 ("Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.") was also recited. At the temple the priests marched around the altar while the temple choir sang the Hallel (Ps. 113–118). The water was transferred from the golden pitcher into a silver bowl and was then poured out on the altar (10 ft tall by 48 ft long) as an offering to God and as an appeal to God to provide water for the people. (MacArthur, 2006). It was poured out as an offering to God in prayer for water to provide sustenance for the people.
- Illustration – Pour water from a pitcher into a bowl into the baptistery



Jesus stood and cried – This is the setting in which Jesus stood up, raised His voice so all could hear, and said...

If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink –The priest had just poured out the water offering as an appeal to the Creator God to provide water for the people, and Jesus, as if to answer that prayer, tells the people to come to Him for water. Imagine the uproar his statement must have caused. (Klett, 1989)

- Jesus was inviting thirsty souls to come to Him for spiritual, eternal, life-giving water instead of the physical, temporal water of the ceremony. He used living water as an illustration and a call for people to believe on Him. Just as you must partake of water in order to have physical life, you must partake of Christ through faith to have spiritual, everlasting life (cf. 4:10 and 6:35).
- Those who thirst are those who recognize their need for salvation. They must come to Jesus, the only source of living water, the only source of salvation...and they must drink. They do so through faith in Him. (MacArthur, 2006)

Leviticus 23:36 - Seven days ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: on the eighth day shall be an holy convocation unto you; and ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD: it is a solemn assembly; and ye shall do no servile work therein.

John 4:10 - Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

John 6:35 - And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

Psalms 42:2 - My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?

Psalms 63:1 - O God, thou art my God; early will I seek thee: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is;

38 He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

He that believeth on me – the one who drinks of the living water that I offer (notice how believing is paralleled with drinking)

As the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water – God did not intend for believers to be containers in which the living water of salvation stays and stagnates. Believers are to be channels through which rivers of living water are sent to others. By evangelizing the lost (which is the primary emphasis here) and edifying the saints (1 Cor. 12:4-11; 1 Peter 4:10-11), believers allow the spiritual life within them to spill over and impact those around them. (MacArthur, 2006)

- Illustration – God did not design you to be a container of living water. He designed you to be a channel through which living water is offered to others.
- How can I do that?
- Jesus is not quoting a specific Old Testament text here, but alluding to passages such as Proverbs 11:25, Ezekiel 47:1-9; and Zechariah 13:1.
Proverbs 11:25 - The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself.

Isaiah 12:3 - Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

Isaiah 44:3 - For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring:

Isaiah 58:11 - And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

Ezekiel 47:1-12 - Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house; and, behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward: for the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house, at the south side of the altar. Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without unto the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward; and, behold, there ran out waters on the right side. And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the waters were to the ankles. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters; the waters were to the knees. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through; the waters were to the loins. Afterward he measured a thousand; and it was a river that I could not pass over: for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over. And he said unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen this? Then he brought me, and caused me to return to the brink of the river. Now when I had returned, behold, at the bank of the river were very many trees on the one side and on the other. Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh. And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from Engedi even unto Eneglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many. But the miry places thereof and the marishes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt. And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall

bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.

39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

John is not saying that the Holy Spirit was not present or active at that time. Certainly He was. John was saying that after Jesus ascended to heaven, the Holy Spirit would come down and indwell and empower believers in a unique way. It is through this indwelling of the Holy Spirit that are empowered to share the living water (the salvation we have received) with others. (MacArthur, 2006)

Acts 1:8 - But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

- The early church received the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit at the Feast of Pentecost shortly after Jesus' ascension. For us today, we receive that indwelling presence the moment that we are saved. The Holy Spirit today convicts us of sin, helps us to understand the Scripture, guides us in following the Word.
- It is the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit within us that empowers us to be channels, not containers of living water, in sharing our faith with others.
- As John explains, by this Jesus was referring to the Spirit, who had not yet been given (v. 39). The image of rivers of water flowing from a person's innermost being may derive from Isaiah 58: 11. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2559-2560)
 - o This develops further the theme underlying the Feast of Tabernacles seen in Isaiah 12:3: "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."
 - o But whereas Isaiah 12: 3 talks about a person's salvation, Isaiah 58: 11 speaks of how believers will be a blessing to others. The point Jesus makes at this juncture in his ministry is therefore this: he is the dispenser of the Holy Spirit, through whom those who come to him for salvation will be abundant blessings to others. The message is clear: Jesus fulfills the symbolism of the Feast of Tabernacles, conveyed by the water-pouring ceremonies that celebrated the abundance of God's blessings at harvest time in reminiscence of God's provision for his people in the wilderness. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2564-2567)

John 14:16-17 - And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

John 14:26 - But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

John 16:7 - Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

Joel 2:28 - And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

Acts 2:17 - And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

Acts 2:38 - Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Application

Have you received living water from Christ? Have you accepted Him and His death on the cross as the payment for your sins? Have you stopped trying to save yourself and turned to Jesus in faith to save you through His death, burial, and resurrection?

Christian, are you a container or a channel of living water? God has literally taken up residence inside of you to empower and equip you to share the gospel. When's the last time you did? When's the last time you invited someone to church? When's the last time you made an effort to tell a thirsty soul about Jesus Christ?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 19 – JOHN 7:25-39

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 7:25-32 Memorize John 7:38</p>	<p>How did Jesus defend the origin of His ministry? Describe the different reaction to Jesus' words in verses 30-32.</p>
<p>T Read John 7:33-36 Recite John 7:38</p>	<p>Summarize Jesus' warning of His departure to the crowd. How does the crowd misinterpret Jesus' words?</p>
<p>W Read John 7:37-39 Recite John 7:38</p>	<p>How does one partake of the living water that Christ offers (vv. 37-38a)? What has God designed us to do with the living water we've received (vs. 38)? Who empowers us to do this (vs. 39)?</p>
<p>T Read John 7:40-53</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 7:40-53</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 7:40-53

Review

Jesus is at the seven-day Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem in the fall.

- The religious authorities wanted Him dead.
- Halfway through the feast, Jesus taught publicly in the temple.
- The authorities questioned Him.
 - o He defended the source of His teaching, the hypocrisy of their vendetta, the acceptability of His healing of the lame man, the origin of His ministry, and then warned about His departure.
 - o So ended His interaction with the crowd and authorities at the midweek point of the festival.
- Then, the last day of the feast arrived.
 - o In the context of the water pouring ceremony, where the high priest would pour out water on the altar as a prayer to God for provision of water for the upcoming year, Jesus stood up and cried, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come unto me and drink of the living water that I have. I am the answer to your prayers for water. And for those who receive living water by believing on me through faith, through the power of the Holy Spirit, they will be channels, not containers of living water."

We left off with a cliffhanger last week. Jesus gives this bold invitation for people to believe on Him. How will they respond?

Sermon

The Responses at the Feast of Tabernacles

1.) The People

A.) Some Faith

40 Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.

Many of the people therefore. - remember that in this chapter, when it says "Jews" it's likely referring to the religious authorities, and when it says "people", it's referring to the crowd.

When they heard this saying - when they heard Jesus' claim to be the source of living water

Said, Of a truth this is the Prophet - Truly! Jesus is the Prophet. What are they talking about?

Deuteronomy 18:15 - 15 The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

- The Prophet in Deuteronomy 18:15 is referring to the Messiah. We know that from Acts 3:20-23 and 7:37. However, the Jews of that day for the most part did not take the position that the Prophet foretold in Deuteronomy 18:15, 18 was the Messiah. They believed that the prophet was some kind of a forerunner like Elijah who would come before the Messiah. Some people thought of Jesus as this prophet that would come before the actual Messiah. (Sorenson, 2007)
 - They did not accept Him in the fulness of who He claimed to be: the Messiah, the Son of God, God in the flesh. They accepted Him in light of their own preconceived notions. They had some faith that He was at the least a prophet sent from God., but they stopped short of believing in who He actually was.
 - Application – there are a lot of people that look at Jesus this way today.
 - Illustration – Islam’s conception of Jesus
 - Jesus is mentioned 25 times in the Quran.
 - Islam states that Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary (19:20-21) and is “high and honored in this and the next world” (3:45-47)
 - While Islam accepts Jesus as a servant, teacher, and lover of God’s Word, it does not accept that He was divine or the Son of God. It claims that He was a prophet who was given a special message to convey to all people. (Farina, 2016)
 - To not accept Jesus in the fulness of who He claimed to be is to reject Him. You cannot believe that Jesus was merely a good person or a prophet and call yourself a child of God. He is the divine Son of God who died on the cross for the sins of the world.
 - When it comes to faith in Jesus, it’s all or nothing. Some faith is not good enough.

Acts 3:20-23 - 20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: 21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. 22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. 23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

Acts 7:37 - 37 This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear.

B.) Full Faith

41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

Others said – others of the people claimed

This is the Christ – This is the Messiah

- The Messiah is distinguished from the Prophet in the words of the multitude here, as in the questioning of John the Baptist by the delegation from Jerusalem in John 1:20-21. (Ellicott, 1905)
- These are those who had put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ. They had recognized their thirsty state and come to Jesus for spiritual nourishment. They had received living water through faith in Him and at Pentecost they would receive the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit who would empower them to be channels, not containers of living water.
Matthew 16:14-16 - And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Application – in contrast with those who have a misguided or incomplete faith in Jesus, there are those who truly trust in Jesus Christ as their Messiah, the Son of God, the Savior of the world.

Illustration – different levels of faith in people

- When you delegate something to someone
 - o Full faith
 - o Some faith
 - o No faith
- When you need a medical procedure done
 - o Full faith
 - o Some faith
 - o No faith

C.) No Faith

41 ... But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? – in response to the claim of some that Jesus was the Messiah, others responded by asking if the Messiah would come from Galilee. (Sorenson, 2007)

- The phrasing of the question anticipates a negative response. “Come on, the Messiah is not going to come from Galilee!”
- Galilee was poor and far less educated and civilized than Judaea (think of the city versus the country). Frankly, a lot of Jews had a more “better than thou” perception of Galilee.
 - o John 1:46 - And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

- Could the Messiah really come from the Galilean ghetto?
- In a greater sense, this question goes back to the Old Testament where it prophesies that the Messiah would come, not from Galilee, but from Bethlehem in Judaea.
 - Premise 1 – The Scriptures says the Messiah will come from Bethlehem.
 - Premise 2 – Jesus comes from Galilee, not Bethlehem.
 - This premise is incorrect.
 - Conclusion – Therefore, Jesus cannot be the Messiah.

42 Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David – doesn't the Bible say that the Messiah would come from the descendants of David? Yes it does. (cf. 2 Samuel 7:12; Isaiah 11:1; Jeremiah 23:5)

2 Samuel 7:12 - And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom.

Isaiah 11:1 - And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

Jeremiah 23:5 - Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

And out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was – and doesn't the Bible say that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem, where David grew up? Yes it does. (cf. Micah 5:2)

1 Samuel 16:1 - And the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I have provided me a king among his sons.

Micah 5:2 - But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Luke 2:4, 11 - And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)... For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.



Secure in their smug unbelief, those of no faith failed to examine the situation fully. Had they done so, they would have discovered that Jesus met both of those qualifications. He was a descendant of David (Matt. 1:1; Luke 1:32; 3:23, 31; cf. Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:27; 2:4), and He had been born in Bethlehem (Matt. 2:1; Luke 2:4–7, 11, 15). They hastily **assumed** that since Jesus had grown up in Nazareth (Matt. 2:21–23; Luke 2:39, 51; 4:16; cf. Matt. 21:11; 26:71; Luke 18:37; John 1:45), He must have been born there. They had no interest in investigating His messianic credentials. (MacArthur, 2006) They were just interested in justifying their unbelief. And such is the case for many people today. They jump from argument to argument to argument in an effort to disprove Christ without ever actually taking the time to investigate the truth of His claims.

Maybe that's you. Maybe you don't believe in Jesus because you don't want to believe in Jesus, and you'll jump through hoops to convince yourself that He's not who He claims to be.

Illustration – every year when football season rolls around, I jump through mental hoops to convince myself that my team is not a dumpster fire awful organization. And every year they prove me wrong like last year when they went 1-15. Though I try to justify my unbelief, I am inevitably confronted with the truth.

And if you're a person of no faith in Jesus, I implore you to drop the façade, take an honest look at the truth, and embrace it before it's too late. Because one way or another, you will be confronted with the truth.

43 So there was a division among the people because of him.

So there was a division among the people because of him – the truth divides, and because Christ came authoritatively and confrontationally with the truth, He divided people.

- You either believe or you don't.
- You either follow Christ or you don't.
- Jesus has no place for those who straddle the fence.
 - o You're either in or out.

Matthew 10:35 - For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother-in-law.

Luke 12:51 - Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

D.) Negative Faith

44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

And some of them would have taken him – Some of the people desired to seize Jesus

- They had faith in Jesus. They had faith that He was the devil incarnate, the antichrist, and they wanted to nothing less than to arrest Him, shut Him up, and prevent Him from deceiving the masses.
- They were so enraged by who He was and what He said that they wanted to physically seize Him so as to stop Him. They hated Him, and there are many people today who still do. Their life's agenda is to attack and destroy Christian beliefs and values.

But no man laid hands on him – but no one dared take action on those desires. There were too many people in the crowd that embraced Jesus, and His time was not yet come.

John 7:30 - Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

John 8:20 - These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

2.) The Temple Guard

They were stunned by Jesus.

45 Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees – these temple guards had been sent several days prior to arrest Jesus and had now returned to the religious authorities empty handed

And they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? – frustrated with the temple guard’s failure to accomplish what they had been instructed to do, the religious authorities questioned them on why they had not arrested Jesus and brought Him to them.

Illustration – as a manager or leader asking someone to do something, and them just completely ignoring and/or failing to complete the assigned task

John 7:32 - The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

The officers answered, Never man spake like this man - They were religiously trained Levites, and Jesus’ words left them stunned. While they did not accept Him as the Messiah, neither did they openly reject Him. They did not know what to do with Him. Caught between the power and grace of His message and the hatred of their leaders, they were paralyzed into inactivity. (MacArthur, 2006)

- It’s quite probable that Jesus said much more than John records at the festival. You might imagine the officers arriving on the third/fourth day to arrest Jesus and being utterly captivated by His words. They might not have known what to do with Him, but they knew what they could not do with Him. How could they arrest this man?
- Application: Maybe that’s you. Maybe Jesus intrigues and fascinates you. You’ve sat in church and heard about His life and teachings and miracles, and you’re amazed. You haven’t yet put your faith in Him, but you’re drawn to Him.
 - o Illustration – atheist who was intrigued by Christianity, started faithfully attending church, but hadn’t yet put his faith in Christ
 - o To you I say, today is the day of salvation. How tragic would it be for you to be so close to eternal life, and pass away tonight and miss it?

Matthew 7:29 - For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

Luke 4:22 - And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

3.) The Pharisees

They were repulsed by Jesus.

47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?

Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? – outraged and blinded, the Pharisees responded by asking the temple guard (who were Levites) if they too were deceived.

- This question accused the temple guard of naively being duped by a religious cult leader and condescendingly placed them on the same level as the uneducated crowd (cf. vs. 49). (MacArthur, 2006)

Matthew 27:63 - Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.

John 7:12 - And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.

48 Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?

Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? – the implication here being that if Jesus truly were the Messiah, the religious elites would have been leading the way in following Him.

I love how Stephen responded to this idea in his sermon in Acts 7.

Acts 7:51-59 - 51 Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. 52 Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: 53 Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it. 54 When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. 55 But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, 56 And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. 57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, 58 And cast him out of the city, and stoned him: and the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.

- The assumption that if Jesus were the true Messiah, then the religious elite would accept Him, was wrong. The Jewish leaders had been persecuting prophets and disobeying God since Israel's inception. They had killed the prophets and they would kill Jesus too.
- The assumption that none of the religious authorities believed on Him was also wrong.
 - o In a couple verses, we're going to be reintroduced to a Pharisee who was sympathetic to Jesus. He had met Him and had a conversation with him under the cover of nightfall during Jesus' first Passover in John's gospel. His name was Nicodemus.
 - o Not only that, but we are also told in John 12:42 -
John 12:42 - Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed – these people who follow Jesus are idiots who don't understand the law and are cursed before God.

- here the Pharisees distinguish between themselves (the educated elite) and the people who followed Jesus. They claimed that these people were uneducated and ignorant of God's law (referring to the Old Testament and rabbinical traditions). Moreover, because they did not know the law, they were deceived into following Jesus and were now cursed before God.
- "If they knew the law, then they would know that a Sabbath breaker and a Galilean could not be the Messiah."
 - o Of course, as we've seen, both of these contentions are based in false assumptions.

1 Corinthians 1:20-21 - Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

1 Corinthians 3:18-20 - Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain.

4.) Nicodemus

He was sympathetic to Jesus.

50 Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,)

Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) – Although the Pharisees at large had great disdain for Jesus and the ignorant crowds who believed in Him, there was at least one Pharisee named Nicodemus (and possibly another in Joseph of Arimathea) who were sympathetic to Jesus. (Sorenson, 2007)

- Nicodemus was probably not yet truly a disciple of Jesus, but He was sympathetic to Him and open to Him. He would later become one of His disciples following His death (cf. John 19:39).

John 3:1-2 - There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

John 19:39 - And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.

51 Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?

Nicodemus here does not openly defend Jesus, but He does raise a procedural point in His favor.

Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? – we’re sitting here condemning the multitude for not knowing the law, but doesn’t the law require that we give a man a fair hearing, before condemning him? (Plummer, 1902)

Deuteronomy 1:17 - Ye shall not respect persons in judgment; but ye shall hear the small as well as the great; ye shall not be afraid of the face of man; for the judgment is God's: and the cause that is too hard for you, bring it unto me, and I will hear it.

Deuteronomy 17:8-11 - If there arise a matter too hard for thee in judgment, between blood and blood, between plea and plea, and between stroke and stroke, being matters of controversy within thy gates: then shalt thou arise, and get thee up into the place which the LORD thy God shall choose; And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and enquire; and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment: And thou shalt do according to the sentence, which they of that place which the LORD shall choose shall shew thee; and thou shalt observe to do according to all that they inform thee: According to the sentence of the law which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgment which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do: thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee, to the right hand, nor to the left.

Deuteronomy 19:15-19 - One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established. If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him that which is wrong; Then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days; And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother; Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so shalt thou put the evil away from among you.

Proverbs 18:13 - He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.

52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? – They attempted to insult Nicodemus by implying maybe he too was from that back-water illiterate region of Galilee (Sorenson, 2007)

- “You’re surely not from Galilee like Jesus, so why are you defending Him like a Galilean?” (Meyer, 1880)
- Illustration – Republican and northerner Abraham Lincoln selected Democrat and southerner Andrew Johnson as his running mate for his second term towards the end of the civil war. He did so in an effort to pull the country back together. He won the election. He won the war. But then 6 weeks after his inauguration and 6 days

after the war ended, Lincoln was assassinated, and His Democrat southern vice president Andrew Johnson became the Vice President. Frankly, Johnson was not the right man for the job at that moment in history for pulling the nation back together. He made a lot of bad decisions, would be impeached in the House, and would only serve one term. His ascension to the presidency for that four years led to real tension between him as a southerner and the northerners in congress. Many felt he was too sympathetic with the south because of his southern roots

- This is what the Pharisees are saying. Are you also of Galilee? Is that why you're so sympathetic with this Galilean?

Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet. – Jonah, who was from Gath Hopher (2 Kings 14: 25) in Zebulun (Josh. 19: 10, 13), did come from Galilee. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2603-2604) Others may have been. Nahum of Elkosh may have been, but the situation of Elkosh is uncertain; Hosea was of the northern kingdom, but whether of Galilee or not is unknown; Abelmeholah, whence Elisha came, was in the north part of the Jordan valley, possibly in Galilee. But these were exceptions. Their point was that judging from the past, Galilee was not very likely to produce a Prophet, much less the Messiah. (Plummer, 1902)

53 And every man went unto his own house.

Following Jesus' invitation, and the responses of the different people, everyone went home.

Application

My question to you is, "How will you respond to Jesus' invitation?"

The Bible tells us that sin separates us from God. It makes us undeserving of heaven and deserving of hell. It tells us that the only way we can be saved from sin is through putting our faith in Jesus Christ as God in the flesh and trusting in His death on the cross as the payment for our sins. You've heard that. You've heard the invitation of Scripture. You've heard the message of Jesus. How will you respond?

Will you be repulsed by Him like the Pharisees?

Are you stunned by Him like the temple guard?

Are you sympathetic and intrigued like Nicodemus?

Are you of no faith like the doubters in the crowd?

Are you of some faith like many in the crowd?

The only right response to the claims and life of Jesus is full and complete faith in Him.... faith in who He claims to be and what He did to save you from your sin.

You're either in or you're out.

You're either saved or you're not.

Don't go another day without making the decision to trust in Christ as your Savior.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 20 – JOHN 7:40-53

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 7:40-44 Memorize John 7:41</p>	<p>In what differing ways did the crowd respond to Jesus' invitation?</p>
<p>T Read John 7:45-46 Recite John 7:41</p>	<p>How did the temple guard respond to Jesus' invitation?</p>
<p>W Read John 7:47-53 Recite John 7:41</p>	<p>How did the Pharisees and Nicodemus respond to Jesus' invitation?</p>
<p>T Read John 8:1-11</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 8:1-11</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 8:1-11

Pericope Adulterae Resources

- Appendix
 - See the appendix resource at the end of this study guide for a more detailed treatment of the case for and against the story of the women caught in adultery.
- Books
 - A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11 by James Snapp Jr
 - The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research edited by David Black and Jacob Cerone
- Websites
 - <http://textualcriticism.scienceontheweb.net/>
- Articles/Excerpts
 - The Woman Taken in Adultery (John 7:53-8:11) The Text by Zane Hodges
 - <http://textualcriticism.scienceontheweb.net/TEXT/Hodges1979.html>
 - The Woman Taken in Adultery (John 7:53-8:11) The Exposition by Zane Hodges
 - A Stylistic Trait of the Fourth Gospel in the Pericope Adulterae by Alan Johnson
 - A Plain Introduction to the Textual Criticism of the New Testament by F.H.A. Scrivener
 - <http://textualcriticism.scienceontheweb.net/TEXT/Scrivener.html>
 - Causes of the Corruption of the Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels by John Burgon
 - <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/burgon/corruption.iii.xviii.html>

Just as was the case with John 5:3-4, there are many modern versions that place doubt on the authenticity on this entire passage of Scripture (John 7:53-8:11): the story of the woman caught in adultery. Even though the majority of Greek manuscripts include the passage (1476 to 268), (Snapp Jr., 2016, pp. Loc 82, 213) most versions place a footnote next to the passage saying that the best and earliest manuscripts (copies of John) don't have these verses. There are quite a few scholars today that even call for this passage to be removed from the Bible altogether.

I think that's incredibly audacious, and I think that's a shame. The story of the woman caught in adultery is critical to the context of what is happening at the Feast of Tabernacles. It is one of the most moving and powerful stories we have about Jesus. There is good reason for accepting it as authentic.

The Didascalia Apostolorum, a third century Syriac text, alludes to the story. (Snapp Jr., 2016, pp. Loc 315-330)

Pacian of Barcelona in the fourth century discusses the story in the gospel about the Lord sparing the adulteress (Snapp Jr., 2016, p. Loc 330).

Ambrose, pastor of Milan from 374-397, cites John 7:53-8:11 extensively. In Epistle 26 he states that, "The acquittal of the woman who, in the Gospel of John, was brought to Christ accused of adultery, is very famous." (Snapp Jr., 2016, p. Loc 346)

Jerome said in *Against the Pelagians*, 2:17: "In the Gospel according to John, there is found, in many of the Greek, as well as the Latin, copies, the story of the adulteress who was accused before the Lord."

- Further, Jerome claimed that he included this passage in his Latin Vulgate because of his study of early Greek manuscripts. (Snapp Jr., 2016, p. Loc 361)

Finally, Augustine was a proponent of the passage, and he claimed that the reason some manuscripts didn't have it was because some intentionally removed it from the text because they thought it was too lenient on the sin of adultery. (Snapp Jr., 2016, p. Loc 394)

So the majority of manuscripts include this story, the story is vital to the context of the surrounding verses, and early church fathers spoke in favor of this passage.

Then why isn't it found in some of the early Egyptian manuscripts? Let me give you a possible explanation.

We have strong evidence that in the early church they would have readings of Scripture passages on certain special days. One of those special days was Pentecost, and the reading for that day was John 7:37-52 plus John 8:12 (the final verse being included in order for the reading to end on a positive note).

- In order to make this clear, the one who performed the public reading would mark his copy of the Gospel of John with notes or marks to remind himself that on Pentecost Sunday, when he reached John 7:52 to skip forward to the end of John 8:11 and read John 8:12.
- Picture, then, the puzzle that presented itself to a copyist who down the road used the reader's Bible as what he was going to copy from: as he copies down the text of John chapter seven, he sees, after the statement at the end of 7:52, instructions in the margin, which say: Skip ahead. Unaware that these instructions were meant for the reader on Pentecost Sunday, he interprets them as if they were meant for him, the copyist. And so he skips ahead until he finds instructions in the margin which say, Restart here. Therefore this dutiful copyist follows these instructions, and accordingly he does not copy John 7:53-8:11, just as – he supposes – he was instructed. And the manuscript which contained this mistake proceeded to affect both the main Alexandrian transmission-stream and whatever transmission-streams to which it was exported.
- John 7:53-8:11, when marked as a segment of text not to be included in the reading on Pentecost, was vulnerable to accidental deletion at the hands of early Egyptian

copyists. This would explain why it's not found in some of the early Egyptian copies. (Snapp Jr., 2016, pp. Loc 240-280)

- I say all of this to say that we have good reason for accepting this moving, beautiful passage, as we do with the rest of John's gospel, as authentic. We can trust the Word of God. We can trust this passage, and we're going to learn some remarkable truths from it today.

Before we dive into this passage of Scripture today, let's get some context to remember where we've come from.

Review

Jesus issued His invitation for the crowd to come to Him for everlasting life. Last week we looked at their responses.

The People

- Some faith
- Full faith
- No faith
- Negative faith

Following that, we were given a glimpse of a private encounter between the temple guard who had been sent to seize Jesus days earlier and the chief priests and Pharisees.

The temple guard

- They were stunned/intrigued by Jesus

The Pharisees

- They were repulsed by Jesus

Nicodemus

- He was sympathetic to Jesus

One need only consider the lack of continuity when the story of the woman caught in adultery is excluded from the context: the chief priests and Pharisees had sent their assistants to arrest Jesus, but they came back empty-handed (Jn 7:32, 45). Nicodemus declares that they need to hear and see what Jesus actually does in a given situation (7:50-51). Yet, "Jesus again speaks to them" (8:12)—even though he had not been brought before them (!), and apparently the same Pharisees continue in dialogue with Jesus (8:13ff.). One would think that such discontinuity resulting from the absence of the Pericope Adulterae would be obvious,³⁸ despite the claims to the contrary stated in most articles and commentaries. (Black & Cerone, p. 141)

The Story of the Woman Caught in Adultery

1.) The Setting

53 And every man went unto his own house.

And every man went unto his own house - worshippers “go to their own homes,” which is what they would be expected to do if, as 7:37 suggests, the festival is coming to a close. (Black & Cerone, p. 21)

1 Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.

Jesus went unto the mount of Olives - Although the people had homes to go home to. Jesus had no home. He went to the Mount of Olives where He would spend the night.

- This is a reminder of Jesus’ statement in Luke 9:58 that “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.”
- It’s also possible that He spent the night at the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus who lived adjacent to the Mount of Olives. (Sorenson, 2007)

2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.

And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him – the next morning, Jesus made His way to the temple and once again the people thronged Him there

And he sat down, and taught them – as was His custom, Jesus sat down and taught them

Matthew 5:1-2 - And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was **set**, his disciples came unto him: And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

Matthew 26:55 - In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? **I sat daily with you teaching in the temple**, and ye laid no hold on me. (cf. Luke 4:20; 5:3)

- Jesus was to be challenged in His widely recognized capacity as a teaching Rabbi and, to prepare for this, John takes note of the fact that Jesus was seated for the purpose of teaching in precise accord with the usual Rabbinic practice. In every way, then, the stage is set for a dramatic confrontation. (Hodges, 1980, p. 43)
- Luke 21:37-38 - 37 And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives. 38 And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

2.) The Disruption

3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

John 8:3-11 became a well-known lection/reading in the church that would take place on October 8th, the Feast of Penitents (the Feast Day of Pelagia). (Snapp Jr., 2016, p. Loc 1811) Thus, this passage would often be accompanied by markings in manuscripts to notate

where to begin and end. These markings were not placed next to the passage to indicate doubt in its authenticity, but to indicate where to begin and end reading.

- See MS 685 (Snapp Jr., 2016, p. Loc 480)
- See Codex E (Snapp Jr., 2016, p. Loc 495)
- See the Palestenian Aramaic Lectionary (Snapp Jr., 2016, p. Loc 1811)

And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery – the religious authorities brought to Jesus a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery.

- Illustration – imagine someone bursting through the back doors of the auditorium, interrupting my sermon, dragging someone with them, accusing them of having an extra marital affair, and asking me what to do about it.
 - o “Someone call security!”
- Abruptly, the teaching ministry of Jesus was rudely disrupted. A group composed of scribes and Pharisees thrust a woman into the midst of the circle of people who had assembled around Jesus, and they stridently accused her of the sin of adultery. (Hodges, 1980, p. 44)
- Because the sin here was described as adultery, this means that either she or the man she was with were married.
- She was caught. She was brought to the religious authorities. Rather than passing judgment themselves, someone apparently had the bright idea of using this as an opportunity to make a fool of Jesus.

And when they had set her in the midst – after they had set her in the midst of the people next to Jesus (exposed, ashamed, humiliated)

3.) The Trap

4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act – Jesus, this woman was caught and taken in the act of adultery

- There is no doubt that she is guilty

5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned – The seventh commandment forbids adultery (Ex. 20:14; Deut. 5:18), and Leviticus 20:10 (under the OT law for Israel) prescribes the death penalty for those who commit it. (MacArthur, 2006) Further, in certain specific cases, stoning was prescribing as the method carrying out the death penalty (Deut. 22:21-24).

But what sayest thou? – but what do you say? Moses said this...but Jesus what do you say?

- There are a couple of immediate questions that come to mind.
 - o Where was the man? Adultery is a two-party offense. If the woman had been caught in the act, then those who caught her surely would have seen him too.

Why hadn't they apprehended the man as well and brought both of them before Jesus?

- If justice was what they wanted, then why would the authorities bring the woman to Jesus at all? Why not try her in their own courts? Why not bring her before the Sanhedrin? (MacArthur, 2006)
 - It makes no sense.
 - The answer to both of these questions is found in verse 6.

Leviticus 20:10 - And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death.

Deuteronomy 22:21-24 - Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die: because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: so shalt thou put evil away from among you. If a man be found lying with a woman married to an husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman, and the woman: so shalt thou put away evil from Israel. If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto an husband, and a man find her in the city, and lie with her; Then ye shall bring them both out unto the gate of that city, and ye shall stone them with stones that they die; the damsel, because she cried not, being in the city; and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbour's wife: so thou shalt put away evil from among you.

6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him – Why was there no man present? Why hadn't they tried her in their own courts? The answer is simple. They weren't concerned with justice. They just wanted to trap Jesus. This situation had nothing to do with that woman, and it had everything to do with Jesus. They wanted to put Him in a lose lose situation, and they wanted to force His hand.

- That's exactly what we see here. Jesus was in the middle of a trap.
 - If He objected to stoning her as the law prescribed, He would be guilty of opposing Moses and the law. This would discredit His claim to be the Messiah and undercut His legitimacy as a teaching rabbi in the eyes of many.
 - On the other hand, if He agreed with her accusers that she should be stoned, this might put Him at odds with the Romans. According to John 18:31, the right of capital punishment did not belong to the Jews, but to the Romans. If Jesus were to insist on the execution of this woman, this could have been reported to the Romans as an act of instigation in defiance of Roman authority by one who claimed to be a king. (Hodges, 1980, p. 45) Further, His reputation of compassion toward sinners would have been destroyed (cf. Matt. 9:11; Luke 7:34; 15:2; 19:7). (MacArthur, 2006)

- The dramatic scene in the temple courtyard had reached its climax. The woman, her sin publicly exposed, was humiliated, terrified, and about to be stoned. The scribes and Pharisees were jubilant, thinking they had caught Jesus in an impossible dilemma. The crowd was hushed, watching intently to see how Jesus would react. (MacArthur, 2006)

- Well, what does He say in response? Nothing.

4.) The Response

But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not – It has been assumed that Jesus wrote in the soil or sand and indeed the word translated as ground (gh ghay) would seem to so indicate. However, this event took place, if not in the Temple itself, certainly in its courts. Most if not all of the Temple had paving stones. Conceivably, Jesus wrote invisibly upon the pavement of the temple making what he wrote all the more mysterious. (Sorenson, 2007)

- What did He write? It's not important. If it were, John certainly would have told us what He wrote. For John, what's important is not what He wrote on the ground, but that He wrote on the ground. (Hodges, 1980, pp. 45-46)
 - Jesus, of course, had taken His seat as a teaching Rabbi (8:2), but Jesus was more than just a teacher of the Law. He was the giver of the Law.
 - When God first gave Israel the law on Sinai, how did He do it? He wrote it on tablets of stone with His finger (Ex. 31:18). Yet ironically, soon after Moses came down the Mount, what did He find? He found Israel had committed spiritual adultery against Jehovah in their worship of the golden calf (Ex. 32:1-6). God's anger was kindled against Israel, Moses broke the tablets in frustration, and yet God was gracious to Israel nonetheless. Despite a purging judgment, the nation was preserved. In token of God's continued acceptance of Moses and the people whom he led (33:12-23), new tables of stone were carved out and the broken commandments were inscribed anew upon them, once again by the finger of God Himself (34:1-4, 28; cf. 31:18; Deut. 10:2, 4).
 - Prior to Jesus, God is the only one described in the Bible as writing with His finger. Thus, Jesus is pictured here not only as a teacher of the law, but its author. If He were no more than a mere Rabbi, He could do no more than assent to the Mosaic prescription of judgment. But if He were the Law's Giver, He could do for this woman what He had done for the entire nation at Sinai. He could forgive! (Hodges, 1980, pp. 46-47)

Illustration – imagine if someone caused such a disruption here, I stopped teaching, stooped down, start writing on the ground with my finger and didn't say a word for an indefinite period of time

Matthew 19:3 - The Pharisees also came unto him, **tempting him**, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

Luke 10:25 - And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, **and tempted him**, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

Luke 20:20-23 - And they watched him, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor. And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly: Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no? But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, **Why tempt ye me?**

7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

So when they continued asking him – in response to His silence and peculiar action, the religious authorities continued to question Him. They pressed Him.

He lifted up himself – he stood up

And said unto them, He that is without sin among you – he that is without this type of sin....or he that is free from the sin of impurity (Plummer, 1902) (cf. John 8:11; Luke 7:37, 39)

- Remember, in His sermon on the mount, Jesus had claimed that God's standard for adultery was much higher than they thought. He claimed that adultery was not just a matter of deed, but desire.
 - o Matthew 5:27-28 - 27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: 28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.
- The Scribes and Pharisees cried "Guilty! Deserving of death!" regarding this woman. Jesus' reply in essence means "Are you not as well?" "If you're going to execute this poor woman, you better be morally flawless enough to justify such an extreme action."
 - o Jerusalem was crowded with pilgrims at the feast of Tabernacles. Strangers were thrown together at close quarters, and chance encounters between men and women must have led to many illicit liaisons between parties who had never seen each other before and might never do so again. The opportunities for adultery must have been manifold; nor did the facade of morality maintained by the religious leaders make them genuinely more continent than the masses; and there must have been many among their number who—at one time or another, whether recently or in the more distant past—had succumbed to this temptation and escaped detection. There is nothing improbable at all in the supposition that the cabal which had hoped to trap the Lord Jesus was composed of just such men as this. (Hodges, 1980, p. 48)

let him first cast a stone at her - The Lord's reply was simple, yet profound. It upheld the Law, since He did not deny the woman's guilt, and broadened the Law's power by exposing the sins of the accusers. It wasn't just her that was guilty. They were as well. It also avoided the charge of instigating an execution in violation of Roman authority, since the Lord put the responsibility back on the accusers. If they threw that stone, they would be the ones that might draw the ire of the Romans.

And it mercifully spared the woman from being stoned for her sin. Jesus knew that according to the Law, the witnesses to a capital offense were to be the first to throw stones at the guilty person (Deut. 13:9; 17:7). Jesus' masterful answer neither minimized the woman's guilt, nor denied the Law's sanctity. But it cut the ground out from under the scribes and Pharisees by revealing that they were unfit to be her judges and executioners. (MacArthur, 2006)

Matthew 23:25-28 - Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Romans 2:1-3 - Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

5.) The Resolution

9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

And they which heard it – in reference to the accusers

Being convicted by their own conscience – perhaps they were guilty of adultery themselves. At the very least, they certainly would have been guilty of lust. Perhaps they felt the weight of the moral standard they would be held to in killing this woman with their own hands.

- Certainly they knew the legal ramifications of taking someone's life without the permission of the Romans (see the hoops the religious authorities had to jump through to receive Roman approval for taking Jesus' life)

- Jesus has flipped the script on them. Now they are the ones in the lose lose situation. Went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last – in the awkward, sobering silence of that eternal moment, the accusers slowly begin to leave...starting with oldest and ending with the last of them.

- Ironically, those who came to put Jesus to shame left ashamed; those who came to condemn the woman went away condemned. Unfortunately, their indictment and sense of guilt did not lead them to repentance and faith in Christ. Like many who hear and feel the convicting truth of the law, they hardened their hearts and turned away from Him, not even open to gospel forgiveness. (MacArthur, 2006)

And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst - The circle of the crowd remained too, of course. But only the woman was now left in that circle and, though it might have seemed natural for her to slip away as well, for some reason she remained. (Hodges, 1980, p. 49)

The sun was rising in the east and its warm rays were rapidly dispelling the shadows from the Temple Court. Since Jesus had entered the Temple at “deep dawn” (8:2), all of the incidents John has reported could well have transpired in but a few short moments of time. The conspirators had perhaps watched Jesus enter the Temple precincts and before He had taught for very long they were in the midst of the group of listeners and were lodging their accusations. But suddenly they found themselves extremely discomforted. The whole incident which had begun, it would seem, amid the last shadows of a departing night was then being played out under a rapidly brightening sun. And somehow they stood in the glare of a Light that was greater than the sun—and was itself more hopelessly revealing than natural sunlight could ever be. They had to leave! He said nothing more—just wrote on the ground leaving His words to do their own work. Somehow their guilty past was as open to Him as these courts were then open to the light from above. How He knew they probably found it impossible to guess, but suddenly His presence had become intolerable to them. Those on whom the gnawing pains of guilt had had longest to work—“the older ones”—were the first to go, but shortly they were all gone. Except one. The woman! (Hodges, 1980, p. 48)

10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

When Jesus had lifted up himself – when He stood up

And saw none but the woman – the accusers having left

He said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? –

This is the first time anyone has addressed the woman. He says, “Where are the men that accused you? Has nobody condemned you? Did nobody throw a stone at you?”

11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

She said, No man, Lord – no one has condemned me, sir

Neither do I condemn thee – Exercising His divine power to forgive, Jesus does just that (Matt. 9:6; cf. John 3:17)

- In the truest sense, Jesus was the one she had sinned against.
- His exercise of forgiveness reminds us of what John told us earlier in chapter 3 verse 17.

John 3:17 - For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

John 5:14 - Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

Proverbs 28:13 - He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

Isaiah 1:16-18 - Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Luke 5:32 - I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

Christ didn't come to condemn the world. He came to save it. And although that woman's sin would be punished by death, it wouldn't be by her death, but by His. Though perfectly sinless Himself, Jesus would die 6 months later on the cross for her sin, our sin, and the sins of the whole world. There is punishment for sin. There is condemnation for sin. There is death for sin, but it is only for those who reject Christ's death on their behalf and the forgiveness it offers. Either you will accept by faith Christ's death on your behalf, or you will suffer spiritual death in Hell for all eternity as you pay for your own sins.

Jesus offers this woman forgiveness, but he calls her to a transformed lifestyle.

Go and sin no more – specifically Jesus said go and don't sin in this specific way (in reference to adultery) any more. In general, He called her to a transformed life.

- the only right response to God's grace and forgiveness in our lives is holy, righteous living.
- Illustration – Adult Entertainer starting a new church in San Diego (a church for sinners by sinners)
- Romans 6:1-2 - What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

The woman likely left the Court of the Women by its entrance on the east. In doing so she walked directly into the blazing Palestinian sun which then lit her path. Out of the shadows of darkness she had been roughly dragged to stand in shame before Jesus and before others. But with His words of compassion and direction still ringing in her ears, a new “day” had truly begun for her, and she walked out into it! As she left, Jesus resumed the teaching which this incident had so ungraciously interrupted. But where the Son of God is concerned, nothing happens by chance. In the wake of this striking intrusion—and against the backdrop of the physical light of this world—He was able to claim for the first time a title that is among the greatest He bears. Whatever the sun is to the natural earth—the source of light and warmth and life— He is to the world of mankind. He is, in fact, the Light of the world! Moreover, if any man or woman (such as the one who had just been there!) cared to follow the path He could reveal to them, the sins of the night need no longer be their experience but instead each day they could fully enjoy the liberating and illuminating light of life. (Hodges, 1980, p. 49)

Application

I don't know which character in the story resonates with you, but there is a lesson for each of them.

Perhaps you are like the Pharisees and scribes. You are adept at pointing out the faults in others, but totally oblivious to the sin in your own life. You need to repent and get your own self right before you attempt to condemn others. May we have the same attitude towards sinners as Jesus who came not to condemn but to save them.

Perhaps, you are like the woman. You have been so caught up in sin and this world. What you really need is Jesus. Embrace Him. Accept by faith the forgiveness He offers through His death in your place. And turn from the sin He died to save you from.

Perhaps you are like the crowd that watched the whole thing happen. They saw God's forgiveness first hand, just as we have seen it today. May seeing God's forgiveness so freely given inspire us to do the same with others.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 21 – JOHN 8:1-11

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 7:53-8:2 Memorize John 8:7</p>	<p>Describe the context and setting of the story of the woman caught in adultery.</p>
<p>T Read John 8:3-6 Recite John 8:7</p>	<p>How was Jesus' teaching session in the temple disrupted? In what way did the religious authorities set a trap for Jesus?</p>
<p>W Read John 8:6-11 Recite John 8:7</p>	<p>How did Jesus respond to this trap? How did He treat the woman and what did He say to her after her accusers had left?</p>
<p>T Read John 8:12-30</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 8:12-30</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 8:12-30

Review

John 7:37-53

- Jesus' invitation on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles for people to put their faith in Him for everlasting life.
 - o Response of the People
 - Full Faith
 - Some Faith
 - No Faith
 - Negative Faith
 - o Response of the Temple Guard
 - They were stunned by Jesus
 - o Response of the Pharisees
 - They were repulsed by Jesus
 - o Response of Nicodemus
 - He was sympathetic
- Everybody went home

John 8:1-11

- The next morning Jesus is at the temple (likely in the court of women adjacent to where the temple treasury boxes were; the court of women was as far into the temple complex as women were permitted to go).
- There is a crowd. Jesus is teaching.
- The Pharisees rudely disrupt His teaching by bringing a woman caught in adultery before Him and insisting He cast judgment.
- Jesus says, "He that is without sin cast the first stone."
 - o The accusers leave.
 - o Jesus, as divine judge, forgives the woman, and calls her to a transformed life as a result of that forgiveness.
 - o Against the backdrop of a sunrise, the woman leaves, and Jesus resumes teaching the crowd.

Sermon

JESUS' TREASURY DISCOURSE

1.) Jesus' Claim to be the Light of the World

12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying - One need only consider the lack of continuity when the story of the woman caught in adultery is excluded from the context: the chief

priests and Pharisees had sent their assistants to arrest Jesus, but they came back empty-handed (Jn 7:32, 45). Nicodemus declares that they need to hear and see what Jesus actually does in a given situation (7:50-51). Yet, “Jesus again speaks to them” (8:12)—even though he had not been brought before them (!), and apparently the same Pharisees continue in dialogue with Jesus (8:13ff.). One would think that such discontinuity resulting from the absence of the Pericope Adulterae would be obvious, despite the claims to the contrary stated in most articles and commentaries. (Black & Cerone, p. 141)

Then – The conjunction here is the Greek word *oun* which forms more of a logical connection than a chronological one to the preceding events. It could also be translated as “therefore” or “in accordance with”. (Sorenson, 2007)

- The woman having left, Jesus returned his attention to the crowd surrounding Him at the temple.

I am the light of the world - This is the second of 7 I AM statements in John’s gospel (cf. I am the bread of life in John 6)

- Bread provides sustenance for those who are hungry. Light provides direction for those who are lost.
- In John chapter 1, the author describes Jesus as the light of the world and John the Baptist as the one who had come to point people to the light. Further, in His conversation with Nicodemus in chapter 3, Jesus alluded to Himself as the light come into the world that draws some and yet repels those who love darkness. However, here following the Feast of Tabernacles is the first time Jesus has publicly declared Himself the light of the world. What is the significance of that claim?
 - o At the Feast of Tabernacles, there were two major rituals that would take place throughout.
 - One was the water pouring ceremony where the priest would pour out the water on the altar as a symbol of God’s provision of water in the wilderness wanderings and in prayer for God’s provision of water in the coming year. In the context of that ceremony, Jesus said, “If anyone wants water that will provide everlasting sustenance, come to me.”



- The second ceremony that would take place throughout was a lamp lighting ritual. It would take place each afternoon of the festival in the

court that Jesus was likely teaching in at this point (the court of women). Four huge oil lamps would be lit in the temple courtyard, and it was said that the light was so bright, you could see it from every courtyard in Jerusalem. The lights were a reminder of the pillar of fire (the presence of God) that guided Israel through the wilderness wanderings in the Old Testament (Ex. 13:21-22). (Colon, 2001)

- In Ex. 13:21-22, God led Israel through the wilderness as a pillar of fire. In Is. 60:19-20, God is described as an everlasting light to the world. In Is. 42:6-7, the Messiah is described as a light to the Gentiles. Thus, in referring to Himself as **THE** light of the world against the backdrop of the rising sun that morning, Jesus is placing on Himself a title that belonged to both God and Messiah. (MacArthur, 2006)
 - If any man is thirsty, I can provide Him with true sustenance.
 - If any man is lost in darkness, I can show Him the way because I am the light of the world.

John 1:4-9 - In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

John 3:19-21 - 19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. 20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. 21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Psalms 27:1 - **The Lord is my light and my salvation**; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

Isaiah 42:6-7 - I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, **for a light of the Gentiles**; To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.

Isaiah 60:1-3, 19-20 - 1 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. 2 For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. 3 And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.... 19 The sun shall be no more thy light by day; neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee: **but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light**, and thy God thy glory. 20 Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy

moon withdraw itself: for the **Lord shall be thine everlasting light**, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended.

He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life – Having just forgiven the woman caught in adultery and called her to newness of life, having just shown her the light and called her to walk in it, Jesus says that those who follow Him will not walk in darkness, but will have him, the life-giving light, as a traveling companion. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

- Illustration – think about the darkest place you have ever been. In the midst of complete darkness there is nothing more valuable and needed than light.
- Just as Israel had followed the pillar of fire in the wilderness, so Jesus called on people everywhere to follow him.
- You can approach life in one of two ways: The world is lost in darkness. You can follow Christ, or you can do your own thing. You can follow the light as your traveling companion, or you can stumble around in the darkness on your own.
 - o John 12:35 – Jesus says that the one who walks in darkness does not know where he goes.
- Further, by accepting the light of the world, the New Testament tells us that we not only have the light as a traveling companion, but the light of Christ illuminates us as well.
 - o John 12:36 – Jesus says to believe in the light that we might be the children of the light
 - o Ephesians 5:8 - For ye were sometimes darkness, but **now are ye light in the Lord**: walk as children of light:
- Not only that, but as little lights in the world, God has designed us to shine among the darkness, and we shine among the darkness when we follow the light and live righteous, holy lives.
 - o Matthew 5:16 - 16 **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works**, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.
 - o Philippians 2:15 - That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, **among whom ye shine as lights in the world**;

Thus, Jesus is the light of the world that helps lost people find their way, that serves as a traveling companion in the darkness, and gives us light that we might help other people find the way as well.

John 12:35-36 - Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for **he that walketh in darkness** knoweth not whither he goeth. 36 While ye have light, believe in the light, **that ye may be the children of light**. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

2 Cor. 4:4-6 - 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God,

should shine unto them. 5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. 6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, **hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.**

Matthew 5:14-16 - 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works,** and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

The Pharisees therefore said unto him – in reference to those who were then present in the crowd, but were not a part of the group that had brought the woman caught in adultery (Benson, 1857)

- The Pharisees followed Christ from place to place in an effort to catch Him in an error or oppose Him. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

Thou bearest record of thyself – you testify of yourself in saying that you are “the light of the world”

Thy record is not true – your testimony is false!

- According to Old Testament law, every fact in a legal matter had to be established by the testimony of more than one witness (Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:15; cf. Matt. 18:16; 2 Cor. 13:1; 1 Tim.5:19; Heb. 10:28). (MacArthur, 2006)
- Rather than genuinely evaluate His claim, the Pharisees dismiss it on a technicality. John 5:31 - If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.

2.) Jesus' Defense of His Testimony

14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

Jesus answered and said unto them. Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true – even if it were just me testifying of myself (who I am: the Messiah; what I offer: eternal life), my testimony is true

- Illustration: one person's testimony may be true even if it's not corroborated by others

For I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go – Because I know where I came from (heaven with God). I know why I'm here (to save

humanity), and I know where I'm going (back to the Father). You guys have no clue about any of those things.

- Illustration – Holocaust deniers confronting a survivor

- o “You were never in a concentration camp.” – I think I would know.

John 8:42 - Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

John 7:27-28 - 27 Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is. 28 Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.

John 7:35 - Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?

15 Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man.

Ye judge after the flesh – You evaluate and condemn according to appearance, according to human standards

John 7:24 - Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

I judge no man – I condemn no one.

- Does that mean that Jesus doesn't judge anyone?

John 3:17 - For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

John 12:46-48 - 46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. 47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. 48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

- o Christ will condemn and judge those who reject Him one day, but the purpose of His incarnation was not to condemn, but to save (cf. John 3:17; 12:46-48).

John 8:11 - She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

And yet if I judge, my judgment is true – But if I do judge, my judgment is true. Why?

For I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me – Because I don't judge by myself. The Father and I are completely unified in judgment.

John 5:17 - But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

John 5:22 - 22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

John 5:19 - Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

17 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true – Further, the Old Testament law says that the testimony of two witnesses should be accepted (cf. Deut. 17:6; 19:15)

Deuteronomy 17:6 - At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.

Deuteronomy 19:15 - One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established.

Matthew 18:16 - But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

2 Corinthians 13:1 - This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.

18 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

Well, hey I am one and God the Father is two.

19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? – well, where is your Father? Bring him out. Let's hear His testimony. (You can imagine the scorn and sarcasm in this response) (Ellicott, 1905)

Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father – you guys are ridiculous. You don't know me, and you don't know my Father either.

John 7:28 - Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.

If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also – if you would have known me, you would have known Him too. Why? Because they were perfectly unified. To accept Christ is to accept the Father. To reject Christ is to reject the Father who sent Him.

20 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.

These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple - The setting for the Lord's confrontation with the religious leaders was the temple treasury. The reference was not to a building, but to the thirteen trumpet-shaped receptacles or treasure boxes located in the section in the temple complex called the Court of the Women (the second outermost court). It was so named because it was as far into the temple area as women were normally permitted to go. Each treasure box was marked to designate how the money put in it would ostensibly be used (for the temple tax and various offerings). It was at this site that Jesus would later observe a poor widow making her cent offering (Mark 12:41-44; Luke 21:1-4). (MacArthur, 2006)

And no man laid hold on him; for his hour was not yet come – no one seized because it was not time yet. There was still 6 months to go.

3.) Jesus' Warning to the Lost

21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.

Then said Jesus again unto them – Therefore (since no one laid hands on Him), Jesus said again to them

I go my way – I am going away (in reference to His upcoming resurrection and ascension)

- Perhaps there is a side reference to the Jews who were now leaving Jerusalem in great numbers due to the conclusion of the Feast of Tabernacles. (Plummer, 1902)

And ye shall seek me – you will look for the Messiah once I'm gone

and ye shall die in your sins – though they would seek for the Messiah, they would not find Him. And because of their rejection of God's one means of forgiveness of sins, they would die in their sins.

Illustration – flood victim on his roof praying for God to save him. A rescue team comes by, and he turns them away because he's waiting on God to save him. The flood waters continue to rise, and he drowns. He stands before God and asks why He didn't save him. "Who do you think sent the boat?"

- Such will be the plight of those who reject Jesus (God's rescue boat that He sent to save us from our sin)

Whither I go, ye cannot come – and because they rejected God’s sacrifice for sin, they would not be granted entry into heaven. They could not be granted entry into heaven, where Christ would be.

John 7:34 - Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come.

22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.

Several days prior when Jesus had made a similar claim, the religious authorities mocked Him suggesting that He might go preach to the Jews dispersed among the Gentiles. Here they offer a more gruesome suggestion.

Then said the Jews – the religious authorities

Will he kill himself? Because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. – Suicide at that time was perceived to be one of the worst crimes anyone could commit. The Jews believed that those who killed themselves would be condemned to the darkest places of Hell. Thus, we can perceive once again the crude sarcasm and disdain in this suggestion from the authorities. (Barnes, 1834)

- Since they assumed that they were going to heaven, the Jews mockingly suggested that Jesus must be speaking of killing Himself, in which case He would go to hell. (MacArthur, 2006)

John 7:35 - 35 Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?

23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

You are earthly. I am not. You are carnal. I am not. You are a sinner. I am not.

John 3:31 - He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.

24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

I said therefore unto you – this is why I said to you

That ye shall die in your sins – that you are going to die in your sins

For if you believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins – The pronoun “he” does not occur in the Greek. Thus, Jesus is claiming that if they did not believe that He was the “I am” they would die in their sins.

- The Lord’s use of the phrase “I am” in reference to Himself is a veiled claim to full deity that Jesus will make explicit in verse 58.

- When Moses asked God His name He replied, "I AM WHO I AM" (Ex. 3:14). In the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament), that is the same phrase (ego eimi) Jesus used here (the Septuagint similarly uses ego eimi of God in Deut. 32:39; Isa. 41:4; 43:10, 25; 45:18; 46:4). Jesus was applying to Himself the tetragrammaton (YHWH, often transliterated as Yahweh)—the name of God that was so sacred that the Jews refused to pronounce it. Unlike many modern cult groups (such as the Jehovah's Witnesses), the Jews of Jesus' day understood perfectly that He was claiming to be God. In fact, they were so shocked by His use of that name, in reference to Himself (cf. vv. 28, 58), that they attempted to stone Him for blasphemy (v. 59). (MacArthur, 2006)
- Illustration – You are drowning in your sin. If you do not believe that you are drowning, and if you do not believe in who I am and in my ability to save you, then you will die in your sins.
John 3:18 - He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 3:36 - He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

4.) Jesus' Explanation of His Identity

25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.

Then said they unto him, Who art thou? – Answer us plainly. Perhaps they wished to draw from Him something more definitive, something that they could more easily use in a formal charge against Him. (Plummer, 1902)

And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning – I am who I have claimed to be from the very beginning of my ministry

- Jesus had already claimed to be the Messiah as well as equal with God (cf. 5:17-18). They now ask Him directly who He was that they might charge Him with blasphemy. Jesus deflected their question by answering that was who He had always claimed to be from the beginning of His ministry. (Sorenson, 2007)
John 1:19 - And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

John 5:17-18 - 17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. 18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

26 I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

I have many things to say and to judge of you – There are so many things that I have to say in condemnation and judgment of you...but it's not just me saying things.

But he that sent me is true – The one who sent me here to you is completely 100% true in what He says

And I speak to the world the things which I have heard of him – and I am just sharing with the world His message that He has given me to communicate

John 5:42-43 - But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

John 7:28 - Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.

John 8:17 - It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

John 7:16 - Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

So entrenched in their willful unbelief, the authorities did not understand that when Jesus spoke of the one who sent Him, He spoke of God the Father.

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man – when you have lifted me up. Jesus here is referring to the cross upon which He would be lifted up.

Then shall ye know that I am he – then you will know firsthand that I am who I claim to be

- Christ's death, burial, and resurrection vindicated every claim He ever made. He was crucified as a blasphemer by the Jews to show that He was not who He claimed to be. He was raised in power by the Father to show that He was claimed to be. He was crucified a blasphemer. He was raised the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

And that I do nothing of myself – that I don't do anything in isolation from the Father

But as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things – and that I don't say anything in isolation from the Father. We are perfectly unified, and I act in accordance with His will.

John 3:14 - And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

John 12:32-34 - And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die. The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

And he that sent me is with me – The Father was in constant fellowship and communion with the Son.

- “You have asked me where the Father is. The answer is that the Father is with me.” (Spence & Exell, 1883)

The Father hath not left me alone – The Father did not send the Son into the world to do His will and leave Him alone.

For I do always those things that please him – We are in perfect communion and fellowship at all times because I always act in accordance with His will.

John 14:10-11 - Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

John 16:32 - Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

John 4:34 - Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.

Once again here John provides us with some additional commentary.

As he spake these words many believed on him – John here claims that many of those who had held back and not yet put their faith in Christ, now made the decision to believe on Him. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

- While there were many who became more hardened in their unbelief due to His preaching, there were others who were softened to the point of faith and repentance. “The same sun that hardens the clay, softens the wax.” (Clarke) (Barnes, 1834)

John 7:31 - And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?

Application

Are you lost in darkness? Are you drowning in your sin? Jesus is the light of the world. He can save you from your sin and give you new life?

Christian, are you following the light? Jesus is your traveling companion through life. Have you stayed near Him, or have you begun to veer off into the darkness? Is the way you live your life a light in the darkness to the lost around you?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 22 – JOHN 8:12-30

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 8:12, John 12:35, Isaiah 60:19-20, Eph. 5:8, Matthew 5:14-16 Memorize John 8:12</p>	<p>What is the significance of Jesus' claim to be the light of the world?</p>
<p>T Read John 8:13-20 Recite John 8:12</p>	<p>In what way do the Pharisees attack Jesus' testimony regarding Himself? How does Jesus defend His testimony?</p>
<p>W Read John 8:21-30 Recite John 8:12</p>	<p>In what ways does Jesus warn the lost and explain His identity in these verses?</p>
<p>T Read John 8:31-47</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 8:31-47</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 8:30-47

Review

The context of this passage of Scripture is the discourse of Jesus on “I am the light of the world.” By declaring that he is the light of the world, he is alluding to the Old Testament. Specifically, he is alluding to the pillar of fire that guided Israel through the wilderness. By declaring himself to be the light of the world, Jesus is saying that he is the one who will show them the way to eternal life.

One of the many themes of the gospel of John is that Jesus is the incarnational revelation of God the father. Simply put, he put on a human nature to reveal to us the way to eternal life and God the Father. Every single human is in darkness, lost in sin, but Jesus is the light that will show us the way to eternal life.

John 1:4-12, “⁴In him was life; and the life was the light of men. ⁵And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not. ⁶There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe. ⁸He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light. ⁹*That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. ¹¹He came unto his own, and his own received him not. ¹²But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name.”

He came to the world to light the way to eternal life, to light the way to God the father. And not only that, just like the pillar of fire guided the people of Israel into the wilderness, Jesus is now our traveling companion, to guide us as we walk through a dark, sinful world. He calls us to walk in the light as Christians, to walk in his truth and in his commands, rather than walk in the sinful lusts of our flesh.

This declaration of Jesus turns into a discussion of his authority. (Carson 1991) The pharisees start to challenge his testimony, and Jesus in turn defends it.

They say to Jesus in vs. 13-14, “¹³The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true. ¹⁴Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, *yet* my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.”

In response to their charge that his testimony is false, Jesus tells them that his testimony is true because of three things.

1. He knows that he came down from heaven.
2. He knows that he will die for the sins of the world.
3. He know that he will return back to heaven.

In other words, my testimony is true because I know that I am sent from God the Father, to fulfill a specific purpose and a specific plan. I know these things, and it is obvious that you have no idea.

But not only is his testimony true because he knows he came from heaven, it is also true because God the Father bears witness with him.

John 8:16-18, "And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. ¹⁷ It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. ¹⁸ I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me."

Even though you accuse me of bearing witness on my own, there are actually two people that say that I am the Messiah, me and God the Father.

They ask him to then to show them the Father, but Jesus tells them if they actually believed the Father, they would have believed on him. Jesus and the Father are one, therefore to reject one is to reject the other. Jesus is a packaged deal.

John 8:19, "¹⁹ Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also."

Jesus then moves on to offer a warning to the pharisees. Because they had rejected him, they would die in their sins and be unable to join him in heaven.

John 8:21, "²¹ Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come."

He tells them that he is of heaven, they are carnal, they are worldly, they are sinful. Because they had rejected him as the Messiah, they could not join him.

John 8:22-24, "Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. ²³ And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. ²⁴ I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins."

The phrase "for if ye believe not that I am *he*..." is a reference to his explicit claim of deity, which he will make in vs. 58. He is claiming that he is the "I am that I am" from Exodus 3:14; he is claiming to be God. Because they had refused to believe that he was God, the Messiah, they would die in their sins.

They then ask him "Who are you?" And Jesus says to them that he is the one who he has been telling them from the beginning, which is the Messiah. Since the beginning of his ministry on earth, Jesus has claimed to be God the Son, the Messiah, and the Jews missed it.

He says to them that his witness again is 100% true, because it is backed up by God the Father.

John 8:25-27, "Even *the same* that I said unto you from the beginning. ²⁶ I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him. ²⁷ They understood not that he spake to them of the Father."

And again, they miss the boat. Jesus moves right on and points them to his future death on the cross, and tells them that when they see him lifted up, they will know that he is from the Father, that he is one with the Father, and that he is in full submission to God the Father.

This is in full contrast to the pharisees. Jesus is telling them that he is in full submission to God the Father, but the pharisees were not in submission to God the Father. This was because they had rejected the Messiah. If you wanted to nail down a theme of this chapter it would be this, Jesus is of the Father, the Jews are not.

They were the ones in the wrong, not Jesus. This theme is further expanded throughout the rest of the chapter. The ones who are truly in error are the Jews, not Jesus.

What is so interesting is that the words of Christ start to chip away at some of the Jew's unbelief.

8:30, "³⁰ As he spake these words, many believed on him."

Because of what Jesus said, many people believed in him. Now, as we read down through the chapter, it becomes very clear that these people had an incomplete faith in Jesus. Now what does that mean? It simply means that they only believed part of Jesus teaching, not all of Jesus teaching.

Jesus offers to complete their faith. But to do that, the Jews must believe something that isn't comfortable for them. Instead of continuing in the teaching of Christ they reject him, because of this rejection, the teaching of Jesus pushes them farther away rather than drawing them closer.

The teaching that pushes them away from Jesus is this, true freedom is found in Jesus Christ alone.

"The opening clause seems innocuous, until it becomes apparent in the ensuing verses that *the Jews who had believed him*, apparently referring to the 'many' who 'put their faith in him' in the preceding verse, turn out to be, in Jesus' view, slaves to sin (v. 34), indifferent to Jesus' word (v. 37), children of the devil (v. 44), liars (v. 55), and guilty of mob tactics, including attempted murder of the one in whom they have professed to believe (v. 59)." (Carson 1991)

This becomes evident as we move down through the passage.

Sermon

1.) Jesus' Teaching on Freedom

8:31, "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;"

For the Jews to find freedom in Christ, they first and foremost must continue in his teaching.

A.) Continue in my Teaching

Now there are a few things in this phrase which show us that Jesus did not believe that these people were truly his disciples, and that their faith in him was incomplete.

This word “continue” is a verb, which means to remain, to abide. This verb is in what is called the subjunctive mood.

Now Greek verbs can have three possible moods.

1. Indicative – expresses a reality, something that has, is, or will happen.
 - a. Example, currently I am preaching, this is a reality.
2. Imperative – expresses a command
 - a. Go to the store
3. Subjunctive – expresses a possibility. (Summers, Essentials of New Testament Greek: Revised 1995)
 - a. This is an action that is not a reality but is objectively possible. (Ibid.)
 - i. “I may eat in and out for lunch”

What Jesus is saying here is that it is possible that they will continue in his word, but it is not a reality. Their later rejection of Jesus in John 8 makes it apparent that they were not true disciples of Jesus Christ and did not have true faith in Him.

He uses another word here that shows that he does not think they are yet his disciples, and they have an incomplete faith.

“...then are ye my disciples indeed.”

The word Indeed is simply defined as, “pertaining to being real and not imaginary— ‘real, really, true, truly.” (Louw and Nida 1989)

If you continue in my teaching, if you remain in my word, then you are my true disciples.

Jesus does not think that these people were his true disciples. They had an incomplete faith in Jesus.

One of the many themes in the gospel of John is the incomplete faith of the Jews. There are many passages which state that the Jews had believed on Jesus, but it is evident that their faith was incomplete as they would later reject Him in unbelief.

John 2:23-25, “²³ Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast *day*, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. ²⁴ But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all *men*, ²⁵ And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.”

John 6:14-15, “¹⁴ Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. When Jesus therefore perceived

that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.”

They got temporarily excited about the miracles, and to a certain extent believed that Jesus was the Messiah. The problem though was that these people only believed part of Jesus’ teaching, not all of it.

For example, in the story of the bread and fishes, the people follow Jesus the next day. But they turned from Jesus because they didn’t want to believe his teaching.

John 6:53, “Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. ⁵⁴ Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day... ⁶⁶ From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.”

The Jews would get temporarily excited by what Jesus did and taught, but when he would start to teach them something they didn’t like, they would walk away. In other words, they did not continue in his word.

They only believed that he was the Messiah when it was convenient. When it came to his teaching on everlasting life, his deity, or in this passage freedom from sin, they chose to stop believing in him. Really, they only believed in him as the Messiah until he talked about who he was and what he came to do, which was that he was God the Son come down to save them from their sin!

This passage of Scripture fits this theme. The Jews who believe on Jesus, instead of continuing in the teaching of Jesus, reject His further revelation. This ultimately leads to them attempting to stone him.

Further, although some interpret this passage to be about continuing in good works, this isn’t what this passage is teaching.

Jesus is not saying that if you stay faithful to God and obey his word, then you are a true disciple. He is saying if you continue to accept his teaching, that he is the Son of God, the Messiah, then you are truly his disciples. Being a disciple in this chapter is not fundamentally about good works. It is about belief. A disciple of Jesus is not someone who only believes some of what Jesus says, a disciple is someone who believes all that Jesus said about himself.

Further, although these Jews were not true disciples of Jesus, He certainly desired them to be, and He would go on to discuss the resulting state of affairs for those who become true disciples of His through faith.

B.) Understand the Truth

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

The result of continuing to believe the teaching of Jesus is that they will know truth.

What Jesus is talking about here is explained in more detail later in the passage but suffice it to say that the result of continuing in the teaching of Jesus is understanding who Jesus was and what he came to do. The truth that Jesus is talking about here is that they would understand the truth of the deity of Christ that he came to die on a cross and rise from the dead to give them eternal life.

But you not only understand the truth, understanding the truth results in being set free.

C.) Be Set Free

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

And that truth, Jesus says, will make them free, which simply means they will be freed from the slavery of sin and become a son of God.

Jesus is genuinely offering them the opportunity to understand the gospel. To understand that he is the Son of God, and that he has come to offer them eternal life.

But this aspect of freedom reveals the fickle faith of the Jews. This is when they stop continuing in his teaching. If they have to be set free, that must mean they are slaves. (Carson 1991)

At that moment they had a choice, either they would continue to believe the teaching of Jesus, or they would not. And it is very evident as we continue through the passage, that these people chose the latter.

They chose to not continue in his teaching when they realized it means they were slaves, and not free men.

D.) The Jews' Denial of Bondage

8:33, “³³ They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?”

Now there is some debate as to exactly what they mean by this. For instance, some people think that the Jews were simply talking about spiritual freedom, because it was obvious that they had been enslaved by other nations. (Carson 1991)

Others think that they were so proud and arrogant that they saw themselves as never having been actually enslaved by anyone. (John F. Walvoord 1983)

Another viewpoint is that the Jews in this passage were referring to themselves personally never having been in bondage to any man. This would fit the context of them not understanding their need for freedom because they did not perceive of themselves as in bondage.

Regardless, this teaching about the bondage to sin is ultimately what drives them away. In their mind, because they were the physical descendants of Abraham, they didn't have a problem of sin. In other words, they were right with God because of their physical lineage.

And ultimately, this is why they reject the Messiah, because of his teaching on the Spiritual Lineage of Abraham.

As Jesus makes clear, it is not being in the physical lineage of Abraham that makes you right with God, it is being a spiritual descendant of Abraham that makes you right with God.

8:34-38, “³⁴ Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. ³⁵ And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. ³⁶ If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. ³⁷ I know that ye are Abraham’s seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. ³⁸ I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.”

It is obvious that Jesus is speaking about the spiritual lineage of Abraham, because he admits that the Jews are physically descendant from Abraham. But the point that Jesus wants to make to the Jews is this: Being a physical descendant of Abraham does not make you a spiritual descendant of Abraham. Being in a physical lineage does not make you free from sin or a son of God.

The only way we can be free from sin or a son of God is through belief in Jesus Christ. And this is what is meant by being in the spiritual lineage of Abraham. Everyone, Jew or Gentile, becomes a spiritual son of Abraham when they place their faith in Jesus.

To understand this, we have to start with Abraham being justified by faith. (Scofield, 1945)

Genesis 15:5-6, “⁵ And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. ⁶ And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”

Abraham was justified, declared righteous, received spiritual blessings, because he believed in the revelation that God had given him. (Scofield, 1945) God instituted all the way the back at the time of Abraham that the way we would become right with God was by grace through faith alone.

When we place our faith alone in Jesus, we become “sons of Abraham”.

Galatians 3:6-9, “⁶ Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. ⁷ Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. ⁸ And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed. ⁹ So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.”

Being a spiritual descendant of Abraham means that you are placing your faith alone in Jesus Christ.

And for the Jews in this scripture, the only way they would become spiritual descendants of Abraham was by participating in what God instituted when Abraham believed him by faith.

Just like Abraham placed his faith in the revelation of God, they needed to believe in the revelation of God, Jesus Christ.

He is showing them that the only way that they could become free from sin and sons of God was by believing in him! That he was the Messiah, the Son of God, and that only through believing in his name would they receive eternal life.

But what they had done was they took their physical descentance from Abraham and had misapplied it. They thought because they were in the physical line of Abraham that meant they were not sinners, and they were the Sons of God.

Illustration – For those of you who are teachers in the room, you know there are those kids who think they are all that and a bag of chips because of who their parents are. “You wait till my dad hears about this!” It’s always awesome when the parent agrees with you, because the child thought they had a certain privilege because of their parents.

And this is exactly what the Jews thought! They thought they had special spiritual status because of their father Abraham. They thought they were free from sin already.

This is ultimately what drives them away from Jesus.

The Jews had a problem with this because they thought their physical lineage already set them free. Jesus’ mission when he came to this earth was to save his people from their sins. It is because of this that they choose to reject Jesus.

Jesus wants to emphasize, being a son of God and free from sin only comes through participation in what God set up in Abraham, namely placing their faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Jesus argues that physical descentance doesn’t do these things by first bringing up the universality of sin.

2.) Jesus’ Teaching on Bondage

A.) Their Problem of Sin

John 8:34, “³⁴ Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.

Being a physical son of Abraham does not make you free from sin.

Jesus tells them that whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. All men are therefore slaves to sin because all men have sinned! And last I checked the Jews are included in the category of all men. Having a problem of sin is not exclusively a gentile problem, it is a universal problem.

Romans 3:9-10, “⁹ What then? are we better *than they*? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; ¹⁰ As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:”

Just because they are the physical descendants of Abraham does not mean they are free from sin. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

But not only does he point to the universality of sin, he points to the position of a slave.

B.) Their Position as Slaves

8:35, “And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: *but* the Son abideth ever.”

Being a physical descendant of Abraham does not make you a son of God. When he says a servant doesn't abide forever in the house, he is referring to the fact that the only guarantee of escape from judgement and a guarantee of an eternal home in heaven is believing in Jesus.

Now, what he is not saying is that the true nation of Israel are the ones who become spiritual “sons of God”, because he is speaking about the spiritual children of Abraham, not the physical children. (Scofield, 1945) He is speaking in the context of universal sin and judgment, which is different than God's national dealings with Israel, though they overlap. (Ibid.)

A slave of sin has no part in the family of God. The Jews Jesus is speaking to are the slaves to sin, therefore they do not have a part in the family of God. They are guilty of their sin and deserve punishment for their sin just like everyone else.

Romans 3:19, ¹⁹“Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”

Everyone has a problem called sin, whether you are Jewish or a Gentile. Being in the physical lineage of Abraham does not set you free from sin or make you part of the family of God.

Jesus says this in contrast with himself. Even though a slave has no part in the family of God, The Son, Jesus, is eternally in the family of God. He points to eternal position of the Son.

C.) His Position as Son

8:35, “And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: *but* the Son abideth ever.”

Even though a slave of sin has no part of the family of God, the eternal Son of God does. Jesus as the Son of God has all the rights to the family of God. What is conclusion then that Jesus draws from this fact? Because Jesus has the eternal position, he has the eternal power to set you free from sin.

D.) His Power to Free Them

8:36, “³⁶If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed”

The Son of God has eternal freedom from sin and an eternal home in heaven. Therefore, if the Son is the one who sets you free from sin, you are truly free from sin.

This shows Jesus divine power to liberate slaves of sin. (Carson 1991) In fact, the only one who can truly set you free from sin is Jesus Christ! The only one who can make you a son of God is Jesus Christ!

This is what he means earlier by “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.” The truth they would understand was that he was the Son of God and through belief in him they could receive everlasting life. And believing that truth would set them free from sin and make them a Son of God.

Jesus is calling them to be in the spiritual lineage of Abraham. Just like Abraham believed God, and it made him righteous, they needed to believe in the Son of God in order to be set free from sin and become a son. Then, and only then, would they be spiritual children of Abraham.

Being a physical descendant of Abraham does not make you free from sin, it does not make you a son of God, it does not give you an eternal home in heaven. Only by believing Jesus alone as the Messiah will set you free from sin and make you a son of God.

3.) Jesus’ Teaching on Spiritual Heritage

Because they refused to believe in Jesus alone to save them and make them the sons of God, they fully bought into being the children of the devil.

Jesus does not pull any punches. He goes on to emphasize that not only are they not the sons of Abraham, but they are also the children of the devil.

They are first of all the children of the devil because they are doing the works of the devil.

A.) They were not the children of Abraham

John 8:37-38, “I know that ye are Abraham’s seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. ³⁸ I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.”

Jesus is saying I know you are the descendants of Abraham, but you are literally trying to kill me, which shows that the word of God has no place in you. It again goes to show that their faith in Jesus Christ was incomplete. (Carson 1991)

John 8:38, “³⁸ I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.”

“If the Jews are falsely claiming Abraham as their father, Jesus is rightly claiming God as his: he is passing on what he has seen in his Father’s presence (*i.e.* he always acts just like his Father: *cf.* 3:11–13, 34; 5:19ff.; 6:46). Jesus’ conduct displays his true paternity. Sadly, the

same is true of the Jews: they do what they have heard from their father—only they have not yet grasped that Jesus is referring to the devil himself (v. 44).” (Carson 1991)

Jesus is speaking the words of God the Father; he is re-emphasizing the truth that he always acts and speaks according to his Father’s will. Jesus is saying this to contrast himself with the Jewish people. Again, Jesus is in the will of the Father, the Jews are not.

The Jews are not believing the word of God, they are behaving like their true father, the devil. Their disbelief and attempt to murder Christ reveal that they are not spiritual children of Abraham or of God, they are rather children of the devil.

John 8:39-40, “³⁹ They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham. ⁴⁰ But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. ⁴¹ Ye do the deeds of your father.”

“The stern protest, *Abraham is our father*, doubtless misses the proleptic allusion to the devil. It is not mere repetition of a biological fact. The Jews are advancing the argument by saying, in effect, that even in the moral and ethical realm, they measure up well enough to be considered the descendants of Abraham.” (Carson 1991)

“To counter the thrust of Jesus’ argument, the Jews claimed Abraham as their spiritual father. But Jesus responded by stating that spiritual descendants of Abraham do what Abraham did, that is, they believe and obey God. They should respond in faith to the heavenly messenger and do what He says.” (John F. Walvoord 1983)

They try to reassert that they are the spiritual children of Abraham. They are saying we don’t need Jesus to be spiritual children of Abraham, because we already were before Jesus got here.

But Jesus responds and says that if they truly were the children of Abraham, they would have believed the revelation of God just like Abraham.

He says, “If you really were Abrahams spiritual children, you would have done the works of Abraham.” What he referring to by the works of Abraham is the faith that Abraham had in the revelation of God. They were not believing the Son, the revelation of God the Father, therefore they were not doing Abraham’s works.

8:40, “⁴⁰ But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. ⁴¹ Ye do the deeds of your father.”

And beyond that, they were trying to kill him! Nothing says “I don’t believe you are the Messiah” more than murder! Their belief is diametrically opposed to Abraham.

Jesus says they are seeking to kill him, the one who has told them the truth of God. This is the truth that Jesus says, “which I have heard of God...”, truth that the Father literally spoke to him. This is the revelation that God told Jesus to tell the Jews. Because they seek to kill

him, this shows that they are truly not the spiritual children of Abraham. If they were, they would have believed the revelation of Jesus.

Jesus says that they “do the works of their father...” which again reiterates they are the children of the devil. Their actions prove it.

John 8:41, “Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.”

“Naturally enough, the Jews do not appreciate Jesus’ insistence that their conduct disallows their claim to Abraham as their father. His charge makes them spiritual bastards: *We are not illegitimate children*, they protest.” (Ibid.)

Jesus pulls no punches! He is in essence calling them spiritually illegitimate children because they were solely relying on their physical descent of Abraham. This strikes right at the heart of their identity as a Jew.

The response they give Jesus attacks this claim, but it is also a bit of a slam on Jesus himself.

“It is not at all impossible that the Jews are alluding to the irregularities connected with Jesus’ birth. From their perspective, he displays considerable cheek to talk about paternity: *they were not born of fornication* (wink, wink). If this is a correct reading, then it is a further instance of Johannine irony, irony which extends beyond the virginal conception of Christ (*cf.* notes on 6:42) to the question of his ultimate origin in the Father (1:1–18; 3:17).” (Ibid.)

“The Jews’ works were different, so their father (*cf.* v. 38) must also be different. They could seek to evade Jesus’ logic only by denying an illegitimate human paternity and claiming a heavenly one. In their denial, *We are not illegitimate children*, they may have been casting aspersions on Jesus’ birth.” (John F. Walvoord 1983)

They may have in this claim been attacking the birth of Christ, saying that Jesus was born out of wedlock. They might be saying something like, “Hey, we weren’t born out of wedlock like you.” But either way the point is clear, they don’t consider themselves to be spiritually born out of wedlock, they believe that they only have one Father, God himself.

“In any case, if Jesus will not allow them Abraham as their father, surely he cannot deny them God. Had not the LORD himself declared, ‘Israel is my firstborn son’ (Ex. 4:22), and ‘I am Israel’s father’ (Je. 31:9; *cf.* Dt. 14:1–2)? In one sense, this is, for the Jews in this context, both a proud claim and the ultimate defiance: there is no turning back in the debate at this point. That the Evangelist records it may be in part his own wry way of referring to the unique origins of Jesus.” (Carson 1991)

Jesus goes on to attack this claim as well! Because of their works, it shows they are not children of God.

B.) They were not the children of God

John 8:42, “Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.”

“Knowing with absolute certainty that he himself has come from God and has been sent by him (this recurring emphasis on Jesus’ functional subordination harks back to 5:19ff.), Jesus can only conclude that if the Jews do not enthusiastically embrace him and love him, it must be because they themselves do not know the Father (*cf.* 1 Jn. 5:1). By implication, of course, that means God’s word about being a Father to Israel must apply to others.” (Carson 1991)

If you really were from God the Father, you would love me! This again ties back into the theme of the testimony and authority of Jesus. Jesus came down from heaven from the Father, and he is in full submission to the Father. Therefore his testimony is true!

What he is saying here is if you really loved God, you would have loved me, because I came from the Father in heaven and because I am in full submission to the will of the Father in heaven. Jesus and God the Father are a complete package. You can’t have the Son without the Father, and you can’t have the Father without the Son.

He then goes on to explain further why they are unable to hear his words. It’s because they are children of the devil. And he proves they are the children of the devil by pointing to the nature of the devil.

C.) They were the children of the devil

John 8:43-45, “⁴³ Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word. ⁴⁴ Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. ⁴⁵ And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not.”

8:43, “⁴³ Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word.”

Jesus goes on starts off with a question, but then goes on to answer it. Why can’t you understand my teaching? It is because you are unable to hear my word.

“It is not that his idiom, the peculiar way Jesus dresses his message, is so difficult that they cannot comprehend what he is trying to say. That would suggest the fault is with him: he is a poor communicator. Rather, because they cannot truly ‘hear’ (including ‘obey’!) his message, *i.e.* the thrust of his word, the content of the revelation of the incarnate Word, therefore they are unable to grasp the meaning of his outward speech. The flaw is therefore not with the communicator, but with those whose values and prejudices make them constitutionally unable to ‘hear’.” (Carson 1991)

Why can’t they understand the Word of God? Why won’t they believe in the teaching of Jesus? They have a fatal flaw which hinders them from being able to understand the message of Christ, namely that they are the children of the devil.

8:44, “⁴⁴Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”

Everyone who has yet to trust Jesus as their Savior is a child of the devil. Every single one of us is born in sin and by nature are children of Satan.

Ephesians 2:2-3, ²Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: ³Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”

We were by nature the children of wrath. And because we were the children of Satan, we were walking in darkness, and we had no awareness of the truth of the gospel. This is where the revelation of Jesus comes into play. Jesus, the Light of the World, came down to reveal to sinful man the way to the Father.

This is exactly what Jesus does in this passage. In the beginning he reveals to the Jews that he is the light of the world. And he also reveals to those who start to believe on him that if they continue in his teaching, they will be his disciples, and they will know the freeing truth of Jesus. He gives them a choice. He gives them the freedom to either continue in his word, or reject him.

But as you can tell, they chose of their own free will to reject Jesus’ revelation simply because they refused to be called slaves to sin. And they are now unable to hear the message of Christ because they chose to remain as children of the devil rather than enter the wonderful revelation of God the Father.

“Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do.”

Because they chose to stay the children of the devil, now they are doing the works of the devil. They are acting just like their father, Satan. Jesus teaches them the nature of Satan and in so doing shows them they are behaving just like him.

“He was a murderer from the beginning.”

This is probably in reference to how he led Adam and Eve to disobey God and become spiritually dead. (Carson 1991)

Jesus tells them they are just like Satan because they are wanting to murder him instead of believing on him.

“and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him.”

Satan decided to abandon the glory of heaven for his own pride. He did not abide in the truth of God because he rejected the truth of God.

That is the exact same thing the Jews are doing. They rejected the offer of everlasting life, and are therefore no longer in the truth of Jesus Christ. They did not continue in his teaching because there was no longer truth in them; just like Satan.

“When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”

This is also a reference back to his lies in the garden of Eden. He told Adam and Eve “You will be as gods...” and “You will surely not die...”, both of which were completely false.

They had bought into the lies of the devil because they had chosen to reject Jesus Christ. They were being deceived by Satan into believing that they were really the children of God and Abraham and free from sin.

8:45, “⁴⁵ And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not.”

Because they had chosen to reject Jesus, the truth that Jesus was telling them was now driving them away from him rather than drawing them closer.

The more you reject the message of Christ, the more the message of Christ will push you away. The more you reject the gospel, the more you accept the lies of Satan.

Those who get closer to Satan will only recoil when the light of the gospel shines into their lives.

Application

To those of you who are in the room, who have heard the message of the gospel but have never accepted it, accept it today.

There are so many different excuses for not turning to Christ.

I don't have time for Jesus.

I don't have a problem with sin.

I have more time later.

The more you reject Jesus, the harder it is to accept him.

Accept Jesus today, because it only gets harder after this.

What we have here plays into the theme of the Gospel of John, which is the steadily growing rejection of Jesus from the Jews. Because they chose to reject his teaching, they steadily moved farther and farther away from him. Their rejection culminates in their arrest and crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

John 1:10-11, “¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. ¹¹ He came unto his own, and his own received him not.”

John 8:46-47, “⁴⁶ Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? ⁴⁷ He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God.”

Jesus is basically saying “Which one of you can prove that I have sin?” No one can prove that Jesus is a sinner. He is perfectly sinless. As he said earlier in the chapter, “²⁹ And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.” (Carson 1991)

Jesus was perfect and sinless, and by pointing to his sinlessness, he is pointing out to the Jews that his testimony is true. His sinless life was evidence of his teaching. Because he lived a perfect life, his claims to be the Son of God, the only one who can set them free from the slavery of sin and make them sons of God, are true. (Carson 1991)

The sinlessness of Jesus is a testimony to his truthfulness. Now he moves on to ask them...

“And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?”

Jesus is asking them, “If I am saying the truth, which is backed up by my sinlessness, why do you still not believe my words?” Jesus answers this question right away.

⁴⁷ He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God.”

Even in the face of the evidence of the sinlessness of Christ, they still do not hear the teaching of Jesus because they are not of the Lord. Those who are of the Lord hear the word of the Lord. They accept the truth of the gospel.

The Jews are the children of the devil; therefore they do not hear the word of the Lord.

Now you remember, they are not of God because they chose of their own free will to not continue in the teaching of the Word of God. At the beginning of this passage, they had a choice. Either they would continue in his word, or they would reject his teaching.

They chose the latter and decided to stay the children of the devil. Because of this, they are not of God, and they cannot hear the teaching of God’s Word.

Application

Don’t let it get to this point. Don’t get to the point of rejecting Jesus so much you won’t even hear the gospel anymore. Today is the day of salvation. If you are sitting in this room, and you have never trusted in Jesus alone to take you to heaven, today is the day to do it. Don’t put it off, don’t wait, because the more reject the gospel, the less you notice the gospel. The less you listen to the Jesus, the harder it will be to hear him.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 22 – JOHN 8:12-30

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 8:12, John 12:35, Isaiah 60:19-20, Eph. 5:8, Matthew 5:14-16 Memorize John 8:12</p>	<p>What is the significance of Jesus' claim to be the light of the world?</p>
<p>T Read John 8:13-20 Recite John 8:12</p>	<p>In what way do the Pharisees attack Jesus' testimony regarding Himself? How does Jesus defend His testimony?</p>
<p>W Read John 8:21-30 Recite John 8:12</p>	<p>In what ways does Jesus warn the lost and explain His identity in these verses?</p>
<p>T Read John 8:31-47</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 8:31-47</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 8:48-59

Review

The day after the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus is in the courtyard of the women teaching when there is a woman caught in adultery brought to Him.

“He that is without sin let him first cast a stone at her.”

The accusers leave, and Jesus resumes His teaching.

(1) Jesus' Claim to be the Light of the World (8:12-13)

He is the light of the world that helps lost people like that woman caught in adultery find their way.

(2) Jesus' Defense of His Testimony (8:14-20)

It's not just me saying these things. God the Father is testifying of me as well.

(3) Jesus' Warning to the Lost (8:21-24)

If you do not put your faith in me, you are going to die in your sins, and you will never step one foot inside heaven's gates.

(4) Jesus' Explanation of His Identity (8:25-30)

I am who I've claimed to be from the very beginning: the Messiah, the Son of God, the Savior of the World.

(5) Jesus' Teaching on Freedom (8:31-32)

Through my teaching you can know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

We don't need your freedom because we've never been slaves to anyone and we're children of Abraham (“we're cultural Jews/Christians”).

They deny their need to be saved.

(6) Jesus' Teaching on Bondage (8:34-36)

Jesus confronts the claim: “I don't need to be saved/rescued/set free.”

If you're a sinner (which we all are) yes you do.

Sinners are slaves to sin, and slaves to sin have not part in the family of God. That's a problem. Why? Because we're all sinners.

But Jesus says that the good news is that He has the power to free/rescue sinners from the bondage of sin and bring them into the family of God.

(7) Jesus' Teaching on Spiritual Heritage (8:37-47)

Jesus confronts the claim: "I'm a Jew/I'm a Christian."

Just because you're born into a religious home with a religious heritage does not make you a child of God.

In fact, if you have not been rescued/saved from your sin, you're not a child of God. You're a child of the devil. Why? Because you're a sinner, and you're a slave to that sin, and you haven't been freed from its penalty and power.

You cannot be found until you realize you are lost in sin.

You cannot be freed until you realize you are bound in sin.

You cannot be saved until you realize you are separated from God in your sin.

How would they respond? There are two responses to the claim that you are lost, guilty, and in need of a Savior:

- How can I be saved?
- Who do you think you are?

Sermon

How did the Jews respond? Well, let's look at John 8:48.

1.) Jesus' Defense of His Character

48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

Then answered the Jews, and said unto him – how would the Jews respond to Jesus' claim that they needed to be saved from their sin through Him? By personally attacking Him.

Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan – Samaritans were a mix of Jew and Gentile. Thus, in a real sense the Jews direct a racial slur at Jesus despite knowing full well that Jesus was Jewish.

- "You know what Jesus? You're nothing more than a godless half breed."
- This may have been due to the Samaritans also questioning the legitimacy of the Jews as children of Abraham, or it may have been another cheap shot attack questioning the legitimacy of Jesus' parents. (MacArthur, 2006)

And hast a devil – not only did they direct a racial slur at Jesus, but they also suggested that He was possessed by a devil.

- This was a common insult directed at Jesus (cf. Mark 3:22, 28-29; John 7:20).

- Just to put this in perspective, God Himself is standing in front of His chosen people telling them of their need to be saved by Him and they respond to Him by calling God a godless half breed that was possessed by a demon.

- o How does Jesus respond to this unfair criticism?

John 7:20 - The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?

Matthew 10:25 - It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?

49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.

Jesus answered, I have not a devil – what you're saying is not true (Jesus doesn't even respond to the claim that He was a Samaritan)

Application – take note of how Jesus responded to unfair criticism

- He did not respond by saying, "Well, you know what....!" and getting right up in their face
- He was meek. He was strong, but under control. He was never out of control.
- He was wise as a serpent, but harmless as a dove (Matt. 10:16).

- o Illustration – teaching this to the deacons

1 Peter 2:23 - Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

- o Jesus is the only person in the history of the planet that never did anything wrong...and guess what Jesus still got? Criticism...and He got a ton of it!
- o Criticism can be constructive or destructive, but in life it is inevitable over time.
 - "To avoid criticism, do nothing, say nothing, be nothing."
 - Criticism is inevitable because sin is inevitable.
 - We are criticized because of our sin.
 - o To think that you are above criticism is to implicitly assume that you are not a sinner – which is not true for any of us.
 - And in the case of Jesus in this passage, others criticize because of their sin (insecurity, pride, selfishness, anger)
 - o How should we respond when we receive criticism?
 - In meekness (always under control and never out of control)
 - In humility
 - "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."
 - "If anyone thinks ill of you, do not be mad at him, for you are worse than he imagines you to be." - Spurgeon

- A lot of times when we receive criticism, our gut reaction is to strike back instead of look within. We ought to look within and ask the Lord, “Is this an area of my life I need to make changes in?”

Proverbs 15:1 - A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.

But I honour my Father – I revere. I honor. I ascribe worth to and lift up my Father.

Illustration – In life, we approach situations from the perspective of what would God have us to do.

And ye do dishonour me – and you insult, disgrace, and shame me. By the way, when you truly endeavor to honor God with your life, the response often from the world will be to shame, dishonor, and insult you (just like they did with Jesus).

- The implication here is that by dishonoring Jesus, the Jews were dishonoring God the Father.

John 8:42 - If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

John 5:23 – He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

Application – when you ad hominem attack another person so as to disgrace them, you disgrace your Father, and you disgrace yourself.

50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

And I seek not mine own glory – Jesus did not come to earth to exalt Himself. He did not come concerned with Himself at all. He came to exalt the Father and save humanity.

John 7:18 - He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

Luke 19:10 – for the Son of man is come to seek and save that which was lost

John 3:17 - 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

Matt. 1:21 – Jesus names means deliver because he would come to save His people from their sins

There is one that seeketh and judgeth - although Jesus did not seek to lift Himself up, do you know who did? The Father. And the Father would judge between Jesus and those Jews who dishonored Him. “You dishonor me. God honors me. Who’s right? God will be the judge of that.” (Ellicott, 1905)

Philippians 2:9-11 - 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,

of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

- In the relationship between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, you see the ultimate example of what a healthy relationship looks like.
 - o A relationship in which the parties involved are selfless givers who seek the wellbeing of each other.
 - o In our relationships with others, we should strive to be like God, a selfless giver in the relationship.

John 5:20-23 - For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

Verily, verily, I say unto you – Truly, truly, I'm telling you

If a man keep my saying – if a man observes/takes heed to my Word, my teaching, my doctrine (cf. John 5:24; 8:31) (Sorenson, 2007)

- If any man truly follows me in faith as a disciple
He shall never see death – he will be passed from death to life. He will be made spiritually alive and will live forever and ever with God in His kingdom.

- Because of our sin
 - o We are lost in darkness
 - o We are bound in slavery
 - o We are spiritually dead
 - o We are undeserving of heaven
 - o We are on our way to separation from God forever and ever in a place called hell
 - o That's the bad news, and you have to understand the bad news before you can understand the good news.
- What's the good news?
 - o God loves us. He doesn't want us to be lost. He doesn't want us to be bound. He doesn't want us to die and go to hell. He wants us to be in heaven with Him.
 - o That's why Jesus came. God in the flesh came down to earth to live a perfect life and to die on the cross for the sins of the world and then rise from the dead three days later.
 - Jesus came to do for us what we could not do for ourselves, pay the penalty for our sins.

- Through His death on the cross as the payment for our sins, Christ offers us forgiveness of sins, freedom, and everlasting life not as something we could ever earn or deserve but as a gift that we receive through faith.
- Application: once again, even to those who vociferously and personally attacked Him, Jesus extended the gospel. He showed grace to those who deserved none.
 - He showed grace not because his opponents deserved it, but because it was what He was called to do.

John 3:16 – For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

- Jesus claims to be the exclusive means of everlasting life.

John 5:20-24 - 20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel. 21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. 22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: 23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. 24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

John 8:55 - Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.

John 15:20 - Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

2.) Jesus' Declaration of His Greatness

52 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.

Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil – We know that you are possessed because what you just said is unbelievable and impossible (Barnes, 1834)

- Once again due to the hardness of their hearts, they completely misunderstand what Jesus is saying

Abraham is dead, and the prophets – Abraham (the George Washington of the Jewish faith) is dead. The prophets are dead. They did not have the power to defeat death.

And thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death – and yet, you say, If a person takes heed to your teaching, your Word, they will never taste of death.

- Of course, Jesus is not here talking about physical death as they mistakenly imply, but spiritual death in Hell.

Hebrews 2:9 - But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?

Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself? – who do you think you are to say such a thing? (MacArthur, 2006) Only a crazy, demon possessed person could say such a thing.

- “If Abraham, who received God’s covenant, himself died, and if the prophets, who uttered the oracles of God, themselves died, what kind of person do you assert Yourself to be that Your word shall deliver men from death?” (Ellicott, 1905)
Hebrews 3:2-3 - Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house.

Hebrews 7:1-7 - For this Melchisedec, king of Salem, priest of the most high God, who met Abraham returning from the slaughter of the kings, and blessed him; To whom also Abraham gave a tenth part of all; first being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is, King of peace; Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God; abideth a priest continually. Now consider how great this man was, unto whom even the patriarch Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils. And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham: But he whose descent is not counted from them received tithes of Abraham, and blessed him that had the promises. And without all contradiction the less is blessed of the better.

John 5:18 - Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:

Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing – If I glorify myself, if I alone lift myself up, my glory is nothing.

It is my Father that honoureth me - But that’s not the case. I’m not lifting myself up. Do you know who is? God the Father is.

How?

John 5:21-23 - 21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. 22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: 23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

- Through giving Him the authority to impart life to those who receive Him by faith and to judge those who do not (cf. John 5:22-29).

Of whom ye say, that he is your God – for you to claim to know God and then to disgrace and blaspheme His Son, whom He honors and has sent into the world, is absolutely outrageous.

John 5:31-32 - If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

John 5:22-29 - For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

John 8:41 - Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.

55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.

Yet ye have not known him – you might know about God in your head, but you have not come to experientially know God in your heart (you have no real relational knowledge of God) (Sorenson, 2007)

But I know him – I absolutely know the Father as through the eyes. I know the Father because I have seen Him. (Sorenson, 2007)

And if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you – For me to say that I do not know God would be just as much of a lie as you saying that you do know Him.

But I know him, and keep his saying – But I do know Him, and I observe/take heed to/follow His Word

John 7:28-29 - Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

John 1:18 - No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

1 John 5:10 - He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: - God had promised Abraham 2000 years prior to the life of Christ that through his descendant (i.e. the Messiah) all the nations of the earth would be blessed. Abraham was exuberant to see the day of the coming of the Messiah.

and he saw it, and was glad – 2 thousand years after God made that initial promise to Abraham, that promise was fulfilled through the coming of Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, to this earth

- Although he did not see the fulfillment of that promise while alive, it seems from this verse that in the afterlife he was aware of and saw the arrival of Jesus to this earth, and he was pumped when it finally happened.
 - On the one hand, Abraham (whom these Jews idolized and claimed to follow) with great anticipation looked forward to the coming of Jesus and he saw it and was happy. On the other hand, these Jews disgraced Jesus and wanted to kill him.
 - The Jews asked, “Do you really think you’re greater than Abraham?”
 - Jesus replied, “Absolutely. And Abraham would tell you the same thing.”
- Genesis 22:18 - And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice.

Galatians 3:7-9 - Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.

3.) Jesus’ Declaration of His Deity

57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham – fifty years old was the age of maturity in the Jewish mindset. “You talk like you were buddy buddy with Abraham, but

you're not even a fully grown man, and yet you've seen Abraham who lived 2000 years ago?"

- Technically Jesus didn't say that he had seen Abraham. He had said that Abraham had seen of Jesus' coming and then saw it when it happened, implying that Abraham knew of what was happening here on earth while in the afterlife. (Barnes, 1834)
- How would Jesus reply?

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

Jesus said unto them, verily, verily, I say unto you – Truly, truly, I'm telling you

Before Abraham was, I am – This is a mic drop statement by Jesus. He doesn't just claim to be greater than Abraham. He claims to be equal with God. Saying "before Abraham was, I am" in first century Israel would be the equivalent of someone in modern culture saying, "I am God." How?

- In this statement, Jesus affirms two critical aspects of His nature.
 - o He affirms His eternal preexistence. Before Abraham was ever even born, I existed. He doesn't say, "Before Abraham was born, I came into being." He says, "Before Abraham was, I am." ...The implication being that Jesus is the ever present one who always was and is and will be.
 - o He explicitly affirms His deity.
 - The clause "I am" is the explicit name that God calls Himself in Exodus 3:14.
 - In that passage, Moses asked God how he should introduce Him to Israel. Who should I tell them has sent me?
 - "My name is I am that I am. You tell them that the I am has sent you unto them."
 - In using the same name to describe Himself, Jesus explicitly claims to not only be the eternally existent one, but God in the flesh.

John 1:1-2 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.

John 17:5 - And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

Isaiah 9:6 - For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Micah 5:2 - But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Exodus 3:14 - And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you.

59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

Then took they up stones to cast at him – The Jews understood exactly what Jesus was saying, that He was claiming to be eternal, self-existent God. In response to His “blasphemous” claim, they took up stones to throw at and execute Him as the Old Testament law prescribed (cf. Lev. 24:16).

John 8:5-6 - Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.

Leviticus 24:16 - And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the LORD, shall be put to death.

John 5:18 - Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

John 10:30-33 - I and my Father are one. Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by. – as Jesus enemies took up stones to kill Him in their fury, Jesus slipped into the crowd and escaped through the midst of it. (Sorenson, 2007) Why? Because the time of His death had not yet come, although it was soon on the horizon.

Application

The Scripture is clear that we all have a problem of sin. Because of our sin we're not good enough for heaven and because of our sin, we're deserving of Hell. There's nothing we can do to change that. We can't be religious enough. We can't be good enough. We can't pray enough. We are lost, and we are in need of a Savior.

But Jesus loved us so much that He came down to this earth to do for us what we could not do for ourselves. He died on the cross to pay for your sins and my sins and the sins of the

whole world. And the Bible tells us that if we will recognize that we are lost and hopeless and bound because of our sin and put our faith in what Jesus did on the cross to pay for our sins, we can be saved.

Jesus confronted the religious Jews with their need to be saved from their sin just as you have been confronted this morning. They weren't having any of it. How will you respond? Will you receive Him, or will you reject Him?

Christian, how will you respond to criticism and hostility from others? Will you follow in the footsteps of your Savior in meekness and humility or will lash out in hostility and anger?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 24 – JOHN 8:48-59

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 8:48-51 & 1 Peter 2:23</p>	<p>How did Jesus respond to the unfair criticism directed at Him? How should we respond to criticism?</p>
<p>T Read John 8:52-56, Genesis 22:18, & Gal. 3:7-9</p>	<p>In what way did Abraham look forward to the coming of Jesus? Why was he so glad to see Jesus' arrival?</p>
<p>W Read John 8:57-59, Exodus 3:14, & Leviticus 24:16</p>	<p>What was the significance of Jesus' statement "before Abraham was, I am"? How did the Jews respond?</p>
<p>T Read John 9:1-17</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 9:1-17</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 9:1-17

Review

In John 8:12 Jesus claimed to be the light of the world. He said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." Sandwiched around this claim are two life changing encounters that Jesus has with lost, blind people.

Does anyone remember who the first lost person was that Jesus engaged with? It was the woman caught in adultery. She was caught in the act of sin. She was guilty. She was spiritually blinded, separated from God, and what did Jesus do? He forgave her of her sin and called her to live in newness of life not so that she could be forgiven, but because she had been forgiven. He removed the spiritual blinders from her eyes and called her to follow Him and no longer walk in darkness.

So you have Jesus' encounter with spiritually lost and blind lady (the woman caught in adultery). Then you have His teaching in the temple which He claims to be the light of the world, greater than Abraham, equal with God. The Jews try to kill him. He slips away out of the temple, and guess who He runs into? Another lost and blind person...However, this time, the man wasn't just spiritually blind, he was physically blind as well. Through His encounter with this blind man, Jesus is going to further corroborate His claim to be the true light of the world.

Jesus's healing of the lame man in chapter 5 closely parallels the healing of the man born blind in this chapter. Jesus heals the lame man by the pool of Bethesda (5: 2); he heals the man born blind at the Pool of Siloam (9: 7). In both cases, attending circumstances render the healing difficult: the lame man had been in that condition for thirty-eight years; the blind man had been blind from birth. In both instances, Jesus chooses an unconventional method of healing. He simply orders the lame man to walk, entirely sidestepping washing in the pool, and the invalid is cured that instant (5: 8- 9). To heal the blind man, Jesus spits on the ground, makes some mud with his saliva, and puts it on the man's eyes (9: 6; cf. Mark 8: 22- 26). Then he tells the man to go and wash in the Pool of Siloam. The man does as he is told and comes home seeing (vv. 6- 7). Moreover, both healings take place on a Sabbath (5: 9; 9: 14). (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2769-2778)

As we look at the sixth miracle presented in John's gospel, the first thing we notice is:

1.) The Encounter with the Blind Man

1 And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.

And as Jesus passed by – on His way out of the temple, Jesus passed by this blind beggar. This makes sense as we know that beggars would often situate themselves near the temple gates and there ask for alms from those who came to worship (cf. Acts 3:2). (Ellicott, 1905)

- At the temple gates, beggars would get both quantity and quality in terms of those who passed by.

He saw a man which was blind from birth – we don't know how Jesus and the disciples knew that he was blind from birth. Perhaps the man was a well-known beggar that they had heard of (cf. vs. 8). Or more likely he probably told them as part of his plea for alms as they passed by. (Ellicott, 1905)

- “Sirs, can you please spare some change? I've been blind from birth.”

Despite all of the incredible advances in modern technology and medicine, death and disease are inevitable parts of human life. Medicine is limited. But our God is not. Throughout the history of the Bible we see numerous examples of God's miraculous healings in the lives of people.

- Old Testament
 - o Naaman of leprosy (2 King 5:1-14)
 - o Hezekiah of a terminal illness (2 Kings 20:1-11)
 - o The Israelites of poisonous snake bites (Num. 21:6-9)
 - o Sarah, Leah, and Rachel of infertility (Gen. 21:1-2; 29:31; 30:22)
 - o Job of a debilitating infirmity (Job 42:10)
 - o Resurrections of the widow's son at Zarephath (1 Kings 17:17-24), the Shunammite woman's son (2 King 4:18-37), and a man whose body was thrown in Elisha's grave (2 Kings 13:21)
- Acts
 - o Through the apostles and to authenticate them as messengers of the truth of God (cf. 2 Cor. 12:12; Heb. 2:3-4)
 - o Lame men in Jerusalem (3:6) and at Lystra (14:8-10)
 - o The sick on whom Peter's shadow fell (5:15-16)
 - o Those who touched Paul's handkerchiefs or aprons (19:11-12)
 - o The father of Publius on the island of Malta (28:8-9)
 - o Resurrections of Dorcas (9:36-43) and Eutychus (20:9-12)
- Earthly Ministry of Jesus
 - o Nothing even remotely close to the miraculous display through Him has ever occurred, and rightly so. It has been said that He virtually banished disease from Palestine during that time in an explosion of miraculous healings (cf. Matt. 4:23-25; 8:16; 9:35; 12:15; 14:35-36; 15:30; Luke 6:17-19; 7:21; 9:11; John 21:25)
 - o 6 Character Traits of Jesus' Healings
 - He healed with only a word or touch (Matt. 8:5-13, 15; 9:6, 20-22; 14:35-36; 20:34; Mark 5:24-29; Luke 13:10-13; John 5:1-9).

- He healed instantly (Matt. 8:3, 13, 15; 9:6–7, 28–30; 15:28, 30–31; 17:18; 20:34; Mark 3:1–5; 5:29; 7:33–35; Luke 13:10–13; 17:14; John 4:53; 5:9)
- He healed completely (Luke 4:39; Mark 2:12; John 5:9; John 3:2; 7:31; 9:16; 11:47; Acts 2:22)
- He healed everyone who came to Him (Luke 4:40)
- He healed organic, physical diseases (Matt. 11:5; 12:10–13; Luke 13:10–13; Matt. 9:28–30; Mark 7:32–37; Matt. 4:23)
- He raised dead people (Mark 5:22–24, 35–43; Luke 7:11–16; John 11:43–44; cf. Matt. 11:5). (MacArthur, 2006, pp. 422–424)

2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

And his disciples asked him saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind – this kind of thinking was common within first century Judaism in which physical illness was often viewed as the direct result of sin (cf. the story of Job). Further, although not always the case, it is true that there are instances in which certain ailments could be the direct result of sin. (Sorenson, 2007)

- Working from the assumption that all physical maladies are the result of sin, the disciples are left with one of two options: either the man sinned, or his parents did.
 - “How could the man have sinned if he had been born blind?”
 - Many Jews believed that infants could sin in the womb before they were even born.
- They ask Jesus which was the case. (MacArthur, 2006)

3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents – this man had not sinned in the womb, and he was not being punished for the sins of his parents.

- Although we can be influenced by and suffer the consequences of the sins of previous generations (Ex. 20:5; Ex. 34:7; Num. 14:18; Deut. 5:9), God does not hold us accountable for the sins of our parents (Deut. 24:16; Jer. 31:29–30; Ez. 18:20). (MacArthur, 2006)

Ezekiel 18:20 - The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.

But that the works of God should be made manifest in him – this does not necessarily mean that God had brought about this man’s blindness. Rather, it means that God permitted it so that the workings of God might be displayed in him. Sin has brought suffering into the

world, and yet just as was the case with Joseph and Job, God works through that suffering to bring about a greater good. (cf. Gen. 50:20) (Sorenson, 2007)

Genesis 50:20 - But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.

John 32:3 - Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

John 11:4 - When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day – Jesus viewed His time on earth as a time of spiritual light. It was a time in which the light (in reference to Himself) shined in the darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not (cf. 1:4). It was a time in which men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil (cf. 3:19). It was a time that would soon come to pass.

- There was a sense of urgency in Jesus' ministry at this point in time as He knew that He only had 6 months left before His crucifixion (before sunset) and as He knew what God had sent Him to do. (Sorenson, 2007) Jesus felt compelled to do the works that God had commissioned Him to do, and time was of the essence.
- Take note that the disciples had a backwards looking focus, while Jesus had a forward-looking focus. They were concerned with why the man had been born blind. Jesus was concerned with what they could do about it. (MacArthur, 2006)

The night cometh, when no man can work – before the invention of artificial light through electricity, the average person's daily routines followed the cycle of the sun. They would work during the day, and when the sun went down, so did they.

- Here when Jesus references night, He is talking about death. He knew that He had 6 months left to accomplish the work the Father had sent Him to do prior to His death. What was true specifically of Jesus and His work is true of us generally in our lives too. There's only life that will soon be past, and only what's done for Christ will last. (Barnes, 1834)
 - o Illustration – timed tests in school
 - When the teacher said, "pencils down" there was no more work. The test was over. You couldn't go back and change answers. You couldn't answer any more questions. You were done.
 - Friend, do you understand that your life is like that? When you die (when night comes), your life is over. There's not take backs. There's no redoes. Your life is done.
 - There ought to be a holy sense of urgency in your life to do and make a priority of the things in your life that God has called you to do.

- I must work the works of my Father while it is day. The night comes when no more work can be done.

John 4:34 - Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

John 5:36 - But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

John 11:9-10 - Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

John 12:35 - Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world – Does that mean that Jesus is no longer the light of the world? No. And yet, He fulfilled this role in a unique way while He was physically here on the earth, and Jesus knew that the time was fast approaching in which His presence would be taken from the world. (Sorenson, 2007)

John 8:12 - Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Matthew 5:14-16 - 14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. 15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. 16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven

Ephesians 5:8 - For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

Philippians 2:15 - That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

2.) The Healing of the Blind Man

6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with clay – it was an old remedy of the Jews that believed that saliva had medicinal

benefits for the eyes. However, no one thought that it could come anywhere close to restoring a blind man's sight. The truth is that it couldn't do such a thing, but Jesus could.

- Jesus spit on the ground, made clay of the dirt, and lightly covered the man's eyes with the clay. (Sorenson, 2007)

Mark 7:32-35 - 32 And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. 33 And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue; 34 And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. 35 And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

Mark 8:22-25 - 22 And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him. 23 And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. 24 And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking. 25 After that he put his hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up: and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.

7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.



Go wash in the pool of Siloam – The pool was large (dimensions would have been somewhere around 200+ ft by 150+ ft) (approximately 2/3 the size of a football field). This was where the priest got the water for the water pouring ceremony at the feast of tabernacles. This pool was used for ceremonial cleansing. It was the end of Hezekiah's conduit which had

been built centuries earlier to bring water into the city during times of war and siege. The pool had no therapeutic power to heal, but it was where Jesus sent this man to wash the clay off of his eyes. (Sorenson, 2007)

<http://www.bibleplaces.com/poolofsiloam/>

Each set of steps was separated by a landing which may have served people entering the pool. The length of the pool is estimated to be as much as 225 feet (70 m), and Jerome Murphy-O'Connor puts the size at 190 x 160 feet (60 x 50 m). (Bible Places)

Which is by interpretation, Sent - The name probably originated because of the water sent into the pool (via Hezekiah's tunnel) from the Gihon spring. But, as its use in the Feast of Tabernacles suggests, the name also symbolized the blessings God sent to Israel. Here it symbolizes God's ultimate blessing to the nation: Jesus the Messiah, the One sent from God (5:24, 30, 36-37; 6:38-39, 44, 57; 7:16, 28-29, 33; 8:16, 18, 26, 29, 42; 11:42; 12:44-45, 49; 13:20; 14:24; 15:21; 16:5; 17:8, 18, 21, 23, 25; 20:21; Matt. 10:40; Mark 9:37; Luke 4:18; 9:48; 10:16). (MacArthur, 2006)

- Thus this blind man is "sent" to wash off his eyes in the pool that symbolizes the "sending" of God's blessings.

He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing – he could have stayed there and continued begging, but he didn't do that. He obeyed in faith (believing the words of Jesus) and returned with his eyesight restored (restored isn't even the right term because he never had sight in the first place!)

John 9:39 - And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

Isaiah 29:18-19 - And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.

3.) The Testimony of the Blind Man

8 The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

The neighbors therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged? – this man's neighbors, the people that God had placed in close proximity to him in his life, ran into him after his eyes had been opened, and they were amazed. They were confused. He looked the same as he did before, but he acted completely different. Why? Because he had been physically blind before, but now he could see.

- And when you can finally see for the first time in your life, it radically changes the way that you live...and people notice.

- Illustration – blindfold someone and have them walk down the middle aisle. Take the blindfold off and have them do the same thing.
- Application: what was true of this man physically is true of us spiritually.
 - Before we met Christ we were blind. We were lost in spiritual darkness. But then Jesus found us and through faith he opened our eyes, and made it so that so we can spiritually see and no longer be lost in darkness. And He calls out to those of us who He has healed and saved and says, “I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”
 - And when Jesus has saved you and healed you of your spiritual blindness, it ought to radically effect the way that you live. Why? Because you’re not blind anymore.
 - You know what the Word of God says.
 - You know that Jesus is Lord.
 - You can see for the first time in your life.
 - And yet how many Christians today claim to have been saved and they live like the spiritually blind. There’s no change in their life.
 - 2 Cor. 5:17 – therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.
 - Do you live like the blind, or do you live Jesus has saved you from your spiritual blindness?
- This man was blind, and then He met Jesus, and then He could see, and it radically changed the way that He lived, and people noticed.
 - Application – can people notice that there is something different about you? Do you live your life in a discernibly different way than the lost, blind people all around you?

Is not this he that sat and begged? – Isn’t that the guy that used to curse all the time? Didn’t that lady used to have a real temper? Isn’t that the teen that used to disrespect his parents left and right? Didn’t that guy used to be a jerk? Didn’t that lady used to be a gossip? Didn’t that teen used to be promiscuous? There’s something different about him.

9 Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.

Some said, This is he: - That’s the guy. I mean it has to be.

Others said, He is like him – Ah, it just looks like him. There’s no way that can be him. The guy I used to know, the lady I used to know, the teen I used to know, acts nothing like this person. It has to be someone else.

But he said, I am he – Guys, it’s me. When people noticed that he was different and that he stood out, he didn’t shy away from it. He owned it. I’m the say guy, but I’ve been changed.

10 Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened? – You used to be blind and now you can see. You're the same guy, but you've fundamentally changed. How? How did that happen to you? What changed in your life?

11 He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

He answered and said – ah it's kind of hard to explain. Ah it's not that important. Ah it's kind of embarrassing. Ah I decided to turn over a new leaf. Is that what he said? No it's not. You know what he said?

A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. – You want to know what happened to me? Jesus. There was the man I was, and there is the man that I am, and the difference between who I was and who I am can be summed up in one word: Jesus.

- He told his story. He told about how He met Jesus and Jesus changed his life. He was lost, but then he met Jesus, and now he was found.
- Christian, when you start living differently than the lost people around you. When you start living selflessly and joyfully as a peacemaker with patience and kindness and compassion as one who desires holiness, as one who is strong but under control, as one who lives a disciplined life by faith, people will notice. And when they do and they ask what's different about you, why you've changed, why you don't do certain things, don't you cower away in that moment. You stand up with courage and tell them truth. You own your identity in Christ.
 - o You tell them about Jesus, and you tell them about how you got saved. You might not know all the verses in the Bible, but you know your story. You know how you got saved, and you can tell people that.

12 Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.

Then said they unto him, Where is he? – where is this Jesus?

He said, I know not – Do you realize that this man had never even seen Jesus? He was blind when Jesus put the clay on his eyes, and then He told him to go wash in the pool of Siloam. The man goes off to the pool, washes his eyes, and he could see, but guess who wasn't physically there? Jesus. So he didn't know where He was, and even if He did, He couldn't identify Him because he had never seen Him.

- Application: Like that blind man, you and I have yet to physically see Jesus, and yet like that blind man, through faith in Him, Jesus has changed our lives forever.

4.) The Examination of the Blind Man

A.) The Pharisees Examined Him

13 They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.

These friends and neighbors are perhaps well-meaning people, not intending to make mischief. But they are uncomfortable because work has been done on the Sabbath, and they think it best to refer the matter to the Pharisees, the great authorities in matters of legal observance and orthodoxy. (Plummer, 1902)

- This may have been the same day, or it may have been the following day since these events happened on the Sabbath.
- Whether or not this was a formal inquiry is not clear, though the fact that the Pharisees eventually excommunicated the man from the synagogue (v. 34) suggests that they met in some official capacity. Perhaps the Sanhedrin delegated them to investigate the incident. (MacArthur, 2006)

14 And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.

And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes – they brought this man to the Pharisees because Jesus had healed him on the sabbath day (just as He had done in healing the lame man at the Pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath).

John 5:16 - And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.

Mark 3:1-6 - And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand. And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him. And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth. And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace. And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other. And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.

Luke 13:10-17 - And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath. And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. And he laid his hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the sabbath day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the sabbath day. The Lord then answered him, and said, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?

And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

Mark 2:23-28 - And it came to pass, that he went through the corn fields on the sabbath day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the sabbath day that which is not lawful? And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was an hungred, he, and they that were with him? How he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the shewbread, which is not lawful to eat but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him? And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath: Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath.

15 Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight – now this man is standing before the religious rulers of that day being asked to give an account of what had happened to him. The stakes have been raised. This is a much more high-profile conversation. How does he respond? Does he cower in fear? Does he back off of his testimony of what Christ did for him? No he repeated it.

Matthew 10:33 - But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

He said unto them - He (in reference to Jesus) put clay on my eyes. I washed, and now I see. There's who I was and there is who I am, and the one difference between the two is Jesus.

16 Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.

Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God because he keepeth not the sabbath day -In their eyes, Jesus had broken the Sabbath, not because He had violated any of the divine Sabbath regulations revealed in Scripture, but because He had ignored the restrictions and extrabiblical traditions of the rabbis. (MacArthur, 2006)

- They assumed that their interpretation of the sabbath day regulations was infallible. Therefore, regardless of any other factors, if any person “broke the sabbath”, they could not be of God.
- This was not the first time that Jesus had “broken their interpretation of the Sabbath regulations”
 - o Matthew 12:1-8 – Jesus defended His disciples for picking grain on the Sabbath
 - o Matthew 12:9-13 – Jesus healed a man with a withered hand on the Sabbath

- John 5:1-18 – Jesus healed a lame man at the pool of the Bethesda, angering the religious authorities to the point that they desired His execution
- By the way, He did so to demonstrate that He was Lord of the Sabbath and to expose the illegitimacy of their extra biblical traditions. (MacArthur, 2006)

Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? – others of the Pharisees saw the bigger picture of what was happening here. They saw the forest the trees. Regardless of what day it occurred on, this man just performed a miracle...and this isn't the first one. How can a man do such things openly in the city of God and not be from Him?

And there was a division among them – part of Jesus' ministry was to divide by the truth

Luke 12:51 - Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

17 They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.

They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? – after offering their divergent opinions, the Pharisees turn back to the man who had been healed and asked him, “Well, what do you think?”

John 4:19 - The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

He said, He is a prophet – the man's bold reply to the authorities showed that he grasped the reality that the spiritually blind Pharisees refused to see – that Jesus was sent from God. His words reflect a growing understanding on his part as to the true identity of “the man who is called Jesus” (v. 11). (MacArthur, 2006)

- He doesn't fully understand who Jesus is yet, but next week he is going to find out, and he is going to embrace him fully in faith.

Application

Have you been saved?

If you've been saved, are you living like it? Now that you are no longer spiritually blinded, are you still walking around and acting like a blind person?

- Pray through the fruit of the Spirit each day (Gal. 5:22-23).

Are you sharing with others what Christ has done in your life? Are you looking for opportunities? Are you bold when they present themselves?



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 25 – JOHN 9:1-17

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 9:1-7, John 8:12, Eph. 5:8, and Phil. 2:15</p>	<p>How does the healing of the blind man relate to Jesus' claim to be the light of the world? As followers of the light of the world, what responsibilities do we have?</p>
<p>T Read John 9:8-12 & 2 Cor. 5:17</p>	<p>In what ways has Christ changed your life since you've been saved? In what ways do you still need to grow in Christlikeness?</p>
<p>W Read John 9:13-17 & John 5:1-16</p>	<p>What was the significant about when Jesus performed this miracle? What character traits did the formerly blind man exhibit in his responses to the Pharisees?</p>
<p>T Read John 9:18-41</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 9:18-41</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 9:18-41

Review

John 7:53-8:11 – Jesus forgives and opens the eyes of a spiritually blind woman

John 8:12-59 – Jesus claimed to be the light of the world, greater than Abraham, and equal to God. A mini riot ensues from which Jesus narrowly escapes.

John 9:1-17 – leaving the temple, Jesus comes across a man born blind from birth.

- He spits in the ground, rubs the clay in the man's eyes, and tells him to go to wash his eyes off in the pool of Siloam.
- The man obeys in faith, and his eyes are miraculously opened.
- His demeanor is so different that his neighbors take notice, and he explains to them what Jesus had done in his life.
- They take him to the Pharisees, and he tells them the same story he told everyone else. There was the person I was, and there is the person I am, and the difference between the two is Jesus.
 - o Some of the Pharisees claim that Jesus must be a sinner because he healed the man on the Sabbath.
 - o Others wonder how he could do such things if He were not from God.
 - o Evidencing a growing, but incomplete understanding of who Jesus is, the formerly blind man boldly proclaims to the Pharisees that Jesus must be a prophet sent from God.

1.) The Examination of the Blind Man

A.) The Pharisees Examined Him

But the Pharisees were not content with his testimony or explanation.

B.) The Pharisees Examined His Parents

18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.

But the Jews - (a title John often used to describe those who are hostile to Jesus, especially among the religious elite; cf. 2:18, 20; 5:16, 18; 6:41, 52; 7:1, 15, 35; 8:22, 48, 52, 57-59; 10:24, 31, 33; 19:38; 20:19) (MacArthur, 2006)

But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight - Unbelief seeks alternative explanations to the workings of God. It will bend over backwards to reinforce its lack of faith.

- Example 1: Neighbors who said he was someone who looked like the blind beggar

- Example 2: Pharisees who disregarded the testimony of the man and called for his parents (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2864-2866)

19 And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see?

And they asked them, saying – they interviewed them without their son present (cf. vs 24)

- Illustration: No one likes to be a part of a trial in which you or someone you love has the possibility of being convicted. No doubt, this man's parents are nervous. They ask three lines of questions in an effort to prove dishonesty on the part of the formerly blind man

Is this your son – Is this man whom he claims to be? Do you confirm his identity and your relationship to him?

Who ye say was born blind – He claims to have been blind from birth. Do you confirm this to be true?

How then doth he now see – What happened to make it so that he can now see? How do you explain it? Is there some kind of alternative explanation that your son is not sharing with us?

20 His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

His parents answered them and said. - they provide three answers to the three lines of questioning

We know that this is our son – this man is definitely our son

- This destroys the possibility of this being a case of mistaken/stolen identity

And that he was born blind – Our son was blind from birth

- This destroys the possibility of this being a case of outright deception

21 But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not

- You can tell from their answer that they know more than they're letting on.
- Illustration – imagine that you have three kids and one of them has “stolen” some money from your purse. You don't know which one, but you decide to interrogate them one at a time.
 - o Child one: I didn't do it, and I don't know what happened
 - o Child two: I didn't do it, and I don't know what happened

- Child three: I didn't do it and I don't know what happened, but if I find the guy who took the \$9.59 from your purse, you will be the first one to know.
 - The answer tells you that they know more than they're saying.
- The same is true here: "we have no idea how can see he now, and as for the person who opened his eyes, never heard of him."
 - Their son had more than likely told them about what had happened to him and who had done it (this is evidenced by their statement "who hath opened his eyes, we know not" as well as John's explanation in the following verse), but, to be fair, the parents only knew this to be true through the testimony of their son. They had not been there when it happened and thus could offer no further corroborating evidence for the court beyond their son's testimony.

He is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself - he's a grown man. Ask him. He can speak for himself.

- Thirteen years of age was the requirements for males to provide valid testimony to the court (Gill, 1811)
- You can see the fear in their response. Why would they answer in such a way?

22 These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews - the man's parents gave this answer/non answer to the Pharisees' question because they were afraid of them. Why?

For the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was the Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue - the Pharisees had decided that those who openly confessed that Jesus was the Messiah should be excommunicated from the synagogue.

- This punishment meant being cut off from the religious and social life of Israel. It was a harsh, terrible fate.
- The parent's fear of being excommunicated from the synagogue for confessing/seeming to confess Jesus as Messiah in verse 22 tells us that they did know that it was indeed Jesus who had healed their son (their son had likely told them already). If they didn't know, then they would have had no reason to fear answering that question. (MacArthur, 2006)

John 7:13 - Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.

John 12:42-43 - Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

John 16:2 - They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

Luke 6:22 - Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

Proverbs 29:25 - The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.

23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him. – this is why they deflected the question the back to their son. They knew that the Pharisees had Jesus in their crosshairs, and they did not want to end up being collateral damage in the firefight.

C.) The Pharisees Reexamined Him

24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

Then again called they the man that was blind – they call back the formerly blind man to stand before them once they had finished interviewing his parents without him in the room

And said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner – when the Pharisees say, “Give God the praise”, they don’t just mean “Give God the praise for performing this miracle.” They mean, “Give God the praise by telling the truth.” What they’re really saying is, “Stop lying. Confess your falsehood. Repent. We know that Jesus is a sinner.”

- Their charge to the formerly blind man is similar to the charge that Joshua gave to Achan in the Old Testament to stop lying about the Babylonian garments that he had stolen and consequently brought judgment on Israel for.
- Joshua 7:19 - 19 And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me. (cf. 1 Samuel 6:5; Jeremiah 13:16; Rev. 16:9)

25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.

Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not – you guys keep saying that you know Jesus is a sinner. Personally, from my interaction with Him, I’ve had no experience of that. I don’t know if He’s a sinner or not, as you claim to know.

One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see – but there is one thing I know absolutely and beyond a shadow of a doubt. I know that I was blind, and I know that I now see. I am certain of it. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

Application – the importance of experiencing God as warrant for belief in the face of attacks on faith

26 Then said they to him again, What did he do to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

Then said they to him again, What did he do to thee? How opened he thine eyes? – the Pharisees ask him again what exactly Jesus did to him and how he opened his eyes. They likely do so in an attempt to catch him in an inconsistency or contradiction so as to discredit his testimony. (Barnes, 1834)

27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?

He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? – growing tired of their cross examination of him and seeing right to the heart of what the Pharisees were trying to do, he quickly quips back at them. What? You guys didn't hear the first time I said it? You want me to say it again? Will you too become a follower of Jesus? (Ellicott, 1905)

Will ye also be his disciples? – thus implying that he had already become one of them

John 9:15 - 15 Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

28 Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.

Then they reviled him – they verbally assaulted him

- Application: teenager, college student, adult if you truly stand up and own your faith in Christ, people will attack your faith, and then they will attack you.
 - o “you're just intolerant...you're just a bigot...you're just a homophobe.”

And said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciple – if you as a blind, lower class, uneducated beggar want to be this man's follower, go for it...but we godly, well educated, upper class religious leaders are followers of Moses (who, by the way, Jesus disobeyed by healing you on the Sabbath)

- Application: if you as a lowly, uneducated 18-year-old Christian want to follow Jesus, go for it. But we, well educated, intelligent, better than you professors, we will follow science.

John 5:45-47 - Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

John 7:19 - 19 Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

John 7:46-48 - 46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man. 47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? 48 Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?

John 8:39-40 - 39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. 40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

29 We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.

We know that God spake unto Moses - we know that God commissioned and spoke to and through Moses.

As for this fellow – note that they can't even bring themselves to say his name

We know not from whence he is – maybe He's crazy. Maybe He's demon possessed. Maybe He's a narcissist. We don't know where He's coming from (Barnes, 1834).

Application – we know that science is true, but as for this Jesus fellow, we don't know about Him. Maybe he was a liar. Maybe he was a lunatic. Maybe he was a legend. Who knows?

Hebrews 3:2-5 - Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house. For this man was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house. For every house is builded by some man; but he that built all things is God. And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after;

30 The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.

The man answered and said unto them, - the man replied

Why herein is a marvellous thing – well this is amazing isn't it?

That ye know not from whence he is – you say that you don't know where He's coming from

And yet he hath opened mine eyes – and yet he miraculously opened my eyes

- The truth is staring you in the face and you just can't see it. You're blind to it.
- Application: to those today who would belittle our faith today, we can say, "well isn't that amazing. You say that you don't know about this Jesus fellow, and yet Jesus rose from the dead...and yet Jesus fulfilled some 300 prophecies...and yet Jesus has changed my life and my family's life in ways you'll never comprehend."

Isaiah 29:18 - And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness.

Isaiah 35:5 - Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

Now we know that God heareth not sinners – the Bible says that God does not hear sinners (willful, unrepentant sinners) (Job 27:9; Ps. 66:18-20; Prov. 28:9; Isa. 1:15)

Psalm 66:18-20 - If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me: But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me.

Proverbs 28:9 - He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.

But if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth – however, God does hear those who fear Him and obey Him

Proverbs 15:29 - The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind – there is no record of any cure of blindness in the Old Testament. Further, in the case of this particular man, it was not just that he was a blind man whose eyes had been healed, it was a man born blind whose eyes had been healed. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

- The basic conclusion of the formerly blind man's argument is thus: God must have heard Jesus and approved of Him if He enabled Him to do a miracle that had been unheard of since the beginning of time. (MacArthur, 2006)
 - o If Jesus were not of God, then there's no way He would have enabled Him to do such a thing. Why? Because God does not hear willful, unrepentant sinners.
 - o That's exactly what He explains in the following verse.

33 If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.

If this man were not of God, he could do nothing – if this man who claims to follow God, were not truly of God, then he could do nothing like this for God would not empower Him to do so. (MacArthur, 2006)

John 3:2 - The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

34 They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? – they respond by launching an ad hominin personal attack on the man. They imply that because he was born blind, either he or his parents were guilty of gross sin. As a person who was born tainted, who did he think he was to teach them?

And they cast him out. – then they proceeded to excommunicate him from the synagogue, the very fate of which his parents were so fearful. (MacArthur, 2006)

Application: this man had just met Jesus, and he did not even understand completely who Jesus was...and yet that one encounter with Jesus so emboldened him that he stood firm in the face of the Pharisees and was willing to be cast out of the synagogue for what he believed.

- You might just be a new believer. You might have been a believer for longer than I've been alive. Wherever you find yourself at in your relationship with Jesus, I want to challenge you to stand up and be bold as a follower of Jesus Christ, come what may. John 9:2 - And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

John 7:48-49 - Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

References to excommunication from the synagogue: John 9:22; 9:34-35; 12:42; 16:2.

2.) The Faith of the Blind Man

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

Jesus heard that they had cast him out – word began to spread about this formerly blind man's excommunication, and Jesus hears about it. But, He didn't just hear about it.

And when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God – He sought him out, found him and asked him, "Do you personally recognize that the Messiah has come? And are you believing on Him?" (Spence & Exell, 1883)

John 3:15-18 - That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

1 John 5:13 - These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? – up to this point, the man viewed Jesus as a miracle working prophet sent from God, because that’s all that had been revealed to him. Believing that Jesus was sent from God, he trusted Him to direct him to the Messiah that he was to believe in. (MacArthur, 2006)

37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee – You have seen the Messiah, and in fact, the Messiah is the one that’s talking to you right now. I am the Messiah.

John 4:26 - Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.

38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

And he said, Lord, I believe – immediately, he put his faith and trust in Jesus Christ as not just a prophet, but the Messiah, the Son of God, the Savior of the world.

And he worshipped him – this is the most explicit mention of direct worship of Jesus in John’s gospel outside of Thomas in John 20:28

Illustration – This is a great example of what Jesus meant in John 8:31 where he said, “If you continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed.”

- Jesus revealed His identity to those who followed Him gradually. There were those who believed in and followed Jesus the prophet who did miracles, but when Jesus went beyond that and revealed that He was the Messiah, the Son of God, the only way of salvation for those who put their faith in Him...there were many who turned away in unbelief. That’s exactly what we say in John 8. There were many who believed on Jesus until He revealed that was greater than Abraham and equal with God.
- Here in direct contrast to those is this formerly blind man who first met Jesus the miracle worker sent from God. Then following his excommunication from the synagogue, Jesus revealed to this formerly blind man that He was the Messiah, the Son of God, the Savior of the world, and how did he respond? He believed and he worshipped. He was a true disciple of Jesus Christ.

Application: as you are learning more of the Word of God, I want to encourage you to have a heart that says, “If the Bible says to do it, I’m going to do it. If the Bible says not to do it, I’m not going to do it.”

Matthew 14:33 - Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

John 20:28 - And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

Matthew 28:9 - And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

Luke 24:52 - And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:

3.) The Rebuke of the Blind Pharisees

39 And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

For judgment I am come into the world – I have come into the world to bring to pass a certain result (verdict, judgment, sentence)

- Here the emphasis is not on purpose, but result.
- What is the result that Jesus would bring about through His life and ministry?

That they which see not – that those who understand and admit their shortcomings, their sinful condition, their spiritual blindness

Might see – would be saved from their sin and have their spiritual eyes opened

And that they which see– and I come that those who in pride and self-sufficiency think that they are okay and have no need of a Savior

might be made blind – would be hardened and further blinded in their unbelief (Barnes, 1834)

- Spiritual sight comes only to those who acknowledge that they do not see, who confess their spiritual blindness and their need for the Light of the World. On the other hand, those who think they see on their own apart from Christ delude themselves, and will remain blind. (MacArthur, 2006)
- My ministry will bring to pass the result that those who acknowledge their need for salvation will find it and that those who deny their need for salvation, won't. You can't be saved, until you recognize that you are lost and in need of salvation.
2 Cor. 4:4-6 - In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

John 3:19 - And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

John 12:40-41 - He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

Isaiah 6:9-10 - 9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. 10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

Isaiah 44:18 - They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand.

Matthew 13:13-15 - Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

Romans 11:7-10 - What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.

40 And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?

And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words – apparently Jesus was not alone when he found the formerly blind man. There were some Pharisees nearby. They overheard Jesus' conversation with this man.

And said unto him, Are we blind also – Surely, we are not blind too, are we? You don't think that we, the spiritual leaders of Israel are blind, do you? (MacArthur, 2006)

41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin – if you would recognize your sinful condition and need for a Savior, then you could be forgiven, and your sins would be washed away.

But now ye say, We see; therefore, your sin remaineth - but in your pride and self-sufficiency you are insistent that you are good enough, that you spiritually see, and because you won't admit your need for salvation, you remain lost in your sin.

Application: Do you know what those unbelieving college professors are? Blind. Do you know what those secular humanists are? Blind. Do you know what those who would attack your faith and attack you for your faith are? Blind.

- Do you know what our heart should be towards those who are blind?
Acts 26:18 - To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

John 15:22-24 - If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin. He that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

Proverbs 26:12 - Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him.

Illustration – David Simmons Letter of Recommendation

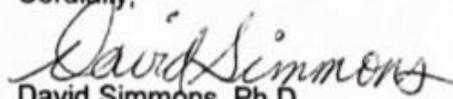
I am proud to recommend Jacob Bundy to you. I met Jacob through my Humanities courses and my acquaintance with him enriched my life. I have not met another young person so engaged with faith and reason. In my classes, I challenge students to think through the inconsistencies that can be found in any belief system, and to especially reflect upon their own. I hope students will go out from my classes more aware of their worldview and more sophisticated in their reasoning. Jacob accepted this challenge and grappled intently with the questions I posed for him.

Although our belief systems are diametrically opposed, Jacob's method of argument was always the respectful debate of ideas without acrimony or accusation. He diligently applied himself to persuade with impressive support of his point. We discussed ideas formally in my office and chatted about the same in the school cafeteria. We also exchanged lengthy emails in which we layered comments upon comments.

Throughout these conversations, Jacob was attentive to his studies and focused on course material. He saw that the course content was not merely academic but pertinent to daily life. Not surprisingly, in Fall 2009, he scored the second highest score of 81 students in Ancient Humanities and, in Spring 2010, the highest score of 122 students in Modern Humanities.

Jacob's example raised my expectations of students; it's not that I expect many to be as conscientious as he, but Jacob convinced me that youth and inexperience are no impediment to critically reflecting upon one's own faith. If I can be of any assistance in forwarding his career, please feel free to contact me.

Cordially,



David Simmons, Ph.D.

Brevard Community College

Why do I tell you that story?

- I want to encourage you to be bold in your faith regardless of the opposition.
- Whether you're fifteen or fifty...whether you're a blind beggar or a software engineer, you stand up for Jesus, come what may.

- The world doesn't need Chicken Little Christians living in a perpetual state of panic because the world is dark, and the sky is falling. The world needs lights that aren't afraid to shine in the darkness.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 26 – JOHN 9:18-41

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 9:18-23</p>	<p>Why did the Pharisees interview the formerly blind man's parents? How did they answer the Pharisees three lines of questioning?</p>
<p>T Read John 9:24-34, Psalm 66:18, and Prov. 15:29</p>	<p>How did the formerly blind man respond to the Pharisees reexamination of him? How did he defend the idea that Jesus was sent from God?</p>
<p>W Read John 9:35-41, John 8:31, and Isaiah 44:18</p>	<p>In what way was the formerly blind man's response to Jesus different than the crowd's in John 8 and different than the Pharisees in John 9?</p>
<p>T Read John 10:1-21</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 10:1-21</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 10:1-21

Review

In order to understand the metaphor that Jesus uses in John 10, we have to understand the Old Testament context. The Old Testament routinely depicts Israel as God's flock (Ps. 74:1; 77:20; 78:52; 79:13; 80:1; 95:7; 100:3; Ez. 34:12-16), God as their shepherd (Gen. 48:15; 49:24; Ps. 23:1; 28:9; 80:1; Is. 40:11; Jer. 23:3; Ez. 34:11-12; Mic. 7:14), and Israel's leaders as God's under shepherds (Num. 27:16-17; 2 Sam. 5:2; 1 Chr. 17:6; Ps. 78:70-72; Jer. 3:15; 23:4).

(1) Israel depicted as God's flock

Psalm 100:1-3 - 100 Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. 2 Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing. 3 Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; **we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.**

(2) God depicted as Israel's shepherd

Psalm 23:1 - **The Lord is my Shepherd.** I shall not want.

Psalm 80:1 - **Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel**, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth.

(3) Leaders depicted as God's under shepherds

Psalm 78:70-72 - 70 He chose David also his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds: 71 From following the ewes great with young **he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his inheritance.** 72 So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands.

In fact, most of Israel's greatest leaders were not just shepherds in a figurative sense. They were literally shepherds. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob (Gen. 13:1-11; 26:12-14; 46:32; 47:3), Moses (Ex. 3:1) and David (1 Sam. 16:11; 17:28, 34; 2 Sam. 7:8) were all shepherds. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 460)

In order to understand Jesus' teaching in this passage, we need to understand the Old Testament context, but we also need to understand the immediate context of when this teaching took place.

Jesus' Good Shepherd teaching flows right out of the events of the previous chapter, namely the healing of the blind man and Jesus' subsequent rebuke of the spiritually blind pharisees (aka the bad shepherds). Thus, it seems that His Good Shepherd teaching is directed at these leaders of Israel who were failing to rightly lead and shepherd the nation. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 2883-2888)

Ezekiel 34:2-5, 11-16, 22-24 - 2 Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord God unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? 3 Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. 4 The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. 5 And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered.... 11 For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. 12 As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. 13 And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. 14 I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. 15 I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. 16 I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and the strong; I will feed them with judgment.... 22 Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. 23 And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. 24 And I the Lord will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the Lord have spoken it.

Sermon

Illustration –

- My Sermon Delivery: Text, Explanation, Illustration (to bring clarity to the explanation), Application
- Jesus' Sermon Delivery: Illustration, Explanation (to bring clarity to His illustration)

1.) The Illustration

1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

Verily, verily, I say unto you – truly, truly I'm telling you

He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber – Villages in Palestine would typically have a communal sheepfold where shepherds could drop their sheep off for the night. These sheepfolds were typically walled or fenced off with a single-entry gate. They would lead their flocks out to graze the fields during the day, and then at night they would drop them off at one of these enclosures to be locked inside and kept under the care of an under shepherd or doorkeeper (porter). (Plummer, 1902) The under shepherd or doorkeeper would only allow the shepherds access to the sheep fold. (MacArthur, 2006)

- However, there were those who wanted access to the sheep for their own selfish purposes. They had no relation to the sheep or the doorkeeper. They could not enter through the front. The doorkeeper obviously wouldn't let them in. So they had to gain access in some other way. These people were not shepherds of the sheep but thieves and bandits who wanted to steal and then sell or butcher the sheep for their own personal profit. (Spence & Exell, 1883)
- "Let me tell you a story. Anyone who tries to sneak into the sheepfold instead of entering through the front gate is not the shepherd, but a thief."
John 10:7, 9 – 7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. 9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

Matthew 7:15 - Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

2 Peter 2:1 - But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

John 10:8 - All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

John 10:10 - The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Ezekiel 34:2-5 - Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered.

Romans 16:18 - For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.

2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep – in contrast with the thieves and bandits who try to sneak into the sheepfold, the shepherd is the one who enters the sheepfold by means of the doorkeeper at the front gate

Acts 20:28 - Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

John 10:11-12 - I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

John 10:14 - I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

Ezekiel 34:23 - And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd.

Hebrews 13:20 - Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

1 Peter 2:25 - For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

1 Peter 5:1-4 – 1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock. 4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

To him the porter openeth – and when the shepherd approaches the front gate, the porter/the doorkeeper opens the gate

And the sheep hear his voice – the sheep hear the voice of their shepherd/their leader/their caretaker. What do they hear him say?

And he calleth his own sheep by name – their names. The shepherd cares for and loves and knows his sheep by name. As he calls out for his sheep in the morning to follow him out of the fold into the pastures to graze, he calls them by name. (Sorenson, 2007)

And leadeth them out – cattle are driven, but sheep are led. The shepherd brings his sheep out into green pastures and leads them beside still waters.

1 Cor. 16:9 - For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries.

Colossians 4:3 - Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds:

Rev. 3:7-8 - And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.

John 6:45 - It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

John 10:26-27 - But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

Psalms 23:2-3 - He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Revelation 7:17 - For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

And when he putteth forth his own sheep – when he brings out his sheep from the fold

He goeth before them, and the sheep follow him – the shepherd goes before them to lead, and the sheep follow him. Why?

For they know his voice – because they recognize the voice of their shepherd

John 12:26 - If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

John 13:15 - For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

1 Peter 2:21 - For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

1 Peter 4:1 - Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;

John 10:8 - All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him – if some stranger, some thief or bandit tries to impersonate the flock’s shepherd and lead them away, the sheep will not follow. They will run away screaming “Stranger Danger.” Why?

For they know not the voice of strangers – because they know their shepherd’s voice, and they know that the stranger’s voice isn’t his.

Colossians 2:6-10 - As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:

2 Timothy 3:5-7 - Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

1 John 4:5-6 - They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.



Illustration – shepherd called to gather the wandering sheep up in the housing development near Las Posas Country Club

- CHP couldn't do anything about the sheep.
- The minute the shepherd showed up and did his special call, the flock straightened up, fell into line, and went right to him. It was like magic.
 - o Why did they do that? They recognized the call of their shepherd.

“Let me tell you a story. Anyone who tries to sneak into the sheepfold instead of entering through the front gate is not the shepherd, but a thief. The one who enters through the front gate is the shepherd. When he approaches, the doorkeeper opens the gate, and the shepherd calls out to his sheep by name and leads them out into the pastures to graze. The sheep follow him because they recognize his voice. And anyone else who tries to lead them, they will not follow, because they don't recognize their voice.”

- Thus ends the story. Thus ends Jesus' illustration.
- He had just healed the blind man. He had just called the religious leaders spiritually blind. Then He gives this illustration.
- I want you to imagine that you've just heard it for the first time. It's a cool story, but what does it mean? What's the explanation and the application? You say, “Pastor, I don't know.” Welcome to the club! Look at verse 6.

6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

This parable spake Jesus unto them – Jesus delivered this allegory/illustration to the religious leaders

But they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them – but they didn't understand what Jesus was trying to say.

- 2 Questions
 - Who/what do the characters in the story represent?
 - **Shepherd**
 - Sheep
 - Thieves
 - **Door**
 - Sheepfold
 - There are two primary characters in the story (the door and the shepherd). As their identity comes into focus, the identity of the other objects will fall into place.
 - What's the point of the story?
 - Jesus is going to answer both of these questions in His explanation.

2.) The Explanation

A.) Jesus is the Door of the Sheep

This is Jesus' third of seven "I am" statements Jesus makes in John's gospel to reveal His identity.

- I am the bread of life (6:35, 41, 48, 51)
 - I am the source of sustenance for those who are spiritually famished.
- I am the light of the world (8:12; 9:5)
 - I am the source of direction for those who are lost.
- I am the door of the sheep
 - I am the point of entry for those who seek the salvation and safety of God's fold.
 - He is also the point of access for those who seek to lead God's flock.

7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep - It matters that Jesus begins his explanation with the door. For Him, it's the starting point of understanding everything else in the illustration.

- The door is first off referred to as the "door of the sheep". What does that mean? It is the sole point of entry for the sheep to enter into the safety of God's fold. Here's what that means: it is through Jesus alone that any person can be saved and enter God's family.
 - John 14:6 – I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me.
 - Acts 4:12 - 12 Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

- Jesus states this explicitly in verse 9 when He says, “I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.”
 - As the door of the sheep, Jesus is the exclusive point of entry those who seek the salvation and safety of God’s fold.

What else do we know about the door from the story?

- John 10:1-2 – 1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door (Jesus) into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2 But he that entereth in by the door (Jesus) is the shepherd of the sheep.
 - In verses 1 & 2, Jesus is not talking about the door in relation to the sheep, but in relation to the shepherd and the thief.
- In the story, there are two types of people who want access to the sheep: the shepherd and the thief. The shepherd wants to lead the sheep out of the fold into the pastures to graze because he knows the sheep and loves them and wants to care for them. The thief wants to lead the sheep out of the fold into the back of his windowless van where he can take them to the butcher and make a quick buck. What’s the difference between the shepherd and the thief according to verses 1 and 2? It’s their point of entry.
 - Those who do not seek access to the sheep through the door (Jesus) are thieves and robbers (vs. 1) whose voice the sheep do not listen to (vs. 5)
 - What does that mean? What’s the application?
 - Those “shepherds”/ “spiritual teachers”/” pastors” who believe and teach that salvation (entry into God’s fold/family) can be found in some other way than Jesus are neither God’s children, nor his shepherds. They are thieves and robbers who seek to kill and destroy and whose voice God’s flock does not listen to, because they don’t recognize it.
 - Thus, as the door of the sheep, Jesus is both the exclusive means of salvation, and He is the litmus test for those who would claim to “shepherd”/” pastor” God’s people.
 - If they deny Jesus as the exclusive way to God, they are no spiritual shepherd. They are a thief and a bandit.

8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers – all those who came before me (a) claiming to be the sole means of salvation or (b) teaching some other way of salvation are not shepherds. They are thieves and robbers.

But the sheep did not hear them – Why? Because the sheep know God’s voice (in His Word), and when they hear something that contradicts God’s Word, do you know what they do? They yell “stranger danger” and run away.

Ezekiel 34:2 - Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the

shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks?

9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture – As the door of the sheep, Jesus is the sole point of entry for those who seek the salvation of God's fold. Those who enter through faith in Him will find salvation, freedom, and provision. They will be able to say as David did in Psalm 23:

Psalm 23:1-6 - The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Such is the fate of God's flock.

Ephesians 2:18 - For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

Hebrews 10:19-22 - Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

Psalm 100:3-4 - Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy – the thief seeks access to the sheep not because he cares for the sheep, but because he seeks to exploit the sheep.

- Application – there are many “spiritual shepherds”/”pastors” today who preach salvation outside of Jesus (through works, self-help, prosperity) and who don't care about people. All that matters to them is what they can get from people. They drain people of their bank accounts through the prosperity gospel. They exploit people. They destroy people's lives to line their own pockets. They are false shepherds. They are thieves and bandits. They have come to take.

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly – Jesus says, “I have not come to take from the sheep, but to give to them.” Those who put their faith and trust in Him will not receive exploitation or destruction at His hand. They will receive everlasting and abundant life.

Mark 11:17 - And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.

2 Peter 2:1-3 - But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

John 3:17 - For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

- Through Jesus, we are not only saved. We are given life.
- The sheep don't just enter in the salvation of the fold, but under the care of the shepherd, they are given abundant life.

As the door of the sheep, Jesus is the sole point of entry for those who desire salvation and everlasting and abundant life.

As the door of the sheep, Jesus is the litmus test for those who seek to “shepherd” God’s flock. Any “teacher” who claims salvation/entry into the fold can be found outside of Jesus is not a shepherd, but a thief and a bandit.

B.) Jesus is the Shepherd of the Sheep

This is the fourth of Jesus’ 7 “I am” statements. “I am the spiritual caretaker of God’s flock.”

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

Jesus is not just our door. He is our shepherd. Doors are just access points, but shepherds are so much more than that. Jesus is not just our access point to salvation, into God’s family. He is so much more than that.

I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep – as the good shepherd that leads and cares for God’s flock, Jesus has come to give us everlasting and abundant life (we saw that in verse 10). The question is, “How?” How can Jesus give us life? Verse 11 answers that question. He can give us life because He has given His life for us. What does that mean? How did He give His life for mine?

Isaiah 53:6 - All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Titus 2:14 - Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.

But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not – hireling – someone paid to watch over the sheep

- The hired servant, like the thief and the robber, is a picture of false teachers, those whose care for the sheep is based solely on what they get out of it

Seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep – he's being paid to watch someone else's sheep, and when danger arises, he runs. Why?

Isaiah 56:10-12 - His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.

1 Peter 5:2 - Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;

Acts 20:29 - For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep – “I don't get paid enough for this!” He runs because they're not his sheep. He doesn't care about them. He only cares for them because of the money he gets out of it, but that money is no good to him if he's dead. So he runs.

- Those who care for the sheep solely because they are paid to, not because they love them, place their own safety above that of the sheep. The sheep are harmed in the process.
- Application: this happens in churches all over the world today.

John 12:6 - This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

I am the good shepherd – I'm not a hired servant. I am the good shepherd of the sheep. I am the owner of the sheep. My care for the sheep is not based on what I get out of it.

And know my sheep, and am known of mine – the word “know” here does not signify head knowledge. It signifies a deep familial relationship (“I KNOW my wife”). As our shepherd, Jesus knows and loves us intimately, and we get the privilege of knowing and loving Him as well. “I am the good shepherd, and I have a deep, real relationship with my sheep.” That’s why He doesn’t abandon the sheep in the face of danger.

- This description distinguishes him from the hired servant, and it enriches the door illustration. A door is an access point, which is valuable, but do you know what I don’t have a relationship with? My front door. That door is a point of entry, but as an inanimate object, I have no relationship with it. What Jesus is saying is, “Hey, I’m not just an access point for salvation. When someone puts their faith and trust in me, they are not just saved from their sin. They enter into a deep, meaningful relationship with the best friend you could ever ask for.
 - o A shepherd/a friend who knows you by name, who cares for you, who provides for you, who understands you, who is always there for you, who tag teams life with you.
 - o The moment I came to realize that is the moment that my relationship with Jesus fundamentally changed.
 - Illustration – leaning on Jesus as a 17-year-old at UCF

Illustration – salvation isn’t just escape from the consequences of sin. It’s the beginning of a relationship.

- Rescuing of the princess from the dragon guarded tower by the prince, and they live happily ever after
- As the door, Jesus is our means of escape from sin. As our shepherd, Jesus is our happily ever after.
- Salvation is not just about what we get out of it. It’s about who we get out of it. 2 Timothy 2:19 - Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

John 17:3 - And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

John 17:8 - For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

1 John 5:20 - And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father – just as the sheep and the shepherd have a deep mutual relationship, so too do God the Father and God the Son

And I lay down my life for the sheep – as the true caretaker of the sheep who knows them and is known by them (just as the Father and the Son have are known of each other), He puts the needs of the sheep above the needs of His own.

- He doesn't run from danger and abandon the sheep. He runs to danger for the sake of the sheep. He ran to the cross for you.

John 6:46 - Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

John 8:55 - Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.

John 17:25 - O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

John 10:17 - Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

John 15:13 - Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

Isaiah 53:4-6 - Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Daniel 9:26 - And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold – Here Jesus is referring to genuine Gentile followers of God as distinguished from the saved of Israel

Them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice – these Gentiles will hear my voice and follow me

And there shall be one fold (flock), and one shepherd – and Jewish and Gentile followers of God will be united by faith into one flock following one Shepherd

- That's exactly what we see in Christianity today. People of all backgrounds and upbringings and ethnicities are united into one spiritual family as sheep belonging to the same Shepherd. (MacArthur, 2006)

Isaiah 11:10 - And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.

Isaiah 49:6 - And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth.

Zechariah 2:11 - And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee.

Romans 15:9-13 - And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust. Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Ephesians 2:14 - For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

Therefore doth my Father love me – This was the Father's plan all along, and one of the reasons for the Father's great love for the Son was because of His willing submission to God's plan for the redemption of the world. What was the plan? We saw earlier that the Shepherd would give the sheep abundant and everlasting life by giving His life for them. But what does that mean? And how would people of all backgrounds and ethnicities and upbringings be united into one flock under one shepherd?

Because I lay down my life that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father – Everlasting life for the sheep was made possible through the Shepherd willing laying down His life on the cross for the sins of sheep and then taking it back again through His victorious resurrection.

Isaiah 53:4-6 - 4 Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray;

we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

- Because of our sin we were in grave danger. There was no access point to the safety of God's fold and the wolves and bandits of hell were closing in on us with every passing moment. We were hopeless. We were destined for spiritual death in hell separated from God forever.
- But Jesus loved us and cared for us so much that He came down to this earth to live a perfect life, to die on the cross for the sins of the world, and to rise again three days later. In doing so, He created a point of access into the salvation of God's fold through faith in Him. When we put our faith and trust in Jesus Christ and what He did for us on the cross, we are not only saved from sin, death, and hell. We also enter into the most wonderful caring perfect relationship with the Good Shepherd. We no longer have to do life alone. Our life journey becomes a tag team venture.
- Thus, Jesus is not just the door of the sheep. He is the shepherd of the sheep.
 - The door is this. There is a means of salvation. The question now is, "Will you enter it?"
 - You could die today, and if you do without having entered that door, there is no second chance...and you will live forever with the consequences of that awful decision.

Isaiah 53:7-12 - He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. **Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him;** he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Isaiah 42:1 - Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, **in whom my soul delighteth;** I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

John 19:11 - Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

Matthew 26:53-56 - Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be? In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me. But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

John 2:19-21 - Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body.

John 6:38 - For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

3.) The Reaction

How did the people respond? As was often the case, Jesus' teaching received mixed reviews.

Illustration – if Yelp were a thing, Jesus would have had a lot of 1 star and a lot of 5-star reviews with not much inbetween.

19 There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.

John 7:40-43 - Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? So there was a division among the people because of him.

John 9:16 - Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.

20 And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?

And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him? – This guy is demon possessed and crazy. Why are you taking seriously what this guy says?

John 7:20 - The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?

John 8:48 - Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

John 8:52 - Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.

John 7:46-52 - The officers answered, Never man spake like this man. Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed. Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil – demon possessed people do not speak with the clarity and succinctness and power that this man does. And not only that...

Can a devil open the eyes of the blind? – These reached the same conclusion that the formerly blind man had: that Jesus' miraculous works were undeniable proof that He was truly commissioned and sent from God. (MacArthur, 2006)

John 9:32 - Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

Isaiah 35:5-6 - Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

Application

Night is coming and so is the danger that it brings. Death comes for all of us, and salvation can only be found in the sheepfold of God...and there is one gate of entry: Jesus Christ. Death and hell are closing in. What are you waiting for? Enter the door. There is no other way. Has there been a time in your life where you've put your faith in Jesus Christ and been saved.

John 14:6 – I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me.

- I'm begging you. If you've never been saved, put your faith and trust in Jesus today. Jesus is not only our way of salvation. He is our Shepherd. When you enter the door of salvation, you don't just get salvation, you get Him. He loves us and cares for us and leads us. Our life journey as Christians is a tag team venture. Do you realize that? Are you leaning on Jesus? Are you resting in and enjoying the life you get to live with Him at your side? Are

you following and walking with Him every day? Life is so much better and easier and joyful when you journey through it with Jesus at your side.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 27 – JOHN 10:1-21

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 10:1-6; Ez. 34:2-5, 11-16, 22-24</p>	<p>Summarize the illustration that Jesus gives. Why do you think the religious leaders had trouble understanding its meaning?</p>
<p>T Read John 10:7-18</p>	<p>Who/what do the five main characters in the story represent (the shepherd, the sheep, the thieves, the door, and the sheepfold)? What is the main takeaway of Jesus' explanation?</p>
<p>W Read John 10:19-21; 7:20; 7:46-52; 8:48, 52</p>	<p>How did the people respond to Jesus' illustration and explanation? Why did Jesus' often produce such polarizing responses?</p>
<p>T Read John 10:22-42</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 10:22-42</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 10:22-42

Review

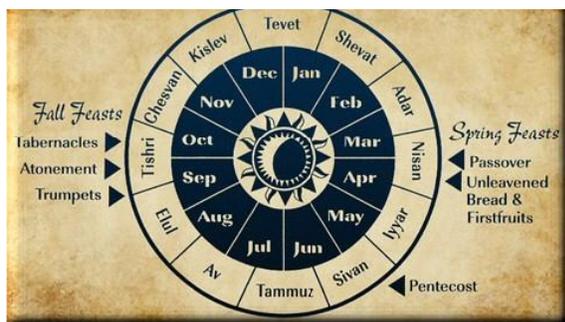
THE FEAST OF DEDICATION

In John 10:1-21 Jesus gives the good shepherd teaching and that teaching finishes up the events John records in connection with the Feast of Tabernacles (which was 6 months out from Jesus' crucifixion).

In verse 22, we fast forward to about three months later to the Feast of Dedication in the dead of winter in Jerusalem. This is where we're going to pick up our story this morning.

1.) The Setting of the Feast

22 And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.



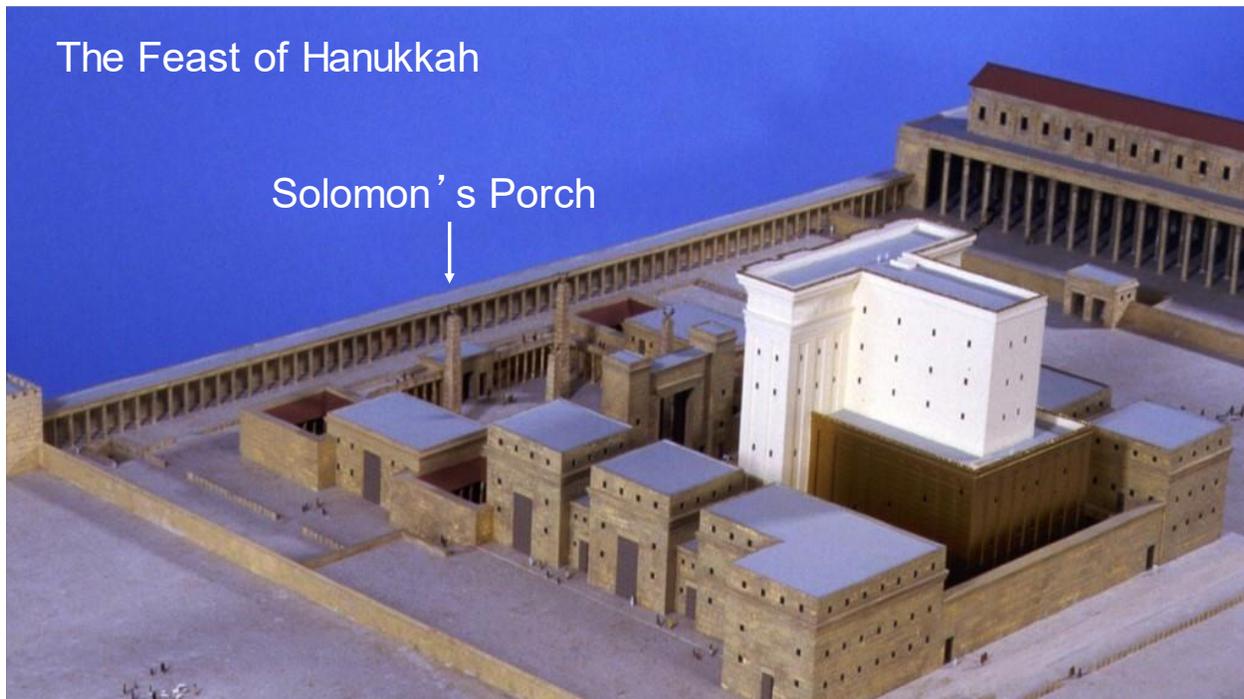
And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter – several months had passed since the Feast of Tabernacles in October and the events that transpired then including: Jesus' public invitation for those who thirst to come to Him, the woman caught in adultery, the treasury discourse, the healing of the blind man, and the good shepherd discourse (7:1-10:21).

- The Feast of Dedication occurred in December, and it was not a prescribed feast from the Old Testament, because it arose during the 400 silent years inbetween the Old Testament and the New Testament.
- In 168 BC there was Syrian general named Antiochus IV. He referred to himself as Antiochus Epiphanes meaning "god manifest." The Jews referred to him as Antiochus Epimanes meaning "mad man." They did so because of what he did to them. He tried to impose Greek ideals and religion on Jews living in Israel during that time frame. He desecrated the Jewish temple by sacrificing pigs on the altar and setting up a statue of the Greek god Zeus. He burnt Torah scrolls, prohibited the reading of the Torah, prohibited Jewish parents from circumcising their children, and only allowed Jews to sacrifice to Greek gods at the temple. Some Jews gave in

because they didn't want to be killed and tortured. However, there was a remnant that resisted and began a rebellion under the leadership of a priest named Mattathias and his five sons, one of which was named Judah the Maccabee. They led this revolt against Antiochus, and they defeated him three years after his desecration of the temple. The Maccabees recaptured Jerusalem and went into the temple and wept because of the state of the temple. They cleansed the temple. They made new altars, and dedicated it to the Lord. Thus, began the annual observance of the feast of dedication in remembrance of when the Maccabees cleansed the temple and dedicated it to the Lord. Does anyone know what the Hebrew word for "dedication" is? It's Hanukkah. You probably know the Feast of Dedication mentioned in John 10:22 by its more common title in usage today: Hanukkah.

- Hanukkah is an eight-day celebration. The eight days are based on the legend of a miracle that happened during the rededication of the temple in which they only had enough oil to light the temple menorah for one day, and yet it lasted for eight days until they could acquire more. Jews today will light an additional candle on their own menorah each day of the celebration.
- It's a wonderful holiday to remember how God preserved the Jewish people, and it was the holiday being celebrated in John 10:22 as we are now three months away from Jesus' impending crucifixion. (The Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, 2019)

23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.



And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch – this was one part of the Temple which had avoided the destruction of the Babylonians. It was a pillared area with a patio like roof, offering relief from the elements. It's possible that Jesus' utilization of the porch rather than

the courtyard may have been due to inclement weather such as rain/snow. (Sorenson, 2007)

Acts 3:11 - And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering.

Acts 5:12 - And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.

2.) The Jewish Leaders' Inquiry of Jesus

24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? – the Jewish leaders encircled Him and asked Him, “How long will you keep us in suspense?”

If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly – The Jewish leaders say this not because of confusion about who Jesus is or claims to be, but likely to get Him on public record as claiming to be the Messiah so that they might have means of accusing him of insurrection or something like that to Rome.

- Recall that the average Jew thought of the Messiah as a political savior. Thus, one who claimed to be the Messiah could be conceived of as a credible threat by Rome, especially if the claim was made during Hanukkah, the Jewish celebration of a political rebellion some 200 years prior. (Sorenson, 2007)
- They say this even after a plethora of unmistakable demonstrations of His messianic power including “the turning of water into wine (2: 1– 11), the clearing of the temple (2: 14– 21), several other Jerusalem signs (2: 23; 3: 2; 6: 2), the healing of the royal official's son (4: 46– 54) and of the lame man (5: 1– 15), the feeding of the multitudes (6: 1– 15), and the healing of the man born blind (chap. 9).” (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 3007-3009)

John 8:25 - Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.

3.) Jesus' Affirmation of His Identity

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not – In John 5:17, Jesus had told them He was the Son of God. In John 8:12, He had told them that He was the light of the world. In John 8:24, He had told them that apart from faith in Him, they would die in their sins. In John 8:58, He had told them that He was equal with God.

- “Hey, I have told you and you did not believe.”
John 5:17-43

John 8:12 - Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

John 8:24 - I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

John 8:58 - Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

The works that I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness of me – “Not only have I told you, but the Father has told you as well. He has testified of me through the miracles that I have done in His name and yet...”

26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

But ye believe not – You do not believe. I have told you who I am, and my Father has told you who I am, and yet you do not believe. Why?

- Jesus twice stating that they believe not tells us that the problem with the religious leaders was not a lack of clear revelation on Jesus’ part, but a lack of faith on their part. (MacArthur, 2006)

But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep – Who are His sheep? Jesus uses sheep here as a metaphor for the group of those who hear Him and follow Him (just like sheep hear and follow the voice of their shepherd) (vs. 27). The Jewish leaders did not believe in who Jesus claimed to be because they did not hear Him or follow Him (cf. 10:4, 8, 16, 27). They didn’t recognize His voice, and they didn’t recognize the Father’s voice who was time and time again pointing them to Jesus.

- Another important point to keep in mind when thinking about the identity of Jesus’ sheep is that Jesus’ flock is really the Father’s flock. Jesus’ people are really the Father’s people. How do we know that? Because the Father has given the flock to the Son (vs. 29), because the flock is held secure in both the hand of Jesus and the hand of the Father (vs. 29), and because Jesus and the Father are one (vs. 30). Thus, those who hear and follow Jesus (vs. 27) are first and foremost those who hear and follow God the Father (cf. John 6:45; 8:42-44, 47), and those who reject Jesus are those who reject the Father as He is testifying of Jesus and drawing them to Him. It’s a package deal.
 - o Thus, in rejecting Jesus’ testimony of Himself as well as the Father’s testimony regarding Jesus, these Jewish leaders had demonstrated that they were neither followers of Jesus, nor followers of God.
 - o John 6:45 - It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

- If you're listening to the Father, you'll come to me.
 - If you recognize the Father's voice, you'll recognize mine.
- John 8:42-44, 47 - 42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. 43 Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. 44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. 47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.
 - God is drawing you to me, but you don't recognize His voice because you're not following Him either.
- I've testified of myself to you, and you don't believe. The Father has testified of me to you, and you don't believe. The reason you don't believe is because you're not following me and you're not following God. You don't recognize either of our voices.
- In an astonishing statement, Jesus tells the Jewish leaders that because they do not believe in Him, they are not a part of God's flock. Why? Because if they were part of God's flock, they would recognize His voice as the Shepherd and follow Him and believe on Him. (Kostenberger, 2013, p. Loc 2994)
John 10:4 - And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

John 10:27 - My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

John 6:37 - All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

John 6:65 - And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me – Jesus' flock are those who recognize His voice and follow Him. They know Him, and He knows them.

- Here's the point that Jesus is making: those who are true followers of God the Father recognize His Son's voice and follow Him. "You do not believe in me, the Son, because you have not followed the Father who sent me. Jesus' voice is the same as that of the Father. If you recognize His voice, it's because you have been listening to and learning of the Father (cf. John 6:45)." (Soteriology 101)
- The fact that the Jewish leaders berated Jesus saying, "Hey! If you're really the Messiah, tell us plainly!" tells us that they were neither followers of Jesus nor followers of God. Why? Because they didn't recognize Jesus' voice, and they didn't recognize the Father's voice as He was testifying of Jesus.

- Christ's flock is the collective group of those who hear, believe in, and follow the Shepherd. It is not some group of individuals that has been secretly chosen to salvation at the exclusion of others. (Clarke, 1831)
John 10:8 - All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

John 10:16 - And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

John 8:43 - Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.

John 10:14 - I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.

Luke 13:27 - But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.

1 Corinthians 8:3 - But if any man love God, the same is known of him.

John 8:12 - Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

And I give unto them eternal life – to those who follow Jesus in faith, He presently gives to them the greatest gift they could ever receive: the gift of everlasting life. Do you know what “everlasting” means? It means that it never ends. That means that you can't lose it once you have it.

- Why? Because if you could lose it, then your everlasting life would have an end. But that makes no sense. Because how can something that has no end, end? The answer is that it can't.
- This is the doctrine of eternal security. It means that once you're saved you receive everlasting life, and you can't ever lose it because by definition it never ends.

And for those who follow Jesus in faith and receive everlasting life by extension that means

They shall never perish – they will never perish in Hell. They cannot lose their salvation. Just in case there was any doubt over whether “eternal life” meant that you couldn't lose it, Jesus makes it even clearer. Those who are saved “have everlasting life and will never perish in hell.”

- Were even one of God's sheep/children to lose his salvation and spend eternity in Hell, it would make God a liar. (MacArthur, 2006)
- As if it wasn't already clear enough, Jesus is going to take it another step further.
John 6:39-40 – 39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand – my sheep, my children, my followers are eternally secure in the grasp of my hand and there is no one and no thing that is strong enough to seize them from my hand. Not only that...

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

John 5:39-40 - Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life

Romans 8:33-39

Philippians 1:6 - Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

1 Peter 1:5 - Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

1 John 2:19 - They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

2 Tim. 1:12 - For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all – Jesus' flock is also God the Father's flock. Jesus' people are God's people. God the Father, who has given to me my flock, is greater than anyone and everything.

And no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand – those who are a part of God's sheep/family.... those who have been saved are not only held eternally secure in the grasp of Jesus. They are also held eternally secure in the grasp of God the Father.

- "The Father and Son jointly guarantee the eternal security of believers." (MacArthur, 2006)
- Application – this is one of the greatest passages in the Bible on the eternal security of believers

John 6:37 - All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

John 17:2 - As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

John 17:11 - And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

30 I and my Father are one.

I and my Father are one – The Father and the Son are in one in unity (the Father’s flock is the Son’s flock), action (believers are eternally secure in the hand of the Father and the Son), and essence (for to be one with the Father is to be equal with the Father)

- Let’s recap what Jesus has shared regarding His identity in this passage.
 - o I am the one that God the Father testifies of through His miraculous works.
 - o I am the Son of God.
 - o I am the Shepherd/Caretaker of God’s flock/God’s people.
 - o I am the impartor of eternal life to those who believe in me.
 - o I am the eternal security of those who believe in me.
 - o I am one in unity, action, and essence with the one who is greater than all, God the Father Himself.
 - o Does that answer your question?
 - Application – Jesus is not just some baby in a manger. He is so much more than that. He is God in the flesh. He is the sole means of everlasting life.

Philippians 2:6 - Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

John 5:17 - But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

John 5:23 - That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

John 14:9 - Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

John 17:21 - That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

4.) The Jewish Leaders’ Rejection of Jesus

31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him – recognizing the seriousness of what Jesus had just affirmed in saying that He was one with God, they took up stones like

missiles locked and loaded with arms cocked ready to execute Him at a moment's notice. (Sorenson, 2007)

- "Happy Hanukkah Jesus"
- "While the Jews continued to be vulnerable at many points, the exile had purged them once and for all from the error of idolatry. Hence they considered Jesus's perceived attempt to make himself equal to God to be the most serious religious offense possible." (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 3017-3019)
- Remember that Jesus makes this claim in the context of the Feast of Dedication in which a madman Antiochus declared himself to be God, desecrated the temple, and persecuted the Jews.
- This is the fourth time in John's gospel that the Jews tried to kill Jesus (cf. John 5:18; 7:1; 8:59).

John 5:18 - Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

John 7:1 - After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

John 8:59 - Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

Exodus 17:4 - And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me.

1 Samuel 30:6 - And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.

Matthew 23:35 - That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

Acts 7:52 - Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:

5.) Jesus' Defense of His Identity

How does Jesus defend Himself?

He defends Himself by pointing them to His miracles as evidence of His identity

32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me? – hold on a second guys. I'm not just claiming to be one with the Father. I've demonstrated it time and time again through the amazing miracles I've done through the power of the Father. For which of those miracles are you going to execute me for? For helping the lame guy walk? For giving the blind guy sight? For feeding the 5000?

- His miracles proved that He was not guilty of blasphemy because they proved that He was who He claimed to be. (MacArthur, 2006)
- Application
 - o The ultimate miracle that proved His identity was His resurrection. In three months' time, Jesus would be crucified as a blasphemer. And yet three days later He would rise from the dead in vindication that He was who he claimed to be and in victory over sin, death, and hell.

John 5:36 - But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

Acts 2:22 - Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

The Jews answered him saying, For a good work we stone thee not – we're not going to kill you because of anything you done

- They brush us aside His miraculous works
- They ignore the testimony of the Father through the miracles He did.

But for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God. – we're stoning you for blasphemy because you, like that Antiochus guy, are a man that hast tried to make himself God

- Their explanation here indicates that when Jesus said that He and the Father were one, the Jews understood exactly what He meant by that. They understood that He was claiming to be God and were going to execute Him for it in accordance with the Old Testament law (cf. Lev. 24:16)
- Ironically, Jesus was the exact opposite of what they supposed Him to be. They thought of Him as a man who had made Himself God, when in all reality, He was God who had become man. (MacArthur, 2006)
 - o That's what Christmas is all about: celebrating His incarnation/His advent.

He defends Himself by pointing out an inconsistency in their reasoning

34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?

Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? – Jesus is here quoting from Psalm 82:6 in which God chided Israel’s sinful rulers and judges. In God’s rebuke to them, he refers to them as “gods” because as His representatives, they were supposed to be relaying His will to the people. (Plummer, 1902)

Psalm 82:1, 6-7 – 1 God standeth in the congregation of the mighty; he judgeth among the gods. 6 I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High. 7 But ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.

Exodus 4:16 - And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God.

Exodus 7:1 - And the LORD said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet.

Exodus 22:28 - Thou shalt not revile the gods, nor curse the ruler of thy people.

Psalm 138:1 - I will praise thee with my whole heart: before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

Romans 13:1 - Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;

If he – in reference to God the Father

Called them gods – in reference to these divinely appointed human rulers

Unto whom the word of God came – as those who He spoke through as His spokespeople

And the Scripture cannot be broken – and the Scripture is unbreakable, without error

Deut. 18:15 - The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;

1 Samuel 30:8 - And David enquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all.

Matthew 5:18 - For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

Matthew 24:35 - Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God? – how can you say that I, as one that the Father set apart and sent into the world, am blaspheming in referring to myself as the Son of God? (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 3030-3033)

- “This passage is sometimes misinterpreted as though Jesus was simply classing himself with men in general... But this is not taking seriously enough what Jesus actually says. He is arguing from the less to the greater. If the word god could be used of people who were no more than judges, how much more could it be used of one with greater dignity, greater importance and significance than any mere judge, one “whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world”? He is not placing himself on a level with men, but setting himself apart from them.” (Morris, 2000, p. 396)
- Jesus says, “Hey, my works provide the evidence that I am who I claim to be. Not only that, but you guys are being inconsistent. If in the Scriptures, representatives of God that God spoke His word through were referred to as lower case gods, then how can you be upset at me for claiming to be God, when I actually am God and I have been sent from heaven from the Father to you?”

- o It’s an argument of inconsistency from lesser to greater.

Psalm 2:6-12 - Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Isaiah 11:2-5 - And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

Isaiah 61:1-3 - The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he might be glorified.

John 3:17 - For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

John 5:36-37 - But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

John 6:38 - For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

John 5:17-18 - But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

John 19:7 - The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

John 20:31 - But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

Matthew 26:63-66 - But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.

Now, He's going to circle back around to the miraculous evidence for His identity.

37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not – If I am not doing the miraculous works of the Father, then by all means, don't believe me. Don't believe that I am the Son of God. Don't believe that I and the Father are one. Don't believe that I am equal with God.

John 10:25 - Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works – but if I am doing the miraculous works of the Father, even if you don't believe what I am telling you, believe what the miracles are telling you.

That ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him – for if you believe what the miracles are telling you, then you will know and believe that I am who I claim to be.

- If you won't believe me on my own account, at least believe me on account of the miracles that I do.... that I and the Father are one, and that the Father is in me, and I am in the Father.

John 5:36 - But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

Acts 2:22 - Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

John 14:9-11 - Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

John 14:20 - At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

- o Christ dwells in us through the Holy Spirit. We are placed “in Christ” at salvation.

John 17:21-23 - That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

- o We can be one in the Father and Son by virtue of our status of being “in Christ.”

39 Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand,

Therefore they sought again to take him – apparently by this point in time they had dropped the stones out of their hands and sought to seize Jesus, perhaps to have him stand trial before the Sanhedrin for His blasphemous claims of which they now had insurmountable evidence (Gill, 1811)

But he escaped out of their hand – but once again Jesus eluded them. How? We don't know. Why? Because His hour was not yet come. It was still three months away.

John 7:30 - Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

John 8:59 - Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

6.) John's Disciples' Acceptance of Jesus

40 And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.

And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode – with the authorities in such a frenzied state, Jesus left Jerusalem and returned to the Judaeen wilderness where John the Baptist had been preaching about the coming of Jesus the Messiah, ministering, and baptizing. We saw this back in chapter 1 verse 28.

- Just as the Father was pointing people to Jesus through His miracles, John the Baptist was pointing people to Jesus through his preaching and ministry.
- Although John the Baptist had been dead for some time now (he had been executed by Herod), his ministry of pointing people to Jesus was still bearing fruit long after his death.

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

41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.

42 And many believed on him there.

And many resorted unto him – many came to Jesus

And said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true – Don't miss the significance of what is being said here. There is a clear, direct contrast between the Jewish leaders' response to Jesus and John's disciples' response to Jesus.

- The Jewish leaders had not only the testimony of Jesus Himself, but they also had the testimony of God the Father pointing them to Jesus through the miraculous works He empowered them to do, and yet how did they respond to Jesus? They rejected Him over and over and over again.
- John's disciples had the testimony of Jesus, and they had the testimony of John the Baptist pointing them to Jesus through preaching (no miracles). And yet how did they respond when Jesus came to town? They heard it. They recognized it. They followed it. Heard what? Recognized what? Followed what? The voice of the Shepherd.
 - o My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep.

- Can you hear His voice? Do you recognize it? Will you follow it?

John 1:29 - The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

John 1:33-34 - And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

Application

There are two primary questions that this passage brings to light.

Who is Jesus?

- He is God in the flesh.
- He is the Great Shepherd.
- He is the source of eternal life for those who believe in Him.

How will you respond to Him?

- The Shepherd is calling out to you. The Father is testifying of Him. The Word is testifying of Him. You have two choices.
 - You can reject Him like the Jewish authorities.
 - You can receive Him like John's disciples.
 - The choice is yours, but eternity hangs in the balance.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 28 – JOHN 10:22-42

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 10:22-23</p>	<p>In what ways does the historical background of the Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah) set the stage for Jesus' claim to be one with the Father?</p>
<p>T Read John 10:24-31</p>	<p>Take time to read these verses closely. Who all does Jesus claim to be in His response to the Jews? What titles does He use in reference to Himself?</p>
<p>W Read John 10:32-42, John 5:36, Psalm 82:1-7</p>	<p>In what two ways does Jesus defend His identity? Explain his reasoning. What is significant about the difference between the Jewish leaders' and John's disciples' responses to Jesus?</p>
<p>T Read John 11:1-27</p>	<p>What is this passage saying?</p>
<p>F Read John 11:1-27</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 11:1-27

Review

Following Jesus' Good Shepherd Teaching 3 months pass, and Jesus is in Jerusalem during the winter Feast of Dedication (Hanukkah). During the feast, Jesus has a run in with the religious leaders in the temple. They ask Him to definitively state on the record who He claims to be. Jesus says, "I and my Father are one."

They Jews take up stones to kill him for blasphemy. Jesus defends His claim of unity and equality with God. They try to seize Him, but He escapes out of their clutches and makes His way into the Judean wilderness (the area where John the Baptist once ministered). In the wilderness, Jesus finds safety from the religious leaders who want Him dead, and He finds many who are receptive to His teaching and believe on Him.

Thus brings us to John 11 which takes place roughly three months prior to Jesus' crucifixion. Throughout His earthly ministry, Jesus performed many miracles, and yet John in His gospel highlights seven of them. We've already seen six, and in John 11, we are going to see the seventh and greatest sign of Jesus' earthly ministry that John records as evidence of His identity.

Sign 1: Turning the Water into Wine

Sign 2: Healing the Nobleman's Son

Sign 3: Healing the Lame Man at Bethesda

Sign 4: Feeding the 5000

Sign 5: Walking on Water

Sign 6: Healing the Blind Man

Sign 7: Raising Lazarus from the Dead

Sermon

Throughout the gospels, we have record of three resurrections that Jesus performed during His earthly ministry: (1) the raising of Jairus's daughter (Mark 5: 22- 24, 38- 42 = Matt. 9: 18- 19, 23- 25 = Luke 8: 41- 42, 49- 56), (2) the raising of the widow's son at Nain (Luke 7: 11- 15), and (3) the raising of Lazarus (John 11: 1- 44) (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 3064-3066)

- And yet, of the three, the raising of Lazarus is by far the most spectacular and important.

- Whereas the raising of Jairus' daughter and the widow's son were more private and personal miracles, the raising of Lazarus was a very public event.
- Word of the miracle would soon spread to Jerusalem, and for the religious leaders it would be the final straw with Jesus. Following this miracle, we're told that they convene and that from that day forward they determined to put Him to death.
 - It was the most spectacular miracle He performed.
 - It led directly to His impending crucifixion.
 - It foreshadowed the most important moment in Jesus' life: His own resurrection, which would take place three months after He raised Lazarus from the dead. (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 3066-3068)

1.) The Sickness of Lazarus

1 Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha – This is the only time in the gospels that Lazarus is mentioned. As a result, John has to introduce him to us. He does so by relating him to Mary and Martha, who John assumes that we already know about from the other gospels.

Luke 10:38-42 - Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

John 12:1 - Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

John 12:9, 17 – 9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead. 17 The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.

2 (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

Here John mentions another story about Mary to confirm to his readers who he is talking about.

Although John himself would not tell this story of Mary until chapter 12, he expected his readers to be familiar with the story from Mark and Matthew's accounts.

Mark 14:3 - And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. (Matt. 26:6-7)

John 12:3 - Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

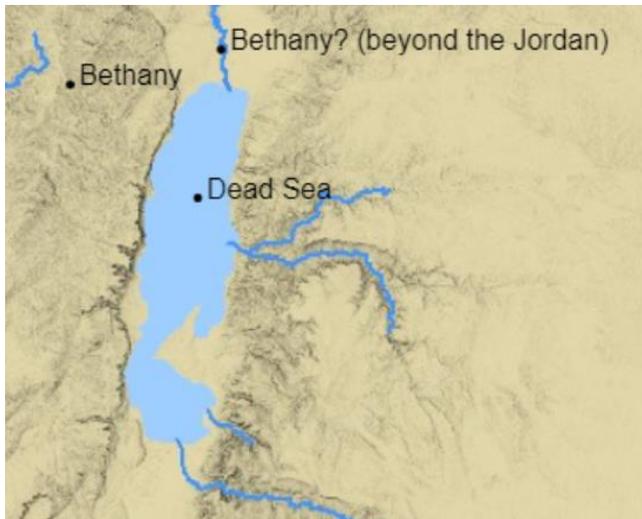
3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

Therefore – since Lazarus was gravely sick

His sisters (Mary and Martha) sent unto him – sent word to Jesus

Saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick – here we discover that not only does Jesus know Lazarus, but He also cares deeply for him.

- Jesus receives bad news about someone He loves dearly.
- All of us at times in our lives have received different types of bad news.
 - o There's bad news and then there's BAD NEWS. Here Jesus gets BAD NEWS about someone he loved dearly. "Lazarus is dying."
 - It's really heavy to receive news like that.
 - Illustration – receiving word several years ago about a close family member having cancer
- The sisters, in their sending word to Jesus of Lazarus' impending death, presupposed that Jesus loved Lazarus, could heal Lazarus, and would heal Lazarus.
 - o Application: As Christians when tragedy strikes near to us, we find ourselves in a similar situation with God as Mary and Martha found themselves with Jesus. We personally know someone who can fix things. What do we do? We tell God, just like they told Jesus, praying and hoping and believing that He'll fix it. Because if you love someone, and it's in your power to save them, why wouldn't you?
- The distance between the Bethany near Jerusalem (where Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived) and the Bethany beyond Jordan where Jesus was ministering was about a day's journey (17 miles). It's quite possible that Lazarus actually died before the messenger even reached Jesus because we're told that by the time Jesus had gotten there, Lazarus had been dead four days.
 - o One day for the messenger to reach Jesus.
 - o Two days during which Jesus delayed His departure.
 - o One day for Jesus and the disciples to make the journey.



2.) The Response of Jesus

Jesus is one who knows Lazarus, loves Lazarus, and has the power to heal Lazarus. How would Jesus respond to Mary and Martha's cry for help?

First off, He responds in accordance with His purpose.

A.) His Purpose

4 When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death – “this sickness will not have death as its final result or purpose” (Ellicott, 1905)

But for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby –It's purpose will be first and foremost to glorify the Father and me (MacArthur, 2006, p. 488)

- The raising of Lazarus advanced Christ's glory in three distinct ways: (1) it demonstrated His power and deity (11:25-27) (2) it strengthened the faith of the disciples (11:15) (3) it led directly to the cross (11:53). (MacArthur, 2006, p. 488)
- God was working in the midst of this situation to accomplish first and foremost His own purposes. His own agenda and will took precedence over everything else.
- Application: In my life and in your life, His purposes and His will and His glory take precedence over ours. The purpose of my life is not my glory, my agenda, my will. It is His.
 - 1 Cor. 10:31 – whether therefore ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.
 - Philippians 1:21 – for to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.
 - His glory and purposes take precedence in my life.

- Illustration – Have you ever been at a wedding where someone other than the bride and groom has to make the wedding all about them? It’s like, “Come on. What are you doing? This is about them, not about you.”
 - When we take our lives and make them about us and not about Him, we are doing the same thing. This isn’t our story. It’s His. This isn’t our big day. It’s His.
 - As such God’s working in the world is not first and foremost dictated by our purposes, but His own. I’m thankful for that because unlike me He knows what He is doing, and He sees a much bigger picture.
- God is a miracle working God, who loves His children, and is eager to answer their requests made in faith. But we must remember that God is not our genie in a bottle whose existence revolves around our desires.
 - We are called to pray in faith believing that God will answer our requests, but we are also called to pray in submission to His will.
 - Some of the hardest moments in life are when God’s will is different than our own. In those moments, there is grief and pain and hurt and doubt, but we must not forget that (1) our lives are not our own and (2) joy comes in the morning.
 - For the believer, pain and grief and disappointment are all temporary. There is coming a day when all of those things will be a distant memory and we will live and reign with God forever and ever.
 - Romans 8:28 - And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.
 - God’s answer to the believer’s cry for deliverance from pain and suffering and death and heartache is never “no”. Sometimes, it’s just “not yet”.
- How would Jesus respond to the news of Lazarus’ sickness? He would respond purposefully. In His purposes and plans, Jesus saw things that no one else would until much later.
 - He saw that raising Lazarus four days later would strengthen His disciples.
 - He saw that raising Lazarus four days later would magnify His name.
 - He saw that raising Lazarus four days later would lead to His shameful death followed by His glorious resurrection.
 - And who would stand to benefit from His death, burial, and glorious resurrection? Every single person on the face of the planet.
 - No one else knew any of that, but Jesus did, and He responded to the news purposefully, and His purposes are always good.
 - Thank God He acted in accordance with His purposes and not someone else’s.

John 9:3 - Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

Mark 5:39-42 - And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying. And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise. And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was of the age of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.

John 5:23 - That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

John 8:54 - Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:

John 17:1 - These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

Not only did Jesus respond in accordance with His own purposes, but He also responded in accordance with His own timing.

B.) His Timing

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus – here Jesus’ love for this family is explicitly stated by John. It seems that there were many other visits and encounters in the past that we are not told about, and that this family had become some of Jesus’ dearest friends. John had no doubt witnessed their friendship firsthand.

- Why does John tell us that Jesus loved them?
- It seems that John tells us this to make sure we know that Jesus’ lack of action and urgency in this situation was not due to a lack of love for anyone in the family.
 - o Application: sometimes if we’re not careful we can make that assumption about God. We perceive His lack of action and urgency in a situation in our life as due to a lack of love for us, when nothing could be further from the truth. Sometimes we need to be reminded that God loves us even when we can’t understand what He’s doing.

6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

When he heard therefore that he was sick – when Jesus had received the news of Lazarus’ terrible sickly state

He abode two days still in the same place where he was – he waited two more days before making the journey to the village of Bethany

- This makes no sense. If He loved them, then He should have rushed to Bethany to heal Lazarus or to at least be with the family.
 - o But we need to remember something. Jesus' life and ministry are not a part of Lazarus' story. Lazarus is not the main character. Jesus is, and, as such, the story of Lazarus is not really a story about Lazarus. It's a story about Jesus that Lazarus got to be a part of.
 - o Application: the story of your life is not really a story about your life. It's a story about Him that you get to be a part of.
 - God's delays are not always God's denials
 - o Sometimes God's timing is just different than ours, and it's not a bad thing.
 - o Have you ever asked for something, and God didn't give it to you when you asked for it, and looking back you were glad?
 - o Illustration: praying for a wife as a fifteen-year-old
- Isaiah 55:8-9 - For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.

7 Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again.

Then after that – after he waited two days making no effort to come to Bethany on anyone else's timing but His own

Saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again – let's go back into Judaea, implying that they would now make the trip to see Mary, Martha, and Lazarus

- How does Jesus respond to the news of Lazarus' sickness? He responds in accordance with His purposes, and He responds in His own perfect timing. John 10:40-42 - 40 And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode. 41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true. 42 And many believed on him there.

8 His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

His disciples say unto him, Master the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? – Jesus, do you remember what happened the last time we were in that area? The religious leaders tried to kill you. Jesus, if we go back there, we're going to die. This makes no sense!

- Jesus, you said his sickness is not unto death.
- Jesus, if you want to heal the guy, why don't you just do it long distance like you did with the nobleman's son (4:46-53)?

Jesus' decision making here made no sense to anyone but Himself. It made no sense to Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. It made no sense to the disciples. It makes no sense to us...until

we see it in hindsight from Jesus' perspective. What's true in this story is often true in our lives as well.

Application – there are things in our lives that make no sense and will make no sense until we look back on them one day from God's perspective.

John 10:31, 39 – 31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. 39 Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand,

9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

Jesus is going to use an illustration to drive home a point with His disciples.

Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? – The Jews divided the time period between sunrise and sunset into twelve-hour long periods. “Don't we have twelve hours of daylight on a given day?”

If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world – a traveler making his journey during the day, when it's light out, does not stumble and fall. Why? Because it's light out, and he can see.

John 9:4 - I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

John 12:35 - Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him – But if a traveler is journeying during the night, he stumbles and fall. Why? Because the light is gone, and his eyes have no light within them to direct his walking. (Barnes, 1834)

- Application: although it was the eleventh hour of Jesus' ministry, the day was not over yet. There was still work to do be done before the light of the world would be removed from it in death. The disciples were scared of “stumbling and falling” in Judea. Jesus' point was that they had nothing to fear while He was still there with them. It was not His time yet.
 - o “Guys you have nothing to be afraid of. It's not time for that yet.”
 - o Once again, we are reminded that God's timing is perfect, and that there is safety to be found when we navigate life's path with Him at our side.
(MacArthur, 2006)

Proverbs 4:18-19 - But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. The way of the wicked is as darkness: they know not at what they stumble.

1 John 2:10-11 - He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.

C.) His Power

11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

These things said he: and after that he saith unto them – this seems to imply that Jesus paused after His prior illustration. He wanted to let His words sink in.

Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep – in the Scriptures, sleep is often used as an expression for death. Thus, what Jesus was saying was that Lazarus was dead and that He desired to go see him to bring him back to life. He was going to respond to Lazarus' sickness with the most incredible demonstration of His divine power that anyone had seen to date.

- But, as was often the case, the disciples misunderstood what Jesus was saying. They took him literally. What they heard Jesus say was, "Our friend Lazarus is napping, but I need to go wake him up."

Deuteronomy 31:16 - And the LORD said unto Moses, Behold, thou shalt sleep with thy fathers; and this people will rise up, and go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me, and break my covenant which I have made with them.

Daniel 12:2 - And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

Matthew 9:24 - He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn.

1 Cor. 15:18 - Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.

1 Thessalonians 4:14-15 - For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.

John 5:25-29 - Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

Ephesians 5:14 - Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well – “Jesus, if He is sleeping, then that’s a good thing. That means he’ll get better.”

Illustration – if someone is sleeping, avoid waking them up if you don’t have to!

- Bad things happen when you wake up sleeping people.

13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

Here John plainly lays out the misunderstanding between Jesus and the disciples. It is because of this misunderstanding that Jesus says in verse 14:

14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead – this is a good example of Jesus’ omniscience (i.e. He was all knowing). He knew things that no one else knew because He was God.

- Application: In your situation in life, Jesus knows things that you don’t know. We need to remember that. His purposes and His timing revolve around a much bigger picture of what actually is going in the world.
- The messenger had merely told them that Lazarus was sick. Certainly no additional word had been sent on Lazarus’ condition. Otherwise the disciples would have known he was dead.
- Guys, Lazarus is dead.... “Oh”
- From this we know that Lazarus had definitively passed away before they began the journey from the Jordan to Bethany.

15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him.

And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe – If Jesus had been there when Lazarus was still sick, it’s hard to imagine Lazarus dying. In fact, Jesus’ statement here implies that if he had been there Lazarus wouldn’t have died.

- Imagine Lazarus deathly sick with Jesus at his side, and Mary and Martha begging Jesus to heal him. What is He going to say? It’s not like He’s going to say, “I can’t.” Of course He could. Jesus had healed multitudes of sick people. How cruel would He have appeared if He had been there in person and said, “I won’t.”
- And yet, by delaying His journey and not healing Lazarus from His sickness, that’s sort of what Jesus is saying. Certainly the sisters willed that Jesus heal their brother,

but in this instance God's will was something different. Or to put it more accurately, His timing was different.

- For the disciples, witnessing Jesus heal another person would have been a positive, but seeing Jesus resurrect a man who had been dead for four days would go a lot further in strengthening their faith. (Barnes, 1834)
 - o Jesus knew what was coming in three months, and He knew that the disciples would need all the faith that they could get.

Nevertheless let us go unto him – Nevertheless, let's go! Let's get on our way.

- You might imagine Jesus beginning to walk away.
1 John 5:13 - These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus – Thomas was his Hebrew name, and Didymus was his Greek nickname. Both names mean the same thing: "twin".

Unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him. – You can imagine, perhaps as Jesus walks away, Thomas muttering under his breath to his fellow disciples, "Yeah let's go back to the place where they just tried to kill Him. That's great. At least we can all die together. Maybe we could all go in together on a joint burial plot, maybe save some money for our families."

- Once again, we see that Jesus' response made sense to no one else but Himself.
John 20:24-29 - But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

D.) His Arrival

17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already.

Then when Jesus came, - when he finally arrived in Bethany

He found that he (Lazarus) had lain in the grave four days already – "The Jews believed that the soul hovered around the body for three days after death, hoping to reenter it. But on

the fourth day, after noticing that the body was beginning to decompose (cf. v. 39), the soul departed. Only then would a death be considered completely irreversible. Lazarus had been dead for four days, and his body had already started to decompose (v. 39). The Jews therefore would have recognized that only an act of God could restore him to life.” (MacArthur, 2006)

- Timeline
 - o Day 1 – messenger dispatched (Lazarus dies unbeknownst to the messenger)
 - o Day 2-3 – Jesus delays His coming
 - o Day 4 - Jesus makes the journey to Bethany
- Hosea 6:2 - After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.

18 Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:

Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off – a furlong/stadia was about 600 feet. Thus, fifteen furlongs would have been a little less than two miles. Bethany and Jerusalem are right next to each other. (Sorenson, 2007)

- Illustration – the two cities would have been closer to each other than the church is to Old Town.
- This is important for two reasons:
 - o It makes clear how risky this trip was for Jesus. He was coming within two miles of the religious leaders in Jerusalem who wanted him dead.
 - o It explains where many family and friends came from to mourn the passing of Lazarus and comfort his sisters. (Ellicott, 1905)

19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary – Many Jews, presumably from Jerusalem, made the short journey to Bethany

To comfort them concerning their brother – From the human perspective, the mourners were there to comfort the sisters, but from God’s perspective, they were also there to witness the most magnificent miracle Jesus would perform during His earthly ministry. (MacArthur, 2006)

- “It was customary to bury the deceased on the day of their death (cf. Acts 5:5–6, 10), since the climate was warm, and the Jews did not practice embalming. Men and women would walk separately in the funeral procession, after which the women alone would return from the burial site to begin the thirty-day mourning period. The first seven days of mourning were the most intense, and many of the mourners would remain with the family for that entire week. That explains why the Jews who came to console Martha and Mary were still with them four days after the burial.” (MacArthur, 2006)

3.) The Conversation with Martha

20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house.

Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house. – as soon as the sisters received word that Jesus had made the journey, they reacted in very different ways. Just as Mary had sat at Jesus’ feet in Luke 10, so too here she remains in the house. Further, just as Martha was hustling to prepare food for her guests in Luke 10, so too here she quickly makes her way out to see Jesus. (Ellicott, 1905)

21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

Then said Martha unto Jesus – “Hey Jesus, how are you doing? Did you have a nice journey? Can I get you anything?” She didn’t say anything like that.

Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died – “Jesus if you would have been here, my brother would not have died.”

- “Jesus, you have been there for so many other people, and yet when we needed you the most, you weren’t there for us.”
- Have you ever had moments in your life where you asked the Lord, “God, where were you?”
 - o “You’ve been there for other people. You’ve done things for other people, and yet when I needed you most you weren’t anywhere to be found...God, you could have done something and you didn’t, and I thought you loved me, and I don’t understand why.”

Luke 8:49-55 - While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's house, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master. But when Jesus heard it, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole. And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden. And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead. And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise. And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat.

22 But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.

But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee – and yet I know that even now, despite what has happened, through your prayers some good can still come out of this tragedy. (MacArthur, 2006)

- Martha’s words in verse 39 suggest that she is not here insinuating Jesus’ ability to raise her brother from the dead.
John 3:35 - The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.

23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again – Lazarus will (future tense) rise from the dead

- Jesus means that He is going to raise Him from the dead at that point in time, and yet Martha assumes that Jesus is speaking of the resurrection of the last days.
- She had probably heard those words of comfort from many of the mourners who came to see her and Martha. (MacArthur, 2006)
 - o “I know this is sad, but this isn’t the end for him. He will rise again one day. You’ll see him again one day.”
 - o Application – that is a legitimate point of comfort for Christians
 - Unbelievers can’t say that. There is no hope. There is no comfort for them because death is the end.
 - 1 Thess. 4:13 – as believers we grieve, but we don’t grieve as those who have no hope.
 - As Christians we can legitimately know that when someone we love passes, God’s answer to our prayers for deliverance and healing and life for that person was not “no”. It was just “not yet”.

24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.

Martha said unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day – At the moment of death, the believer’s soul goes to be with the Lord. And yet the Bible also teaches that there is a future physical resurrection that awaits us. Mary assumes that this is what Jesus was talking about when He said that Lazarus would rise again. “The resurrection of the body was taught in the Old Testament (e.g., Job 19:25–27; Ps. 16:10; Dan. 12:2), and affirmed by the Pharisees (though not by the Sadducees; Matt. 22:23; Acts 23:6–8). It was also, as Martha knew, the teaching of Jesus (cf. 5:21, 25–29; 6:39–40, 44, 54). Ironically, while she believed Jesus had the power to raise her brother in the distant future, she did not think that He could also do so immediately.” (MacArthur, 2006)

John 5:28-29 - Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

Psalms 17:15 - As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.

Psalms 49:14-15 - Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling. But God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave: for he shall receive me. Selah.

Isaiah 25:8 - He will swallow up death in victory; and the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of his people shall he take away from off all the earth: for the LORD hath spoken it.

Isaiah 26:19 - Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead.

Ezekiel 37:1-10 - The hand of the LORD was upon me, and carried me out in the spirit of the LORD, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, And caused me to pass by them round about: and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord GOD, thou knowest. Again he said unto me, Prophecy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus saith the Lord GOD unto these bones; Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the LORD. So I prophesied as I was commanded: and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them. Then said he unto me, Prophecy unto the wind, prophecy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army.

Daniel 12:2-3 - And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.

Hosea 6:2 - After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.

Hosea 13:14 - I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from mine eyes.

Matthew 22:23-32- The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him, Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother: Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh. And last of all the woman died also. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her. Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye

not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life: - this is the fifth of Jesus' seven "I am" statements in John's gospel.

- As the bread of life, Jesus is the source of sustenance for those who were spiritually famished
- As the light of the world, Jesus is the source of direction for those who are lost.
- As the door of the sheep, Jesus is the sole point of entry into God's fold.
- As the good shepherd, Jesus is the spiritual caretaker of God's people.
- As the resurrection and life, Jesus is the source of life for those who are dead.
 - o This is true both physically and spiritually.

He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live - for those who believe in me, even though they physically die (everyone dies), they will physically live again when I raise them from the dead.

John 6:39-40 - And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

1 Corinthians 15:20-26 - But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.

Philippians 3:20-21 - For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

John 1:4 - In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

John 5:26 - For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

John 14:6 - Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

1 John 5:11-12 - And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

John 3:36 - He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?

And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die – and for the one who lives and believes in me, he will never die spiritually. He has everlasting life, and though his body may perish for a time, he is and will ever be spiritually alive.

As the resurrection and the life, to those who believe on Him, Jesus is the means of spiritual resurrection as well as the hope of physical resurrection.

Believest thou this? – do you believe this? Do you believe in me?

- “Do you believe that I alone am the source of resurrection power and eternal life?” (MacArthur, 2006)
John 3:15-18 - That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.
- John 6:50 - This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.
- John 10:28 - And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

She saith unto him, Yea, Lord – yes Lord.

I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world – I have believed (perfect tense) that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who should come into the world to deliver it (Is. 9:6; Mic. 5:2).

- “Martha issues the most complete Christological confession in the entire gospel, remarkably similar to John’s purpose statement near the end of the gospel (v. 27; cf. 20: 31).” (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 3105-3107)
- When Jesus’ purpose and timing differed from her own, Martha rooted her response in an affirmation of Jesus’ identity.

- Application: when God's will differs from our own, we must root our response in an affirmation of His identity.
 - o If He is who He claims to be (all knowing, all loving, all powerful), then I can trust what He does, even when I don't understand it.
 - o I can trust His purposes, His timing, and His heart.

John 1:49 - Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

John 4:42 - And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

John 6:69 - And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

John 9:36-38 - He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

Application

When pain and tragedy strike, we are not as the unbelievers who have no hope and comfort. We believe that death is not the end, and that there is coming a day when we will live and reign with God forever and ever in a time when sickness and death and pain are all things of the past. That is coming. That day is on God's calendar.

As Christians, We know God and love God and know that God loves us. In the midst of these moments when pain and tragedy strike, we can trust His purposes, His timing, and His heart. His purposes are greater than ours. His timing is better than ours, and His heart is more perfect than ours.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 29 – JOHN 11:1-27

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 11:1-3, Luke 10:38-42, Mark 14:3, and John 12:3</p>	<p>What background information do we know about Mary, Martha, and Lazarus?</p>
<p>T Read John 11:4-16</p>	<p>In what way did Jesus' purpose and timing in this story differ from those of the sisters as well as Jesus' disciples?</p>
<p>W Read John 11:1-27, John 5:24-29, and Daniel 12:2-3</p>	<p>What is the significant about Jesus' claim to be the resurrection and the life? Does He mean this to be true physically, spiritually, or both?</p>
<p>T Read John 11:28-45</p>	<p>What does this passage mean?</p>
<p>F Read John 11:28-45</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 11:28-45

Review

John 11 records the greatest miracle Jesus performed on earth before his death, burial, and resurrection: the raising of Lazarus from the dead.

It is ultimately this miracle that is the last straw for the religious leaders; it is the miracle which leads to his crucifixion.

John 11:4, "When Jesus heard *that*, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby. ⁵ Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. ⁶ When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was."

Jesus immediately fills his disciples in on the reason this event is happening. All of this happened to Glorify Jesus and to grow their faith. (Carson 1991)

John 20:31, "³¹ But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name."

Jesus wanted to manifest to all those present that he was the Messiah the Son of God. For some people this meant starting their faith in him, for others, it meant growing their faith in him.

John 11:11-15, "These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. ¹² Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. ¹³ Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. ¹⁴ Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. ¹⁵ And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him."

In short, Jesus tells them explicitly that he will raise Lazarus from the dead to grow their faith in him.

Now when Jesus got to Bethany, on outskirts of the town, Martha came to see him.

John 11:21-27, "²¹ Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. ²² But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give *it* thee. ²³ Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. ²⁴ Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. ²⁵ Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: ²⁶ And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? ²⁷ She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world."

Martha told Jesus that if he had been there, Lazarus would not have died.

“Verse 22 must be taken more generally: Martha is not only persuaded that her brother would not have died had Jesus been present, but even now, in her bereavement, she has not lost her confidence in Jesus, and still recognizes the peculiar intimacy he enjoys with his Father, an intimacy that ensures unprecedented fruitfulness to his prayers.” (Carson 1991)

Jesus responds with, “²³Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.”, which Martha takes to mean that Lazarus will rise again in the last day.

Instead of correcting her, Jesus uses this opportunity to teach her that He is the resurrection and the life.

²⁵Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: ²⁶And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?”

This is the fifth “I am...” statement of the Gospel of John. By saying “I am the resurrection and the life,” Jesus wants to complete Martha’s belief about the resurrection from the dead. He moves her from not only knowing **that** people will rise again, but also **who** will raise them from the dead.

He is teaching her that he alone is the one who can raise people from the dead in the last day, and he alone is the one who can give everlasting life. (Carson 1991)

“**11:25–26.** Jesus has repeatedly mentioned resurrection on the last day (5:21, 25–29; 6:39–40). In this he has been in line with mainstream Judaism. But these references have also insisted that he alone, under the express sanction of the Father, would raise the dead on the last day. The same truth is now repeated in the pithy claim, *I am the resurrection and the life*. Jesus’ concern is to divert Martha’s focus from an abstract belief in what takes place on the last day, to a personalized belief in him who alone can provide it. Just as he not only gives the bread from heaven (6:27) but is himself the bread of life (6:35), so also he not only raises the dead on the last day (5:21, 25ff.) but is himself the resurrection and the life. There is neither resurrection nor eternal life outside of him.” (Carson 1991)

John 11:27, “Believest thou this?”

Jesus is asking her if she will place her trust in him as the one who is the resurrection and the life.

Martha’s response is one of faith. (Carson 1991)

²⁷She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.”

She strongly believes that he is the one who is the resurrection and the life.

Jesus is telling this to Martha to provide a theological backdrop to the miracle. In essence, he is going to prove that he truly is the resurrection and the life. He is proving that he is the only one who can give us eternal life, and raise us physically from the dead at the end of time.

He also gives this to Martha as a lens in which to view the death of Lazarus. If she can trust that Jesus is the resurrection and the life, she can trust that he will use the death of Lazarus for the glory of God.

But as is made clear by the rest of the passage, she does not. Martha's faith still needs to grow.

Sermon

As we continue to look at this story, I want each single one of us to ask this question: how is my faith? Do I believe that Jesus can use my suffering for God's glory?

1.) The Conversation with Mary

A.) Mary's Reaction

John 11:28-30, "And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. ²⁹ As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly, and came unto him. ³⁰ Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him."

After Martha had her conversation with Jesus, she went back to Mary to tell her that Jesus wanted to see her. Martha told her this in secret because she wanted Mary to have a private audience with Jesus without the mourners.

As soon as Mary heard that Jesus had come, she quickly got up and went to meet him outside of town.

John 11:31, "³¹ The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there."

The mourners thought that she was going to the tomb to weep, so they went with her! As mourners it was their responsibility to always be with the family and mourning with them.

John 11:32, "³² Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."

Mary, overcome with emotion, collapses at the feet of Jesus sobbing and consumed with grief. Her heart is broken by the fact that Jesus had not healed Lazarus. But there is more to the story.

επεσεν - "*fall down, throw oneself to the ground as a sign of devotion.*" (Danker and Bauer 2000)

Mary throws herself down at the feet of Jesus as a sign of devotion to him. Just like Martha with her confession, Mary had not completely lost her faith or devotion to Jesus.

She even says the exact same thing as Martha said, "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died."

- Her saying the same exact thing to Jesus that her sister Martha had, implies that, no doubt, they had discussed this between the two of them. (Sorenson, 2007)

"When Mary reaches Jesus, she falls at his feet—indicating, perhaps, less emotional restraint than her sister displayed—and utters the same thing Martha had said (v. 21). This similarity surely makes it harsh to conclude (with Schnakenberg, 2. 333), that 'Mary gives the impression of being nothing but a complaining woman'. If unlike Martha she does not go on to affirm her continued faith in Jesus, her words nevertheless reveal her confidence that Jesus has power to heal. Her approach to Jesus is more emotional than that of her sister, and less private, and so the interchange now follows a different line." (Carson 1991)

Mary is expressing a certain level of faith in Jesus! Mary believed that he had the power to stop Lazarus from dying, if only he had been here a few days ago.

But her faith in Jesus is incomplete. She believed that he could have healed Lazarus of sickness, she believed that he was the Messiah, but part of her was still caught in the sin of unbelief.

During times of suffering in our lives, it is very easy to have an incomplete faith in Jesus. In the case of Mary and Martha, they were followers of Jesus! They loved him and were devoted to him, but the death of Lazarus made them struggle to believe in Jesus' ability and power to work out Lazarus's death for the glory of God.

And during trials in our own lives, it is hard to see how God is going to use our suffering for his glory.

1. God, how can you use the death of my mom for your glory?
2. God, I lost my job, what are you going to do out of this?
3. God, this situation is so complicated, what are you doing?

It is during those times that it is easy to lose our trust and confidence in Jesus.

Illustration – the pastor search in 2020

How does Jesus respond to their unbelief, and their sorrow? And what does that teach us about Jesus' response to our unbelief and sorrow?

B.) Jesus' Anger

John 11:33, "When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled."

During the funeral customs at the time, a family was required to have at least two flute players and a professional wailing woman to weep with the family. That Mary and Martha

had so many people wailing at the funeral shows that they were probably well to do. (Carson 1991)

Mary is weeping at Jesus feet, and the crowd is weeping with her! People are crying all over the place.

And Jesus response to their sorrow is a bit unexpected. He becomes deeply troubled.

“he groaned in the spirit...” – ενεβριμησατο – to feel strongly about something, often with the implication of being indignant (Carson 1991) (Danker and Bauer 2000) (Louw and Nida 1996)

“troubled” – to cause inward turmoil (Danker and Bauer 2000)

Jesus became violently agitated and troubled when He saw their weeping. “Troubled” likely refers to some physical manifestation of His internal grief (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884).

Now as we will see in a moment, Jesus, while he was angry, was also completely compassionate, merciful, and understanding of their sorrow.

There is no tension between Jesus’ anger and his love. Because Jesus is the sinless Son of God, these emotions are not in tension for him. Scripture describes him with both emotions.

Matthew 11:28-29, “Come unto me, all *ye* that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.”

This is the same Jesus who could also pronounce his judgement and anger on the people of Jerusalem.

Matthew 23:37-38, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not! ³⁸ Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.”

Jesus can be compassionate and indignant at the same time.

Now the question is, why was Jesus angry? He was angry at their unbelief.

“Others think that the anger is directed at the unbelief itself. The men and women before him were grieving like pagans, like ‘the rest of men, who have no hope’ (1 Thess. 4:13). Profound grief at such bereavement is natural enough; grief that degenerates to despair, that pours out its loss as if there were no resurrection, is an implicit denial of that resurrection...The one who always does what pleases his Father (8:29) is indignant when faced with attitudes that are not governed by the truths the Father has revealed.” (Carson 1991)

But Jesus not only is angry with them, because of his love and affection he sorrows with them.

C.) Jesus' Sorrow

John 11:34-37, “³⁴ And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. ³⁵ Jesus wept.

Jesus asks them where they laid his body, and they told him to follow them. It is at this moment that we see another side of the emotions of Jesus. He weeps.

“The word translated as wept) literally means ‘to weep.’ Often at funerals when close friends and family are confronted with the casket or the graveside, emotions can no longer be contained. Though one knows the loved one is gone, the physical sight of the grave or the casket with their finality and obvious loss overwhelm the emotions. As Jesus was brought to the actual grave, He, too, broke down and cried.” (Sorenson, 2007)

- This verse is the only time that this particular word for “crying” is used in the New Testament.

Their unbelief triggers anger, but their sorrow produces compassion. Jesus wept is a beautiful example of the humanity of Jesus.

Isaiah 53:3 - He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Jesus, as a man, fully understands our sorrows. He's not an impersonal deity who sits aloof on his throne, he stepped into humanity to experience our pain and our suffering.

So, remember when you face times of suffering, Jesus is the friend who will walk with you. Run to the feet of Jesus today. He will not run you off, he will not ignore you. Jesus is always there to listen, and he is always there to comfort you.

Matthew 11:28-29, “Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

But Jesus does so much more than experience our pain, he uses our pain for the glory of God.

D.) The Jews' Reaction

John 11:36-38, “³⁶ Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? ³⁸ Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.”

As one who truly cared for Lazarus, could not this one who had just miraculously healed a blind man several months prior, have healed Lazarus so that he didn't die?

Jesus, once again, being violently moved within Himself, came to the grave of Lazarus.

Lazarus was buried in a cave, which was common practice during that time. It could have been a natural cave or one carved out of stone, and the entrance was sealed with a stone. (Carson 1991)

“The cave floor would be leveled, and shelves for the bodies cut into the walls. The tomb was located outside the village, so that the living would not become ritually defiled by contact with dead bodies (Num. 19:16; cf. Matt. 23:27; Luke 11:44). It was also sealed by a large round stone, which was rolled in front of the opening to keep grave robbers and animals out.” (MacArthur, 2006)

Their lack of faith of the mourners again causes Jesus to be angry. It was at this point that Jesus requested the stone to be moved.

2.) The Resurrection of Lazarus

John 11:39-40, “Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been *dead* four days. ⁴⁰ Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?”

Jesus tells them to take away the stone, and Martha pipes up! This shows again that she does not have faith in him.

Now Jesus did not make it clear to her that he would raise Lazarus from the dead. In this question, he is summarizing what he taught her, that He is the resurrection and the life. By doing so, Jesus is pointing this out, that if He truly is the resurrection and the life, then He can be trusted to use Lazarus’s death for his glory. (Carson 1991)

John 11:41-42, “Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. ⁴² And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said *it*, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.”

Jesus prays out loud to God the Father, and thanks him that he has already heard him. This shows that Jesus had already prayed for Lazarus to be raised from the dead. (Carson 1991) Jesus is largely not praying for His own benefit, but for the benefit of those around him.

“And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said *it*, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.”

Jesus prayed this to show his intimate relationship to the Father, and to demonstrate to some around him that he was in fact sent from God the Father.

This fits into the first theme that we talked about. Jesus is not only doing this to grow the faith of His followers, but to give miraculous evidence that he is God the Son.

John 11:43-44, “And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. ⁴⁴ And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.”

After Jesus prays, he performs the greatest miracle outside of his own resurrection. He calls out with a loud voice to the grave...

“Lazarus, come forth!”

Lazarus came to life! He kind of hobbled out of the grave, and Jesus commands them to let him out of his grave clothes.

Application

1. Proof of the Resurrection

This is the evidence of Jesus claim to be the resurrection and the life. He is the only source of eternal life; he is the only one who will raise us physically from the dead. Raising Lazarus from the dead was the vindication of the claims of Jesus.

The resurrection of Lazarus gives us assurance of a future hope, that Jesus is coming back. He will raise the dead and carry those who are still alive up with him into heaven.

1 Cor. 15:51-57, “⁵¹ Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, ⁵² In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. ⁵³ For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality. ⁵⁴ So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. ⁵⁵ O death, where *is* thy sting? O grave, where *is* thy victory? ⁵⁶ The sting of death *is* sin; and the strength of sin *is* the law. ⁵⁷ But thanks *be* to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

No matter how bad the world gets, no matter how much sin and death is in the world, we can rest assured in the fact that there will be a resurrection of the dead, and we will spend eternity with God in heaven.

2. The Glory in Suffering

Jesus also glorified himself by showing Mary, Martha, and his disciples that He was trustworthy, that He had the power to use their suffering for his glory! Jesus strengthened their faith.

Whatever you are going through right now, Jesus is sovereignly working out his plan in your life for his glory. You might not know how, you might not know when, but you can trust him. He’s the Messiah, the Son of God, the resurrection, and the life, why wouldn’t you?

So, before you even know how God is going to do that, strengthen your faith in him. Choose to believe that he will work it out for his glory.

3. The Way to Heaven

Jesus also glorified himself by showing those that did not yet believe in him that he was truly the Messiah, the Son of God. And many believed on him.

John 11:45, “⁴⁵ Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.”

Through the resurrection power of Jesus, many believed on him. The only way you can know that you will be able to go to heaven is by trusting in Jesus. The only way you can have the hope of heaven after you die, is through Jesus.

Conclusion

Lazarus’s death was for the purpose of glorifying God in Christ Jesus.

1. Jesus is the resurrection and the life.
2. Jesus will work out your suffering for the glory of God.
3. Jesus is the only way to heaven.

Don’t allow your circumstances to grow the sin of unbelief in your heart, strengthen your faith in Jesus.



Weekly Devotional Guide

WEEK 30 – JOHN 11:28-45

READING	STUDY QUESTION
<p>M Read John 11:28-32</p>	<p>What do these verses reveal about Mary's faith? What should our faith look like during trials in our life?</p>
<p>T Read John 11:33-37</p>	<p>What is significant about the way Jesus reacts to their sorrow? What does it teach us about his humanity?</p>
<p>W Read John 11:37-45</p>	<p>What was Jesus proving about himself by raising Lazarus from the dead? How does the resurrection of Lazarus give us assurance as Christians?</p>
<p>T Read John 11:46-57</p>	<p>What does this passage mean?</p>
<p>F Read John 11:46-57</p>	<p>How does this passage apply to me?</p>

JOHN 11:46-57

Review

Lazarus was dying.

Mary & Martha sent word to Jesus believing that He could save his life.

Jesus responded in accordance with His purposes and timing.

He waited two days to leave, and by the time He arrived, Lazarus had been dead four days.

Martha, Mary, and the mourners all really say the same thing to Jesus: "If you had been here, Lazarus would not have had to die."

What does Jesus do? He went to the tomb. He had them roll the stone away. He cried out, "Lazarus, get out here."

Lazarus hobbled out of the tomb. Jesus had raised him from the dead.

"And with that John draws a curtain on the scene. He does not describe Lazarus's tearful reunion with Martha and Mary, or the stunned reactions of the people in the crowd. Nor does he report on Lazarus's experience after resurrection. All of that would have detracted from his reasons for recounting the miracle—that the Lord Jesus Christ might be glorified (v. 4) and that the readers of John's gospel might believe that Jesus is who He claimed to be (20:31)." (MacArthur, 2006, pp. 510-511)

45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him – we're told here that the mourners came to see Mary. We don't know why only Mary is mentioned. Perhaps she was more in need of consolation than Martha. Perhaps she was the more sociable of the two and knew more people.

- Regardless, there were many of the mourners, some of whom may have been physically involved in the miracle by rolling away the stone and undressing the body, that believed on him
- They saw. They understood. They believed.

THE FALLOUT OF LAZARUS' RESURRECTION

1.) The Notification of the Pharisees

46 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done –

- They saw. They understood. They would not believe.
- Luke 16:30-31 - And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Application – this has got to be frustrating for Jesus. In John 5, Jesus healed a lame man, and how did the Jews respond? They wanted to kill Him. In John 9, Jesus healed a blind man, and how did the Jews respond? They tried to kill Him. In John 11, Jesus raised a man from the dead, and how did many of these mourners respond? They ran off to Jerusalem to tattle on Jesus to the religious leaders, who, you guessed it, are going to determine from this day forward to kill him.

- Don't you be one of those people that sows discord, that stirs the pot.
 - o Prov. 6:16-19 – there are six things that the Lord hates and seven that are an abomination
 - A proud look
 - **A lying tongue**
 - Hands that shed innocent blood
 - Perverse heart
 - *Feet that are swift to cause trouble*
 - **A liar**
 - *One that sows discord among the brethren*
- Jesus is just helping people, and He's getting undercut and persecuted for it.
- I think there are times that all of us have tried to do a good thing or tried to help people and gotten railroaded because of it. To you, I just want to say, "You're not alone."
- John 15:18, 20 – if the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you...if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.

These mourners tattled on Jesus to the Pharisees.

Understanding the significance of Jesus' most powerful and public miracle yet, the religious elite of Jerusalem are galvanized into action.

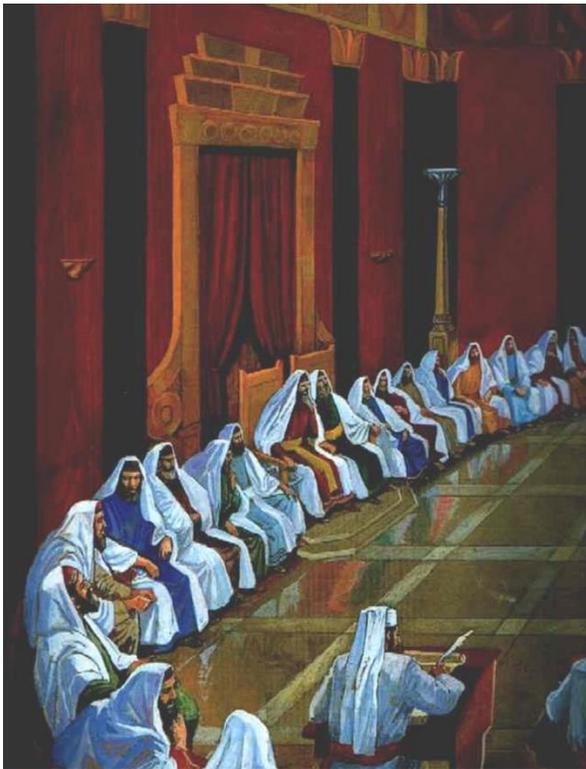
2.) The Convening of the Sanhedrin

47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council – the Pharisees alongside of "former high priests and members of important priestly families" called for meeting of the Sanhedrin (Sanhedrin – assembly/council), the Jewish supreme court, the ruling council of Israel that consisted of 70 men and the high priest. (MacArthur, 2006)



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- Illustration – on the US supreme court, you have 9 justices, some of which are conservative and some of which are liberal. Right now, there is a conservative majority.
- Just like the US supreme court, the 70 person Sanhedrin consisted of conservatives (Pharisees – middle class) and liberals (Sadducees – upper class). There was a strong liberal majority with the Sadducees. The two parties disagreed on a lot, and

yet there was on particular person that would unify them in a most surprising way: Jesus.

- Jesus unified the Pharisees and Sadducees in their mutual hatred for and opposition to Him. We will see this born out in the details of this private session of the Sanhedrin (the Jewish supreme court).

None of the other gospel writers record any information at all about this meeting of the Sanhedrin.

The million dollar question is, “How did John gain access to the content of this conversation?”

- We don't know for sure, but John likely received the details of this meeting from someone who was there at this meeting.
- There is a member of the Sanhedrin who is only mentioned in John's gospel and is painted by John as one sympathetic to Jesus. Do you know who it is?
 - Nicodemus
 - It's my personal belief that Nicodemus is John's source for the private details of the contents of this “supreme court” session.
 - Nicodemus would have been at this meeting, as well as Joseph of Arimathea, but Nicodemus is unique to John's gospel.

And said, What do we?— what do we do? That is the question that defines all crisis management emergency meetings. Have you ever been in a meeting like that?

- Illustration – receiving a call about a VBS bus that had broken down late at night on the train tracks in Palmdale
- Imagine the Pharisees receiving word about what Jesus had just done. “You're never going to guess what Jesus just did...” What did he do? “He raised someone from the dead who had been dead for four days.” What? Are you kidding me?
- Oh my goodness. What do we do about this guy?

For this man doeth many miracles – He is doing many miracles. We can't deny that. We can't discredit them. This is a major problem.

Psalm 2:2-4 - The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

Matthew 26:3 - Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,

Mark 14:1- After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death.

Luke 22:2 - And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people.

48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation.

If we let him thus alone – if we do nothing

All men will believe on him – then the people will believe on Him and follow Him blindly as their Messiah. Once Rome catches word of this insurrection, especially if something happens at the Passover feast right around the corner, the results are going to be bad

And the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation – Rome doesn't tolerate insurrection. They'll come and take away our place (i.e. Jerusalem, the temple, or their position of power) (Acts 6:13-14) and our people. We'll be left with nothing. (Barnes, 1834)

- Take note of the emphasis on “us”
- If we don't do something, we are going to lose everything.
- Acts 19:26-27 - 26 Moreover ye see and hear, that not alone at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands: 27 So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.
- Application: embracing Jesus often will cost you.
 - o Matthew 16:24 - Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.
 - o It might cost you relationships, pleasure, control of your life's direction.
 - o But can I tell you something? Jesus is so much better than any of those things. You and I get the better end of that bargain every single time.

1 Thessalonians 2:15-16 - Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us; and they please not God, and are contrary to all men: Forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins alway: for the wrath is come upon them to the uttermost.

Luke 21:20-24 - And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Luke 23:28-31 - But Jesus turning unto them said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are

coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

49 And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year – Caiaphas was the sitting high priest at that time

- “Joseph Caiaphas had been appointed high priest in A.D 18 by the Roman prefect Valerius Gratus. He would continue in office until he was deposed in A.D. 36. He was the son-in-law of Annas, who had served as high priest from A.D. 6–15 and still retained a great deal of power and influence (cf. 18:22; Luke 3:2).”
- Due to how politicized the office had become, there was frequent turnover with the position. Caiaphas’ long standing 18-year tenure in the office was actually a testament to how politically savvy he was. (MacArthur, 2006)

Said unto them, Ye know nothing at all – literally translates to “You don’t know nothing.”

- “You know nothing of what needs to take place in this situation, but I do.”
- We’re beating around the bush here.

John 18:13-14 - And led him away to Annas first; for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year. Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

Luke 3:2 - Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

Acts 4:6 - And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

1 Corinthians 3:18-19 - Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness.

50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

Nor consider that it is expedient for us – nor are you taking into account that it is advantageous for us

That one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not – that one person should die for the sake of the people so that the whole nation doesn’t die

- "It is a good thing that this man dies if it means that the nation can be saved."
 - o Caiaphas is thinking in terms of salvation from Rome. "If we don't do something about this guy, He's going to take the whole nation down with Him."
 - Caiaphas was right. Jesus' death would save the nation, but not in the way he thought. Because man's true need is not salvation from political oppression, but from sin and hell.
 - Romans 5:8 – but God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
- This is a DeJa'Vu/eureka moment. I can just imagine Nicodemus or someone else later relaying this conversation to John, and remembering how Caiaphas said, "It's a good thing if Jesus dies to save the people" and John thinking to himself, "Wow. Are you kidding me? He said that? Did he realize what he was saying?"
 - o John is going to explain to his readers the significance of this.

Romans 3:8 - And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.

51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

And this spake he not of himself – John does not mean to clarify here that Caiaphas was referring to Jesus and not to himself. Obviously Caiaphas was referring to Jesus. John here means to clarify that Caiaphas did not make that statement solely of his own accord. He did not say it of himself. It was God that led him to say it.

But being the high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation – being the one who was supposed to be God's official representative to the people, God led him to prophesy truthfully that Jesus should die for the nation (just not in the way that he thought it would happen).

- When Caiaphas made that statement, he meant it for evil, but God used it for God.
- " So, paradoxically, the Jews went ahead in their resolve to have Jesus executed, and in AD 70 the nation still perished when the Romans razed Jerusalem and the temple." (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 3144-3146)

Exodus 28:30 - And thou shalt put in the breastplate of judgment the Urim and the Thummim; and they shall be upon Aaron's heart, when he goeth in before the LORD: and Aaron shall bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart before the LORD continually.

Numbers 22:28 - And the LORD opened the mouth of the ass, and she said unto Balaam, What have I done unto thee, that thou hast smitten me these three times?

Numbers 24:2 - And Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding in his tents according to their tribes; and the spirit of God came upon him.

Isaiah 53:5-8 - But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

Daniel 9:26 - And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

2 Corinthians 5:21 - For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

And not for that nation only – Here John adds a clarifying comment that Jesus would not just die for the nation of Israel

But that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad – but also so that He might gather together into one fold children of God from all nations, backgrounds, and ethnicities

- Galatians 3:28 - 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.
 - o That doesn't mean that there are no distinctions between us. What it means is that as Christians, we are not defined by how we differ from one another. We are defined by what unites us...by who unites us...by Jesus.
- Jesus would not just die for the sins of Israel. He would die for the sins of the world. That's the gospel message.
- Application: The gospel
 - o Sin separates us from God.
 - It bars us from heaven.
 - It sentences us to hell.
 - It comes for all of us.
 - o Jesus as the perfectly sinless Son of God died for your sin and my sins and the sins of the whole world so that we might not perish.
 - o If we will receive by faith what He has done for us, we can be saved from our sins.

John 1:29 - The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

John 12:32 - And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

1 John 2:2 - And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

John 10:16 - And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

Romans 9:25-26 - As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.

Ezekiel 34:12 - As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.

Here we see the true grimness of Caiaphas' suggestion. He was not merely suggesting that it would be a good thing if Jesus died for the sake of the nation. He was suggesting that it was their duty as the political and spiritual leaders of Israel to make it happen.

From that day forward, a group that was radically divided on many issues, was unified in their resolve to execute Jesus.

Jesus is a problem, they thought, and this is THE ONLY solution.

3.) The Withdrawal of Jesus

54 Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.

Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews – as the all-knowing one, Jesus knew the Sanhedrin's intent, and He also knew that it was not yet time for Him to die...although that time was fast approaching. As a result, Jesus determined to withdraw from public appearances for a time.

But went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples – He and His disciples left Bethany (which was right next to Jerusalem) and withdrew to a small village named Ephraim near the Judean wilderness.

- We don't know exactly where this village, but it was likely 10-15 miles north east of Jerusalem.

- Some identify Ephraim with Taiyibeh, some with Ephron (2 Chr. 13:19), and others with Ophrah (Josh. 18:23). (Kostenberger, 2013, pp. Loc 3146-3147) (Spence & Exell, 1883)



55 And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.

And the Jews' Passover was nigh at hand – This is the third and last Passover that John mentions in his gospel (2:13; 6:4). The annual feast was just right around the corner.

- John calls it the Jew's Passover as an explanatory note for his non-Jewish readers. And many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the Passover, to purify themselves – in order to partake of the Passover as a Jew, you had to be ceremonially clean (cf. Num. 9:4-6; John 18:28). If you became ceremonially unclean because of contact with a dead body (Num. 19:11), infectious disease (Lev. 13:9-11), or an unclean animal (Lev. 5:3), you had to be ceremonially cleansed before you could take part in temple worship, including feast celebrations. That ceremonial cleansing would take place through waiting periods, washings, and often sacrifices (Num. 19:11-12; Lev. 14:19). (Got Questions)

- Thus, many were already making their way up to Jerusalem to be ceremonially cleansed and to ensure that they would be permitted to partake in worship in the Passover Festival.

John 2:13 - And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,

John 6:4 - And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

Exodus 12:11-14 - And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt. And

this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an ordinance for ever.

Numbers 9:4-6 - 4 And Moses spake unto the children of Israel, that they should keep the passover. 5 And they kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the Lord commanded Moses, so did the children of Israel. 6 And there were certain men, who were defiled by the dead body of a man, that they could not keep the passover on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day:

2 Chronicles 30:17-20 - For there were many in the congregation that were not sanctified: therefore the Levites had the charge of the killing of the passovers for every one that was not clean, to sanctify them unto the LORD. For a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim, and Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the passover otherwise than it was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, The good LORD pardon every one That prepareth his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary. And the LORD hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.

1 Corinthians 11:28 - But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.

56 Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?

Then sought they for Jesus - in reference to the Jews from the country that made their way up to Jerusalem early for Passover

And spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple - where they came to purify themselves (Gill, 1811)

What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? - people were talking, and Jesus was the talk of the town. What do you think? Do you think He'll really come to Passover? The reason they were talking is explained in verse 57.

John 7:11 - Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?

57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him.

Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him -

Application: Jesus faced a dilemma between duty and danger. On the one hand, He was required by Jewish law to attend the feast. On the other hand, if He did, He would almost certainly be arrested and executed.

- People were talking. "What will He do?"

Illustration – If the government outlawed church, what would you do? Would you still go? What if the government knew about the location of your church, and if you showed up, you were guaranteed to go to prison? Would you have the guts and courage to show up?

- That's the situation Jesus faced.

The stage is set. The religious leaders have issued a warrant for Jesus' arrest. Passover is quickly approaching. Jesus is required by law as a Jew to attend the Passover Feast in Jerusalem. What will He do? The answer to that question is the subject of chapter 12.

John 5:16-18 - And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day. But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

John 8:59 - Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

John 9:22 - These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

John 10:39 - Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand,

Application

In your life, when your duty to Christ might cost you something, how do you respond? How will you respond? Will you cower back in fear, or will you stand up with courage?

- What if doing the right thing means you don't make as much money as you could have?
- What if doing the right thing costs your relationships with people who don't appreciate your integrity?
- What if doing the right thing pulls you out of your comfort zone?
- When your duty to Christ could cost you, how will you respond?

study questions

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

2.) *Read John 11:45-46, 53-57. What type of responses did Jesus elicit from people for His good deeds and teachings? What lessons can this teach us about the responses we will face when we follow in His footsteps?*

digging deeper

1.) *Read John 11:49-51, John 18:13-24, Luke 3:1-2, and Acts 4:1-6. What information can we learn about Annas & Caiaphas from these passages?*

2.) *Read John 11:55 and 1 Cor. 11:23-32. In what way does the Jewish practice of ceremonial cleansing prior to Passover remind us of the importance of examining our hearts for sin prior to partaking in communion as Christians? Focus on 1 Cor. 11:28-30.*

looking forward

1.) *Read John 12:1-11. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

2.) *Think application. How does John 12:1-11 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 12:1-11

Review

In John 11, Jesus had publicly raised Lazarus from the dead following four days in the tomb. Many believed on Him, but others ratted Him out to the Pharisees. The Sanhedrin convened and determined to execute Jesus. An arrest warrant was issued, and as it was not yet His time to die, Jesus withdrew from Bethany to Ephraim in the Judaeen wilderness.

Sermon

The Anointing of Jesus

1.) The Worship of Jesus

The key theme in this passage of Scripture is worship. We see several different examples of worshipping (ascribing worth) to Jesus by Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. Then we see another in this passage of Scripture who is the opposite. Rather than ascribing worth to Jesus, he devalues Him. His treatment of Jesus contrasts sharply with that of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus'.

1 Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

Then Jesus six days before the Passover came to Bethany – we are now within the last week of Jesus' life, and He makes the journey from Ephraim to Bethany (which was 2 miles from Jerusalem).

- Jesus would have arrived on either the Friday night or Saturday prior to the following week's Passover.
- The main story of this passage is the anointing of Jesus with spikenard by Mary. Matthew and Mark discuss, I believe, the same story from a different vantage point in their gospels (Matthew 26; Mark 14). However, there is a potential problem with trying to reconcile the different accounts, and it's that the timing seems to differ.
 - o In Matthew and Mark, we're told that two days prior to Passover the religious authorities convened and plotted to secretly seize and execute Jesus. Then, the story of the anointing of Jesus is told. Some have alleged there's a contradiction. John says it happened six days prior. Matthew and Mark say two. Others have tried to say that Jesus had two separate anointings the week before Passover. I think the more likely explanation is that Matthew and Mark are flashing back to that six day point in time and they've arranged their material topically rather than chronologically.
(MacArthur, Preparing for Christ's Death Matt. 26:1-16, 1984) (Lacey, 2019)

Where Lazarus was, which had been dead, who he raised from the dead – this is the location where Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived, and where Jesus had recently raised Lazarus from the dead.

- Because of the miracle Jesus had done there, Bethany became known for a person and an event. That person was Lazarus, and that event was his resurrection. (MacArthur, 2006)
- Illustration of places becoming associated with people and events: Waco, Texas: David Koresh, the Branch Davidians, and their standoff with the authorities

2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

There they made him a supper – in Bethany, Jesus was served a formal supper in his honor

- Rather than turning Jesus in as the Sanhedrin ordered, these in Bethany honored him with a dinner.
- Application: what will you do with Jesus when He becomes branded as an outcast?
 - o Illustration: sexual ethics, gender identity, abortion, holiness

And Martha served - Martha served the supper, likely with her attention primarily directed to Jesus

- In this passage of Scripture, you're going to see each member of the family worshipping Jesus in a unique way.
 - o The family dynamic was pointed out to me by some in our group this past week.
 - o Martha – worships through serving
 - o Mary – worships through giving
 - o Lazarus – worships through testifying
- Why is it a good thing for Martha to serve Jesus here in John 12, but a bad thing for her to serve Jesus in Luke 10:38-42? There is nothing bad about serving Jesus and others. In fact, we are commanded to do so biblically.
- Matthew 23:11 - But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant
- John 12:26 - If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.
- Application: the problem arises when we become so caught up in serving Jesus that ignore our relationship with Jesus
 - o Thinking in terms of what, not who.

But Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him – Lazarus too is a guest at the dinner

- Lazarus' description as a guest here seems to imply that this dinner did not take place in his home. Whereas John only implies this, Matthew and Mark state clearly that this dinner did not take place in Mary, Martha, and Lazarus' home. It took place in the home of Simon the Leper. From this passage and the other gospel accounts, we know that Mary, Martha, Jesus, Lazarus, Simon and the disciples (including John) are all present at this dinner (17 people).
 - o The fact that Simon has a home and the means to provide a meal for Jesus and other guests suggests that he no longer had leprosy. If he did, he would

be a contagion risk and would not be permitted to live in the city. Thus, Simon was a man who at one point had leprosy, in the present did not have leprosy, and somehow knew Jesus. What does that sound like to you? It makes me think that at some point in the past Jesus may have healed Simon of leprosy.

Sat at the table with him - Meals like this one back in first century Palestine were served on low U-shaped tables that guests laid down sideways next to by propping themselves up on an elbow. (MacArthur, 2006)

Mark 14:3 - And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head.

Luke 10:38-42 - Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

Luke 22:27 - For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.

Revelation 3:20 - Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.

“Expecting his readers to know her from oral or written tradition, John had already introduced her in the previous chapter: “It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick” (11: 2).” (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, pp. Loc 3180-3182)

- This provides further indication that John’s account refers to the same incident as does Matthew and Mark’s.

John 11:2 - (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard – 12 ounces of perfume extracted from the root and spike of a rare plant growing on the Himalayas in Northern India. (MacArthur, 2006) (Ellicott, 1905)

Illustration – 5 milliliter bottle of spikenard (\$70)

- It smells good. It smells strong.
- A 12 ounce pound would be the equivalent of 70 of these.

Very costly – because of how far away the plant and perfume were, the fragrance was very expensive. In fact, the value of 12 ounces of spikenard was three hundred denarii (300 days wages) (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3179)

- Assuming one day off a week, there are 312 working days in a year.
- Illustration – imagine giving a year’s wages to Jesus
 - o That very well may have been her life savings.
- Mary worshipped Jesus through sacrificial giving. When we give to the Lord, do you know what we’re doing? Worshipping. We are ascribing worth to Him. Jesus, this is for you. Use this for your glory.
 - o There is no gift you could ever give that would be too much for Jesus.

And anointed the feet of Jesus – According to Mark 14:3, this pint of perfume was kept in a sealed alabaster container. Alabaster was a stone that resembled white marble. Containers like these were sealed in order to prevent contamination. Thus, in order to access the perfume, you had to break the container. Mary broke the alabaster container, and then poured its contents on Jesus’ head (according to Matthew and Mark) and then his feet (according to John). (Got Questions)

- Remember, Jesus is in a reclining position when this happened.
- Imagine Mary doing this out of left field in the middle of dinner as an over the top expression of her love for Jesus.
- Servants cared for the feet of guests, not friends or hosts. She humbled herself in her giving.

And wiped his feet with her hair – it was improper etiquette for women to unbind their hair in public, but she didn’t care. (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3190)

- She gave sacrificially. She gave humbly. She gave without concern for what people would think of her.

And the house was filled with the odour of the ointment – written as if by someone remembering the events who was literally there when this happened.

- “I’ll never forget that smell.”
John 11:32 - Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

Matthew 26:6-13 - Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste? For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor. When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always. For in that she hath

poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

Mark 14:3-9 - And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on his head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her. And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

Luke 7:36-50 - 36 And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. 37 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, 38 And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. 39 Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. 40 And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. 41 There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. 42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? 43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. 44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. 45 Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. 46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. 47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. 48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. 49 And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? 50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

- Luke's account of Jesus' anointing by a sinful woman takes place earlier in his ministry at a Pharisee's home in Galilee.

2.) The Antagonism of Judas

Whereas only one verse describes Mary's act of devotion and sacrifice, five verses describe Judas' critique of Mary and Jesus' rebuke of him.

- He had such a critical spirit. Looking back, it's amazing that despite his own misgivings, Judas was able to see so clearly the fault in others.

4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,

Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him - This is the second time that Judas is mentioned in John's gospel. He was previously referred to in a derogatory fashion by John at the end of chapter 6, a time in which many turned away from Jesus.

- Judas is within one week of betraying Jesus, and it's shocking. It's no surprise that the religious leaders want Him executed, but it's shocking that one of the twelve that He's spent the last three years is going to sell Him out.

John 6:70-71 - Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

John 13:2 - And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

John 13:26 - Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.

5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? - Mary, what are you thinking? What is wrong with you? Why wouldn't you sell the ointment for a year's wages, and then the moneys could have been given to the poor? You just wasted all of that money.

- Application: many in the world today think the same way about Christians that give generously and sacrificially to the Lord through the church
 - o "You could have gotten a boat. You have a new car. You could have a bigger house."
 - o Illustration - friend growing up that always had the latest and greatest
- Judas is the only disciple that John identifies as critiquing Mary, but according to Matthew and Mark there were multiple disciples that were angry at Mary and frustrated that she would waste such a valuable resource. (Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9)

John 6:7 - Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

Matthew 20:2 - And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

Luke 18:22 - Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

This said he, not that he cared for the poor – Judas said this not out of concern for the poor, but out of concern for himself

But because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein – Jesus had given him charge of the money bag that He and the disciples lived off, and Judas helped himself to the money therein

- Illustration – discussing finances last Sunday evening at our annual church business meeting
 - Jesus' church treasurer was a thief
 - Here we discover that Judas was betraying Jesus long before he gave Him up for 30 pieces of silver. He was stealing from Him.
 - This comment by John looks forward in anticipation to Judas' betrayal of Jesus for thirty pieces of silver (likely in reference to 30 denarii)
 - Judas would betray Jesus for 1/10th the value of what Mary poured out on Jesus' head and feet
 - To Mary, Jesus was worth more than a year's wages. To Judas, Jesus wasn't even worth a tenth of that.
 - By the way, do you know how much you are worth to Jesus? He cares for you and loves you so much that He gave up the most precious thing He possibly could for you: His life.
 - Application: You might think, "That's crazy. I can't believe he would do that." And yet how many husbands and fathers have sold out church attendance, Jesus, their families for a 10% raise? For a few more dollars an hour?
 - Mary worshipped Jesus by giving sacrificially and selflessly to Him. Judas devalued Jesus by stealing from Him and by selling Him out for a month's wages, a paycheck.
- If Judas was so money centric, then why was he following Jesus?
 - It seems to me that Judas was following Jesus for what he would get out of it: perhaps an exalted position in Christ's kingdom. He was hopping on that bandwagon. But now, the authorities wanted Jesus' dead, and Judas' personal outlook was looking bleaker by the day.

1 Timothy 6:10 - For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

John 13:29 - For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

Then said Jesus, Let her alone – You, Judas, leave her alone.

Application: don't you criticize someone for worshipping Jesus.

Against the day of my burying hath she kept this – She might not have realized it, but in what she's done tonight, she's preemptively anointed my body for burial.

Matthew 26:12 - For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.

Illustration – it's weird for Jesus as a 30 year old to be talking about death. That would be like me as a 27 year old talking about my looming burial and death to the congregation.

“It was usual to embalm the dead with ointments and spices: Christ suggests, that the time of his death and burial were nigh, and that this woman had kept this ointment till now, for such a purpose; and whereas she would not be able to make use of it at the time of his interment, she had embalmed his body with it now, beforehand; though without any knowledge of his death, or any such intention and design in her, but the Holy Ghost so directing her: for this is not to be understood of her keeping any part of it till that time, which it does not appear she did.” (Gill, 1811)

Mark 14:6-8 - 6 And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me. 7 For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always. 8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand to anoint my body to the burying.

Matthew 27:57-60- When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always – Jesus was not downplaying the importance of being charitable to the poor. He was challenging his

disciples to keep their priorities straight. They had very little time left with Him physically to honor and appreciate Him.

At any point, Judas could have repented of his hypocrisy and humbly followed Jesus. Jesus would have welcomed him with open arms. He came to call sinners to repentance...and yet Judas would not repent. His heart was further hardened, and soon he would make the transition from hypocrite to traitor.

Application – Judas is a great example of those who follow Jesus for what they get out of it. Perhaps they view Jesus as means to an end, a better life perhaps. And then when things don't go the way they thought they would, rather than repenting of their selfishness and turning to Jesus in true faith, they betray Him in the end. They walk away from it all.

Judas is the polar opposite of Mary, Martha and Lazarus in this passage of Scripture.

- Martha served Jesus selflessly. Judas selfishly saw Jesus as a means to an end.
 - Mary gave to Jesus. Judas took from Jesus.
 - Lazarus testified of what Jesus had done in his life. Judas testified to the authorities of where to find Jesus so that they could end His life.
- John 13:33 - Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

John 16:5-7 - But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

3.) The Testimony of Lazarus

9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there – with Bethany being so close to Jerusalem, and crowds beginning to pile into Jerusalem for Passover, word soon spread that Jesus was staying in Bethany

And they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead – and they made the two mile journey, not just for Jesus' sake, but so that they could see the living and walking dead man: Lazarus.

- None of this happen unbeknownst to the Jewish religious authorities. They are fully aware of the crowds flocking to see Jesus in Bethany. (MacArthur, John Volumes 1&2 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2006)
 - o They're likely trying to figure out how to arrest Him without starting a riot of those who follow Him.

10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;

But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death – the chief priests deliberated in order that they might also put Lazarus to death.

- In the previous chapter, Caiaphas had remarked that it was a good thing if one man died to save the nation. Now, apparently it's no longer one, but two. Sin will take you further than you want to go, keep you longer than you want to stay, and cost you more than you want to pay.
- Jesus had healed on the Sabbath and claimed to be God, but what had Lazarus done? (Poole, 1990)
- He had just been dead. What are they going to do? Kill him again?
 - o It would have been so funny if they had and Jesus had raised him again.
- The chief priests were mostly Sadducees, and recall that the Sadducees didn't believe in the resurrection. (Ellicott, 1905)
- Lazarus was a living refutation of their doctrine that there is no resurrection as he had been raised to life by one who claimed to be the resurrection and the life (Matt. 23:23; Acts 23:8). (Plummer, 1902)
Luke 16:31 - And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

Because that by reason of him – the chief priests thought to kill Lazarus for the reason that

Many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus – because of him and his testimony of what Jesus had done in his life, many of the Jews went away, not only from Jerusalem, but also from the chief priests and Pharisees so as to believe on Jesus Christ. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

- Application: Lazarus worshipped Jesus by telling others about Him, by going forth. Because of his testimony, many believed, but others turned on Lazarus just as they had turned on Jesus.
- If you're going to tell others about Jesus, you will make a difference, but you also might make yourself a target for those who don't appreciate Jesus.
 - o Don't let the noise of your detractors discourage you from doing what God has called you to do.

Application

How's your worship this morning?

Are you serving Jesus like Martha? Are you giving of yourself and your gifts and your time as an expression of Jesus' worth to you? Are you worshipping by serving? If not, we have a ministry night coming up in just a few weeks.

Are you giving to Jesus like Mary? Do you see Jesus in terms of what you can get out of Him, or are you sacrificially giving back to Him as an expression of His worth to you?

Are you telling others about Jesus like Lazarus? What do I tell them about? You tell them about how you were dead in your sin with no hope, and then how Jesus raised you from the grave and gave you everlasting life. Are you worshipping Jesus by telling others about Him?

Are you worshipping Jesus, or, like Judas, is He a means to an end for you?

How's your worship this morning?

study questions

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Matthew 26:1-13 and Mark 14:1-9. Compare Matthew and Mark's account of Jesus' anointing with John's. What unique insights does each author give us?*

3.) *Read Luke 7:36-50. Compare Jesus' anointing by Mary in John 12 with this separate anointing that occurred earlier in His ministry. What similarities do you see? What differences? How do we know that Luke is referring to a separate anointing than Matthew, Mark, and John?*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 12:12-19. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 12:12-19 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 12:12-19

Review

Last week, we were in John 12:1-11, and we talked about worship, ascribing worth to Jesus. There was a dinner for Jesus at the home of Simon the leper in Bethany on the Saturday 6 days before Passover. Martha worshipped Jesus by serving at the dinner. Mary worshipped Jesus by giving in anointing Jesus with the spikenard at the dinner. Lazarus worshipped Jesus by testifying of Him. Contrasted against the positive example of these three siblings was Judas. He devalued Jesus. He didn't give. He took. He saw Jesus as a means to an end.

We ended in verses 9-11:

9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;

11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

Sermon

Whereas last week the passage revolved around the theme of worship, this week, as I studied the text, I couldn't help but notice the theme of meekness. We're going to see it all throughout this passage today.

What is meekness? Meekness is the fusion of strength with lowliness. It is the combination of guts and humility. It is incredibly rare, and it is an integral part of who Jesus is. We're going to see it all throughout the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.

1.) The Coming of the King

12 On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

On the next day – the dinner in Bethany and anointing of Jesus by Mary took place on Saturday, the Sabbath. The next day on which Jesus would make His triumphal entry into Jerusalem would be Sunday. That's why we refer to the Sunday before Easter as Palm Sunday.

The date of Jesus entry into Jerusalem is incredibly significant because of how it relates to prophecy. One of the reasons that we believe the Bible is true is because of prophecies regarding the future that are fulfilled to the letter.

In fact, there are 8 specific prophecies from the Old Testament regarding Jesus (where He would be born, how He would be born, when He would die, how He would die) that are so improbable that the odds of just these 8 being fulfilled by chance are $1/10^{17}$. To put those odds in perspective, imagine that you covered the state of Texas with quarters two feet deep, dropped a random marked quarter in the middle of the state, and sent someone in blindfolded. The odds of them by chance picking up that one quarter are the odds of those 8 prophecies regarding Jesus coming true by chance.

One of those prophecies is found in Daniel 9:24-27, and it was written 500 years before Jesus was born. It predicted that when the command was given to rebuild Jerusalem a 483 lunar year (360 day year) countdown (476 years and 25 days) would begin until the coming of the Messiah who would be cut off for His people. That command was given by King Artaxerxes on March 5th, 444 BC. Thus the countdown began. If you do the math, do you know what date you arrive at? Sunday, March 30th, AD 33...this exact day that Jesus will publicly ride into Jerusalem as King and Messiah.

Exodus 12:3-6 - 3 Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house: 4 And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. 5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats: 6 And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.

Much people were come to the feast – there was a great crowd from all over that had come to celebrate the Feast of Passover

- That means that most of the people that would be part of the crowd that will greet Jesus would have been primarily pilgrims, rather than residents of Jerusalem.
- Some estimate that there may have been a million Jews in Jerusalem for Passover. (MacArthur, 2006)

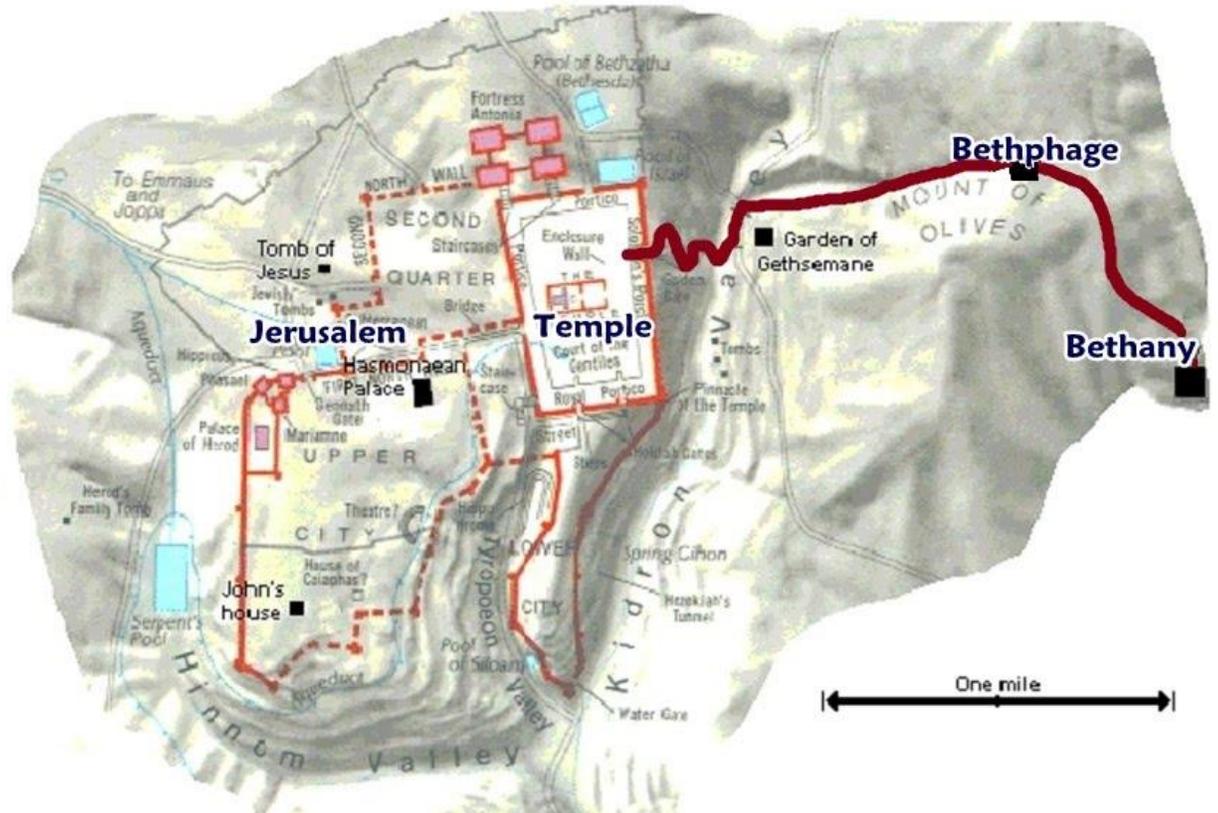
When they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem – word had spread among those in Jerusalem that despite His arrest warrant and the animosity of the religious authorities towards Him, Jesus was coming to Jerusalem for Passover.

- Do you know what we begin to see here in this passage of Scripture? You see the strength of Jesus here. Remember, meekness is the fusion of strength and humility. You see the strength of Jesus here.

- Luke 9:51 - And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly (in determination) set his face to go to Jerusalem,
 - o You know what you see there? Guts. Strength. Inner resolve.
- You see strength here in a couple of ways:
 - o It took guts to stand up to the religious authorities. They had issued an arrest warrant for Him. They had drawn a hard line in the sand. What would He do? Would He attend Passover as the Jewish law commanded or would He stay away to protect Himself? And He didn't just go to Jerusalem. He went publicly. He crossed that line for all to see. That took guts. That took strength.
 - Application: if we're going to follow in Jesus footsteps, there are going to be some times where we stand up for what's right come what may. We need that kind of strength ...to do right regardless of the fallout.
 - That strength doesn't come from us. It comes from leaning on the Holy Spirit (God) within us.
 - o It took guts for Him to enter Jerusalem knowing what would happen there in five days...knowing that the cross awaited. The inner turmoil Jesus faced knowing the events He was setting in motion is hard to describe...knowing that He faced torture and death by hanging on the cross.
 - Illustration – imagine the crowd shouting Hosannah and Jesus kind of sick to His stomach, gulping, “Yup. Here we go.”
 - You say, “Jesus didn't get sick to His stomach. What are you talking about?” Yes He did.
 - John 12:27 - Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.
 - Matthew 26:37-39 - 37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. *(I use that expression with our deacons sometimes. “Guys, it's been a heavy week.”)* 38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. 39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.
 - You know what you see there? Guts. Strength.
 - Strength is not the absence of inner turmoil. It is the courage to do what is right despite it.

Matthew 21:8 - And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way.

13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.



(Israel and You, 2014)

There was already a crowd with Jesus in Bethany (John 12:9). When Jesus began to make His journey from Bethany to Jerusalem, another crowd of pilgrims from Jerusalem came out of the city to meet Him. Thus, these two groups intertwined to form a massive entourage that would accompany Jesus on the way into Jerusalem.

Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him – although palm branches are typically more associated with the Feast of Tabernacles, from other Jewish accounts around to this time period we know that palm branches had become a customary means of greeting a returning conqueror or celebrating victory. (1 Macc. 13:51). (Spence & Exell, 1883) (MacArthur, 2006)

- People covered the path Jesus took into Jerusalem with palm branches and coats.
- Perhaps this further illustrates the views of many Jews that Jesus would be a political Messiah who would break the yoke of Rome from off of Israel's back. They saw Jesus a savior from Rome. They saw Him, not as He was, but as they wanted Him to be, and that excited them.
- This moment was a definitive act of rebellion against the Jewish religious authorities and it may have been seen by many in the crowd as the spark of a revolution that Jesus would now lead.

And went forth to meet Him – outside of the city near the descent of the Mount of Olives (Luke 19:37)

- They met Him outside and followed Him in.

The public over the top “worship” of Jesus by the crowd contrasts clearly with that of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus in the beginning of this chapter. The siblings worshipped Jesus genuinely for who He was, and yet the exuberant cries of praise from the crowd would soon turn into demonstrous calls for His execution (Crucify Him! Crucify Him!). Such is a warning even to us in this day of the fragility of popularity. (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3234)

- Such is the reaction of many who like Jesus as they think He should be turn on Him when they discover who He really is.

And cried – Luke’s account (19:38) says that the crowd rejoiced and praised God with a loud voice

Hosanna– Hosanna is a Hebrew word that literally means, “Save us now, we pray” (compare with Ps. 118:25).

- Psalm 113-118 are known as the Hallel. It was a familiar group of Psalms that would be sung by the temple choir on each morning of the major Jewish festivals. (MacArthur, 2006)
- Isn’t that amazing? The crowd is crying out for Jesus to save them, and that’s exactly what He intended to do as the crucifixion drew nearer and nearer by the day.
 - o But Jesus would not save them from Rome. He would save them from a much bigger problem that all of humanity faces: sin.
 - o Application: the gospel

Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord – blessed is the Messiah, the King of Israel, who comes at the commissioning of the Father. (Barnes, 1834)

- “Blessed be the kingdom of our father, David”
- “Hosanna in the highest!”
- “Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”
- There were some Pharisees in the crowd that called on Jesus to rebuke those who praised Him. He replied, “If these didn’t cry out in praise to Me, the rocks would fill the void with my praise.” (Luke 19:38-40)
- As He was approaching the city, Jesus broke down and wept, knowing the destruction that would soon come upon it.
John 5:43- I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

Psalms 118:25-26 - Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD.

- Matthew, Mark, Luke and John all make reference to this Old Testament Psalm.

Leviticus 23:40 - And ye shall take you on the first day the boughs of goodly trees, branches of palm trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook; and ye shall rejoice before the LORD your God seven days.

- In reference to the Feast of Tabernacles

Revelation 7:9 - After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

Matthew 21:9-11 - And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

Mark 11:8-10 - And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed them in the way. And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.

Luke 19:35-38 - And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon. And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way. And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

John 19:15 - But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

John 19:19-22 - And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

2.) The Steed of the King

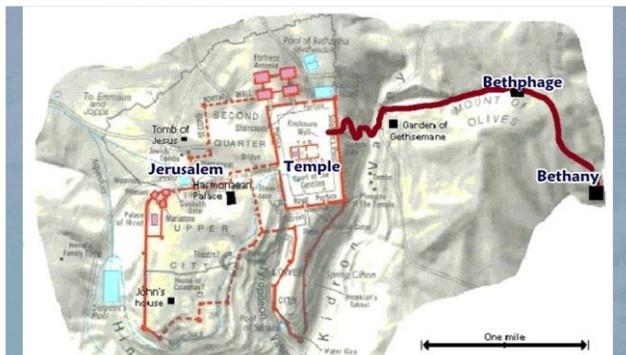
14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written,

15 Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.

It's interesting how John tells the story of the triumphal entry. He tells it differently from the other gospel writers. He, first off, tells it in reverse. He starts with the entry. Then he

backtracks to the donkey Jesus rode in. Then he backtracks again to explain why the crowd met Jesus in the first place.

Additionally, when John and the other gospel writers discuss the same event, John is usually the one providing additional details to supplement the other's information. However, with regards to the triumphal entry, Matthew (21:2-3), Mark (11:2-3), and Luke (19:29-31) all provide us with additional information regarding the whole triumphal entry, including how Jesus acquired the donkey. (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3245)



And Jesus, when had found a young ass, sat thereon – This is all John tells us, but the other gospel writers provide us with additional details. On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus and His disciples arrived in Bethpage at the Mount of Olives. Upon arriving, He told two of His disciples to go into a nearby village where they would find a young donkey and its mother tied up. He told them to retrieve the donkeys and if anyone asked what they were doing, they were to tell them that the Lord needed of the donkeys. The disciples obeyed. They found the donkeys. They started to untie them, and the people standing nearby said, “Um. What are you guys doing?” The disciples replied, “The Lord needs the donkeys.” ...and the people said, “Ok” and let them go. Not sure which donkey Jesus would ride the disciples put their coats on both the mother and the child. Jesus intended to ride the colt (which had never been ridden: was unbroken). From Bethpage Jesus would ride that colt into Jerusalem with the mother nearby likely as a means of keeping the child calm.

Matthew 21:1-7 - And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me. And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon.

Mark 11:1-7 - And when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples, And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring him. And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither. And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met; and they loose him. And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt? And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go. And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and he sat upon him.

Luke 19:29-35 - And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called the mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples, Saying, Go ye into the village over against you; in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring him hither. And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose him? thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him. And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them. And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt? And they said, The Lord hath need of him. And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon.

John then goes to explain the significance of it. Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem on a donkey fulfilled a prophecy regarding the Messiah.

15 Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.

as it is written Fear not - taken from Isaiah 40:9

Daughter of Zion - Jerusalem (quoting from Zech. 9:9)

Behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt - Look! Your king comes riding on a donkey's foal

- Zech. 9:9 continues - He is just (righteous). He is bringing salvation. He is humble, as seen by His riding on a donkey (not a horse, a donkey).
- Illustration - Jesus could have ridden into Jerusalem on a brand new 2023 Tesla cyber truck, but He chose a 20-year-old Nissan Maxima instead. Why? Humility.
- Everything about His first coming was clothed in humility. It was strength and humility. Further, Jesus knew that the ultimate act of humiliation for Him lay soon on the horizon: the cross.
 - Philippians 2:3-8 - 3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. 4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. 5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7

But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

- You know what you see there?
- Strength and humility
- Strength and lowliness
- Strength and selflessness
- Jesus entering Jerusalem was an act of strength. Jesus doing so on a donkey was an act of humility. Jesus saving the world from sin was an act of strength. Jesus doing so through His own death was an act of humility. If we're going to be like Jesus, we need both. We need strength, but we also need humility.
- Application: Are you humble? Are you lowly? Do you think about others before yourself, or is it mostly about you? Would others describe you as meek? As strong, but humble?
- There's coming a day when Jesus comes back the second time in which He will not be riding a donkey, but rather a war horse.
 - Rev. 19:11-14 - 11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. 12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. 13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. 14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

Zechariah 9:9 - Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

- John and Matthew make reference to Zechariah's prophecy (Matt. 21:5).
Isaiah 40:9-10 - O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him.

Zechariah 2:9-11 - For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD. And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee.

16 These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.

These things understood not his disciples at first: - You can imagine John thinking later on, "The crowd didn't get it, and neither did we. We were so wrapped up in the frenzy and excitement of what was happening that we didn't understand the meaning of the triumphal entry. We thought He was going to ascend the throne in power and save Israel from Rome. We didn't realize He intended to ascend the cross in humility and save the world from sin. We didn't understand this at the time."

But when Jesus was glorified - after He had died and rose and made many appearances and ascended to heaven where he sits in power and glory at the right of the Father

Then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him - "Then it all clicked. We remembered the prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 where it said that the Messiah would enter Jerusalem on a donkey in humility to bring salvation, and it clicked. And we realized that we had even been a part of the fulfillment of this prophecy in the acquiring of the donkey for Jesus."

- Application: you might not understand the bigger picture of what God is doing in your life in the moment, but that doesn't mean that He's not working. There are many times in my life where in the moment I didn't understand what God was doing, but now I can look back and begin to see parts of what God was doing.
- Application: you haven't arrived yet. The disciples had a LOT of growing to do. They probably didn't realize how much growing they had to do. If you think that you've arrived and that you know everything and that you are the font of holiness and righteous living, you're crazy. There are areas in your life and my life that we need to grow in, and part of spiritual maturity is having the humility to recognize that and be willing to change and grow when we're wrong.

Acts 2:36 - Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

Acts 3:13 - The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.

John 2:22 - When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

John 14:26 - But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

John 16:4 - But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

3.) The Testimony of the King

Why was there such a frenzy that coalesced around Jesus as He made His entry into Jerusalem?

17 The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.

The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record – the people who had physically been there and witnessed Jesus' resurrection of Lazarus from the grave could not stop talking about it. They had testified of it, and now, even among the crowd, they are still bearing record to what Jesus did.

- Application: don't ever get tired of telling people what Jesus has done in your life and in the lives of those around you.
- Horizon Baptist Church is and will be an evangelistic church with a heart for the lost so long as I am its pastor.
 - o We don't approve of sin, but we accept sinners, and we love them with the gospel.

John 11:45-46 - Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him. But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

John 1:19 - And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?

John 1:32 - And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

John 1:34 - And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

John 5:35-39 - He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.

John 19:35 - And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

John 21:24 - This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

18 For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.

For this cause the people also met him – the testimony of those people is the reason that so great a crowd came out from Jerusalem to meet Him on His triumphal entry into the city. Why?

For that they heard that he had done this miracle – because they heard testimony of Jesus' raising of Lazarus from the dead.

- If Jesus can raise someone from the dead, imagine what else He can do for our nation!

19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

The religious authorities had declared that anyone who knew the whereabouts of Jesus must tell them so that He could be arrested. And here is Jesus out in the open, surrounded by thousands of people, making His way into Jerusalem, but instead of turning Him in, the crowd was hailing Him as their Messiah...and on Passover week nonetheless.

The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, - the Pharisees find themselves in a helpless situation. Due to His popularity and the support of the crowd, though He's right there in plain sight, they are powerless to do anything to Him. All they can do is mutter to each other in frustration.

Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? – Do you see how that your plans have accomplished nothing?

Behold, the world is gone after him – the whole world is following Him now

- Church, these men intended to stop Jesus in His tracks, but nothing can stop the plan of God!
- The religious authorities would soon crucify Jesus in an effort to stop Him and His teaching. Little did they know that their act of opposition would be the means through which God would accomplish His plan to bring salvation to the world...and through which Christianity would explode.

John 11:47-50 - Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place and nation. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

Matthew 21:15 - And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased,

Luke 19:47-48 - And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him, And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him.

Upon arriving in Jerusalem, Jesus went to the temple where He cleansed it a second time and then healed the lame and the blind (Matt. 21:12-14). The chief priests and scribes confronted Jesus in the temple for not refuting the praise that He was being given by the children nearby. Jesus defended the children, and then He headed back to Bethany where He would lodge for the evening (Matt. 21:15-17).

Application

Jesus came to Jerusalem in strength and humility to save the world from sin.

If you're not yet a Christian, not yet a follower of Jesus, can I share with you for a moment why Jesus made that trip into Jerusalem? He did it for you. He did it in love for you.

- Romans 5:8 – But God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.
- Because of your sin, you are separated from God and destined for an eternity apart from Him. There's nothing you can do to change that. But the good news is that Jesus did for you what you could not do for yourself. As the perfectly sinless Son of God He died on the cross for your sins and rose again three days later.
- The Bible tells us that we can be saved not through anything we do, but by accepting in faith what Christ has done for us.
- If you're never made that decision before, it's the most important decision you'll ever make in your life, and I beg you to make. The cross beckons you to make it.

If you are a Christian, a follower of Jesus, can I urge you to be like Him? I don't know what situation/valley/trial you are facing in your life right now, but can I urge you to face it the way that Jesus faced Jerusalem: in strength and humility...not in your strength, but in His strength working in and through you.

May I urge you to let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who being the God of the universe, lowered Himself in humility to the cross as a selfless expression of His love for you and for me. May the way that Jesus has treated us be the way that we treat those around us.

Strength + Humility

study questions

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Matthew 21:1-17, Mark 11:1-18, and Luke 19:28-46. Compare Matthew, Mark, and Luke's account of Jesus' triumphal entry with John's. What unique information does each author include?*

3.) *Read Revelation 19:11-14. Compare Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem with the way in which He will come when He returns at His second coming.*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 12:20-36. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 12:20-36 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 12:20-36

Review

Last week, we saw the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem. He came in strength and humility. He came in defiance of the religious leaders riding on a donkey. He came with a plan and for a purpose. That plan is going to be the subject of our passage of Scripture today as we examine the revelation of God's plan.

Sermon

1.) The Request of the Greeks

20 And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:

And there were certain Greeks among them – here “Greek” is used as a broad term to denote non-Jews or Gentiles. This is similar to the only other usage of this term in John's gospel which can be found in John 7:35. (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3245)

John 7:35 - Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?

- Note how Ἕλληνας (Hellenas) is translated as Gentiles in John 7:35.

Romans 1:16 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Isaiah 11:10 - And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious.

That came up to worship at the feast: - these God-fearing Gentiles had come to Jerusalem to worship at the Passover Feast

Acts 17:4 - 4 And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few.

21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee and desired him, saying – these Gentiles approached Philip and made a request

- Philip was a Greek name, and Bethsaida was close to the Gentile region of Decapolis. Additionally, as a Galilean local, Philip likely spoke Greek. These are all possible explanations for why the Gentiles approached him. (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3256)

Saying, Sir, we would see Jesus – we would like to see Jesus and talk with Him. We would like to have an audience with him.

- Once again, notice the contrast between the religious authorities' desire to kill Jesus and these Gentiles' desire to speak with Him. (MacArthur, 2006)
- In John chapters 10, 11, and 12 we see allusions to the soon coming explosion of Christian faith into the Gentile world.
 - o John 10:16 - And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.
 - o John 11:52 - And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.
 - o John 12:32 - And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

John 1:43-47 - The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

John 6:5-7 - When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

John 14:8-9 - Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

Philip cometh and telleth Andrew – Philip wasn't really sure how to respond to their request, so he went and told his buddy Andrew.

- Philip and Andrew were both natives of Bethsaida. Philip and Andrew are also referenced together at the feeding of the 5000 in John 6:5-9. From those passages and this one, it seems that they had a closer relationship of sorts. (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3256)

And again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus – the two of them together went and told Jesus

- "Jesus, there are some Gentiles here that would like to speak with you."
- How would Jesus respond?

John 1:40-41 - One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

John 6:8 - One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

2.) The Response of Jesus

A.) Declaration

Illustration – learning in homiletics 1 to have a declaration statement that ties together the theme of the entire sermon

Jesus' declaration of His plan and purpose is going to set the tone for everything else in this passage of Scripture, and it's going to show you where His mind is at: Calvary. The time for Jews and Gentiles alike to be saved en masse was fast approaching, but the cross came first.

23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

Jesus answered them – “Them” is referring to Philip and Andrew. Interestingly, Jesus is never said to have talked to the Gentiles, although He may have spoken loud enough so that they overheard Him from the crowd.

- Jesus does not say “yes” or “no” to the Gentiles request for an audience. Rather, at this point in time, we see that He is focused on the reason for which He came.
- Others could and would proclaim the good news of salvation through the cross, but only Jesus could lay His life down on it.
 - o That's where His mind was.

Saying, The hour is come – this is the first time in John's gospel that we are told that Jesus' hour is come (the hour of His death, the hour for which He came, the hour in which He would be glorified)

- The implication is that the time for the Gentiles would come, but right now it's time for something else.
- Compare with John 2:4, 7:30, 8:20, 13:1, and 17:1.

That the Son of man be glorified – if you're a Jew in the crowd having just been a part of the triumphal entry, you would interpret Jesus' words here in reference to the setting up of the kingdom of God on earth with Jesus on the throne. (MacArthur, 2006)

- With His usage of the title “Son of Man”, Daniel 7:13-14 certainly would have come to mind.
 - o Daniel 7:13-14 - 13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion,

which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

- If you're a first century Jew, this is what you're expecting of Jesus. This is what it means, in your mind, for Jesus to be glorified, and yet, such was not the plan of God for Jesus' first coming.
 - Jesus' answer to those Jews who expected the setting up of the kingdom was the same as His answer to the Greeks who wanted an audience. It wasn't "No". It was "not yet."
- Now when Jesus comes back the second time, it's a different story. That passage will then be literally fulfilled. He will come in power and judgment and will establish that kingdom on earth, but that was not what Jesus was going to accomplish at His first coming.
- Whereas the author of Hebrews (12:2) and Peter (1 Pet. 1:11) speak of Christ's suffering and the glory that followed after, John conflates. Jesus is not glorified despite the cross. He is glorified through the cross. Why? Because it was there He finished the work He came to do. (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3298)

John 17:1-5 - These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

B.) Illustration

The illustration points back to Jesus' declaration in vs. 23. It's going to shed light on it for us. It is also going to point forward to His application in vv. 25-26.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

Verily, verily I say unto you – truly, truly I'm telling you

Except a corn of what fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone – if you have a seed and never bury it, it will never grow. It will never sprout. It will never produce life.

But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit – but if that seed dies (i.e. is buried in the ground), it sprouts and grows in newness of life.

- Here's what Jesus is saying: "What's true of that seed is true of Me. It's going to take my death to make possible everlasting life."
- Jesus, in that moment, shattered their misconceptions about what He came to do.
 - "The hour is come for me to be glorified, but that's not going to happen through the establishment of the kingdom. It's going to happen through the death of the King."

- What???
 - Illustration – watching a superhero movie and within the first 15 minutes the superhero faces the villain and dies. What???
 - His plan made no sense to anyone else, not even to the disciples, and yet Jesus knew that before the kingdom would come, death had to be defeated. Sin had to be conquered. Salvation had to be made possible. Through His death, burial, and resurrection, Jesus would secure everlasting life for all who follow Him in faith. His death, like that buried seed, would bring forth much fruit.
- Paul uses this illustration in 1 Cor. 15:36-38.
- 1 Corinthians 15:36-38 - Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: And that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body

C.) Application

Jesus is now going to show how His illustration applies to others as well.

25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal –

- This is a continuation of the agricultural analogy.
 - 1 John 2:15-17 - 15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.
 - Your life in this world is like that seed. If you tightly cling to and love and prioritize this world and the things of it, you might gain the world, but you'll lose your soul in the process.
 - In contrast, if you'll die to this world through faith and give your life to Jesus, do you know what will happen? You will receive everlasting life and never die.
- The farming illustration was both an explanation of what Jesus was about to do as well as a call for us to follow in His footsteps.
 - Jesus laid down His life on the cross so as to make possible everlasting life for us.
 - If we will die to this world through faith in Him, we can receive that everlasting life that He purchased for us.

- Luke 9:23-24 - And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.
- Luke 14:26 - If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

Jesus makes this comment within the context of the Greek Epicurean philosophy which basically said to “Enjoy yourself”. His point is that those who center their lives around self-centered pleasure will lose everything in the end. Why? Because they center their lives around sin. But those who recognize the sinfulness of self-centered indulgence can be saved and have everlasting life. (Sorenson, 2007)

26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

He’s describing Himself as a different type of king that they expected: a dying King.

if any man serve me - if anyone desires to be a servant of this King

Let him follow me – follow in what way? In the way He just described in verse 25...In choosing the eternal over the temporal...in laying down your life and giving it to Jesus.

- “If you want to serve me, you need to follow in my footsteps.”

And where I am, there shall also my servant be – for those who will by faith choose eternal life over the things of this world, where I am, there they too shall be. Where is that? Heaven. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

- John 14:3 - And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.
- Through giving our life to Jesus in faith, we receive heaven. But not only that...through serving the King, we also receive rewards.
- 2 Corinthians 5:8 - We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

If any man serve me, him will my Father honour –

- 1 Samuel 2:30 - Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.
- Romans 8:17 - And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.
- Colossians 3:24 - Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

Luke 6:46 - And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

Matthew 16:24 - Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

D.) Consternation

27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: – As a dying king, Jesus had set His eyes firmly on the cross, and yet, in His humanity, He was greatly distressed about the events that lay on the Horizon.

- “Troubled is a strong word used for figuratively to speak of severe mental or spiritual agitation; of being disturbed, upset, unsettled, or horrified.”
(MacArthur, 2006)
- Jesus faced great inner turmoil as He approached the pain that would undoubtedly accompany the laying down of His life.
 - o The pain was only temporary, and yet it was severe and it was real.
- Application: Just as it was painful in that moment for Jesus to lay down His life, it can be painful at times to die to this world and live for God. It can and will cost you, but the payoff makes it so much worth it. For the Christian, there may be stress and pain in the moment, but joy comes in the morning.
 - o How did Jesus deal with that turmoil?
 - He kept His eyes on the finish line
 - He took it to the Father in prayer.
- Matthew 26:53-54 - Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?
- John 18:37 - Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

But for this cause came I unto this hour – Jesus had set his sights on the cross like a horse with blinders. That was why He came, and He knew what it would accomplish. (Sorenson, 2007)

Application: keep your eyes fixed on heaven

28 Father, glorify thy name

Father, glorify thy name – God, glorify yourself through Me.

- Application: There is no better person to share your burdens with than someone who knows you, understands your pain, and can do something about it.
- God fits all three of those descriptions.

- Matthew 6:9 - After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
- That ought to be our heart too. God, glorify yourself through me.
 - o 1 Cor. 10:31 - Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

John 11:33-35 - When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept.

John 13:21 - When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

Isaiah 53:3 - He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Matthew 26:38-39 - Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

Luke 22:44 - And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

3.) The Reassurance of the Father

A.) The Father's Declaration

28 ... Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

Then came there a voice from heaving, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again – This is the third time in Jesus' life that the Father spoke to Him in a voice from heaven. We don't know exactly where Jesus was when this was spoken, but it must have been in or near Jerusalem in a place where the crowd that was around Him could hear it.

- This audible affirmation of the Father showed that Christ's looming death was not an aberration from the plan of God. Rather, it was a joint venture through which the plan of God would be fulfilled and through which both the Father and the Son would be glorified (vs. 23). (MacArthur, 2006)
 - o The Son would be glorified through the cross (vs. 23).
 - o The Father would be glorified through the cross (vs. 28).

Matthew 3:17 - And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Matthew 17:5 - While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

29 The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.

Illustration – people who say that they would believe if God would just talk to them in a voice from heaven.

- God does just that, and how did the people respond? Denial.
- It goes to show that unbelief is never satisfied.

The people therefore that stood by and heard it –, the crowd heard God, but they did not recognize Him as God.

- Romans 1:18-20 - 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; 19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:
said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him – some thought it was thunder. Other suggested it was an angel speaking to Him.

- In both the Old Testament and Revelation, the voice of God is often associated with thunder.

Revelation 6:1 - And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

Revelation 8:5 - And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

Revelation 14:2 - And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:

Revelation 18:1-2 - And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

B.) The Son's Explanation

30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes - Although the voice of God came in response to Jesus' prayer, the Father's response was not given for the purpose of strengthening the Son. Rather it was given to strengthen the faith of the disciples and to confirm to the crowd who He was.

- John 11:41-42 - 41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. 42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

Jesus is going to explain how the Father and the Son were to be glorified through the plan of God: Jesus' death on the cross.

31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

Now is the judgment of this world - Jesus' death would not only bring about salvation for those who receive Him, it would also bring about sentencing and judgment on those who reject Him, on the world system that rejects Him.

- How? Because God Himself came down to earth in love for the world, and how did the world treat Him? They spat on Him. They beat on Him. They tortured Him and executed Him.
 - o "The cross is the condemnation of all who reject it." (Plummer, 1902) For those who reject Jesus, there is no other hope.
- For those who reject Jesus today, who identify with this God hating world, they make the same judgment that those Jews did 2000 years ago and they crucify Him afresh in their heart...and for those who do anything other but bow before the cross in faith and contrition, there is no escape. There is no second chance. All that remains is judgment.
 - o Hebrews 2:3 - How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation
- The world thought it was thwarting the plan of God through crucifying Jesus, and yet what it was really doing was digging its own grave. For the cross would be the means through which salvation would be purchased, and the risen Lord will be the one that judges this rebellious world in flaming fire and vengeance. (MacArthur, 2006)

Now shall the prince of this world be cast out - now (present tense) Satan will be (future tense) cast out

- The prince of the world is a title for Satan.
 - o John 14:30 - Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.
 - o John 16:11 - Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

- The cross is not only the condemnation of those who reject it. It also marked the beginning of the end for Satan. His power was defeated. His fate was sealed, and it is only a matter of time until He will be cast out permanently.
- What Satan saw as victory would be the means of his very defeat.
- As Hebrews 2:14 says about Jesus, “that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.”

Genesis 3:15 - And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

Ephesians 2:1-2 - And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

Hebrews 2:14 - Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

1 John 3:8 - He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

The plan of God would condemn the world, defeat Satan and beckon sinners to Jesus.

The cross both invites and condemns.

- It invites the world to repent and turn to God. Those who receive the cross by faith are forgiven, delivered from the kingdom of darkness, and given eternal life.
- On the other side, those who reject the cross are condemned in that they have spit in the face of God’s offer of salvation. Those who reject Jesus, crucify Him afresh. They agree with the crowd that He was worthy of death.
 - o He was either God or worthy of death. You have to choose.

And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me – In verse 32, we finally see how Jesus’ death was the answer to the Gentiles’ request to see Him. The cross would be the means by which God would beckon the world (regardless of ethnicity or background) to be saved from its sin through faith in Jesus.

- The cross would become a spiritual magnet through which all men would be drawn to the offer of salvation from sin through faith in Jesus Christ. (Sorenson, 2007)
- John 3:16 – For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
 - o The cross is available to all.
 - o The invitation is given to all.

- Sadly, there are many like those first century Jews, who will not come.
- “All things” rather than “all people” is a textual variant present in some early manuscripts such as P66 and Codex Sinaiticus. However, the context of John’s gospel as a whole (i.e. his concern with all people being saved), the context of this particular passage (inclusion of the Gentiles), as well as other external manuscript evidence (i.e. Codex Alexandrinus, Codex Vaticanus, Byzantine testimony) provide evidence that “all people” is the correct reading.
(Kostenberger A. J., 2013, pp. Loc 3302-3306)

John 1:12 – But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name

John 20:30-31 - 30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

John 3:14 - And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

John 8:28 - Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

John 6:44 - No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 1:7 - The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

Romans 5:17-19 - For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

Hebrews 2:9-10 - But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.

1 Timothy 2:6 - Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.

1 John 2:2 - And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.

This he said, signifying what death he should die – John’s footnote here makes clear that Jesus’ comment about being lifted up was not in reference to His ascension, but rather His crucifixion.

- The Father had declared that He and the Son would be glorified through the cross. Jesus explained how this would happen. The cross would condemn those who reject it. The cross would defeat the devil. The cross would invite sinners to be saved.
- How would the people respond to Jesus’ explanation?
John 18:32 – That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.

The people responded to the Father’s declaration with denial. They respond to Jesus’ explanation with confusion.

34 The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? who is this Son of man?

The people answered him – in reference to the common people

The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever: - Jesus had made comments about being glorified through dying. These comments did not register with the people.

- “What do you mean you’re going to die, Jesus? You’re the Messiah, and the Bible says that the Messiah will set up the Kingdom of God on earth and reign over it forever.”
- 2 Samuel 7:13 - He shall build an house for my name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.
- Isaiah 9:7 - Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.
- Daniel 7:13-14 - 13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.
- What the people failed to understand is that the Messiah was coming twice. Jesus had a very different agenda for His first coming than He will for His second.

And how sayest thou, the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man? – Jesus, what kind of Messiah are you talking about? It’s not the Messiah of the Bible.

- “They could not reconcile Jesus’ prediction of His death (12:23–26) with their belief that the Messiah was to be a triumphant conqueror (cf. John 6:14–15).” (MacArthur, 2006)

Daniel 2:44 - And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

John 3:14-16 - And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

C.) The Son’s Invitation

35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

Then Jesus said unto them – Just like with the Gentiles, Jesus didn’t answer the question of the crowd.

- Rather, He returned to an illustration He had given on prior occasions.

Yet a little while is the light with you – I, as the light of the world, am only with you for a while

Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you – follow me, as Israel followed the pillar of fire by night, lest darkness consume you.

For he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth – the one who goes his own direction, away from the light, will soon find himself lost in the darkness of this world...directionless.

- 1 John 1:6-7 - If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

John 7:33 - Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me.

John 9:4 - I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

John 16:16 - A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.

John 8:12 - Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Romans 13:12-14 - The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Ephesians 5:8 - For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

1 Thessalonians 5:5-8 - Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

John 12:39-40 - Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

Romans 11:7-10 - What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back alway.

2 Corinthians 3:14 - But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ.

36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

While ye have the light, believe in the light – While I am still here among you, follow me and believe on me.

That ye may be the children of the light – in following and believing on the light of the world, we become little lights ourselves that shine in the darkness.

- Ephesians 5:8 - For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:
- 1 Thessalonians 5:5 - Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

Jesus ends His discourse in the same way He began it, by calling on those in the crowd to follow His example in faith.

These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them – probably retiring to Bethany as mentioned in the other gospels (Plummer, 1902)

- Thus marked the close of Jesus' public ministry in John's gospel.

The people had responded to the Father's declaration with denial. They had responded to Jesus' explanation with confusion. How would the people respond to Jesus' invitation? That will be the subject of our passage of Scripture next week.

Application

How will you respond to the plan of God? To the cross?

- You can worship Him or you can crucify Him. You can receive Him or you can reject Him. You can be forgiven or you can be condemned. There are no third options.
 - o Well, I still haven't made my mind up. Friend, then as of this moment you stand condemned before the cross as one who has put those nails in his hands.
- I beg you to repent and turn to Him in faith. Today is the day of salvation. Tomorrow might be too late. Your response to the invitation of the cross will determine whether that cross is the means of your eternal salvation or your condemnation. There are no other outcomes.

Christian, as one who has been saved out of this world, who has been given everlasting life, who has passed from condemnation to freedom, may I urge you alongside of John in saying:

1 John 2:15-17 - 15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

- True joy is not found in the world or any of the cheap knockoffs it offers. True joy is found in following Jesus. He's blazed the trail. He knows the path. He knows what's best for your life. Follow Him and keep your eyes on the prize.

study questions

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Matthew 3:13-17 and Matthew 17:1-9. How do the three occurrences in which the Father speaks from heaven about the Son compare to one another? What is significant about each occurrence?*

3.) *Read Romans 13:8-14, Eph. 5:1-8, and 1 Thess. 5:5-8. How do these passages echo and build upon Christ's command to walk as children of the light?*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 12:37-50. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 12:37-50 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 12:37-50

Review

Two weeks ago we looked at Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem in strength and humility, and then last week we looked at the end of Jesus' public ministry in John's gospel. Some Greek pilgrims made a request for an audience with Jesus which then segued into a response from Jesus. His response showed that His mind was somewhere else. It was fixed on His impending death on the cross, through which He would bring forth much fruit. Later on in the passage, we saw that God spoke audibly from heaven to affirm that He and the Son were on the same page with regard to the cross. It was a joint venture through which salvation would be made possible and through which both the Father and the Son would be glorified together. We ended last week with Jesus' invitation for people to believe on Him as the light of the world.

John 12:36 - While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

How would the people respond to Jesus' invitation? That is the subject of our passage of scripture today.

Sermon

1.) The Rejection of the King

A.) Rejection through unbelief

37 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

But though he had done so many miracles before them – the gospels specifically record some 37+ instances in which Jesus performed miracles, and there are likely many other instances which were not recorded. (Fairchild, 2019)

- Of the many miracles that Jesus did, John focused on seven:

- Turning the water into wine
- Healing the nobleman's son
- Making the lame man walk
- Walking on water
- Feeding the 5000
- Opening the eyes of the blind man
- Raising Lazarus from the dead

- And yet, despite the many miracles that Jesus had done...

Yet they believed not on him – they persisted in not believing on Him

- In John 5, in response to Jesus healing on the Sabbath, we are told the Jews sought more to kill him because he had not only broken the Sabbath but made Himself equal with God.
- In John 6 many of his followers went back and followed Him no more.
- In John 7 people accused Jesus of being demon possessed, there was division among the people because of Him, and the religious authorities wanted to arrest Him.
- In John 8, Jesus was called a demon possessed Samaritan, and the Jews tried to stone Him.
- In John 9, a blind man that Jesus had healed was excommunicated from the synagogue for professing faith in Jesus.
- In John 10, Jesus caused division and was called a crazy devil possessed man. Then the Jews tried to stone Him again.
- In John 11, the Sanhedrin determined from that day forward to execute Jesus.
- In John 12, following Jesus' explanation that He would be a dying king, we are told that despite all of the miracles He had done, the Jews by and large persisted in not believing on Him.
- Application: What was true of the Jews 2000 years ago is still true of many today. Despite the overwhelming evidence God has provided, they persist in their unbelief.
 - o Despite the fact that if the universe came into existence out of nothing, it must have had a cause...
 - o Despite the fact that, not just the planet, but our universe is fine tuned for life...
 - o Despite the fact that God has revealed Himself to us in His Word...
 - o Despite the fact that the Bible is filled with hundreds of prophecies about the Messiah that were fulfilled to the letter in Jesus...
 - o Despite the fact that there is overwhelming historical evidence that Jesus physically rose from the dead...
 - Yet they persist in not believing on Him.
 - Like the Jews, they reject Jesus through unbelief.

John 1:11 – He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

And yet, in verse 38, John clarifies that this rejection of the Messiah by the Jews was not some unexpected development. On the contrary, it had been prophesied hundreds of years prior in the Scriptures.

- The crucifixion of Jesus was not an aberration from the plan of God, and neither was the Jewish rejection of Jesus that led to it.
- We are told that this rejection happened in order that...

38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake – This happened in order that the prophecy of Isaiah 53 would be fulfilled

Lord, who hath believed our report? – the implication by Isaiah is that, when the Messiah came, there would be very few that would actually believe what he and the other prophets had written/reported in the Scriptures regarding the Messiah (Barnes, 1834)

- Who hath believed our report? Very few.
- Remember that one of the reasons that the people rejected Jesus was because they could not wrap their mind around the idea of a dying Messiah, and yet in Isaiah 53, do you know what Isaiah prophesied of? A dying Messiah.
 - o Vs. 2 – He would be undesirable
 - o Vs. 3 – He would be rejected by the Jews
 - o Vs. 4 – He would bear our grief and sorrows
 - o Vs. 5 – He would be wounded and bruised for our sins, and through His stripes we would be healed
 - o Vs. 6 – the Father would lay on Him the sins of all people
 - o Vs. 7 – He would remain silent in the face of death as a lamb being brought to the slaughter
 - o Vs. 8 – He would be killed for the sins of the people
 - o Vs. 9 – He would be sinless
 - o Vs. 10 – He would fulfill the plan of God by making His soul an offering for sin
 - o Vs. 11 – Through His death He would justify many
 - o Vs. 12 – Through His death He would make intercession for sinners
- Isaiah prophesied in detail about Jesus, and yet when Jesus came the Jews ignored His writings. “Lord, who hath believed our report?”
- In their rejection of Jesus, the Jews rejected the testimony of the Old Testament prophets regarding the Messiah, and fulfilled Isaiah’s prophecy that few would believe on Jesus when He came.

And to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed – Illustration: flexing biceps (I used to work out, but then I got married, and now I read books and fix toilets)

- To whom is the power and working of God revealed?
 - o How was the power and working of God revealed in the ministry of Jesus? Through His miracles. God had testified of Jesus through the Scriptures and through miracles, and yet when Jesus came, the Jews believed neither.
- They rejected the testimony of the Old Testament prophets and they rejected the testimony of the power of God manifested in the miracles that Jesus did. (Sorenson, 2007)
- And yet their rejection of Jesus was no surprise to God. It had been foretold hundreds and hundreds of years prior. He knew it would happen.
John 15:25 - But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

John 17:12 - While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

John 19:24 - They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

John 19:36-37 - For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken. And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

Isaiah 53:1 - Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?

Romans 10:16 - But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?

2 Corinthians 4:3-6 - But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:17-20 - That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

Therefore – this points us back to verse 38.

- Because they rejected the prophets
- Because they rejected the miracles
- Because they would not believe ->

they could not believe – because they would not believe, they could not believe.

- Because the Jews, in a broad sense, persisted over and over and over again in their willful unbelief, many of them reached a point where they could not believe.
- What do you mean by that? How did that happen? John's going to explain by referencing another prophecy of Isaiah that was fulfilled in the Jewish rejection of Jesus.

Because that Esaias said again – Here John quotes another passage from Isaiah (6:9-10) to explain what he means when he says that they reached a point where they could not believe.

Isaiah 6:9-10 - And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted and I should heal them – In Isaiah 6:9-10, God called Isaiah to go to the nation of Israel, and prophesy that they would hear and not understand and see and not perceive. In that passage, God tells Isaiah that through his preaching, he would harden their hearts, close their ears, and blind their eyes so that the end result would be that they would not be converted and healed. God was going to harden Israel by confronting them with the truth through the preaching of Isaiah.

- Illustration – talk about a tough ministry assignment
- John’s point is that this prophesy in Isaiah had been fulfilled in a general sense in that present day through the Jews and their response to Jesus.
- Because of Israel’s constant unbelief and rebellion against God, He had reached a tipping point. In response to their unbelief, He judicially hardened their hearts and blinded their eyes. Because they would not believe, they reached a point where they could not believe and be healed by Christ.
 - o From Matthew 13:13-15, we know that the “I” is in reference to Jesus.
- “It is a sobering reality that those who persistently harden their hearts **against** God may find themselves hardened **by** Him. The historical record of God’s dealings with Pharaoh illustrates that principle, noting ten times that he hardened his own heart (Ex. 7:13, 14, 22; 8:15, 19, 32; 9:7, 34, 35; 13:15) and ten times that God hardened his heart (Ex. 4:21; 7:3; 9:12; 10:1, 20, 27; 11:10; 14:4, 8, 17).” (MacArthur, 2006, p. 666)
 - o A veil has been placed over the heart of unbelieving Israel that will not be completely revealed until the tribulation (cf. 2 Cor. 3:15; Romans 11:8-11; 25-26). (Sorenson, 2007)
 - o The judicial hardening of those who continually reject God may be an explanation for the impossibility of repentance mentioned in Hebrews 6:4-6.
- This prophesy was true of Israel in a general sense, but that did not mean that it was true of all Jews. In fact the early church at the outset was composed almost entirely of Jews. Isaiah, John, Peter, Paul, etc. were all Jews. What that means is that the judicial blinding of the Father comes only upon those who will not hear and will not see. (Ellicott C. , 1905)

- Illustration - God says come. They say no. God says come. They say no. God says come. They say no. God says no.
- Because they would not believe, they reached a point where they could not believe.

John 9:39 - And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

Isaiah 29:10 - For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.

Deuteronomy 29:4 - Yet the LORD hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear, unto this day.

Isaiah 42:19-20 - Who is blind, but my servant? or deaf, as my messenger that I sent? who is blind as he that is perfect, and blind as the LORD's servant? Seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not.

Isaiah 44:18-20 - They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand. And none considereth in his heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the fire; yea, also I have baked bread upon the coals thereof; I have roasted flesh, and eaten it: and shall I make the residue thereof an abomination? shall I fall down to the stock of a tree? He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?

Ezekiel 12:2 - Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see, and see not; they have ears to hear, and hear not: for they are a rebellious house.

Matthew 13:13-15 - Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

Acts 28:26-28 - 26 Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: 27 For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 28 Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.

Romans 11:8-11 - (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: Let their eyes be darkened that they may not see, and bow down their back alway. I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy.

Romans 9:18 - Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.

Romans 11:7 - What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded

Mark 8:17-18 - And when Jesus knew it, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened? Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?

41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him – This prophecy in Isaiah (vs. 9-10) happened right after Isaiah had seen His glory (in verses 1-8) as He was sitting on the throne surrounded by angels crying out in praise to Him.

- Who is “Him” referring to? In Isaiah 6, it’s clearly referring to God, and yet, here, I believe that John is making the claim that Isaiah saw Jesus’ glory and spake of Him.
- How is that possible? As John explains over and over again, Jesus is no mere man. He was and is the visible image of the invisible God. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

Thus, we see the rejection of the King through persistent unbelief. This persistent unbelief was foretold in Isaiah 53:1, and it led to God’s judicial hardening of the nation of Israel in general (Isaiah 6:9-10). Because they would not believe, they reached a point where they could not believe.

Isaiah 6:1-5 - In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.

Isaiah 6:9-10 - And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make

their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

B.) Rejection despite Belief

42 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

Nevertheless – despite the judicial blindness that God brought upon the nation of Israel in general

Among the chief rulers also many believed on him – men such as Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea believed that Jesus was the Messiah

But because of the Pharisees they did not confess him – in fear of the religious elite, they would not openly profess Jesus. They refused to publicly acknowledge Him whatsoever. (head knowledge without heart commitment)

- It's the equivalent of believing that Jesus is who He claims to be without the willingness to embrace Him as my personal Lord and Savior.
 - o Illustration – sharing the gospel with someone this past week and explaining that it's enough to know it generally. You must believe it personally.
- We are saved by that personal faith in Jesus, and yet that faith is manifested in a willingness to acknowledge that belief in Him before others.
 - o How can a person be saved and never be willing to acknowledge Jesus before others at all?
 - o The Bible makes some strong statements about this.

Matthew 10:32-33 - Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. 33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

Romans 10:10 - For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Here are these chief rulers that believed that Jesus was the Messiah, and yet they rejected Him nonetheless. Why?

Lest they should be put out of the synagogue – they knew that if they publicly accepted and acknowledged Jesus, they would be excommunicated from the Jewish synagogue. They would lose everything.

Application – there are those today who refuse to believe in Jesus despite the evidence and then there are those today who know in their hearts of hearts who Jesus is, but they refuse to embrace Him because they know what it would cost them.

- Relationships
- Lifestyle

- Control

John 3:2 - The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

John 19:38 - And after this Joseph of Arimathaea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

1 John 4:15 - Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

John 7:13 - Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.

John 9:22 - These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

Proverbs 29:25 - The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.

Matthew 26:69-75 - Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

They valued man's approval more than God's approval, at least at this point in time.

- There's indications that later on some of these would embrace and publicly confess Jesus as Christ, but not at this time.
- As Christians, we have many opportunities to publicly acknowledge Jesus as our Savior (every day), and yet the Lord has given to us two specific ways to publicly acknowledge our faith in Him before others. Do you know what those are? Baptism and communion. We will be observing communion today as believers, and next week we have a baptism for someone who has just recently made the decision to trust in Christ as Savior.
- As I was thinking of those who publicly denied Jesus, I couldn't help but also think of Peter. There's a difference between Peter and those in this passage. There's a difference between denying Jesus in a moment of weakness and denying Jesus at

every moment. That was the chief rulers. They refused to acknowledge Jesus at all...and yet even Peter would deny Christ three times on the night of the crucifixion.

- And yet, whether it was through unbelief or despite belief, the response to the King from the Jews was by and large the same: rejection.

John 5:44 - How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?

John 12:26 - If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

2.) The Message of the King

In verse 36, we were told that Jesus had departed and hid himself from the Jews. Thus, it's likely that Jesus' words in verses 44-50 are a summary of Jesus' message in general that John inserts here to conclude this section of his gospel. (Ellicott C. , 1905)

44 Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.

Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me – as the ambassador of the Father, to believe on Jesus is not only to believe on Him. It is to believe on the Father as well. They are a joint package. (Plummer, 1902)

He is the ambassador of the Father.

Matthew 10:40 - He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

He is the exact expression of the Father.

45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.

And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me – Jesus is not just the ambassador of the Father. He is the exact expression of Him. He is the visible image of the invisible God so that it can be truthfully said that he who has seen Jesus has seen the Father.

John 14:9-10 - Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

Colossians 1:15 - Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

Hebrews 1:3 - Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

He is the light of the world.

46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

I am come a light into the world – Jesus was not only the ambassador and exact expression of the Father. He was also the light of the world.

That whosoever believeth on me – that those who put their faith in Him

Should not abide in darkness – would be rescued from the domain of darkness and transferred into His kingdom of light (MacArthur, 2006)

Colossians 1:13 - Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:

John 12:35-36 - Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

John 3:19 - And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

John 8:12 - Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

He is the Savior of the world.

47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

And if any man hear my words, and believe not – if anyone hears my words and does not keep/believe them.

I judge him not – at this point in time. Why?

For I came not to judge the world, but to save the world – the purpose of Jesus' first coming was to save the world, not to judge it. However, at His second coming, the opposite will be true.

John 3:17 - For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

He is the judge of the world.

48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him – But make no mistake, that person who rejects me will be judged.

The words that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day -the words that I have spoken and that He has rejected will judge him in the end times.

Luke 9:26 - For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.

Hebrews 10:29-31 - Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

He is everlasting life.

49 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

For I have not spoken of myself – I have not spoken of my own initiative

But the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak – The Father gave me a divine commission regarding what I should say. Thus, to reject My words is to reject His words. To reject Me is to reject Him.

John 5:30 - I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

John 6:38-40 - For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

And I know that his commandment is life everlasting – The commission the Father gave to me is the means through which everlasting life is made possible.

Whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak – knowing what would be accomplished through what the Father sent me to do, I have spoken and acted in accordance with what He has directed.

John 3:16-17 - 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. 17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

1 John 3:23 - 23 And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

1 John 5:11-13 - And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

In verses 44-50, we basically see Jesus' message summarized.

Vs. 44 - He is the ambassador of the Father.

Vs. 45 - He is the exact expression of the Father.

Vs. 46 - He is the light of the world.

Vs. 47 - He is the Savior of the world.

Vs. 48 - He is the judge of the world.

Vs. 49-50 - He is everlasting life.

And yet, He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.

“As God’s chosen nation (Amos 3:2), Israel had received many blessings, some of which Paul described in Romans 9:4–5. But the biggest blessing they received was that it was from the Jewish people that the Messiah came (v.5). Tragically, when He came, they rejected Him. They refused to accept His call to believe in Him, and ignored His warnings of the consequences of unbelief. As a result, God hardened them, and those who were unwilling to believe became unable to believe. Having been entrusted with such great privileges, Israel was accountable for much (cf. Luke 12:48). Therefore Jesus pronounced the nation’s judgment in His chilling words, “Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!” (Luke 13:35). A generation later, in AD 70, Israel’s doom would fall at the hands of the Romans. Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed, and the people would be scattered and troubled under divine discipline even to the present. But the story does not end there. Because of His great love for His people, God

will one day redeem the remnant of His chosen people, “and so all Israel will be saved” (Rom. 11:26).” (MacArthur, 2006, p. 668)

Application

Creation, Scripture, prophecy, and the resurrection all testify to you that Jesus is who He claimed to be: God in the flesh, the Savior of the world. If you have not been saved, today He calls out to you. Won't you be saved? Over and over and over again, Israel had said “no” to God.

Come – no – come – no – come – no

They finally reached a point where God said “no” to them.

Today Christ is calling out to you to come. Don't delay another day. Don't reject Him another time. Tomorrow might be too late. Won't you say “yes” to Jesus?

Christian, can I encourage you to boldly acknowledge Jesus as your Savior? Acknowledge Him in your home. Acknowledge Him in your workplace. Acknowledge Him in every area of your life. Stand firm for the one who gave His all for you.

study questions

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Isaiah 6:8-10, Matthew 13:13-15, Romans 11:7-11, and Acts 28:26-28. How was Isaiah's prophecy fulfilled in the rejection of Jesus by the nation of Israel? What unique insights does each passage give us?*

3.) *Read Matthew 26:29-75 and John 21:15-19. Compare and contrast Peter's denial of Jesus in Matthew 26 with His confession of Him in John 21. What truths can we learn from these passages?*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 13:1-20. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 13:1-20 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 13:1-20

Review

In John 1-12, we covered the life and ministry of Jesus from the preaching of John the Baptist to the calling of the disciples to the miraculous workings of Jesus. We saw numerous “I am” statements that John recorded to clarify who Jesus claimed to be. We saw seven miracles that John highlighted to prove that Jesus was who He said He was. At the conclusion of chapter 12, we saw the ultimate rejection of Jesus by the Jews. Because they would not believe, they reached a point where they could not believe because they became so hardened in unbelief.

Introduction

John chapter 13 begins a transition away from Jesus’ ministry to the public that rejected Him to His ministry to the private followers that accepted Him: His 12 disciples. John 13-17 forms a passage of Scripture known as the upper room discourse/teaching. It records the intimate details of what Jesus said to His disciples at the last supper on the night before His crucifixion. It’s the last words of Jesus to His followers before His death. Much of what is found in these chapters is unique information that, without John, we wouldn’t know about. (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3407)

Jesus’ Farewell Discourse shares many similarities to Moses’ in Exodus 33-34. The five major themes of Exodus 33-34 are “love, obey, live, know, and see.” Jesus can be seen as a “new Moses” who makes possible a “new covenant”. “Just as Moses was prevented by death from leading God’s people into the promised land, Jesus will be— albeit only temporarily— separated from his followers. Yet in contrast to Moses, Jesus, as the new Joshua, entered heaven itself as our forerunner (cf. Heb. 4: 8, 14; 6: 20; 12: 2).” (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, pp. Loc 3441-3443)

- Compare with John 14:2-3

John’s recollection of this unforgettable night begins with the story of Jesus washing the feet of the disciples.

As we examine that story, the first aspect we discover is the setting.

1.) The Setting

1 Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

Now before the feast of the Passover – this time indicator once again inches us closer to the climax of Jesus’ death on Passover

- John 12:1 – six days before the Passover
- John 12:12 – 5 days before Passover
- John 13:1 – one day before Passover
- The Passover Festival was a time for the Jews to remember how the blood of the lamb on the doorposts saved them from the plague of death in Egypt. At Jesus' last Passover meal, He made some adjustments that we observe to this day. He instituted a new practice in which His followers would remember not the blood of some lamb spread on doorposts in Egypt, but the blood of the Lamb poured out on the cross for their sins.
 - o When we partake of the bread and the juice together in communion, we remember His body and blood which were given for us. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 672)
- How could Jesus and the disciples have eaten the Passover meal on Thursday evening (Matt. 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16; Luke 22:7-15) if the Jewish leaders had not yet eaten it on Friday morning (John 18:28)?
 - o "Ancient Jewish sources suggest that Jews from the northern part of Israel (including Galilee, where Jesus and most of the Twelve were from) counted days from sunrise to sunrise. Most of the Pharisees apparently also used that method. On the other hand, the Jews in the southern region of Israel counted days from sunset to sunset. That would include the Sadducees (who of necessity lived in the vicinity of Jerusalem because of their connection with the temple).... Thus, there is no contradiction between John and the Synoptics. Being Galileans, Jesus and the Twelve would have viewed Passover day as running from sunrise on Thursday to sunrise on Friday. They would have eaten their Passover meal on Thursday evening. The Jewish leaders (the Sadducees), however, would have viewed it as beginning at sunset on Thursday and ending at sunset on Friday. They would have eaten their Passover meal on Friday evening." (MacArthur, 2006, p. 673)

When Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father – Jesus knew that his time had come (t-minus 24 hours) in order to finish His mission and return to the Father. His hour would conclude with His return to the Father. (Sorenson, 2007)

- Illustration – tv show 24 (the entire season of episodes was a 24 hour period of time)
 - o John 13-19 is 24 hours.
- For Jesus, death was not the end. Rather, it was the means through which Jesus would return to the Father. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

Having loved his own which were in the world,– this statement is made in reference to Jesus' followers, particularly His disciples.

- It's a comment made by one of those disciples (John) reminiscing on those last moments of Jesus.

- Illustration – cherishing last moments with a loved one who has passed away
 - Voicemail from my nana.
- “It was the day before He would die, and He loved us.”
 - Jesus said it, and He showed it.
 - “Love” is referenced 12 times in chapters 1-12. “Love” is referenced 45 times in chapters 13-21. (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3576)
 - But Jesus didn’t just say it. He showed it.
 - He showed it when He washed their feet. He showed it when He died for their sins. He showed it when He forgave them for abandoning Him in His darkest hour.
- He loved His own which were in the world.
 - This verse contrasts Jesus who would soon depart “out of the world” with the disciples who were “in the world”. In doing so, it reveals one of the primary purposes for Jesus’ last words: to prepare His disciples for life and ministry after He was gone. (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3455)

He loved them...but He didn’t just love them.

He loved them unto the end – This expression can have multiple meanings

- He loved His disciples to the uttermost
- He loved them to the end of his life...even though they would not return the favor.
- He loved them to the end, even though they would abandon Him in the end.
- Romans 8:35-39 - 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

And supper being ended – this is in reference to the Last Supper: Jesus’ and the disciples’ observance of the Passover meal

The devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him – the word for “now” can also mean “already”. What that means is that at this point in time, the devil had already planted the thought in Judas’ mind to betray Jesus.

- In fact, from Luke 22, we know that Satan had already led Judas to strike up an agreement with the chief priests to betray Jesus for a sum of money. (Sorenson, 2007)
 - Luke 22:4-6 - 4 And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them. 5 And they were glad, and

covenanted to give him money. 6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

- Judas is reclining at this table with Jesus for this meal having already gone behind His back to betray Him.
 - o And yet, despite the fact that Jesus knew that Judas had never truly believed in Him, had stolen from Him, had slowly of his own free will allowed Satan more and more influence in his life, and had betrayed Him behind His back, Jesus loved him unto the end. In a moment, Jesus is going to humble Himself before Judas and serve him in love by washing his feet. Wow. How do you do that?
 - o Application – It's hard enough loving someone after they've betrayed you. Can you imagine loving someone that you know is going to betray you? Wow.
 - You know what that is? Strength.

John 6:70-71 - 70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? 71 He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

John 13:27 - And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

Acts 5:3 - But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?

Nehemiah 2:12 - And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I any man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither was there any beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon.

Here's the setting:

It's the Last Supper. Jesus knew that His time was almost up. Judas is planning to betray Jesus, and

3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands – Jesus knew that all power and authority had been given to Him by the Father. (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3466)

Jesus washed the disciples feet like a slave knowing who He truly was and knowing the power and authority that had been given to Him by the Father

- This was not even a task required of Jewish slaves. It was reserved for Gentile slaves. (MacArthur, 2006)

And that he was come from God, and went to God – He knew where He had come from, where He was going (exaltation), and the power and authority that He possessed...He knew

that His time was almost up.... He knew that the disciples would soon abandon Him....He knew that Peter would soon deny Him... He knew that Judas was planning to betray Him...

- And yet He did not incinerate the one who would betray Him. He did not berate the one who would deny Him. He did not give up on those who would abandon Him. He loved them to the end. He served them. He lowered Himself to wash their feet like a slave. He gave them the ultimate example of love, humility, and servanthood.
 - o And today, 2000 years later, we get to revisit that moment as a fly on the wall.

John 3:35 - 35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.

John 17:2 - As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

Matthew 28:18 - And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Hebrews 2:8 - 8 Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

2.) The Example of Humble Service

“Having walked through the dirt streets of Jerusalem to the upper room, the disciples’ feet, protected only by sandals, would naturally have been dirty, and while they were reclining for a long meal, offensive. Since there was no servant there to do it, one of the Twelve should have volunteered to wash the feet of the others.” (MacArthur, 2006)

Illustration – walking in the desert in sandals

4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel and girded himself – He didn’t say anything. He just got up, took off His outer robe, and tied a towel around His waist...just like a slave would.

- Illustration – take off coat and tie a towel around my waist
 - Luke 22:27 - 27 For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.
- This is diametrically opposed to how our world views things.

5 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

After that he poureth water into a bason – then He went and got some water and poured it into the bason that was in the room for this very purpose

And began to wash his disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded – He just went ahead and started washing their feet and wiping them off with the towel that He had tied around His waist

“In the dry climate of Palestine, foot washing was essential to hygiene, especially since people did not sit on separate chairs at a table but reclined side by side by leaning back close to one another (cf. 13: 23).” (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, pp. Loc 3472-3475)

- Feet were typically washed by slaves. In this instance, it seems that there was no one to wash the feet, and so what did Jesus do? (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3477)
- Jesus, as Lord of the universe, humbled Himself to perform the task of a slave as He washed the feet of those who would betray, deny, and abandon Him.

Illustration – pretend to wash someone's feet

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

Then cometh he to Simon Peter – He made His way around the room until He arrived at Peter

And Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? – Lord, what are you doing? You are a king. This is beneath you.

Every action taken by Jesus in this story would have been like a dagger of conviction piercing the hearts of the disciples. His humility and willingness to serve would have convicted them of their own pride and selfishness. (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3477)

John 1:27 - 27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.

Luke 5:7-9 - 7 And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. 8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. 9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken:

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter – Peter, you don't understand what I'm doing now, but you will later. (Sorenson, 2007)

- Application: we give the disciples a hard time for not understanding what Jesus means a lot of the time, but the first time you read through this passage, did you fully understand what Jesus meant with all of His explanations? I certainly didn't.

They didn't in that moment when they heard it for the first time, but they would later on when they reflected on it.

John 12:16 - 16 These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet – No. You will not ever (to the end of the age) wash my feet.

- Peter is bold, but Peter is also stupid. He's brash at times.
- Illustration – kids saying “no” to their parents

Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me – what does Jesus mean here? There is a direct and an indirect meaning to what Jesus is saying here

- Directly: “Peter, you don't get to say ‘no’ to me.’ I'm not your advisor. I'm either your Lord or nothing at all. If you won't allow me to demonstrate humility and service in washing your feet, you are acting in defiance of me and setting yourself apart in opposition to me.”
- What Jesus says here is also true in a general or indirect sense.
- Indirectly: Jesus is alluding to the ultimate act of cleansing that He was about to accomplish through the cross. Through the humiliation of the cross, Jesus would not cleanse feet of dirt, but souls of sin.
 - o Application: those who do not allow Jesus to cleanse them have no part with Him. Those who think they can be clean apart from Jesus have no part in Him.
 - o Titus 3:5 - Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

Deuteronomy 12:12 - 12 And ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God, ye, and your sons, and your daughters, and your menservants, and your maidservants, and the Levite that is within your gates; forasmuch as he hath no part nor inheritance with you.

Matthew 16:22 - 22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

Matthew 26:33-35 - 33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended. 34 Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. 35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.

Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head – well if that's the case, Jesus, don't just wash my feet. Wash my hands. Wash my head.

- In verse 8, Peter diverged from what Jesus was trying to do on the negative side.
- In verse 9, Peter diverged from what Jesus was trying to do on the positive side.
 - o He's wrong in both directions. The pendulum has swung too far.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit – once again, there is a direct and indirect meaning to what Jesus says here.

- Directly, Jesus is saying, "Peter, come on. Did you take a bath today? Peter, if you took a bath, you don't need me to wash your whole body. You haven't been rolling around in the dirt with your whole body, have you? No. You've just been dragging your feet through the dirt with your sandals on. Peter don't be silly. Only your feet need to be washed."
- There is also an indirect application of what Jesus says here.
- His words here are a great picture of the difference between salvation (being saved from the penalty of your sin) and sanctification (growing closer to Jesus).
 - o Once you're saved through faith in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, you are cleansed from your sin. You're forgiven. You will never again have to worry about bearing the ultimate penalty for your past, present or future sins. You have a one way nonrefundable ticket to heaven based on what Jesus did for you on the cross.
 - o However, even though we're forgiven of the penalty of sin, we're not yet freed from the presence of sin. We still live in this dirty world, and we're still sinners. The part of us that is still connected to this dirty world (our feet: our sin nature) still gets dirty. That sin creates distance in our relationship with God...we're still saved...we're still His child...but we find ourselves not as close to Him as we used to be...and do you know what we need to do restore that closeness? We need to wash our feet off. We need to confess our sin to the Lord and forsake it.
 - "Lord, the other day, I gave into some bitterness, and I shouldn't have...and I don't want this to come between us. Lord, will you forgive me? I don't want to do that again."
 - You say, "Pastor, if I really take that seriously, then I'm going to be confessing my sin to the Lord a lot"yup...if the last time you confessed sin to the Lord was more than 24 hours, it's probably been too long.

And ye are clean. – Guys, you are both physically and spiritually clean. The disciples were cleansed through faith in Jesus.

- John 15:3 - 3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.

But not all – but not all of you have been cleansed through faith in me.

- What does Jesus mean by that? John, looking back, is going to give us an explanation.

2 Cor. 5:17, 21 - 17 Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. 21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

For he knew who should betray him – Jesus knew that Judas was going to betray him

Therefore said he, Ye are not all clean – that’s why he said that not all of the disciples were spiritually clean.

- Pastor, was Judas saved? Absolutely not.
- Did he have free will? Absolutely. Despite the fact that he was so close to Jesus, of his own free will, Judas became more and more hardened in his unbelief and more and more susceptible to the influence of Satan in his life.
 - o Illustration – the same sun that melts the wax hardens the clay
 - The 11 were wax
 - Judas was clay

3.) The Explanation of the Example

Jesus on His last night with the disciples took the time to wash their feet. Why? What was the purpose for the action?

12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again – He finished washing the feet of every disciple. He put his outer garment back on, and he reclined at the table once again.

He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? – Do you understand what I just did?

- Jesus had just given the disciples one of the most important object lessons the disciples would ever receive, and now He is going to explain the significance of it.

13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

Ye call me Master and Lord – You call me teacher and ruler. A teacher is one we learn from, and a ruler is one obey. (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884)

- You refer to me using these elevated titles of respect.
- Illustration – we still do this in our culture today
 - o Pastor
 - o Officer

- Mr. President
- Councilman & Councilwoman
- Sir & Ma'am

And ye say well, for so I am – and rightfully so because I am your master and Lord. I am the teacher and you are the learner. I am the Lord, and you are the servant.

14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet – if I in my elevated position have taken on myself the task of a slave and served you in humility

Ye also ought to wash one another's feet – how can such an act be beneath you?

- If Jesus loved those who betrayed, abandoned, and denied Him, how can we say that such an act is beneath us?
- If Jesus cared for the poor, how can we say that such an act is beneath us?
- If Jesus put others needs before His own, how can we say that such an act is beneath us?
- If Jesus ministered to the sinners and the outcasts of society, how can we say that such an act is beneath us?
- If Jesus served others in humility, how can we say that such an act is beneath us?
 - Ironically, in God's kingdom the greatest are not the powerful or the wealthy or the accomplished, but rather those who serve.
 - You may be wealthy and accomplished, but how much of a servant are you? If you struggle to answer that question, you're in for a rude awakening when you stand before God one day.

Matthew 20:26-28 - 26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; 27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: 28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

- Jesus' foot washing was a precursor to His crucifixion.

Mark 10:42-45 - 42 But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. 43 But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: 44 And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all. 45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Philippians 2:5-8 - 5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

1 Tim. 5:9-10 - 9 Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man. 10 Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you – The example that Jesus gives in this passage is not of foot washing. The example is of humble service.

- Jesus references “washing one another’s feet” symbolically as a representation of humble service. In that sense, this passage is similar to the Lord’s prayer.

Illustration – when Jesus gave us the Lord’s prayer, He was not saying, “Pray this exact prayer over and over again.” He was saying, “When you pray, pray like this.” It was an example of what prayer should look like. In the same way, when Jesus washed the disciples’ feet, He was not saying, “Perform this ritual over and over again.” He was saying, “When you serve others in humility, do it like this.” It was an example of what humble service looks like.

- This is one of the reasons why we don’t practice foot washing as an ordinance like we do with baptism and communion. Jesus was not instructing the disciples to follow His example in performing a ritual, but rather in humbly serving others.
 - o It’s worth noting that the early church didn’t practice foot washing as an ordinance, and that this passage is the only major reference to it in the New Testament (see 1 Tim. 5:10 where it is referenced as a good deed performed by widows as opposed to an ordinance).

16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

Verily, verily, I say unto you – truly, truly, I’m telling you.

The servant is not greater than his lord – to refuse to serve others in humility is to make the claim that you are greater than your Lord.

- What servant would dare claim that something was beneath him if his master had done it himself? (MacArthur, 2006)

Neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him – The word for “he that is sent” is *apostle*. *Apostle* means “messenger”.

- “As My servants, you are not greater than Me, and as My messengers, you are not greater than Me. And if you are not greater than Me, then how can you claim that what I have done is beneath you?”

John 15:20 - 20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

If ye know these things - if you know what I have taught you about humbly serving others

Happy are ye if ye do them - you are blessed if you do them.

- It's not enough to just be hearers of Jesus' instructions. We have to be doers. If we are doers, if we follow Jesus' example, do you know what we will be? Blessed.
- James 1:25 - 25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.
- Illustration - the Greek word for "happy" is Makarios
 - o It's the same word that's used in James 1:25, and it's the same word that's used in the Beatitudes in Matthew 5
 - o Makarios
 - The Greeks had a word for the feeling one has when one is happy. It is a feeling of contentment, when one knows one's place in the world and is satisfied with that place. If your life has been fortunate, you should feel Makarios.
 - We use idioms in English to try to approximate Makarios because we don't really have a word for it. We'll say, "My life has really come together," or "I'm in a happy place," or "Life has been good to me." We are not really discussing the details of our life; we are trying to describe a feeling we have... a feeling of being happy, content, balanced, harmonious, and fortunate. Happy sounds trite, so we avoid it. Actually, we are Makarios. (Richards & O'Brien, 2014, p. Ch. 3 13:30)

Psalm 19:9-11 - 9 The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. 11 Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.

18 I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

I speak not of you all - if you do these things, you will be blessed, but that will not be the case for all of you. Why? That promise of blessing is only true for believers, and Judas was no believer. He was not clean.

I know whom I have chosen - Jesus knew that what He had said in verse 17 was not applicable for Judas because He knew that Judas was not a true believer, and He knew that Judas would betray Him.

- John 6:70 – Jesus answered them, “Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?”
- He had chosen the twelve for service, and yet Jesus was no fool. He knew who He had chosen. He knew that of the twelve, eleven of them were true believers, and one of them was not. That is why Jesus can say, “I speak not of you all.”
 - o “I know that of the twelve I have chosen, one is not a believer.”

But that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me – but I chose Judas to be a disciple so that Psalm 41:9 might be fulfilled

Psalm 41:9 - 9 Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

- “kicked me while I’m down”
- In this passage, David’s own experience points forward to Jesus’ own betrayal. (MacArthur, 2006)
 - o 2 Samuel 15:12, 31; 2 Samuel 16:15-23; 2 Samuel 17:1-23
 - This Psalm is likely in reference to Ahithophel’s betrayal of David

19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he.

Now I tell you before it come that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he – I’m telling you about my betrayal before it happens so that when it does, you’ll be able to look back one day and know that I knew it was coming...and it will further confirm to you that I am who I say I am.

John 16:4 - But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

Verily, verily, I say unto you – Truly, truly, I’m telling you

He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me And he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me – what does this have to do with anything? Why does the Lord drop this statement in the midst of His prediction that He would be betrayed?

- I think it was to reassure the disciples that His betrayal by one of them would not nullify the mission that Jesus had given to the rest of them.
 - o Application: what do we do when people turn away from what God has called us to do here? We love them to the end, and we just keep moving forward.
- Even though Judas would betray Jesus, the others would still be the Apostles/the messengers of Jesus...to receive their message of salvation was to receive Jesus, and to reject it was to reject Jesus. (MacArthur, 2006)

Application

In this passage of Scripture, we have seen one of the most remarkable examples of love, humility, and servanthood in all of the Bible. Despite the fact that they would betray, deny, and abandon Him, Jesus loved His disciples to the end. He lowered Himself to wash their feet as a servant, and He calls on us to do the same with others.

- Have you forgiven those who have betrayed, hurt, or abandoned you? And if not, how can you say that something your God did is beneath you?
- Do you put the needs of others before your own? And if not, how can you say that something your God did is beneath you?
- Do you serve others in humility? And if not, how can you say that something your God did is beneath you?

Philippians 2:5-8 - 3 Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. 4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. 5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

study questions

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read John 13:17, James 1:25, and Matthew 5:1-12. What are some of the character traits of those who are blessed (makarios)? How can we find greater blessedness in our own lives?*

3.) *Read Psalm 41:9 and 2 Samuel 15:12, 31; 16:15-23; 17:1-23. David is likely alluding to Ahithophel in Psalm 41:9. Compare and contrast Ahithophel's treatment of David with Judas' treatment of Jesus.*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 13:21-38. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 13:21-38 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 13:21-35

Review

John 13:1 is the introduction to the Farewell Discourse of Jesus, which is chapters 13-17. (Carson 1991)

13:1, "Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."

Jesus, knowing that His time had come to leave this world and return to God the Father, turns His attention to His twelve disciples. John, introducing one of the major themes of the farewell discourse, remembers this about Jesus...

"Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end..."

The expression "loved his own...in the world" makes an important contrast. It shows that the object of Jesus' love in this discourse is "his own", the disciples. Their contrast with the world also shows that the purpose of Jesus' final words was to prepare His disciples for life and ministry after He was gone to the Father.

"he loved them to the end"

The phrase "to the end, or εἰς τέλος" is an idiom, which can have multiple meanings. (Louw and Nida 1996)

First, it can mean that He loved them "completely, totally, entirely, wholly". (Louw and Nida 1996) This simply means that there is nothing lacking in the love that Jesus shows to us.

Second, it can also refer to the "continuous extent of time up to a point." (Louw and Nida 1996) In this context, it is saying that Jesus loved them to the end of His life. He loved them till His death.

These two meanings are combined by this idiom. (Danker and Bauer 2000)

Both meanings are represented in this phrase. Jesus loved the disciples completely, and He loved them to the end of his life.

Jesus loved His disciples, even though Judas would betray Him, even though Peter would deny Him, and even though the remainder of His disciples would forsake Him.

This introduces one of the major themes of this discourse. Jesus' love was an example for how His disciples ought to love one another.

The first way Jesus showed His love to His disciples was by washing their feet.

John 13:2-5, “² And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray him; ³ Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; ⁴ He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. ⁵ After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded.”

Even though Jesus knew that Judas would betray Him, even though he knew Peter would deny Him and his disciples would forsake Him, He got down on His hands and knees and washed their feet.

This is such a wonderful example to us of love, humility, and service. Jesus, the God of the universe, took the job of a servant.

John 13:14-15, “¹⁴ If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.”

Jesus washed their feet to give them an example to follow. If He, their Lord, and Master, served them, they ought to serve each other as well. Jesus tells them that if they obey this command, they will be blessed.

But this blessedness does not apply to all of them. One of them is not a believer, and he is going to betray Jesus.

John 13:18-20, “¹⁸ I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But the Scripture will be fulfilled, ‘He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.’

Jesus knew that Judas was going to betray Him, for He knew from the beginning that Judas was not a believer. This scripture Jesus quotes is from Psalm 41:9, which is about David’s experience with betrayal. David’s experience pointed toward the betrayal of Jesus by Judas.

John 13:19, “¹⁹ I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he.”

Jesus told them this prophecy so that when it came to pass they would believe on Him. It was to further confirm that Jesus was who He said He was.

²⁰ Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.”

He is telling them this to reassure them that the betrayal of Judas did not nullify the mission that He had given them. They were still called by God to be apostles, and they still had the mission of preaching the gospel. Judas’ betrayal did not stop any of that.

Sermon

Jesus, after prophesying his betrayal, finally reveals the traitor.

1.) The Traitor Exposed

John 13:21, “²¹ When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.”

Before this verse, Jesus had been a bit unclear when talking about His betrayal. The disciples might have even assumed that He was talking about some disciple outside of the inner 12, or that the betrayal would somehow be inadvertent. (Carson 1991)

Either way, none of the disciples thought that the traitor was in their midst.

When Jesus prophesied that someone was going to betray Him, He became troubled. He then turned to the disciples and testified that one of them is going to betray Him. Jesus uses “Verily, Verily,” before this saying to emphasize the importance of what He is going to say, to the point that it cannot be misunderstood. (Carson 1991) Jesus clearly tells them that one of them is going to betray Him.

This flabbergasted the disciples.

A.) The Confusion

John 13:22, “²² Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake.”

Doubting – “**to be in a confused state of mind, be at a loss, be in doubt, be uncertain.**” (Danker and Bauer 2000)

They start looking at each other, “uncertain of” which disciple He was speaking about. (Danker and Bauer 2000) They are completely caught off guard and it throws them into a state of confusion. They all start looking around at each other, wondering who the traitor was.

Matthew and Mark provide more detail on the response of the disciples.

Matthew 26:22 and Mark 14, “And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?”

They become sorrowful, and start looking to Jesus and asking Him, “Lord, is it me who is going to betray you?”

They are shocked, confused, and sad about this statement of Jesus.

John skips over the sorrowful question of the disciples and moves to part of the story that is unique to him.

John 13:23, “²³ Now there was leaning on Jesus’ bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. ²⁴ Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. ²⁵ He then lying on Jesus’ breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it?”

For the first time in the Gospel of John, we are introduced to the disciple whom Jesus loved. This is most likely referring to the apostle John, the one who wrote this gospel. It is his way of referring to himself. (Carson 1991)

Now, this title is not one of arrogance, it is a title of wonder and awe on the part of John. As one commentator put it, it carries with it "...a profound sense of indebtedness to grace ('What a wonder—that I should be loved by the incarnate Word!'" (Carson 1991) Rather than being prideful, the author wants to emphasize that he is in no way sharing a special platform with Jesus. (Carson 1991)

John, in part, by using this title to remain anonymous and to point to the wonderful love of Jesus, is making sure that Jesus alone receives glory. (Carson 1991)

But primarily, due to the context, John is continuing his theme found in verse one, that Jesus wholly loved his disciples, and that He loved them to the end. This is the first time in this gospel in which John calls himself the disciple who Jesus loved, which is no accident, given that the primary theme of this chapter so far has been the love of Christ. It seems that John is using this identifier to continue his theme, that Jesus loved them to the end.

Jesus loved them even though he was betrayed, denied, and forsaken by them. And that love carried on till the cross!

The cross of Jesus Christ is the ultimate revelation of God's love to us. God loved us so much that He died on a cross for me and for you, so we could have our sins forgiven, so we could be restored to a right relationship with God, so we could have an home in heaven.

This undeserving love of Jesus was so wonderful to John that he identified himself with it. It was part of who he was.

Illustration – When I told my wife that I loved her, there was always a small part of me that worried about how she would respond. But she said it back, and I was on cloud nine. I could not believe that I was loved by her!

John is so overwhelmed by the love of Christ it's how he identifies himself. This is central to John's theology.

1 John 4:7-10, "7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. 8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. 9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. 10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins."

Application

How wonderful is Jesus' love to you? When was the last time you just sat down, and pondered the love of Jesus? When was the last time you were in awe by how loving Jesus

was to you? The love of Jesus was such an amazing gift that it should be how we identify ourselves! I am the one Jesus loves!

The love of God is greater far
Than tongue or pen can ever tell
It goes beyond the highest star
And reaches to the lowest hell
The guilty pair, bowed down with care
God gave His Son to win
His erring child He reconciled
And pardoned from his sin

Could we with ink the ocean fill
And were the skies of parchment made
Were every stalk on earth a quill
And every man a scribe by trade

To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry
Nor could the scroll contain the whole
Though stretched from sky to sky

O love of God, how rich and pure!
How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure
The saints' and angels' song

1. To freshen the love of God.
 - a. Sit down and just read the story of the cross.
 - b. Get on your knees and worship Jesus for His love
2. Keep the love of God fresh in your life.

John, amidst confusion of Jesus statement, is resting on Jesus. Peter, who isn't that close to Jesus at the table, gets His attention.

John 13:24-25, "Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. ²⁵ He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it?"

Peter gets John's attention to have him ask Jesus who the traitor was. John leans back against Christ and asks, Lord, who is the traitor?

B.) The Reveal

John 13:26-27, "²⁶ Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. ²⁷ And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly."

Vs. 26

In the middle of the table during meals in general, there would be a bowl with some sauce inside that everyone would dip their bread, meat, and other assorted foods into. What Jesus dipped into the bowl was probably a piece of bread, although it could have been a piece of meat or something like a date. (Carson 1991)

He says to them, whoever I give the bread that I have dipped to is the one who will betray me.

Now the gospel of Luke adds more to what Jesus said, and how the rest of the disciples reacted to Jesus saying.

Luke 22:21-23, "But, behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me *is* with me on the table. ²² And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined: but woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed! ²³ And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing."

Jesus says that the man who is the traitor is at the table. He also pronounces woes on Judas because he would be held accountable for His betrayal.

He even says in Matthew 26:24 that it would have been better if Judas had not been born!

The disciples inquire amongst themselves. This word inquire means to debate or argue. (Danker and Bauer 2000) The disciples start to argue amongst themselves who the traitor was.

While the disciples are arguing amongst themselves, Judas turns to Jesus and asks him an interesting question.

Matthew 26:25, "²⁵ Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered, and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said."

This is where I believe John and Matthew very closely coincide. While we can only speculate, this is probably around the time where Jesus dipped the sop, and gave it to Judas.

"And when he had dipped the sop, he gave *it* to Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon. ²⁷ And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly."

Part of the reason He handed this bread to Judas was to show His other disciples that he was the traitor. But there is another reason as well.

Often the host of these types of meals would take a tasty bit of meat or bread, dip it in the sauce, and hand it to a guest as a sign of honor and friendship. (Carson 1991)

This is Jesus' final act of love to Judas. This fits into a broader theme of the Gospel of John, that Jesus, the light of the world, has come to save us. But men love darkness rather than light. (Carson 1991)

"And that final act of love becomes, with a terrible immediacy, the decisive movement of judgment. At this moment we are witnessing the climax of that action of sifting, of

separation, of judgment which has been the central theme in John's account of the public ministry of Jesus ... (3:16-19). So the final gesture of affection precipitates the final surrender of Judas to the power of darkness. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has neither understood it nor mastered it. (Newbigin, p. 173)" (Carson 1991)

John 3:16-19, "¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. ¹⁸ He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

Jesus by giving him the sop, was extending to Judas one final opportunity to turn to Him. But Judas loved darkness rather than light, and rejects him, which is clear in the next verse.

Application - Do you know what this shows me? No one is too far gone for Jesus.

"²⁷ And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly."

It is clear which side Judas has chosen, the side of Satan. When Jesus offers him the bread, Satan enters his heart. In other words, he was possessed by the devil.

This is not just a random demon who has possessed him. This is Satan himself, the ruler of all darkness and sin. (John F. Walvoord 1983)

This same word "enter" is used throughout the gospels to refer to demon possession. One prime example is the maniac of Gadara, which had many demons "enter" or possess him. This same group of demons is kicked out of that man by Jesus, and they "entered", possessed, the pigs. (Carson 1991)

This is the second time that Satan possessed Judas. The first occurrence happened when Judas first went to the chief priest to betray Jesus.

Luke 22:3-6, "³ Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was of the number of the twelve. ⁴ He went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers how he might betray him to them. ⁵ And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. ⁶ So he consented and sought an opportunity to betray him to them in the absence of a crowd."

Satan possessed Judas to accomplish his own will.

Jesus then turns to him and says, whatever you are going to do, do it quickly. In other words, go do what you are going to do without delay. (Danker and Bauer 2000)

John 13:28-29, "Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. ²⁹ For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy

those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.”

The disciples completely miss what is going on. They have no idea why Jesus said this to Judas. They think that because Judas was the one who took care of the money that Jesus was having him buy stuff for the feast, or that he was supposed to give money to the poor.

John 13:30, “³⁰ He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.”

Judas leaves immediately like Jesus told him to. The add on by John that it was night is of theological significance. Judas rejected the light of the Christ and fully embraced the darkness of this world and Satan.

Now after Judas has gone out, Jesus starts what is often known as the Farewell Discourse. This is Jesus’ teaching to his twelve disciples on how to live for him after he has ascended to the Father.

Illustration – My parents leaving us behind, here is how you need to behave while I am gone.

Jesus starts off this discourse by pointing out that his ultimate glorification is coming.

2.) The Son Exalted

John 13:31-32, “Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. ³² If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.”

Jesus’ hour had finally come. The departure of Judas set in motion the arrest, trial, and crucifixion of Jesus. And it is through all this pain and suffering that Jesus and God the Father are going to be glorified. (Carson 1991)

Vs. 31, ““Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.”

The word “therefore” in this context isn’t pointing back to Judas leaving as a reason why Jesus said this. In this context it has more to do with the continuation of the story. It could be translated as “so, now, then”. (Danker and Bauer 2000)

When Jesus said, “Now is the Son of man glorified,” Jesus is pointing out that the greatest display of His and the Father’s glory is in His death, burial, and resurrection. (Carson 1991)

John 8:28, “²⁸ Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am *he*, and *that* I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.”

The greatest revelation that Jesus is the Son of God and revelation of God the Father is seen in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. That revelation brought them glory.

Vs. 32, “³² If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.”

Now this verse is a bit hard to wrap the mind around. The first part is easy to get, “If God is glorified in him...” is something that has happened. God is glorified in Jesus through his betrayal, which leads to the next point.

“God shall also glorify him in himself...”

You must remember that the work of Christ and the work of the Father are one, they are united. If it is true that the actions of Jesus glorify the Father, the Father’s actions glorify the Son.

“And straightway glorify him” shows us how exactly God’s actions glorify the Son. God was going to glorify Jesus through his death, burial, and resurrection. Just as those were the actions of Christ to glorify the Father, they were also the actions of God the Father to glorify the Son. (Carson 1991)

God, through his Sovereignty, predestined all that was about to pass: Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection. (Carson 1991)

Acts 2:22-24, ²²Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: ²³Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:

²⁴Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.”

God, through His sovereignty, brought about the death of the Son, and therefore glorified the Son through His own actions. (Carson 1991)

The glorification of Christ caused Jesus to start to prepare His disciples for His departure.

3.) The Faithful Exhorted

John 13:33, ³³Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.”

Little children is a term of endearment in this passage of Scripture. The next part of this verse introduces a major theme of the Farewell discourse. Jesus is not going to be around for long, therefore He is prepping His disciples to live for Him after He is gone.

Now, “yet a little while I am with you” is probably referring to both His death on the cross, and His ascension to the Father, because both of them are addressed in the following chapters. (Carson 1991)

Jesus tells him that they will seek Him, and just like He told the religious leaders, where He is going, to the Father, they cannot come. Now, when Jesus spoke this to the religious leaders, it was a condemnation. Because of their rejection of Christ, they would not be able to find Him, and they would not be able to go to God the Father with Him. (Carson 1991)

This has a very different sense for the disciples. While they would presently seek Him, and presently be unable to go with Him to the Father, they will one day join Him. Jesus uses this as good news for His disciples. (Carson 1991)

Because Jesus told them He is going away, He starts to tell them how to live for Him after he is gone. (Carson 1991)

John 13:34-35, “³⁴ A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. ³⁵ By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

This ties back into the theme of this chapter of the love of Christ. Just as Jesus loved them, they were to love one another.

Remember, Jesus loved them by washing their feet, Jesus loved them despite Judas’ betrayal. He loved them even though he knew they would deny and forsake him. And John knows that Jesus loved them till the end of His life. John knows that the cross of Jesus is the ultimate revelation of the love of Jesus and God for me and for you.

And in the same way, we are to love one another.

Jesus says this is a new commandment. Now, what He does not mean is that it hasn’t been said before. Jesus very clearly taught this in His early ministry. But now there was a new standard. It was no longer just a command of God; it was rooted in death of Jesus. The love of Jesus to His disciples and on the cross is now the standard of our love for one another.

John 15:13, “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

But Jesus tells us something interesting about this love.

John 13:35, “³⁵ By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

This is the way that the world will know that you are a follower of Jesus, is if you love one another. The main identifier of the followers of Christ ought to be the love we have for one another.

Application

And to us, Horizon Baptist, Jesus has the same command. Horizon, love one another just like I have loved you.

You have received an amazing gift, the love of Jesus. Jesus' love to us is unconditional, sacrificial, and never lacking. Jesus loved the disciples, even though He would be betrayed and forsaken. That is the standard of how we should love one another!

1 John 4:10-11

Sometimes, we have a hard time loving people because we see ourselves as better than others.

1. Loving one another means forgetting about how "spiritual" you are.
Sometimes, we have a hard time loving people because we've been hurt.

1. Eph. 4:31-32

2. Loving one another means being kind and forgiving of one another.

Sometimes, we have a hard time loving people because we elevate our preferences above our love for other people.

1. Loving one another means staying unified with the church even when our preferences differ.

Sometimes we have a hard time loving one another because we are selfish.

1. Loving one another means putting the needs of others above your own.

Our love for one another needs to be like Christ's: self-sacrificial, unconditional, unlimited. Our love for one another needs to be so radical that the world looks at horizon and knows that we follow Jesus!

This love we have for each other is how people in the world will know that we follow Jesus.

If someone were to observe how we treat one another, would they know we follow Jesus?

study questions

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read John 13:1, 23, 34-35 and 1 John 4:7-11. in what ways does 1 John 4:7-11 expand John's teaching of the love of God and Jesus?*

3.) *Read Matthew 4:1-11, John 8:39-47, Luke 22:1-7, and John 13:2 and 27. What was Satan's goal in the story of Jesus? How did it eventually turn out for him?*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 13:36-14:14. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 13:36-14:14 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 13:36-14:14

Review

Take your Bibles and open up to John 13:36.

In this passage, we have been talking about the Last Supper, and the events of the night before Jesus' crucifixion. Two weeks ago we talked about how Jesus washed the feet of the disciples. He gave a convicting lesson on service as He performed the task of a slave in washing the feet of those who would betray, deny, and abandon Him within a 24 hour period. The key theme was service.

Last week we looked at Jesus' exposure of Judas as the betrayer in their midst. Jesus dipped the sop and gave it to Judas as a last act of care for him as He truly loved him to the end. We were introduced to the disciple whom Jesus loved and we spent some time in awe of the fact that we too are disciples that Jesus loves. Our key theme was love.

But at the end of our passage last week, Jesus dropped a bomb on the disciples that created quite the stir and sets the context for our passage of Scripture today. He told the disciples that He was leaving, and He told the disciples that they could not come with Him.

This was jaw dropping, and Peter responded immediately.

Sermon

D.) The Denial Foretold

36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.

Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? – Jesus, where are you going?

- Jesus, we've given up everything to follow you. We've put our lives on hold for three years for you. The religious authorities want you dead. The people have by and large rejected us. If ever there was a time to stick together, it's now, and you're leaving us.
- Where are you going? What could possibly be so important that you have to leave us behind now?
- Peter disregarded Jesus' command to His disciples and referred back to a prior statement Jesus had made in verse 33 about going somewhere that the disciples could not follow.

Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards – Notice that Jesus didn't answer the question that Peter asked (where are you going?). He answered the question that Peter really cared about: (why can't we go with you?).

- Peter, where I'm going you can't follow Me now, but you will follow Me later.
 - o What?!
- Peter would follow Jesus in death. Peter would follow Jesus in everlasting life and resurrection.
- Note the contrast with Jesus' statement to the Jews in John 8:21, "I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come."

John 21:18-19 - 18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. 19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

2 Peter 1:14 - Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me.

John 16:17 - 17 Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?

37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.

Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? – Why not? We need to stick together. You need us, and to be honest, we need you!...not later, now.

I will lay down my life for thy sake – Jesus, I know that there are powerful people that want you dead, and if this is your way of trying to protect us, I appreciate the gesture, but I am willing to die at your side if that's what it takes.

Luke 22:31-34 - 31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: 32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. 33 **And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.** 34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

Mark 14:27-31 - 27 And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. 28 But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee. 29 But Peter said unto him, **Although all shall be offended, yet will not I.** 30 And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. 31 But he spake the more vehemently, **If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise.** Likewise also said they all.

Matthew 26:31-35 - 31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock

shall be scattered abroad. 32 But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. 33 Peter answered and said unto him, **Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.** 34 Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. 35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

- “In Matthew 26:31-35 and Mark 11:27-31 the announcement of Peter's fate is made on the way to the garden of Gethsemane; Luke's account (Luke 22:31, etc.) may harmonize chronologically with this statement of John; but from all we know of Peter, it is probable that, after his long silence maintained during the discourse of John 14-17, his love may have been so quickened and deepened as to have once more induced the reiteration of his fidelity and his willingness to die for and with his Master, only to receive again a more explicit warning of his weakness.” (Spence & Exell, 1883)

38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? – Oh, you’re going to lay down your life for my sake, huh? That’s ironic.

- This is ironic for a couple of reasons.
 - It’s ironic because Jesus is going to lay his life down for Peter.
 - It’s ironic because Jesus knows how badly Peter is going to falter later that night.
 - He speaks to that.

Verily, verily, I say unto you – truly, truly, I’m telling you

The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice – before the rooster crows, you will disavow, reject, deny me three times.

- From Mark’s account we know that the rooster crowed twice, and that Jesus’ statement here refers to the final crow (Mark 14:26-31; 66-72).
- Whoa. Jesus is just dropping bombs left and right with the disciples.
1 Cor. 10:12 – Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall

John 18:16-17, 25-27 - 16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. 17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not. 25 And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not. 26 One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? 27 Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.

For the disciples, this has got to be one of the most confusing, awkward, and uncomfortable evenings they've ever had.

- Jesus washed their feet and then called them out for not being willing to do it themselves.
 - o When Peter initially refused to have his feet washed, Jesus rebuked him saying, "If I don't wash your feet, you have no part with me."
- Jesus announced that one of the 12 of them, one of their tight knit family, would betray Him and then revealed that it was Judas.
- He then told the 11 of them that remained that He was abandoning them and when Peter confronted Him about it, He predicted that Peter, the best of them, would disavow Him before others.

The disciples would have been confused and extremely uncomfortable, and yet in the midst of their discomfort, Jesus is going to take some time to comfort His disciples.

Our theme for today is going to be: What You Need To Know When It Seems Like God is Abandoning You

1.) Jesus' Comforting of the Disciples

1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

Let not your heart be troubled – The walls were beginning to close in for Jesus and His disciples. I don't know how you would feel in the setting that I described moments ago, but I know how I would feel: troubled. (MacArthur, 2006)

- Jesus says, "Hey guys. Don't be troubled. Don't be worried."

Ye believe in God, believe also in me - The Greek word for "believe" used twice in John 14: 1b can be either indicative (" You believe") or imperative (" Believe!"). Most commentators believe that Jesus is issuing a double command to his disciples. "Believe in God," he says; "believe also in me." (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, pp. Loc 3671-3684)

- Believe in God and believe in me! Trust me! Trust us!
- This might not have been how you saw things playing out, and things might not be going according to your plans, but my plans never fail. Trust me. Trust us.
- Application: when things in life are not going according to your plans and it seems like God is abandoning you, you need to know that His plans never fail, and you need to trust Him.
- If anyone needed comfort and encouragement in that moment, it was Jesus. The cross and all that it entailed was staring Him in the face...and yet, here He is, comforting and encouraging others.
Isaiah 26:3 - Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

2 Cor. 4:8-10 - 8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; 9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not

destroyed; 10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

Jesus is going to call on His disciples to trust Him. And He's going to comfort them by sharing some truths with them.

A.) Where He Was Going

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

Jesus comforts the disciples by, first off, sharing with them where He was going. He shared the destination of and purpose for His departure.

(1) Destination – the Father's home in heaven

In my Father's house– my Father's house is one of many pictures used to describe heaven in the Bible. It is described as a country (Heb. 11:16) to emphasize its magnitude. It's described as a city (Heb. 12:22) to emphasize its sizable population. It's described as a kingdom to emphasize it's King (2 Tim. 4:18; Dan. 4:37; Matt. 11:25). It's described as paradise (Luke 23:43; 2 Cor. 12:4) to emphasize its beauty and bliss. It's described as a place of rest (Heb. 4:1-11) to emphasize its lack of pain, suffering, and sin. And it's described as the Father's house to emphasize, I believe, the intimacy its residents have with God. (MacArthur, 2006)

Are many Mansions – The Greek word for “mansions” is *monai* which refers to a permanent dwelling place

- It is only used twice in the entire New Testament. Both instances are usages by the Lord in this very chapter. (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3657)
- John 14:23 - Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our **abode** with him.
- We need to get out of our twenty first century American suburban mindset and think first century Palestine if we're going to understand the picture that Jesus is painting here.
- When we think of permanent dwelling places, mansions, we think of single family homes. We think of the multi-million dollar house on the hill with all the fixings. But that's not what a first century Jew would have pictured when Jesus spoke of dwelling places/mansions. In the first century, when an adult son was getting married and starting a family, it was customary for the son to build additional rooms/dwelling places onto their father's existing home for their family (e.g. mother in law quarters). (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, pp. Loc 3687-3690)
 - o When Jesus says, “In my father's house are many mansions/dwelling places/rooms” this is the picture He is using. He is referring to His Father's

house as a home with plenty of rooms that He has prepared for Him and His family, a home with plenty of space for those who would like to dwell there. If it were not so, I would have told you – if there were no heaven or if there were no room (no vacancy), I would have told you straight up.

(2) Purpose – to make arrangements for His family to dwell in His Father’s house

I go to prepare a place for you – Guys, I’m not leaving you behind. I’m not abandoning you. I’m going ahead of you back to my Father’s house to prepare a dwelling place for you. How? How was Jesus going to go about preparing a place for them in His Father’s house? Was Jesus going there by way of Home Depot to pick up supplies and prepare a place for them? No. Of course not.

- He was going there by way of the cross and the tomb to pay for their sin and to prepare a place for them.
- Jesus would prepare a place for them and for us in heaven through His death, burial, and resurrection. (Spence & Exell, 1883)
 - o The reason that any one of us can come within 100 feet of God’s abode has nothing to do with anything that we could ever do, and it has everything to do with what Jesus did for us.
 - o Because of our sin, we were unfit for God’s abode. We were the enemies of God destined for an eternity spent separated from Him. But Jesus Christ, as God in the flesh, went to the cross and died thereon for your sins and my sins and the sins of the whole world.
 - But He didn’t just die. He was buried and rose again the third day victorious over sin, death, and Hell, having made a way for us to spend eternity with Him...not based on what we have done, but based on faith in what He did for us on the cross.

1 Cor. 15:20-22 - 20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. 21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

Hebrews 11:14-16 - 14 For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. 15 And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. 16 But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

Hebrews 13:14 - For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

2 Cor. 5:1 - For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Revelation 21:2 - And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself – If I go ahead to prepare a dwelling place for you, for my family, obviously, I’m coming back to get you.

- At the rapture, Jesus will return to earth for His saints.
 - o Those Christians who are alive will be caught up to meet Him in the air.
 - o Those Christians who have already passed and whose souls are with the Lord in heaven will be physically resurrected and receive their glorified bodies.
- This is in reference to the rapture of the church, the resurrection and catching up of believers into heaven (1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 51:51-57).
 - o Note the lack of reference to judgment. At the second coming, Jesus will return to the earth with His saints to judge the earth and establish His kingdom (Matt. 13:36-43, 47-50; 24:29-44; 25:31-46; Rev. 19:11-15). At the rapture, Jesus will return to earth for His saints.
 - o “Between the rapture and the second coming, the church will celebrate the marriage supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:7-10), and believers will receive their rewards (1 Cor. 3:10-15; 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:10). When He returns in judgment and kingdom glory, the saints will come with Him (Rev. 19:7, 11-14).”
(MacArthur, 2006)

If I go to prepare a place for you, I’m obviously coming back to get you.

Why?

That where I am, there ye may be also – so that we, as a family, might be together

Revelation 21:3-4 - 3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. 4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

Application: when things aren’t going according to plan in our lives and it seems like God is abandoning us, sometimes we just need to remember that He hasn’t left us behind. He’s just ahead of us. And sometimes we need to remember that no matter how rocky things get in the here and now, we have a place prepared for us on the other side that’s really nice. We’ve got someone and something amazing to look forward to. We get to spend eternity together with our family in heaven.

Acts 1:11 - 11 Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

1 Thess. 4:16-17 - 16 For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know – and you know where I’m going, and you know the way to get there.

- Jesus had told the disciples that He was returning to the Father in heaven. (7:33)
 - o John 7:33 - Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me.
- Jesus had taught the disciples that He was the way to God and the source of everlasting life. (10:9; 11:25)
 - o John 10:9 - I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.
 - o John 11:25 - Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

Jesus comforted His disciples by sharing with them where He was going, the destination of and purpose for His departure.

But He didn’t just do that. He also comforted them by sharing with them who He was.

B.) Comfort in Who He Was

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

Thomas saith unto him - Thomas’s response here is a great example of his typical bluntness.

John 11:16 - Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

Lord, we know not whither thou goest – Jesus, can you just explain this to us like we’re 5? We do not know where You are going

And how can we know the way? – if we don’t know where You are going, how can we know the way?

- Jesus, can you provide us with a literal roadmap, complete with turn by turn instructions and an estimated time of arrival for where You are going?

Jesus is going to answer Thomas’s questions and provide comfort to the 11 by sharing with them who He is.

(1) He is the way to God

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

This is the sixth “I am” statement Jesus makes in John’s gospel in which He reveals who He is.

Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life –I am “the” epitome of truth. I am “the” source of everlasting life. As the epitome of truth and the source of everlasting life, Jesus was and is “the” one way to God. Jesus provided turn by turn instructions to God the Father. You want to know how to get to the Father in heaven? You turn to Jesus in faith. There is no other way.

- Religion won’t get you there. Tradition won’t get you there. Good deeds won’t get you there.
 - o Acts 4:12 - Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.
- Illustration – conversation with Amy who said all religions are basically the same except they don’t say that Jesus is the way
- Early Christians so believed this that in the book of the Acts they were commonly referred to as followers of “the Way” ...of Jesus...the one way to God.
 - o Acts 9:2 - 2 And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.
 - o Acts 19:9 - 9 But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.
 - o Acts 19:23 - 23 And the same time there arose no small stir about that way.
 - o Acts 22:4 - 4 And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.
 - o Acts 24:14 - 14 But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets:
 - o Acts 24:22 - 22 And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter.
- “It is sometimes argued that way, truth, and life should be merged such as in ‘the true way of life.’ But a comparison with other instances in this gospel where John links three terms with the conjunction ‘and’ shows that the terms thus tied together remain distinct. In the phrase ‘cattle, sheep and doves’ (2: 14), ‘sheep and doves’ is not further explicating the term ‘cattle.’ Likewise, in the expression ‘sin and righteousness and judgment’ (16: 8), ‘righteousness and judgment’ is not further explicating ‘sin.’” (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, pp. Loc 3711-3714)

No man cometh unto the Father, but by me – Jesus answers both of Thomas’s questions. Thomas had asked, “Where are you going, and how do we get there?” Jesus says, “The

Father is the destination, and I am the only way. No one goes to the Father in heaven except through faith in me.”

- That could not be more clear.

Jesus comforted His disciples by sharing with them that He was the way to God, but He didn't stop there. For Jesus is not just the way to God. Jesus is God.

Acts 4:12 - Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

1 John 5:11-12 - 11 And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

John 17:2-3 - 2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. 3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

(2) He is God

7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also – if you had truly grasped and understood who I am, then you would have seen/perceived the Father

- Why? Because Jesus was and is the exact expression of the Father.
- He was God in the flesh, perfectly unified with the Father in essence, power, and purpose.

And from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him – from here forward, you will know Him and you will have seen Him. How? Because you are going to have a more full understanding of who I am and that in seeing me, you have seen Him. (Plummer, 1902)

- It seems that Jesus here is referring to the time period after His resurrection when it would click and the disciples would fully understand who He was. (John 14:17, 26; 15:26; 16:13; 20:28; Acts 2:22; 3:12; 4:8-12; 5:29-32). (MacArthur, 2006)
Colossians 1:15-17 - 15 Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: 17 And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Hebrews 1:3 - Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high:

John 1:18 - No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father – Jesus, you just said that we have seen the Father. Show us Him. Make that statement true.

And it sufficeth us – and that will be enough. That will reassure us. That will help us to not be troubled at your departure.

Application: We say this to God all the time: “God, if you would just show yourself to me, that would calm me and reassure me. That would be awesome if you would just do that.”

John 1:43-46 - 43 The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me. 44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. 46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

John 6:5-7 - 5 When Jesus then lifted up his eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat? 6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do. 7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

John 12:21-22 - 21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. 22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?

Jesus saith unto him – He responds directly to Philip

Have I been so long time with you – “you” is plural here. Jesus is speaking to Philip but referring to all of the disciples.

- Have we been together for so long...

And yet hast thou not known me, Philip? – and yet you Philip have not recognized me?

- Application: we ask God this same question and it’s like He replies, “How long have you been a Christian, a disciple of mine? All this time my Spirit has been within you. I’ve convicted you. I’ve comforted for you. I’ve provided for you. I’ve answered your prayers. Have we been together for so long Christian, and yet you haven’t recognized me? You’ve forgotten who I am and what I’ve done in your life?”

He that hath seen me hath seen the Father – Philip, I am the visible image of the invisible God. I possess the same nature, attributes, and glory as the Father. (Gill, 1811) In seeing me, you have seen Him.

- It reminds me of what John wrote in the introduction to his gospel.
 - o John 1:1, 14, 18 – 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. 18 No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.
- John 10:38 – ...believe, that the Father is in me and I in him
- John 12:45 – and he that seeth me seeth him that sent me

And how sayest thou then, Show us the Father? – how can you ask me to show you God when I am God manifest in the flesh?

- God had come down from heaven, become flesh, and dwelt among them. The disciples had physically lived with God for three years...and the night before His crucifixion, they are asking Him to show them God.

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? – Do you not believe that I am in the Father and that the Father is in me? Do you not believe that we are perfectly unified? Do you not believe that I am the physical manifestation of Him? Do you not believe what I said to the Jewish leaders in Solomon’s porch at the Feast of Dedication? (John 10:38)

- John 10:38 - But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.
- Jesus is going to reiterate what He had previously said the Jewish leaders in John 10.
 - o I’m not just claiming to be one with the Father. I’m backing it up with my words and my miraculous works.

The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself – The words that I have spoken I have not spoken of my own initiative. I have spoken the words of God that I have received from the Father.

- God’s words have a tone and power to them that cannot be imitated by mortal man.
 - o At the conclusion of the sermon on the mount, the people were astonished at His teaching (Matt. 7:28-29).
 - o At the Feast of Tabernacles the guards failed to seize Jesus because they had never heard anyone speak like Him (John 7:46). (MacArthur, 2006)

But the Father dwelleth in me, he doeth the works – the Father’s abiding presence within Me can be seen not only through My words but through the miraculous works that He does through Me. (Plummer, 1902)

John 1:1-3 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

John 5:19 - Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

John 6:38-40 - 38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. 39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. 40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 8:28 - Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

Colossians 2:9 - For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

Jesus now turns and addresses the entire 11.

Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me – you eleven believe my words, which are the Father's words, that I am in the Father and that the Father is in me.

Or else believe me for the very works' sake – and if my words are not enough, at the very least believe me on account of the miraculous works that you have seen me perform. (Barnes, 1834)

Application: when you find yourself in a situation where things aren't going as planned and it seems like God is abandoning you, you need to remind yourself of who Jesus is by getting into the Word and by remembering the miraculous works and the answered prayers He has performed in your life. They testify to you that He is who He says He is and that He has not abandoned you. His plans are just different than yours...and that's okay because He is God.

John 5:36 - But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

Acts 2:22 - Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know:

Hebrews 2:4 - God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

Jesus comforted His disciples by sharing with them where He was going. He comforted them by reminding them of who He was, and He comforted them by explaining what He would do for them.

C.) What He Would Do

12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

Jesus was not abandoning the disciples. He was departing for a purpose, and that purpose was first and foremost to empower them for ministry.

(1) Empower their ministry

Verily, verily I say unto you – Truly, truly I'm telling you

He that believeth on me, the works that I do he shall do also – the one who believes on Me will become an instrument through which God will do His work

- He will do the works of the Father, the Father dwelling in him through the Son (John 14:23) (Plummer, 1902)

And greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father – My departure is going to empower you for greater ministry once I'm gone.

- You will do greater works than I have done.
- These works are not fundamentally in reference to miraculous signs. Even the apostles themselves did not do greater miraculous works than Jesus had done during His lifetime. When Jesus says that His disciples will do greater works than Him, He's referring to gospel work. He's saying that the scope of His disciples' ministry following His ascension would soon exceed the scope of His own ministry.

Do you know why the disciples' ministry impact would exceed that of Jesus?

Because I go unto my Father – because of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, His disciples had at their disposal the most powerful message in the history of the universe: the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- The message that through faith in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, I can be forgiven of sin, escape the clutches of Hell, and spend eternity with God in heaven.
- Romans 1:16 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.
- Christianity exploded through the power of that message, but in order to make that message true, Jesus had to leave. He had to die.
 - o I know that you think My departure is Me abandoning you, but it's really me empowering you.

- The same powerful, life changing message that the disciples had 2000 years ago, we have at our disposal today. Oh that God would use us to see an explosion of that gospel power into Ventura County. The question is not whether the gospel is powerful enough. The question is whether we have the courage to share it...whether we this Easter season will make a priority of going forth with the good news of Jesus.

Matthew 21:21 - Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

Acts 4:33 - And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all.

Jesus told the disciples that through His departure, He would empower them, but that's not all that He would do. Through His departure, He would also answer their prayers.

(2) Answer their prayers

13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son – to pray “in Jesus’ name” is not just to tack those words onto the end of a prayer as a magic formula for receiving whatever you asked for.

- To pray in the name of Jesus is to pray based on His authority. It's to pray for things that will glorify the Father in the Son. As such, it's to pray for things in accordance with His will (1 John 5:14).
- If we pray based on Jesus' authority for things in accordance with God's will, He will answer those prayers so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.
 - o Certainly the Father is glorified in the Son through the answering of specific requests. The Father is also glorified in the Son through answering prayer in general.

John 15:7 - If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

John 15:16 - Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

John 16:23 - And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

John 16:26 - At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

Mark 11:24 - Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

1 John 3:22 - And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

1 John 5:14 - And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

Jesus assured His disciples that even though He would not be physically with them, He would still hear their requests, empower their ministry, and answer their prayers.

Application

Jesus comforted them in a time of confusion and heartache, and His words still comfort us today.

- I know that this is not what you expected, but I'm not abandoning you. I'm going ahead of you to prepare a place for you.
- I know that this is not what you expected, but don't forget who I am. When my plans differ from yours, it's not because I've forgotten about you, it's because my plans are better.
- I know that this is not what you expected, but I'm going to use this to empower you to do greater works in greater ways for My glory.

Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God and believe in me.

study questions

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Matthew 26:31-35, Mark 14:27-31, and Luke 22:31-34. Compare and contrast the gospel accounts of when Jesus predicted Peter's three fold denial of Him. What unique insights can we gather from each passage?*

3.) *Read John 14:13-14, 15:7, Mark 11:24, 1 John 3:22, and 1 John 5:14. What unique insights on prayer does each of these passages provide us with?*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 14:15-31. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 14:15-31 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 14:15-31

Introduction

The theme of John 13-17 is Jesus' last words to His disciples on the night before His crucifixion.

Jesus had told the disciples that one of them would betray Him, and then revealed Judas as the betrayer. Jesus had explained that He was going to be leaving the disciples soon, and where He was going, they could not follow. And Jesus had declared that Peter, the best of them, would soon deny Him three times.

That evening would have been confusing and troubling, and yet in the midst of the disciples' uneasiness, Jesus took time to comfort them.

In chapter 14, we saw that He comforted them by sharing where He was going: to prepare a dwelling for them (vv. 2-3). He comforted them by sharing who He was: He was the way to God, and He was God dwelling among them (vv. 6-10). He comforted them by sharing what He would do: He would empower their ministry, and He would answer their prayers (vv. 12-14).

- 1.) Where He Was Going
- 2.) Who He Was
- 3.) What He Would Do

Sermon

- 4.) Who Would Take His Place

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments. 16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. 18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

Jesus was soon leaving. He would die on the cross. He would rise again. He would 40 days later ascend to heaven and leave His disciples behind...but He wasn't just going to leave them on their own. He had personally dwelled among them for three and half years, and He was going to send someone to take His place in dwelling among them. Who? The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead.

As Christians, we believe in the trinity, the idea that God is one being, but three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

Verses 15-26 are all about God the Son's comforting of His disciples regarding His soon departure by promising them that He would send the God the Spirit to take His place among them when He departed.

As we examine Jesus' promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit, we're going to uncover some key truths, the first of which is that:

A.) Obedience is a demonstration of our love for Christ

We know this is a significant truth to Jesus because He states it three times in our passage today.

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.

21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

What's that saying? Obedience is a demonstration of our love for Christ.

If ye love me, keep my commandments – if you love me, don't just tell me you love me. Show me that you love me.

- Illustration – when you think about married couples that truly love each other, who comes to mind? If I were to ask you to think of a couple or two that would be the best examples you know of a loving marriage, who would come to mind?
 - o I think of husbands like Tony Rogers and Jim Bushong and their spouses.
- How do you know they love their spouse?
 - o I've seen the way they treat their wives.
 - o When we look at others, we diagnose love not in what they say or in how they feel, but in how they act.
 - o The same can be said about our relationship with Christ.

Obedience is a demonstration of our love for Him. Our love for Him is not seen in merely what we say, but what we do.

What does this have to do with the Holy Spirit, and the promise of the sending of the Comforter? I believe that it is to those who love Him that Jesus promises He will send the Holy Spirit in His stead.

B.) The Holy Spirit is a promise to those who love Christ

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments. 16 **And** (*connecting word*) I will pray the Father, and he shall give you (*those who love me*) another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: **and he that loveth me** shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him (*With who? With the ones who loves Jesus*).

- The Bible teaches that in the present age, the moment that someone enters into a permanent relationship with Jesus Christ through faith (Gal. 3:2), God immediately takes up residence within that person through the Holy Spirit (Eph. 1:13). He wastes no time moving in. In fact, that promise is so certain that the Scripture also teaches in Romans 8:9 that if someone does not have the Holy Spirit living within them, they are not a Christian. Why? Because the moment you become one, the Spirit moves in.
- Why? Why does Christ send the Holy Spirit to indwell His followers, to indwell Christians?

John 15:10-14 - If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.

John 21:15-17 - So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

1 John 2:3-5 - And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.

1 John 5:2-3 - By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

I'll tell you why. The Holy Spirit is a demonstration of Christ's love for us.

C.) The Holy Spirit is a demonstration of Christ's love for us

We've seen that obedience is a demonstration of our love for Christ, but I also believe that the Holy Spirit is a demonstration of Christ's love for us.

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments. 16 **And** I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

And - I believe that the “and” at the beginning of verse 16 is significant in two ways. Firstly, it identifies those who would receive the Holy Spirit as those who love Jesus. Secondly, it highlights the different ways in which Jesus and His followers would express their love for each other.

- Those who love Jesus express their love for Him by keeping His commandments. Jesus expresses His love for His followers by moving in, by permanently dwelling within them through the person of the Holy Spirit. (Sorenson, 2007)
- Romans 5:5 - And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.
- How is the Holy Spirit a demonstration of Christ’s love for us?
- Illustration – Marriage and Moving In
 - o Gods Design for Relationships: Love -> Marriage -> Moving In (Heb. 13:4 – within marriage the bed is undefiled)
 - Culture has this backwards and culture is wrong.
 - The National Marriage Project located at Rutgers University published in 2002 the following conclusions in a comprehensive review of cohabitation research.
 - (1) Those who live together before marriage are more likely to eventually get a divorce (a 1992 study based on the National Survey of Families and Households indicated that this figure was around 50% higher)
 - (2) In general, unmarried couples have lower levels of happiness and wellbeing than married couples
 - (3) Cohabiting parents break up at a much higher rate than married parents and the effects of break up can be devastating and long lasting on children.
 - o About 75% of children born to parents living together but not married will see their parents split up before they reach age sixteen, whereas only about a third of children born to married parents face a similar fate. (Keller, 2013)
 - o If you love someone and you enter into a permanent relationship with them through marriage, what’s one of the first steps you take in that permanent relationship? You dwell together with that person.
 - After Liz and I got married, she no longer made her abode in the college dormitories. She no longer dwelled in her parent’s home. She permanently made her abode with me as an expression of love for me.

- In the same way, when you become a Christian, when you enter into an eternal relationship with God through faith in Jesus, the Holy Spirit makes His abode within you of you as an expression of God's love for you.

Jesus says, "For those who love me..."

I will pray the Father And he shall give you another Comforter – The word for "another" is "allos" and it means another of the same kind. (MacArthur, 2006) Who was the other Comforter? It was Jesus (1 John 2:1-3). As "another" comforter, the Holy Spirit would take Jesus' place as an advocate/helper/ever present companion for His followers.

- Jesus said that Comforter would be given for the purpose of abiding with His followers forever.

That he may abide with you forever – He will not stay with you for only a few years as I have done. He will stay with you to the end of the age. (Gill, 1811)

- When someone becomes a Christian, enters into a relationship with Jesus, the Holy Spirit moves in to stay.
- "Parakletos (Helper) is a term the meaning of which cannot be exhausted by any one word. It literally means "one called alongside to help" and has the connotation of a helper, comforter, counselor, exhorter, intercessor, encourager, and advocate (defense attorney)." (MacArthur, 2006)
- This title is found in the New Testament only in John's writings. It is used by Jesus to describe the Holy Spirit in 14:16, 14:26, and 16:7. It is used by John to describe Jesus in 1 John 2:1.
- "The Synoptists discuss the Spirit almost exclusively in reference to His role in Jesus' ministry (e.g. Jesus' conception, baptism, wilderness temptation, etc.). (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3809) Beyond this, John stresses the Spirit's role in regeneration (3:5-8; 1:12-13), worship (4:23-24), and the giving of life (6:63)." (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3818)

As a means of comfort and an expression of my love for you, when I depart, I will not leave you alone. I will send one in my place to dwell with you, and He will dwell with you forever.

John 14:14 - If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

Hebrews 7:25 - Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.

John 15:26 - But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

John 16:7-15 - Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment,

because the prince of this world is judged. I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

Romans 8:15-16 - For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

Romans 8:26-27 - Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Galatians 5:22 - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Ephesians 1:13-14 - In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Not only is the one who will dwell with you a comforter/advocate/helper, He is also a source of truth.

17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

Even the Spirit of truth – This title is given to emphasize His role in helping us to understand spiritual truths

Whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him – just as the world failed to recognize Jesus and rejected Him, so too it would do and does do with the Holy Spirit.

But ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you – but you do know Him. For He presently abides with you in a general sense, but soon He will take up residence within you permanently and intimately.

Illustration – you’ve seen the Holy Spirit hanging around our ministry, but soon He’s going to be moving in within you

“As John has made clear earlier in his gospel, this giving of the Spirit was possible only after Jesus’s glorification (7: 39). With this glorification now imminent (cf. 12: 23; 13: 1), Jesus

spends much of his time in the upper room preparing his followers for life in the age of the Spirit.” (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, pp. Loc 3807-3809)

1 John 2:27 - But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

1 John 4:6 - We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

1 Cor. 2:14 - But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Romans 8:9, 11, 13-14 - But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

1 Corinthians 3:16 - Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

1 Corinthians 6:19 - What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

Galatians 4:6 - And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you – The Greek word for “comfortless” literally means “as orphans”

- “I am going to die, but I will not leave you as orphans. I’m going to come to you.”
How?
 - o Through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 3876)

19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more – within a matter of hours, the unbelieving world is going to crucify me, and they will see me no more

And yet a little while

But ye see me – but you will see me again once I have risen

And yet a little while

Because I live, ye shall live also – and because I will physically rise from the dead, you too will one day physically rise from the dead

John 13:33 - Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

John 14:6 - Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

1 Corinthians 15:20 - But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.

Obedience is a demonstration of our love for Christ.

The Holy Spirit is a promise to those who love Christ.

The Holy Spirit is an expression of God's love for us.

D.) The Holy Spirit is an assurance of our union with Christ

20 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

At that day – once I have resurrected, returned to the Father, and sent the Holy Spirit in my stead

Ye shall know that I am in my Father – ye will know that I and the Father are unified, that we are in union with one another

And once I have been raised and the Holy Spirit has been sent, you will also know that

And ye in me, and I in you – and you will know that you are I unified, that we are in union, as well

- Our union/relationship with Christ is a different type of union than the one that Christ has with the Father. The union between the Father and the Son is a union of equals. The union/relationship between us and the Son is not a union of equals. Christ is divine and we are not.
 - o Illustration: the difference in my relationship with my cat and my relationship with my wife
- When Jesus talks about Him being in us and us being in Him, what does He mean by that?
- Being “in Christ”, and Christ dwelling “in us” are relational terms that are used throughout the New Testament to describe our permanent union with Christ.
 - o When we put our faith in Jesus Christ as our personal Savior, we enter into a permanent relationship with Him.

- And for those of us who, as Christians, love Jesus, the Holy Spirit permanently moving in within us is not only an expression of Christ's love for us. It is an assurance of our union with Christ.
 - 1 John 3:24 - And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.
 - 1 John 4:12-13 - No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.
 - The Holy Spirit dwelling within us is an assurance of our relationship with Jesus.
- Illustration: waking up some days and thinking to myself, "Is this real life? Am I really so lucky to be married to Liz?" You know what I do? I walk around the house, and I see all of her stuff, and I see her. And I know that this is real life because she lives with me.
- The presence of the Holy Spirit within our hearts and lives is a testimony to the fact that we have a permanent relationship with Jesus Christ. We know that we have a relationship with Him because He lives within us.
- You ask me how I know He lives? He lives within my heart.
- What does it mean to be unified with Christ?
 - In Christ
 - How are we in Christ? The Bible uses many different metaphors to help us picture this union/relationship.
 - Metaphor 1 – Christ is the vine. We are the branches. (John 15:5)
 - Metaphor 2 – Christ is the head. We are the body of Christ. (1 Cor. 12:27)
 - 1 Cor. 12:13 - 12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.
 - We are placed into Christ through the Holy Spirit.
 - Metaphor 3 – Christ is the groom. We are the bride (Eph. 5:22-24)
 - 2 Corinthians 5:17 - Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.
 - Christ in us

- Romans 8:9-10 - 9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.
- Galatians 2:20 - I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.
- Colossians 1:26-27 - 26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

Following my resurrection and sending of the Holy Spirit, you will know that the Father and I are in union as fellow members of the Godhead and you will know that you and I are in relationship with each other through the presence of the Holy Spirit within you. He will testify to that fact.

John 14:10 - Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

John 17:21-23 - That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

John 6:56 - He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

John 15:5-7 - I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

1 John 4:12 - No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me –Obedience here is presented as the outflow of love

And he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him– those who love Jesus are loved by both the Father and Jesus in a special relational way

- Notice the union/relational terminology.

And I will love him, and will manifest myself to him – I will make myself known to the one who loves me. How? Is He going to physically appear in my living room or something? How?

- Jesus will manifest Himself through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (vs. 23) (Barnes, 1834)

James 2:23-24 - And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

1 John 3:18-24 - My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight. And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment. And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

2 John 1:6 - And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

22 Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us and not unto the world? – Judas, also known as Thaddaeus or Lebbaeus (Matt. 10:3), assumed that Jesus was talking about some kind of physical manifestation when He returned to establish His kingdom. In such a situation, why would you manifest yourself only to us and not also the world? (MacArthur, 2006)

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words – for the third time in this passage that Jesus states this (He means it!)

And my Father will love him – and the one who loves Jesus will be loved in a special relational way by the Father. Notice the mirroring between verses 21 and 23.

And we will come unto him, and make our abode with him – How will the Son manifest Himself to those who love Him? It will take place through the Father and the Son making their home, their abode within them. How? Through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit.

- Jesus was then talking about a future time period after His resurrection (the time period we live within) in which those who enter into a relationship with Jesus will be indwelt by the Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit, so that God is always with that person. Isn't that awesome?
 - o God moving/taking up residence within us is a testament to His love for us, and it is one of the ways that we know that we are in union with Him.

John 5:17-19 - But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work. Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God. Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

Romans 8:9-11 - But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

1 John 4:15-16 - Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings – Those who do not love me will not obey me

- What's implied here is that the Father and Son will not indwell that person through the Holy Spirit
- Illustration – God will not move in until a permanent union has taken place (no marriage = no move in)

And the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me – this isn't just coming from me. It's coming from the Father who sent me.

Obedience is a demonstration of our love for Christ.

The Holy Spirit is a promise to those who love Christ.

The Holy Spirit is a demonstration of Christ's love for us.

The Holy Spirit is an assurance of our union with Christ.

E.) The Holy Spirit is an instructor in the words of Christ

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you – while I have abided with you physically, I have shared the words of God with you. I have shared truth with you.

26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name – But the Advocate, who is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send on my behalf...what will He do? He will be your source of truth.

Whom the Father will send in my name – The Spirit is sent both by the Father and the Son (15:26)

- John 15:26 – But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

He shall teach you all things. - The Holy Spirit is our personal, always available private tutor in truth. He helps us to understand the Word of God because He is the author.

Illustration – imagine having the author to your college math textbook at your disposal at all times to help you understand the text

- 1 Cor. 2:13 - Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you – The Holy Spirit reminds us of the Word of God. He helps us to understand biblical truth, and He brings biblical truth to our memory when we need it.

- I believe this also refers to the Holy Spirit's reminding of the disciples of the words of Jesus as they wrote Scripture.
- 2 Peter 1:19-21 - 19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: 20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

John 7:39 - (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Matthew 3:11 - I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

Matthew 28:19 - Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

Acts 1:8 - But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Acts 7:51 - Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.

Romans 5:5 - And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Eph. 4:30 - And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

John 2:22 - When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

John 12:16 - These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.

Jesus comforted the disciples by sharing with them who would take His place following His soon departure. But then He also comforted them by sharing them two things that He would leave them.

2.) What He Would Leave Them

A.) His Peace

27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Peace I leave with you – This was a common oriental farewell (“Peace to you”)

- But then Jesus goes beyond this when He says...

My peace I give unto you – “I give you my peace”

Not as the world giveth, give I unto you – my peace is not like the world’s peace. The world’s peace is temporary and circumstantial. It is a shadow of the true reality. My peace that I give unto you is a peace that passes all understanding. It is the peace of God.

Ephesians 2:14-17 - For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid – Do not allow your heart to be worried or afraid at my impending departure

2 Timothy 1:7 - For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

Psalms 56:3 - What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee.

Psalms 56:11 - In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.

B.) His Example

28 Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you – you have heard me speak of my impending departure to my Father and subsequent return to you

If ye loved me, ye would rejoice - if you were truly thinking not of yourselves, but of me, you would be happy for me. You would rejoice over my gain and not mourn over your own loss. (Plummer, 1902)

Because I said, I go unto the Father – you would be happy for me because of my return to the Father

For my Father is greater than I – not in terms of Jesus’ nature, but in terms of His lowered state of humility while He was in the form of a man.

- In Christ’s earthly incarnation He had humbled Himself in becoming a man and would be further humbled through His death on the cross, but in returning to the Father in heaven following His death and resurrection, Jesus would be exalted to the state of glory and honor at the Father’s right hand that He and the Father had shared since eternity past. (John 17:5)
- His disciples should have wanted that.
- “The Lord was not speaking here of His essential nature as God, but of His submissive role during His ministry on earth. In essence and being, the Father and

the Son are eternally coequal; but in role and function, the Son submitted Himself to the Father's will at the incarnation." (MacArthur, 2006)

- "What the Bible does teach is an economic (or relational) subordination within the Trinity. The three Persons of the triune Godhead voluntarily submit to each other respecting the roles They perform in creation and salvation...Economic or relational subordination is simply a term to describe the relationship that exists among God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Essentially, economic subordination within the Trinity refers to what God does while ontological subordination refers to who God is." (Got Questions)

John 13:16 - Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

1 Corinthians 11:3 - But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.

1 Corinthians 15:28 - And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

Philippians 2:6-11 - Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

I have told you of my impending departure so that when it happens, you will know that it was all part of the plan, and that you might believe.

John 13:19 - Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he.

30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

Hereafter I will not talk much with you – I don't have much time left to speak with you. Why?

For the prince of this world cometh – the devil is on his way

And hath nothing in me – he has no power over me (Plummer, 1902)

John 16:12 - I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

John 12:31 - Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

John 16:11 - Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

Luke 22:53 - When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

1 John 3:5-8 - And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

31 But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

But that the world may know that I love the Father – the devil is on his way, and he has no power over me, but I am going to allow myself to be taken. Why? So that the world may know that I love the Father.

And as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do – How would the world know that the Son loved the Father? Through His obedience. Christ's obedience to the will and plan of the Father was the ultimate demonstration of Jesus' love for Him.

- Philippians 2:8 - And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.
- One of the major themes of John 14 is Christ's call for those who love Him to demonstrate that love towards Him by obeying Him. But Christ did not just call on us to do so. He left us an example of what it looked like. For, just as our obedience to Christ demonstrates our love for Him, so His obedience to His Father demonstrated His love for Him.

Arise, let us go hence – this signals Jesus and the disciples' departure from the upper room for the Garden of Gethsemane (MacArthur, 2006)

John 10:18 - No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

John 12:27 - Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

John 18:1-4 - When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his

disciples. And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples. Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons. Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

Invitation

Have you been saved? Have you entered into a permanent relationship with Jesus Christ by faith? If not, there is no better day than today to make that decision.

For those of us who have been saved, who have the Holy Spirit living within us, how's your obedience? If someone had followed you around last week, and had watched your actions, would they have come to the conclusion that you love Jesus based on what you did? How's your obedience?

How's your awareness? When's the last time you thanked God for always being with you? When's the last time you asked Him for assistance in understanding His Word? When's the last time you asked Him for help in the midst of a difficult decision/situation? How's your awareness of Him?

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read John 14:15-31 and 1 John 2:1-5. How do John's words in 1 John compare and contrast with Jesus' words in John 14. What common terms can be found in both passages and what is the significance of them?*

3.) *Read John 14:15-31 and 1 John 4:7-16. How do John's words in 1 John compare and contrast with Jesus' words in John 14. What common terms can be found in both passages and what is the significance of them?*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 15:1-17. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 15:1-17 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 15:1-17

Review

1. What would take place
 - a. Obedience is a demonstration of love
 - b. The Holy Spirit is a promise to those who love Christ
 - c. The Holy Spirit is a demonstration of Christ love for us
 - d. The Holy Spirit is an assurance of our union with Christ
 - e. The Holy Spirit is an instructor in the words of Christ
2. What he would leave them
 - a. His peace and His example

Sermon

John 15 continues many of the themes found last week in our sermon. In large part, it expands on the theme of Christ dwelling in us, and what a disciple should do because Christ is in him. It also serves as a warning to those who are not in Christ, because, if they do not turn to him, all that is left for them is judgment.

1.) The Call to Abide in the Vine

John 15:1, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman."

This imagery of the vine, the gardener, and the branches is an allegory. Generally, an allegory in the Bible is an extended metaphor or word picture used to convey spiritual truth. (Zuck 1991) In this allegory Jesus is the vine, and his Father is the gardener.

Illustration – This is a perfect allegory for Southern California! Santa maria

This statement, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman," is the last of the "I am" statements in the Gospel of John, and this is the only one that extends on to include God the Father. (Carson 1991)

All the "I am" statements point to a major theme of the gospel of John, namely that Jesus alone is the source of our spiritual needs. By saying he is the "true vine", Jesus is emphasizing another aspect of his sufficiency.

As the true vine, Jesus is the source of spiritual fruit, and the only way we can ever bear fruit is through abiding in him.

Jesus has two different audiences in mind in this passage of Scripture.

First, this is Jesus' Farewell Discourse to his disciples. The Farewell Discourse is simply Jesus' time to comfort his disciples because he will ascend to heaven, and to tell them how to live for him after his ascension. By teaching them he is the true vine, Jesus is telling the

disciples the only way they are going to bear fruit is through him and God the Father. Basically, the only way they were going to live up to the new expectations of Jesus in this Discourse is by abiding in him.

Second, there is sufficient OT evidence that Jesus has the nation of Israel in mind as well, who at this point had not believed on him, and were about to crucify him.

The people of Israel are often depicted in the OT as a vine (Ps. 80:9-16; Is. 5:1-7; 27:2; Je. 2:21; 12:10; Ez. 15; 17:1-21; 19:10-14; Ho. 10:1-2) (Carson 1991)

Ezekiel 15, “And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, ² Son of man, What is the vine tree more than any tree, *or than* a branch which is among the trees of the forest? ³ Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or will *men* take a pin of it to hang any vessel thereon? ⁴ Behold, it is cast into the fire for fuel; the fire devoureth both the ends of it, and the midst of it is burned. Is it meet for *any* work? ⁵ Behold, when it was whole, it was meet for no work: how much less shall it be meet yet for *any* work, when the fire hath devoured it, and it is burned? ⁶ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; As the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem. ⁷ And I will set my face against them; they shall go out from *one* fire, and *another* fire shall devour them; and ye shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I set my face against them. ⁸ And I will make the land desolate, because they have committed a trespass, saith the Lord GOD.”

This passage compares Israel to a vine, and the fruit they are supposed to bear is spiritual fruit. So far this is the passage of Scripture is the closest to John 15. Outside of bearing fruit a vine is really good for nothing. You can't use for building; you can't use it for hanging stuff on; it really is useless. And after it has been burned it is emphatically good for nothing. Israel had stopped bearing fruit, which simply means it was good for nothing. All that awaited the people of Israel was the fire, the judgement of Babylon. (John F. Walvoord 1983)

The Old Testament background points to the failure of the people of Israel to produce good fruit. Simply put, they had failed to love the Lord their God with all their heart. Because of their failure to live for God, they deserved punishment. This truth isn't exclusive to the nation of Israel. Romans 3:23, “All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.”

Israel's apostasy made it an empty vine, and for a long time disqualified as the channel for God's blessings. Those blessings now come only from union with Jesus Christ, the true vine. “Theologically, John's point is that Jesus displaces Israel as the focus of God's plan of salvation, with the implication that faith in Jesus becomes the decisive characteristic for membership among God's people” (Andreas J. Köstenberger, John, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004], 448). (MacArthur 2006)

Jesus, as he had done throughout the entire Gospel, was pointing Israel to himself as the true source of spiritual life. Now Jesus is not saying that the people of Israel needed to bear fruit to go to heaven, he has made it clear throughout this gospel that eternal life only

comes through belief. What he is saying is that the only way they could live for God was first through believing in him, and after believing abiding in him to bear fruit.

For his disciples, for the nation of Israel, the only source they could turn toward to bear spiritual fruit was Jesus the true vine. It is important to note at this point that the nation of Israel had rejected him and were about to crucify him.

But Jesus is not the only one producing fruit in this allegory, God the Father is mentioned as well.

John 15:1, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman."

God the Father has an important role to play in bearing fruit. He is described in this passage of Scripture as the husbandman, which is a farmer or a vinedresser. He is the one in this allegory who cares for and cultivates the vine and the branches. (Carson 1991)

The Father's cultivation is necessary to bear spiritual fruit. The next verse goes to expand on the role of the Father, and to give us the purpose of the true vine.

A.) Bearing Fruit

John 15:2, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."

The phrase "in me" in John 15 seems to have a couple of different meanings.

It can refer to those such as Judas, who appear to be in relationship with Christ, but are not and do not bear fruit. It can also refer to those who are in relationship with Christ and through abiding in Him, do produce fruit.

But what does that mean to bear fruit? Bearing fruit simply means to continue in our love and obedience to Christ.

John 15:10, "10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."

"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away:"

This branch is not bearing fruit, there is no effort to love the Lord and obey his commands. If there is no fruit on the branch it is clearly dead. If someone is not bearing fruit (e.g. Judas) it is a sign that they are not a Christian. The only thing left to do with these branches is cut them off.

"The transparent purpose of the verse is to insist that there are no true Christians without some measure of fruit. Fruitfulness is an infallible mark of true Christianity; the alternative is dead wood, and the exigencies of the vine metaphor make it necessary that such wood be connected to the vine." (Carson 1991)

Illustration – Gardeners in the church, deadheading the blueberry bushes.

God the Father “takes away” these dead branches. This literally means “to cut off”. (Danker and Bauer 2000) To have a fruitful, healthy vine, you must cut off the dead branches. And as we will see later, to cut off refers to eternal judgement.

“and every *branch* that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.”

Purging is simply referring to pruning. (Danker and Bauer 2000) You have to trim vines to get them to grow even more.

Illustration – to have a healthy plant in general, you have to trim it down.

Jesus is referring to His disciples. Every disciple that bears fruit is pruned by the Father. In other words, those who are growing in their obedience to Christ are pruned by God the Father. And the reason the Father does this is so they can produce more fruit.

This is very similar to the discipline of Christians that is found in Hebrews 12, where God disciplines his children so they can grow as Christians. (Carson 1991)

Hebrews 12:10, “¹⁰ For they verily for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness.”

God the Father’s desire is that all men produce fruit, which means to live for Him. And He prunes those that do, and He cuts off those that don’t.

John 15:3, “³ Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.”

Now, Jesus is not saying that his words in verse 2 had cleansed them. This is referring to how the disciples had already bought into the teaching of Jesus, and therefore they were already clean. Jesus already told them they were clean back in John 13:10, (Carson 1991)

“¹⁰ Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.”

But Jesus doesn’t just explain that the vine produces fruit, He explains how it produces fruit.

B.) Abiding in Him.

John 15:4-6, “⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. ⁵I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”

As was mentioned in John 14, Jesus promised that he would indwell his disciples by the Holy Spirit.

John 14:23, “²³ Jesus answered and said unto him, if a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”

The “I in you” is in reference to this promise. (Carson 1991) Jesus will indwell his disciples.

Then Jesus commands his disciples to “Abide in” him. This word means “to remain, continue, abide”. (Danker and Bauer 2000) It seems they were to abide in Christ after he had come to dwell in them.

As the rest of the verse shows us, to abide has the idea of continual dependance on Christ to bear spiritual fruit. (Carson 1991)

“As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.”

“The imagery of the vine is stretched a little when the ‘branches’ are given the responsibility to remain in the vine, but the point is clear: continuous dependence on the vine, constant reliance upon him, persistent spiritual imbibing of his life—this is the *sine qua non* of spiritual fruitfulness. The Christian or Christian organization that expands by external accretion, that merely apes Christian conduct and witness, but is not impelled by life within, brings forth dead crystals, not fruit.” (Carson 1991)

Illustration – Unless a branch is connected to a vine, it is not going to bear fruit. If I wanted to grow a garden, I wouldn’t start by going to a tree, cutting off a branch, and sticking it in the ground.

There is no possible way for a Christian to grow in his love and obedience to Christ unless he depends on Christ. Being a fruitful Christian is the result of the Son’s life being reproduced in the disciple through dependance on him. (John F. Walvoord 1983)

Jesus in the Farewell Discourse is laying out his expectations for his disciples after His ascension. All throughout this discourse, Jesus is giving his disciples commandments to follow.

John 13:34, “³⁴ A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.”

John 14:15, “¹⁵ If ye love me, keep my commandments.”

The only way they were going to love and serve one another, the only way they were going to keep his commandments was by abiding in him.

“⁵ I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.”

Jesus makes it clear that He is the vine in this metaphor, and His disciples are the branches. And when He indwells the believer, and the believer depends on Him, the believer will produce much fruit.

The word “much” means “relatively large in quantity or measure.” (Danker and Bauer 2000) Jesus promises that if His disciples abide in Him, it will produce explosive growth in their lives. Specifically in their love for one another and obedience to his commands.

Abiding in Christ is sort of the “miracle growth formula” of the Christian walk. Abiding in Christ leads to an explosion of growth in the Christian life.

And Jesus emphasizes their dependence on Him for spiritual growth at the end by saying “without me ye can do nothing.” No Christian will ever properly grow without continual dependance on Christ.

Application

This is wonderful news for Christians! We don't have to depend on our own strength to be more like Jesus, Jesus is dwelling in us, and we can depend on Him! It is so easy in our walk with God to become self-reliant, to pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps. To grit our teeth and move along. But Jesus said that without him, you can do nothing. You will not be able to properly grow as a Christian unless you depend on Him.

This simply means to place your faith in Christ, to trust in him for your growth. To abide simply means to remember who Christ has made you to be, and act like it.

2 Cor. 5:17, “¹⁷ Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”

Eph. 4:22-24, “²² That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; ²³ And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; ²⁴ And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.”

Jesus has made you into a new creature. So, all it means to abide in Christ is to trust and act like who Jesus made you to be. And when you abide in him, Jesus promises that it will produce an explosion of growth.

Transition

Jesus doesn't only talk about the fruit from of abiding in Him, he talks about the results of not abiding in Him.

C.) Burning the Unfruitful

John 15:6, “If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.”

Now some people use this verse to teach that you can lose your salvation. But remember, this passage of Scripture is not always referring to believers. It also refers to those like Judas who appear to be in Christ but do not bear fruit.

Secondly, the eternal security of the believer is a constant theme through this gospel.

John 3:18, “¹⁸ He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

John 10:28-29, “²⁸ And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any *man* pluck them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and no *man* is able to pluck *them* out of my Father’s hand.”

With that backdrop, this passage is not referring to people losing their salvation. It is referring to unbelievers in the context of judgement.

Branches that are not abiding in Christ, which no unbeliever abides in Him, are cut off and thrown away. They wither, and then they are thrown into the fire to be burned.

Ezekiel 15 references how the people of Israel failed to bear fruit, and therefore faced judgement from the Lord.

Ezek. 15:6, “⁶ Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; As the vine tree among the trees of the forest, which I have given to the fire for fuel, so will I give the inhabitants of Jerusalem.”

The fire in John 15 is in reference to the eternal judgement. Because the nation of Israel failed to bear fruit, they were in danger of eternal judgement. This isn’t exclusive to the Jews, this is a problem for the whole world; because the world has failed to bear fruit, they also are in danger of hellfire.

The only way the nation of Israel could bear fruit, could love God, was by turning to the true vine to believe and then abide in Him.

So, this isn’t just a message of condemnation, it is a message of hope that there is a true vine. There is one who can save them from their sins and cause them to love the Lord through his power. Jesus is the hope for the nation of Israel, and Jesus is the hope for the sins of the world.

Application

Every single one of us has failed to live up to God’s commandments. Romans 3:23 says “For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” Sin is simply anything we think, say, or do that disobeys God’s commands. And because we have failed to live for him, we deserve to be punished. This punishment is separation from God forever in a place called hell.

But there is good news, and His name is Jesus. He took all the bad things you ever did, put them on Himself, and took the punishment for your sins by dying on a cross and shedding His blood. He then rose from the dead to defeat death and prove He was God. And by doing those things He did everything necessary for you to avoid punishment and go to heaven. All you have to do is trust in what He already did for you.

And the good news is, after you have trusted Him, you don’t need to feel the burden of relying on yourself to live for him. Because He will live in you, and you can depend on Him to help you love God with all your heart.

Transition

But Jesus not only talks about abiding in Him, He also talks about the results of abiding in Him.

2.) The Results of Abiding in the Vine

John 15:7-, “⁷ If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. ⁸ Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples. ⁹ As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. ¹⁰ If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love. ¹¹ These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and *that* your joy might be full. ¹² This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

This passage of Scripture expands on the teaching of the vine and the branches. (Carson 1991)

A.) Answered Prayer

John 15:7, “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”

“If you abide in me” is simply referencing the dependence on Christ again. “And my words abide in you” is the simple fact that Jesus’ teaching abides in those who depend on Him, which then flow out into the life of the believer. (Carson 1991)

Jesus promises that if you abide in Him, He will answer your prayers. But Jesus has a very specific prayer in mind, which is prayers for a fruitful ministry.

This is in reference to the prayer life Jesus mentioned in John 14:12-13, “¹² Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. ¹³ And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”

Jesus promised that His disciples would do greater works than He did on earth. Simply, they would see more people believe in Jesus than Jesus ever did during his life and ministry.

This fruitfulness in ministry is the result of their prayers, asking the Lord to use them to see souls saved, baptized, and discipled. (Carson 1991) Jesus is saying in John 15 that if you abide in Him, when you ask Him to give you a fruitful ministry, to give you souls saved and discipled, He will give it to you. A fruitful life results in fruitful ministry.

Transition

But a fruitfulness in the Christian life doesn’t only result in answered prayer, it results in the Father being glorified.

B.) The Glory of the Father

John 15:8, “⁸ Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.”

God the Father is glorified when we bear much fruit in our lives. The phrase, “so shall ye be my disciples” is simply referring to the fact that genuine discipleship is bound up with bearing fruit. (Carson 1991)

Therefore, we seek to grow in our walk with the Lord, because when we bear fruit, when we grow spiritually, it brings glory to God the Father.

Transition

Not only does it bring glory to God the Father, it also makes us enjoy the love of Jesus.

C.) Enjoyment of His Love

John 15:9-10, “⁹ As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. ¹⁰ If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.”

The love the Father has for Jesus is a perfect and complete love, and it is the same love that Jesus has for his disciples. (Carson 1991) John is expanding on his theme that he started at the beginning of the Farewell Discourse.

John 13:1, “Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.”

Jesus loved his disciples completely, there was nothing lacking in His love for them. Again, this is foreshadowing His death on the cross, which is the ultimate example of His love. (Carson 1991)

“¹⁰ If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.”

Jesus tells them to abide in the complete, unconditional love that he has for them.

Jesus is not saying that His love is conditioned on our obedience, but that obedience to Him is the way we enjoy his love. (Carson 1991) Abiding in Christ is therefore the way we enjoy the love of God. Abiding leads to obedience which leads to enjoyment of the love of Jesus.

Jesus sets Himself forward as the example to His disciples. Just as He is in complete obedience to the Father and remains in His love, they are to obey Him and remain in His love. This emphasizes that the way we enjoy God’s love is through obedience to Him.

How can we say we enjoy the love of Jesus if we are not living for Him?

Illustration – My wife unconditionally loves, and I know that even when I am not the husband I need to be she still loves me unconditionally. But if I choose to not really invest in my marriage, If I am being lazy in my love and service to here, can you really say I am enjoying her love for me?

Abiding is how we obey him, obeying him is how we enjoy in his love.

Transition

But abiding not only results in enjoying Jesus' love, it results in receiving fulness of joy.

D.) Fulness of Joy

John 15:11, “¹¹ These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.”

Jesus told them these things so that His joy would remain in them, and that their joy may be full, which means that their joy would be completed or finished. (Danker and Bauer 2000)

The true, completed, finished joy of the Lord in our lives comes through abiding in Christ. This is a promise of Jesus that His joy will fill our hearts if we live for Him.

Walking with Jesus shouldn't a drudgery or a pain in the neck, it should be filled with the joy of the Lord. If serving the Lord is a pain to you, you should check and see if you are abiding in Christ.

It is a good reminder that true joy is not found in sin; true joy is found in Christ. Nothing in this world will ever give you joy like Jesus.

Transition

But abiding in Christ not only causes the fulness of Joy, it causes love for one another.

E.) Love for One Another

John 15:12-13, “¹² This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

Remember, the Farewell Discourse is to teach the disciples how to live for him after he has ascended. And all the commands Jesus called them to obey are really wrapped up under this commandment, to love one another as He loved us. (Carson 1991) This is a major theme of the Farewell Discourse, which Jesus called a new commandment...

John 13:34, “³⁴ A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.”

It was new in the sense that there is a new standard for the command, namely His unconditional love for them.

“¹³ Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”

There is no greater love than sacrificing yourself for your friends. And Jesus is simply reiterating that his self-sacrificial love to His disciples was the standard for how they were to love one another.

In John 13 Jesus gave his disciples this new command, and by placing it in John 15, he is telling them the only way they could ever live up to this new standard was by abiding in Christ. The only way they could love each other was through the power of Christ.

Application

The only way that we as a church are going to love one another is by depending on Jesus alone. The only way we are going to serve one another is by depending on Jesus alone.

This is a wonderful message for us, that we don't have to rely on ourselves to love each other, we have the Lord Jesus dwelling in us.

Transition

Jesus then moves on to talk about another privilege that the disciples have, and another type of fruit he wants them to bear. The disciples are no longer His servants, they are His friends.

F.) The Friends of Jesus

John 15:14-15, "14 Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. 15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."

Jesus is not saying that obedience is a necessary condition to be His friend, but that obedience is what characterizes His friends. (Carson 1991) Buy why does He call them His friends?

"Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you."

Jesus called them His friends because He gave them His full revelation from God the Father. He told them who He was, God the Son, what He came to do, to die and rise again, and what He would do after He ascended, send them the Holy Spirit, and use them to do greater works than He ever did. The Holy Spirit, after He indwelt them, would bring to their memories all that Christ taught them, and complete the revelation that was found in the person and work of Christ. (Carson 1991)

Jesus teaches them this by making a distinction between a servant and a friend. While obedience is demanded of both, a servant is just told what to do no questions asked, but a friend is given insight into the thinking, motives, and plans of his master. (Carson 1991)

“So also here: Jesus’ absolute right to command is in no way diminished, but He takes pains to inform His friends of his motives, plans, purposes.” (Carson 1991)

The disciples were Jesus’ friends because He gave them His full revelation from the Father. This made the disciples the most informed, privileged believers in the history of the world.

Transition

But there was a potential danger here: that the disciples would get a big head from this. But Jesus makes sure to crush all pride by pointing out that the only reason they had this privilege was through His choosing, not theirs. (Carson 1991)

John 15:16-17, “¹⁶Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. ¹⁷ These things I command you, that ye love one another.”

Jesus emphasizes that He chose them, they did not choose Him. They were not given this privilege because of who they were, but because of the gracious sovereignty of Jesus. (Carson 1991) When Jesus said He chose them, He is not referring to election to salvation, but that he specifically chose these 11 men to be His apostles for a specific plan and purpose. Namely, that they were set apart to go and bear fruit, and that their fruit would remain.

The words “ordained you” means set apart. (Danker and Bauer 2000) It is commonly used in the Bible to refer to someone being set aside for ministry. (Carson 1991) Because of this common usage, and because it is paired with the emphasis on “go and bring forth fruit”, it is probably referring to fruit in the ministry, not fruit in our personal walk with God. In other words, the fruit here is referring to new converts.

This is in reference again to how the disciples would do greater works than Christ during their lifetime.

John 14:12, “¹² Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.”

Jesus chose these apostles to go out into the world to see many people saved and to see more people converted than He ever did.

And when He chose them that their fruit should remain, He is probably referring to the fact that their converts would be baptized, discipled, and then stay faithful in their walk with the Lord. This is the mission He ordained them for, and what He called them to do in Matthew 28:18-20.

“¹⁸ And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. ¹⁹ Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father,

and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.”

“your fruit remain, that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. ¹⁷ These things I command you, that ye love one another.”

Their permanence of their fruit would cause the Father to answer their prayers. Again, this is like the prayer mentioned earlier in vs. 7, which are prayers for fruitfulness in the ministry. In short, the permanence of the apostles converts lead to their prayers for more fruit in the ministry to be answered.

Application

God has called me and you to go and preach the gospel; He has called us to see many people saved. But God doesn't just want us to make converts, He wants us to make disciples. He wants us to see people saved, baptized, discipled, and faithfully living for the Lord Jesus in the long term.

The Great Commission is not just about seeing people saved, it is about making faithful disciples for the Lord.

Conclusion

Jesus finishes out this section with what he has been saying all along.

“¹⁷ These things I command you, that ye love one another.”

Jesus reiterated what he said all the way back in verse 10. All His commandments are brought under this simple command, to love one another.

This draws our mind back to the purpose of this discourse. Jesus is the true vine, and his Father is the gardener. The only way we can bear spiritual fruit is through the God the Son and God the Father.

The Father prunes the ones who bear fruit and cuts off the ones who don't.

He calls his disciples to abide in Him. The only way they would live up to the commands, especially to love one another, was through him. And when we abide in Christ, it leads to answered prayers, the glory of God, and will cause us to obey the command of Christ, to love one another.

The branches that don't bear fruit will face judgement one day, because all have sinned and fallen short of God's glory. But there is hope, that they can turn to Jesus save them from their sins.

And Jesus called the disciples His friends, because he had given all his revelation from the Father to them. And He had chosen them as his apostles, to go and bear fruit, to see souls saved, and that their fruit should remain. God has called us to see people saved. But a Christian is never satisfied with converts, he is called to make faithful disciples.

Are you abiding in Him? Depend on Him. You will bear fruit and experience His joy.

Are you sitting here today, and realizing that you are sinner, that you are like the branches that aren't bearing fruit? There is hope, believe in Him.

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Ezekiel 15, Ezekiel 36:22-28, and John 15:1-6. How does this backdrop in Ezekiel inform how you read John 15? Is there any hope for the nation of Israel?*

3.) *Read John 15:16 and Acts 2:1-11, 37-47. The disciples were chosen by Jesus to go and bear fruit. How is that fulfilled in Acts 2? How does this inform how we do ministry at Horizon?*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 15:18-16:4. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 15:18-16:4 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 15:18-16:4

Review

It was the night before Jesus' crucifixion, and Jesus was taking time to say goodbye to His disciples, to comfort them, and to prepare them for His departure. Throughout this goodbye, He shared a lot of hard truths with them. He washed their feet and then rebuked them for not being willing to serve each other in that way. He exposed Judas as a traitor. He predicted that Peter, their leader, would deny Him three times that night. He told them that He was leaving, and where He was going they could not follow. He shared a lot of hard truths with them that evening, but He also took time to comfort and teach them as well.

He comforted them by sharing why He was leaving. He was leaving to make a way to heaven possible. He comforted them by reminding them of who He was: the way, the truth, the life, God in the flesh. He comforted them by promising that when He departed, He would empower their future ministry, answer their prayers, and send the Holy Spirit to take His place among them as a helper and comforter.

He promised that through the Holy Spirit, He would abide in them, and He called on them to abide/continue in Him. For, it would only be through continuing in their relationship with Christ that they could bear spiritual fruit and be blessed with answered prayer, the enjoyment of Christ's love, fullness of joy, and friendship with God.

However, as we are going to see in our text today, there would not only be blessings from abiding in Christ, but also burdens. For, our study this morning begins with Jesus' prediction of persecution for His disciples (another hard truth).

1.) Jesus' Prediction of Persecution

Why would Jesus take the time to share this hard truth with His disciples on the night before His crucifixion?

"The disciples needed instruction on the world's hatred, for during Jesus's earthly ministry it was he, not his followers, who bore the major brunt of the world's persecution, but once Jesus was removed from the scene, the world's hatred would inevitably turn toward them." (Köstenberger A. J., 2013, pp. Loc 3977-3979)

Jesus needed to prepare them for that.

18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you – Jesus had just spent a great deal of time describing the intimacy and blessedness of the relationship between

Himself and His disciples. However, for those who are in relationship with Jesus Christ, it will cost them their relationship with this world that opposes God. (Plummer, 1902)

- If this lost, unregenerate world hates you, don't forget that it hated me before it hated you.
 - o "Before" – "proto": can be used in reference to time or priority
 - o If the world hates you, remember that its hate for me preceded its hate for you...and remember that its hate for me was the prototype of its hate for you.
- The world's treatment of you, though severe, will be no different than its treatment of me.

John 3:20 - For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

Matthew 5:11 - Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

In this passage, Jesus is preparing His disciples for a future without Him by warning them that, "The world is going to hate and persecute you." But why Jesus? Why will they do that?

Jesus gives three answers to that question.

They will hate you...

A.) Because You are Different

The world will hate you because you are not a part of it.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

If ye were of the world, the world would love his own – if you belonged to the world, the world love you because the world loves its own

- 1 John 4:4-5 - Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.
- There is an ever present pressure today in schools, workplaces, social media to conform to the world and its way of thinking so as to be loved, rather than hated...accepted, rather than rejected.
 - o And if you don't bake that cake, your bakery gets sued.
 - o And if you don't use the right pronouns, you get fired.
 - o And if you don't make the right rulings, you have protestors outside your home.
 - o This lost world that does not know God is constantly pressuring people to conform to its doctrine, its worldview, its priorities, and for those who do, it loves them.

But because ye are not of the world – because you do not belong to this world with its desires and lusts (its obsession with pleasure, ambition, the things of this life)

But I have chosen you out of the world – but, in contrast, I have chosen you out from among the world to minister to the world as an outsider

Therefore the world hateth you – Why?...because you are different. Because you are an outsider.

- Because you don't live for this world. You live for this next.
- Because you don't view yourself as your own master, but as God's servant.
- Because you don't make your own rules, but follow God's rules.
- Because the world hates that which is different from itself, and as a follower of Jesus you are a new creation and you are not conformed to this world.

The world is going to hate and persecute you. Why?

Because you are different

B.) Because the World Hates me

The world will hate you because it hates me.

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord – Jesus called His disciples' attention back to what He had just said earlier that night in John 13:16, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him."

- Statement - The servant is not greater than His Lord
 - o You no longer belong to the world. As my servant, you belong to me. As my sheep, you belong to me. As my branches, you belong to me.
- Application - The application in 13:16 was that since the servant was not greater than his lord, and Jesus had washed their feet, they too should follow the example of their Master in serving one another.
 - o In Matthew 10:24-25, when Jesus first sent the disciples out, Jesus had also told this to them with the application being that they should expect persecution.
- Here in chapter 15, Jesus' uses the same saying, with a different application.

If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you – (1) since the servant is not greater than his master and (2) since you are my servants (3) the way the world treats me will be the way that the world treats you

- 1 John 3:13 - Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.

- If the world hates you, know that their hate for you is just an extension of their hate for me. They hate you because they primarily hate me.
 - o Illustration – hating Alex Rodriguez because he was a New York Yankee

If they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also – those who have obeyed my Word/my teaching, will obey yours also

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake

But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake – the world will hate you and persecute you, not because you've done anything wrong, but on account of my name

- Because you confess me
- Because you love me
- Because you follow me
- Because you teach my words
- Because I am diametrically opposed to everything the world stands for
- Matthew 5:11 - Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.
- Illustration – when I think of persecution on for the sake of Jesus' name, I think of a man by the name of Polycarp (AD 69-155)
 - o Polycarp – very old bishop of Smyrna in Asia Minor (perhaps the last surviving person to have known an apostle, having been a disciple of John)
 - o During a time of intense persecution of the church by the Roman empire, He was arrested and taken into the arena by the Roman Proconsul for being a Christian
 - o Proconsul – “reproach Christ and I will set you free”
 - He didn't hate Polycarp. He hated Jesus, and he hated Polycarp because he hated Jesus.
 - o Polycarp – “86 years I have served him and he has done me no wrong. How can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?”
 - When faced with the opportunity to distance himself from Jesus so as to avoid the hatred and persecution of the world, Polycarp refused. He would not deny his Lord so as to escape the disdain of the world.
 - o Proconsul – threatened him with wild beasts and with burning
 - o Polycarp – refused to deny the name of Jesus and was burned to death (Christian History Institute)
 - Why? Because when the world hated Jesus and hated him for his love for Jesus, he refused to renounce the name of Christ.

The world is going to hate and persecute you. Why?

Because you are different.

Because the world hates me.

C.) Because the World Does not Know God

The world will hate you because it does not know God.

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

The world will hate you and persecute you because they hate me. But why do they hate Jesus?

Because they know not him that sent me – Because they do not know God the Father, the one who sent Jesus.

- The fact that they don't know God can be seen in their rejection of Jesus who was God in the flesh. They literally didn't recognize God when He was standing right in front of them because they didn't know God.
- Illustration – if my cousin Ben walked in the back door of the church, I would recognize him because I know him...but you probably wouldn't because you don't know him.
 - o When God manifest in the flesh showed up in the first century, it became abundantly clear who did and did not know God because many didn't recognize Him when He was standing right in front of them.

Matthew 24:9 - Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

1 Peter 4:13 - But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

As we examine the world's failure to recognize God, we see that they first off did not recognize His voice.

22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.

If I had not come and spoken unto them – If I, as God in the flesh, had not come and revealed myself to the world through my words

They had not had sin – they would not have been guilty of the specific and serious sin of willfully hating, persecuting and rejecting God in the flesh (MacArthur, 2006)

- The world heard my teachings. They heard my words as the one sent by the Father, and they rejected me anyways. Why? Because they didn't know God.

But now they have no cloak for their sin – If I, as God in the flesh, hadn't come and spoken to them, the world wouldn't have been guilty of the specific sin of rejecting me, but I did come, and they did reject me, and now, they have no covering, no excuse for their sin (for their treatment of me)

John 3:18-21 - He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also.

He that hateth me hateth my Father also – it's a package deal; we're a team

- The world is going to hate and persecute you. Why?
 - o The world does not know the Father, and, as a result, the world hates the Father, and the world hates me, and as a follower of me, the world will hate you.
 - o When God showed up in the first century, the world did not recognize His voice, but not only that...

John 8:40-42 - But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

1 John 2:23 - Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.

2 John 1:9 - Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

It also did not recognize His works

24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.

If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin – If I had not done miracle after miracle after miracle before this generation in demonstration of my deity, then they would not have been guilty of such a great sin in their rejection of me

But now they have both seen and hated both me and my Father – but in hearing the voice of God and witnessing the miraculous hand of God, and yet still rejecting me, they have both seen and hated me and the Father.

- For the one who hates me hates my Father also.

Jesus told His disciples, "When I'm gone, the world is going to hate you and persecute you. Why? Because you're different from it. Why? Because it hates me. Why? Because it does not know God."

But...

John 3:2 - The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

John 5:36 - But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

Matthew 11:20-24 - Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

Hebrews 2:3-4 - How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.

But this cometh to pass – the world's hatred towards and rejection of Christ

That the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law – in order that the Old Testament Scripture might be fulfilled (in reference to either Psalm 35:19 or Psalm 69:4)

They hated me without a cause – they hated me, the Messiah, the Son of God, the complete revelation of God, without a reason

- Psalm 69 is also references prophetically as a Messianic Psalm in John 2:17; Acts 1:20; Rom 11:9, 10; 15:3 (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884)
- Psalms 35:19 - Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.
- Psalms 69:4 - They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away.

- “His point is that if David, a mere man, could be so hated by his enemies, how much more the sinless Son of God?” (MacArthur, 2006)

This is going to happen. This is why it’s going to happen, and here’s the plan for when it does happen.

2.) Jesus’ Plan for Persecution

26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

A.) The Holy Spirit will comfort you

But when the Comforter is come – when the Holy Spirit, your Advocate, your helper, your comforter is come

Whom I will send unto you from the Father – in John 14:26, it is the Son who asks the Father and the Father who does the sending of the Holy Spirit. However, here in John 15:26, it is Jesus who sends the Holy Spirit from the Father to His disciples. Which is true? Both are true. The sending of the Holy Spirit is a joint act of the Father and the Son.

- In the midst of the incredible hatred, persecution and opposition you will face at the hands of the world, God’s Spirit will have been sent to you as a Comforter and you won’t have to endure it alone.
- Application: What a blessing it is to know that due to the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, no Christian ever undergoes persecution alone, and that included the disciples.
 - o When James was killed by Herod, he wasn’t alone.
 - o When Bartholomew was whipped to death, he wasn’t alone.
 - o When Thomas was speared to death, he wasn’t alone.
 - o When Matthias was stoned to death, he wasn’t alone.
 - o When Andrew was crucified, he wasn’t alone.
 - o When Peter was crucified upside down, he wasn’t alone.
 - o When Paul was beheaded, he wasn’t alone. (Got Questions)
 - o God’s Spirit was with them as a comfort in the midst of persecution.

When persecution comes, the Holy Spirit will comfort you, but not only that, the Holy Spirit will also testify of me.

B.) The Holy Spirit will testify of me

Even the Spirit of truth – as Jesus already referred to the Holy Spirit as in 14:17

Which proceedeth from the Father – The Holy Spirit is sent by the Son from the Father on a mission. What is that mission? (Spence & Exell, 1883)

He shall testify of me – He will testify of me to the world. He would do so through the empowering the miraculous signs that accompanied the ministry of the disciples. He would do so through inspiring the Holy Scriptures. He would do so through convicting the hearts of the men and women of this lost world.

- When the gospel is preached, the Holy Spirit testified of Jesus by convicting those who do not know Him of their sin and of their need for a Savior.
- Jesus is going to talk more about this work of the Holy Spirit to the world later on in John 16.
- The Father testified to the Son through the Scriptures.
- The Father testified to the Son through the miraculous works that He did.
- The Father testified to the Son through the coming of the Holy Spirit.
 - o Acts 5:32 - And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.
 - o Hebrews 2:3-4 - 3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; 4 God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

John 8:42 - Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

1 John 5:6-10 - This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son.

Acts 20:23-24 - Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

When persecution comes, the Holy Spirit will comfort you. When persecution comes the Holy Spirit will testify of me. When persecution comes...

C.) You will testify of me

God has a very specific plan for how Christians are to respond to the persecution of the world.

- It isn't anger.

- It isn't bitterness.
- It isn't revenge.
- Do you know what it is? Evangelism – telling others about Jesus
- When the world persecutes you and hates you for being a Christian, your response ought to be boldly proclaiming, “He that keeps the whole of God’s law and offends in one point is guilty of all, and All have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and neither will God allow anything into heaven that defiles it. Beyond that the wages of sin is a second death that the Bible describes in Revelation when it says that death and hell were cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the second death. But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God demonstrated His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. And if you will confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in thine heart that God has raised Him from the dead you will be saved. For whosoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved. For by grace are you saved by faith in what Christ did for you and that not of yourselves. It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.”
- When the world persecutes us for following Jesus our response out to be to turn up the volume on our gospel witness.

27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

And ye also shall bear witness – in addition to the Spirit’s testimony of Jesus to the world, God’s plan was that followers of Jesus would also boldly testify of Him

- What’s amazing is that the convicting work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of a lost world works in conjunction with our declaration of the gospel message of Jesus Christ. So that it can truly be said that no Christian ever shares the gospel alone.
- Acts 1:8 - But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.
- Application: if you and I will respond to the persecution of the world with grace and the gospel, you will receive more opposition from some, but for others, that gospel witness will be what God uses to save them out of that world system.
- The times of the most explosive growth in church history have come about when all three elements are present:
 - o Persecution
 - o The conviction of the Spirit
 - o The bold testimony of Christians
 - o That was and is Jesus’ plan for persecution.
- Illustration – the salvation of Saul
 - o Acts 8:1-3 - And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria,

except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.

- Acts 9:1-2 - And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem.
- Acts 22:3-4 - I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women.

because ye have been with me from the beginning – Jesus is speaking directly to the eleven, those who had been with Him from the beginning of His ministry, the time in which revealed Himself through His teaching and miraculous works.

- 1 John 1:1-3 - That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

John 21:24 - This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

1 Peter 5:1 - The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed:

Luke 1:2-3 - Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word; It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

We've seen Jesus' prediction of persecution. We've seen Jesus' plan for persecution. Finally, this morning, we see...

3.) Jesus' Purpose for His Prediction

Why did Jesus tell His disciples about all of the crazy opposition they were getting ready to face?

1 These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended – I’m telling you about the hatred and persecution you will receive at the hands of the world so as to prepare you...so that it does not shock you and cause you to stumble. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

- It’s no surprise to us that the disciples faced great persecution following Christ’s resurrection because we know the story... but they were totally in the dark about what the future entailed. They had no idea that great persecution awaited them. Jesus wanted to prepare them for it.

Matthew 11:6 - And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

Matthew 13:21- Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

Matthew 13:57 - And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.

Matthew 24:10 - And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

Matthew 26:31-33 - Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.

2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.

They shall put you out of the synagogues – they’re going to excommunicate from religious society, as had happened with the formerly blind man that Jesus healed in John 9

- “We may sometimes wonder if the reason why Christians in the United States do not suffer more is that many do not clearly and openly identify with Christ...Many Christians live in a cocoon that enables them to go through life almost completely insulated, without ever having to deal with non-Christians. Yet as a result, we frequently fail to fulfill the function of salt and light in our culture (cf. Matt. 5: 13–16).” (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, pp. Loc 4024-4029)

Yea, the time cometh – you might think that excommunication from the synagogues is bad, but they will go to far more extremes than that...for the time comes (Plummer, 1902)

That whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service – in order that the one who kills you will think that he is offering service – sacrificial homage – to God (Spence & Exell, 1883)

- People are going to try to kill you. That’s a big statement to hear.
- Illustration – this was true of the apostles and true of Christians in the Roman empire in the first century

“But all human efforts, all the lavish gifts of the emperor, and the propitiations of the gods, did not banish the sinister belief that the conflagration was the result of an order. Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their center and become popular. Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired.

Nero offered his gardens for the spectacle, and was exhibiting a show in the circus, while he mingled with the people in the dress of a charioteer or stood aloft on a car. Hence, even for criminals who deserved extreme and exemplary punishment, there arose a feeling of compassion; for it was not, as it seemed, for the public good, but to glut one man's cruelty, that they were being destroyed.” (Tacitus, 1942, p. Annals 15.44)

John 9:22 - These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

Matthew 10:28 - And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

3 And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

They will do all these things unto you because they have not known the Father, nor me.

- “When I’m gone, people are by and large going to hate and persecute you. They will excommunicate you from the synagogues and try to kill you. Just wanted to give you a heads up. Oh and also, the way I want you to respond to this is to lovingly tell them more about me, the one they want to kill you because of. “

John 17:3 - And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

2 Thessalonians 1:8 - In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:

1 John 5:20 - And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

4 But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

But these things have I told you – in order that

- John 13:18-19 – I have told you of Judas’ betrayal so that when it comes to pass that you may believe that I am he
- John 14:28-29 – I have told you that I am departing from you and returning later on so that when it comes to pass you might believe
- John 16:1 – I have told you of the coming persecution and hostility you will face in order that you might now stumble

That when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them – when these things happen, you will remember that I told you they were coming, and you’ll know that you’re on the right path

- Persecution, for the Christian, is an indicator that we are on the right path.

And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you – up to this point, I did not share with you the full scope of the persecutions you would face when I left because I have been with you...but when I depart, you will need to stand in my place with courage.

John 13:19 - Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he.

John 14:29 - And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

John 17:12-13 - While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

Matthew 9:15 - And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.

Application

1 John 2:15-17 - 15 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that is in the world, the lust of

the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

Romans 12:1-2 - I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Are you conforming to the world or are you conforming to Christ? Are you enduring the hatred of a world that despises Jesus because you stand by Him like Polycarp? Or are you conforming to the doctrines and lifestyles of this world so as to be spared its persecution?

And then, when persecution and hatred from the world does come, how are you going to respond? Will you respond in grace with an even bolder gospel witness? Or will you respond in the flesh with bitterness, hatred, and vengeance?

As a follower of Jesus, are you different than the world, and are you testifying to the world of Jesus?

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *In John 15:25, Jesus quotes from Psalm 69:4. Read John 2:17, Acts 1:20, Romans 11:9-10, and Romans 15:3. What other verses in Psalm 69 do these New Testament authors quote from?*

3.) *Read Acts 7:51-8:3. How did Stephen respond to persecution from the world? In what ways is the story of the conversion of the persecutor Saul a reminder to us of the power of the gospel in the face of intense persecution?*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 16:5-24. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 16:5-24 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 16:5-15

Review

On the night before His crucifixion, Jesus is saying goodbye to His disciples and sharing some parting words to prepare them for what is to come. Up to this point in the evening, Jesus has washed their feet, revealed Judas' betrayal, predicted Peter's denial, comforted their hearts, called for their abidance, and shared with them the intense persecution that they would soon face on His behalf.

Last week we studied Jesus' words on persecution. In particular, we saw that Jesus predicted the world's persecution of His disciples. We saw that Jesus shared with them how they were to respond to that persecution: by turning up the volume on their gospel witness as the Holy Spirit also bears witness in people's hearts. And we saw that Jesus shared with His disciples that, for them, persecution would not be an indicator that they were on the wrong path, but the right path.

Illustration – Rumble strips on the side of the road

Sermon

In John 16:5-15, Jesus is going to move past His teaching on persecution to further instruct His disciples on the Holy Spirit and His ministry.

He does so by, first off, reminding them of the...

1.) The Coming of the Spirit to Them

4 ...And these things (*regarding your coming persecution*) I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

5 But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you. 5 But now I go my way to him that sent me – I did not share with you the full extent of the persecution you would one day face because I have been with you, but the time has now come for me to depart to the Father. And yet despite the fact that I am now returning to my Father (which is a good thing)

And none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou? – Hold on one second. That isn't true, is it? In fact, that very night Peter had earlier asked Jesus (in 13:36), "Lord, where are you going?" ...and then in 14:5, Thomas had said, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, and how can we know the way?" Was Jesus wrong? Was His memory that bad? Of course not. What I believe Jesus is saying here is, "Even though you've asked me where I'm going, you haven't really asked me where I'm going. You don't really care about where I'm going. You only care about how my departure affects you." (MacArthur, 2006)

- Illustration – asking Liz how her day was while surfing twitter on my phone from across the room
 - o She would say that I asked her, but I didn't really ask her
 - o Jesus' contention here wasn't with what they had asked Him, but why they had asked it. They didn't care to hear about where He was going and how great it was for Him. They only cared about how His departure was bad news for them.

John 13:36 - Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.

John 14:4-6 - And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

You've asked me, but you haven't really asked me, and instead of being excited for me...

6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

But because I have said these things unto you – regarding your coming persecution after my departure

Sorrow hath filled your heart – instead of getting excited for me, you're feeling sorry for yourself

- Application: That kind of mentality is poisonous. If someone shares good news with you, and the first place your mind goes is how that good news negatively impacts you, that is self-centered, immature and wrong.
 - o Philippians 2:4 – Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

John 14:1 - Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

John 14:27-28 - Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

Jesus said, "You guys are acting so selfishly in feeling sorry for yourself over the news of my departure because you think it's good news for me and bad news for you. That couldn't be further from the truth."

7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

Nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away – The truth is that it's a good thing **for** you that I go away.

- It's not just good for me. It's good for you too. Why?

For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you – Jesus knew that following His return to the Father in heaven, His followers would actually be better off with the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit within them.

- Why? Because as Jesus had already promised His followers, the Holy Spirit would indwell them forever (14:16-17), teach them all things, help them to understand what Jesus had said (14:26), empower their witness (15:26-27), and equip them to be conduits (not containers) of living water (7:37-39).
- Application: the same Spirit that indwelt Peter, James, and John, if you are a Christian, indwells you today. How awesome is that. Jesus said it was better for them, and it's better for you.
- Application: May this serve as a reminder too that when God's plans are different than ours, God's plans are better than ours.
 - o The disciples thought, from their limited perspective, that Jesus' departure news was bad news for them, but it wasn't. The disciples just couldn't see the bigger picture yet.
 - o Jesus said, "Hey, my departure is actually a good thing for you because it means that the Holy Spirit will come in my place."
- Why wouldn't the Holy Spirit come without Jesus departing from them? Because, as John 7:39 says, Jesus would send the Holy Spirit in His glorified state. And how would Jesus be glorified? Through His death, burial, and resurrection.
 - o Beyond that, the Holy Spirit would not have been able to minister in His full capacity had Christ not yet accomplished His redemptive work on the cross. John 11:50-52 - Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

John 14:3 - And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

John 7:39 - (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

Acts 1:4-5 - And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

Jesus taught the disciples regarding the Coming of the Spirit to them. But He didn't stop there. He also taught them regarding the ministry of the Spirit to the world.

In the verses that follow, Jesus is going to give us greater insight into what He meant when He said in John 15:26 that, "When the Comforter is come, he shall testify of me." (15:26)

2.) The Ministry of the Spirit to the World

8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

And when he is come – this would happen on the day of Pentecost, 50 days after Jesus' crucifixion

He will reprove the world – take note of who the Spirit is ministering to in this verse. Jesus says that he will reprove "the world". That is how we know that we follows is in reference to the way in which the Holy Spirit ministers, not to Christians, but to this lost, unbelieving world.

- How will the Holy Spirit minister to the world?
- The Holy Spirit will reprove the world.
 - o The word "reprove" is a broad word that means to convince, rebuke, and convict
 - o The Holy Spirit is like a prosecutor whose aim is to convince, rebuke and convince the hearts of those who do not know Jesus
 - Acts 2:37 - Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

What does the Holy Spirit convict the world about? 3 Things:

Of sin – that which separates us from God; our own unrighteousness (Rom. 3:10; Is. 64:6)

Of righteousness – not our righteousness, but Christ's perfect righteousness which can be received only by grace through faith (2 Cor. 5:21)

And of judgment – on those who stand opposed to God in their sin having not received the righteousness of Christ through faith in Him but rather remain in their own unrighteousness (2 Thess. 1:8-9)

In the verses that follow, Jesus goes into greater detail describing the three fold ministry of the Spirit to the world, and as we examine that ministry, the first thing that we see is that...

A.) He will convict the world of sin

9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;

- He shares with them what the Spirit will do and why He will do it.

Of sin – Sin is anything we say, think, or do that is contrary to God's law

- Rom. 3:23 – All have sinned
- Rom. 3:10 – there is none righteous

- Illustration – omelet with a little bit of arsenic in it
 - o That little bit of arsenic is enough to make the whole thing inedible
 - o The sin in our life makes our whole person unrighteous before God
- The Holy Spirit convicts those who do not know Jesus about their sin, that which makes them wholly unrighteous before a righteous God.

Why does He convict the world regarding their sin?

because they believe not on me – because it does not believe on me, the Holy Spirit will convict the world of its sin (Plummer, 1902)

- “Because” relates to the conviction, not the sin.
 - o The Holy Spirit will convict the world of their sin because they have not yet believed on Jesus. For, if they had believed on Jesus, their sins would have already been forgiven.
 - o John 3:18 - He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.
 - o John 8:23-24 - And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

Acts 7:51-54 - Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers: Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it. When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

Hebrews 10:28-29 - He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?

Not only will the Spirit convict the world of sin, but He will also...

B.) He will convict the world of righteousness

10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

- He shares with them what the Spirit will do and why He will do it.

Of righteousness – In contrast to our unrighteousness is Christ's perfect righteousness, and we can only be saved through faith in what the Righteous one did for us.

- 2 Cor. 5:21 - For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.
- Romans 3:21-26 - But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Why does the Holy Spirit convict the world about Christ's righteousness?

because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more – because Christ lived a perfect life in fulfillment of the law, died as our perfect sacrifice on the cross, and was resurrected and exalted to the right hand of the father, the Holy Spirit will testify of the perfect righteousness of Christ that can only be received through faith in Him. (Plummer, 1902)

- “Because” relates to the conviction, not the righteousness.
 - o Once the Holy Spirit has convicted the world of its sin, the Holy Spirit will further convict the world of Christ's perfect righteousness. Why? Because Christ's death, resurrection and ascension testify that Christ was and is perfectly righteous and that on the cross in His righteousness, He died to pay the penalty for our unrighteousness.

The Holy Spirit will convict the world of sin. The Holy Spirit will convict the world of righteousness, and the Holy Spirit will convict the world of judgment...of condemnation.

C.) He will convict the world of judgment

Application – there are those who shy away from preaching the condemnation of hell to a world that is destined for it, but the Holy Spirit does not. The Holy Spirit does not shy away from testifying of sin, and the Holy Spirit does not shy away from testifying of judgment.

11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

- He shares with them what the Spirit will do and why He will do it.

Of judgment – The Holy Spirit testifies of God's condemnation on those who are unrighteous before God and have not Christ's perfect righteousness by faith.

- John 3:36 - He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.
- 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9 - 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;

Why?

because the prince of this world is judged – because Satan has been judged, the Holy Spirit will convict the world of its own looming judgment

- The cross marked the beginning of the end for Satan. His power was defeated. His fate was sealed, and it is only a matter of time until He will be cast out permanently.
- What's true of Satan is true of those who do not know Jesus and remain in their sin. As Jesus said in John 12:31, "Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out."
- Illustration – courtroom situation
 - o Holy Spirit – prosecutor
 - o Defendant – the world (those who do not know Jesus)
 - o Judge - God
 - o The Holy Spirit, like a prosecutor, testifies to the world of its sinfulness and guilt before God. He testifies of the sentence of spiritual death that the world deserves because of its sin. He testifies of the pardon that is made available to a guilty world because of what Christ in his righteousness did for it when He died on the cross for our sins. John 3:17 – Christ did not come to condemn the world, but rather, in His sinless state He came to save us by taking our sin and our death sentence upon Himself when He died on the cross. He did that so we could be pardoned of our crimes before God and the sentence we deserve.
 - There is only one condition: you must plead guilty before God and request that pardon by faith.
 - The Holy Spirit is doing everything He can to urge you to do so, but you must make the decision to recognize your guilt and then to accept what Christ has done for you on the cross.
 - For those who plead guilty before God, they are declared innocent based on faith in what Christ has done. For those who plead innocent before God, they are declared guilty based on what they have done.

Jesus taught the disciples regarding the Holy Spirit by reminding them of the coming of the Spirit to them, by teaching them on the ministry of the Spirit to the world, and finally by instructing them on ...

3.) The Ministry of the Spirit to Them

12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

I have yet many things to say unto you – Even after three years together, I have a lot of things left I need to teach you

But ye cannot bear them now – but you're not ready to carry them yet

- There's nothing that I wish to withhold from you, but it doesn't make sense to share truths with you that you can't yet understand, and what good does it do to share burdens with you that would just crush you in this moment? (Plummer, 1902)
 - o "Not with respect to the main doctrines of the Gospel, for everything of this kind he had made known unto them, John 15:15; but what regarded the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles, the abrogation of the Mosaic economy, and settling the Gospel church state, which were to come to pass after the death and resurrection of Christ, and the sending of the Spirit." (Gill, 1811)
- Application: what a wonderful reminder that God knows what we can handle and He never gives us more than we can handle
 - o 1 Cor. 10:13 - 13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

Acts 1:3 - To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:

I have a lot of things that I'd like to share with you and that you need to know, but you're not ready for them yet. But that doesn't mean that I'm going to "leave you hanging". For, when the Holy Spirit comes...

A.) He will guide you into all truth

All of the truth that I wish to share with you and that you need will be revealed to you by the Holy Spirit.

As we look at this statement, remember that Jesus is saying these words directly to the eleven as those who would be His apostles, the foundational leaders of the church. There are specific aspects of this promise that were applicable to them, but are not applicable to us today.

13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come – I've got a lot of things I want to share with you, but you're not ready for them yet. But, when the Holy Spirit has come and taken up residence within you

He will guide you into all truth – He will guide/lead you into all of **the** truth...the truth in all of its parts. Everything that the church needs to know from Jesus and about Jesus was revealed to the apostles by the Holy Spirit after Jesus' departure.

- This is significant for a couple of reasons.
 - First off, this is a precursor promise from Jesus to His apostles that points to the inspiration of the New Testament Scriptures by God.
 - How do we know that after Jesus' resurrection and ascension, the New Testament authors got it right in what they recorded about Him and about church doctrine? Jesus promised. That's how we know. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would guide them into all of the truth.
 - 2 Peter 1:20-21 - 20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.
 - This promise is a precursor pointing to the inspiration of the New Testament Scripture.
 - Secondly, this is a precursor promise from Jesus to His apostles that points to the sufficiency of the New Testament Scriptures.
 - Since Jesus promised the apostles that the Holy Spirit would guide them into the fulness of truth, what that means for us today is that all of the truth we need for Christian living can be found in the inspired writings of Scripture from the first century.
 - If someone says, "Hey, the Scriptures are good and all, but the Holy Spirit has revealed something to me that He did not reveal to the Apostles in the first century, that is not in the Bible", do you know what our response should be? No thank you Joseph Smith. No thank you Jim Jones. No thank you Pope Francis. I've got everything I need right here because Jesus promised the apostles that through the Holy Spirit, He would guide them into all the fulness of the truth and we have that fulness of that truth recorded in the New Testament.
 - 2 Tim. 3:16 – All Scripture is given by inspiration of God
 - That's the inspiration of the Scripture
 - 2 Tim. 3:17 – *in order* that the man of God may be perfect (*complete*), thoroughly furnished (*completely equipped*) for every good work...
 - Everything that we need for Christian living and doctrine can be found in the Scripture.
 - That's the sufficiency of the Scripture.
 - Jesus' words here point forward to that.
 - Jesus' promise here to His disciples that the Holy Spirit would guide them into all truth is primarily in reference to them as the apostolic leaders of

the early church. However, His words here of the ministry of the Spirit are also applicable to us in a secondary sense.

- The Holy Spirit guided the authors of Scripture in the recording of the truth, but the Holy Spirit ministers to us today in helping us to understand the Scriptures that He inspired two thousand years ago. As the author of the Scriptures who lives within us, the Holy Spirit helps us to understand what the Word of God says.
- 1 Cor. 2:12-13 - 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.
- 1 John 2:27 - But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.

For he shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak – The Holy Spirit will not speak of His own initiative. Just as Christ during His time on earth, acted in accordance with, rather than independent of, the Father's Will, so too would the Holy Spirit.

And he will shew you things to come – Jesus promises to His disciples that the Holy Spirit would reveal to them everything they needed to know about things to come...(things like the formation of the church, the fulfillment of the Mosaic law, the salvation of Gentiles, the tribulation, the coming kingdom, the end times, the eternal state). (Gill, 1811)

- What a blessing that these truths that were revealed to them are recorded for us in the New Testament. (MacArthur, 2006)

1 John 4:6 - We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

John 14:26 - But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

John 7:16-18 - Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

John 12:49 - For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

Joel 2:28 - And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:

Acts 2:17-18 - And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams: And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

Acts 11:28 - And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar.

Revelation 1:1 - The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

B.) He will glorify Me

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

He shall glorify me – the Holy Spirit will glorify me. How?

For he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you – for he will reveal the fulness of me to you: my identity and my work. He will glorify me by revealing me to you.

Application – the Holy Spirit does not point to Himself. He points to Christ.

- If you are ever in a place where the emphasis is primarily on the Holy Spirit as opposed to Jesus, you need to get out of there. Why? Because that is not how the Holy Spirit works.

Acts 2:32-36 - This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool. Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:3 - Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

1 Peter 1:10-12 - Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it

testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

1 John 5:6 - This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

John 15:26 - But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:

15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

All things that the Father hath are mine: - since Christ is the fulness of the revelation of the Father and since the two are perfectly unified in nature and mission, as the Spirit reveals Christ, He reveals the Father.

John 3:35 - The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.

Therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you - That is why I said that the Spirit will reveal me to you...for in revealing me to you, He will reveal the Father to you as well.

Application

The Holy Spirit testifies to the hearts of this world regarding sin, righteousness, and judgment. Have you recognized your own unrighteousness before God? Have you recognized what Christ in His perfect righteousness did for you on the cross? Has there ever been a time in your life where you have plead guilty before God because of your sin and asked to be pardoned based on what Christ did for you on the cross? If not, I beg you to.

For those who plead guilty before God will be declared innocent based on faith in what Christ has done. But those who do not will be condemned to everlasting punishment based on their own unrighteousness.

For us as believers, The Holy Spirit revealed and inspired the recording of the fulness of truth in the New Testament for you and for me. And beyond that, He ministers within us today in helping us to understand what the Word of God says. God has put an incredible amount of time and effort into that book sitting in your lap. When is the last time you read it? Are you utilizing it as the priceless treasure that it is? Or has it simply become an accessory in your life that you bring with you on Sundays? A décor piece in your home?

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Romans 3:10-26. Jesus taught that the Holy Spirit would convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. Where do you see these themes in Paul's declaration of the gospel in Romans 3? How does the conviction of the Holy Spirit coincide with the gospel message?*

3.) *Read 2 Tim. 3:16-17 and 2 Peter 1:19-21. How did God inspire the writing of the New Testament? In what ways does the Scripture minister to us today?*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 16:16-33. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 16:16-33 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 16:16-33

Review

On the night before His crucifixion, Jesus gave a final farewell teaching to His disciples. In the face of His departure, He comforted their hearts, called for their abidance, encouraged them to endure persecution, and taught them regarding the coming of the Holy Spirit as a helper. As the evening was drawing to a close, Jesus ended His farewell the same way that He had started it, by sharing with the disciples about His imminent departure.

Sermon

1.) The Restatement of His Departure

16 A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.

Having just spoken to the disciples about the impending arrival of the Holy Spirit, He returns to the topic of His own departure.

A little while, and ye shall not see me – He’s referring here to His departure from the earth which would not occur long after. In just a short time, you will no longer physically see me.

And again, A little while, and ye shall see (*opsesthe – perceive me/my presence*) me, because I go to the Father – In a little while you won’t see me physically, and yet in a little while you will perceive me. Why? Because I am going away to the Father

- What in the world does that mean?
- Obviously, it’s true that the disciples would physically see Jesus again following His resurrection, but I don’t believe that’s what Jesus is referring to here for two reasons:
 - o When Jesus talks about His departure, He is primarily referring to His ascension.
 - o All throughout Jesus’ farewell discourse, Jesus’ departure and the coming of the Spirit are presented as flip sides of the same coin.
 - John 16:7 – “It’s a good thing for me to leave because if I don’t leave, the Holy Spirit will not come.”
 - John 14:17-20 – “when the Holy Spirit comes, you will perceive me. In that day, you will know that I am in you and you are in me.”
- “In a little while, when I depart to the Father in heaven, you won’t physically see me anymore, but you will perceive me. Why? Because I am going to the Father and when I arrive, I will send the Spirit in my place. When He arrives, you will know that I am in you, and you are in me. “

Did the disciples grasp that? Not at all. Look at verse 17.

John 14:17-20 - 17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. 18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. 19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; **but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. 20 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.**

John 16:10 - Of righteousness, **because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;**

17 Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?

Then said some of his disciples among themselves – one to another

What is this that he saith unto us – what in the world is He saying?

A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go the Father – “in a little while you won’t see me, but you will see me because I’m going to the Father. Wink. Wink. “

- What? That makes no sense!

18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith.

They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? – He said “a little while”. How long is a little while? When is this happening? And what is happening?

We cannot tell what he saith – we do not know what He is saying

19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?

Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him – Jesus knew that they were totally confused and wanted to ask Him what He meant.

- He knew this because He is God, and He knows everything.

And said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me? – Are you guys trying to figure out what I meant by what I just said?

John 7:33 - Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me.

John 13:33 - Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

John 14:19 - Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

Let me try to explain this for you.

2.) The Explanation of His Departure

One of the best ways of explaining an unfamiliar concept is through means of an illustration. Jesus is going to explain His departure by giving them a vivid illustration.

A.) Illustration

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.

Verily, verily, I say unto you – Truly, truly, I'm telling you

That ye shall weep and lament – you will deeply, painfully grieve over my departure

- Jesus seems to see and present the cross as the beginning of His departure to the Father. He would die, be buried for three days, be raised in a glorified body, make numerous appearances over a forty day period, and then ultimately ascend to the Father in heaven at which time He would send the Spirit down ten days later. The cross really begins the time of Jesus' 43 day departure.
- When the time of my departure begins via the cross, it will bring you deep pain and grief.
Luke 23:27 - 27 And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.

But the world shall rejoice – in contrast, it will bring the world gladness and joy...for a very short period of time.

- Their world's joy would turn to sorrow, but for the disciples...

And ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy – How? How would the disciples deep, painful grief over Jesus' humiliating death be turned into joy? The resurrection. The resurrection would reveal the true purpose of the cross. Rather than the cross being seen as the place of Jesus' defeat, it would come to be known as the place of sin's destruction. As such, the cross and the empty tomb would become a source of hope, glory, and joy for followers of Jesus. (MacArthur, 2006)

- Gal. 6:14 - 14 But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.
- 1 Cor. 1:18 - For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

John 19:25-27 - Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother,

Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

Mark 14:72 - And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

Matthew 27:39-44 - And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads, And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross. Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

Acts 2:46-47 - And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.

You're going to experience some intense pain throughout my departure, but that pain is going to turn into joy. How can I illustrate this for you guys? Hmmm. It's going to be like childbirth.

- It's sort of ironic that Jesus uses this illustration with a bunch of men that had never actually been through it, but at the very least they would have been familiar with the concept and likely been with their wives as they went through it.

21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

Illustration – something that at first brings intense pain and then later brings joy: childbirth

A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow – When a woman is in labor, she has great pain, grief, and sorrow. Why?

Because her hour is come – because the time has come and there is no avoiding it. This is happening and it is painful as all get up.

Illustration – I have never been through labor physically, but I have been through labor emotionally, and it wore me out. And if the physical experience is anything like the emotional experience, it is a time of great sorrow and pain. At least that's how it looked to me. That experience permanently changed me. I now look at my life in terms of before seeing a delivery and after seeing a delivery.

But as soon as she is delivered of the child – but as soon as that painful labor culminates in the birth of the child

She remembereth no more the anguish – she no longer remembers the pain and sorrow. Why?

For joy that a man is born into the world – because that momentary pain is overcome by the joy of the child that labor has brought into the world

All of the sudden that which brought such intense pain has resulted in an even greater joy.

- “My departure is going to be like that. It’s going to be so painful, but then it’s going to be so good.”

22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

And ye now therefore have sorrow – the hour of labor has come; your sorrow has begun because you know my departure is imminent, and it will intensify in a matter of hours

But I will see you again – In verse 15 Jesus promised that His disciples would perceive Him. Here He promises that He would perceive them again.

- This would certainly come to pass in His post resurrection appearances, but, in a more permanent sense, it would come to pass through the coming of the Spirit.

And your heart shall rejoice – your sorrow will be turned into joy

And your joy no man taketh from you – and that joy will remain forever. Why? Because I will be alive, and through the Spirit I will take up residence within you and be with you always even unto the end of the world (Matt. 28:20).

Application – in life we often find ourselves in situation of pain, grief, and sorrow. These times can be tough, intense, seemingly never ending...but as Christians we can be thankful that our sorrow will be turned into joy and that eternal joy will be so much greater than the pain we endured for a season.

- 2 Cor. 4:17-18 - 17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; 18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.

John 20:19-20 - Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

John 21:7 - Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

Romans 8:35-39 - Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

B.) Ramifications

In sharing the ramifications of His departure, Jesus was sharing some of the ways in which their sorrow over His departure would turn into joy.

(1) Answered Prayer

23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

And in that day – when my departure is complete, the Spirit has come in my place, and your sorrow has turned into joy

Ye shall ask me nothing – This isn't talking about prayer. It's talking about questioning. "At that time, you won't question me about anything." Why?

- #1 – He would no longer be physically with them.
- #2 – The Holy Spirit would be their resident truth teacher
 - o 1 John 2:27 – 27 But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.
- "That further suggests that the day cannot be the resurrection (cf. the discussion of v. 16 above). The disciples undoubtedly asked many questions during the forty days between the resurrection and the ascension that the Lord spent 'speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God' (Acts 1:3; one of their questions is recorded in v. 6). But after the coming of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, they would no longer question Jesus." (MacArthur, 2006)

But beyond that...

Verily, verily, I say unto you – truly, truly, I'm telling you

Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it to you – once I have departed, whatever requests you make to the Father in my name will be answered

- This is the third time in the farewell discourse that Jesus has stated this to His disciples (14:13; 15:16)
- What does it mean to pray in Jesus' name?
 - o For us it's a familiar concept, but for them it would not have been.
 - o Is it some magic word formula that guarantees a prayer will be answered? No.
 - o To pray in Jesus' name is to pray with Jesus' authority in submission to His will for His glory.
- "When I'm gone, you will pray in my name, and your prayers will be answered."

Application – what a privilege it is today that as follower of our risen Lord, we too can pray to the Father in Jesus' name and see our prayers answered, but you will never see answered prayers if you don't pray.

John 14:13-14 - And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.

John 15:7 - If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

John 15:16 - Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

(2) Joy

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name – up to this point, since I've been with you, you have not asked the Father for anything in my name. You have either asked me directly or just prayed to the Father. But now as I am preparing to depart from this world to my Father...

Ask, and ye shall receive – make your requests to the Father in my name, and your prayers will be answered

That your joy may be full – in order that, you might receive “another source of spiritual blessing, the joy of answered prayer” (Sorenson, 2007)

- “When I'm gone and the Father answers your prayers, you will get the joy of seeing God move and work and getting to be a part of it.”
 - Application: what a privilege it is today that we too through answered prayer can receive the joy of seeing God move and work and getting to be a part of it.
- Matthew 7:7-8 - Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

James 4:2-3 - Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

(3) Clarity

25 These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs – Jesus had shared much with them that night in figurative, cryptic language that they didn't quite grasp at that moment

- Ex. – departing to a place they could not follow, preparing a place for them in the Father's house, calling on them to abide in Him as branches in a vine, describing the sorrow and joy the disciples would face over His departure as a woman's experience in labor (Gill, 1811)

But the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs – but following my departure and the arrival of the Spirit that won't be the case anymore. Rather...

But I shall shew you plainly of the Father – “When I'm gone, in that day, through the Spirit, I will teach you plainly the things of God “(Gill, 1811)

Application – what a blessing it is today to know that in the inspired Word of God we have that same clear revelation of God available to us. It's there, and all you have to do is pick it up and read it.

Matthew 13:34-35 - All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

2 Corinthians 3:12-18 - Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

(4) Intimacy

26 At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

At that day ye shall ask in my name – at that time, when my departure is complete and the Spirit has come, you will ask in my name, and I want to take a moment and clarify what I mean by that. When I say that what I do not mean is that...

And I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you – to pray in my name does not mean to ask me to ask the Father for something on your behalf...as if the Father were indifferent to your prayer.

Romans 8:34 - Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

John 14:20 - 20 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

John 17:9 - I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

27 For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God – just as I love you, the Father loves you, as those who are in relationship with me. God certainly has as a universal love for the world, but He also has a special intimate love for those who are His children through faith.

- “When I tell you to pray in my name to the Father, I’m not telling you to ask me to ask the Father something on your behalf, as if He were indifferent to you. As I love you, so too He loves you and just like you feel the freedom to talk to me, you have access to Him as a child does to his father.”
- As our Great High Priest, Christ does intercede with the Father on our behalf (Is. 53:12; Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1-2), but based on what Christ has done for us on the cross, “we can boldly and fearlessly enter the Father’s presence in complete confidence as His children for whom He cares deeply (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6).” (MacArthur, 2006)
- Application: what a privilege and what a blessing it is to know that through Christ’s sacrifice on the cross, we can enjoy that kind of intimacy with God our Father.

Jesus explained His departure by illustration. He explained it by sharing its ramifications, and finally, He explained it by way of summarization.

John 14:21 - He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

John 17:23 - I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

John 17:7-8 - Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

C.) Summarization

28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world – as the Son of God, I came from the Father in heaven and became flesh on this earth. What's implied here is that He did so for a purpose (Jesus spoke of that purpose in John 3:16-17).

- I came down from heaven for a purpose: to provide a means of salvation for the world. I will fulfill that purpose.

Again, I leave the world, and go to the Father – Furthermore, having accomplished the work I came to do, I will leave the world and return to the Father in heaven.

- Why would Jesus leave the world? Because His true home was in heaven with the Father and because once He had endured the cross and risen from the dead, He had done what He came to do.

Acts 1:9-11 - And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

3.) The Response of His Disciples

29 His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.

His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speaks no proverb – wow, Jesus. You're right. The hour has come in which you will no longer speak cryptically, and it's right now. You have spoken clearly, and we completely understand.

30 Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

Now are we sure that thou knowest all things – Now we know that you are omniscient since

And needest not that any man should ask thee – you knew the question we wanted to ask you without us even mentioning it. You read our minds.

By this we believe that thou camest forth from God – based on your omniscience we believe that what you have said is true...that you came forth from God

John 16:17 - Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?

John 17:8 - For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

4.) The Response to His Disciples

A.) Rebuke

31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? – the Lord’s question here highlights the fact that though the disciples’ faith was genuine, it was immature, and it was completely oblivious to what was coming.

- John 13:38 - Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

Behold the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone – the time is coming, and in fact, has arrived in which the shepherd (referring to Himself) will be smitten and the sheep (referring to them) will scatter

- Zech. 13:7 - Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.
- Matthew 26:31 - Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.
- Matthew 26:56 - But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.
- That night, He had predicted that Judas would betray Him. He had predicted that Peter would deny Him, and now, at the end of His discourse, He predicted that they would all abandon Him.
- Application – I can’t even imagine how painful that must have been for Him...to be betrayed, denied, and abandoned by the people closest to Him. It’s one thing when you get that from a critic, but when it comes from those you thought had your back, it’s painful.

And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me – when the disciples abandoned Jesus, the Father was still with Him.

- Although we find ourselves alone at times, due to the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, we never have to be lonely.

- The Father would remain with the Son up until the moment upon which Christ bore in His body the sins of the world on the cross.
 - At that moment Jesus cried out on the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46)
- John 20:10 - Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

B.) Reassurance

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace – I have delivered this farewell discourse to you in order that you might have peace in the midst of turmoil

- John 14:27 - Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

In the world ye shall have tribulation – in the world, you will be surrounded on every side by turmoil and trials

But be of good cheer – but have courage

I have overcome the world – I have already overcome the world, and I have done so in order that you might as well.

- 1 John 4:4 - Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.
- 1 John 5:4 - For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.
- Romans 8:37 - Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.
- "The world is a vanquished enemy; Satan is a humbled foe; and all that believers have to do is to put their trust in the Captain of their salvation, putting on the whole armor of God, assured that the victory is theirs, and that the church shall yet shine forth fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners raised." (Barnes, 1834)

Jesus spoke these words of encouragement to His disciples knowing that they would fail Him and knowing that they would enduring great persecution in the days ahead.

Illustration – The honest truth is that there will be times in our lives in which we will fail. We make mistakes. We stumble and fall, but what a blessing it is to know that we serve a God that is restorative and that is victorious. He is with us through our trials. He is with us through our heartaches. He is with us through our failures, and He is our victor, and we are more than conquerors through Him has already overcome the world.

John 15:19-21 - If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than

his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

Application

Stop trying to live the Christian life alone. You can't do it on your own, and you don't have to. For when Jesus rose from the dead and ascended to heaven, He did not leave us on our own. He sent us a Helper, the Holy Spirit. The moment someone becomes a Christian the Holy Spirit takes up residence inside of them. He is with us in the good times and bad. He helps us to understand the Scripture. He helps us to obey God commands. He helps us to endure persecution, heartache, trials, and failure. The key to spiritual growth in the Christian life is not try harder in your own strength, but rather it is to recognize our need for the Holy Spirit's help in our life and to lean on Him daily as we seek to follow the instructions He has left for us in the Word of God.

Illustration – praying through the fruit of the Spirit

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read John 14:13-14, John 15:7, and 1 John 5:14-15. How do these verses on prayer compare and contrast with Jesus' teaching in John 16:23? How can we better understand what it means to pray in Jesus' name from these verses?*

3.) *Read Zechariah 13:7 and Matthew 26:31, 56. How do these verses compare to Jesus' prediction in John 16:32? What is the significance of the picture that the Scripture uses to describe the disciples' abandonment of Jesus?*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 17:1-10. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 17:1-10 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 17:1-10

Review

On the night before His crucifixion Jesus had shared much with His disciples. He had washed their feet. He had eaten the Last Supper with them. He had foretold Judas' betrayal. He had disclosed His looming departure. He had predicted Peter's denial. He had taught them much about persecution, prayer, the coming of the Spirit, etc., in an effort to prepare them for His departure.

Sermon

Inbetween the upper room and the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus shifted from conversing with His disciples to conversing with His Father in prayer. In John 17, we have access to the longest recorded prayer of Jesus in the Bible. (Sorenson, 2007) Within it we are offered a glimpse into the unique intimate relationship between the members of the Godhead.

Although the prayer Jesus taught His disciples during the Sermon on the Mount ("Our father which art in heaven...") has come to be known as the Lord's prayer, if there ever were a prayer in Scripture that could be truly described as the Lord's prayer it is this one in John 17. The prayer from the Sermon on the Mount was an example of prayer taught to His disciples, but the prayer from this passage is an actual prayer of Jesus for Himself, for His disciples, and for all believers.

John 17 begins by saying...

1 These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven – "these words" refers to Jesus' discourse with the disciples in the upper room. Having finished speaking with them and begun traveling to the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus lifted up His eyes so as to speak with His Father.

"In hearing this prayer, the disciples were allowed to listen in on the most holy and profound of conversations. In reading this prayer, believers today are similarly ushered into the Holy of Holies, where they find their Great High Priest—even in the moments before His death—interceding on their behalf. Some refer to it as the 'Holy of Holies of sacred Scripture.'" (MacArthur, 2006, p. 862)

This is not a despondent prayer. It is a confident one, given by one looking forward to the cross with courage and hope in the face of immense suffering and pain.

1.) Jesus' Prayer for Himself

And said, Father – whenever the Son addresses the Father in prayer, it is a constant reminder that although the Father, the Son, and the Spirit are one God, they are separate persons

The hour is come – the time has come

A.) The Request

Glorify thy Son – glorify me. The time has come. Father, glorify me. This is the only request He makes for Himself in this prayer. What does that mean: glorify me?

- To glorify means to honor, to clothe in splendor, to lift up to a place of exaltation.
- “Father, I have lowered myself, and the time has come for me to be lifted up.”
- Philippians 2:5-11 - 5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (*this is talking about prior to His coming to earth*) 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: (*Jesus had lowered Himself in His earthly state, but He would lower Himself further the cross*)
- Jesus had lowered 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 9 Wherefore (*because of the humiliation of Christ on the cross and what He did for us thereon*) God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: 10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
- John 12:23 - And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.
- John 13:31-32 - Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, **Now is the Son of man glorified**, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.
- When Jesus prayed for the Father to glorify Him, to exalt Him, He was, in essence, praying for the Father to bring to pass their eternal plan of redemption that Philippians 2 speaks about...the plan by which the exalted Son would be lowered on the cross for the sins of the world, raised to life three days later, and then ascend to heaven where He would sit exalted, clothed in splendor and honor, at the right hand of the Father having achieved the victory for you and for me.
- “Father, the time has come. Lift me up.” That’s the request, but there was also a purpose

B.) The Purpose

That thy Son also may glorify thee – “Lift me up that I might lift you up.”

- In fulfilling His role in the plan of redemption, the Son would not only be lifted up by the Father, but He would also glorify the Father as well. Through His death, burial,

resurrection and ascension, Christ made known God's eternal redemptive plan, and in so doing He has lifted up the Father in the eyes of the world for all to see.

- Philippians 2:9-11 - 9 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:10 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; 11 And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
 - o As Christ is glorified, the Father is glorified. For Christ is the manifestation of the Father, and His death, burial, and resurrection are the revelation of the Father's wisdom, love, justice, and mercy poured out on this world.
- John 12:27-28 - Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

"Father, the time has come. Lift me up." – That's the request.

"so that I might also lift you up as well." – That's the purpose.

John 7:39 - (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that **Jesus was not yet glorified.**)

John 11:4 - When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, **that the Son of God might be glorified** thereby.

1 Peter 1:21 - Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, **and gave him glory**; that your faith and hope might be in God.

C.) The Parallel

2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

As you have given me power and authority in order that I impart eternal life, Father, in the same way, lift me up in order that I might lift you up.

The Parallel

What you did: You gave me authority

Why you did it: so that I might give eternal life (vs. 2)

What I'm asking: Lift me up

Why I'm asking: so that I might lift you up (vs. 1)



As thou hast given him power over all flesh – From the Father, Jesus has been given all power and authority over mankind, including the power to impart eternal life.

- John 3:35 - The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.
- As God the Son, doesn't Jesus already de facto possess authority over His creation? Absolutely He does. This isn't talking about Jesus' nature though. It's talking about Jesus' role and office in God's plan of redemption. (Gill, 1811)

that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. – In God's plan of redemption, the Son was given the authority and role of imparting eternal life to those of faith. That's who the Father has given to the Son: those of faith. The Father has not chosen to save people based on wealth, ethnicity, intellect, effort. He has chosen to save people based on faith, and those of faith collectively are given by the Father to the Son as a gift.

- God, in His love, has given His Son to the world (John 3:16). God, in His love, has given those of faith to His Son. (Klein, 2015)
- "The greater body of Christ is in view here through the telescope of foreknowledge and election." (Sorenson, 2007)

"Father, just as in your eternal plan of redemption you gave me authority for the purpose of me imparting eternal life to those of faith...in the same way....lift me up so that I might lift you up"

Daniel 7:14 - And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

Hebrews 2:8-9 - Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little

lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.

John 6:37 - All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

John 6:39 - And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

John 10:29 - My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.

And this is life eternal – Jesus, in His prayer, defines eternal life.

That they might know thee the only true God – Eternal life consists in experientially knowing the only true God

- Eternal life is not merely living forever. It is forever intimately knowing the everlasting God.
- What makes heaven heaven is not what is there, but rather who is there.

And Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent – and Jesus the Messiah, whom the Father sent to make that relationship possible

- Since Jesus Christ the Son is the express revelation of the Father, you cannot truly know God without knowing Jesus.
- Since eternal life is relational, it is not merely a future reality, but a present one as well. (MacArthur, 2006) Eternal life is an intimate, eternal relationship we get to have with God right now if you will receive Him by faith and that will continue beyond the grave into eternity. “Believers enjoy eternal life even now as they experience the rich blessings that come through their personal and intimate fellowship with Christ (John 15:1–11; 1 Cor. 1:9; Eph. 1:3; Phil. 3:8–11; 1 John 1:3; 5:20). Of course, they will most fully experience that life in the age to come (Eph. 2:6–7), when they see Christ face-to-face (1 Cor. 13:12) and worship Him in the perfect, unending glory and joy of heaven (Rom. 8:19–23, 29; 1 Cor. 15:49; Phil. 3:20–21; 1 John 3:2; Rev. 22:3–4).” (MacArthur, 2006, p. 872)
- Jeremiah 31:33-34 - But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

1 John 5:20 - And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. **This is the true God, and eternal life.**

John 8:19 - Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

John 14:9-10 - Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

John 3:17 - For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

The Request: lift me up

The purpose: so that I might lift you up

The Parallel: this is what you've done, and this is what I'm asking you to do

D.) The Timing

4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

I have glorified thee on the earth – Jesus magnified and honored the Father while on the earth. How?

I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do – He perfectly accomplished all the Father had given Him to do on His mission in life and all that remained now was His death, resurrection, and exaltation. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

- Or Jesus may speak in this prayer from a future perspective as if the cross were already a done deal. (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884)

John 4:34 - Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

John 15:10 - If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

John 12:28 - Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

John 13:31-32 - Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

John 19:30 - When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

And now – that I have finished what you have called to do in my life and now that the hour is come (vs. 1)

Glorify thou me with thine own self – Lift me up to an exalted place with you

With the glory which I had with thee before the world was – Clothe me with the splendor and exalted position I shared with you from eternity past before the creation of the world

- This is one of the strongest references in all of the Scriptures that Jesus makes to His own deity, His own equality with the Father.
- “Father, I have lowered myself to accomplish your redemptive plan. I have done what I came to do. The time has come. Exalt me back to where I belong: right next to you.”
- John 1:1-3, 14 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. 14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

“Lift me up.” – That’s the request

“So that I might lift you up.” – That’s the purpose

“You’ve done so in the past.” – That’s the parallel

“The time has come to do so now.” – That’s the timing

John 17:24 - Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

John 10:30 - I and my Father are one.

John 14:9 - Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?

Philippians 2:6 - Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

Colossians 1:15-17 - Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.

Hebrews 1:3 - Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

John 1:1-3 - In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

2.) Jesus' Prayer for His Disciples

A.) Who He Prayed for

6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

I have manifested thy name – I have made known you (your name, your person, your attributes)

Unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world – in reference to the disciples

- (1) The disciples were those whom the Father had given to the Son.
- The disciples were given by God to Jesus in a unique sense to help Him in ministering during His time on earth and beyond. The disciples had a special ministry calling from God in the same sense as men like Moses, Elijah, and Paul did. (Sorenson, 2007)
- In this prayer, when Jesus talks about the eleven as those given to Him, I believe that the primary sense is in reference to their unique ministry calling.

Thine they were, and thou gavest them me – they belonged to God as their heavenly Father, and He gave them to the Son as a gift of love and as helpers in the ministry

And they have kept thy word – (2) The disciples were those who kept the Father's Word

- And they have faithfully obeyed your commands
John 1:18 - No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

John 12:28 - Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

Psalms 22:22 - I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

Hebrews 2:12 - Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee.

John 17:11 - And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

John 17:24 - Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

John 8:31-32 - Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

John 14:21-24 - He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

7 Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

Now they have known – now they have come to know

That all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee – that you have been behind everything I've done. They've come to recognize your hand working through me. They've come to see the Father in the Son.

Illustration – As I was thinking about Jesus' words here I couldn't help but think of my relationship with my own Father. If you know my dad and you know me, it's pretty easy to recognize the areas of my life in which I am just like my dad. That's true for many people. You can recognize the father in the son.

- Drivenness
- Loyalty
- Frugality/Contentment
- You can recognize the father in the son.
- Whereas I am an imperfect representation of my father, Jesus is a perfect representation of His Father. Why? Because the Father and the Son share the same nature. They are perfectly equal and unified.
- "They have come to recognize you in me."

John 7:16-17 - Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

John 8:28 - Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

John 12:49-50 - For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

John 16:15 - All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

For - because

I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them – how had the disciples come to recognize the Father in the Son? The Son had given to them the words of God/of the Father and they recognized the voice of God in those words and received them. (Ellicott C. , 1905)

- The result being that...

And have known surely that I came out from thee – they have known that I came from you, from God

And they have believed that thou didst send me – and they have believed that you sent me into the world as the Messiah

(3) The disciples were those who believed on the Son.

John 14:10 - Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

John 16:30 - Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

1 John 4:14 - And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

I pray for them – I am praying specifically for these eleven men that you have given me, these men that have recognized your voice and believed on me, and kept your word.

- “I am praying for them.”

- Jesus is saying this as the disciples stand by and listen.
- Imagine Jesus praying over you.

I pray not for the world – “I’m not praying for the world right now. Rather, I’m praying for those who will be left behind to minister on my behalf within the world.”

But for them which thou hast given me – I am praying for the eleven that you have given to me as my disciples. Why?

(4) The disciples were those who still belonged to the Father

For they are thine – because although you have given them to me, they are still yours as well. This is why I pray for them to you, and this is why you should attend to my prayers...for they are ours.

Luke 22:32 - But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

And all mine are thine – and what’s mine is yours

And thine are mine – and what’s yours is mine

- This is another excellence statement regarding Jesus’ deity that is found in the prayer. For what he says here is nothing less than a full claim to equality with the Father.
 - o It’s one thing to say that everything I have is God’s. It’s another thing entirely to say that everything God has is mine.

And I am glorified in them – (5) the disciples were those who glorified the Son

- They glorified Him through their faith, worship, and ministry on His behalf
- This verse brings our whole passage full circle today. Jesus’ one prayer request for Himself on the night before His crucifixion was that the Father would glorify Him so that He might glorify the Father...and as He prayed for His disciples, He prayed for them as those whose life purpose was to glorify Him.

Application

- Just as the disciples lived to glorify God (to make Him known and to make Him look good to others), the ultimate purpose of every Christian on this planet is to bring glory to God
 - o 1 Cor. 10:31 – Whether therefore ye eat or drink or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.
 - o Illustration – Disneyland
 - That theme park is one of the most magical places in the world for kids and families, and that doesn’t happen by accident. It’s not just about facilities. It’s about the people that work there, and the culture that exists there.
 - Theme Park Employees
 - They hire friendly people that believe in the mission.

- At orientation, they don't speak to employees' brains. They speak to their hearts. They don't put people into their organization. They put their organization into people.
- They teach them that as the park's front line they are the park's bottom line.
- They teach them to always be in character
- They teach them to make eye contact and smile.
- They teach them to greet and welcome every guest.
- They teach them to seek out guest contact.
 - They recognized that it was Liz's first time and they gave her a button.
 - They were waiting for Liz and I after we got engaged with stuff.
- They teach them to solve problems immediately.
 - You won't ever see trash on the ground at Disney because they have trash cans everywhere and they have employees everywhere looking for trash to pick up.
- They teach them to thank each and every guest. (Disney Institute, 2011)
- They teach them that the moment they stop foot on Disney property they are a representative of the most magical place in the world in everything they say and do, and their purpose is to preserve that sense of awe and wonder in the hearts of every person they come in contact with.
- That is your life's purpose as well, but it is not with regards to some stupid theme park. Your life's purpose is to make God look good to every person you come in contact with in what you say and do. That is your identity, and you are never to be out of character. Whether therefore you eat or drink or whatsoever you do, do all to the glory of God. In the way that you represent Christ, are you more like a Disneyland employee or a Six Flags employee? Do people even know that you work for Jesus? If they do, are you creating a sense of wonder in their hearts at the greatness of the God you serve and represent?
- Is Jesus Christ glorified in you?

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Matthew 6:5-15. How does Jesus' example prayer given to His disciples in this passage compare and contrast with Jesus' prayer to the Father on the night before His crucifixion?*

3.) *Read Matthew 5:13-16. In what ways does this passage teach that we can glorify our Father in heaven? What might this look like practically in our lives?*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 17:11-19. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 17:11-19 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 17:11-19

Review

Last week, we began studying the Lord's prayer...the prayer He made to the Father in the presence of His disciples on the night before His crucifixion...the prayer He made somewhere inbetween the upper room and the Garden of Gethsemane.

We saw that He first off prayed for Himself. He said, "Father, the time has come. Lift me up so that I might lift you up. Glorify me so that I might glorify you." We also saw that He prayed for His disciples, the eleven. In His prayer for the disciples, we saw last week that He started by emphasizing to the Father who they were, and this week we're going to study what requests He made for them.

Sermon

WHAT HE PRAYED FOR

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

And now I am no more in the world – Jesus spoke from a future perspective as one who would very soon no longer be in the world

- "The hour has come in which I am no longer in the world."

But these are in the world – but these eleven that I am praying for will remain in the world, in Satan's domain...and it is in this domain that they must carry out a very sacred mission.

- Mission: sharing the good news of the gospel behind enemy lines, speaking truth into the darkness of the world

And I come to thee – as they embark on this important but very dangerous mission, I'm not going to be there with them anymore, and they're going to need help. So, I'm going to ask you for some things for them that they are going to need to accomplish their mission directive. First off, Father, I'm going to ask you to:

1.) Protect Them From Destruction

"The mission is dangerous. Father, keep them safe. Keep them from falling to the wayside."

Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me – Father, through your power, protect and preserve these eleven men so that they remain in your name... in the faith...in relationship with us so that they are not lost and destroyed (vs. 12).

- On the one hand you have protection and preservation (vs. 11). On the other hand, you have destruction (vs. 12). Jesus prayed, "Father, protect and preserve them from destruction."



Illustration – protect and preserve sea turtles

- Don't disturb them (up to a \$10,500 fine)
- Don't touch them
- Don't throw trash/plastics in the ocean
- No matter how great the conservation effort is, it's not perfect. They still lose some. Rules are broken. Animals are harmed. Violations fall through the cracks. But where man's conservation efforts fail, God's never do Whereas man's conservation efforts are imperfect, God's are perfect.

Application – Eternal security is the doctrine that God unfailingly protects and preserves those in the faith who are His children so that none are lost/none fall through the cracks.

- John 6:39-40 – Jesus said that the Father's will is that of those who are His, who are in in relationship with Him, none of them would be lost (eternal security/conservation)
- John 10:27-29 – Jesus said that those who receive eternal life will never perish. They are eternally secure in the joint grasp of the Father and the Son and no one is able to remove them.
- Here, as Jesus prays to the Father to protect and preserve the eleven in the faith so that none of them would be lost, it is a reminder to us that our eternal security is a joint venture together of the Father and the Son.
- 1 Peter 1:5 – Peter wrote that those who are saved are “Kept (protected and preserved) by the power of God through faith unto salvation...”
- Jude 1:24 - Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,

“Father, as these eleven embark on this dangerous mission behind enemy lines, protect them from destruction...and do it for a purpose.”

That they may be one, as we are – that they may be unified like we are unified

- It is through Christ that we are brought into permanent union with one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. Our union with each other as fellow Christians is like the Father's union with the Son in that they are both permanent.
 - o Jesus prayed for His disciples to be one like He and the Father were, and He prayed for them to be in He and the Father. (vs. 21)

- As those who are in Christ/part of His body, we are one with one another.
- Illustration – when Liz and I got married, we entered into a permanent relationship with each other. In the context of that permanent relationship, we had a little girl, Jacqueline, who was added into the family. She has a permanent relationship with us. Well, come August, Liz will give birth to another little girl that will be added to the family and enjoy a permanent relationship with us. However, Jessica will not only have a permanent relationship with us. Who will she also have a permanent relationship with? Jacqueline.
 - Here’s what Jesus is praying to the Father, “Father, keep these men in the family so that they might enjoy a permanent relationship with each other as you and I enjoy a permanent relationship with each other.
- “That unity the Lord had in mind is the spiritual unity that all believers possess, namely, the life of God in their regenerated souls, secured to them forever by His power and presence. The emphasis here is not on a fluctuating, visible unity in the church, but on the real, constant unity that is invisible. The Lord is praying for the essential oneness of believers that they share in common eternal life. This prayer is answered every time a sinner is regenerated.” (MacArthur, 2006, p. 898)
John 17:13 - And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

John 15:18-21 - If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

John 17:21-22 - That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

John 10:30 - I and my Father are one.

John 14:20 - At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

1 Corinthians 12:12-13 - For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name – while I was physically with them there in the midst of this dangerous godless world, I protected and preserved these eleven in your name/in the faith/in relationship with you

Those thou gavest me I have kept – those that you gave to me to be my disciples I have guarded and watched over. I have protected and preserved them.

And none of them is lost – and not one of them have been destroyed, not one of them have abandoned the faith/abandoned us

But the son of perdition – in contrast to the ones you have given me, the son of perdition has been lost

- What Jesus isn't saying: Father, of those you gave me I protected and preserved all of them. None of them is lost...except for Judas. But I kept 11 out of 12, so mostly good.
- What Jesus is saying: Father, of those you gave me I protected and preserved all of them. None of them is lost, but Judas is lost. Why? Because He was not one of the given ones. He was never truly a person of faith, and his destruction proved it.
 - o "The term son was given by the Hebrews to those who possessed the character described by the word or name following. Thus Judas is called a son of perdition because he had the character of a destroyer. He was a traitor and a murderer. And this shows that he who knew the heart regarded his character as that of a wicked man one whose appropriate name was that of a son of perdition." (Barnes, 1834)

That the Scripture might be fulfilled – Judas was no surprise to God. In fact, God worked through Judas' betrayal and destruction in order that the Scriptures might be fulfilled (in reference to Psalm 41:9 and Psalm 109:8).

- Psalm 41:9 - 9 Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.
- Psalm 109:8 – 8 Let his days be few; and let another take his office.
- 1 John 2:19 - They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

John 13:18 - I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.

Psalm 109:6-19 - Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand. When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin. Let his days be few; and let another take his office. Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them

seek their bread also out of their desolate places. Let the extortioner catch all that he hath; and let the strangers spoil his labour. Let there be none to extend mercy unto him: neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children. Let his posterity be cut off; and in the generation following let their name be blotted out. Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered with the LORD; and let not the sin of his mother be blotted out. Let them be before the LORD continually, that he may cut off the memory of them from the earth. Because that he remembered not to shew mercy, but persecuted the poor and needy man, that he might even slay the broken in heart. As he loved cursing, so let it come unto him: as he delighted not in blessing, so let it be far from him. As he clothed himself with cursing like as with his garment, so let it come into his bowels like water, and like oil into his bones. Let it be unto him as the garment which covereth him, and for a girdle wherewith he is girded continually.

13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

And now come I to thee – and now I am coming to you

And these things I speak in the world – and I am praying these things aloud in the world for these eleven to hear

That they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves – in order that they (the eleven) might have my joy filled up within them

- Certainly, Jesus' words, as the disciples reminisced on them later, would bring fullness of joy into their hearts, even as they do for us today.

John 3:29 - He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

John 15:11 - These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

John 16:22-24 - And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you. Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

1 John 1:4 - And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

2 John 1:12 - Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.

14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

I have given them thy word – I have given these eleven your word, your doctrine, your revelation

And the world hath hated them – why? Because they received God’s word that Jesus had given to them

- John 17:8 - 8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.
- The world hated them because they received God’s word and...

Because they are not of the world – as those who have received Jesus and God’s Word, although they were in the world, the eleven were no longer of the world

Even as I am not of the world – just as I am not of the world

- Their mission was to share the good news of the gospel behind enemy lines to a world that hated them because they were outsiders (in the world, but not of the world)



- Illustration – rose bush in my neighbor’s trashy yard whose roots come underneath the fence to our well-watered yard
 - That bush is physically located in the neighbor’s yard, but is rooted somewhere else
 - That’s what it means to be in the world, but not of the world.
 - We are physically located in the midst of this godless society that is ruled by Satan, but we are rooted somewhere else.
 - God has called us not to blend into the weeds of the world, but to shine as lights in the darkness to purify as salt.
 - Romans 12:2 - And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.
 - Application: As one who Christ has sent on a mission into the world, are you behaving like one who is of the world?
 - Your speech
 - Your attitude
 - Your integrity

- Your humor
 - Your relationships
 - Your treatment of your spouse
 - Your treatment of your kids
 - Your treatment of your parents
 - Are you sticking out with courage, or are you blending in in cowardice? You are physically located in this world, but are you rooted somewhere else?
- As citizens of heaven, they are now strangers and pilgrims on the earth (1 Peter 1:1; 2:11) (MacArthur, 2006)

John 15:18-21 - If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

John 17:16 - They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

1 John 4:5-6 - They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.

1 John 5:19-20 - And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

“Father, as those who are on mission in the world, but not of the world, protect these eleven from destruction, but don't just do that...”

2.) Protect Them From Evil

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world – I am not asking that you should remove them from the world. That would defeat the purpose of their mission.

Application – God has you here for a reason... to shine in the darkness and point people to the one we're rooted in (Matt. 5:13-16).

But that thou shouldest keep them from the evil – but rather as they are on mission in the world, that you should protect and preserve them from the evil (singular). This could be in

reference to the evil in the world or to the evil one behind the world. Both are certainly applicable.

- Evil in the world – protect and preserve them from the evil within the world
 - o Matt. 6:13 – Don’t lead us into temptation, but rescue us from evil
 - o Illustration – The Christian life is like being on a boat floating on the ocean of the world. We get in trouble when we allow the ocean into the boat. (Sorenson, 2007)
 - o Keep them from the dominion of evil in their lives
- Evil one behind the world – protect and preserve them from Satan, the evil ruler of the world
 - o Behind all of the evil within the world is the evil one: Satan himself.
 - You are either in Christ and a citizen of His kingdom, or you are in Satan and a Satan of this world. According to 1 John 3:8-10, you are either a child of God or you are a child of the devil. You are either in Christ (in union with Him) or in Satan (in relationship with Him). There is no third option.
 - “In” terminology in the New Testament denotes relationship. Thus, those who are “in Christ” are in relationship with Him, and those who are not “in Christ” are in relationship with Satan. You are either “in Christ” and “out of Satan” or “in Satan” and “out of Christ”.
 - 1 John 2:13 - I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father.
 - 1 John 3:12 - Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.
 - 1 John 4:4 - Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.
 - 1 John 5:18 - We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not.
 - Jesus was praying for the Father to protect and preserve the eleven from the evil one, the ruler (John 12:31) and god (2 Cor. 4:4) of this enemy domain: Satan himself.
 - Though we physically live in Satan’s domain, through God’s power we overcome the world. Why? Because, as John writes later, greater is He that is in us (God) than he that is in the world (Satan).
 - Jesus prayed, “Father, as those who are on mission behind enemy lines, protect them from the evil one and the evil they will encounter on a daily basis.”

- If you can't see Satan behind everything that is going on in his world today, I don't know what to tell you other than that you need to get your vision checked.
- If you had told me 15 years ago back when marriage was still between a man and a woman that today in 2022, it would be gospel truth in the world that women can be men, biological males can compete in women's sports, and that the only acceptable treatment for kids struggling with gender dysphoria is cross dressing, puberty blockers, and surgery, I would have told you that you were nuts...and yet here we are. How do you explain that? The evil one. He is crafty, he is destructive, and he is pulling the strings behind his world system that opposes God in every way.
 - And you might not realize it, but, living in enemy territory, your kids are getting pumped full of his propaganda every day...and it is loud, constant, and convincing.
 - You need to be having biblical conversations with your kids about these issues because somebody is.
- The Truth about Gender
 - Matthew 19:4 – Jesus said, “Have you not read how that from the beginning God has made them male and female?”
 - Although people have the freedom to express themselves however they want, how we express ourselves or how we identify doesn't change the underlying truth about who we are.
 - Illustration – out door knocking when people tell me I'm young for a pastor, I tell them that I identify as a 45-year-old...which usually gets a laugh...Why? Because I might act like a 45-year-old, and I might identify as a 45-year-old, but that doesn't make me 45.
 - Illustration – my daughter acting like a dog doesn't make her one
 - The first time she did this I didn't rush to the pet store to buy her dog food and a collar. Why? Because she's not a dog.
 - When the mind strays from reality, the problem is not with reality, it's with the mind. In these instances, it is the mind that needs treatment, not the body.
 - Illustration – that's what we do with anorexia. We don't affirm people in their anorexia. We help them to see the truth.
 - Do you realize that of kids struggling with gender dysphoria, if they're just allowed to grow up normally and go through puberty, 80-95% of them will naturally grow out of their gender dysphoria. (Paul R. McHugh, Paul Hruz, and Lawrence

S. Mayer, Brief of Amici Curiae in Support of Petitioner, Gloucester County School Board v. G. G., Supreme Court of the United States, No. 16-273 (January 10, 2017), 12, http://www.americanbar.org/content/dam/aba/publications/supreme_court_preview/briefs/2016_2017/16-273_amicus_pet_mchugh.authcheckdam.pdf) (Jesse Singal, "What's Missing From the Conversation about Transgender Kids," Science of Us, New York, July 25, 2016)

- That's huge, because for those who embrace gender dysphoria and live as transgender, they are some ten times more likely than the average person to attempt suicide (40%). (Anderson, 2019, pp. 49-50)
- That goes to show too that people struggling with gender dysphoria are suffering greatly, and they need our compassion and help. And the compassionate thing to do is to love these people without affirming these wrong beliefs and to share the truth of Jesus Christ with them.

▪ Application

- This is the kind of stuff that characterizes the domain of the one who opposes God in every conceivable way. The devil is crafty and convincing and destructive. He is the evil one who is behind this world system that hates and opposes god.
- Jesus prayed, "Father, as these eleven testify of the truth behind enemy lines, protect and preserve them from Satan and the evil of this world. They need your help."
 - And so do we as well.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

Jesus repeats what He previously said in verse 14 as a point of emphasis as a transition to His next request for His disciples.

- This was stated in verse 14 as a reason for the world's hatred of them, as whereas it earlier paved the way for Jesus' request of spiritual protection for them, it will now pave the way for Jesus' request of sanctification for them. (Plummer, 1902)

3.) Prepare Them For The Mission

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

Sanctify them – to set apart or to make holy

- I believe that both of these are true aspects of what Jesus is praying for the disciples.
 - "Father, set these men apart/prepare them for the mission that we are calling them to."

- Acts 13:2 – the Holy Ghost said to the church at Antioch to set apart Barnabas and Saul for the work I’ve called them to
- John 10:36 - Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?
- John 17:19 - And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.
- One of the ways that God prepares men for the mission is by growing them in holiness.
 - God has no undercover agents.
 - He calls on us to speak truth in the world as those who vividly contrast with it. The more that we contrast spiritually the better equipped we are to accomplish our mission.
- “Father, prepare these men for the mission by making them holy...by making them more like you and less like the world”
 - “Having prayed for their spiritual protection from the world, Jesus continued by asking the Father to sanctify and purify the disciples as they prepared to preach the truth to the world.” (MacArthur, 2006)
- But how would the Father accomplish this?

Through thy truth – But what is truth?

Thy Word is truth – God is truth, and the revelation of God to us is truth. As we are exposed to the truth of God’s Word, it both purifies us and points us in the direction of God’s mission for our lives. It sanctifies us and sets us apart.

- Psalm 119:9 - Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.
- The Word of God is like a shower. Just like we shower daily so as to be physically clean, we must bathe ourselves in the Word of God daily if we are going to grow spiritually.
- Illustration – college roommate that rarely showered
 - Some of you wouldn’t go a day without showering, but you’ve gone weeks without spending personal time in the Word of God...and you know what? You’re dirty and you need to get right.
- Psalm 119:105 – Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.
- The Word of God is also like a flashlight. It helps us to see the path in front of us and guides us in the way we should go. It helps set us apart for God’s mission in our lives.
 - You want God to speak to you and give you direction in your life? Stop looking for a light from heaven and open up the Bible. How can you claim to desire God’s leading in your life and be too lazy to read what He’s written to you?

- Like a shower and a flashlight, the Word of God purifies us and points us in the direction of God's mission for our lives. The Word of God sanctifies us and sets us apart.
- Jesus prayed, "Father, as those who are set apart on a mission to minister in the world, help make these eleven holy through your word."
Psalms 19:7-9 - The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

Psalms 119:9 - Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

Ephesians 5:26 - That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

As thou hast sent me into the world – Father, just as you sent me into the world on a mission

Even so have I also sent them into the world – going back to the beginning of Jesus' ministry, Jesus had already sent His disciples forth to preach, and soon thereafter, following His death, burial, and resurrection, Jesus would recommission His disciples with the great commission.

- Matthew 28:18-20 - 18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.
John 10:36 - Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

John 20:21 - Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

2 Corinthians 5:20 - Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

And for their sakes I sanctify myself – for the disciples' sake, I have set myself apart for my own sacred mission: the cross (Ellicott C. , 1905). Why? For in doing so, the disciples would

That they also might be sanctified through the truth – Christ’s sacrifice on the cross accomplished three things for the disciples

1. It saved them from their sin (eternal sanctification)
 - a. Hebrews 10:10, 14 – 10 By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. 14 For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.
2. It enabled them to grow in holiness (ongoing sanctification) through the Word
 - a. Ephesians 5:25-27 - 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.
 - b. Romans 8:29 - 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.
3. It set them apart for their own sacred mission (which was to share the good news/revelation of what Jesus accomplished on His mission to all people of all nations)
 - a. Matt 28:18-20 - 18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Application

On the night before His crucifixion, His own sacred mission, Jesus prayed for the Father to preserve the disciples in the faith, to protect them from evil, and to make them holy. Why? Because all three of these elements would be necessary for the disciples to accomplish the sacred mission they were set apart for: sharing the good news of the gospel behind enemy lines.

Just as the disciples were given this sacred mission, so too have we. Jesus said, “Go ye therefore and teach all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” God has called every single person in this room to share the good news of Jesus while we live behind enemy lines in this life. The second this life is over, the mission is terminated, and we will never have another opportunity to tell a lost person about Jesus. Are you obeying the orders God has given to you? Are you faithfully partaking in the mission God has given to you? As one who is called to this dangerous but important mission, are you following God’s promptings as He works to keep you from evil and make you holy through His Word?

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Psalm 41:9, Psalm 109:8, and 1 John 2:19. In what ways was Judas' betrayal of Jesus a fulfillment of Scripture? In what way was Judas' departure an indication that he was never truly saved?*

3.) *Read Hebrews 10:10, 14; Ephesians 5:25-27; John 10:36; Acts 13:2. Sanctification can refer to salvation, ongoing spiritual growth, or being set apart for ministry. Which usage does each of these passages refer to?*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 17:20-26. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 17:20-26 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 17:20-26

Review

The last several weeks we have been studying the Lord's prayer...the prayer He made to the Father in the presence of His disciples on the night before His crucifixion...the prayer He made somewhere inbetween the upper room and the Garden of Gethsemane.

We saw that He prayed for Himself.

- "Father, lift me up so that I might lift you up."
- In reference to His impending death, resurrection, and ascension.

We saw that He also prayed for His eleven disciples.

- "Father, preserve them in the faith, protect them from evil, and make them holy."
- He prayed for these three specific requests because they would be essential elements for the disciples to accomplish the sacred mission they were set apart for: sharing the good news of the gospel behind enemy lines.

Jesus prayed for Himself. Jesus prayed for the eleven, and then we're going to see this morning that Jesus prayed for a third group.

As we examine our text this morning, we're going to discover exactly who that was.

Sermon

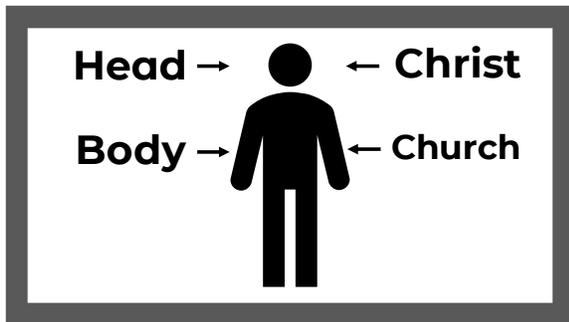
1.) Who He Prayed For

20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;

Neither pray I for these alone – However, I do not pray for only these eleven

But for them also which shall believe on me through their word – Jesus prayed for Himself. Jesus prayed for the eleven, and Jesus prayed for all believers, including us in this passage, Jesus here is praying for you and me. Wow. What a thought.

- As we read and study the words of Jesus' prayer this morning, we can marvel in the fact that He spoke them for us. Just as He prayed over the eleven, He is here praying over us.
- "Father, I'm not just praying for the eleven. I'm also praying for those who believe on me through the word of the eleven."
 - o What's interesting here is that this verse in the Greek is actually in the present tense. What that means is that in this verse Jesus is actually speaking of future believers (including you and me) in the present tense (2000 years before we were ever even born).
 - o He's already done this on a couple of occasions in this prayer.
 - John 17:11 - And now I am no more in the world...



Metaphor Application – just as the body, composed of many individual parts, collectively carries out will of the head, so too the church composed of all Christians across time is called to collectively carry out the will of Christ.

- When my body stops doing what my head wants, I've got major problems. When the body of Christ does not act in accordance with the wishes of its head, Christ, it's a major problem.
- Illustration – can you imagine what it would be like if your body parts could just decide to not do what you wanted them to?
 - Ex. 1 – Time to make a sandwich.
 - Hands say, “Nah, we had a sandwich yesterday for lunch. I'll make you a salad, but I'm not doing a salad again.”
 - Ex. 2 – Time to get out of bed and get up for work
 - Feet say, “No thank you. We're tired. We did that yesterday. If you want to go somewhere today, ask your hands and knees to help out a little bit.” What?!
 - If your body parts could say no to what you wanted them to do, it would be utter chaos. Just as our body carries out our wishes. We, as the body of Christ, are to carry out His wishes.

Christ (the head) is not physically present here on this earth, but do you know what is? His body. We are here on this earth to carry out His will as His hands and feet.

In verses 21-23, Jesus prayed that the Father would unite all Christians together into this body that would carry out Christ's will on earth in His absence. Christ prayed for unity within His body.

A.) Unity within His Body

That they all may be one – Jesus prays, “Father, I ask that you unify all of my followers into one group, one body.” Despite all of the differences that exist between genuine Christians today and in the past, two thousand years' worth of Christians who have been saved by faith are unified within the body of Christ. We are all part of the body of Christ.

- 1 Cor. 12:12-13 - 12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 13 For by one

Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

- When we get saved the Holy Spirit places us in the body of Christ. Every Christian is a part of the body of Christ. Since every Christian is a part of the body of Christ, as we enter into a relationship with Christ we also enter into a relationship with one another.
- Application – That is why it is so important to be a regular participating part of a local gathering of Christians. God has called us together as fellow members of His body to carry out His purposes on this earth. You cannot do individually what God has called us to do together. You cannot fulfill God’s purposes in your life as a Christian disconnected from other Christians. Those who live in such a way are disobeying God.
- Illustration – imagine if your left foot refused to work in harmony with any other part of your body. Imagine if it just decided that it was going to do what it was going to do, in disobedience to your wishes. As crazy as that we would be, those who think they can honor Christ with their lives while living independently of His body, in defiance of His will, are crazier.

“Father, I pray that you would make those who follow me one. Unite them...”

Galatians 3:28 - There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 4:3-6 - Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

As thou Father, art in me, and I in thee – Unite them into one body so that they are in a permanent relationship with one another, just as you and I are in a permanent relationship with one another.

That they also may be one in us – so that their unity with one another would be the result of their unity with us.

- Illustration – my hand is connected to my head, but it is also connected to my foot and my knee and my big toe.
 - In the same way, when we get saved and are placed into the body of Christ, we are permanently connected to the head (Christ), but we are also permanently connected to each other as fellow parts of the body of Christ.
- Beyond that, there is a reason why Christ asked for the Father to unite all Christians into one body that would carry out the will of the head (Christ).

That the world may believe that thou hast sent me – The body of Christ has been formed by God to carry out Christ’s mission on this earth together, the mission He devoted Himself to when He was on this earth: to seek and save the lost.

- That is what Jesus did when He was on the earth, and that is what we are to do in His absence.
- When the body of Christ together carries out the mission of Christ by taking the gospel message of Christ into the world, lost people get saved out of the world, and they get added into the body. God is glorified in the process.

John 17:11 - And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are.

John 17:22-23 - And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

John 10:16 - And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

Jeremiah 32:39 - And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them:

Acts 2:46 - And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,

Acts 4:32 - And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

1 Corinthians 1:10 - Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

1 Corinthians 12:25-27 - That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

John 5:23 - That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.

John 10:30 - I and my Father are one.

John 10:38 - But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

John 14:9-11 - Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the

Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

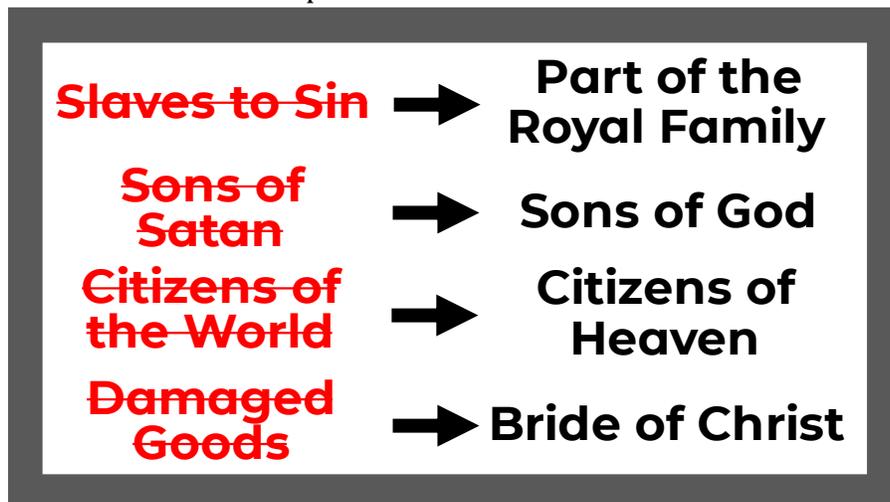
22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one:

And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them – Jesus here is once again talking about the future as if it were the present. Technically, He's talking about the future as if it were the past. He's talking about having given His glory to people like you and me, who, 2000 years ago, when He spoke these words, didn't even exist yet. What does Jesus mean?

- The elevated status that you have restored me to through my resurrection and ascension (This restoration was future. His resurrection and ascension hadn't happened yet. However, He is talking about them as if they were past)...
 - o This is not in reference to Christ's eternal inherent glory. It is in reference to the restoration of His elevated status that He prayed the Father would give Him in John 17:1-5. He is now praying as if that restoration had already happened.

- The elevated status that you have given to me...I have given to my followers.
I have given them – as the Father has elevated Christ, so too Christ has elevated us in virtue of our relationship with Him.

- Christ lowered Himself to come into the filth of this world and save us out of it. Following His death on the cross, the Father elevated Him to an exalted position at His right hand...and as those who have been rescued by Christ out of this wicked, filthy world, we too have been elevated in virtue of our relationship with Christ.
 - o We are no longer the filth that we were. We are something new. As those who have been brought into a relationship with the King of Kings, our status has been elevated not because of anything we have done, but because of who we are now in relationship with.



- o
- o Because of our relationship with Christ, we are no longer slaves to sin. We are a part of the royal family. We are no longer children of Satan. We are

children of God. We are no longer citizens of this world. We are citizens of a heavenly kingdom. We are no longer in Satan. We are in Christ as His body. We are no longer damaged goods. We are the bride of Christ.

- Romans 8:17 - And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.
- 1 John 3:1-2 - Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2 Beloved now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.
- Ephesians 2:5-7 - 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.
- Ephesians 5:23-27 - 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.
- Illustration – Hallmark movies where a prince falls for a commoner
 - When they wed, the commoner’s status is elevated, not because of anything they have done, but in virtue of their relationship with royalty.
 - The moment we entered into a relationship with Christ our status was elevated not because of anything we did, but because of who we were now in relationship with: the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

“I have elevated their status for a reason.”

That they may be one, even as we are one – As Christians we are united in our current elevated status as sons of God, citizens of heaven, the bride of Christ, etc., but we are also united in our hope of what that means for us in the future when we will live and rule and reign with Christ forever.

2 Peter 1:4 - Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

John 1:16- And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

Mark 16:17-20 - And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; They shall take up serpents;

and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

Luke 22:30 - That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

2 Corinthians 3:18 - But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Ephesians 2:20 - And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

1 John 1:3 - That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

1 John 3:24 - And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

I in them, and thou in me – Jesus is the relational link between the Father and Christians. It is only through faith in Jesus in Christ, through union with Christ that we are brought into relationship with the Father. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

- It does not say “You in them as You are in me”.
- Through the Holy Spirit, Christ indwells those who are His (Rom. 8:9-11; John 14:23; 1 John 4:12-16)

That they may be made perfect in one – it is through our relationship with Christ that we are perfected/saved (Heb. 10:14; 1 John 2:5; 1 John 4:12, 17-18) into the unity of the body of Christ.

And that the world may know that thou hast sent me – as this unified body of Christ carries out the mission of the head (Christ) by taking the gospel message into the world, the lost are saved out of it, and they come to know who Jesus really is (John 13:35; John 14:31) and they come to know something else.

And hast loved them, as thou hast loved me – they come to know that God loves the world as He loves His Son.

- In fact, He loved the world so much that He sent His Son to die for it so that the world might be saved.

- As the Body of Christ takes that message into the world, lost people, for the first time in their lives come to see and understand the love of God.

“Father, unify my followers into one body that together, in my absence, will carry out my mission and my purposes on this earth.”

As a member of the body of Christ, are you living your life in accordance with the wishes of the head, or are you doing your own thing?...Obeying only when you feel like it?

Jesus prayed for unity within His body, but He also prayed for union with His bride.

John 6:56 - He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

John 14:10 - Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

John 14:23 - Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

Romans 8:10-11 - And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Galatians 3:28 - There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

1 John 1:3 - That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.

1 John 4:12-16 - No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

Ephesians 4:12-16 - For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may

grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Philippians 3:15 - Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

1 John 3:1 - Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.

1 John 4:19 - We love him, because he first loved us.

B.) Union with His Bride

Just as the Bible pictures Christians together as the body of Christ that carries out His will here on earth, so too the Bible pictures Christians together as the bride of Christ that He will love and be with forever and ever.

Ephesians 5:25-27 - 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

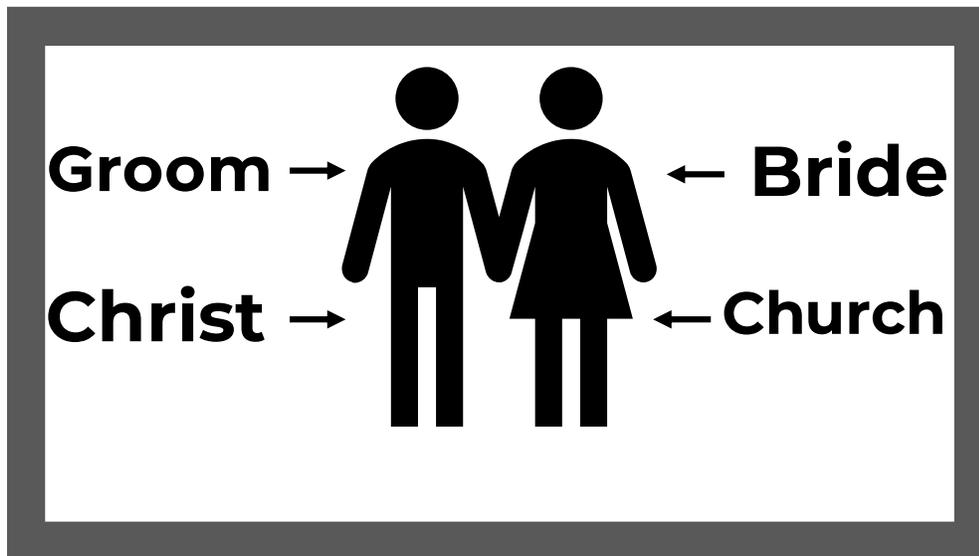


Illustration – The Bible pictures us in our natural sinful condition as damaged goods, a disgusting, repulsive, seemingly unlovable being. We were filthy and we lived in a dump with no hope of ever escaping our life situation. But Christ, the King, loved us in our unlovable condition. The King left His throne and came down to the garbage dump that we lived in and He gave Himself for us. He cleaned us up so that we are in the dump but no longer of the dump, and He put a ring on our finger as He betrothed us to Himself. Then He

departed to prepare a home for us. As the bride of Christ betrothed to King we look forward to the day in which He will return for us to wed us and to take us home that where He is there we may be also.

As the body of Christ, we obey Him. As the engaged bride of Christ, we love Him and look for His return.

Christ longs for that day, the day of His return. Look at His prayer.

24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am – Father, I so desperately want to be with my betrothed. I want to be with the bride that you have given to me.

- “The church is Christ’s bride betrothed to Him by the Father (Rev. 19:7; 2 Cor. 11:2, Eph. 5:22-24).” (MacArthur, 2006)
- John 14:3 - 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.
- What an amazing thought it is that Christ desires to be with us.
 - o You long to be with Christ? Christ longs to be with you...to be with us.

Be with me where I am – Jesus was not speaking of His present physical location on the way to the Garden of Gethsemane. Rather, He was once again speaking in the future tense of where He would soon be in heaven at the right hand of the Father.

- Illustration – Christ longs for the betrothal/engagement period to His bride to be over. He longs for the wedding ceremony in which the eternal union of Christ and His bride will come to fruition. When He returns for His bride at the rapture, that’s exactly what will happen. In that day...

That they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me – we will see Christ’s unveiled glory in heaven when we see Him as He is. We will see Him in His elevated position as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

- Illustration – when we receive official recognition (graduation, award, trophy, etc.; honoring graduates tonight in our service), we naturally desire those we care about most to be there to see it.
- Application: What an amazing thought it is that Christ not only longs to be with us, but that He longs for us to see Him in His position of honor.
- 1 John 3:2 - Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.
- 1 Corinthians 13:12 - For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.

- Rev. 22:3-4 - 3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: 4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

For thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world – because from eternity past you have loved me, and it has always been your plan for me to rescue those of faith from their sin and dwell with them in eternal bliss in your kingdom where they will behold my glory forever.

2 Corinthians 3:18- But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

John 17:5 - And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.

Verse 25 & 26 seems to form the basis for Jesus' request in verse 24.

O righteous Father – Jesus appeals to His Father's righteousness as the basis for His request for those of faith to be with Him

The world hath not known thee – this world system opposed to you did not know you personally/relationally, and I'm not praying for them

But I have known thee – but I personally have had a relationship with you (from eternity past), and I'm doing the praying

And these have known that thou hast sent me – and these of faith in me knew that you sent me (and these are the ones I'm praying for)

- And further, as Jesus referenced in verse 23, they understood the love of God in Jesus because of why He was sent.
 - o John 16:27 - For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.
 - o John 17:8 - For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

John 8:19 - Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

John 8:55 - Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.

John 15:21 - But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

John 16:3 - And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

1 John 5:19-20 - And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness. And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life.

John 1:18 - No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

John 5:19-20 - Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

John 7:29 - But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

John 10:15 - As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

John 17:8 - For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

And I have declared unto them thy name – They have known me, and I have known you, and I have made you known to them...and I will continue to do so.

And will declare it – Jesus perpetually makes known His Father to His followers both personally and through the person of the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 16:13) (Plummer, 1902)

- Why does the Son make known the Father to His followers, to His bride?

That the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them – in order that God's love (for the Son) and the Son's presence might perpetually dwell in us.

- 1 John 4:7-9 - 7 Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. 8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. 9 In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him.
 - o It is through personally knowing God that the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts at the moment of salvation. That love of God inevitably flows out of us in the way we treat others and the way we treat Him. It dwells in us, but it does not stay within us.

- Romans 5:5 - And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.
 - o At the moment of salvation, God's love is shed abroad in our hearts.
- Ephesians 3:17-19 - 17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

John 17:6 - I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

John 14:23 - Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

John 15:9 - As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

Ephesians 5:30 - For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Galatians 2:20 - I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

1 John 3:24 - And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.

1 John 4:13-14 - Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

Application

Two thousand years ago, Christ prayed for two things for us. First, He prayed that we would be united within His body. As the body of Christ, we are called to obedience and unity. When I tell my hand to move, I'm thankful that it moves. As a member of the body of Christ, when He tells you to move, do you move? Are you living your life in accordance with the wishes of the head? Or are you just doing your own thing? I'm also thankful that the different parts of my body work together. I'm thankful that my feet are on speaking terms. It would be hard to get around if they weren't. As a member of the body, are you working together in unity with other members of the body, or, once again, are you just trying to do your own thing? Christ prayed that we would be united within His body.

Christ also prayed for His coming union with His bride. As the betrothed bride of Christ, we are called to love Him, and we are called to eagerly await His return for us to take us home. Are you looking forward to that day, or have you forgotten about it? Are you living your life as if Jesus could return at any moment? Are you bags packed and ready to go?

As the body of Christ, we are called to obey Him in unity. As the bride of Christ, we are called to eagerly await His return. How are you doing in those areas of your life?

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-31. What does this passage teach us about the Body of Christ? How does our mutual inclusion in the Body of Christ affect the way we interact with other Christians?*

3.) *Read Ephesians 5:22-33. In what ways does Christ's treatment of the church model the way husbands and wives should relate to one another? Take note of how Paul switches back and forth in this passage between the body and bride analogies.*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 18:1-14. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 18:1-14 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 18:1-11

Review

Take your Bibles and open them up to John 18:1.

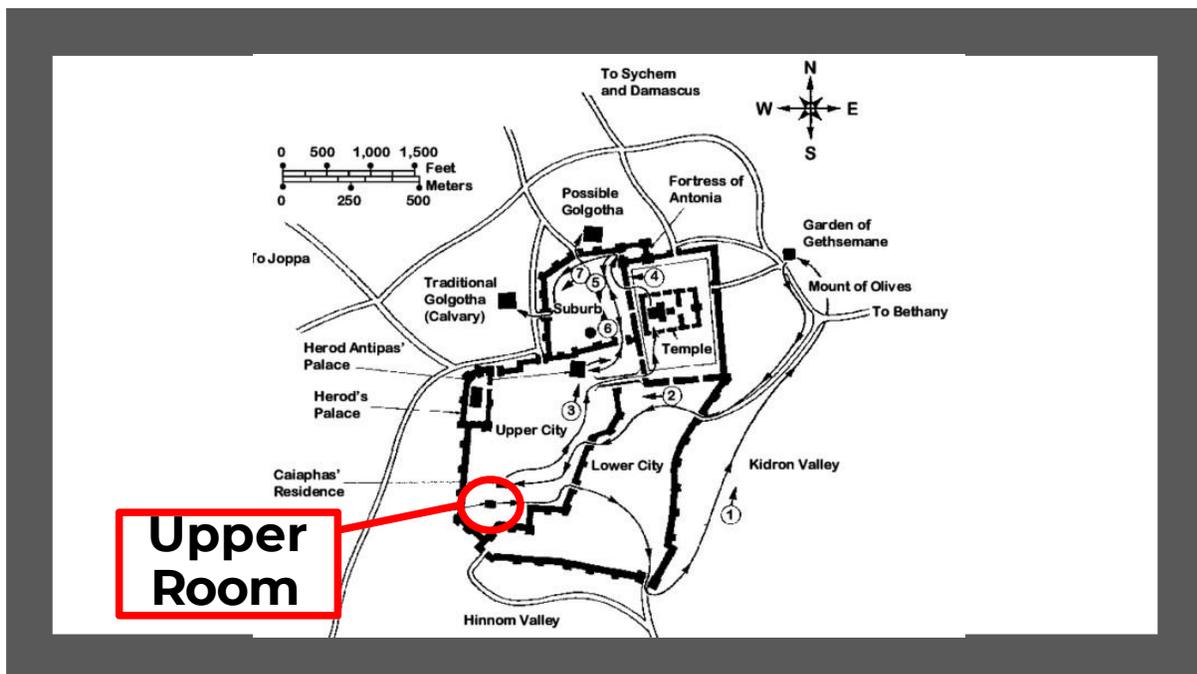
We have spent quite some time studying in detail the events that transpired on the night before Jesus' crucifixion. We saw that Jesus had the Last Supper with His disciples in the upper room and spent a great deal of time teaching them so as to prepare them for what was about to happen. That was chapters 13-16. Then we also saw that Jesus took time to pray to the Father out loud for the disciples to hear as they traveled from the upper room to the Garden of Gethsemane. He prayed for Himself. He prayed for the eleven, and He prayed for all those who would come to be His disciples in the years to come. This morning we're going to be studying the story of Jesus' arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, and as we examine that story, the first aspect that we're going to see in John 18 is the garden.

Sermon

1.) The Garden

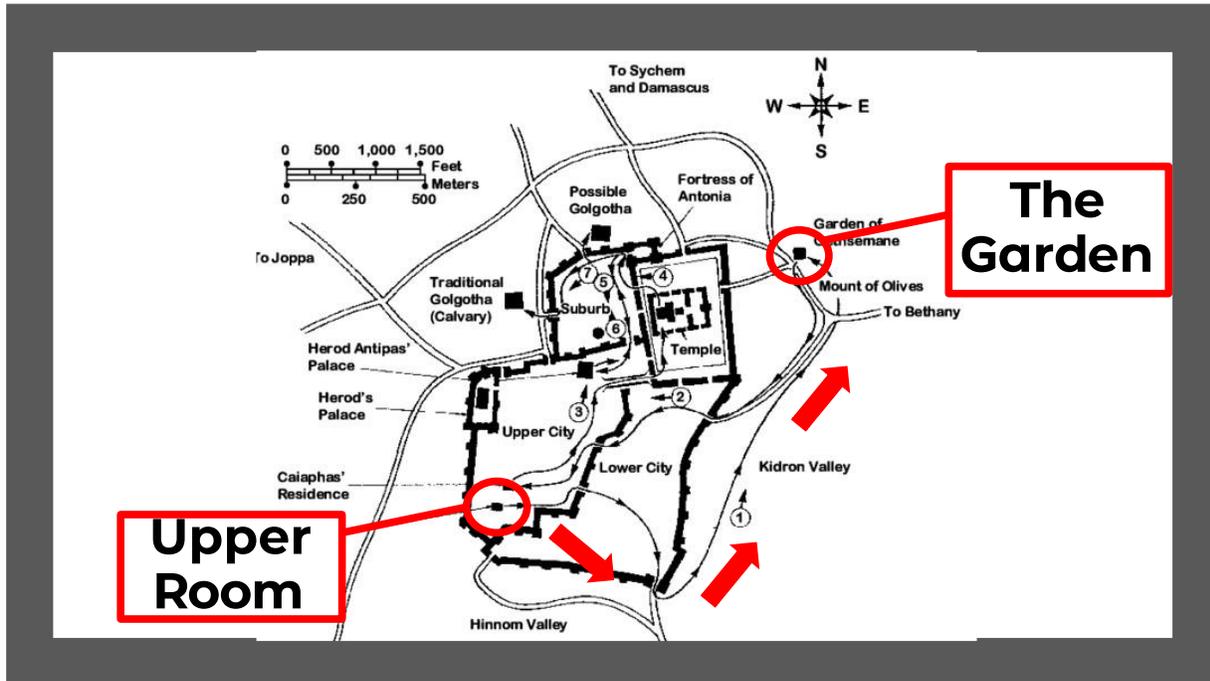
1 When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.

When Jesus had spoken these words - in reference to His teaching of the disciples and then His prayer



(Research Gate, 2022)

He went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron – Jesus and the disciples went forth from the city of Jerusalem. They had already left the upper room by this point in time. (MacArthur, 2006) They passed over the brook Cedron which was a drainage ravine that would have been dry except for in the rainy season.



Where was a garden, into which he entered, and his disciples – Although John does not tell us the name of the garden, Matthew and Mark do. This is none other than the Garden of Gethsemane which was an olive grove that Jesus frequently visited with His disciples. (Matt. 26:36; Mark 14:32).



(Garden of Gethsemane, 2022)

In order to understand the significance of what was about to take place in this garden, you have to understand why the Garden of Gethsemane and Jesus' arrest within it were necessary. They were necessary because of events that transpired some 4000 years prior in a different garden: the Garden of Eden. Really the story of the Bible, the story of redemption, is a story of two gardens. In one garden (Eden), paradise was lost because a man (Adam) partook of a fruit when he shouldn't have. That was the first garden. In the second garden (Gethsemane), paradise was regained because the God man (Jesus) drank a cup when He didn't want to, a cup that unbeknownst to Adam all those years ago was the terrible price tag of the fruit of sin he ate in the Garden of Eden.

We'll come back to this illustration later on, but as we work our way through the story, I want us to take note of the contrast between what happened in these two gardens: Eden and Gethsemane.

Mark 14:32 - And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

Luke 22:39-40 - And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

2 Chronicles 30:14 - And they arose and took away the altars that were in Jerusalem, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast them into the brook Kidron.

As we examine this contrast, we see not only the garden. We also see the villain.

2.) The Villain

2 And Judas also, which betrayed him (*was betraying him*), knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.

In the Garden of Eden, Satan was that serpent that plotted against Adam to destroy him, to kill him. He did so through deception. He remarked to Eve, "Did God really say that if you eat that fruit you'll die? I'm telling you, the moment you eat that sweet, luscious fruit, you will be like gods."

Just as in the Garden of Eden Satan sought to kill Adam through deception, here in the Garden of Gethsemane Judas Iscariot, at this point possessed by the devil himself, plotted to bring about the destruction of Jesus through deception and betrayal.

The villain in Eden was Satan in the form of a serpent, and the villain in Gethsemane was Satan in possession of Judas.

Recall that prior to this evening Judas had contracted with the chief priests and officers to betray Jesus for a price. In the meanwhile, he was biding his time looking for an opportunity to do so. Earlier that very night, Judas had been at the Last Supper. During the course of that meal, Jesus had revealed Judas as the betrayer within the 12 and said "That thou doest, do quickly". Judas then hurried off to the chief priests and Pharisees, knowing that on that night Jesus and the other eleven would likely end up at the Garden of Gethsemane.

Luke 22:39 tells us that it was Jesus' custom to retreat to the Mount of Olives whenever He was in Jerusalem. For Jesus, this location seems to be a place of quiet, a place of prayer, a place of intimate fellowship with His Father and disciples.

Luke 21:37 - And in the day time he was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Olives.

Luke 22:39 - And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

But Judas didn't just know that Jesus would likely end up at the garden that evening, he took action on the information.

3 Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.

Judas then, having received a band of men – a military cohort of Roman soldiers

- During the festival of Passover when millions of Jews were in Jerusalem, there would have been a Roman cohort temporarily stationed in the city to keep the peace.
- A full cohort consisted of 600-1000 men, and although it's unlikely that the full cohort was present for Jesus' arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane, we do know from verse 12 we know that the captain of the cohort was there. Beyond that, if the Roman and Jewish leaders truly believed that Jesus' arrest had the potential to cause a riot, it would not have been out of the ordinary to have had hundreds of Roman soldiers present in the garden for this arrest. (Plummer, 1902) I believe that is the case here in John 18.
 - o In Acts 23:23, 470 Roman soldiers were commissioned to transport Paul from Jerusalem to Caesarea as a result of credible threats on Paul's life while he was standing trial.

And officers from the chief priests and Pharisees – a portion of the temple guard under the supervision of the Sanhedrin (cf. John 7:32).

- Luke 22:52 – indicates that some of the chief priests were present, likely to supervise the temple guard

Cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons – Judas, the Roman soldiers, and the temple guard came to the garden that evening with lamps, torches, and weapons.

- Lamps and torches to help find Him
- Weapons to secure Him if necessary

They come at the behest of Judas, the villain.

Mark 14:43-44 - And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead him away safely.

Luke 22:47-53 - And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him. But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss? When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword? And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him. Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief,

with swords and staves? When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

Psalms 22:12 - Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round.

We've seen the garden: the Garden of Eden and the Garden of Gethsemane.

We've seen the villain: Satan in the form of a serpent and Satan in possession of Judas

Thirdly, we see the Creator God.

3.) The Creator God

4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him – The same God that knew in the Garden of Eden what Adam and Eve had done even when they sought to hide it, knew that night in the Garden of Gethsemane who was coming, why they were coming, and what it would lead to.

- In both gardens, God's omniscience (complete knowledge) was on full display. Knowing who was coming and what was about to happen, what did Jesus do? Did he flee the scene? No. He...

Went forth – out into the open

- This is another reminder for us that on this night, Jesus was not taken. He offered Himself up voluntarily.

And said unto them, Whom seek ye? – Who are you looking for?

- It's interesting that in John's record of Jesus' arrest, there is one very important detail of Jesus' betrayal that John leaves out: Judas' betrayal of Jesus with a kiss.
 - o Matthew 26:48-50 - 48 Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. 49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him. 50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus and took him.
 - o Since John leaves it out of his account, we don't exactly know where this kiss of betrayal took place in the order of events. Some place it right before Jesus asks this question in verse 4. Others place it in the middle of verse 5, and some after verse 8. (Plummer, 1902)
 - o Pastor, when do you think it took place? I don't know, but I'll ask John when I see Him.

Acts 4:24-28 - And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the

sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.

5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.

They – likely in reference to those in charge

Answered him Jesus of Nazareth – an official declaration of the name of the person they had been charged with arresting (Ellicott C. , 1905)

Jesus saith unto them, I am he – The “he” is silent. It’s not in the Greek. What that means is that when the officers stated that they were looking for Jesus of Nazareth, Jesus responded by calling Himself the name that God referred to Himself by in the Old Testament. He said “I am.” (Exodus 3:14).

- Exodus 3:14 - And God said unto Moses, I Am That I Am: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you.

John 8:24, 28, 58 – 24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. 28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. 58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them – Judas, who was in the process of betraying Jesus, was standing there with them

6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward and fell to the ground

– The same mighty God that in the beginning created everything in the universe with nothing more than the power of His Word, here in the Garden of Gethsemane knocked hundreds of soldiers to the ground with nothing more than the utterance of His name.

- God spoke, and His word brought men to the ground.
- Just as was the case with His omniscience (full knowledge) that night, Jesus’ omnipotence (full power) here reminds us that He was not taken to that cross against His will. He offered Himself up willingly.

7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? – For the second time, Jesus asked them who they were looking for

Taken back (literally), and rising from the ground

And they said, Jesus of Nazareth – they once again stated the name they had been given to arrest

8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:

Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he – Well, I already told you that I am. What are you waiting for?

If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way – “By making His captors twice state that their orders were only to arrest Him, the Lord forced them to acknowledge that they had been given by their superiors no authority to arrest the disciples. His demand that they leave the eleven alone was backed up by the awesome power He had just displayed.” (MacArthur, 2006)

Jesus told the arresting party to leave His disciples out of this in order that...

John 16:32 - Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.

That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none – This was a part of Jesus’ prayer to His Father on the way to the garden. He said “Father, I’ve protected these eleven during my time on earth. Now, it’s your turn. Protect and preserve them.”

- Is this in reference to Jesus protecting them physically or spiritually? Both. Spiritually, Jesus had preserved and protected them in the faith up to this point in time, and He prayed for the Father to do so upon His departure. Physically, Jesus’ plan had always been for the disciples to outlive Him and minister on His behalf following His resurrection. Thus, it was important for Him to keep them alive beyond His own crucifixion. (Poole, 1990)
John 17:12 – While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

We’ve seen the garden: the Garden of Eden and the Garden of Gethsemane.

We’ve seen the villain: Satan in the form of a serpent and Satan in possession of Judas.

We've seen the Creator God: the same all-knowing and all powerful God that spoke the universe into existence was there in Gethsemane that night in the person of Jesus.

Finally, we see the temptation, which was the climax of Eden, and is the climax of Gethsemane as well....the fruit and the cup.

4.) The Temptation

At this point in the story, Luke gives us some additional information:

Luke 22:49 - When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

- Two of the disciples had swords and having just witnessed Jesus' awesome display of power, the disciples asked Jesus whether they should attack. However, one of the two that had a sword did not wait for Jesus to answer. He just went ahead and started swinging. Look at verse number 10.

10 Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

Then Simon Peter having a sword – a short sword/dagger

- The word "sword" is "machaira" which refers to a small sword or a short sword (12-18 inches long). Roman soldiers carried their short swords with them at all times. This would have been different than the Roman long sword that soldiers would yield with two hands.
 - o Luke 22:38 - 38 And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.
 - Two of the disciples had these short swords with them

Drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. – feeling invincible in light of Jesus' awesome display of power, Peter started swinging, likely planning to cut down the entire cohort.

- His first target, likely because he was in closest proximity to him, was the high priest's slave Malchus. Peter cut off his ear.
 - o John is the only gospel writer that identifies Peter as the one who attacked Malchus.
- Why did Peter cut off Malchus' ear? That's weird. It's likely that Peter wasn't aiming for Malchus' ear. He was probably trying to cut off his head.
- Illustration – swinging to cut off the head, the servant ducking, and cutting off his ear

What did Jesus do?

11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath – Peter, put that thing away!

- Jesus then healed Malchus' ear (Luke 22:51).

He said something striking to Peter:

The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? – The fruit of Eden and the cup of Gethsemane. It's interesting that if you go back to the Garden of Eden, and you look at the temptation and fall of Adam in Genesis 3, you discover that Satan wasn't actually the one who tempted Adam. Who was it? It was Eve. Satan tempted Eve, and after Eve had eaten of the fruit, she tempted Adam.

- For me, one of the most interesting discoveries in studying Jesus' arrest in Gethsemane was that Satan wasn't the one that tempted Jesus in the garden. In fact, unbeknownst to Satan he was being used by God to carry about God's eternal plan of redemption through the cross. If it wasn't Satan that tempted Jesus in the garden, who was it? It was Peter. It was Peter. When Peter went full John Rambo against that Roman cohort, Peter tempted Jesus to bypass the agony of the cross and to run away from the very purpose for which He had come.
- I believe that the temptation Jesus faced in the Garden of Gethsemane that night was the greatest temptation He faced in his life. From Matthew's gospel we know that Jesus didn't just pray on the way to Gethsemane. He also prayed when they got there. I want you to listen to Jesus' words, and I want you to feel His emotional state in the garden that night.
 - o Matthew 26:36-39 - 36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. 37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. 38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. 39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.
 - Jesus prayed three times to the Father that night in the garden, "Father, if there is any other way, please don't make me drink this cup."
 - What cup? What could have been so terrible to inspire that kind of an emotional state in the Son of God? In order to understand the answer to that question, you have to go all the way back to the Garden of Eden.
 - In Eden, God had one rule for Adam and Eve: don't eat the fruit of this one tree. In essence, the one rule was: don't rebel against me. Don't eat the fruit, and if you do eat that fruit of sin, there is a very hefty price tag attached It: my wrath and your death. The price tag of sin was and is God's wrath and man's death. So they didn't eat it.
 - But then Satan came along and lied to them. He said, "There's no price tag to the fruit of sin. That whole wrath and death

thing....that's just a myth. The day you eat the fruit of sin you will be like gods."

- And they ate it, and they became like gods in the sense that they set themselves up in rebellion against the one true God....And the moment they ate that fruit, they saw its price tag as they felt God's holy wrath against their sin. But the price tag wasn't just wrath it was death, and the moment they ate that fruit, they died spiritually and they later died physically because of that moment. That sin nature that originated in the Garden of Eden with its price tag of God's wrath and man's death was passed down from generation to generation for 4000 years up until the night that Jesus was in that garden.
- If you were to take every sin that had ever been committed and would ever be committed in human history, and you were to take the sum total of that sin's collective price tag: all of God's pent up wrath and all of man's pent up death and you put it in a cup for one person to bear, that was what Jesus was staring at that night in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- He was staring at the cup of God's pent up wrath covering thousands of years of the most heinous sins and crimes. God's wrath against every instance of homicide, rape, and torture. God's wrath against Auschwitz, Tiananmen Square, and the slave trade was pent up in that cup....in that cross. God's righteous wrath against every sin that had ever been and would ever be committed by every person that walked the face of this planet was contained within that cup.
- Like Adam, I had eaten that fruit, and I deserved that cup. I deserved that death. I deserved God's wrath....but on that cross Jesus drank my cup, and He didn't just drink my cup. He drank yours too. He tasted death for every man (Heb. 2:9). He died for our sins so that we could be forgiven, so that the paradise that was lost through Adam's disobedience could be regained through Christ's obedience.
- When Peter took up that sword, unbeknownst to him, he was tempting Christ to circumvent the very purpose for which He had come to earth, to drink the cup of death in our place so that through faith in Him, we might be forgiven and have everlasting life with God in the paradise that was lost in Eden.
- Friend, the price tag of your sin will be paid. The only question is, "Who will pay it?" Will it be you our Christ? You will either accept by faith what Christ did for you on the cross as the price tag for your sin, or you will drink the cup of God's wrath against your sin in spiritual death in hell for ever.

- You say, “Well what sense does it make for someone to be punished eternally for sins they committed during a mere lifetime?” Sir, ma’am, what makes you think people will stop sinning in hell?

Jeremiah 25:15 - 15 For thus saith the Lord God of Israel unto me; Take the wine cup of this fury at my hand, and cause all the nations, to whom I send thee, to drink it.

Isaiah 51:17 - Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the Lord the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out.

Revelation 14:9-10 - 9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, 10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

Romans 5:12-19 - 12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: 13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. 15 But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. 16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. 17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

Matthew 20:22 - But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

John 12:27-28 - Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.

Application

Friend, have you accepted Christ's payment on that cross on your behalf? Christ died in your place so that you wouldn't have to, and all you have to do to be forgiven is to receive it: to come to God and say, "Lord I know that I'm a sinner...I know that because of my sin I don't deserve heaven. I deserve death in Hell, but you drank my cup. You died for my sins. I believe that and based on that I ask you to forgive me of my sins once and for all so that I might spend eternity with you." Have you received by faith what Christ did for you, or are you staring down the barrel of a bitter cup that you don't have to drink?

Christian, Jesus didn't just drink that cup for you to deliver you from the eternal penalty for sin. He drank that cup to deliver you from the power of that fruit of death in your life today. Have you found that victory, or are there areas of your life in which you keep indulging in that Christ died for...in which you keep believing the same lies that Satan told Eve in Eden...that you can eat the fruit and be better off, not worse.

There's the fruit of wrong relationships

- 2 Cor. 6:14 – Don't unequally join yourself together with an unbeliever
- Illustration – years ago I knew of a teenage girl that grew up in a Christian home and dated an unbeliever to spite her parents. She ended up marrying him and years later I was classmates with their daughter in my Christian school. I can't tell you how many times I heard that little girl pray and cry because she wanted her daddy to be saved and he hated God.
- That fruit of sin promised fulfillment, but its price tag was something different.

There's the fruit of sexual immorality

- 1 Cor. 6:18 – flee sexual immorality
- Illustration – another classmate I had who was the most popular girl in the Christian school. She was pretty. She was athletic. 'She was cool. Some teenage guy fed her some line about loving her and talked her into giving up her purity. Well, she got pregnant, and guess who was no longer in the picture?
- Young lady, if he tells you he loves you and asks for your purity outside of the lifelong covenant of marriage, you run from that boy because he doesn't love you. He loves himself. True loves wait, and if he can't control himself before marriage, he probably won't be able to after.
- That fruit of sin promised pleasure, but its price tag was something different.

There's the fruit of anger

- James 1:20 – the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God
- Illustration – growing up as a teenager, there was a guy in my youth group that I looked up to more than anyone. He was athletic. He was smart. He was godly. He was successful. He was the unquestioned leader of our youth group and school. He got married. He went into ministry. My family supported him financially. Well unbeknownst to anyone, he had addictions to porn and anger that flew under the radar until they didn't. Tired of the beatings and violence his wife left him and he lost everything including his ministry.

- That fruit of sin promised satisfaction, but its price tag was something different. I could tell you story after story after story of different fruits of sin (bitterness, greed, fame, alcohol) that Christians I knew kept going back to over and over and over again and destroyed their life. Though they had been delivered from the eternal penalty of sin, they thought they could keep going back to the fruit of sin and somehow be better off it...and they were wrong.

Christian, I'm here to tell you that everything you are looking for in all of these different things can only be found in one place: Jesus.

Christ drink that cup of sin and death to deliver you from the eternal penalty for sin and to deliver you from the power of sin in your life. Have you been saved? Have you put your faith and trust in Jesus and been delivered from the penalty of sin in Hell? If you have and you're a Christian this morning, have you been delivered from the power of sin in your life? Or is there a sin addiction that you just keep going back to over and over again that you need to repent of because you have been looking for a type of fulfillment in it that can only be found in Jesus?

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Genesis 3:1-24 and Rom. 5:12-19. What further comparisons and contrasts do you see between the events that occurred in the Garden of Eden and the events set in motion by the arrest of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane?*

3.) *Read Isaiah 51:17, Jeremiah 25:15, Matthew 20:22, and Rev. 14:9-10. What do these passages reveal to us about the imagery of the bitter cup that is referenced by Jesus in our passage in John 18?*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 18:12-27. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 18:12-27 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 18:12-27

Review

Last week we talked about the arrest of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night before His crucifixion. We took special note of the parallels between the Garden of Gethsemane and the Garden of Eden.

Whereas we left off last week with Jesus and the soldiers preparing to leave the Garden, today we pick up in John 18:12 with the transport of Jesus to the palace of the high priest to be interrogated.

Sermon

1.) The Transport of Jesus

12 Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him,

Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him – the Roman cohort, the captain of the cohort, and the Jewish temple guard then took Jesus and bound Him as a prisoner.

- Take note of the parallel between Jesus' binding and the binding of the Old Testament sacrifices. (Ps. 118:27)

13 And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.

And led him away to Annas first – Before Jesus actually stood trial before Caiaphas (the high priest) and the Sanhedrin (the Jewish supreme court), He was first taken to a man named Annas for a sort of preliminary interrogation. This interrogation by Annas is only recorded in John's gospel.

Jewish Religious Trials

**1.) Interrogation by Annas
(John 18:12-23)**

**2.) Informal Trial before
Caiaphas & Sanhedrin
(Matt. 26:57-68)**

**3.) Formal Trial before
Caiaphas & Sanhedrin
(Luke 22:66-71)**

Roman Civil Trials

**4.) Trial before Pilate
(Luke 23:1-5)**

**5.) Interrogation by
Herod (Luke 23:6-12)**

**6.) Sentencing by
Pilate (Mark 15:6-15)**

- 3 Stages of Jesus' Trial before the Jews
 - o Interrogation Before Annas (18:12-14)
 - o Informal Trial Before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin (Matt. 26:57-68; Mark 14:53-65; Luke 22:54)
 - o After sunrise the next morning as the previous night's decision was confirmed (Matt. 27:1; Mark 15:1; Luke 22:66-71)
- 3 Stages of Jesus' Trial before the Romans
 - o Before Pilate (Matt. 27:2, 11-14; Mark 15:1-5; Luke 23:1-5; John 18:28-38)
 - o Before Herod (Luke 23:6-12)
 - o Before Pilate again (Matt. 27:15-26; Mark 15:6-15; Luke 23:13-25; John 18:39-19:16) (MacArthur, 2006)

Thursday after 6.0 P.M.	The Last Supper and Last Discourses.
(Nisan 14)	The Agony.
11 P.M.	The Betrayal.
Midnight	
Friday 1 A.M.	Conveyance to the high-priest's house.
2 A.M.	Examination before Annas.
3 A.M.	Examination before Caiaphas at an informal meeting of the Sanhedrin.
4.30 A.M.	Condemnation to death at a formal meeting of the Sanhedrin.
5 A.M.	First Examination before Pilate.
5.30 A.M.	Examination before Herod.
6 A.M.	Second Examination before Pilate.
	The scourging and first mockery by Pilate's soldiers.
6.30 A.M.	Pilate gives sentence of Crucifixion.
	Second mockery by Pilate's soldiers.
9. A.M.	The Crucifixion.
	First Word. <i>'Father forgive them, &c.'</i>
	Second — <i>'Woman, behold thy son.'</i>
	<i>'Behold, thy mother.'</i>
	Third — <i>'To-day thou shalt be, &c.'</i>
Noon to 3 P.M.	The Darkness.
	Fourth Word. <i>'My God, My God, &c.'</i>
	Fifth — <i>'I thirst.'</i>
	Sixth — <i>'It is finished.'</i>
3 P.M.	Seventh — <i>'Father, into Thy hands, &c.'</i>
	The Centurion's Confession.
	The Piercing of the side.
3 to 5 P.M.	Slaughter of the Paschal lambs.
5 P.M.	The Burial.
6 P.M.	The Sabbath begins.
(Nisan 15)	The Passover.
Saturday	The Great Day of the Feast.
	Jesus in the Grave.

(Plummer, 1902, p. 381)

From John's gospel, we know that following His arrest, Jesus was taken to Annas first.

But who was Annas? Why was Jesus taken to him first?

For he was father in law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that year – Annas had been the high priest from AD 6 to AD 15 up until the Roman governor at that time intervened and removed him from office. However, Annas still maintained a significant amount of

power. The next six high priests after him were his five sons and his son in law Caiaphas (Plummer, 1902). During the time of Jesus, although his son in law Caiaphas was officially the high priest, Annas yielded a significant amount of power and influence as a sort of puppeteer, so to speak. In fact, Annas' influence behind the scenes was so great that Luke in his gospel actually referred to Annas and Caiaphas as the high priests (plural). Beyond that, Annas was an incredibly wealthy man, and a significant portion of his wealth came from the temple... from the sale of sacrificial animals in the temple and from the fees charged to exchange foreign currencies into Jewish money so that people could pay the temple tax. He was the one largely responsible for turning the temple, God's house of prayer, into a den of thieves, and who was the one that twice disrupted Annas' income stream by "cleansing the temple"? Jesus. (MacArthur, 2006)

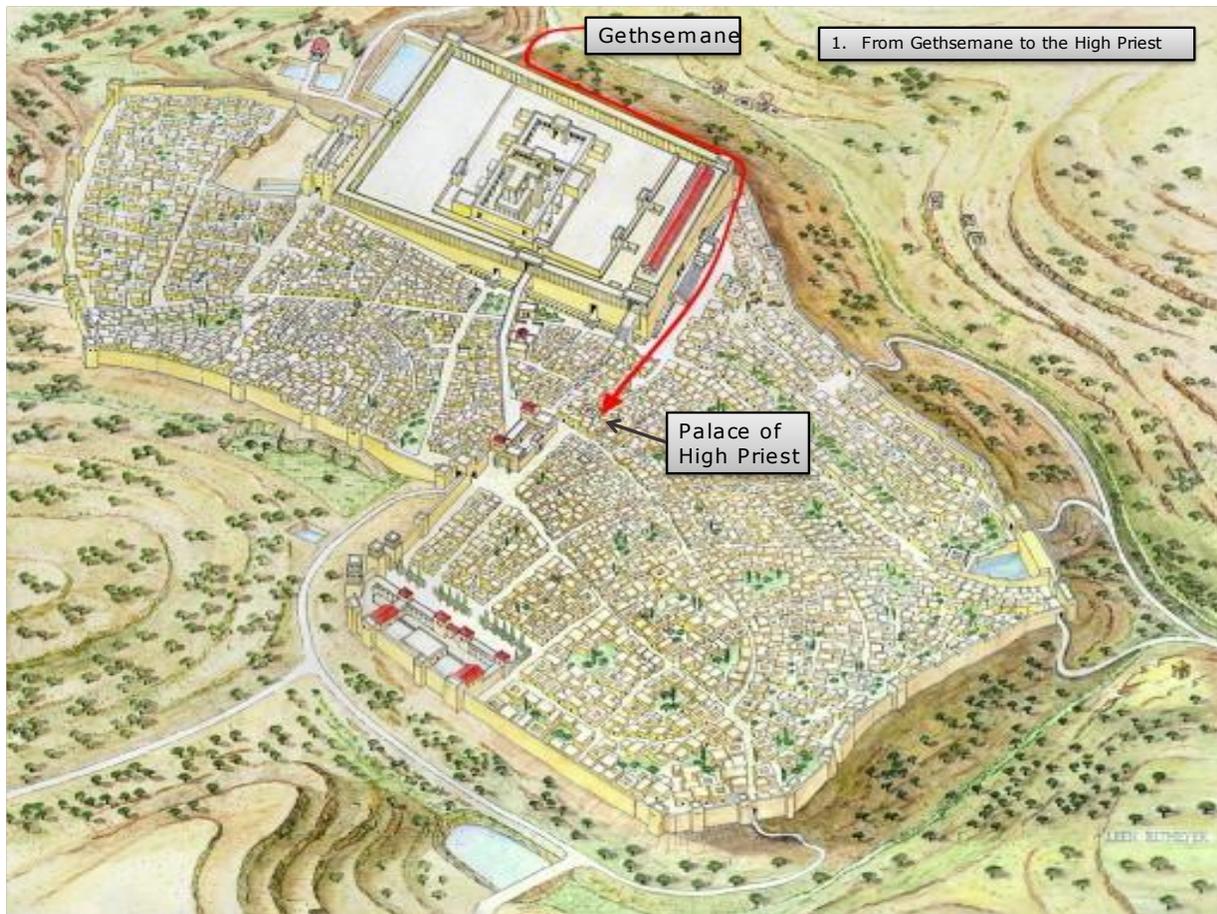
- Annas was powerful, and Annas had a bone to pick with Jesus. Knowing these truths helps us understand why Jesus would go to Annas first.

14 Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people. (*Jesus needs to die*)

Caiaphas was the official high priest, and he made this statement at the convening of the Sanhedrin following Jesus' raising of Lazarus from the dead (John 11:49-52).

John 11:49-52 - And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation; And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

15 And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.



And Simon Peter followed Jesus – from a distance from Gethsemane

And so did another disciple – likely in reference to the author, the Apostle John

- The Apostle John never names himself in his gospel, but rather refers to himself as the disciple whom Jesus loved (compare with 13:23-24; 20:2-8; 21:20-21). (MacArthur, 2006)
- The Apostles John and Peter are often presented together in the gospel accounts.
- This would need to be someone who was present in the Garden of Gethsemane.

That disciple was known unto the high priest – apparently John was known by/acquainted with the high priest. How would that have happened?

- There is a second century writing (the apocryphal Gospel of the Hebrews) that claims that when John worked for his father as a fisherman, he delivered fish to the high priest.
- It's also possible that John may have been of priestly descent. (MacArthur, 2006)
- The truth is that we don't know how exactly John was acquainted with the high priest, but we know that he was.
- The other big question here is: "When this verse refers to the high priest, is it referring to Caiaphas or Annas?"

- This is a reoccurring question throughout John 18.
- Recall that Caiaphas was officially the high priest, but Annas was also referred to as the high priest in Luke and Acts.
- I believe that the best way to approach this issue is to assume that Caiaphas is being referenced unless context dictates otherwise. Thus, I believe that this verse is telling us that the Apostle John and Caiaphas were somehow acquainted.

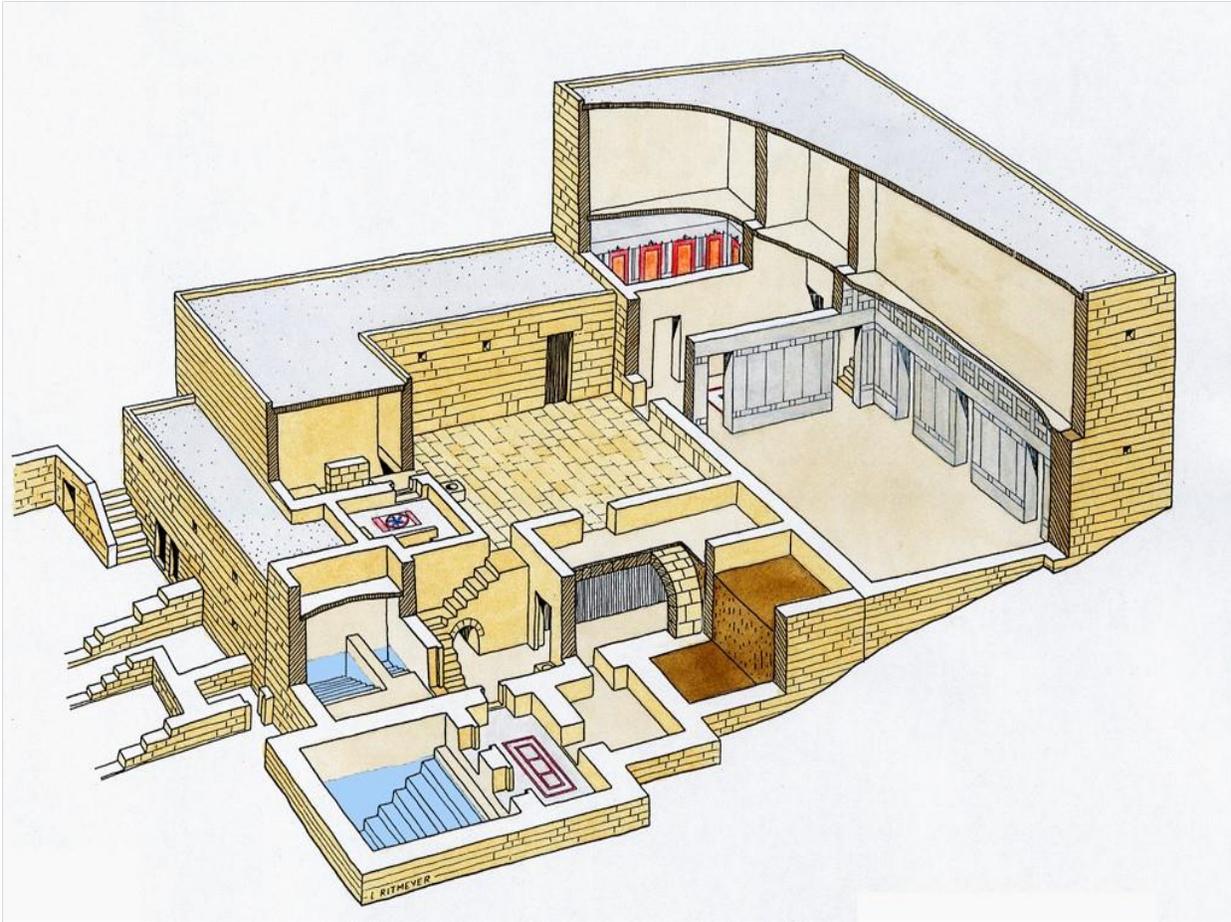
Luke 3:1-2 - Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, 2 Annas and Caiaphas **being the high priests**, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

Acts 4:6 - And **Annas the high priest**, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem.

And went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest – being known by the high priest, John was permitted to go in with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest's palace. (Plummer, 1902)

- From comparing and contrasting the gospel accounts, it seems as if the interrogation of Jesus by Annas and the trial before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin both took place in different parts of the same priestly palace. (Spence & Exell, 1883)

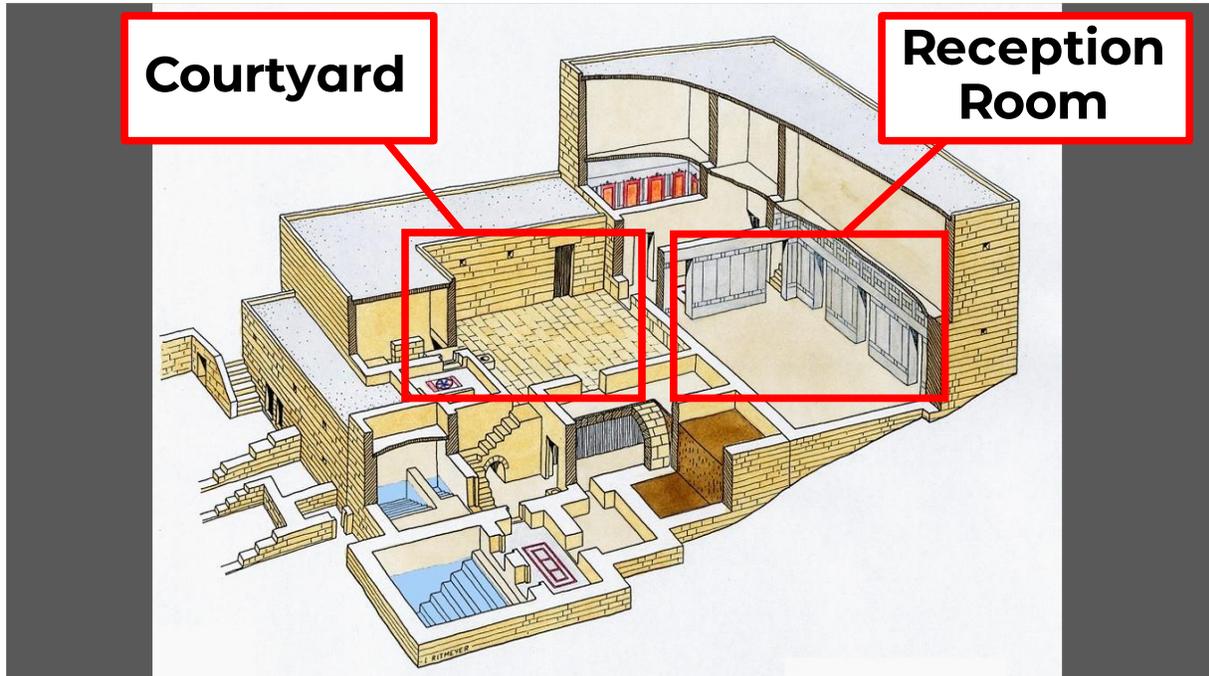
What might this palace have looked like? There's a lot of Jerusalem that has not been excavated and so it's probable that the palace remains have not yet been discovered and may never be discovered. However, in the 1970s Leen Ritmeyer led a team of archeologists that discovered not far from the temple a mansion that may have been the site of the high priestly palace where Jesus' religious trials took place.



This image shows a rendition of what they discovered. The palace they uncovered in the upper city close to the temple was a 6500 square foot, two story mansion (2 stories = 13,000 square foot of usable space).

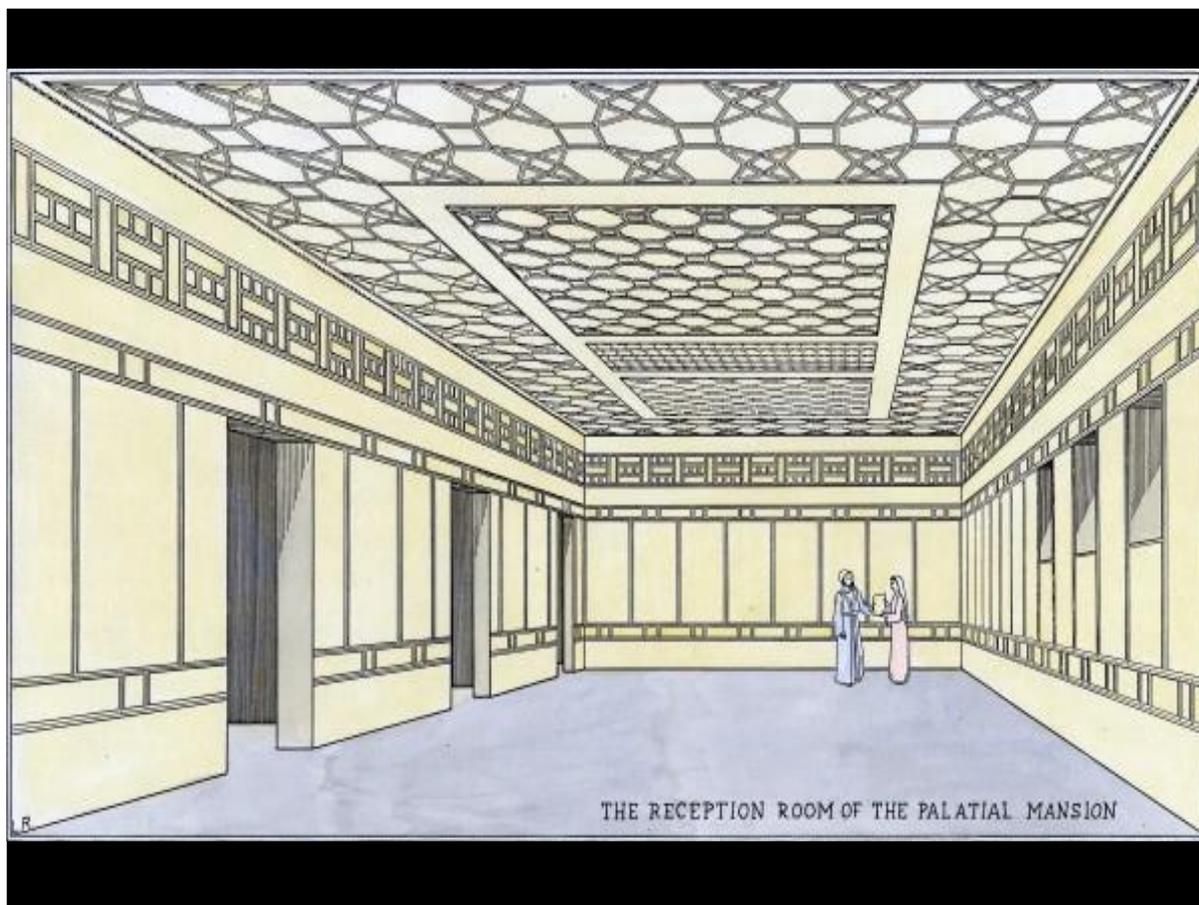
Illustration – the usable space in this mansion would have been more than twice the size of our church

The ground floor was designated for living quarters with the lower level containing storerooms and ritual bathing pools.



The mansion was centered around a paved courtyard that was adjacent to a large roughly 600 square foot reception room.

- Courtyard – where Peter denied Christ
- Reception Room – where Jesus stood trial before the Sanhedrin



This reconstruction drawing of the Reception Room gives an idea of what an elegant room this once was. As indicated in the previous captions, the reconstruction is based strictly on the excavated fragments and, where necessary, on parallels from contemporary architecture. The room, which would better be described as a hall, measures 33 feet by 21 feet (11 m. by 6.50 m.). Because of its large size, it is assumed that it was used to receive guests and for various functions. In the caption to Slide 48, we have already tentatively identified this Mansion, of which the Reception Room is a part, with the Palace of Annas the High Priest. (Ritmeyer)

The Gospel record speaks of Jesus being interrogated by the priests, elders and council in the palace of the High Priest, which at that time was Caiaphas, son-in-law of Annas (Matt. 26.57; Mark 14.53 and Luke 22.54). However, John's Gospel 18.13 intimates that the director of the first interrogation was Annas himself. The task of harmonizing this gospel record with those of the Synoptic gospels, would be far less difficult, if we were to assume that the old High Priest's Palace of Annas continued to be used for such functions, even if it was a relative of his and not he himself that held the office. He was, after all, a type of *éminence grise* who continued to direct affairs by promoting members of his own family to the high priest's office, long after he himself had vacated it. It must be said that the plan of this Palatial Mansion, with its central courtyard and lavish reception hall, makes a

visualization of the scene of Peter warming himself at an outdoor fire while Jesus is interrogated within, eminently possible. (Ritmeyer)

<https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justin-taylor/is-this-the-high-priestly-palace-where-jesus-stood-trial/>

Jesus was taken to the high priest's palace to be questioned by Annas, and John and Peter followed from the Garden of Gethsemane not far behind. When they arrived at the palace, John entered through a door into the courtyard. However, Peter did not. Look at verse 16.

16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

But Peter stood at the door without – in contrast with John, Peter was not allowed by the doorkeeper to enter into the courtyard of the high priest's palace. Peter was not acquainted with the high priest.

John, looking behind him and realizing what had happened

Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter – this disciple went back out of the courtyard and spoke to the doorkeeper so as to bring Peter in.

17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not.

Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter – after Peter entered into the courtyard with John, this slave girl that kept the door went up to Peter and asked him a question that caught him off guard

Art thou not also one of this man's disciples? – this question is framed negatively in the Greek.

- Surely, you are not also, in addition to John, one of this man's disciples?
- You can imagine this said with contempt. (Plummer, 1902)

He saith I am not – why would Peter deny Jesus here?

- Fear
 - o Perhaps he feared being associated with Jesus because he had just tried to kill one of the high priest's slaves Malchus in the Garden of Gethsemane. (Ellicott C., 1905)
- Doubt
 - o Having just witnessed his Lord voluntarily surrender to the soldiers at the Garden of Gethsemane and having sat through a very confusing farewell teaching from Jesus in the upper room
- Insecurity
 - o Feeling out of place at this gaudy mansion surrounded by guards

- Peer Pressure

- o Due to the negative framing of the question by the doorkeeper

Regardless of why Peter denied Jesus in that courtyard, we know that he did. His failure is a reminder to each of us to take heed lest we fall. As was the case with Peter, there will be those in the world that pressure you to distance yourself from Jesus, and when they do, may you stand firm next to your Lord and Master.

Matthew 26:69-70 - 69 Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. 70 But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.

Mark 14:66-68 - And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest: And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth. But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.

Luke 22:55-57 - 55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them. 56 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him. 57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold: and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; for it was cold – in the courtyard, some of the high priest’s slaves and members of the temple guard (who had likely been part of the arresting party) had made a fire and were standing by it because it was cold

And they warmed themselves, and Peter stood with them and warmed himself – these slaves and members of the temple guard warmed themselves by the fire, and so too did Peter, as he likely tried to blend in but risked being recognized in the light of the fire.

We’ve seen the transport of Jesus...from Gethsemane to the palace. Next, we see also the interrogation of Jesus.

2.) The Interrogation of Jesus

19 The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.

Who is conducting this interrogation?

The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine – once again, when this verse refers to the high priest, is it referring to Caiaphas or Annas? Well, in verse 24, after this interrogation by the high priest is complete, Annas sends Jesus to Caiaphas, which wouldn’t really make sense if Caiaphas were the one here doing the questioning. Thus,

context here would seem to suggest that John is referring to Annas as the high priest that is leading this interrogation.

- However, it's possible that although Annas led this preliminary interrogation, Caiaphas was present for it and spoke to Jesus at it.

What takes place in this interrogation? Annas questions Jesus about His disciples and His teaching.

- Illustration – backroom unofficial interrogation by the police that you see in crime shows

As was true of the entirety of the legal proceedings against Jesus, this interrogation did not have justice as its goal. Jesus' guilt and fate had already been established back in John 11:48-50 where, following Jesus' resurrection of Lazarus, the Sanhedrin determined to put Jesus to death.

- Thus, the aim of these proceedings was not to execute justice, but rather to execute Jesus. We see that here in Annas' questioning of Jesus.
 - o Rather than bringing formal charges against Jesus and providing evidence and witnesses to establish the truth of these charges, Annas just starts shooting from the hip with questions in an attempt to get Jesus to incriminate Himself and as a result justify the death sentence that had already been decided on. (MacArthur, 2006)

Contrast the account of this interrogation with the one before Caiaphas, the chief priests, and elders.

- Matthew 26:58-68 - But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end. Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses, And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days. And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death. Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands, Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?
- Mark 14:53-65 - 53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. 54 And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and

warmed himself at the fire. 55 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none. 56 For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together. 57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, 58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. 59 But neither so did their witness agree together. 60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee? 61 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? 62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. 63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses? 64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. 65 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophecy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

Contrast his interrogation here with the official trial before Caiaphas, the chief priests, and elders in the morning.

- Matthew 27:1-2 - When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: 2 And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.
- Mark 15:1 - And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate.
- Luke 22:66-71 - 66 And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying, 67 Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe: 68 And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me, nor let me go. 69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God. 70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am. 71 And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

How does Jesus respond to this line of questioning in this backroom interrogation?

20 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.

Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world – I've spoken openly in public

I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple – I quite frequently taught in the synagogue and in the temple... in the places

Whither the Jews always resort – where the Jews gather together

- I've been an open book

And in secret have I said nothing – it's not like I've said one thing in public and another in private. It's not like I have some super-secret message that I've taught only in private and that your questioning is going to uncover. I've been pretty open with my message.

21 Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.

Why askest thou me? – Why are you questioning me?

Ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them; behold, they know what I said – Question those that have listened to my teaching about what I have said. They know. There's nothing I would tell you that they couldn't also tell you.

- This is not some act of defiance. It's Jesus calling on Annas to actually obey the law by calling witnesses and presenting evidence.
- Illustration – a police officer questioning a suspect and the suspect refusing to talk and insisting that his lawyer be present. Why? Because that's his legal right. Mark 14:55-59 - And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none. For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together. And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands. But neither so did their witness agree together.

22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?

And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand – when Jesus said this, one of the officers standing by, took the palm of his open hand and slapped Jesus across the face

Saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? – Who do you think you are talking to the high priest like that?

- Illustration – imagine a police officer interrogating a suspect, the suspect refusing to talk and insisting on a lawyer, and the officer's partner striking him across the face Isaiah 50:5-7 - The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting. For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

Acts 23:4-5 - And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest? Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.

How does Jesus respond?

And Jesus in His raging inferno with His laser eyes burned to the ground the man that had slapped Him and then ascended up into the sky.... Nope. That's not what He did.

23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?

1 Peter 2:20-23 - For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:

Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil – If what I just said to the high priest was wrong, then correct me

But if well, why smitest thou me? – but if I'm right, why are you striking me?

Illustration - imagine a police officer interrogating a suspect, the suspect refusing to talk and insisting on a lawyer, and the officer's partner striking him across the face.

- The suspect responds, "If I'm wrong about my rights then correct me, but if I'm right, why did you just punch me in the face?"

We've seen the transport of Jesus...from Gethsemane to the high priest's palace. We've seen the interrogation of Jesus, and finally this morning, we see the denials of Jesus.

3.) The Denials of Jesus

24 Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.

Now (as a result, therefore) Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest - Seeing that this interrogation was going nowhere, Annas as a result had sent Jesus bound to Caiaphas the high priest where He would stand trial formally before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all describe those events in great detail.

- This verse is one of the primary reasons why I believe that when the prior verses reference the high priest, they are referring to Annas. If Caiaphas were present for this questioning, this verse wouldn't make a whole lot of sense.
- Also, from comparing and contrasting the different accounts of Jesus' trial and Peter's denial, it seems to indicate that Peter's denials took place in the same general area: the courtyard of the high priest's home.
 - o Thus it seems that rather than sending Jesus to Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin at another location, Annas probably sent Jesus to Caiaphas in a different meeting room at the same location: the high priest's palace.

Matthew 26:57 - And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.

Mark 14:53 - 53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes.

What John says in verse 24 is significant, because it is a time indicator that sets the stage for the denials of Peter that follow in verses 25-27.

The Timing of Peter's Denials

1.) Interrogation by Annas (John 18:12-23)

Denial 1 (John 18:15-18)

2.) Informal Trial before Caiaphas & Sanhedrin (Matt. 26:57-68)

Denial 2 (John 18:25)

Denial 3 (John 18:26-27)

3.) Formal Trial before Caiaphas & Sanhedrin (Luke 22:66-71)

- By comparing and contrasting John's account of the denials with the other gospels, it seems as if Peter's first denial took place as Jesus was being interrogated by Annas, and his second and third denials took place in between Jesus' two trials before the Sanhedrin (the Jewish supreme court).
- Let's take a look at these denials.

25 And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not.

And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself – Jesus has been sent to Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin (Jewish Supreme Court), likely in another part of the same palace: some sort of reception room. Meanwhile Peter is in the courtyard warming himself by the fire

They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples – Matthew says another maid confronted him. Mark says the same maid that kept the door confronted him again. Luke says a man confronted him. Which is right? All of them are. John, accounting for them all, says they together confronted him saying, "You're not one of that man's disciples, are you?"

- That law breaker
- That blasphemer
- That Jesus guy

- You don't follow Him, do you?

He denied it, and said, I am not – I am not one of Jesus' disciples. I swear I do not know Him.

- So, they leave him be.

Matthew 26:71-72 - 71 And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. 72 And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.

Mark 14:69-70 - And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is one of them. And he denied it again.

Luke 22:58 - 58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.

Galatians 2:11-13 - But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.

From Luke we know that about an hour passes between the second and third denials.

26 One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?

One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off – there was a slave of the high priest who has a relative of Malchus' and who was there in the Garden of Gethsemane that night when Peter cut off his relative's ear

Saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? – hold on a second. Didn't I see you with my own two eyes with Him in the garden? Aren't you the guy that cut Malchus' ear off?

- Although being associated with Jesus was not a crime yet, cutting a guy's ear off was...attempted murder was. (MacArthur, 2006)
- Peter reacted in a state of panic

27 Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.

Peter then denied again – Matthew and Mark tell us that Peter began to swear and curse.

- "I swear to God that I am not a disciple of that man, and if I am, may the curse of God Himself fall down on me."

And immediately the cock crew – it crowed for the second time, as Mark tells us.

- Luke 22:59-62 - 59 And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilean. 60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. 61 And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter

remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. 62 And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.

- Matthew 26:73-74 - 73 And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee. 74 Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.

- Mark 14:70-71 - And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art one of them: for thou art a Galilaean, and thy speech agreeth thereto. But he began to curse and to swear, saying, I know not this man of whom ye speak.

John 13:38 - Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

Mark 14:30 - And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

Application

We live in a world that is constantly pressuring us to distance ourselves from and deny Jesus...to deny Him with our words, with our behavior, with our doctrine. But friend, let me remind you that there is coming a day in which we, like Peter, will face the one that we are being pressured to deny. No matter how great the pressure is today, in that moment as you look into His face, you will wish that you stood by Him during your time on earth.

You will wish that you stood by Him:

In Word (Verbally)

- That when the world pressured you to abandon Him and said, "You're not really a Christian, are you? You don't really believe in that Jesus nonsense?", you replied, "Yes I am, and I'm not ashamed to say it."
- While I'm on this point, let me remind our church that God Himself has given the church two practices by which we publicly confess Jesus as Lord: baptism and communion. Baptism by immersion is the first and primary step of obedience that God has given for someone to take after they have been saved, and some of you claim the name of Christ, but you have not taken that step, and you need to. Why? Because baptism is how we first publicly identify with Jesus, and those who refuse baptism are disobeying Christ and refusing to confess Him...and that's serious.
- We publicly identify with Jesus initially through baptism and then after that through communion. Tonight at 5:30pm, we're going to be observing communion (as it ties in with our evening passage), and I want to encourage you to be there. You ought to determine to be in church every Sunday, but especially when we are observing communion because that is one of the ways that God has given for us together to remember His death and to together proclaim our faith in Him. When communion is

offered and Christians don't make an effort to observe it, it burdens my heart just as it is burdened for those who don't see the importance of baptism.

- In that day when you see Him face to face, you will wish that you stood by Him Word, but not only in Word, in works as well.

In Works

- When I played college football as a freshman, the guys on that team knew that I was a Christian. I can't tell you how many times those guys that knew I was a Christian tried to get me to go clubbing and drinking...I was 17, and every day they tried to get me to deny with my works the one that I confessed with my words.
- Oh that we would stand by Jesus not only with our words, but with our works as well.
- You'll wish you stood by Him in word. You'll wish you stood by Him in works. You'll wish you stood by Him in doctrine.

In Doctrine

- "You don't really believe what the Bible teaches about that, do you? Come on! Are you kidding me? That's crazy."
- I'm grieved to say that there are "Christians" all over the country that are distancing themselves from what the Word of God clearly says about issues because culture is pressuring them to. They're distancing themselves from what the Bible says about sin, Hell, salvation through Jesus alone, marriage, sexual ethics, gender, homosexuality, life. Why? It's not because the Scriptures aren't clear. It's because of the peer pressure of a world that is fundamentally opposed to God and His Word.
 - o Before you come to some conclusion about a social issue based on what a news commentator says, you better get in your Bible and figure out what God says. Don't you go to the Bible looking for justification for your predetermined position. You go to the Bible looking for God's position, and you interpret the news commentary in light of what He says. As a Christian, don't you tell me what you think. Tell me what the Word says.

In a moment of peer pressure, Peter denied Jesus three times, and the moment he saw Jesus, he regretted it with every fiber of his being. I beg you this morning not to make the same mistake. Stand by Him in word, in works, and in doctrine.

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read John 18:20-23 and 1 Peter 2:20-23. How does Jesus' demeanor during His trials and crucifixion set the example for the way that we should conduct ourselves in the world today? How did Jesus act?*

3.) *Read Matt. 26:69-74, Mark 14:66-71, Luke 22:55-62, and John 18:15-18, 25-27. Compare and contrast the accounts of Peter's denials. What similarities and differences do you see? How can some of the apparent differences be harmonized?*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 18:28-40. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 18:28-40 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 18:28-38

Review

Religious Trials & Peter's Denials

1.) Interrogation by Annas (John 18:12-23)

Denial 1 (John 18:15-18)

2.) Informal Trial before Caiaphas & Sanhedrin (Matt. 26:57-68)

Denial 2 (John 18:25)

Denial 3 (John 18:26-27)

3.) Formal Trial before Caiaphas & Sanhedrin (Luke 22:66-71)

Take your Bibles and open up to John 18:28. Last week, we continued our story following Jesus' arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night before His crucifixion. We looked in detail at several of Jesus' trials denials that occurred in roughly the same time frame.

We saw that before Jesus stood trial before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin (Jewish Supreme Court), He was interrogated by Annas, the former high priest that wielded a significant amount of power from behind the scenes. It was during this preliminary interrogation that Peter first denied Christ. Then, later in the evening (probably past midnight), Annas sent Jesus to the Sanhedrin to stand trial. During that trial, the high priest said to Jesus, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus responded, "Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

Matt. 26:65-66 - 65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. 66 What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.

But the Sanhedrin had a problem. They weren't legally allowed to hold capital trials at night, so they decided to reconvene first thing in the morning and officially rubber stamp the verdict they had just arrived at.

It was inbetween this late night and early morning convening of the Sanhedrin that Peter denied Christ for the second and third times.

Matthew 27:1 - When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death:

- The Sanhedrin found Jesus guilty and deserving of death. Why didn't they just execute Him themselves? Why did they involve Pontius Pilate in the process at all? At this point in history, Judaea was under Roman occupation. Thus, the Jews could not carry out capital punishments without securing Roman approval.

Jewish Religious Trials	Roman Civil Trials
1.) Interrogation by Annas (John 18:12-23)	4.) Trial before Pilate (Luke 23:1-5)
2.) Informal Trial before Caiaphas & Sanhedrin (Matt. 26:57-68)	5.) Interrogation by Herod (Luke 23:6-12)
3.) Formal Trial before Caiaphas & Sanhedrin (Luke 22:66-71)	6.) Sentencing by Pilate (Mark 15:6-15)

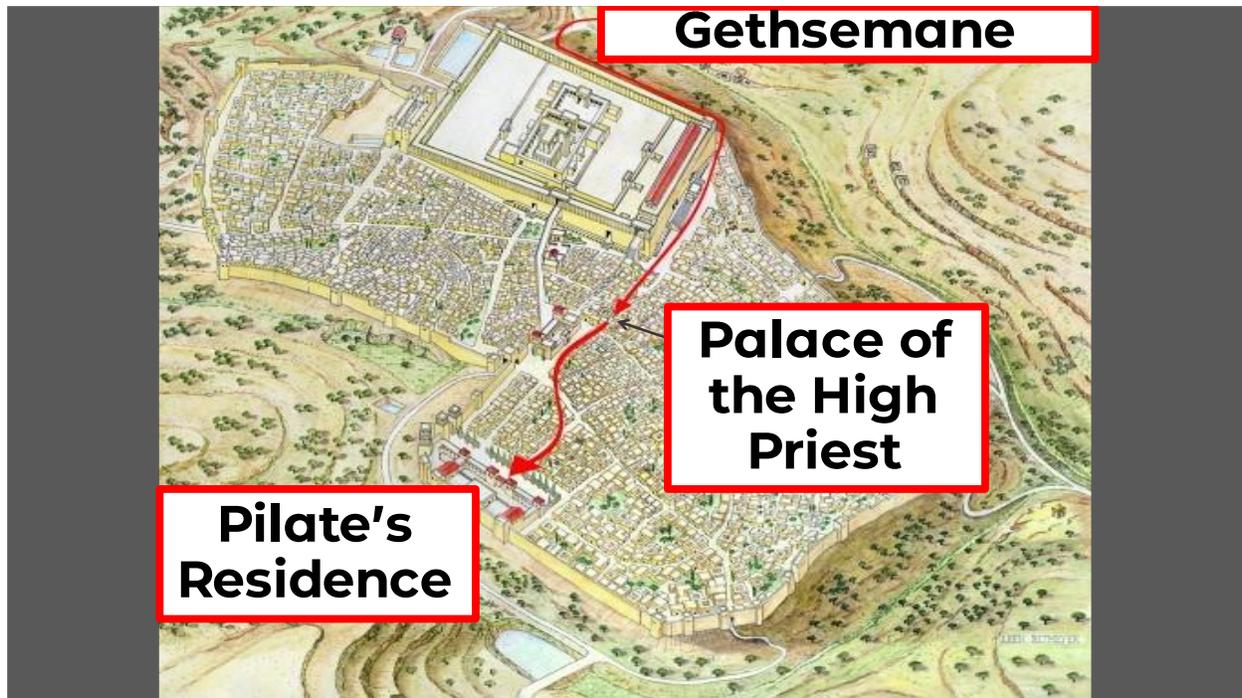
Thus, the stage is set for our passage today in which we will move beyond Jesus' religious trials and examine in detail His civil trials before the Romans.

As we examine this transition, the first aspect that we are going to see is Pilate's interaction with the Sanhedrin.

Sermon

1.) Pilate's Interaction with the Sanhedrin

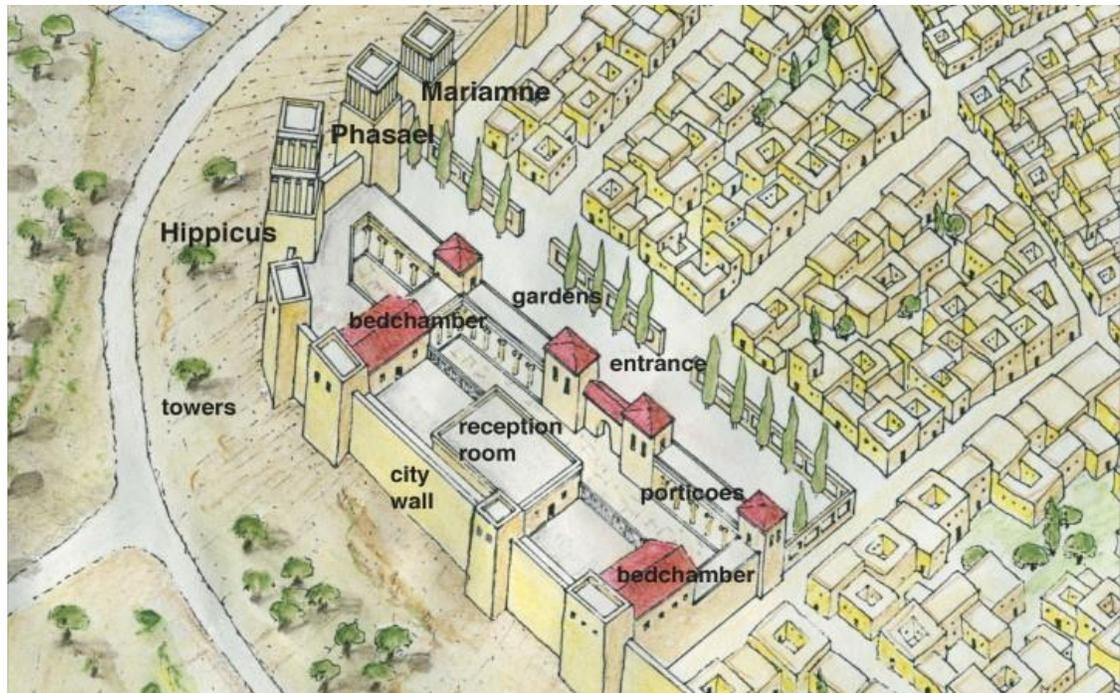
28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.



(Ritmeyer)

Then led the Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment – the hall of judgment/praetorium was the temporary residence of the Roman governor while he was in Jerusalem. Thus, Jesus was taken from the palace of the high priest to the official residence of the Roman governor Pilate.

- Where was Pilate's residence?
 - His permanent residence was in Caesarea, but when he stayed in Jerusalem, he likely occupied either Fort Antonius (the Roman fortress in the north next to the temple) or Herod's royal palace (in the west), which I believe is where Pilate was residing.
 - o From Philo, we know that Roman governors later occupied Herod's palace when staying in Jerusalem. (Plummer, 1902)



- (Ritmeyer)
- Herod's palace back in the first century was something to behold. It was along the western wall of the city with beautiful views overlooking the surrounding region. It was protected by towers and featured luxurious bedrooms, a sizable reception room, long covered patios, beautiful gardens, and a number of courtyards.
- I believe this is where Pilate stayed in Jerusalem during his visit, and I believe that this is where the Sanhedrin took Jesus to get Rome's approval for His execution.

Now when they transported Jesus...

And it was early – likely around 5-6 am

- By implication the day break watch from 3am to 6am (Matt. 14:25; Mark 13:35) (Spence & Exell, 1883)

And they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover – Rabbinical tradition forbade Jews from entering into the dwelling of a Gentile (non-Jew) lest they be defiled (we talked a little about this in last Sunday night's sermon on Gal. 2:11-14). Desiring to stay ceremonially clean just prior to the Passover meal, the religious leaders stayed outside Pilate's residence. (Sorenson, 2007)

- The religious leaders went to incredible lengths to avoid "moral contamination" based on their traditions. Meanwhile, they are bending over backwards to execute the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. You can see the irony of that, right?
- "The Jews take elaborate precautions to avoid ritual contamination in order to eat the Passover, at the very same time they are busy manipulating the judicial

- system to secure the death of him who alone is the true Passover” (Carson, 1991, p. 589)
- Application - God help us if that kind of delusional religious hypocrisy ever comes to fruition in our lives.
 - A man who wears a suit to church on Sunday and beats his wife on Monday.
 - A woman who sings on the front line on Sunday and breaks her marriage vows on Wednesday.
 - A teenager who speaks the name of Jesus at youth group on Thursday and out of the same mouth speaks all kinds of vile four-letter words at school the next day.
 - This is what Jesus earlier in His ministry got on to the Pharisees about when He said, “Woe unto you. You tithe like clockwork, but you are unjust, unmerciful, and unfaithful.” (Matt. 23:23)
 - Illustration – Jack Schaap
 - He preached so strongly on so many standards that you lost count: dress standards, music standards, movie theaters, haircuts, etc. Meanwhile, he was having an affair with a teenage girl in the youth group, and he’s in prison today for it.
 - How does that happen?
 - It happens as Christians become obsessed with external standards and appearances as their hearts rot from the inside out.
 - It happens as Christians believe the lie that there are parts of their lives that evade the ever-watching eye of God.
 - It happens as Christians believe the lie that in sin, they have found life, rather than death, as they feast on their sin in a banquet in the grave.

The Jewish Sanhedrin were preparing to crucify God in the flesh. Meanwhile, they did not want to “contaminate themselves” by occupying the same residence as a Gentile sinner, so they would not go into the palace.

Matthew 27:1-10 - When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor. Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself. And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potters' field, to bury strangers in. Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they

took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.

Mark 15:1-5 - And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him to Pilate. And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it. And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing. And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee. But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

Luke 23:1-5 - And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King. And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it. Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man. And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.

Luke 22:66 - **And as soon as it was day**, the elders of the people and the chief priests and the scribes came together, and led him into their council, saying,

Matthew 27:6 - And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.

29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?

Who was Pilate?

Pilate – Roman governor of Judaea from AD 26-36. He was proud and brutal, but also indecisive.

- Illustrations
 - Idolatrous Standards
 - Pilate sent military troops into Jerusalem carrying military emblems with images of emperor on them that the Jews saw as idolatrous.
 - The Jews complained. Pilate threatened to kill them if they didn't stop. (brutality)
 - They called his bluff, and he backed down. (indecisiveness)
 - Aqueduct Construction
 - Pilate wanted to construct an aqueduct to bring water to Jerusalem, and he paid for it by forcibly taking funds from the temple treasury.

- The Jews rioted, and Pilate consequently had many of them beaten and killed. (brutality)
- Samaritan Slaughter
 - A group of Samaritans planned to climb Mount Gerizim in search of hidden religious artifacts. Misinterpreting their intentions and seeing them as a threat, Pilate sent troops to slaughter many of the pilgrims. (brutality)
 - The Samaritans complained to Pilate's superior who removed him from office in AD 36 and sent him to Rome for judgment.
 - There are different accounts of what happened there to Pilate. Some say that he was banished, while others maintain that he was executed or committed suicide. (MacArthur, 2006)

That was Pilate.

Pilate then went out unto them – since they would not come inside of his residence because of their religious traditions, Pilate went out to them.

- I want you to imagine Pilate's state of mind.
 - It is very early in the morning, and he is being bothered with a problem, and the people bothering him with the problem won't even come inside the palace lest they be defiled. So, he (the Roman governor) has to go outside to them.
 - I don't know what Pilate was feeling at this moment in time, but if that were me, I would have been just a tad bit agitated and irritable.

And said, What accusation bring ye against this man? – he says this not as if he didn't know, but rather as a matter of procedure in securing a formal indictment against Jesus. (Plummer, 1902)

- "State the charges against this man."
- It's important to understand that the Sanhedrin just wanted Pilate to rubber stamp the death penalty for Jesus. They didn't want him involved in this, but Pilate is intent on trying the case himself.

This surprised the Sanhedrin who did not expect Pilate to want to get involved. Taken back...

30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.

They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee – Pilate, what's wrong with you? If this guy were not a criminal, an evil doer, we would not have brought him here to you for execution.

- They skirted the issue. They didn't formally accuse Jesus of anything. They just attacked His character and threw a shaded jab at Pilate in the process.

Mark 15:3 - And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.

Luke 23:2-5 - And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying that he himself is Christ a King. And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it. Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man. And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.

31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:

Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law – responding to their insulting reply in kind, Pilate says, “Fine. That’s how you want to play this? You take Him and judge Him yourselves according to your law.”

- Pilate knew that they wanted to execute Jesus, and Pilate knew that they needed his permission to do so, but in what he said here, he forced them to acknowledge this fact. He reminded them of their place and put them in it.

The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death – The Jews had lost this power when Judaea became a Roman province in AD 6 (Ellicott C. , 1905). Judaea was under Roman occupation.

- But this was no accident. This was by design. Why?
Genesis 49:10 - The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.

That the sayings of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die – Jesus predicted the very manner in which He would die. The Roman occupation of Judaea and Pilate’s insistence on trying this case happened in order that Jesus’ predictions would come to pass.

- How did Jesus predict that He would die?
 - o Matthew 20:18-19 - 18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death, 19 **And shall deliver him to the Gentiles** to mock, and to scourge, **and to crucify him**: and the third day he shall rise again.
 - Jesus predicted that He would die by crucifixion and the hands of the Gentiles.

- In John 3 and 12, Jesus spoke of being lifted up in His death (an allusion to the cross).
 - John 3:14 - And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:
 - John 12:32-33 - And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die
- Think about this for a second.
- How did the Jews execute their capital offenders? Stoning.
- How did the Romans execute their capital offenders? Crucifixion.
 - Thus, the Jews inability to carry out capital offenses, and Pilate's insistence on trying the case rather than rubber stamping were both part of the providential plan of God in which Jews and Gentiles would together crucify and condemn the Savior of the world on a cross.
 - Every part of it was by design.

Matthew 26:2 - Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

Luke 18:32-33 - For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on: And they shall scourge him, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.

Luke 24:7-8 - Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words,

2.) Pilate's Interrogation of Jesus

33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?

Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus – Pilate returned back into the Palace and had Jesus brought to him

And said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews – the context for this question can be seen in Luke 23:1-2

- Luke 23:1-2 – 1 And the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate. 2 And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this fellow (1) perverting the nation, and (2) forbidding to give tribute to Caesar, (3) saying that he himself is Christ a King.
 - Now, for the Sanhedrin, their issue with Jesus was blasphemy, that He had claimed to be the divine Son of God. That can be clearly seen in the gospel accounts of Jesus' trials before the Sanhedrin.
 - However, the Sanhedrin were smart. They knew that a charge of blasphemy would hold no weight with the Roman governor Pilate. He wouldn't care about any of that. So, what did they do? In their conversation with Pilate outside the palace, the Sanhedrin accused Jesus

of three offences: (1) corrupting the nation (2) forbidding Jews from paying Roman taxes (3) declaring Himself to be a rival king to Caesar.

- These accusations were all false. In Matthew 21:21 when Jesus was asked about paying taxes, He said to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesars and unto God the things that are God's.
 - Matthew 21:21 - They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.
 - And in John 6:15 - When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.
 - Nevertheless, the Sanhedrin had made these false accusations about Jesus to Pilate.
- This helps us understand why the first words out of Pilate's mouth to Jesus were, "Are you the King of Jews?"
- For someone within the empire to set themselves up as a rival political power to Caesar was a very serious offence. It was insurrection. Pilate needed to ascertain whether Jesus was or was not a legitimate political threat.

Art thou the King of the Jews - In the Greek, "thou" is emphatic. It's like Pilate is saying to Jesus, "YOU are the king of the Jews???"

- It would certainly have been ironic to Pilate to apply such a title to a man dressed in what was certainly meager apparel. Jesus would not have looked like a king.

Matthew 27:11 - And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.

Mark 15:2 - And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it.

Luke 23:3-4 - And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest it. Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man.

John 12:13 - Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

John 12:15 - Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.

John 19:3 - And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.

John 19:19-22 - And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in

Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin. Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

Psalms 2:6-12 - Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him.

Isaiah 9:6-7 - For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Jeremiah 23:5 - Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

Zephaniah 3:15 - The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.

Zechariah 9:9 - Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? - Who's asking?

- Pilate, are you asking me this because have I acted in such a way so as to make you think that I'm a political rival to Caesar, or are you asking me this because of what others have said?
- It's ironic because many of the Jews wanted Jesus to be a political insurrectionist. They wanted Him to overthrow Rome as a political leader, and He refused...and yet, despite that, as the Messiah, He was Israel's true king. (MacArthur, 2006)

35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done?

Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? – I'm not a Jew, am I? As if I would take great interest in you of my own initiative...that's hilarious, Jesus.

- Of course, I asked you that based on what the Sanhedrin accused you of.

Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me – You are here because your own Jewish supreme court has delivered you unto me.

What hast thou done? – Jesus, what did you do to elicit such hostile actions from your nation's leaders?

John 18:28 - Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

John 19:11 - Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

Acts 3:13 - The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.

36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world – my kingdom is not out of this world. It is not rooted within this world system, just as Christians are not rooted within this world system (comparing John 17:16 and 18:36 it is clear that when says “of this world” His is not speaking of location; He is speaking of nature and rootedness.). It does not draw its power from within this world system. (Plummer, 1902) Christ's kingdom is a supernatural kingdom that is rooted somewhere else and that He will set up on earth when He returns.

If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews – if my kingdom were merely an earthly kingdom, rooted in this world system, then my subordinates would fight to prevent me from being delivered to the Jewish leadership that wants to kill me.

But now is my kingdom not from hence – but my kingdom is not from here. It is not rooted here. It is a supernatural kingdom with a supernatural agenda.

- Application: this is significant because if Christ were but an earthly king of an earthly kingdom, His agenda would have been totally different. World rulers, by and large, have one driving purpose: to hold as much power as they possibly can for as long as they can. Right? That's why there's so much corruption in politics. Politicians are constantly at each other's throats fighting for power. But, as a supernatural King of a supernatural kingdom, Christ was not just concerned with

power. He was concerned for people, and as a result of that, He lowered Himself and used His power for others as He went to the cross for the redemption of His people.

- If Christ were just an earthly king, His agenda would have been totally different. But He was and is not just an earthly king. He is a supernatural King of a supernatural coming kingdom.
- Application: and the moment you accept by faith what Christ has done for you on the cross and become a Christian, you become a citizen of that heavenly kingdom. You are no longer a citizen of this world. You are a citizen of God's kingdom. As citizens of God's kingdom, we submit to Christ's rule in the present while looking forward to the physical coming of His kingdom in the future.

My kingdom is not rooted in this world system. It's not natural. It is a supernatural kingdom.

John 6:15 - When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

Isaiah 9:6-7 - For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Daniel 2:44 - And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.

Daniel 7:14 - And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

Zechariah 9:9 - Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

Luke 17:20-21 - And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

Romans 14:17 - For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Colossians 1:12-14 - Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:

37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? – ah, you talk of a kingdom, you are a king then!

Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king – You are right in saying that I am a king (compare with Jesus' words to the Sanhedrin in Matt. 26:64)

- 1 Tim. 6:13 - I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and before Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession;

To this end was I born – For this purpose I was born into this world (there's the humanity of Christ)

- Christ was born as a human.

And for this cause came I into the world – and for this purpose I came into the world from another domain (there's the deity of Christ)

- Christ came to earth from heaven as God incarnate.

Why was He born? Why did He come?

That I should bear witness unto the truth – that I should testify of the truth

- Jesus is the truth (John 14:6). As the truth, Jesus testified of the truth.... the truth about God, sin, man, heaven, hell, righteousness, judgment, and everlasting life. John 8:14 - Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

John 14:6 - Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice – everyone that is rooted in the truth, listens to my words. Why? Because as those who are rooted in the truth, they recognize the truth in my word when they hear them.

- Before both the Jewish Sanhedrin and the Roman governor, Jesus boldly confessed His identity.
 - o To the Jews he confessed that He was the long-awaited Jewish Messiah, the Son of God, the divine Son of Man that would be given glory, power, and an everlasting kingdom.

- Matthew 26:63-65 - And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. 64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. 65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.
- But Jesus' confession before Pilate was different.
- To the Roman governor Pilate, Jesus confessed that He was a king of a kingdom rooted somewhere else that had come into the world to bear witness to the truth.
 - John 18:37 - 37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.
- The Jews responded to Jesus' confession by declaring Him a blasphemer. How did Pilate respond to Jesus' confession?

John 7:17 - If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.

John 8:47 - He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

John 10:26-27 - But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.

Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? – Pilate responded to Jesus' invitation like a 21st century university student who claims that there is no absolute truth...that there is just your truth and my truth. That perspective is stupid and wrong and self-defeating.

What do you mean? If anyone ever says to you:

- There is no truth.
 - Ask them, "Is that true?"
 - If they say "yes", they've contradicted their own statement. If they say "no", they admit they're wrong and that there is truth.
- That's true for you, but for not me.
 - Ask them, "Is what you just said true for everybody?"

- If they say “yes”, they’ve just admitted to the reality of absolute truth. If they say “no”, they’ve contradicted their own statement.
- There’s not your truth or my truth. There’s just the truth.
- Illustration – imagine if I tried this out in the real world
 - with a cop about my speed
 - with a bank teller about my account balance

Postmodern conceptions of truth as relative are self-defeating, but you see that mentality in Pilate’s response to Jesus and you see that mentality today in a lot of people’s response to Jesus.

- Well, Christianity is your truth, but it’s not my truth. That’s now how it works. Christianity is either true or it’s not, and let me tell you something, I’m here today because I believe it’s true.

And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all – having interrogated Jesus, Pilate did not “believe in Him”. However, He also did not believe that Jesus was any kind of a threat to Roman rule. He realized that the Sanhedrin’s portrayal of Jesus as an insurrectionist was patently false, and based on that, he went back outside of the palace to where the Sanhedrin were and declared unto them, “I find no fault in Jesus.” Thus concluded Jesus’ first trial before Pilate.

John 19:4 - Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.

Matthew 27:18-19 - For he knew that for envy they had delivered him. When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

Matthew 27:24 - When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.

Application

It is not enough to find no fault in Jesus. The Sanhedrin were indignant against Jesus because of their religion. Pilate was indifferent towards Jesus because of his pride. Both of them rejected Him in different ways. It does not matter whether you are indignant against Jesus or indifferent towards Him, both responses are insufficient. When it comes to Jesus, there is acceptance and there is rejection. There is no inbetween, and your eternity hangs in the balance of how you respond to Him.

Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah of the Old Testament Scriptures. He is the sinless Son of God. He is the divine King that so cared for you that He lowered Himself to die on a cross out of concern for you. But my friend, Jesus is not just a crucified Savior, He is a risen Lord. He will return one day to physically set up His heavenly kingdom on this earth. This morning, I have two questions for you.

- 1.) Are you a citizen of that kingdom? Have you put your faith in the king?
 - a. The Jewish Sanhedrin rejected Him because of their religion.
 - b. The Gentile Pilate rejected Him because of his indifference.
 - c. What will you do with Jesus?
 - d. There is one way to heaven. There is one way to forgiveness. There is one way to a right relationship with God, and it is exclusively through personal faith in Christ's death, burial and resurrection as the atonement for your sin that separates you from God.
 - e. Are you a citizen of God's kingdom? Have you put your faith in Jesus Christ to save you from your sins?
- 2.) Are you living like a citizen of God's kingdom? Are you obeying the King?
 - a. The constitution of His rule is right here in this book.
 - i. Are you reading it?
 - ii. Are you obeying it?
 1. Are you the following the instruction manual God has left you, or have you fallen victim to the same lie that Satan told in the Garden of Eden: that you can disregard God's commands and be better off for it?

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Matthew 26:57-68. This passage provides the details of Jesus' informal trial before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin. What happened during this trial? How does it compare and contrast with Jesus' initial interrogation before Pilate?*

3.) *Read Matt. 27:1-10. As Jesus is taken from the Sanhedrin to Pilate, the scene shifts from Peter to Judas. How did Judas respond to Jesus' condemnation by the Sanhedrin? How did Judas' response and ultimate fate compare and contrast with that of Peter?*

looking forward

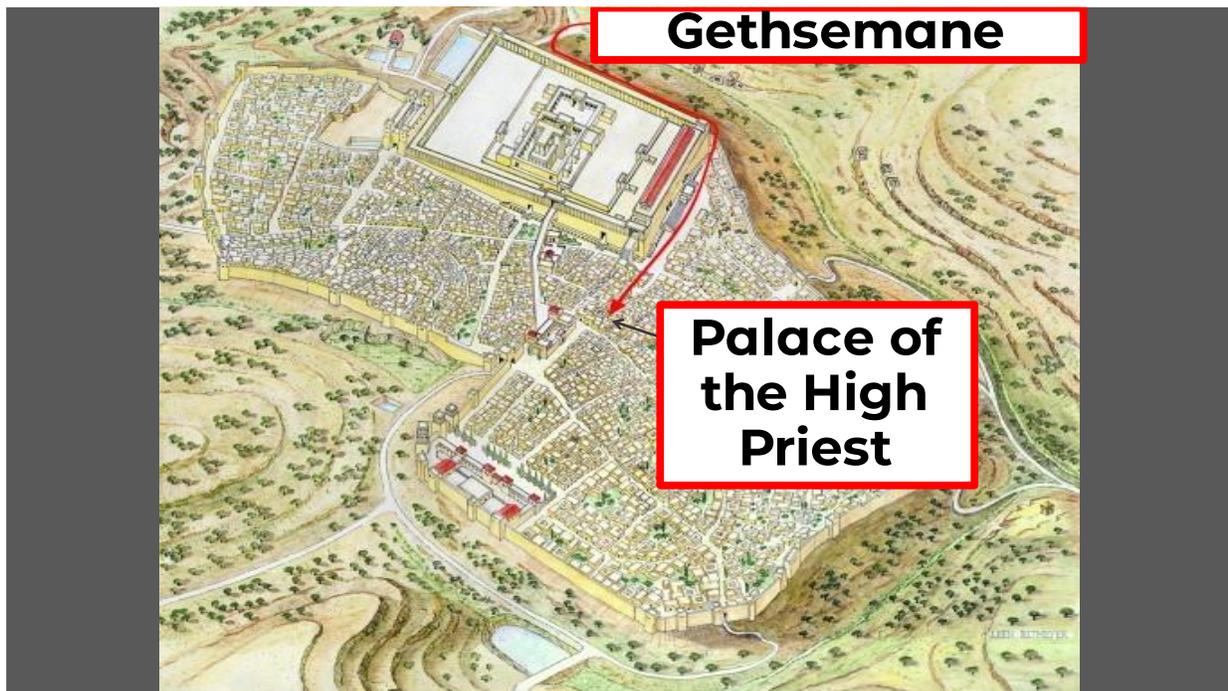
4.) *Read John 18:39-19:5. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 18:39-19:5 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 18:39-19:5

Review

Take your Bibles and open up to Luke 23:4 and John 18:39. This morning we are going to continue looking at Jesus' trials and the events in His last days that led to the cross. Previously, we took time to study the Last Supper and Jesus' farewell teaching to His disciples on the night before His crucifixion. From the upper room where the Last Supper took place, Jesus and His disciples made their way to the Garden of Gethsemane.



It was there that Jesus was arrested by the temple guard and Roman soldiers who transported Him to the palace of the high priest to stand trial before the Jewish religious authorities for blasphemy. In our study, we saw that Jesus actually stood trial three times before the religious authorities.

Jewish Religious Trials

1.) Interrogation by Annas (John 18:12-23)

2.) Informal Trial before Caiaphas & Sanhedrin (Matt. 26:57-68)

3.) Formal Trial before Caiaphas & Sanhedrin (Luke 22:66-71)

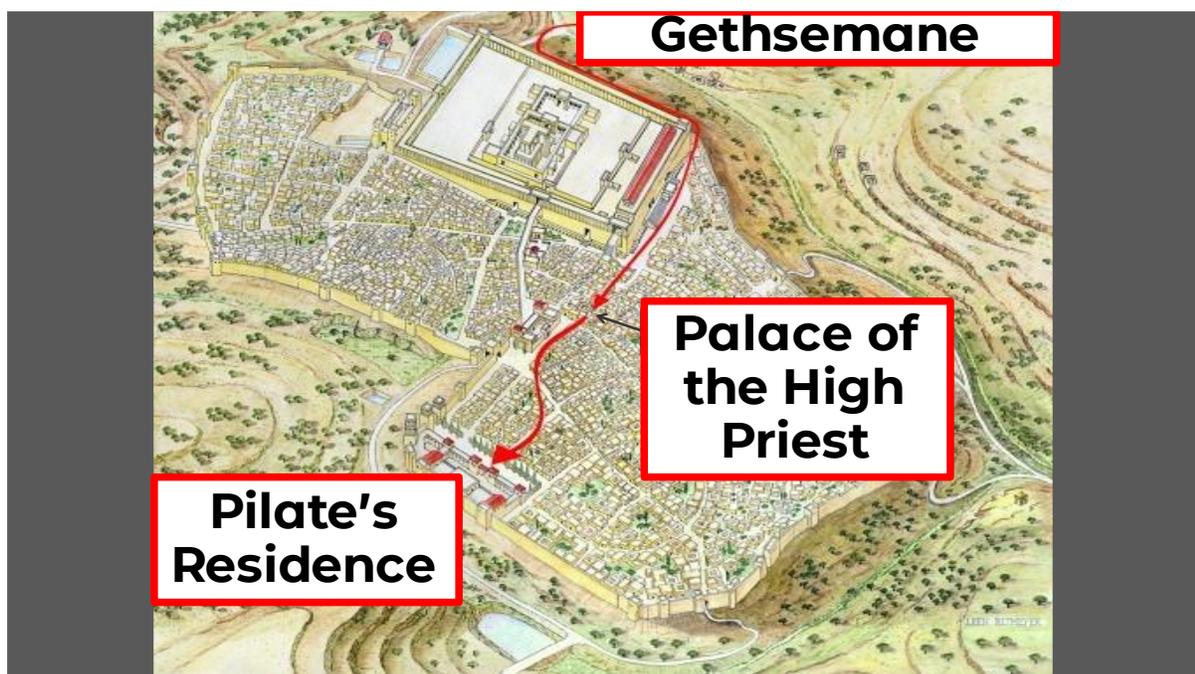
Roman Civil Trials

4.) Trial before Pilate (Luke 23:1-5)

5.) Interrogation by Herod (Luke 23:6-12)

6.) Sentencing by Pilate (Mark 15:6-15)

He was questioned by Annas, the former high priest and sort of godfather religious figure there in Jerusalem. He then stood trial late in the night before the Jewish supreme court and the high priest Caiaphas. Then, first thing in the morning that court reconvened to officially issue the verdict that they unofficially arrived at the night before. The Jewish supreme court found Jesus guilty, and they wanted to execute Him, but because Jerusalem was under Roman rule during that time, they had to get the permission of the Roman government to carry out a capital punishment.



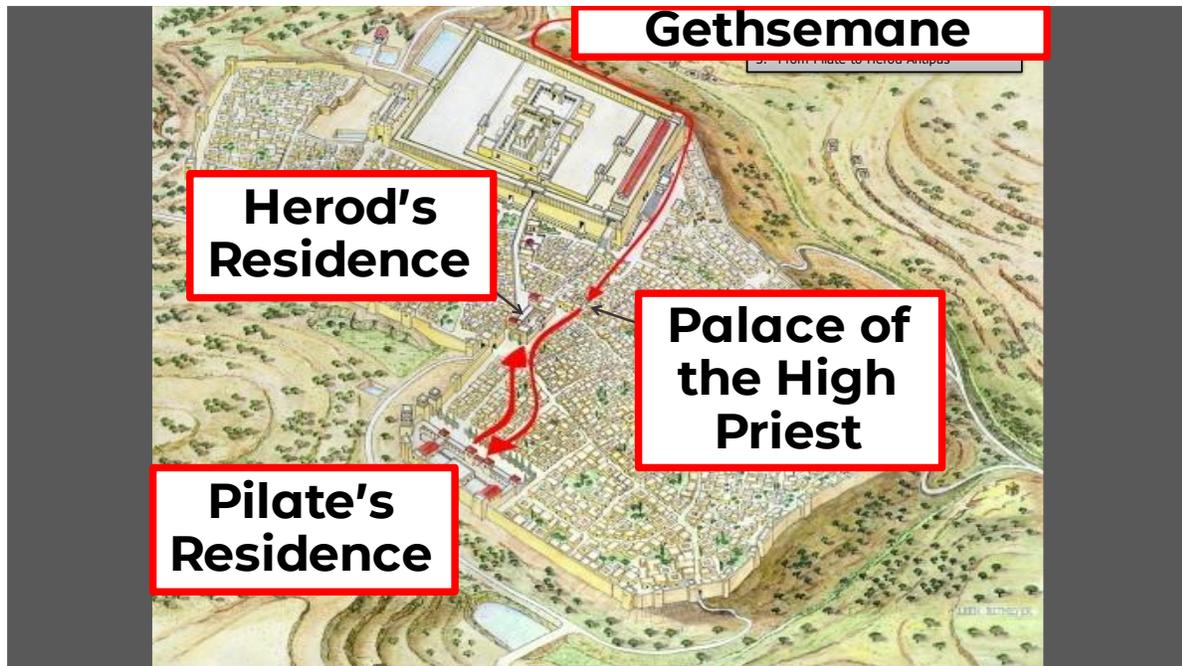
Thus, they took Jesus to the residence of Pilate, the Roman governor to secure this permission. There Jesus would stand trial before the civil authorities.

Just as Jesus stood trial before the religious authorities three times, so too He stood trial before the civil trials three times as well. Last week we looked at that first trial before Pilate. We saw that following his questioning of Jesus inside the residence, Pilate came back out to the religious authorities and said, "I find in Him no fault at all." That was where we left off last week.

The next trial to take place was Jesus' interrogation before Herod, and John actually does not mention this trial in his gospel. However, this interrogation takes place inbetween verses 38 and 39 of John 18. We're going to briefly look at that trial this morning to set the stage for the events that follow in John 18 and 19. Take a look at what the Bible says in Luke 23:4.

Luke 23:4-12 - 4 Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man. 5 And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place. 6 When Pilate heard of Galilee (*a lightbulb went off above his head*), he asked whether the man were a Galilaean. 7 And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time.

- Who was Herod?
 - o This is Herod Antipas. His dad, Herod the Great, was the one who built the palace the Romans had confiscated, and that Pilate was staying in. Herod's dad was also the one who, after hearing of Jesus' birth from the wise men of the East, ordered the mass execution of Jewish infants in an effort to execute this rival king Jesus.
 - o Whereas Pilate ruled over the larger region of Judaea as a whole, Herod Antipas ruled over the smaller norther part of Judaea known as Galilee. Remember, Galilee was where Jesus was raised and carried out much of His ministry. Herod Antipas was the one who ordered the execution of Jesus' cousin John the Baptist. He also surmised later upon hearing of Jesus' miracles that perhaps Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead.
- Like Pilate, Herod was staying in the city of Jerusalem for the Passover Feast. Thus, Pilate sent Jesus, the Galilean, to Herod, the ruler of Galilee.



- Why did Pilate send Jesus to Herod? Two reasons.
 - o It was an attempt to delegate this situation that was quickly turning into a political problem and to escape having to condemn Jesus himself.
 - o It was an attempt to show respect to and earn brownie points with Herod by not infringing upon his domain and its citizens. (Gill, 1811)
 - Thus, Pilate took a lose lose situation and turned it into a win win.
 - You might imagine Pilate thinking, "Sending Jesus to Herod will help mend our relationship and it will rid me of having to deal with this problem."

8 And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.

Assuming that Pilate and the Romans had confiscated the palace of Herod the Great, Herod Antipas would have been forced to use the old Hasmonean Palace nearby to the location of the palace of the high priest. (Ritmeyer)

9 Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.

- Jesus answered Caiaphas. Jesus answered Pilate, but to Herod, He did not say a single word.
- "A murderer of the Prophets, who was living in open and flagrant incest, and who had no higher motive than curiosity, deserved no answer from Jesus." (Plummer, 1902)

10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him.

11 And Herod with his men of war set him at nought (*treated Jesus with contempt*), and mocked him, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe (*likely some sort of white festal garment*), and sent him again to Pilate.

12 And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together: for before they were at enmity between themselves.

- However, this Jesus' problem was dumped back squarely in Pilate's lap, and Pilate was, once again, going to attempt to find a creative solution to this complex problem. Turn over to John 18:39, and let's see what he did.
 - o The trial before Pilate
 - o The trial before Herod
 - Jesus is sent back to Pilate
 - Inbetween Jesus' trial before Herod and His ultimate sentencing by Pilate we see...

Sermon

1.) The Pardon of a Criminal

39 But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

- From Matt. 27:20, we know that by this point in time, word had spread about what was going on and crowds had gathered outside of the governor's residence. It's not just the religious leaders. All of the sudden, this small matter has turned into a major ordeal that is becoming more and more explosive with each passing moment.
 - o Pilate was a politician. He wanted nothing more than to resolve this crisis. He was trying to throw water, not oil, on this fire. He had an idea, a good idea.
 - o Pilate said to the crowds:

But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the Passover – As a gesture of good will, the Romans had a tradition of releasing a Jewish prisoner on death row at the time of the Passover each year

Will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? – Pilate was so smart. This was a great idea. The religious leaders hated Jesus, but the crowds had praised Jesus as their Messianic king just days earlier when He entered into Jerusalem on a donkey (Palm Sunday).

- You might imagine Pilate thinking to himself, "The religious leaders might want Him dead, but certainly the people will want His release, and I can get out of this whole mess without upsetting anyone. Crisis averted."
- We know from the other gospels that Pilate didn't just offer to release Jesus. He presented the crowd with a choice between releasing one of two prisoners: Jesus, the prophet, or Barabbas, the criminal.

- You might imagine Pilate thinking, “Even if they don’t love Jesus, compared to this Barabbas fellow, He’s the only choice. There’s no way anyone wants Barabbas back on the streets.”
- Pilate is smart, and he has crafted a creative solution to this vexing problem.
- The title “King of the Jews” would have been both a jab at the religious leaders and an appeal to the crowds. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 957)

Matthew 27:15-21 - Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would. And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas. Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ? For he knew that for envy they had delivered him. When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him. But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

- This would not have been hard to persuade the people of. Remember, they thought of Jesus as a political Messiah that would overthrow the Romans. Seeing Him helplessly bound by the Romans as the religious leaders called for His execution would have convinced many that Jesus was not who they thought He was.

The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? ...

But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

40 Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber

Then cried they all again – there had been prior clamor up to this point

- In order to understand the seriousness of the situation Pilate is in as Roman governor, you need to remember that Jerusalem is packed with millions of Jews there for the Passover festival. That’s the only reason Pilate is even there. With that many people there, there is a need for an increased military presence because of the possibility of riots. Pilate wanted to avoid riots at all costs. If he didn’t execute Jesus, Pilate knew that the religious leaders likely would instigate riots. Here they convinced the people to call for Barabbas’ release and Jesus’ crucifixion. How hard do you think it would have been to convince them to riot against the Romans if Pilate didn’t issue the verdict they wanted?

Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber – “He probably had operated in underground guerilla operations against Rome as a Jewish partisan and insurgent. The two thieves with whom Jesus was crucified may well have been a part of Barabbas’ band. Jesus likely died upon the cross intended for Barabbas.” (Sorenson, 2007)

Pilate's plan backfired.

You have these two characters that could not have been more different from one another.

- Barabbas
 - Thief (John) – he took that which did not belong to him
 - Murderer (Luke) – he killed in cold blood another human being
 - Traitor (Luke) – he was an insurrectionist
 - Well known law breaker (Matthew) – he wasn't just a criminal, he was a known criminal
 - In chains
 - In bondage
 - Undeniably guilty
 - Deserving of death
 - Deserving of chains
 - Deserving of whipping
 - Deserving of the cross
- Jesus
 - Whereas Barabbas was a thief that took from others, Jesus was a giver that imparted to others.
 - Whereas Barabbas was a murderer that took life, Jesus came so that people might have life.
 - Whereas Barabbas tried to overthrow the powers that be, Jesus came to overthrow the powers of sin, darkness, and hell.
 - He was undeniably innocent
 - He was deserving of life
 - He was deserving of freedom
 - He was deserving of worship
 - He was deserving of the throne

You have Jesus on one side and Barabbas on the other, and the choice is obvious, and Pilate says, "Who do you want?" They cried out "Barabbas...give us Barabbas". Give us the murderer. Give us the thief. Give us the insurrectionist. We don't want this unholy blasphemous. We want Barabbas.

How could they do that? How could they look at the choice set before them and make the decision that they did? How could they set that man free and demand the crucifixion of Jesus? How could they choose Barabbas?

They did not choose Barabbas. Jesus did. They did not choose for Jesus to die in place of Barabbas. They did not choose for Jesus to be scourged in place of Barabbas. They did not choose for Jesus to be crucified in place of Barabbas. Jesus did. Jesus chose the cross, and Jesus chose Barabbas.

He deserved life, but He chose death.

He deserved worship, but He chose whipping.

He deserved a throne, but He chose the cross.

Why? Because I am Barabbas, and because you are Barabbas.

We have broken God's laws. We are undeniably guilty. Like Barabbas, because of the bondage of our sin, we are deserving of the spiritual death penalty.

"Come on Pastor. I'm not the bad. I might not be perfect, but I'm no Barabbas."

Friend, Barabbas was a law breaker, and if you take the time to evaluate your life in light of God's laws, you will quickly discover that you too are a law breaker.

- Proverbs 6:16-19 – there are six things that God hates, and on that list, He puts lying twice.
 - o Have you ever told a lie before, even a small one? Bent the truth? Worded something a certain way to mislead another person? Been deceitful in your language.
 - o If your answer to any one of those question is "yes", you have violated the ninth commandment, and according to the Scripture you are a liar.
- Exodus 20:15 – thou shalt not steal.
 - o Have you ever taken something that didn't belong to you? Maybe not from a store, but from a friend? A parent? A sibling? From your employer?
 - o If your answer to any of those questions is "yes", you have violated the eighth commandment, and according to God's law you are a thief.
- Exodus 20:7 - 7 Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
 - o Have you ever used God's name without purpose? Without meaning? Oh my G*d.... Have you ever claimed the name of Jesus and then acted in disobedience to Him? Denied with your behavior the one you professed with your mouth? If so, friend you have taken God's name in vain. You have violated the 3rd commandment, and according to the Scripture, you are a blasphemer.
- Exodus 20:13 – thou shalt not kill.
 - o "Ah I've never killed anybody before", but do you realize that in the sermon on the mount that Jesus said that God's definition of murder includes not only those who have committed the act with their hands, but also those who have done so in their heart. Jesus said, "If you've hated someone in your heart, you are a murderer." How about it? Have you ever hated someone, even but for a moment, in your heart?
 - o If so, you have violated the sixth commandment, and according to the Scriptures, you a murderer.
- Exodus 20:14 – thou shalt not commit adultery.
 - o "I've never done that before", but once again in that same sermon Jesus said that God's definition of adultery includes not only the body, but the mind.

Jesus said, "If you've ever lusted after someone, you have committed adultery in your heart." How about it? Have you ever had lustful thoughts for another person that was not your spouse?

- If so, you have violated the seventh commandment, and according to the Scriptures you are an adulterer.

This morning, upon examining our lives in light of just five of God's laws, what we discover is that in the eyes of God, this room is full of lying, thieving, blasphemous, murderous, adulterers at heart...I am Barabbas, and you are Barabbas.

- We are law breakers. We are guilty. We are deserving of the spiritual death penalty. But God demonstrated His love towards us in that while we were Barabbas, Christ died for us.

2 Cor. 5:21 - For he (the Father) hath made him (the Son) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

- Jesus took our place and our punishment on that cross so that when God looked down at Him on the cross, He saw our sin and for those who accept the sacrifice of Christ on their behalf, when God looks down on them, He does not see their sin, He sees Christ's perfect righteousness.

Jesus was treated like Barabbas in order that we could be treated like Jesus...forgiven, made righteous, innocent...not based on anything that we have done, but through faith in the one who took our place.

My friend, this morning, in the sight of God, you have two options:

- You can maintain your innocence before God and insist on standing before Him based on your own merit, but let me remind you of what the Scripture says in Romans 3:10, "There is none righteous, no not one." And if you insist on standing before God based on your own righteousness, you will get exactly what you deserve as you pay the spiritual death penalty for your sins for all of eternity.... because you are guilty, just as I am guilty.
- Or you can confess your guilt before a holy God and accept by faith the penalty Christ paid in your place when He was treated on the cross as if He had lived your life.

Mark 15:7 - And there was one named Barabbas, which lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

Mark 15:15 - And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

Luke 23:18-19 - And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas: (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.).

We see the pardon of a criminal. Barabbas was pardoned as Christ died in His place, and that is a picture of the pardon that you and I can receive before God if we accept by faith Christ's death on our behalf.

We see the pardon of a criminal, but we also see the scourging of an innocent.

As we begin to examine the sufferings of Christ, may we be reminded that He suffered in place of Barabbas, that He suffered in place of us.

The pardon of a criminal through the scourging of an innocent.

2.) The Scourging of an Innocent

1 Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.

Although it was the custom of the Romans to scourge victims before their crucifixion (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884), it seems that Jesus' scourging was an attempt by Pilate to placate the blood lust of the people and then let Jesus go free.

- Luke 23:20-22 - 20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them. 21 But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. 22 And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go.
- Pilate's thoughts here may have been influenced by the context of the Roman gladiator games (Spence & Exell, 1883)

Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him – scourge: to flog or to whip with the victim being tied/strapped to a pole

- The Roman scourge/flagrum consisted of a wooden handle with a number of leather straps attached to it. Each of those leather straps contained an assortment of lead balls, sharply pointed bones, jagged metal, and other items that could dig into the bare back of the victim and rip off strips of skin. Scourging drew blood on the first stroke and with each passing stroke the victim's back would turn more and more into a compilation of raw bloody strips of flesh.
- The different parts of the scourge were designed to inflict pain in a number of different ways.
- Illustration
 - o The leather strips would sting like a belt.
 - o The lead balls would bruise like welts from a bb gun.
 - o The jagged metal and pointed bones would slice through the back like knives.
 - o If those pointed objects on the leather strip got caught in the skin, the resulting retrieval would rip through the back like a hook caught in the snout of a fish.
- The scourging of Jesus would have been brutal and bloody. Stroke after stroke after stroke after stroke.

- You can imagine the groans and the cries, the tensing of His body with every whip, the staining of the courtyard pavement with His flowing blood, the averting of the eyes of those nearby, made sick by the brutality of His infliction.
- “His body could have been so torn and lacerated that the muscles, bones, veins, or even internal organs were exposed.” (MacArthur, 2006, p. 958)
- Psalm 22:17 – my bones are on display so that people stare and gloat.
- Isaiah 50:6 – I gave my back to those who struck me
- That was my sin. That was my scourging. That was my suffering.
 - Isaiah 53:5 - But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.
- The scourging of an innocent for the pardon of a criminal.

Matthew 27:26-31 - Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified. Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.

Mark 15:15-20 - And so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified. And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Praetorium; and they call together the whole band. And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his head, And began to salute him, Hail, King of the Jews! And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing their knees worshipped him. And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.

Luke 23:15-24 - 15 No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and, lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him. 16 I will therefore chastise him, and release him. 17 (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.) 18 And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this man, and release unto us Barabbas: 19 (Who for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.) 20 Pilate therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them. 21 But they cried, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. 22 And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go. 23 And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified. And the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed. 24 And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required.

Beyond the scourging, Pilate permitted the soldiers to mock and berate Jesus.

2 And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe,

And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns – the soldiers braided/twisted together a crown out of thorns

And put it on his head – as if it were a victor’s wreath or a royal crown

And they put on him a purple robe – which was probably one of the soldiers’ cloaks as if it were the royal regalia of a king

- And they gave him a reed to imitate a ruler’s scepter.

3 And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.

And said, Hail, King of the Jews! – one after another, having dressed Him up “as a king”, they kept mocking Him.

And they smote him with their hands – the struck His bloodied, beaten, decrepit body, and they spit on Him, and they took the reed from His hand and struck Him across the head with it.

- Psalms 22:6 - But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people.
- Isaiah 53:3 - He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Matthew 26:49 - And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him.

Matthew 27:27-31 - Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers. And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head. And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.

Following Jesus’ scourging and beating and mocking by the Roman soldiers, Pilate went back outside the governor’s residence to address the growing, restless crowd. He said unto them:

4 Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.

Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him – I bring this bloodied, beaten man out here to you in order that you might see the lengths to which I have gone to placate you, despite my belief in His innocence.

John 18:38 - Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all

2 Corinthians 5:21 - For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

Hebrews 7:26 - For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;

1 Peter 2:22 - Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:

1 Peter 3:18 - For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

1 John 3:5 - And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin.

5 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!

Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man – Look at the man! Look at this torn up, bloodied, humiliated and helpless man. Look at the crown of thorns sunk into His head. Look at the blood-stained robe. Look at His bruised, swollen face. Look at the bare muscles of His upper torso that have been ripped to shreds. He's had enough. Behold the man. Behold the man.

The scourging of an innocent and the pardon of a criminal.

John 1:29 - The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Application

That man should have been Barabbas. That man should have been me. That man should have been you.

The sad truth is that if you insist on remaining in unbelief and rejecting what Christ has done for you, that will be you. The penalty for your sin will be paid. The question is by whom? Will you accept by faith Jesus' payment on your behalf in your place, or will you spend all of eternity paying for it yourself?

You say, "My sin is not that bad." Behold the man! "I'm good enough." Behold the man! "God will accept me as I am." Behold the man! That was the price tag of your sin. That is the cost

of redemption. That is what you will pay if you reject Christ's payment on your behalf. There is no third option. Have you been saved? Has there been a time in your life where you have admitted your guilt before a holy God and placed your faith in Christ's death on the cross as the substitutionary payment for your sin? Have you been saved?

If you have accepted that payment and you have become a Christian and you are a sinner saved by the blood of Jesus Christ, do you know what I say to you this morning? Behold the man. Behold the man. Christ suffered and died for you, maybe you ought to stop living for yourself and live for Him. Maybe you ought to show some respect and appreciation. Maybe you ought to make a priority out of coming to church the one day a week that we gather. Maybe you ought to talk to Him more than just before you eat. Maybe you ought to say thank you. Maybe you ought to forgive others the way that He forgave you. Maybe you ought to stop indulging in that sin habit that he was ripped apart to pay for. Maybe you ought to stop looking at church like it's content that you consume rather than a family you commit to. Christ did not suffer for your sin so that you might live the rest of your life for yourself feasting on it. You have been bought for a price. There glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's.

Behold the man!

- Have you been saved by Him?
- Are you living for Him?

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Psalm 22:1-18. Compare and contrast this passage with the account of Jesus' suffering and crucifixion. What prophecies in this passage were fulfilled in Jesus Christ?*

3.) *Read Matt. 27:15-21. Why did the crowd that had earlier that week embraced Jesus during His triumphal entry turn on Him? What might have the religious leaders said so as to instigate this? Who is introduced to the story in this passage, and what does she say?*

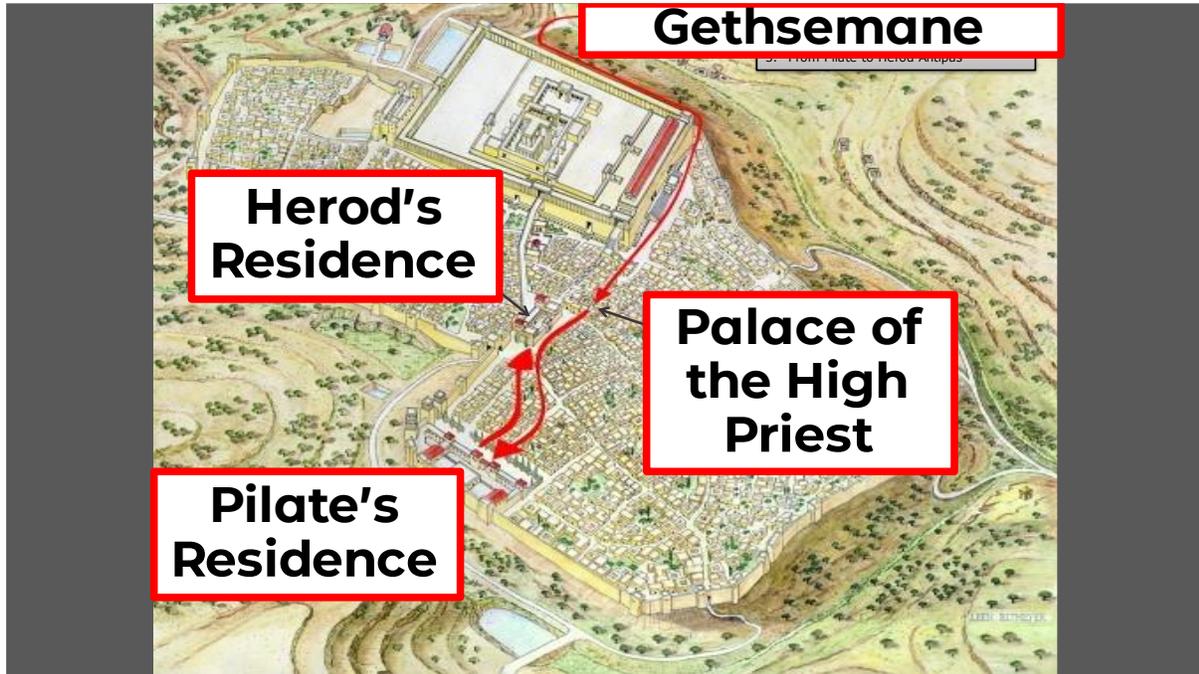
looking forward

4.) *Read John 19:6-16. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 19:6-16 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 19:6-16

Review



Over the past few weeks, we have been studying the events that led up to the crucifixion of Jesus on the cross. We saw that He was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane and taken to the Palace of the High Priest to stand trial before the religious authorities. There, He was found guilty of blasphemy, and afterwards Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin took Him to Pilate's residence to secure permission from Pilate to execute Him.

During the course of Jesus' initial trial before Pilate, the Roman governor found Him "not guilty" of the crimes He had been accused: namely, different types of insurrection against Rome. However, the religious authorities responded to Pilate's words with greater ferocity and insistence that this Galilean heretic be sentenced. When Pilate heard that Jesus was a Galilean, He quickly sent Him off to the ruler of Galilee Herod Antipas, just up the road, to stand trial before him. Herod was intrigued by Jesus, but when Jesus would not so much as utter a word to him, he mocked Him and then sent Him back to Pilate.

At this point in time, Pilate tried to get out of condemning Jesus by offering, in accordance with tradition, to release either Him or the renowned criminal Barabbas. Much to his shock, the crowd called out for the release of Barabbas, and insisted on Jesus' crucifixion. Nevertheless, Pilate tried one last tactic in an attempt to placate the bloodlust of the people and escape condemning Jesus to death. He had Jesus brutally beaten and scourged, and then He brought this bloodied, humiliated, and helpless man back out in front of the crowd. He said, "Look at Him! Look at the crown of thorns sunk into His head. Look at the blood-

stained robe. Look at His bruised, swollen face. He's had enough. Behold the man.!" That was where we left off.

How did the Jews respond to this gruesome sight before their eyes?

Sermon

1.) The Reaction of the Jews

6 When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.

When the chief priests and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him – at the sight of their suffering Messiah, their hearts were not softened in pity. They were hardened in resentment. Like sharks in the water, the sight of Jesus' condition, did not satisfy the Jews' bloodlust, it intensified it.

- Isaiah 53:3 - He was despised and rejected of men. They looked up and saw a man of sorrows and grief, and they hid their faces from him. He was despised, and they did not consider Him as being of any value
- Seeing Jesus' condition, the chief priests and officers quickly shouted out so as to prevent any sympathetic responses from the crowd. (Plummer, 1902)
- They said, "Crucify! Crucify!"

Application: How could you stand there and see someone suffering so greatly and cry out for more? One of the great marks of human depravity over the course of history has been people finding pleasure in watching the suffering of other human beings.

- Gladiator games
 - o Roman citizens found pleasure in watching slaves fight to the death
- Public executions
 - o Hangings
 - o Burnings
 - o Beheadings
- Public tortures
 - o The rack
 - o Scourgings
- "Thank God we don't see that type of depravity today."
 - o Are you kidding me? The SAW movie franchise has grossed nearly a half a billion dollars by selling viewers the opportunity to find pleasure and entertainment in the torture of others. Depravity. Depravity.
- They saw His suffering, and they wanted more. Crucify! Crucify!

Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him – If you're so insistent, then you take Him yourselves, and you crucify Him...for I find Him not guilty.

- Once again, we are reminded that the Jews did not have the power to carry out capital punishment on their own.

John 18:31 - Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:

Matthew 27:24 - When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.

Seeing that their civil charges of sedition and treason against Jesus fell flat, the religious authorities tried another tactic. They would not relent. They would not give up.

- Whereas throughout this story, Pilate is right about Jesus but wavering in his resolve, the religious authorities were dead wrong about Jesus, but unwavering in their conviction.

7 The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

In order to understand the significance of what the Jews said in verse 7, you have to understand Rome's political strategy for military occupation of the areas and peoples they conquered. For the most part, when Rome conquered an area, they allowed the people to keep their local laws in place. The Roman governors were expected to keep control while upholding local laws as long as those local laws didn't conflict with Roman laws.

(MacArthur, 2006, p. 959)

Illustration – the relationship between Roman laws and local laws was kind of like the relationship between our federal laws and state laws today

- As long as a state's laws are not in violation of federal law, the federal government recognizes and upholds them as binding.

The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God – We, as your subjects, have a religious (local) law that one ought not to make himself equal with God. According to our Scriptures (local constitution), the penalty for violating this law ought to be death. Pilate, you might not find Jesus guilty of the civil (federal) charges we accused Him of, but He is undeniably guilty of violating our blasphemy laws (local), and as the Roman governor you are bound to pay respect to and uphold our local laws. (Plummer, 1902)

- The Punishment for Blasphemy
 - o Leviticus 24:16 - And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, and all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of the LORD, shall be put to death.
 - o Deuteronomy 18:20 - But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.
- The Significance of "The Son of God"

- John 5:18 - Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.
- John 10:33 - 33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

Matthew 26:63-66 - But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.

This statement by the religious authorities led to Pilate taking Jesus aside for a private conversation.

2.) The Questioning by Pilate

8 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;

When the authorities revealed to Pilate why Jesus was REALLY standing trial before him (He claimed to be God – and this was news to Pilate), it shocked him, and it terrified him. Why?

- Not because he was afraid of the religious authorities
- Because he was afraid of what he had done and what he might do to Jesus. He was afraid of the off chance that this guy before Him might actually be God.

When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid – From Pilate’s perspective, this Jesus figure was wrapped in a shroud of mystery. He knew that Jesus was an influential Jewish teacher that was known for performing miracles. He knew that He was significant enough to evoke strong antagonism from the religious leadership. He knew that Jesus claimed to be some sort of king of a supernatural kingdom. He knew that his own wife had a mysterious dream warning against condemning Him...and now at this point in the proceedings He heard from the religious authorities for the first time that the man he had just had scourged, the man he had just had beaten, the man whose life was in hands, had claimed to be the God man... and that was the real reason the Jews wanted Him dead. Phew. Whoa. The stakes just got raised.

- Pilate was already apprehensive about putting an innocent man to death, but can you imagine what he must have been thinking and feeling when this bombshell revelation was dropped on him? (Ellicott C. , 1905)
- “He’s probably not actually a divine person, but what if He is? What if I just had God scourged? Could I actually be sentencing God to death?”

- What makes this whole situation even crazier is that Jesus actually was God. Pilate was terrified of the possibility that he would be responsible for the scourging and crucifixion of God in the flesh and that is exactly what happened. His worst nightmare coincided with the reality of the situation, and here we are two thousand years later talking about it.
- To help you understand Pilate's mental state here, let me give you an illustration.
- Illustration – Undercover Boss
 - Have you ever seen that show undercover boss?
 - It's almost like Pilate has this realization that the low-level employee he has been mistreating and talking trash to all day might be the CEO of the company...and he's panicking. Because if that turns out to be the case, he is in big trouble.

What does he do?

9 And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.

And went again into the judgment hall – Pilate took Jesus back into the residence to speak with Him further in private

And saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? – Where are you from? Pilate is not speaking of geography, but rather origin. He knows that Jesus is from Galilee. Pilate wants to know where Jesus is REALLY from. (Barnes, 1834) Are you really the Son of God? Are you some sort of divine being? Are you the CEO of the company?

But Jesus gave him no answer – which would have been even more terrifying and frustrating for Pilate who was in a frantic state at this point in time.

- Why didn't Jesus answer him? It was certainly in fulfillment of Isaiah 53:7: "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth." Additionally, He had already told Pilate that He was a supernatural king of a supernatural kingdom that came to this earth to bear witness to the truth. Perhaps Jesus' silence here was judgment on Pilate's prior rejection of truth (i.e. "what is truth?").

John 8:14 - Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

John 9:29-30 - We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is. The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.

Isaiah 53:7 - He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.

10 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? – TO ME, you do not speak?!
(Ellicott C. , 1905)

- I am the Roman governor!
- Pilate goes back and forth between being a man trembling before one who may be God and on the other hand being one who expects God to tremble before him. He was not accustomed to being answered with silence.

Knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee? – Do you not realize that you are completely in my hands? Your life-or-death rests squarely in my jurisdiction. How dare you not answer me? I hold your fate.

- Pilate sought to intimidate Jesus with fear and hope. (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884)
 - o If you don't talk, I could kill you. – Fear
 - o If you do talk, I could release you. - Hope
- Illustration – Pilate could not have been more wrong. The fate of Christ and His kingdom are settled in stone regardless of the politics of the day. They are not dependent upon Caesar or Pilate or Biden or Trump. The church has thrived for two thousand years under both oppressive and democratic regimes: dictatorships, republics, empires, democracies, etc. And when Christ returns and we have occupied His eternal kingdom for a hundred million years, the temporary rulers of these past earthly kingdoms will be but ancient history.

11 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

Jesus answered – He broke His silence

Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above – Jesus here is referring to the fact that all human governmental authority is derived authority. The only reason they possess any authority at all is because God has determined it to be so and delegated it.

- Illustration – giving Jacqueline some French fries and then asking for one back. She says “No”, and it's like “Don't you remember who gave you those fries in the first place?”
 - o It's like Jesus is saying to Pilate, “Don't you remember who gave you that authority in the first place?”
- Romans 13:1 - Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.
 - o Government is an institution ordained by God for the benefit of society. That's the primary reason why, biblically, we are called to submit, unless in so doing, we would violate Scripture.

- It is by no means perfect (and regimes can often be evil under the influence of Satan who in the present age exercises dominion over this world), but it is superior to anarchy. It is ordained by God, and it is meant to punish evildoers.
- Psalm 62:11 - 11 God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this; that power belongeth unto God.
 - “The entire world, everything in heaven and earth, including Satan and his hosts, are subject to their Creator. God sovereignly created and absolutely controls the universe, with no exceptions or limitations. Also, without exception, the power that any person, group, or society may possess is divinely delegated and circumscribed. How well or how poorly that power is used is another matter. Paul’s point here is that this power has only one source—God.” (MacArthur, Romans 1-16 MacArthur New Testament Commentary Two Volume Set, p. Loc 16825)
- 1 Peter 2:13-15 - 13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; 14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. 15 For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men:
- 1 Tim. 2:1-3 – 1 I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour;
- Titus 3:1-2 – 1 Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, 2 To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men.
 - Submit to the government unless the ordinance is in violation of God’s law (e.g. Hebrew midwives, Daniel, the men thrown in the fiery furnace, the apostles when commanded not to preach)

Jesus’ main point is that governmental authority is derived authority.

- By the way, that is one of the reasons why we never shut our doors during the coronavirus crisis. We were obeying a higher authority.

Therefore, he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin – “Pilate, you are a God ordained authority of the Roman empire at this point and place in time. As such, this whole trial has been forced upon you by another, Caiaphas the high priest. (We know this is in reference to Caiaphas, not Judas, because Judas was not the one that delivered Jesus to Pilate. Caiaphas was.) Caiaphas has delivered me to you and insisted upon my execution. Pilate, you have sinned in your actions against me, but Caiaphas has sinned more egregiously.” (Spence & Exell, 1883)

- This is one of a number of passages that reminds us that not all sins are equal.

John 3:27 - John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

John 11:49-50 - And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

John 18:3 - Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.

John 9:41 - Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

3.) The Sentencing of Jesus

12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.

And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him – this may be in reference to time or cause. (Ellicott C. , 1905)

- From that time forward and because of that conversation, Pilate was trying to release Jesus.

Realizing that they had failed to convince Pilate of Jesus' guilt and afraid that he was preparing to release Him (which he was), the religious authorities cried out saying

If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar – the religious authorities had attacked Jesus with both religious and political accusations. It hadn't worked. Pilate wasn't convinced. He was going to release Jesus. Here, they once again shifted tactics. They were no longer attacking Jesus. Who were they attacking here? Pilate. "Pilate, the choice is no longer between condemning Jesus or freeing Him. The choice is now between condemning Jesus or condemning yourself."

- "Several of Pilate's foolish acts had already infuriated the Jews and caused turmoil in Palestine. Rome's eye was on him, and he dared not risk another upheaval. The emperor at that time, Tiberius, was noted for his suspicious nature and willingness to exact ruthless punishment on his subordinates. Pilate feared for his position, his possessions, and even for his life." (MacArthur, John Volumes 1&2 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2006, p. 962)
- The religious authorities threatened to tell on Pilate to Caesar and in so doing, end his career and possibly his life.
 - o "Pilate, it's you or Jesus. You can save His life, or you can save your life, but you can't save them both. Which is it going to be? You've been playing games this whole time trying to get out of condemning Jesus? How much conviction do you have? How much do you really care about Jesus? Are

you willing to lay down your life for His? Is He that important to you? Are you willing to lose your life to save His?"

- Application – every single one of us in this room faces the same choice that Pilate did. Matthew 16:25 - For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.
 - When push comes to shove, who is it going to be? Me or Jesus? Who am I living my life for? Am I living for myself or Jesus? Am I willing to lay down my life, my future, my plans, my desires at His feet...or when push comes to shove and I'm forced to choose between Jesus and myself, will I respond as Pilate did and crucify Jesus afresh in my heart so that I might live the way I want?

Proverbs 29:25 - The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe

13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.

When Pilate heard what the religious authorities had said

He brought Jesus forth – out in front of the crowds for a formal public sentencing

And sat down in the judgment seat (*bema seat*) – to issue judgment on the one by whom all the world will be judged (John 5:22)

- Application – just as Pilate issued a verdict regarding Jesus, so too does every person on the planet. You must decide what to do with Jesus. You have two options. You can accept Him as your Savior and Lord, or you can crucify Him. You can lay your life down for His sake, or you can send Him away to His death so that you might live out your life unintruded.
- Like Pilate, you must make judgment regarding Jesus, but friend, make no mistake about it, you will one day be judged by Jesus for the judgment you made regarding Jesus.
 - Great White Throne Judgment
 - Rev. 20:11-15 - 11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

- Judgment Seat of Christ
 - 1 Cor. 3:13-15 - 13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. 15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.
 - 2 Cor. 5:10 - 10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Pilate went back out in front of the crowds on the judgment seat to issue verdict regarding Jesus.

in a place that is called the Pavement, - because it was paved with stone

but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha – which means high place, because it was elevated (Poole, 1990)

14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

And it was the preparation of the Passover – it was the day of preparation for the Sabbath, which also happened to be the day of Passover (Gill, 1811)

- “It seems best of all to understand it only of the preparation for the sabbath, which, because it was in the passover week, is called the passover preparation day: and it may be observed, that it is sometimes only called "the day of the preparation", and "the preparation", Matthew 27:62 and sometimes the "Jews' preparation day", John 19:42 and it is explained by the Evangelist Mark 15:42. "It was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath"; on which they both prepared themselves for the sabbath, and food to eat on that day; and this being the time of the passover likewise, the preparation was the greater: and therefore to distinguish this preparation day for the sabbath, from others, it is called the passover preparation; nor have I observed that any other day is called the preparation but that before the sabbath: the Jews dispute about preparing food for the sabbath on a feast day, as this was; they seem to forbid it, but afterwards soften their words, and allow it with some provisions.” (Gill, 1811)

And about the sixth hour – noon

- “This statement presents an apparent difficulty, because according to Mark’s account, Jesus was crucified at the third hour (9:00 A.M.). But as Andreas Köstenberger writes, “Since people related the estimated time to the closest three-hour mark, any time between 9:00 A.M. and noon may have led one person to say an event occurred at the third (9:00 A.M.) or the sixth hour (12:00 noon)” (John, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament [Grand Rapids:

Baker, 2004], 538).” (MacArthur, John Volumes 1&2 MacArthur New Testament Commentary, 2006, p. 963)

And he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! – Pilate was frustrated because he couldn’t save Jesus’ life without sacrificing his own life, his career, his position, his future. He took out his frustration on the Jews. He pointed to the beaten and bloodied Jesus and says “Behold your king” as if what was left of Him was all the king they deserved.

Mark 15:42 - And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath,

Luke 23:54 - And that day was the preparation, and the sabbath drew on.

Mark 15:25 - And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

Mark 15:33-34 - And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

15 But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him – get that guy out of here! Away with him! Impale him on a cross!

Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your king? – he says in frustration and anger

The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar – Jews worshipped God as the one true king (Judges 8:23; 1 Sam. 8:7; Ps. 149:2; Is. 33:22) and they looked to the Messiah to deliver them from the oppression of Caesar. Understanding that makes this comment even more shocking.

- Nevertheless, their exclamation “we have no king but Caesar” was once again a veiled threat to report Pilate to Caesar if he did not crucify this insurrectionist. It was a reminder to Pilate that he had to choose between himself and Jesus.

What did Pilate do? What did he choose?

16 Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.

Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away – when faced with the choice between Jesus and himself, Pilate chose himself. He kept looking for creative solutions in which he could choose both, but when it became clear there was no third option, he chose himself. He gave in and delivered Jesus up to the will of the Jews as the Roman soldiers took Him away to be crucified.

Luke 23:25 - And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

Application

When it comes down to choosing between Jesus and yourself, who will you choose?

- We must all make judgment regarding Jesus. What will you do with Jesus?
- Will you accept Him as your Lord and Savior? Will you embrace Him in faith? Will you accept Him into your life? Or will you reject Him and crucify Him afresh in your heart?
 - The religious authorities rejected Him because they hated Him.
 - Pilate rejected Him because he loved himself.
 - What will you do with Jesus?
 - You can by faith accept Him as Lord and Savior, or you can send Him to the cross. There is no third option.

For those of us who by faith have accepted Jesus Christ as our Savior, Jesus Christ is also your God. He is the Lord of your life. He is your Master and King. Are you living like it?

- If someone could only see your actions and not hear your words, who would they say is the Lord of your life? You or Jesus?
- Are you obeying Him as Lord, or are you merely weighing His input as if He were but some sort of counselor? Do you even care to know what He thinks? Are you talking to Him? Are you listening to Him? By extension, when you read what He says, are you obeying it or merely considering it?
- Who sits on the throne of your heart? Who has final say in your life? Is it you, or is it Jesus?

Pilate was forced to choose between Jesus and himself, and he chose wrong. Would to God that those of us in this room would learn from his example and not make the same mistake that he did.

Matthew 16:24-26 - 24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. 25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. 26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Leviticus 24:16, Deut. 18:20, and Matt. 26:63-66. From the perspective of the religious authorities, what Jewish laws had Jesus violated that made Him deserving of the death penalty? What was the significance of the title "Son of God" to the Jews? (see John 5:18)*

3.) *Read John 5:22, Rev. 20:11-15, and 1 Cor. 3:10-15. Christ will judge unbelievers at the Great White Throne Judgment described in Revelation 20 and believers at the Judgment Seat of Christ described in 1 Cor. 3. Compare and contrast the differences between these two judgments.*

looking forward

4.) *Read John 19:17-27. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 19:17-27 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 19:17-22

Review

Over the course of the past six months (since March), we have been looking at the events of Jesus' final 24 hours that led up to His crucifixion. From the Last Supper to His arrest in the garden to His religious and civil trials, everything that has happened has led up to this moment: the crucifixion.

This morning we are going to begin walking through the Scripture's account of the crucifixion, but before we do so, I want to remind you of the physical and mental distresses that Jesus has already endured.

Summary of Jesus' Physical and Mental Distresses

- Sweating great drops of blood
 - o In the Garden of Gethsemane prior to His arrest, Jesus was so troubled at the thought of bearing in His body God's wrath against every sin that would ever be committed, that He sweat great drops of blood and begged the Father that if there were any other way to let this cup pass from Him.
- Betrayal by Judas
 - o Whom He had devoted three years of His life to mentoring
- Denial by Peter
 - o On account of his fear, he swore to God that He had never even met Jesus
- Abandonment by the Other Disciples
 - o On the most painful, gut-wrenching day of His life, He was alone.
- Mocked by the Jews
 - o His own people that He wept over as sheep without a shepherd
- Mocked by the Romans
 - o The very Gentiles He came to save spat in His face and treated Him like the trash they believed He was
- Mocked by Herod
 - o The one who had already executed His cousin John
- Physically he dealt with...
- Lack of Sleep
 - o Between His arrest and trials and beatings, Jesus was likely running on no sleep (physically and emotionally exhausted). In that condition, He was...
- Beaten by the Jews
- Scourged by the Romans
 - o As the soldiers whipped the skin off His back to reveal a blood red canvas of muscles, organs, and bone
- Crowned with thorns
 - o That they implanted on His head
- Spat on

- As if He were scum
- Struck with a reed
- Punched in the face
- Rejected for Barabbas
- Rejected by the authorities
- Rejected by the crowd
- Rejected by Herod
- Rejected by Pilate
 - Who, when forced to choose between saving his own skin and saving Jesus', delivered Jesus up to be crucified.

16 Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.

- He was brutalized, bloodied, exhausted, humiliated, and rejected by all...and in that state, He set His eyes towards the cross where He would offer up what was left of Him for the sake of those very same people.
- As we examine our passage today, the first aspect of the story that we will see is:

Sermon

1.) The Journey to Golgotha

The journey to Golgotha has come to be known as the Via Dolorosa (Latin for “the way of suffering”). It was the path of suffering that Jesus walked from Pilate to the cross...the path He walked for you and me.

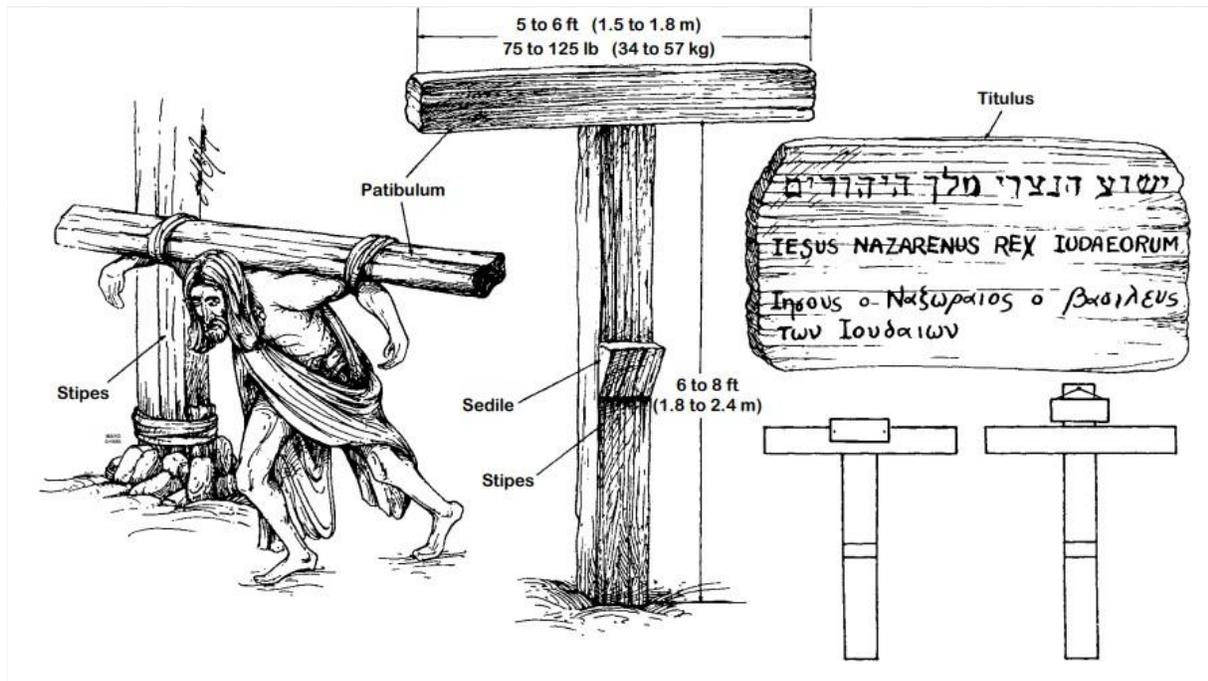


16 Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him away.

17 And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:

Bearing his cross – It was standard Roman procedure for condemned criminals to carry their cross to the site of their execution. The sight of these criminals carrying the means of their execution would have been a powerful object lesson to every person that saw them of

the terrible cost of crime. Jesus' carrying of the cross to Golgotha parallels Isaac's carrying of the wood for the sacrifice to the top of Mount Moriah. (Gen. 22:6) (MacArthur, 2006)



(Edwards, 1986)

- There were different types of crosses used in Roman crucifixions, but the cross that Jesus was crucified on was likely composed of two parts: an upright beam and a cross beam. With such a cross, the upright beam would have been permanently located at the crucifixion/execution site: Golgotha. Thus, the victim would not have carried the whole cross which would have weighed well over 300 pounds. Rather, He would have carried the cross beam, which have weighed somewhere between 75 and 125 pounds.
 - o Illustration – physical beam
- “The processional to the site of crucifixion was led by a complete Roman military guard, headed by a centurion. One of the soldiers carried a sign (titulus) on which the condemned man’s name and crime were displayed. Later, that sign would be attached to the top of the cross for all to see.” (Edwards, 1986)
 - o In John 20:25, Thomas suggests that he would only believe if he were to put his hands in the holes in Jesus’ hands where the nails (plural) had been fastened. If Jesus had been crucified on a pole/stake, only one nail would have been used.

Thus, Jesus, in the broken state He was in, was tasked with carrying this beam on His back as He made His way down the Via Dolorosa (the way of suffering).

- He bore the weight of that beam on His shoulders as He prepared to bear the much greater weight of sin on that cross.

Matthew 27:31-33 - And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him. And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene (*a city in Northern Africa*), Simon by name (*he was likely in Jerusalem for the Passover*): him they compelled to bear his cross. And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull,

- In His weakened state, Jesus crumbled underneath the weight of the cross beam. Unable to carry His cross, the Romans secured a man by the name of Simon to carry it on His behalf. Simon was a Jew from Africa who had likely made the journey to Jerusalem for Passover. He was a father to two boys Alexander and Rufus, and in Romans 16:13 Paul issues a salutation to Rufus as a well-known believer in the church at Rome.
- In Mark 15:22, the wording there suggests that due to the severity of His condition, the soldiers may have even had to carry Jesus to Golgotha, at one point, to get Him there.

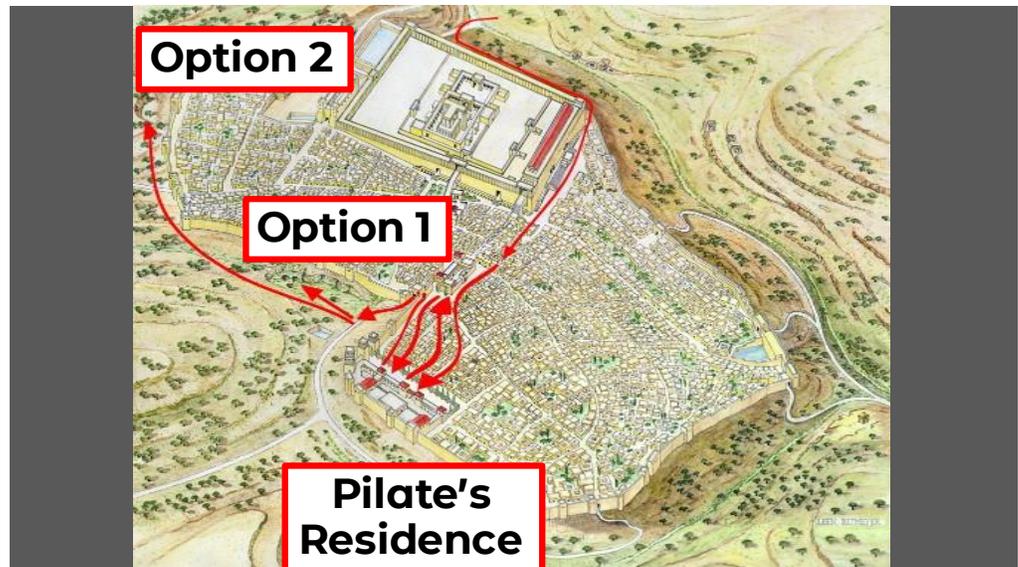
And he bearing his cross went forth – John’s wording here emphasis that Jesus was in full control of the situation. He was not taken to the cross. He went.

Into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha – in accordance with Roman procedure and Jewish law, executions took place outside the city walls. Beyond that, Jewish sin offerings were also to be burnt outside the city.

- That’s significant because Jesus’ execution would be our sin offering.
- Leviticus 24:14 - Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him.
- Leviticus 16:21-22 - And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.
- Exodus 29:14 – But the flesh of the bullock, and his skin, and his dung, shalt thou burn with fire without the camp: it is a sin offering.
 - o Sin offerings were to be burnt outside the city
 - o Hebrews 13:11-12 - 11 For the bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. 12 Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.



- - “This view shows an alternative proposal for the site of Golgotha, the so-called Skull-Hill located just outside the present-day Old City walls, near the Damascus Gate, in the northern section of the city.” (Ritmeyer)
- The Via Dolorosa, the way of suffering, that Jesus took from Pilate’s residence to the cross took him just outside the city of Jerusalem to a place in the Hebrew, known as Golgotha.
 - Golgotha – Hebrew word for skull in the same way that...
 - Kranion – from where we get the word cranium is the Greek word for skull
 - Calvary – Latin word for skull
 - This execution site where these upright crucifixion beams were permanently affixed was known as the place of the skull likely because of the peripheral backdrop that looked like a skull.
 - This is actually a picture from outside the northern city walls of Jerusalem that many today believe is the place of the skull.
 - There are two traditionally suggested locations for the site of Golgotha: one in the West and one in the North.



-
- The picture of the rockface that I just showed you is taken from suggested site 2 up in the North.
 - “The Bible describes this site as outside the city walls of the time, near a main road and located in a garden where a new tomb had recently been made (see Slide 70). There are two main proposals for the location of Golgotha: the Holy Sepulcher (indicated just outside the Gennath Gate, halfway down the left side of the drawing) and the Garden Tomb (just outside the Damascus Gate of the time, on top left of drawing). Both sites are problematic, as the traditional Tomb of Christ in the Holy Sepulcher has been destroyed about 1000 years ago and the tomb in the garden of the Garden Tomb was not a newly hewn tomb.” (Ritmeyer)

Matthew 16:24 - Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

Regardless of where Golgotha actually was, the path that Jesus took from Pilate outside the city walls to the cross was the Via Dolorosa...the way of suffering that Jesus walked for you and for me.

Like a firefighter running into a burning building, Jesus did not run from the flames He ran to them...He ran to them for you.

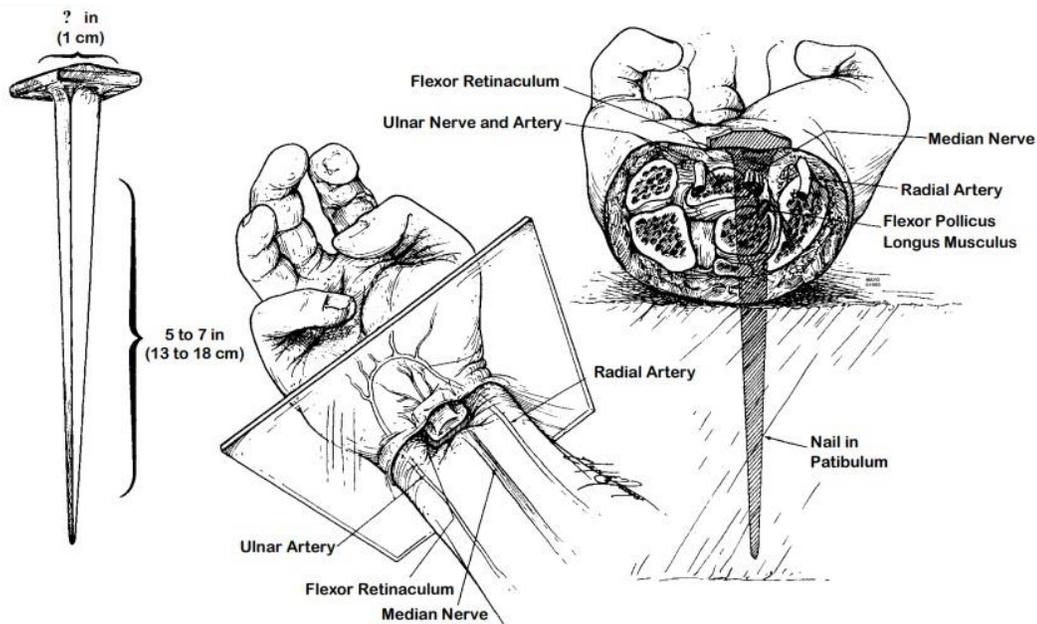
However, as we look at our text this morning, we see not only the journey to Golgotha. We see also the crucifixion at Golgotha.

2.) The Crucifixion at Golgotha

18 Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

Where they crucified him – what makes the via dolorosa, the way of suffering, so significant is where it led. It led to the site of Jesus’ crucifixion.

- “The term excruciating literally means “out of crucifying”; crucifixion was an “excruciating” way to die because it was a very slow and painful means to death.” (Got Questions)
 - o It was essentially a more brutal and prolonged version of hanging in which the victim would eventually suffocate when his muscles gave out and he lost the ability to lift himself up and breathe. It was such a terrible form of execution that it was not a permitted means of capital punishment for Roman citizens or women.
- Although in its earliest forms, crucifixions were carried out on trees or a single upright post, during the first century in the Roman empire, crucifixions were typically carried out on an upright beam with a cross post. The upright beams were permanently located at the execution site. The criminal would carry the cross beam to the execution site, and when he arrived, he would be thrown to the ground with his arms stretched out along the cross post. His hands would be tied or nailed to the cross beam.



- From archaeological finds dating back to the time of Jesus, we know that the nails they used were five- to seven-inch-long iron spikes. Those nails were hammered not through the palms of the hands. If so, they would have just ripped right out. They needed somewhere more stable to secure the arms to the cross post. So they nailed it through the wrists, where mind you, a number of nerves are located. (Edwards, 1986)
 - o Illustration – examples of the nails
 - What that means is that as you imagine how painful it must have been like for Jesus as they hammered those nails through his wrists, multiply it, and you might begin to approach an accurate approximation.

strong bulls, ravening lions, and wild oxen): the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet (*as he was nailed to the cross*). 17 I may tell all my bones (*I can see my bones*): they look and stare upon me (*those around behold and stare at me*).

- The price tag of my sin that was paid out of the heart of my Savior

Matt. 27:45-46 - 45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. 46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

As Jesus hung there on that cross, there were

and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst. – Luke calls these men evil. According to Matthew, they were thieves. The fact that Jesus was crucified with these men in the place of Barabbas, who was also a thief, makes you wonder if perhaps these two were accomplices of Barabbas.

- If such were the case, it would even more vividly picture the death of Jesus in the place of Barabbas. Although we don't know how Barabbas responded to Jesus, we do know how these other two men did.
 - Luke 23:39-43 - 39 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. 40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. 42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. 43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.
 - Not in virtue of a life well lived, for he had not lived his life well. Not in virtue of the turning over a new life/a transformed life, for he would have no such opportunity. That thief on that cross would be admitted to paradise based on one condition.
 - The man on the cross next to Him had paid the penalty of his sin and said he could come.
 - And that is the same way that men and women are granted entrance into paradise today...through faith, not in themselves and their religion and good deeds, but in Jesus Christ and His payment for sin on that cross.
 - You might think that the thief who put his faith in Jesus while dying on the cross was unlucky. It could have been him, not Barabbas, that Pilate offered the people. He had a 33% chance of going free that day, and he did not. Yet, I say to you this morning that that man on that cross was the most fortunate man on the planet that day.
 - For on that cross, he was forgiven of his sins and spiritually reborn. He was declared righteous before God, adopted into the family of God, and blessed with the promise of an everlasting inheritance. Although

Barabbas was delivered from physical death as he was pardoned in the sight of Rome, this dying thief was delivered from spiritual death as he was pardoned in the sight of God.

- Whereas Barabbas and Pilate and Caiaphas and Judas and the chief priests are likely two thousand years later still suffering in separation from God, that thief on that cross is to this day in the presence of Jesus.
- “The first trophy of grace won by Christ on the cross was one of the very men crucified alongside Him.” (MacArthur, 2006)
- The heart of a Savior paid the price tag of his sin.
- What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and lose his own soul?

Matthew 27:38 - Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.

Luke 23:33 - And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

Psalms 22:16 - For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.

Isaiah 53:12 - Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Galatians 3:13 - Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

3.) The King of Golgotha

19 And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was Jesus Of Nazareth The King Of The Jews.



Illustration – example of the title

It was customary for the name and crime of the one being crucified to be inscribed on a placard that was carried either in front of or on the neck of the criminal as he made his journey to the site of his execution. In the eyes of Pilate, Jesus was innocent. There was no crime that he had committed. So, in a parting shot at the Jewish leadership, Pilate **himself** wrote the inscription on Jesus' placard. Name: Jesus of Nazareth. Crime: King of the Jews. (Plummer, 1902)

Just as Jesus had triumphantly entered into the city of Jerusalem a week prior heralded as king, here, as he walked the via dolorosa, he triumphantly exited the city of Jerusalem heralded as king. That fact is a reminder that regardless of what you do with Jesus, whether you worship Him or deem Him worthy of the cross, He is king.

20 This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.

This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city – crucifixions were carried out in public places outside the city, often near to highways so that those passing by would receive an object lesson in the cost of breaking the law.

- Whereas the cross in the first century was an object lesson in the cost of breaking Roman law, the cross to this very day is an object lesson in the cost of breaking God's law.
 - o Your sin is not insignificant. Your sin is not inconsequential. It is that significant.

- Behold the price tag of sin and the heart of the Savior.

And it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin – Pilate wrote this inscription in Hebrew, the language of Israel, Greek, the common language of the empire, and Latin, the official language of Rome. (Sorenson, 2007)

- Hebrew: Yeshua HaNazarei Melech HaYehudim
- Greek: Easous ho Nazaoraios ho Basileus ton Youdaion
- Latin: Easus Nazarenus rex Youdaeorum
- Thus, the crucifixion of a king with no crime was proclaimed to all who passed by.
- Whereas earthly kings often sacrifice their people on the altar of their pleasure, Jesus sacrificed His pleasure for the sake of His people. He demonstrated power not by taking, but by giving. He did not sacrifice the lives of His people for the sake of His own. He sacrificed His own life for the sake of His people.

21 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.

The chief priests were outraged at the parting shot that Pilate had fired. They insisted that he change the wording of the inscription so that His crime would be listed as “claiming to be the king of the Jews.”

22 Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

Pilate, likely enjoying their displeasure, concisely responded, “No.”

Application

Golgotha is an object lesson in the price tag of sin and the heart of our Savior...the heart of a king who did not ascend a throne, but a cross...the heart of a king whose coronation was a crucifixion.

The price tag of sin is death. Friend, you have two options this morning. Like the thief on the cross, you can accept by faith the payment that Jesus has made on your behalf, or you can pay it yourself for all of eternity. That thief recognized his guilt before God, looked to Jesus to save him, and to this day is with him in paradise. In contrast, there were so many like the chief priests and Pharisees who did not recognize their guilt before God, trusted in their own righteousness to save them, and to this day are separated from God paying the penalty for their sin. What will you do with Jesus? Have you been saved through faith in Jesus? How do you do that? You recognize your need to be saved because of your sin. Then you call out to Jesus in faith asking Him to save you trusting exclusively in His death on the cross. If you’ve never done that before, I’d encourage you to do that today.

For thus of us who have already done that...who have embraced Jesus as our Lord and Savior, what a wonderful king He is. He is a king that we worship and serve and obey not in hope that He might save us, but rather in gratitude that He has saved us. May we remember

the cross. May we remember our sin. May we remember His sacrifice....so that we may serve Him out of joy and gratitude for how gracious He was and for how blessed we are.

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Matt. 27:31-33, Mark 15:20-22, and Luke 23:26-32. What unique insights do we garner from each gospel account of the path that Jesus took to Golgotha? Who was present? How were they involved?*

3.) *Read Leviticus 24:14, Exodus 29:14, and Heb. 13:11-12. Why do you think that Jewish executions and the burning of sin offerings were commanded to take place outside the camp? How does this relate to the crucifixion of Jesus? What is the significance of it?*

looking forward

4.) *Read Romans 5:1-11. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does Romans 5:1-11 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 19:23-27

Review

The last time we met, on our journey through the life of Jesus, we finally arrived at the actual crucifixion itself. We talked about the Via Dolorosa (the way of suffering) that Jesus walked from Pilate's residence to Golgotha for you and me. We talked about the cross itself and the suffering Jesus bore when He was nailed to it and hung on it. We talked about the title that Pilate affixed to the cross that read in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek: Jesus of Nazareth – crime: king of the Jews.

We witnessed an object lesson in the price tag of sin and the heart of our Savior...the heart of a king who did not ascend a throne, but a cross...the heart of a king whose coronation was a crucifixion.

This morning we're going to continue our study of John's account of the crucifixion, an account that was from an eyewitness, and an account that contrasts the actions of the soldiers on the ground with the actions of the Savior on the cross. As we examine that contrast this morning, the first truth we see is:

1.) The Greed of the Soldiers

23 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments and made four parts, to every soldier a part – there were four Roman soldiers that were responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus and the two other criminals on that day. These soldiers likely accompanied Jesus on the Via Dolorosa from the Praetorium to Golgotha. They saw the decrepit state of this man who could not even bear His own cross beam on that journey. They had a front row view to the suffering of Jesus as they themselves nailed Him with iron spikes to the cross on which He would hang.

- Having seen Jesus in this state, having handled His mangled body, and having set Him and His cross beam on the upright post where He would suffocate and die, what did the soldiers do next?

Took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part – they were given a front row view of the suffering and sacrifice of the Son of God for the sins of the world, and all they could think about was themselves...for them, the day that they were confronted with the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth was no different than any other and rather than being moved by conviction to repentance, they were moved by greed to self-indulgence.

- Whereas Judas betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver, these soldiers disregarded and disgraced the God of the universe for a few items of clothing.

- According to Luke 23:36-37, these men mocked Jesus. They said, “If you are the King of the Jews, then save yourself!”
- This four-man Roman execution squad took Jesus’ outer garments (likely some combination of a head covering, outer robe, belt, and sandals) and divided the items up between themselves.
- Illustration – examples of the tunic and other garments

And also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout – This is in reference to Jesus’ tunic undergarment. Jewish men would wear this with a cloak over top of it. Jesus’ tunic was seamless and whereas they likely divvied up the other four items between the four of themselves, there wasn’t really a feasible way for them to do so with this tunic.

- The Roman soldiers stripped Jesus of both His outer and undergarments, which means that Christ was likely crucified naked on the cross. Most renditions of the crucifixion include some kind of a loin cloth for modesty’s sake, but the gospels mention no such thing. (Sorenson, 2007) In addition to the physical suffering of Christ on the cross there was also the emotional humiliation of being displayed in such a state.
 - I can’t even begin to imagine what that would have been like.
 - I think all of us at some point and time in our lives have been humiliated by others, and when you find yourself in such a situation, there are a lot of emotions that flow through you, and most of them are not good.
- And yet, even in the midst of such injustice and pain and humiliation, Jesus, from the cross, remarked, “**Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.**” (Luke 23:34)

Mark 15:24 - And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.

Matthew 27:35-38 - And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots. And sitting down they watched him there; And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.

24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be – rather than cutting it up and ruining it, let’s cast lots for it. Let’s roll dice/cast stones for it so as to fairly determine who will get the tunic.

- Illustration – rolling of dice, flipping of a coin

- Once again, you can just imagine how hardened these soldiers must have been to suffering and death to have been playing a game of chance over the undergarment of a man dying in the background right behind them. From where He was on the cross, Jesus, not doubt, would have watched them casting lots over His clothes.

The casting of lots is an interesting topic because the Scriptures talk about it a lot. Just like dice can be used to gamble or for other non-gambling activities (like playing monopoly), the same was true of casting lots. What we discover is that in some instances (like here at the cross), the lots were cast to gamble, and in other instances lots were cast to ascertain God's will.

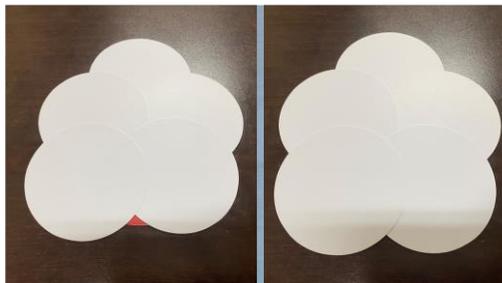
- Proverbs 16:33 - The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.
 - o Prior to the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the casting of lots was a means by which God would at times reveal His will.
 - o Jonah 1:7 – lots identified Jonah as the one to blame for the storm
 - o 1 Samuel 10:19-21 – lots used to identify Saul as God's choice to be king
 - o Leviticus 16:7-10 – lots used to determine which goat would be the sin offering and which would be the scape goat
 - o Joshua 7:16-18 – lots were used to identify Achan as the root of sin in the camp
 - o 1 Chronicles 24:5-19 – lots were used to determine the priestly service rotations
 - o Nehemiah 11:1-2 – lots were used to determine who would be brought in from the suburbs to dwell in Jerusalem
 - o Acts 1:21-26 – lots were cast to select the apostle that would replace Judas
- Every positive Scriptural instance of the casting of lots took place prior to the coming of the Holy Spirit and the completion of the Scriptures.
- These positive Scriptural instances of casting lots were a pre-Pentecost means of discerning God's will. They were not gambling which is the undertaking of unwise risk in the pursuit of more.
 - o Just like dice can be used in both gambling and non-gambling activities, the same was true of lots.
 - o So, those who would seek to defend gambling by appealing to biblical instances of discerning God's will through lots are comparing apples and oranges.
 - Gambling - an activity in which a person risks something of value to forces of chance completely beyond his control or any rational expectation in hope of winning something of greater value, usually more money (Macarthur, 1997)
 - Gambling – risking a person's current position or wealth against the odds in the hope of gaining a greater position or wealth. (Napier, 2019)

Should the Christian gamble? Should the Christian undertake unwise risk in the pursuit of more?

Let me answer that question by telling a story from my past and then sharing some Scriptures.

Illustration – losing \$50 as a 16-year-old playing Cover the Spot at a flea market

- The setting: flea market
- The game
 - o Its description
 - o Its risk: \$2 a play
 - o Its payoff
- My thought process
 - o This guy is a chump
 - o I want a PlayStation
- The result
 - o Failure after failure after failure
 - o I dropped \$50 as a teen
 - o I was going to go to the ATM and come back
 - o The guy cut me off
- That was the last time I gambled



As I was thinking about my own experience and consulting the Scriptures in anticipation of addressing gambling today, I came away with two primary reasons why I believe Christians should not gamble.

1. It is unwise stewardship of **God's money**
 - a. Ps. 24:1 - The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

- b. 1 Cor. 4:2 - 2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.
 - c. Everything that we own is the Lord's. There is coming a day in which we will give an account for how we handled the resources that He entrusted to us. I'm afraid that one day there will be many Christians who will have to stand before God and give an account for why they gambled away His money instead of using it for His purposes.
 - d. It is unwise stewardship of God's money. That day at the flea market I wasted God's money, and from that day forward, I determined never to do that again.
2. It is rooted in **greed** (the pursuit of more)
- a. Illustration – conversation with Caleb about gambling as a means of entertainment
 - i. What if I just do it for fun as if I were just spending money for entertainment?
 - ii. The problem with that is that it's the wrong kind of fun.
 - b. The problem with gambling is not just what it is but why we do it. We do it to satisfy our fleshly craving of greed, materialism, and covetousness: things that the Bible speaks so strongly against indulging in.
 - c. 1 Tim. 6:10 - For the **love of money** is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.
 - i. Based on this verse, you could define gambling as the undertaking of unwise risk so as to find satisfaction in the root of all evil...the love of money...the wrong kind of fun.
 - d. Luke 12:15 - And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of **covetousness**: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.
 - e. Philippians 4:11 - Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be **content**.
 - i. You want to know why I lost all that money as a teen playing that stupid carnival game? Discontentment, covetousness, and greed.
 - f. The entertainment value of gambling (against the odds risking resources for the possibility of accumulating more resources) is rooted in the satisfaction of our own sinful tendencies towards materialism, greed, and discontentment, and Christians have no business indulging in such desires.
 - i. George Washington – Gambling is the child of greed, the brother of iniquity, and the father of mischief
 - ii. Luther – money won by gambling is not won without self-seeking and sin
 - iii. The game of dice is an obvious snare of the devil. He presides over the game in person, bringing to it the deadly venom of the serpent and even inducing ruin which when it is seen to be nothing, a great let down is brought about in the players. I ask you, O Christians, why is

the former the case? This hand has been purified from its sins which were committed prior to conversion and the same hand has been admitted to the Lord's table, having received by God's mercy that which concerns the salvation of the soul. The same hand that rolls the dice is lifted up to the Lord in prayer. I speak of this hand which is always given over to gambling, causing its own ruin and damnation. This hand is accustomed to the unbridled passion of gambling because gambling is like the devil's hunting sphere and those who play the dice are wounded with an irresistible allurements. The gambling board is the devil's snare and the enemy's trap which induces greed but in actuality brings utter ruin. By gambling men become poor, squandering their own riches. Stop being a dice player and start being a Christian before Christ beneath the gaze of the angels and in the presence of the martyrs, cast your money upon the altar of the Lord, distribute your money to the poor before you allow it to be squandered by your unruly passions and trust your stakes to Christ who is always victorious.

1. 2nd century sermon on gambling from North African church (*De Aleatoribus* - about Gamblers) (MacArthur, 1997)

It is unwise stewardship of God's money. It is rooted in greed.

This greed and selfish obsession with the pursuit of more can be seen in the soldiers' casting of lots at the feet of the cross...their risking of their claim to $\frac{1}{4}$ of the tunic for the possibility that they might gain possession of the whole thing. And yet, the casting of lots for the clothes of Savior was no accident. It happened...

That the Scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did. - in fulfillment of Psalm 22:18.

- Psalms 22:18 - They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.

Like those soldiers, have you been so caught up in the pursuit of more that you've missed Jesus in the background? What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?

For those of us who profess to be Christians, how are you managing His resources that He has entrusted to you? Are you stewarding them in wisdom, or will you one day have to stand before God and give an account for why you squandered His resources away?

2.) The Love of the Savior

The contrast between the selfish indulgence of the soldiers and the selfless concern of Jesus is pretty remarkable.

25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

Now – but (term of contrast between the soldiers and Jesus' family/friends)

There stood by the cross of Jesus – Standing near enough to the cross that Jesus can see them and speak to them is a group of women and John (our author). Depending on your interpretation, this verse is either describing 3 or 4 women.

- Jesus' mother, Jesus' aunt, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene
 - o Some would suggest that Mary the wife of Cleophas was Jesus' aunt (Mary's sister), but I think these are two separate women.
 - It would be weird to have two daughters and name them both Mary. (Illustration – naming both of my daughters Jacqueline)

There's Jesus on the cross. There's the soldiers. There's this group of John and 4 women that loved Jesus. The first of them was Mary, His mother.

His mother – Can you even begin to imagine her state of mind?

- Imagine what it would be like for you if you were to walk up on that scene and see the person you love most in the world dying naked and broken...and there was nothing you could do about it. Imagine if it were your kid, your spouse, your parent, your sibling. The thought is unbearable.
- It reminds of what Simeon told Mary when she took Jesus to the temple as a baby:
- Luke 2:34-35 - 34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; 35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

And his mother's sister, - if Mary's sister is a different person than Mary the wife of Cleophas (which I think is likely because who names their kids the same name), then from comparing the gospel accounts (Matt. 27:55-56, Mark 15:40-41, & Mark 16:1-2), it's possible that Mary's sister is a woman by the name of Salome (Salome is the mother of two of the disciples in Jesus' inner circle: James and John our author)

- Tomb - Mark 16:1-2
- Crucifixion – Matt. 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41
 - o Comparing Mark 16:1 with Matthew 27:56 makes it likely that she is the mother of the sons of Zebedee (James and John)
- She was the mom in Matthew 20:20-21 that asked Jesus if her two boys could sit on Jesus' right and left hand in the Kingdom of God.
 - o Matthew 20:20-21 - 20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. 21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

- If this were the case and Salome were Jesus' aunt, that would make John His cousin, which would help us better understand why Jesus commissioned the care of His mother to John, and it would also make sense of why John did not name his mother, just as he did not name himself throughout the gospel.
- Jesus' mother was there. Jesus' aunt was there. John, possibly Jesus' cousin, was there.

Mary the wife of Cleophas – mother of James the less/junior (apostle) and Joseph

- Tomb - Matt. 27:61-28:1; Mark 16:1-2; Luke 24:10
- Crucifixion – Matt. 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41
- Her son (James Junior) was one of the apostles. Her son had followed Jesus, and so had she.

And Mary Magdalene –

- All four gospel writers mention her by name at the tomb (she's mentioned in verse 10 of this chapter), and three of the four mention her by name at the cross.
 - o Tomb - Matt. 27:61-28:1; Mark 16:1-2; Luke 24:10; John 20:1
 - o Crucifixion – Matt. 27:55-56; Mark 15:40-41; John 19:25-27
- Who was she?
 - o Luke 8:1-2 - And it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him, 2 And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,
 - o She was this crazy lady from Galilee who had been possessed by seven demons until Jesus met her and healed her. He changed her life, and she literally started following Him around traveling with Him and the disciples.
 - o She owed everything to Him, and she was there.

Matthew 27:55-56 - And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him: Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

Mark 15:40-41 - There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him;) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

Luke 23:49 - And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.

Luke 24:18 - And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

Mark 16:9 - Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils.

Luke 8:2 - And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,

There's Jesus. There's the soldiers. There's His mother, His aunt, John, possibly His cousin, one of the disciples mothers, and one of His followers, Mary Magdalene.

The events that follow there at the foot of the cross are only described for us in John's gospel, and the reason for that is most likely that John was the only one that was there.

The other gospel accounts describe a group of women afar off from the cross. That's not a contradiction with John's account. It would make sense for a larger group to observe from a distance and for a few of those closest to Jesus to at some point make their way down to the cross to actually see Him. That is what John is describing here.

As they made their way down...

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved – Jesus looked up and saw His mother Mary, and He saw one of His closest companions, the apostle John, the disciple whom He loved (who may have been His cousin)

He said unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! – When Jesus calls His mother “woman” He is not being rude here, as it might be considered today if a son were to use such a term with His mother. Such rudeness would betray the very honor He was showing His mother in ensuring that she was cared for. Beyond that, “woman” in the first century would be the equivalent of “my lady” or “ma’am” in our modern vernacular. (Sorenson, 2007)

Now, Jesus's father was likely dead which explains why care of His mother had fallen to Him as the oldest. Furthermore, His brothers, at this point in time, were still unbelievers, and with the imminence of His own death, He needed to do something about His mother. What did He do? Hanging from the cross, suffering the pangs of death, He committed her care to His apostle, friend, and possible cousin: John the beloved.

It's remarkable to think that Jesus, in the midst of the incredible agony of the cross, was still thinking of others.

- Illustration – when I am in pain, I am not a nice person to be around (e.g. man flu)
- Here Jesus is dying on the cross and when He sees His earthly mother, the thought that pops into His head is, “Oh, I need to make sure my mom is cared for. She's in need, and I've got to take care of that.”
- It's remarkable to think that Jesus, in the midst of the most important event in the history of the universe, took time to care for His mother, His family.

- Application – that should be a reminder to each of us of the importance of caring for family.
- Have you heard the Bible verse that says that the one who does not provide for his own, especially those of his own house, has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel?
 - It's 1 Tim. 5:8. Do you know what the context of that passage is? Paul is talking to Timothy about widows, about sons caring for their widowed mothers.
 - James 1:27 - 27 Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.
- Application – this calling to care for our aging parents is one that is especially pertinent in our world today. It's hard, but it's biblical.
 - Illustration – my mom and dad caring for their elderly parents
 - Jesus cared for His widowed mother, and when He would no longer be there to care for her, He made sure that someone else that He trusted would be.

John 13:23 - Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

John 20:2 - Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

John 21:7 - Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

John 21:20 - Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

John 21:24 - This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.

Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! – Jesus committed Mary to John as if she were now his mother. He entrusted John with the responsibility of caring and providing for her.

- Some would wrongfully interpret this passage in a way such that John is symbolic of the larger church, and in committing his mother to John, Jesus was committing Mary to be the mother of and care giver for all believers. However, from what follows in

the verse, it is pretty clear that Jesus was not committing John to Mary's care, but rather the opposite was true. He was committing Mary to John's care.

And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home – He cared for her as if she were his own widowed mother.

Matthew 12:48-50 – But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Application

The selfless love of Jesus contrasted with the greed of the Roman soldiers...

I wonder if you were to compare and contrast yourself with the soldiers and Jesus, which of the two you would be more like. Do you live your life for more (for greed)? Are you so caught up in the accumulation of money and things and possessions and accomplishments that you have lost sight of Jesus? Are you wasting away God's resources that He has entrusted to you? Are you prepared to give an account to Him for how you have stewarded what He has given you? Or, like the soldiers, have you gambled away that which does not belong to you?

Are you living like the soldiers, or are you living like Jesus? Have you centered your life on giving, rather than receiving? Do you think more of others than you do of yourself? Do you care for the people that God has placed in your life?

Does your life more closely align with the greed of the soldiers or with the love of the Savior?

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Matthew 25:14-30. How does the parable of the talents illustrate our responsibility to be wise stewards of the resources that God has entrusted to us? What are some examples of resources that God has entrusted to us?*

3.) *Read 1 Tim. 5:1-8 and James 1:27. What does the Scripture teach about our responsibility to care for our family? What does it teach about our responsibility to care for orphans and widows? How practically can we have a part in exhibiting this care?*

looking ahead

4.) *Read John 19:28-37. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 19:28-37 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 19:28-37

Review

Over the last couple months we have been looking at the suffering and sacrifice of our Savior that culminated in the cross. We've seen His trials, His mocking and scourging. We've seen the path He walked to Calvary, and then last week we saw the contrast between the greed of the soldiers on the ground and the love of the Savior on the cross. He forgave His enemies, and He designated a caregiver for His mother.

As we finally reach the actual death of Jesus in John 19:28-37, our focus today will be on how His death happened according to the Scriptures. We got a glimpse of that last week when we saw the soldiers casting lots for Jesus' clothes in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, and we're going to see it to a greater extent in our passage today.

As we study our passage today, the first thing we see is:

Sermon

1.) The Last Words of Jesus

28 After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

After this, - having commissioned His mother to John

Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished - "accomplished" - tetelastai (compare with vs. 30 - it is finished)

- Jesus knew that all things were now being accomplished (Sorenson, 2007)
 - o For, there was one last prophecy that He needed to bring to fruition.
 - o This is remarkable because it means that Christ on the cross was mindful of both the significance of the cross and of the prophecies He was fulfilling.
 - The death of the Messiah for the sins of the world wasn't some after the fact reinterpretation of the story of the crucifixion. The crucifixion was what Jesus always knew it would be, what He planned it to be.

Jesus knowing that all things were being accomplished, and that there was one more prophecy for Him to fulfill...

That the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst - in order that the Scriptures would be fulfilled said, "I thirst"

- Jesus said this (1) because He was thirsty.
 - o "Part of the torture of a Roman crucifixion was literally being hung out to dry under the merciless Mediterranean sun. That sun quickly dehydrated the victim, causing his tongue to swell and his mouth to become like cotton." (Sorenson, 2007) And keep in mind that by this point in time due to His

beatings and scourging, Jesus would have already lost so much fluid. He would have been so parched.

- Jesus said this (2) to fulfill the Scriptures.
 - Psalm 22:15 - My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death
 - A thousand years before Jesus was even born, it was prophesied that He would suffer great thirst on the cross.
 - Now, this prophecy had technically already been fulfilled. Jesus was thirsty. He didn't have to say that for it to be true, but He said it so that we might know that it was true. Further, He also said it to bring to pass the fulfillment of another prophecy in the Psalms.
 - Psalm 69:21 - They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.
 - Earlier in the crucifixion, Jesus had been offered a drink mixed with gall (a bitter plant-based substance designed to deaden the senses – it was a pain killer). The offering of gall prophesied in Psalm 69 had already happened, but when Jesus realized what it was, do you remember what He did? He refused to drink it. Why? He was determined to bear the fulness of the pain of sin, suffering, and death without having His senses dulled, without having His suffering eased. (Got Questions)
 - He had already been offered the gall, but by saying “I thirst”, Jesus was setting in motion the fulfillment of the second half of Psalm 69:21.

Look what happens next.

Luke 18:31 - Then he took unto him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.

29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.

Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar – what is referred to here as vinegar is likely a common pungent drink consumed by Roman soldiers. It was made through the mixing of sour wine and water. Like coffee, it was known as a stimulant, and the soldiers, figuring that they were in for a long day, had a jug of it nearby (almost like someone might put a pot of coffee on in this office). (Sorenson, 2007)

And they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth – “they” is in reference to one of the bystanders (either a soldier or someone acting with the soldiers approval). They took a sponge, dipped it in that sour wine/vinegar, stuck it on the end of a stalk of a hyssop plant, and put it up to Jesus’ mouth to suck on. (MacArthur, 2006)



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- “The fact that Jesus later was offered a drink of wine vinegar from a sponge placed on the stalk of the hyssop plant¹ (approximately 20 in, or 50 cm, long) strongly supports the belief that Jesus was crucified on the short cross.” (Edwards, 1986, p. 1462)
- Hyssop is significant in the Bible.
- Exodus 12:22 - And ye shall take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood that is in the bason, and strike the lintel and the two side posts with the blood that is in the bason; and none of you shall go out at the door of his house until the morning.
- Numbers 19:18 - And a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all the vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave:
- Psalms 51:7 - Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Matthew 27:33-35 - 33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull, 34 They gave him **vinegar** (*variant - wine*) to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink. 35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which

was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

Luke 23:35-37 - 35 And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. 36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, 37 And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself.

Matthew 27:46-50 - 46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? 47 Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias. 48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. 49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him. 50 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

Thus, the second half of Psalm 69:21 was fulfilled where the Scriptures says, "They gave me vinegar to drink."

30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar – when He had brought to fulfillment that last prophecy regarding His life and death.

He said, it is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost – Jesus did not mutter or whisper these words in weakness. According to Matthew and Mark, He shouted them as a victor who had just crossed the finish line. (Illustration – victory in Jesus)

- Because He was victorious, we too can have victory in Him.

Illustration - Victory in Jesus

Verse 1

I heard an old, old story how a Savior came from glory,
How He gave His life on Calvary to save a wretch like me;
I heard about His groaning, of His precious blood's atoning,
Then I repented of my sins and won the victory

Verse 2

I heard about His healing, of His cleansing power revealing
How he made the lame to walk again and caused the blind to see;
And then I cried, "Dear Jesus, come and heal my broken spirit,"

And some sweet day I'll sing up there the song of victory.

Chorus

O victory in Jesus, my Savior, forever!

He sought me and bought me with His redeeming blood;

He loved me ere I knew Him, and all my love is due Him.

He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood

He shouted, "It is finished." He said, "Father, into your hands I commend my spirit" (Lk. 23:46), and He died.

- It is finished.
 - o He had perfectly kept God's law (even on the cross).
 - o He had drunk the cup of God's wrath against the totality of sin.
 - o He had borne the curse of sin and death in His body.
 - o The Father treated Jesus as if He had lived my life so that the Father could treat me as if I had lived Jesus' life.
 - o He had finished what He came to do.
 - o But why did He have to die? Why couldn't/why didn't God just forgive? Why did it take such suffering and sacrifice on the part of Jesus?
 - Let me answer that question by telling you a story.
 - Illustration – Gabriel Fernandez, an 8-year-old kid that lived in the Antelope Valley around the time we were out there. He was murdered, and there was actually a Netflix documentary made about the trials that followed.
 - "Gabriel Fernandez was only 8 years old when he was brutally murdered by his mother Pearl and her boyfriend, Isauro Aguirre... Over 8 months Gabriel was subjected to horrific torture, which included regular beatings, being shot in the face with a BB gun, forced to eat cat litter, locked in a cupboard for hours, and pepper sprayed. The cruel nightmare ultimately ended when his mother and her boyfriend beat him to death.... At the crime scene, the investigator came in with red stickers to mark blood spatter around the apartment. However, there was so much blood, that she soon ran out of the color and had to switch to yellow stickers. Inexplicably, there was blood in the sink.
 - The abuse was substantial — they fed him cat litter, put a bandanna and sock in his mouth, knocked out his teeth with a bat, shot him in the face with a BB gun, and pepper sprayed him for fun while he laid in the bath tub. He would show up to

school with bruises all over his face, as well as fresh cigarette burns and shaved hair. Gabriel's brother testified that Aguirre would hold him up by the neck, while his sister said Aguirre knocked the air out of Fernandez on several occasions. During the trial, jurors were told the autopsy took an unusual two days because the injuries were so substantive." (Verhoeven, 2020)

- I remember watching that documentary and just being sick to my stomach about the whole thing...I remember Liz and I just crying over the injustice and depravity that transpired in that home.
- Imagine if the judge just let Gabriel Fernandez's torturers go free. Imagine if he just forgave. He let them off the hook with no sentence. What would you think of that judge? You'd be angry and rightfully so. Why? When injustice occurs in the world, our conscience burns with desire for justice to be executed. In such a setting, the refusal to carry out justice is not an expression of love, but an expression of moral inadequacy.
 - God is not just loving. He is also just.
 - He is not just a Father. He is a judge.
 - God in His justice insisted that sin be paid for.
 - God in His love stepped down into this world to make the payment Himself.
 - That is why the cross was necessary.
 - The cross was the place at which God's love and justice met.

Matt. 27:50 - 50 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

Mark 15:37 - 37 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

Hebrews 9:11-14 - But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

John 10:11, 18 - I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. 18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

Luke 23:46 - And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

We've seen the last words of Jesus: (1) I thirst (2) it is finished, but this morning we also see:

2.) The Final Actions of the Soldiers

31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

Crucifixions often lasted 2-3 days.

Because crucifixions often lasted for days, the Jews had a dilemma.

The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for the sabbath day was an high day) – It was Friday, the day of the preparation for the Sabbath, and this particular Sabbath was significant because it was the Sabbath of Passover week. It was an high day. Whereas Romans would typically leave bodies on the crosses post mortem to rot and be picked apart by scavengous birds, the Jews had an issue with this based on Deut. 21:22-23.

- Deut. 21:22-23 - 22 And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: 23 His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the Lord thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.
- “In ancient Judaism a criminal who was executed, usually by stoning, was then tied to a post, a type of tree, where his body would hang until sunset as a visible representation of rejection by God.” (MacArthur, 1987)
- The Jews feared based on this text that if the bodies of these men were left up on the cross over night, the land would be defiled, during the Passover. Once again this is ironic. They feared that the land would be defiled if the bodies were left up, not because they had just crucified the Son of God.

Being faced with this dilemma, The Jews

Besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away – “Breaking the legs of crucified persons was commonly done when there was a reason to hasten a crucified person’s death. It involved smashing the victim’s legs with an iron mallet. That gruesome procedure hastened death as the victims could no longer use their legs to help raise themselves up to breathe, so when the strength in their arms gave out, they suffocated.” (MacArthur, 2006)

The Jews asked Pilate to do this to the men, and Pilate acquiesced.

Matthew 27:62 - Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

Deuteronomy 21:22-23 - And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

Leviticus 23:7-16 - In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. But ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD seven days: in the seventh day is an holy convocation: ye shall do no servile work therein. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land which I give unto you, and shall reap the harvest thereof, then ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: And he shall wave the sheaf before the LORD, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it. And ye shall offer that day when ye wave the sheaf an he lamb without blemish of the first year for a burnt offering unto the LORD. And the meat offering thereof shall be two tenth deals of fine flour mingled with oil, an offering made by fire unto the LORD for a sweet savour: and the drink offering thereof shall be of wine, the fourth part of an hin. And ye shall eat neither bread, nor parched corn, nor green ears, until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God: it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings. And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD

32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him – On Pilate's command, the soldiers came and broke the legs of the two men crucified next to Jesus to hasten their death because they were, as expected, still alive.

Luke 23:39-43 - And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:

But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already – Jesus’ death after only 9 hours on the cross was relatively quick (although He had been beaten and scourged significantly prior to the cross). Most victims lasted longer than that, and it was surprising that He was already dead.

- In fact, when Joseph of Arimathea went to Pilate to ask the body of Jesus, do you know how Pilate responded? “He’s dead already?” He checked in with the centurion, and only after the centurion had confirmed Jesus’ death did Pilate then release the body to Joseph.

The soldiers came to Jesus and saw that He was dead already on the cross, which, by the way, it was relatively easy to discern if someone was or was not dead on a cross.

- When these soldiers saw that He was dead...

They brake not his legs – they did not break His legs (which was significant as we’ll see in a moment)

- The very truthfulness of God’s Word hung in the balance at that moment.

Rather than breaking His legs, as the professional executions they were, to ensure that He was dead,

34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.

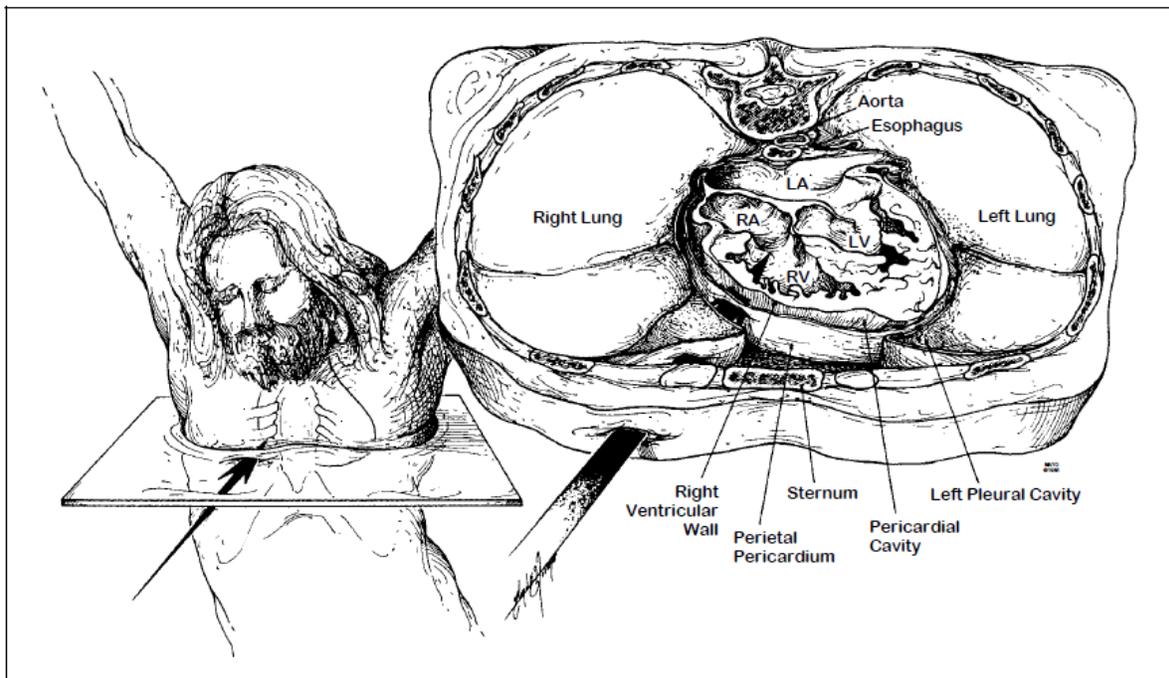


Fig 7.—Spear wound to chest. Left, Probable path of spear. Right, Cross section of thorax, at level of plane indicated at left, showing structures perforated by spear. LA indicates left atrium; LV, left ventricle; RA, right atrium; RV, right ventricle.

(Edwards, 1986, p. 1462)

But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side - one of the soldiers drove a spear through Jesus' mid-section.

“Although the side of the wound was not designated by John, it traditionally has been depicted on the right side.⁴ Supporting this tradition is the fact that a large flow of blood would be more likely with a perforation of the distended and thin-walled right atrium or ventricle than the thick-walled and contracted left ventricle.” (Edwards, 1986, p. 1462)

Forthwith came there out blood and water – the sequence of the words does not likely indicate order but significance (Edwards, 1986, p. 1463)

- “Therefore, the water probably represented serous pleural and pericardial fluid,^{5-7,11} and would have preceded the flow of blood and been smaller in volume than the blood. Perhaps in the setting of hypovolemia and impending acute heart failure, pleural and pericardial effusions may have developed and would have added to the volume of apparent water.^{5,11} The blood, in contrast, may have originated from the right atrium or the right ventricle (Fig 7) or perhaps from a hemopericardium.” (Edwards, 1986, p. 1463)
 - There is fluid that lines the walls/membrane of your lungs and heart. In the case of Jesus, blood loss, dehydration, and heart failure may have contributed to a greater than normal buildup of fluid around His heart and lungs. When the soldier pierced Jesus through the med section, the water that poured out was likely this membrane fluid, and the blood was likely from His heart.
- As an article in the Journal of the American Medical Association states, “Clearly, the weight of historical and medical evidence indicates that Jesus was dead before the wound to his side was inflicted and supports the traditional view that the spear, thrust between his right ribs, probably perforated not only the right lung but also the pericardium and heart and thereby ensured his death (Fig 7).” (Edwards, 1986, p. 1463)
 - What that means is that Jesus, without a doubt, died on the cross of Calvary.

There seems to be spiritual significance for John here as well.

- 1 John 5:6-8 - 6 This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. 7 For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. 8 And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one.
 - Water & Blood – Jesus’ baptism & death on the cross (at which the Father testified regarding the identity of the Son)
 - Water & Blood – cleansing and redemption (OT washings & sacrifices)Hebrews 9:22 - And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.

3.) The Fulfillment of the Scriptures

What did the last words of Jesus and the final actions of the soldiers have in common? The fulfillment of the Scriptures.

35 And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true – This is John talking. He says, “I saw this with my own two eyes, and my eye witness testimony is true.”

And he knoweth that he saith true – “and I know that I am telling the truth, and the reason I have told you the truth is”

That ye might believe – in order that you would believe that Jesus is who He claims to be

- That’s why he wrote John and why he wrote 1 John.

John 21:24 - This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

John 20:31 - But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

1 John 5:13 - These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.

36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

For these things were done, - the things that I’ve written of, the things that happened to Jesus on the cross. They were no accident. They happened in order that...

the scripture should be fulfilled – For instance, the Roman soldiers deciding not to break Jesus’ legs was not just incidental. It was vital, for it happened in accordance with what was prophesied in Psalm 34:20 where the Scriptures promises...

A bone of him shall not be broken - According to Exodus 12:46, no bone on the Passover sacrificial lamb was to be broken. Beyond that, Psalm 34:20 explicitly prophesied that no bone of the Messiah would be broken.

- In that moment when the soldiers were deciding whether they would or would not break Jesus’ legs, the truthfulness of God’s Word hung in the balance. When they opted not to break them, God’s Word was once again proven to be reliable and true. Exodus 12:46 - In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof.

Psalms 34:20 - He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken.

But that’s not all...because it wasn’t just what the soldiers didn’t do to Jesus that fulfilled the Scriptures, it was also what they did do to Him that fulfilled the Scriptures. For...

37 And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced – in fulfillment of Zechariah 12:10 where it says

Zechariah 12:10 - And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

- The Scripture predicted that the soldiers would cast lots for Jesus' clothes, not break any of His bones, and pierce His side, and in every single instance the Word of God was proven to be trustworthy, true, and unbreakable.

The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth happened according to the Scriptures. When the disciples finally understood that and it clicked, man, that must have been an amazing moment.

Illustration – Have you ever seen a movie or read a book that had a crazy twist at the end that made you reinterpret the entire story (e.g. wow, the guy was a ghost the whole time, oh my goodness, he's still alive!)? For me, *The Illusionist* was a film that did just that. It had a crazy twist ending that made me rethink the entire plot, and do you know what I did afterwards? I rewatched the movie, now knowing what was actually going on, and I picked up on so many different things that I didn't notice the first time because I didn't know to look for them.

- The crucifixion and the resurrection was like that for the disciples. As it was all happening they didn't fully grasp the significance of what was occurring. But then after Jesus' resurrection, when they understood they had the full picture, do you know what they did? They rewatched the movie. They reread the book. They poured over the Scriptures, and they picked up on so many different things that seemed incidental at the time, but now having grasped the full picture, they could see were fulfillments of Scripture.

Wait, how much did Judas betray Jesus for again? 30 pieces of silver. Oh my goodness. That's a fulfillment of prophesy. Zechariah 11:12-13 predicted that the Messiah would be betrayed by a friend for 30 pieces of silver that would then be thrown down in the temple and used to buy a potter's field. Gracious. That's exactly what happened.

You can imagine the disciples reading through the Psalms and coming upon chapter 22. Guys, come here, come here. Look at what it says. It prophesies His thirst, the piercing of His hands and feet, His scourging, the gambling over His clothes. That was all by design.

Isaiah 53:5 – He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

There are hundreds and hundreds of prophecies in the Old Testament about the Messiah, and on every single one of them hung the trustworthiness of God's Word and every single

one of them is fulfilled to the T in Jesus Christ. Wow. It was there all along. And every time you read, “as it is written” or “according to the Scriptures” or “that the Scriptures might be fulfilled”, it’s another passage that when the disciples went back and rewatched the movie, it blew their mind. Wow. There it was.

Application

God keeps His Word. It is true, and it is unbreakable. Although many of the prophecies regarding Jesus have been fulfilled, there are quite a few that have not yet been accomplished. Why? Because He’s coming back. Whereas the first time Jesus came to this earth as Savior, the second time Jesus will come as judge.

- Love and Justice
- Jesus Christ will judge the world for its sin, and if your sin has not been paid for through faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, you will be found guilty, and you will pay the penalty for your sin for the rest of eternity. Are you ready for that moment? Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior? He will either save you from your sin, or He will judge you for your sin. There is no third option. He paid your penalty when He died in your place so that you could be forgiven, and all it takes to receive that forgiveness is to call upon Him in faith as your Lord and Savior. Friend, have you been saved by Jesus, or are you on a path of unbelief that will end with you being judged by Jesus?

For those of us who are Christians, following the rapture, we will stand at the Judgment Seat of Christ, not to determine our eternal destiny, but to give an account for our lives as followers of Jesus. Are you ready to stand before God and give an account? Is Jesus at the center of your life, or is an accessory on the exterior of your life? Are you truly living your life for Him, or are you living your life for you?

It was prophesied that the Messiah would come the first time as Savior, and He did. It is prophesied that the Messiah will come a second time as judge, and He will. Are you ready for that day?

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Exodus 12:22, Numbers 19:18, and Psalm 51:7. What is the significance of hyssop in these passages of Scripture? How do they parallel the significance of the hyssop in the crucifixion narrative?*

3.) *Read Matt. 27:45-56. How does Matthew's account (which is reflected in Mark & Luke) of Jesus' final moments on the cross compare and contrast with John's account?*

looking ahead

4.) *Read John 19:38-42. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 19:38-42 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 19:38-42

Review

We've come a long way in our journey through the life of Jesus in the gospel of John, and as we've studied more recently His crucifixion and death, we've been introduced to a lot of interesting characters that were part of His story.

There was Judas, a true unbeliever amongst the 12, who betrayed Him for thirty pieces of silver. There was Peter, who insisted He would be at Jesus' side to the end, and then denied Him three times. There was Caiaphas, the Jewish high priest, who led the effort to put Jesus to death. There was Barabbas, the criminal, who the crowd shouted to be set free instead of Jesus. There was Pilate, the Roman governor, who was unconvinced of Jesus' guilt, but when forced to choose between saving his own skin or Jesus', he chose himself. There were the soldiers at the cross who mocked Jesus and gambled over His clothes. There was the thief on the cross, who while hanging next to Jesus called on Jesus to save him. There were the women at the cross, who grieved as they witnessed their Lord dying. There was John, to whom the Lord committed the care of His mother. And then, Jesus, having accomplished all that He came to do, cried out, "It is finished", and He died in fulfillment of the Scripture for the redemption of mankind.

Today, as we transition our attention to the events that followed Jesus' death, we are going to see two surprising characters introduced into the story: Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus. These men played an integral part in the burial of Jesus, and as we take time this morning to study Jesus' burial, the first thing we see is:

Sermon

1.) The Request for Jesus' Body

38 And after this Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.

And after this – after Jesus' death on the cross and the post mortem piercing of His side with a spear, there was a request made to Pilate regarding His body. The request is interesting because it stands in stark contrast with the request that had just been made by the Jewish authorities (i.e. "Pilate, would you please break the legs of the men on the crosses so that they would die faster and not defile the land?"). It was a pretty brutal request, and John here in verse 38 describes another, very different kind of petition regarding the body of Jesus.

This request was made by a man known as...

Joseph of Arimathea, being an disciple of Jesus – Matthew, Mark and Luke all describe Joseph in very positive terms. From their gospel accounts, we know that he was a wealthy man from the city of Arimathea, located somewhere in Judea. He was a prominent member of the Sanhedrin (the Jewish supreme court responsible for the execution of Jesus). However, we are told that Joseph opposed the decision to crucify Jesus (he dissented from the majority opinion of the court). He was a good and upright man, who, like Simeon and Anna, was waiting patiently for the kingdom of God.

- And yet, the request for Jesus' body by Joseph of Arimathea would have been both embarrassing and unexpected.
 - o It would have been embarrassing because of who didn't ask for the body: namely, the disciples or Jesus' family.
 - Although, I will say that even if Jesus' family or disciples had requested the body, it would have been quite unlikely for Pilate to release it to them.
 - o It would have been unexpected because it was the Sanhedrin, the religious authorities, that were responsible for the death of Jesus in the first place. If you were making this story up, Joseph would not have been the character you chose to request Jesus' body. It's the type of detail that you can only explain being in the historical narrative because it was how it actually happened. The request by Joseph would have been embarrassing to Jesus' disciples and unexpected by all.
- Whereas Matthew, Mark, and Luke all describe Joseph of Arimathea in exclusively positive terms, John adds in a little caveat here in his description of the man.
 - o He says that he was a disciple/follower of Jesus...

But secretly for fear of the Jews – Joseph was a follower of Jesus throughout His ministry. He was a sympathizer with Jesus but up to this point in time, he was unwilling to publicly identify himself as a follower of Jesus Christ.

- John has a very negative perception of those who refused to identify with Jesus publicly...probably due to the fact that Jesus had a very negative perception of those who were afraid to do so.
 - o Luke 9:26 - For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.
 - o Matthew 10:32-33 - 32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. 33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.
 - Jesus is not talking about those who have lapses of courage, as Peter did, and then later on repent. He's talking about those who persist in

refusing to identify with Him, those who persist in being secret followers.

- John 12:42-43 - 42 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him (*i.e. Joseph*); but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: 43 For they (*cough cough Joseph*) loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.
- 2 Timothy 2:12 - If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:
- John's language here in this passage is not meant to belittle Joseph, but rather to contrast who he was before and after this moment when he went to Pilate.
 - Up to this point in time, because of his position as a member of the Sanhedrin and what he stood to lose, he was too afraid to publicly identify as a follower of Jesus.
 - But in this moment, when Jesus had already died, when he had nothing to gain and everything to lose, he went boldly to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus so that he might honor it.
 - That request would have quickly become public knowledge to every other member of that Sanhedrin of what Joseph truly thought of Jesus: that Jesus was a man deserving not of the cross, but of honor.
 - It would have been a slap in the face to his colleagues as he publicly declared that he stood in opposition to the decision of the council.
 - In requesting the body of Jesus, for the first time in his life, Joseph publicly courageously identified with Jesus Christ.
 - Hey may have followed Jesus secretly at one point in his life, but no longer.
- Application – May his example be a reminder to us that God has no undercover children.
 - The history of the church has been the history of a body of believers that even in the face of death would not recant their faith and boldly proclaimed the name of Jesus.
 - Stephen was stoned.
 - Paul was beheaded.
 - Peter was crucified upside down.
 - Under the Roman emperor Nero, Christians were burned like candles to light his garden at night.
 - Under the Roman emperor Domitian, a law was made that no Christian, once brought before the tribunal, should be exempted from punishment without renouncing his religion.
 - Under Trajan, Symphorosa, a widow, was commanded by the emperor to sacrifice to the heathen deities. When she refused, she was carried to the temple of Hercules, scourged, hung by the hair of head, and then

thrown into the river with a large stone tied around her neck so that she drowned.

- Under Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, a woman and her seven sons refused to recant their faith. The mother and three of the boys were beheaded. The fourth was thrown to his death from a cliff. The fifth and sixth were beaten to death with clubs. The last was crushed to death by weights. (Foxe, 1563)
- The history of the church has been the history of bold, public identification with Jesus regardless of the fallout.
- And yet, today we have people who claim the name of Jesus but refuse to identify with Him in baptism. They can't do it. They won't do it.
 - God help us.
- Today, we have those who, when we partake in communion together and identify with Christ, either don't care enough to be at church or just don't partake. We have Christians today that can't even remember the last time they partook.
 - God help us.
- Today, we have those who refuse to make a priority out of weekly publicly gathering and worshipping in person with His people because we're too busy. Because of sports. Because we've got other, more important things going on.
 - God help us.
- Today, we have those who don't have the courage out in the community to call themselves a Christian and act like one.
 - God help us.
- We all deal with fear at times, and Joseph was afraid too, but the crucifixion brought him to the point where Jesus was more important than his fear...and he boldly and publicly identified with Jesus when he requested the body to bury it.
 - Courage is not the absence of fear, but the belief that something else is more important than that fear.
 - God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.
 - Are you afraid? Are you afraid to identify with Jesus? Are you afraid to truly live like a Christian? Find courage in the conviction that Jesus is more important than your fear.
 - The fear of man is a trap, but whoever puts his trust in the Lord will be safe.

Following the death of Jesus, Joseph...

Besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus – he summoned the courage to boldly go to Pilate and beg for the body of Jesus.

- “Marvellous it certainly is, that one who while Jesus was yet alive simply refrained from condemning Him, but now that He was dead, and His cause apparently dead with Him, that he summon up courage to go in personally to the Roman governor and ask permission to take down and bury the body.” (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884)
- It must have been surprising to Pilate for so prominent a person, for a member of the Sanhedrin, to come and request the body of this man that the Sanhedrin insisted he crucify.
 - Jesus was poor. Joseph was rich. Jesus was an outsider. Joseph was an insider. Jesus was crucified. Joseph was respected. ...and yet here was Joseph, begging Pilate for the body of Jesus, in fulfillment of Isaiah 53:9 where the Scripture prophesies that the Messiah would die next to sinners and yet be buried with the rich in His death.
 - How odd that must have been for Pilate. “You want His body? Really? That’s what you’re here for? It means that much to you?”
 - Under Roman practice, the bodies of those crucified would be released to their next of kin...but in the case of those crucified for treason, the bodies would be left on the cross to rot and be picked apart by scavengers. Although that was the Roman practice, the Jews did not refuse anyone the right to burial regardless of the circumstances.
 - But, for the Jews, in the case of executed criminals, rather than giving the body to the next of kin, they would bury these men in a designated public burial site just outside of the city. When the Jews requested that the legs of the criminals be broken so that they could die and their bodies be taken down, they no doubt intended for all three of these bodies to be buried in that public site. (Carson, 1991)
 - That was where Jesus’ body, on the authority of the religious leaders, was undoubtedly headed...but then something surprising happened.
 - A member of the Jewish leadership used his rank to gain access to Pilate and request permission to personally take possession of the body and bury it honorably himself.
 - Now that would have been a shocker, and Pilate very easily could have refused this request. And yet, his willingness to give the body to Joseph likely reflected his conviction that Jesus was not truly guilty of treason.
 - Upon receiving this surprising request from Joseph, Pilate checked with the centurion to ensure that Jesus was actually dead, and upon receiving this verification...

Pilate gave him leave – He gave Joseph permission to take the body

He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus – so as to bury it honorably

- As a wealthy man, he likely had his servants take down the body on his behalf. Matthew 27:57-60 - When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

Mark 15:42-46 - And now when the even was come, because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the sabbath, Joseph of Arimathaea, an honourable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead. And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph. And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

Luke 23:50-51 -50 And, behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counsellor; and he was a good man, and a just: 51 (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.

John 9:22 - These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

The request for Jesus' body...

But as we look at the story of Jesus' burial this morning, we see not only the request for Jesus' body. We see also the honoring of Jesus' body...and in this part of the narrative, we are introduced to another surprising, but somewhat familiar character: Nicodemus (who is previously and exclusively mentioned in John's gospel).

2.) The Honoring of Jesus' Body

39 And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.

And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night – Like Joseph, Nicodemus was also a member of the Sanhedrin (the Jewish supreme court). This is, no doubt, where he and Joseph knew each other from.

- Like Joseph, Nicodemus also, up to this point, seemed to be a secret follower/sympathizer with Jesus. In John 3, he sought Jesus out by night to have a private audience with Him. In John 7, when the Pharisees wanted to kill Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles, Nicodemus sort of defended Jesus. In John 11, we have record of a private convening of the Sanhedrin in which they conclusively determined to

put Jesus to death. In our study of that passage, we discussed how that John may have received the detailed account of that meeting from Nicodemus himself.

- John's reminder to us that Nicodemus "at first came to Jesus by night" is no accident. If it's in there, there's a reason for it. John's description of Nicodemus parallels His description of Joseph. According to John, Joseph was a secret follower of Jesus, and Nicodemus was one who initially sought Jesus out under the cover of night. Once again, his descriptions of these two men is not designed to belittle them, but rather it is designed to provide a point of contrast between the fearful men they were and the courageous disciples they became.
- Nicodemus, Perhaps inspired by the boldness of his companion Joseph, assisted in the dressing of the body and burial of Jesus. In so doing, he locked arms with his colleague in bold opposition to and rebellion against the decision to crucify Jesus of Nazareth. When they honored and buried Jesus' body, it was as if they wrote and published a public dissenting opinion against the decision of the Jewish court. Through his public, open identification with Jesus Christ in His death, Nicodemus, like Joseph, declared that this man was worthy of honor and dignity.

And brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight –



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- As a wealthy man, his servants likely transported the myrrh and aloes on behalf.
- Myrrh is a resin/gum/sap taken from a particular type of tree. It would be grinded down into a powder that would be spread across a deceased body.
- The aloes mentioned here is sandalwood. Like Myrrh, the wood would be made into a powder to cover bodies with during the burial process.

- It's pretty remarkable smelling these fragrances and knowing that was what the body of Jesus and tomb of Jesus would have smelled like.
- Pound – Roman pound (12 ounces)
 - 100 Roman pounds would be about 65-75 American pounds/1200 ounces of fragrance.
 - I have in each of these bags an ounce of fragrance. If you took this amount and multiplied it by 600, that is the amount of fragrance that the body of Jesus was dressed with by Joseph and Nicodemus.
 - That was a lot of fragrance, and it would have cost a lot of money.
 - 1200 ounces
 - Myrrh - \$5/ounce today = \$3000
 - Aloe - \$2/ounce today = \$1200
 - Following Christ's death on the cross, this two men didn't just boldly, publicly identify with Jesus. They put their money where their mouth was, and they gave out of their own pockets to honor Jesus. They honored Him with what they gave.
 - Do you honor the Lord with what you give?
 - You may honor the Lord with your lips, but do you honor Him with your wallet?
 - "Besides the kingdom of God, stewardship (the faithful management of the resources God has entrusted to us) was Jesus' favorite subject to talk about. He talked more about money and possessions than about faith and prayer combined. He spent more time dealing with denari than He did with hell." (Searcy, 2010, p. 25)
 - Why? Because where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.
 - Are you honoring the Lord with your finances? Are you stewarding the resources He has entrusted to you for His purposes, or are you squandering all of it on yourself? Are you supporting the work of the local church you belong to here in Camarillo? Are you giving to the Lord through your local church? Are you generous towards the needs of the poor and needy God has placed in your life? Are you giving to the Lord in that way?
 - "One day everyone must answer three questions: Where did it all go? What did I spend it on? What has been accomplished for eternity through my use of all this wealth? - Randy Alcorn" (Searcy, 2010, p. 22)
 - At the end of your life, your relationship with money will be summed up by one of two words, either generosity or greed. (Searcy, 2010, p. 71) (71)

- Are you honoring the Lord with your finances? Are you ready to give an account to God for how you invested His money in things that made an eternal difference?
- Compare with Jesus' words about Mary's pouring out of spikenard for Him as being done against the day of His burying.
 - John 12:7 - Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

Joseph and Nicodemus honored the Lord with what they gave. Are you?

John 3:1-3 - There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: 2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. 3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 7:50-52 - Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

Psalm 45:8 - 8 All thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad.

Matthew 2:11 - 11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh.

40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury – the mixture of spices was laid along the strips of linen that Jesus' body was wrapped in. The spices were also likely placed under the body and alongside of it. The purpose of this type of Jewish burial practice was not to preserve the body, but to overpower the smell of the body as it decayed. (Carson, 1991) We see this practice not only here with Jesus, but also with Lazarus in John 11.

In what they did, they showed honor to the Lord.

Mark 15:46 - 46 And he **bought fine linen**, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

Luke 24:12 - 12 Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld **the linen clothes** laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

John 11:44 - And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

John 20:5-7 - And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

Acts 5:6 - And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

We've seen the request for Jesus' body. They publicly identified with Jesus in what they did. We've seen the honoring of Jesus' body. They honored the Lord with what they gave. Finally, we see...

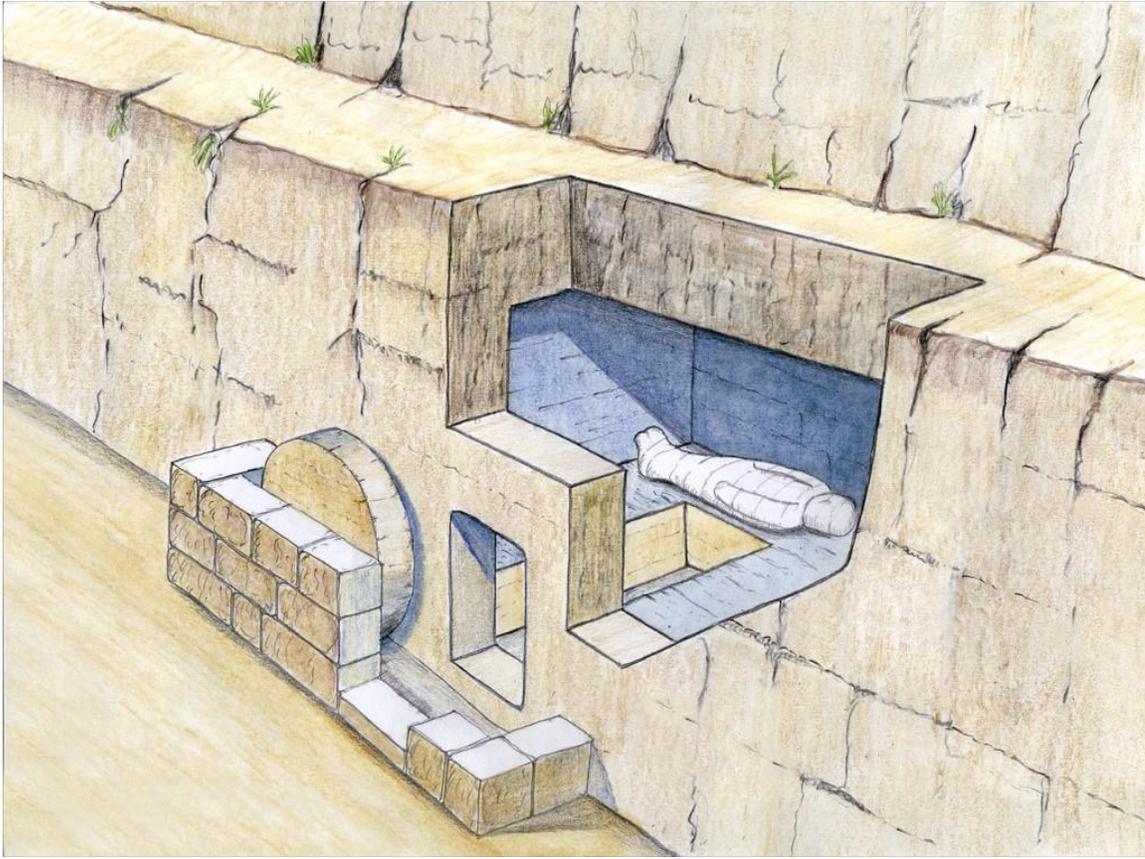
3.) The Placement of Jesus' Body

41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden – near to Golgotha was a garden. It was apparently a substantial enough, well-kept garden that Mary Magdalene, in John 20, assumed it was tended to by a gardener. Perhaps this garden was a private garden owned by Joseph of Arimathea, as was the case with the tomb within it.

In the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid – according to Matthew and Luke, this tomb was an artificial cave recently carved into a rockface. It was a new tomb, and it was a private tomb, owned by Joseph that had never before been occupied by a dead body. That's significant. For...

- When Jesus rose, there could be no confusion over who had risen from the dead. There was only one body that had ever occupied that tomb, and there was one body that arose from within it.
- This tomb was likely intended for Joseph and his family. To bury the body of Jesus within it would have been to designate to Jesus something of great value at great cost to himself.



-
- "If, as the Gospels emphasize, the tomb was 'new,' it would have had the features common to tombs of this period, in the first stage of their construction. These started off as a simple chamber, which had three benches around a pit, in which the tomb cutters could stand while excavating the rock. The body could then be placed in its linen grave clothes on one of these benches. The Gospel record tells us that some of the women could see where Jesus was laid (Mark 15:47) and that the Apostle John, when he stooped down to look into the tomb, after the resurrection, could actually see his grave clothes (John 20:5,6). This could only have been possible if Jesus' body was placed on the bench directly opposite the tomb opening.
- In this representation, a circular stone that could be rolled in order to close the entranceway is shown. In fact, most tombs from this period were closed with square or rectangular stones, rolling stones being reserved for the tombs of the wealthy. However, Matthew 27.59,60 tells us that Joseph of Arimathea, who placed the body of Jesus in his own personal tomb: 'rolled a great stone to the entranceway of the tomb.' This shows the accuracy of the Gospel record, as Joseph was 'a rich man.' All the Gospel references speak only of the stage of 'primary burial,' which means that the bodies were placed on benches (arcosolia) or niches (kokhim). About a year later, the bones of the deceased were collected for 'secondary burial' and placed in an ossuary, when additional chambers were often cut in which to store the ossuaries. This phase of burial was made totally irrelevant in the case of Jesus because of the miracle of his resurrection." (Ritmeyer)

- There are two suggested locations for the site of Jesus' tomb
 - The garden tomb in the north
 - The style of the tomb dates back to 7th-8th century BC. Thus, even if it were reused in the first century, it couldn't be described as a new tomb.
 - The tomb in the church of the Holy Sepulchre in the west
 - The problem with this site is that we don't have access to the tomb in its original form as it was destroyed by Muslims a thousand years ago.



- Church of the Holy Sepulcher
 - "What is the site's claim to authenticity? The requirements, according to the writers of the New Testament, are: that the site of the crucifixion was outside the city walls of the time (Hebrews 13.12), yet close to the city (John 19.20), on a main road (Mark 15.21,29), that it was called Golgotha, meaning 'Place of a skull,' (Matthew 27.33) and that it was in a garden (John 19.41).
 - We see that a determination of the course of the city wall of the period is crucial. From excavations carried out in the area, we see that in the early first century A.D., this site was part of a disused quarry which contained numerous tombs in the style of the period. This alone would indicate that the area was not then included within the city walls, as the dead were always buried outside the city. In addition to this, some fortified remains found in the northern part of the Jewish Quarter excavations have been identified as the Gennath (Garden) Gate mentioned by Josephus in his description of the Second Wall. It is assumed that the gate derived its name from a garden planted in the quarry, which lay just to the north, outside the gate. Indeed a layer of arable soil was discovered above the quarry fill.
 - The claim that the site could have been known as 'Place of a skull' rests on an ancient Jewish tradition, reported by early Christian writers such as Origen

and Epiphanius, that the skull of Adam, our common ancestor, is preserved in this hill.” (Ritmeyer)

- Garden Tomb

- “Because of the wealth of knowledge accumulated in recent years on the subject of burial customs during the various periods, Israeli archaeologists have been able to prove that this tomb was in fact a typical tomb of the First Temple period. They concluded that it formed part of a vast cemetery which was located to the north of the Damascus Gate, dating from the days of the Judean Kings (7-8th centuries B.C.). Thus, even if the tomb had been re-used in the Second Temple period, it could not be said to be ‘new’ (John 19.41). During the Byzantine period, the burial benches were cut to create sarcophagi and Christian symbols were painted on the walls. (No evidence was found of any use of the tomb between the 8th century B.C. and the 5th century A.D.).” (Ritmeyer)
- “Both sites are problematic, as the traditional Tomb of Christ in the Holy Sepulchre has been destroyed about 1000 years ago and the tomb in the garden of the Garden Tomb was not a newly hewn tomb.” (Ritmeyer)

John 20:15 - Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the **gardener**, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

Matthew 27:60 - And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

Luke 23:53 - And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

Regardless of where exactly the tomb was...

42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day – Joseph and Nicodemus wanted to quickly bury the body of Jesus prior to the Sabbath, which was only a matter of hours away at sunset. Our days today start at midnight, but in the first century Jewish days went from sunset to sunset, and Jesus died around 3pm. They were trying to bury Him before nightfall, and so they buried Him in Joseph's family, garden tomb. Why?

For the sepulchre was nigh at hand – the tomb was near by

It was significant that Jesus was buried before sunset on Friday because He had prophesied in Matthew 12:40 that just as Jonah was in the belly of the whale for three days and three nights, so too He would be in the earth. Now, the Jews considered any part of a day as constituting a day and a night. Thus, Jesus needed to be buried before sunset on Friday so that He could be in the tomb for three days (part of Friday afternoon, Saturday, and part of Sunday morning). (MacArthur, 2006)

They buried Jesus in this nearby tomb, but...

Before departing, Joseph rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb (or he had his servants roll a great stone to the door of the tomb), and the following day, the Jews ensured that a Roman guard was posted outside of the tomb for the weekend to make sure the disciples didn't steal the body.

- Matthew 27:60 - And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.
- Matthew 27:64-66 - Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

Thus concludes the story of the burial of Jesus' body.

Psalms 22:15 - My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me **into the dust of death.**

1 Corinthians 15:4 - And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

John 19:14 - And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

John 19:31 - The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

Application

And yet, in the story of Jesus' burial, we have seen two surprising characters that ought to inspire us to follow in their footsteps: Joseph and Nicodemus.

Following His death, at a point in time when it could have cost them everything, they demonstrated courage and generosity. They were courageous in publicly identifying with Jesus when they buried Him. They were generous in giving to Jesus when they anointed Him.

Are you boldly standing for and with Jesus Christ in your life?

Are you honoring the Lord through the stewardship of the financial resources He has entrusted to you? Are you ready to stand before Him and give an account in those two areas of your life?

This morning as we prepare to partake of the Lord's supper together, each of us that know the Lord will have an opportunity to publicly identify with Him by partaking.

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? Describe something that you learned or that stuck out to you.*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Matt. 27:57-60, Mark 15:42-46, and Luke 23:50-51. Compare and contrast the ways that the different gospel accounts describe Joseph of Arimathea.*

3.) *Read John 12:1-8. How does Mary's treatment of Jesus in John 12 mirror Joseph and Nicodemus' treatment of Jesus in John 19? What lessons can we learn from both stories?*

looking ahead

4.) *Read John 20:1-10. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 20:1-10 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 20:1-10

Illustration



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Queen Elizabeth II was probably one of the more beloved global figures of our life time.

Although the monarch in England does not serve as the head of state (the prime minister does), in Elizabeth's role as a unifying figurehead for the country and a stabilizing presence, she was second to none.

She reigned for seven decades and throughout the course of her time as queen, she saw 15 prime ministers ranging from Winston Churchill to Liz Truss. She was the longest reigning monarch in England's history and the second longest reigning monarch in the history of the world.

- Liz was always really interested in the royal family, and I couldn't have cared less.
- She got me into watching some documentaries about the royal family and the crown, and all of the sudden I got interested because history is fascinating.
 - o Queen Elizabeth's faith
 - o Her uncle abdicated the throne to her dad to marry someone in defiance of the church. Then he turned out to be a Nazi sympathizer that plotted with Hitler to retake the throne if/when Germany conquered England.
 - o I got all into the history, and then she died. I was sad because I hadn't finished the series yet.

When she died on September 8th, there was a global outpouring of grief and affection for her.

There was a queue line in England that you could wait in to see and pay respect to the casket of Queen Elizabeth. At one point in time the wait time for that 5-mile-long queue was

24 hours. They got to the point where they had to temporarily close off the queue which just created a queue for the queue when it reopened. An estimated 250,000 people waited in line to pay respects to the deceased monarch.

For the funeral itself, 2000 VIPs attended, but roughly 1 million flocked to London to be in the city when it happened. An estimated 30 million people just in the UK watched.

It was a glorious conclusion to a remarkable life, and yet as beloved of a figure as she was, her story ended with her death and her burial.

That is how the story of just about every other person who has walked the planet has ended as well, but my friend, this morning, the good news of the gospel is that Jesus' story did not end that way.

He died, and He was buried, by my friend, on the third day, Jesus rose from the grave victorious over sin, death, and hell.

- Because He paid for my sin on that cross, I can be forgiven.
- Because He conquered death in His resurrection, I can have life.
- Because He won the victory over Hell, I don't have to go there.

Because He lives, the cross is not bad news. It is good news.

A young man whose father is a carpenter grows up working in his father's shop. He has no formal education. He owns no property of any kind. One day he puts down his tools and walks out of his father's shop. He starts preaching on street corners and in the nearby country side. This uneducated, property less young man who preached on street corners for only three years who left no written word has for 2000 years had a greater effect on the entire world than all the rulers, kings, and emperors, all the conquerors, the generals and admirals, all the scholars, scientists and philosophies who ever lived - all put together. How do we explain that? ...unless he really was what he said he was. - Ronald Reagan

Introduction

At the heart of who He was is the gospel message which Paul summarizes in 1 Cor. 15 when he says,

1 Cor. 15:1-4 - Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved (*from sin, death, and hell*), if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

- Gospel – death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the sins of the world so that we might have everlasting life

- If you were to look at the life and death of Jesus from a purely historical lens, you would find that there is good evidence regarding the historicity of Jesus' death, burial, and His resurrection.

The Death

- Jesus died publicly, and the good news of His death and resurrection was first preached in the very city where that public execution took place.
- Beyond that, His death is described not only by all four gospel authors, but also by the Jewish historian Josephus, the Roman historian Tacitus, and the Greek writer Lucian (just to name a few).
- Jesus died. It's a historical fact, and anyone who says that He didn't die or that He didn't exist has no idea what they're talking about.

The Burial

- The description coincides with archaeological evidence from that time period.
- The involvement of Joseph of Arimathea (a member of the very Jewish Sanhedrin that was responsible for Jesus' execution) was significant.
 - o His request to bury the body would have been embarrassing to the disciples who were nowhere to be found. If you were making up a story about the burial, Joseph is not the type of person that you would invent to request the body. The only explanation for why he is without exception included in the historical accounts of Jesus' burial is because that was how it actually happened.
 - o Further, because Joseph of Arimathea was a Jewish supreme court justice (a very public figure), you couldn't just make up a story about him and not be discredited on the spot if it weren't true.
- "The burial of Jesus is one of the earliest and best attested facts about Jesus." –John A.T. Robinson of Cambridge University

The Resurrection

- The resurrection is the foundation of Christianity.
- The foundation for the early church's belief in the resurrection was the direct result of two intertwined pieces of evidence:
 - o The discovery of the empty tomb
 - o The repeated, public appearances of Jesus following the discovery of that empty tomb
 - The two of them together were important because if you have an empty tomb but no appearances, no one would have concluded that He was risen. They would have concluded that the body had been stolen or moved. If you had appearances but the tomb was not empty, then the notion of the resurrection would have been easily discredited as opponents could have just pointed to the body which was still physically located in the tomb.

Over the course of the past couple months, we've talked about Christ's death. Last week, we talked about His burial, and this morning we are going to talk about the discovery of the empty tomb.

Whereas Joseph and Nicodemus were integral to the story of Jesus' burial, today we're going to see that Mary Magdalene, Peter, and John were integral to the discovery of the empty tomb.

Sermon

1.) The Discovery by Mary Magdalene

1 The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre – early Sunday morning before sunrise, Mary Magdalene made her way to the garden tomb where Jesus was buried.

- Now Mary Magdalene was a woman that Jesus had healed from demon possession earlier in His ministry. As a result, she decided to travel with Jesus and His disciples as a committed follower. She was heading to the tomb that morning.
- We know from the other gospel accounts that Mary Magdalene was not alone. She was also accompanied by Mary the mother of the apostle James, Salome the mother of our author John, Joanna, and other women.
 - o John is aware of this fact by the way. For, in verse 2, when Mary Magdalene reports her discovery to Peter and John, she says, "someone has taken the body, and we (plural) do not know where it is."
 - o What that means is that either Mary arrived at the tomb before the other women did, or that the moment they all arrived and she saw the empty tomb, she immediately ran off to tell Peter and John, leaving the other women behind.
- These women came with spices to anoint the body of Jesus.
 - o How did they know where to go? Unlike the disciples, they were there at the cross and they were there when Jesus was buried.
 - Luke 23:55-56 - 55 And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid. 56 And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the sabbath day according to the commandment.
 - o Why? Why did they come with spices to anoint the body of Jesus? Nicodemus and Joseph had already done that with like 75 pounds of spice. Why would they then come with more? It was probably for the same reason that my wife wipes down the countertops right after I do. They figured it wasn't possible for a man to do the job right, and they needed to take action.

- On a more serious note, it was probably for the same reason that Mary the sister of Lazarus anointed Jesus' feet with costly spikenard in John 12. It had nothing to do with rationale, and it had everything to do with generosity towards and worship for their Lord.
- When did they go?
 - As soon as they could after the Sabbath had ended. Remember, they were there at the burial. The Sabbath was a day of rest. They weren't supposed to do any work on that day. Early Sunday morning, as soon as they could be there, they were on their way back to the tomb.
 - You know what you see there? Grief. If you've ever lost someone that you were very close to, you know that grief can be consuming and debilitating, especially at first.
 - You don't sleep.
 - You don't eat.
 - Your thoughts are consumed by that person.
 - You spend a great deal of time at the grave.
 - The fact that Mary Magdalene and the other women made their way to the tomb when it was still dark tells me that they probably weren't sleeping and that their grieving hearts were consumed with thoughts of Jesus.
- They were on their way as soon as they could early Sunday morning to anoint the body of Jesus. They had seen the stone rolled in front of the tomb on Friday. How were they going to roll the stone away? According to Mark 16:3, they didn't know.
 - Mark 16:3 - 3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

Yet when Mary Magdalene arrived at the tomb, having likely outpaced the women and arriving before them, what did she see? To her surprise...

And seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre – Seeing the stone rolled away, Mary assumed that the religious authorities had moved the body of Jesus (knowing that they certainly would not have been happy with Joseph's burial of the body)

- Illustration – how would you feel if you went to visit the burial plot of your loved one and the grave had been dug up and the body was gone?
 - You'd be angry and frustrated, and you would conclude not that you loved one had risen, but that their body had been moved.
 - Meanwhile, when the other women arrived at the tomb, they too found it empty and entered inside where they encountered the angels. One of the angels proclaimed to the women that Jesus had risen, and upon hearing this, the women quickly left the tomb and ran to bring the disciples word. (Chaffey, 2015)
- The stone was rolled away not so He could get out, but so that they could see in.

- Matthew 28:2-4 - 2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. 3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: 4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.
 - Describes what had previously happened and why the stone was rolled away.

Matthew 28:1-10 - In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came **Mary Magdalene and the other Mary** to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

Mark 16:1-2 - And when the sabbath was past, **Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome**, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

Luke 24:1-10 - Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words, And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. **It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James**, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

Matthew 27:64-66 - Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the

people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

Matthew 28:2 - And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

Mark 16:3-4 - And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

Having discovered the empty tomb and assuming that the body had been taken, what did she do?

2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved – Mary ran to find Peter and John.

- She was outraged, and she had to tell someone.
- The urgency of her heart is reflected in the rapid-fire movement of her feet.

And saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we (remember that Mary didn't travel alone) know not where they have laid him. – Take note of what Mary did and did not say to Peter and John. She did not relay the facts. She relayed her wrong interpretation of the facts.

- She didn't say, "The tomb's empty!" She said, "The authorities took the body, and we don't know what they did with it!" ...which turned out to obviously not be the case.
- Why did Mary only go to Peter and John? Why aren't any of the other disciples mentioned in this passage? If, as we're told in the other gospels, the other women were on their way to notify the other disciples, then how did they not cross paths with Peter, John and Mary Magdalene as they made their way back to the tomb?
 - o It's possible that Peter and John were not staying in the same place as the other disciples on that morning. "Remember, although all the disciples 'forsook Him and fled' at His arrest (Matthew 26:56), Peter and John were brave enough to enter Jerusalem to find out what would happen to Jesus (John 18:15). Of course, Peter fled in shame after he denied Christ (Matthew 26:75), but John was present at the Cross (John 19:26). At some point, John and Peter could have met up, and it's possible they were staying together in Jerusalem when Mary Magdalene came to the door on Sunday morning." (Chaffey, 2015)
 - If Peter and John were staying somewhere in Jerusalem, and the rest of the disciples were staying somewhere else, such as Bethany, this

would explain why Mary Magdalene is described as only notifying Peter and John, and it would also explain why when the other women at the tomb left to notify the disciples they didn't cross paths with Peter, John, and Mary Magdalene. The other disciples were staying somewhere else at least for that morning. By that evening, they were all together.

John 13:23 - Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

John 19:26 - When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

John 21:7 - Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

John 21:20 - Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?

John 21:24 - This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

Regardless of how exactly the different gospel accounts fit together, we see the discovery of the empty tomb by Mary Magdalene. But we see not only the discovery of the empty tomb by Mary Magdalene. We see also the investigation of the empty tomb by Peter and John.

2.) The Investigation by Peter and John

3 Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre – having received this news, Peter and John (our author) quickly made their way to the tomb to investigate what Mary had said.

- That's the kind of news you don't just take at face value. You've got to see it with your own two eyes. They made their way to the tomb with Mary likely trailing behind.

Luke 24:12 - Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

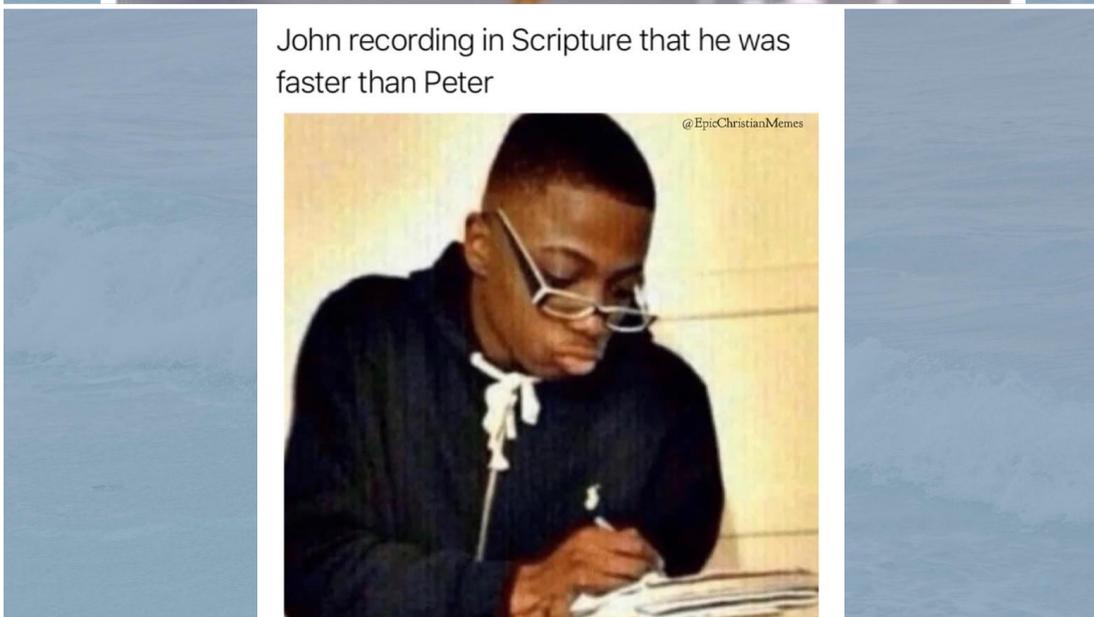
4 So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

So they ran together: - from where they were staying (likely in the city of Jerusalem), Peter and John ran to the site of the tomb

- Once again, you can see the urgency here. They are not walking. They are running to the tomb.

And the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre – John and Peter ran to the site of the tomb. John ran faster than Peter, and he made sure that everybody knew it.

- This is hilarious because John didn't even refer to himself by name in the entire gospel, but here in this passage, he wanted to be sure that everyone across time knew that he was faster than Peter.
- This morning I actually have a picture of them arriving at the tomb 2000 years ago.



- o This is John recording in Scripture that he was faster than Peter.

John 20:4 the other disciple ran ahead faster than Peter and came to the tomb first.
Peter:



- This is Peter when he finally arrived at the tomb.

So John gets there first.

5 And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

And he stooping down – from outside the tomb

And looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet he went not in – he could see Jesus' linen clothes, but no body, but he did not go in. He waited for Peter, his older and slower companion.

6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie,

Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre – whereas John was more contemplative and cautious waiting outside the tomb, when Peter arrived he burst straight into the empty tomb

And seeth the linen clothes lie – and he stared at the linen clothes that Jesus' body had been wrapped in

- John 11:44 - And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.
- "Unlike Lazarus, who needed help getting out of his grave clothes after his resurrection (11:44), Jesus' glorified resurrection body simply passed through the linen wrappings, as it would soon pass through a wall to enter a locked room (20:19, 26)." (MacArthur, 2006, p. 989)

7 And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

And the napkin, that was about his head – this was the napkin that had been placed on Jesus' face

Not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself – and the napkin was not lying with the linens Jesus had been buried in. It was off to the side by itself in a neat rolled up fashion.

- That is really significant because if you're stealing a body or even just moving a body, you don't unwrap the body and leave the linen burial strips and face cloth behind, with the face cloth rolled up neatly off to the side. It was way easier to transport the body if it was still wrapped and the spices that lined the linens were worth a lot of money. It was weird. Really weird. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 989)
- The stone was rolled away.
- The Roman guard was nowhere to be found.
- The body was gone.
- The burial linens were left behind, and the face napkin was rolled up neatly off to the side.

What did it all mean? Well, we've seen the discovery of the empty tomb, the investigation by the disciples, and now, finally this morning, we see the conclusions of Peter and John.

3.) The Conclusions of Peter & John

8 Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre – after Peter went into the tomb, so too did John.

And he saw – he saw that the body was gone. He saw that the linens with all the spices were left behind. He saw that the face napkin was rolled up neatly off to the side.

And believed – that was enough for John to believe that Jesus was risen from the dead.

- Whereas John believed, Luke tells us that Peter wondered.
 - o Luke 24:12 -12 Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre; and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.
 - o And yet as Peter would soon discover on that very day when he later saw Jesus with his own two eyes, Jesus was alive, and He still lives to this very day.

God sent His Son, and they called Him Jesus.

He came to love, heal and forgive.

He lived and died to by my pardon.

An empty grave is there to prove my Savior lives.

Because He lives I can face tomorrow.

Because He lives, all fear is gone.

Because I know He holds the future, and life is worth the living just because He lives.

Because He lives, we can be forgiven.

- The Scriptures teach that Christ as perfectly sinless God in the flesh died on that cross to pay for my sins and the empty tomb is the receipt we have been given proving that payment was made.
- Although we stand before God guilty of our sin, undeserving of heaven, deserving of condemnation, through faith in Jesus we can be forgiven. Why? Because He took our condemnation on Himself on that cross.
- "But God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Because He lives, we can have life, abundant and everlasting.

- For those who do not look to themselves or their religion to save them from their sin, but look in faith to the Savior who died and rose from the dead, Jesus provides not only forgiveness but everlasting life.
- "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."

Because He lives, and because someone shared that message with us, we have been blessed with the greatest privilege, calling and mission in the history of the universe: we get to share that good news with other people.

- The empty tomb is not just a message you keep to yourself. It's a message you run to tell other people about.
- Romans 1:16 - For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.
- The good news of the gospel is not a burden to share. When you hear the Scriptures command each and every one of us to go into all the world and share the good news, that should not inspire fear and hesitation in your heart.
 - o It should inspire energy, and passion and excitement.
- o You are not a doctor that has to go into a patient's room and tell them that they are dying of some terminal disease from which there is no cure. You get to go into that room and tell them that there is a hope that there is a cure from the infirmity of sin that has ailed them their whole life and Jesus died and rose so that they could have it.
 - o It is the greatest news in the history of the universe, and you have been given the blessing of getting to share it with others.
 - o "Sir, ma'am, there is a cure, and here it is. His name is Jesus and He died and rose again for your sins so that you might have everlasting life."

- Oh that we might stop seeing evangelism and soulwinning as a burdensome task that we occasionally work up the courage to do. Oh that we might see it as the calling of God on our lives and one of the greatest blessings Jesus has given to us.
 - o Oh that we might be a church of people obsessed with and on fire for the gospel. That we might pray every morning, "Lord, give me someone to tell the good news to today." That we might take advantage of every opportunity God places in front of us. That we might begin to realize that only failures in evangelism are the opportunities we fail to take.
 - What if they don't like what I have to say? You'd be surprised at how many people would like what you have to say. It's good news after all...but beyond that, friend, it is not your burden to make people believe. It is your privilege to tell them.
 - I don't know what to say.
 - You can just tell them about what Christ did for you...how you got saved. A child can do that.
 - The gospel is simple.
 - o Christ died for our sins. He was buried, and He rose again three days later so that we could have everlasting life. That's it. That's the gospel.
 - o The verses that go along with it are on the back of the church tracts that we put out every week in the back of the auditorium.
 - I long for the day when we don't have to remind the church about the gospel tracts in the back. I long for the day when we have to reorder over and over and over again because Horizon Baptist Church is a body of believers on fire with a passion to tell people about Jesus every week.

The tomb is empty, and our Savior lives. What wonderful news we have been given the privilege of sharing by God Himself.

John saw the empty tomb. He saw the linens, the rolled-up napkin, and unlike most of the disciples, he believed based solely on that. However, he hadn't yet connected the dots about the Old Testament Scriptures that prophesied the resurrection.

That's what verse 9 means when it says:

John 20:25 - The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

John 20:29 - Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

- Psalms 16:10 - For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.
- Acts 2:25-32 - For David speaketh concerning him, I foresaw the Lord always before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad; moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance. Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses.
- Acts 13:29-37 - And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre. But God raised him from the dead: And he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David. Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption: But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.

10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

Every one of us is going to leave and go home today, but my prayer for us is that we don't leave empty. My prayer for us is that we leave with a pocket full of gospel tracts, a burden for the lost next door, and a heart full of excitement for the privilege of getting to tell people the good news of Jesus.

- It is not a burden. It is a blessing, and it is the calling of God on our lives.

Application

Christ died to save us. The Spirit moved in to empower us. The Scripture speaks so as to inspire us to tell others about the gospel.

Have courage. Get excited. Partake in the privilege of evangelism that God has called you to.

- Today, after the service, we're going to have a table outside with gospel tracts on it, and my challenge to you today is to grab a stack of them determined to pass them

out and talk to people about Jesus this week...not because you have to, but because you get to.

- My challenge to you this week is to wake up every morning and pray one thing to God: "Lord, give me an opportunity to talk to someone about you, and give me the courage to take it!"

If there is anyone here today that does not know Jesus Christ as their Savior, but you'd like to, today is the day of salvation.

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? How can you take your next steps in going forth with the gospel?*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Matt. 27:61-28:4. What happened on the Sabbath day in between the crucifixion and the resurrection? Why was this significant, and how was the stone rolled away?*

3.) *Read Psalm 16:10, Acts 2:25-32, and Acts 13:29-37. What significance did Psalm 16:10 come to have in the early church? Why is prophecy so important for the Christian faith?*

looking ahead

4.) *Read John 20:11-15. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 20:11-15 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 20:11-18

Review

It was Sunday morning, the third day since Jesus had been crucified on Friday afternoon. As soon as the Sabbath on Saturday had passed, a number of women followers of Jesus made their way back to the garden tomb to further care for the body of Jesus. One of those women was Mary Magdalene.

- As we studied the differing gospel accounts, we concluded that it's likely that Mary outpaced the other women and made her way to the tomb first.
- As she arrived at the tomb, to her shock and dismay she discovered that the stone had been rolled away.
 - o Assuming the worst, as would you if the casket of your loved one had been dug up, she ran to tell Peter and John of what she had discovered.
 - o Meanwhile, the other women arrived at the tomb, investigated it, and were greeted by two angels appearing as men who said, "'Why are you looking for the living among the dead? He's not here. He's risen.'" (Luke 24:1-7; Mark 16:5-6)
 - They left to go tell the disciples, and we suggested that perhaps Peter and John initially were staying in Jerusalem somewhere separate from the other disciples, which is why you have Mary and the other women seemingly going in different directions without running into each other.
- When Mary found Peter and John, she did not tell them that the tomb was empty. She told them that the body had been stolen. Alarmed by this news, they ran to the tomb, but John ran faster, and you can imagine Mary lagging even further behind Peter.
- When they arrived, the angels didn't appear to them, but they saw with their own two eyes that the body was gone, the grave clothes were left behind, and the face napkin was folded neatly off to the side.
- John believed. Peter wondered, and they left.

That was where we left off, and that is where we pick up our story in John 20:11 with Mary's investigation of the tomb.

1.) Mary's Investigation of the Tomb

10 Then the disciples (*Peter and John*) went away again unto their own home.

11 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping; and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre,

The other gospels (e.g. Mark 16:9) mention Jesus' first resurrection appearance to Mary, but John's gospel is the only account that gives us the details of how it happened...which

means that John 20:11-18 is likely Mary Magdalene's personal eye witness account of what happened that morning which was relayed to John who recorded it in his gospel.

- As we read this passage, you can almost imagine Mary herself telling the story. Mary was an insignificant figure up to this point in time. Prior to the crucifixion, her name had only appeared in Luke's gospel in a list of women from Galilee that followed Jesus. Jesus' decision to appear first to her is a reminder to each of us that none of us are insignificant to God. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 997)

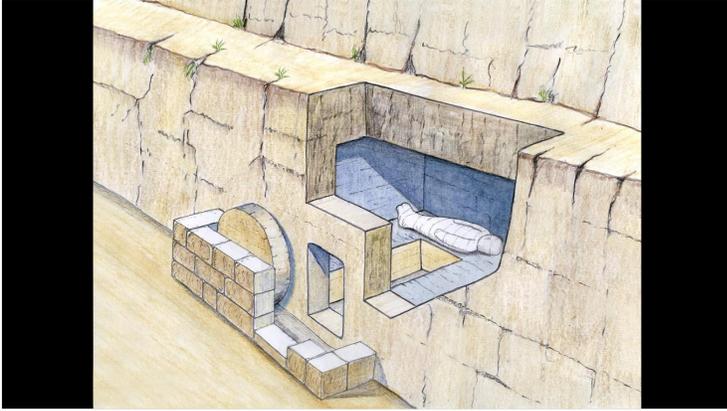
Peter and John left, but

Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping – she was standing there outside the tomb alone sobbing

- Illustration – I want you to imagine her state of mind. She had just lost one of the most important people in her life unexpectedly. The way she lost Him was traumatic. She saw Him die with her own two eyes, and He died in pain and disgrace. That's hard. Beyond that, think about the gossip, the lies, the slander that no doubt were spreading through Jerusalem like wildfire about the person she loved. The whole situation would have been traumatizing. They had quickly buried the body on Friday night before the Sabbath arrived, but they hadn't really had time to process the loss and mourn with the body (as we typically do at funerals). They didn't have that closure. That's why the women were there that morning. They were there to dress the body with spices, but they were there for a "funeral". They were there to have that closure with the body of their Lord.
 - o Imagine that you had lost a loved one unexpectedly and the day of the funeral arrived, and the funeral home forgot to transport the casket/misplaced the body...can you imagine what that would do to you emotionally? That's where Mary was. Since the moment she had discovered the body was gone, she had been running around frantic to notify Peter and John and then make her way back to the tomb. Now, she found herself alone in the dead quiet of the garden outside the tomb. For the first time that morning, she was able to process the reality of what had happened/what she thought had happened, and she just broke down. She was sobbing. She couldn't believe this had happened.
 - "Wasn't it enough to crucify the man in the disgrace? Now you have to dishonor Him in death too?"

And as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre – while she was sobbing, just as Peter and John had done before her, she stooped down to look into the tomb

Illustration – depiction of Jesus' tomb (in line with what we know about Jewish tombs in the first century)



12 And seeth two angels in white (*dressed in white apparel*) sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

When Mary finally looked into the tomb, what did she see?

- She would have seen the same things that Peter and John did just prior.
 - o The body was gone
 - o The grave clothes were left behind.
 - o The face napkin was rolled up
 - o But that's not all she saw.
- As she looked in, she saw two angels (appearing as men) sitting on opposite ends of the bench where Jesus had been laid.
 - o These were assumedly the same angels that had appeared to the other women earlier that morning.

Matthew 28:3-5 - His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

Mark 16:5-6 - And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.

Luke 24:3-7 - And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

Luke 24:22-23 - Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

Matthew 17:2 - And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

Acts 1:10 - And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

Picture the scene.

- Mary was a mess.
- She was distraught.
- She was sobbing.
- She assumed she was alone, and when she finally gathered up the courage to look inside the tomb, there were two guys inside.
 - o When she noticed them, they spoke to her.

It's interesting to take note of what they did and didn't say.

They didn't say.

- "Can we help you?"
- "Oh, hi there."
- "You're probably wondering what we're doing in here."
- "Fear not."
 - o If there ever were an interaction with an angel in which this greeting would have been appropriate, this was the one.

And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? – Woman, why are you crying?

- Illustration – I would think that every married man in this room has at one point in time asked his wife that same question, "Woman, why are you crying?"
- But on a more serious note, this question, I believe, is the key to understanding the significance of this whole passage of Scripture.
 - o I especially believe that's the case because later in the passage in verse 15, the first words out of Jesus' mouth to her reiterated the same question. That is not a coincidence.
- This question was not asked to gather information but to communicate information. This question was a gentle rebuke meant to highlight the fact that the time for grieving was over. There wasn't anything to be sad about. It wasn't Friday. It wasn't Saturday. It was Sunday, and Jesus was not dead. He was alive.
 - o That truth, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, changes everything. It changes everything for the person who will receive it and believe it.

- Application
 - The resurrection of Jesus changes our outlook eternally.
 - We were lost in our sin. We were separated from God. We were undeserving of grace and destined for condemnation, and there was nothing we could do to change that. We were without hope, and yet in our darkest hour, Christ died for our sins, and He rose from the dead three days later victorious over sin, death, and hell.
 - Romans 10:13 – whosoever will call upon the name of the Lord in faith trusting in His death and resurrection as the payment for their sins will be saved and receive everlasting life.
 - Woman, why are you sobbing?
 - That is good news. The resurrection of Jesus changes everything. It changes our outlook eternally.
 - But it doesn't just change our outlook eternally. It changes our outlook in the present.
 - Why? Because Jesus is alive, and He knows us, and through the Holy Spirit He lives within us...now.
 - Christianity and pessimism are a contradiction in terms. There ought not be Eeyores in the family of God. Over and over and over again the Bible uses two words that ought to characterize the lives of Christians. Those two words are hope and joy...we ought to have hope and joy not because of what we have but because of who we have.
 - Jesus is alive. Woman, why are you sobbing?
 - As Christians, we ought to be joyful and hopeful because Jesus is alive, and His resurrection changes everything, starting with our outlook.
 - How do we have that kind of an outlook as Christians on a consistent basis? I want to share with you one practice I start my day off with just about every morning that helps me to do this.
 - Every morning, I start my day by taking ten minutes to praise God, to thank God, and to confess sin. Just ten minutes total, and I journal those three things. (doing these three helps me have the right outlook throughout my day)
 - Praising God reminds me of how big He is and how small my problems are.
 - Thanking God reminds me of how blessed I am.
 - Confessing my sin reminds me of how much I need Him, and it helps me determine to be better today than I was yesterday.

Woman, why are you sobbing? Christian, why are you such a pessimist? Jesus is alive, and the resurrection of Jesus changes everything.

She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him – because somebody has desecrated the tomb of my Lord and taken away His body, and I don't know where they have laid Him

- What we see here is that she is still stuck on her untrue assumptions about the situation that she had first relayed to Peter and John in verse 2.
- She was sobbing over something that wasn't even true. She was living in bondage to her feelings because she believed something that wasn't true.

John 16:20-22 - Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy. A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

But as we look at this passage, we see not only Mary's investigation of the tomb. We also see Jesus' appearance to Mary.

2.) Jesus' Appearance to Mary

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing – having answered the angels, perhaps she heard something behind her, and still being confused as to what was going on and wanting answers, she turned around to see what was happening behind her.

- As she turned around, she saw Jesus standing there,
- She was the first person in all of the New Testament to see the resurrected Lord.

And knew not that it was Jesus – she didn't recognize Jesus at first. Why didn't she recognize Jesus? That seems kind of weird.

- She's been sobbing, and so there's the very real possibility that her vision is obscured by her blurry eyes.
- Additionally, in Luke 24:16, when Jesus first appeared to the two followers on the road to Emmaus, we're told that He for a time withheld from them the ability to recognize Him.
- But beyond that, we know that Jesus' resurrected glorified body was different. He still had the nail scars in His hands and His feet. Thomas could feel the hole in His side where the spear pierced Him, and yet that glorified body was different. It was majestic and in some instances not recognized initially. (Carson, 1991, p. 641)
Mark 16:12 - After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country.

Luke 24:16 - But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

Luke 24:31 - And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? – Woman, why are you sobbing?

- Christian, why is your outlook so pessimistic?
 - o He says the same exact thing to Mary as the angels did.
 - o She was thinking and feeling and acting in accordance with a belief that was not true. Jesus was alive. There was no reason to sob.
- Jesus' words here remind us of the promised day in which God will "wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away". (Rev. 21:4)

Whom seekest thou? – who are you looking for?

- Jesus' question here is once again not meant to gather information, but to communicate it.
 - o Woman, why are you crying? I'm not dead. I'm alive.
 - o Woman, who are you looking for? I'm standing right in front of you.
- Jesus' question here reminds us that not only does Jesus' resurrection change our outlook, but as Christians, it also changes our purpose and identity.
 - o Every person on the planet is looking for purpose, meaning, and identity somewhere.
 - Some look outward
 - They look to find purpose and identity and meaning in the approval of others. They look to others for fulfillment and direction in life.
 - The problem with that is that you can't please everyone, and if your sense of self worth and purpose and identity is tied to other's opinions of you, then you will live out your life with a fragile sense of worth in bondage to the opinions of others.
 - Those who look outward for purpose, meaning, and identity make others their god.
 - In contrast with those who look outward, there are many who look inward
 - This is the message of American culture (as opposed to, for instance, Japanese culture). Your purpose, identity and meaning is not found in other's perception of you. It's found in you being who you want to be and doing whatever you want to do.

- This is the storyline of every modern Disney princess movie (Moana, Tangled, Frozen, etc.)
 - Break free of what the community expect you to do and do what you want to do.
- I find purpose and meaning and identity in what I feel and I want and you don't have the right to tell me I'm wrong.
- What's the problem with that?
- Those who look inward for purpose and identity and meaning make a god out of themselves.
- Beyond that, my feelings and thoughts are an unstable and often deceptive foundation for purpose and identity.
 - I don't know about you, but my feelings are often all over the place, and a significant portion of the time, they're wrong.
 - You know who always does what they want, when they want regardless of how it affects others? Toddlers...and I don't think toddlers are the best example of how we should orient our lives.
- If my purpose and meaning and identity are not found by looking outward or looking inward, then where are they found?
 - The answer to that question is not a location. It's a person. Mary, who are you looking for? His name is Jesus. He is our Creator, our Designer, who made us and who knows us better than we know ourselves.
 - My identity is found not in what I feel or what others expect of me. It is found in who He says I am. Why? Because He made me, and He knows me.
 - When my feelings conflict with what He says of me, by faith I believe that what He says, not how I feel.
 - My purpose is not found in what I want or what others expect of me. It is found in what He has called me to be.

Jesus is alive! ...and His resurrection does not just change my outlook. It changes my purpose and identity because they are no longer found without or within, but in Him.

Who are you looking for? Jesus asked this question to Mary.

She, supposing him to be the gardener – implying that the garden was large enough to require a gardener

- Mary assumed, perhaps based on the early hour, that this man was the gardener and knew what had happened with the body said...

Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. – Sir, if you have taken Him somewhere (she assumed that the gardener would know who she was talking about), please tell me where you have laid Him, and I will personally see that He is taken away and that His body is cared for.

Illustration – Mary is scrappy. When she discovered the empty tomb, she ran to find Peter and John. She probably ran back too...and here she is telling this man that if he'll just tell her where the body is, she'll personally take it away. She wasn't afraid to roll up her sleeves.

John 18:7 - Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

We've seen Mary's investigation of the tomb. We've seen Jesus' appearance to Mary, and now finally this morning, we see Mary's recognition of Jesus.

3.) Mary's Recognition of Jesus

16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.

Jesus saith unto her, Mary – all He said was her name, and it was enough to open her eyes to the truth that He was alive, and it changed everything for here in that moment.

- Illustration – As Jesus spoke her name (like a shepherd calling his sheep by name), it formed a reminder to us that God knows who each and every one of us are.
 - o He doesn't just know who we are. He knows us better than we know ourselves.
 - o Luke 12:7 - 6 Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings (*pocket change*), and not one of them is forgotten before God? 7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.
 - o John 10:3 - To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

Jesus knew her name, and He knows your name.

She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say Master – “Rabboni” is an Aramaic word that means “Master”/“Teacher” in Greek. He translates the word, assuming that many of His readers would be Greek speaking and not familiar with Hebrew.

- Genesis 22:1 - And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.
- Exodus 3:4 - And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.
- 1 Samuel 3:6 - And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

Acts 9:4 - And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

Based on what follows in the next verse, You can imagine Mary casting herself at Jesus' feet and embracing Him at the knees, not wanting to ever let go...once again reinforcing that notion that because Jesus was alive, her identity and purpose was found in Him.

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not – “Mary don’t cling to me”

For I am not yet ascended to my Father - I haven't left for good yet.

But go to my brethren and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God - God tell the disciples that I've risen and of my impending ascension (Jesus was in the process of ascending over the course of that 40-day period).

- Mary understands that when Jesus talks of His brothers here, He’s not talking of His biological brothers, but of His disciples (see vs. 18). (Carson, 1991, p. 645)
- Jesus’ words here are a reminder to us that it is through our relationship with Him that we are brought into a new family with a new Father and new siblings. The resurrection changes everything.
 - o Christ’s wording here highlights the shared relationship that He and His followers have with the Father while still maintaining a distinction between His relationship with the Father and ours. (Carson, 1991, p. 645)
 - o Hebrews 2:11-13 - For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren, Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold I and the children which God hath given me.
 - o Romans 8:14-17 - For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

Psalms 22:22 - I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

Matthew 12:50 - For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

Romans 8:29 - For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

John 16:28 - I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

Psalms 68:18 - Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them.

Ephesians 4:8-10 - Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

John 1:12-13 - But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

What did Mary do? She obeyed her Lord.

18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

Matthew 28:10 - Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

Mark 16:10-13 - Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils. And she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept. And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not. After that he appeared in another form unto two of them, as they walked, and went into the country. And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them.

Application

Jesus is alive, and His resurrection changes everything for those who believe in Him!

Because He is alive, we have a new outlook both eternally and in the here and now. Why are you downcast? Why are you sobbing? Jesus is alive!

Because He is alive, we have a new purpose and identity. As Christians, we no longer find those things within our without. We find them in Him, our Creator and Designer who knows us better than we know ourselves.

Because He is alive, we have a new family. We have a new Father and new brothers and sisters as we are adopted into the family of God.

Two Questions:

1. Have you accepted Jesus Christ by faith as your risen Lord and Savior? If not, I'd urge you to do so. He'll change your life.
2. If you are a Christian this morning, have you forgotten that Jesus is alive? ("No Pastor, I haven't forgotten. Well, tell your face. Smile.") Have you been downcast? Jesus is alive! Have you been looking within or without for identity and purpose? Jesus is alive! Have you been looking to this world for belonging and family? Jesus is alive! I'd urge you to remind yourself and live in light of the truth that Jesus is alive, and His resurrection changes everything.
 - a. It gives us a new outlook, a new identity, and a new family.

JOHN 20:19-23

Review

As a reminder of where we're at in the story, Jesus was crucified and buried in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea on the Friday of Passover week. The next day, Saturday, was the Sabbath, and as such, Jesus' Jewish followers rested. However, early Sunday morning a number of Jesus' women followers made their way to the tomb to further anoint the body of Jesus and find closure.

Mary Magdalene likely arrived first. When she saw that the stone was rolled away, she ran to notify Peter and John who were probably located somewhere separate from the other apostles. Meanwhile, the other women investigated the empty tomb and were told by two angels that Jesus was risen. Having been told this, they quickly left to notify the other apostles. After the women left, Peter and John arrived to discover that the tomb was indeed empty. The stone was rolled away. The body was gone. The grave clothes were left behind, and the face napkin was neatly rolled up. Astonished by what they discovered, they too left the tomb.

Following this, Mary arrived back at the tomb where when she then looked into the tomb and discovered two angels. They had a brief conversation that was interrupted by a stranger in the garden that Mary perceived to be the gardener. However, when the stranger called her by her name, Mary's eyes were opened, and she realized that she was talking to her risen Lord. Mary embraced Jesus, and then Jesus told her to go tell the disciples that He was alive.

That was the first resurrection appearance of Jesus Christ on Easter morning, and that was where we left off last week in verse 18.

Whereas last week we studied the appearance of Jesus to Mary Magdalene in the morning. This week we're going to study the appearance of Jesus to the disciples at night.

Sermon

1.) The Appearance to the Disciples

19 Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

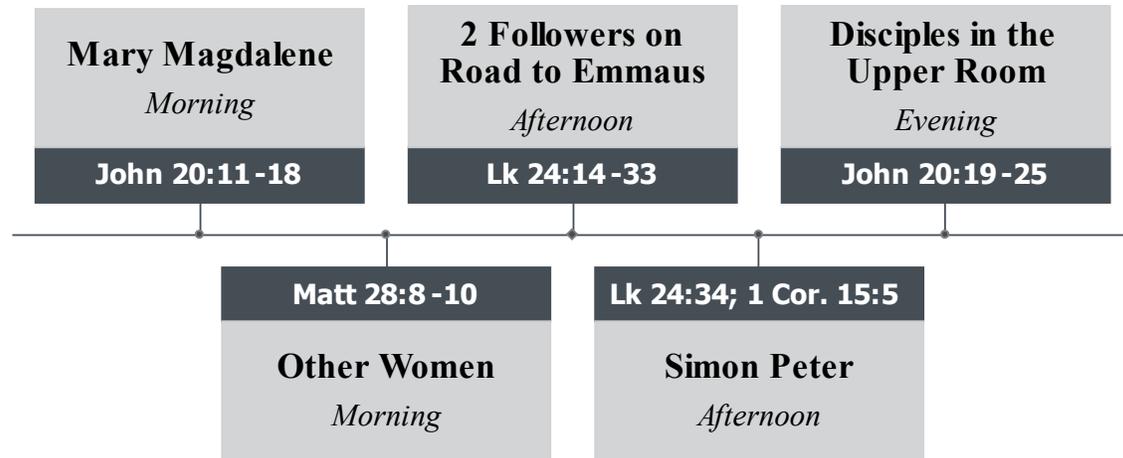
Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week – Now, in verse 19, John begins telling the story of the appearance of Jesus to the disciples on that first Easter night. However, when we compare John's record with the other gospel accounts, we discover that

there was a lot that happened inbetween verses 18 and 19. In fact, there were three other resurrection appearances of Jesus that happened inbetween verses 18 and 19.

Who else did He appear to?

1. Matthew 28:5-10 - 5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. 6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay. 7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you. 8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word. *(meanwhile, Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene outside the tomb) ...After that...* 9 And as they *(the other women)* went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him. 10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.
 - a. The second appearance of the risen Lord on Easter was to the other women.
 - b. The women (including Mary Magdalene) relayed the appearances of Jesus to the disciples and the others, who did not believe (Luke 24:9-11).
2. Meanwhile, two of Jesus' followers (Cleopas and a companion of his), who were there with the disciples and likely heard the testimony of the women, then left the group to travel on the road to Emmaus. During their trip they ran into a strange fellow who walked with them and explained how that everything Jesus had done was in fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures. When they arrived in Emmaus, they broke bread with the man and all of the sudden the Lord opened their eyes and they realized the fellow who had been talking with them was Jesus all along. When they recognized Him, He vanished, and they quickly made the 6-7 mile journey all the way back to Jerusalem to where the disciples were assembled so that they could tell the others. (Luke 24:14-33)
3. Meanwhile, apparently during the period of time in which Cleopas and his companion were hurrying back to where the disciples were gathered in Jerusalem, Christ appeared privately to Peter (the one who had denied Him).
 - a. This appearance is mentioned in Luke 24:34 and 1 Cor. 15:5, but no details about what Jesus said in that appearance are recorded for us, perhaps due to its intimate and sacred nature.

Jesus' Appearances On Easter



All of this sets the stage for the final appearance of Jesus on Easter that we will be studying this morning.

Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, When the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews – whereas the apostles may have been in separate locations initially that morning, they are now definitively together that night in the same location (except for Thomas)

- This gathering that is described in John 20:19 does not just include the apostles. We know from Luke 24:33 that there are other followers of Jesus present in this room (Luke 24:33).
- There's a lot that was happening.
 - o The disciples had heard the testimony of the women that Jesus was alive, and they didn't believe it. Beyond that, they were scared. The tomb was empty. The body was gone. Regardless of what had actually happened, the disciples knew that they would have been ground zero for the Jewish authorities' investigation into the matter. They were scared and rightfully so. They were hiding in fear, with the doors closed and probably locked (as the Greek word for "shut" that is used here can also have the idea of locked). (MacArthur, 2006, p. 1000)
 - o While hiding in this state, guess what happens?
 - There's a knock at the door. Guess who it is?
 - o Luke 24:33-35 - 33 And they (the travelers on the road to Emmaus that Jesus had appeared to) rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them, (*before*

they could tell the others about how Jesus had appeared to them, the others reported to them...) 34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. (*Hearing this...*) 35 And they told what things were done in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

- They told the disciples about how Jesus had just appeared to them.
- 36 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.
 - This is a parallel account of what we're told in John 20:19.
 - Luke 24:33-49 is really an expanded version of John 20:19-23.

Came Jesus and stood in the midst and saith unto them, Peace be unto you – which was the customary greeting and farewell.

- Imagine what that would have been like.
 - Illustration – Have you ever had someone sneak up on you and scare you half to death?
 - Illustration – me and my brothers sneaking into each other's rooms at night to scare each other
 - According to Luke's account, the disciples were troubled and terrified, believing that they were being visited by some kind of ghost.
 - Why? Because the doors were locked, and now all of the sudden there's this glorified, maybe glowing, person in the midst of the room that's talking to them.
 - "After the Resurrection Christ's human form, though still real and corporeal, is not subject to the ordinary conditions of material bodies." (Plummer, 1902)

Mark 16:14 - Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

Luke 24:36-49 - And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should

be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

John 16:22 - And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

Philippians 1:2 - Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

20 And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side – Luke tells us that Jesus said unto them, “Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.”

- They saw His hands, His feet, His side, and when they thought it too good to be true (Luke 24:41), Jesus took it a step further and ate fish and honey in front of them.

Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord – They were no longer sorrowful, confused, or fearful. They were glad as it finally dawned on them who was really standing in front of them. This was really happening. Jesus had showed up in their lives.

- Application – Don't you just love it when God shows up in your life?
 - o We all inevitably find ourselves in times of darkness, fear and isolation.
 - o But as Christians, there is great comfort in knowing that Christ is with us in the darkness and that the light at the end of tunnel will come in His timing.
 - Christ uses those dark times in our lives. He uses them to mold us, to grow us, to make us more reliant upon Him....so that when that light at the end of the tunnel finally arrives in His timing, we come out more conformed to His image on the other end.

Luke 24:39-40 - Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.

1 John 1:1 - That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life;

We see the appearance of Jesus to the disciples (He showed up in their lives),, but as we look at this story, that's not all we see. We also see...

2.) The Commission of the Disciples

21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you – Now Jesus wasn't just repeating Himself here. Remember, "Peace to you" was the customary Jewish greeting and farewell. Inbetween that greeting and farewell, we know from Luke's account that a lot happened. Jesus ate. He opened their eyes. He explained how He had fulfilled the Old Testament Scriptures. But then towards the end of His visit, as Jesus prepared to leave them, He once again told them "Peace be unto you" and then He gave them a parting commission, a parting call to action, which John highlights for us. (Ellicott C. , 1905)

As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you – Jesus, having accomplished what He was sent to this earth by the Father to accomplish, was now no longer the sent one. Rather, He was the sender. He said to His disciples that the time had come for them to be the sent ones.

- He formally commissioned them to spread the good news of what He had accomplished on His mission to save the world. The commission here anticipates that Great Commission that Christ would give to the disciples later in Galilee before His ascension into heaven.
 - Application – Christ's commission here reminds us that God prepares us in the darkness to use us in the light. He brought light into their darkness. He showed up in their lives, but then He called them to action.
 - o I don't know what dark times and trials and tribulations you have gone through or are going through, but I want you to know that in the midst of that darkness God is molding you and preparing you for a call to action...
 - o 1 Peter 1:3-9 - 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: 7 That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: 8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: 9 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.
 - o Psalm 30:5 - Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.
 - o Romans 5:3-5 - 3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.
- John 14:27 - Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

John 17:18-19 - As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

Matthew 28:18-20 - And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Luke 24:47-49 - And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

Acts 1:8 - But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

The appearance to the disciples – He brought light into their darkness. He showed up in their lives.

The commission of the disciples – He called them to action

3.) The Empowerment of the Disciples

He didn't just call them to action. He gave them the resources they needed to accomplish what He was calling them to do.

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:

And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost – Hold on a second. I thought that the Holy Spirit's indwelling presence came down at Pentecost after Jesus' ascension. Isn't that why Jesus told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem until the time at which the Holy Spirit would indwell and empower them? And didn't Jesus say that the Holy Spirit wouldn't come down until He left? When did the disciples receive the Holy Ghost? Was it here on Easter or was it 50 days later on Pentecost?

- To answer that question, it's important to take note of what the Scripture does and does not say here. Does this verse say that Jesus breathed on them the Holy Ghost? It does not.
- It says that He breathed on them and then told them to receive the Holy Ghost.
 - o When Jesus breathed on them, He did so as a symbolic foreshadowing of what would happen to them 50 days later on Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came down.

- When Jesus said to receive the Holy Ghost, He was once again making a statement that would not be fulfilled in that moment, but rather that would be fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost 50 days later. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 1000)
- The word used for “breathing onto” is a rare word. This is the only instance in the New Testament in which the word is used. The word “refers not to the actual impartation of the Spirit (as in “breathed into”) but merely to a symbolic gesture.” (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. 325)
- Just as God breathed the breath of life into Adam at creation (Gen. 2:7), Christ’s breathing on the disciples foreshadows the imparting of the Holy Spirit to them at Pentecost...and it is the presence of the Holy Spirit within us that marks us of as a new creation in Jesus Christ.
- Christ showed up in the disciples lives. He brought light into their darkness. He called them to action, and then He promised to provide them with the power they needed to accomplish what He had called them to do.
 - And the same Holy Spirit that initially came down on them at Pentecost, the moment that you became a Christian, took up residence inside of you. What that means is that you today have access to the same exact power source that Jesus gave to the apostles 2000 years ago: the Holy Spirit of God inside of you.
- Application – Don’t tell me that you can’t live the Christian life. Don’t tell me that you can’t do what God has called you to do. Don’t tell me that you can’t fulfill God’s purpose for your life. Don’t tell me that you can’t make it through that trial. Don’t tell me that you can’t endure this dark time in your life.
- For while it may be true that you can’t do it alone, it is also true that you don’t have to do it alone. For God’s Holy Spirit is within you as a companion and a power source.
 - When you say, “I can’t”, I’m telling you that you can. When you say “I can’t”, God’s Word is telling you that you can, and when you say “I can’t”, God’s Holy Spirit inside of you is testifying that you can, not through your own power and strength but through the power of God’s Spirit within you.

Christ empowered the disciples, and He has given you the same exact power source that He gave those disciples. Are you tapping into that power source? Are you following His promptings? Are you asking for His help? Are you seeking to be led by God’s Spirit within you?

Genesis 2:7 - And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Job 33:4 - The spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

John 16:7 - Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

Acts 2:4 - And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 2:38 - Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

We've seen the appearance to the disciples – Christ showed up in their lives. He brought light into their darkness.

We've seen the commission of the disciples – Christ called them to action.

We've seen the empowerment of the disciples – Christ equipped the disciples for what He had called them to do.

Finally this morning, we see the authorization of the disciples.

4.) The Authorization of the Disciples

23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.

Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them – whoever's sins you forgive, they are forgiven.

And whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained – and whoever's sins you retain, they are not forgiven.

- What does this mean Pastor? Does this mean as the Catholic church teaches that the apostles literally had the power to forgive sins and that power has been passed down throughout the church?
 - o Does this mean that if someone makes fun of my Jacksonville Jaguars I can declare their sins unforgiven until they repent? No it does not.
 - o It's important to remember that it wasn't just the apostles that Jesus said this to. He said this to all of His followers that were present in that room.
 - o Beyond that, we have no record in the New Testament of any apostle/Christian ever forgiving someone of their sins. That power belongs to God alone.
- Well then what is Jesus talking about here?
 - o Jesus is personally authorizing His disciples to preach the gospel message and to declare based on the power of Jesus' authority that the one who genuinely receives that gospel message is forgiven and that the one who rejects it remains condemned in his sin.
 - o Jesus did not give His followers the power to forgive sins. Rather He gave them the authority to declare the forgiveness of sins for those who genuinely accept Christ. (Jamieson, Fausset, & Brown, 1884)

- To this day, on the authority of Jesus Christ, Christians can declare that whosoever puts their faith and trust in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection to save them from their sins stands forgiven before God, and to this day on the authority of Jesus Christ, Christians can declare that whosoever rejects the all sufficient sacrifice of Jesus Christ remains condemned in their sin.
- As followers of Jesus who have been called to action and empowered by His Spirit we have been given the authority of His Word....that we can build our lives upon and declare to others.
 - Don't tell me what you think. Don't tell me how you feel. Tell me what God says. Why? Because there's authority in that.
 - "That which the Scriptures affirm, Christians can dogmatically and unhesitatingly affirm; that which the Scriptures denounce, Christians can authoritatively and unapologetically denounce. Believers do not decide what is right or wrong, but they are to declare with boldness that which God has clearly revealed in His Word." (MacArthur, 2006, p. 1002)

Luke 24:46-49 - 46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: 47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 And ye are witnesses of these things. 49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

Matthew 16:19 - And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Matthew 18:18 - Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Acts 2:38 - Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Acts 10:43 - To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.

Acts 13:38-39 - Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Ephesians 2:20 - And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

Application

Christ revealed Himself to His followers. He showed up in their lives. He called them to a mission. He empowered them for that mission, and then He gave them the authority to carry out that mission.

If you are a follower of Jesus Christ, He has a calling on your life. He didn't just save you to save you. He saved you for a purpose. Are you living out that purpose? As you look at the big picture of your life, are you living in pursuit of your own ambitions or of His calling on your life? He has a mission for you. Are you fulfilling it?

If you are a follower of Jesus Christ, He has empowered to live out your purpose. Get that "can't do" attitude out of your head. You can do it through the power of God's Spirit within you. Stop believing the despondent lies of the devil, and choose rather to believe what God's Word says.

For if you are a follower of Jesus Christ, the Word of God is your authority so that you can boldly believe and proclaim and live in light of the truth found therein.

Are you living out God's purpose for your life? Are you living empowered by God's Spirit within you? Are you living under the authority of God's Word to you?

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? How can you practically apply the sermon to your life this week?*

digging deeper

2.) *Read Luke 24:13-33. What sticks out to you about Jesus' appearance to Cleopas and his companion on the road to Emmaus? What is unique about this appearance as opposed to the others that Jesus made?*

3.) *Read Luke 24:33-49, and compare it with John's summarized account of this appearance to the disciples. What additional details does Luke provide? What is John most concerned with emphasizing?*

looking ahead

4.) *Read John 20:24-31. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 20:24-31 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 20:24-31

Review

The last several weeks in our study of John's gospel, we have been focusing in on the post resurrection appearances of Jesus Christ.

- In John 20:11-18, we saw that the first resurrection appearance of Jesus was early on Sunday morning to Mary Magdalene, a seemingly insignificant character in the gospel narratives.
- From there, Jesus appeared to the other women who had already witnessed the empty tomb and were on their way to tell the disciples about it.
 - o Having all seen the resurrected Lord, the women including Mary Magdalene told the disciples about how Jesus had risen from the dead and appeared to them, but the disciples did not believe them. They thought the women were out of their minds.
- After that, two of Jesus' followers (Cleopas and his companion) left where the disciples were gathered to take a road trip to Emmaus. While on that journey, a strange fellow ran into them and accompanied them. He explained to them how that Jesus of Nazareth had fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah. When they arrived in Emmaus, they broke bread with the man and all of the sudden the Lord opened their eyes, and they realized the fellow who had been talking with them was Jesus all along. When they recognized Him, He vanished, and they quickly made the 6-7-mile journey all the way back to Jerusalem to where the disciples were assembled. (Luke 24:14-33)
- Meanwhile, apparently during the period of time in which Cleopas and his companion were hurrying back to where the disciples were gathered in Jerusalem, Christ appeared privately to Peter (the one who had denied Him) on Sunday afternoon.
- So Peter made his way to where the disciples were gathered together to notify them that Jesus was indeed alive... and then shortly thereafter, the Emmaus travelers arrived excited to share that Jesus had appeared to them. Everyone's talking back and forth about the appearances of Jesus.
 - o Then poof in the midst of the hustle and bustle, Jesus appeared to the disciples together that night.
 - o He reassured them that He was alive. He called them to a mission of evangelism. He empowered them for that mission through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. He authorized them for that mission with the power and authority of His word.
 - o That was where we left off last week with Jesus' appearance to the disciples on that first Easter Sunday.... well, actually not to all the disciples.

For, as we pick up the story in verse 24, the first thing we see is:

Sermon

1.) The Unbelief of Thomas

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

But Thomas, one of the twelve – the collective name by which the apostles came to be known (even though there were technically only 11 of them at this point in time)

Called Didymus – which was his Greek name that meant “twin” (Spence & Exell, 1883)

- It’s funny when you think about it, because nowadays Thomas is known as “Doubting Thomas”, but to the other disciples he was known as Thomas the twin.

Thomas, the twin...

Was not with them when Jesus came – What this means is that on the first Easter night, all of the disciples were hiding and huddling together, except for one.... except for Thomas. Thomas was alone. Why do you think that? Couldn’t he have been with other friends or family? I don’t think so, and I’ll tell you why...his family was probably up in Galilee, and the entirety of his support system likely consisted of the men up in that room, the men he had left everything behind to follow Jesus alongside of for the last three years. Couldn’t he have been running an errand? Folks, when you are the number one suspect for a missing body, and the authorities are looking for you, you don’t casually go run errands in public. You keep a low profile. We don’t know exactly where Thomas was, but I think we can say with a pretty decent degree of certainty that wherever he was, he was isolated, and that wasn’t good.

- Thomas’s actions here are a great reminder of our own tendencies at times. For, more often than not, our tendency when depressed, struggling, or hurting is to isolate.
- It’s to cut ourselves off from outside help and sink further and further down into the pit of self pity that we dig for ourselves.
- In that isolation, we often think negative and untrue thoughts about ourselves, our situation, and our God.
 - o The longer we remain isolated from others and dominated by these negative impulses, the further we sink down into this spiraling bottomless hole of darkness.
 - o With each passing day, the light seems further and further away.
- Application: What do you do when you find yourself in a situation like that (whether it’s hurt, depression, discouragement, self pity)?
 - o You have to stop cutting yourself off from other people because one of the most effective ways you can stop that negative mental spiral is through encouragement and truth from others.
 - o Hebrews 10:24-25 - 24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: 25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; **but exhorting one another**: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

- Our church is not a museum for saints. It is a hospital for sinners. When one part of the body, when one member of the family is struggling, we don't cut them off, we seek to help them. We seek to encourage them.
- That is why it is so important to be faithful in the weekly gathering of the church together and in our weekly small group gathering. Why? Because you and I need that encouragement, that support system that God has initiated within His church...and when we forsake the assembling of ourselves together, more often than not, we find ourselves in a situation like Thomas. He forsook the assembly, and it wasn't good.

However, despite the fact that Thomas wasn't there when Jesus showed up...

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except **I** shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put **my** finger into the print of the nails, and thrust **my** hand into his side, **I** will not believe.

The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord – even though Thomas was isolated initially, after Jesus had appeared to the other disciples, they sought him out and they told him the truth... they excitedly reported to Him that Jesus had risen and appeared to them.

- They spoke light into his darkness. They spoke truth into his ignorance. They spoke encouragement into his pit of negativity.

How did he respond?

- “Wow, that’s awesome!...I can’t believe it!...This is such great news!...What a blessing!”
- He didn’t say any of those things...He said...

Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe (*I will by no means believe – double negative*) – Most people when they look at Thomas, they see a skeptic. That’s where the nickname “doubting Thomas” has come from. However, when I look at Thomas’s words in this verse here, I don’t see a rational response. I see an emotional one. I don’t see a doubting Thomas. I see a hurting Thomas...a Thomas that was so invested in the negative, untrue thoughts that he had spun around in his head for three days, that even when confronted with the best news of his life by the people he trusted most in his life, he would not believe. His pessimism within blinded him to the truth without.

- “Thomas was the eternal pessimist. Like Eeyore in the Winnie the Pooh stories, he was a melancholy person, with an uncanny knack for finding the dark cloud in every silver lining.” (MacArthur, 2006, p. 1004)
 - Example 1 - John 11:16 - Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.

- Example 2 - John 14:5 - Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?
- We need to be so careful of that in our own lives.
 - Self pity is an obsessive pessimism about ourselves and/or our situation in life. It is a deceptive sin that if we're not careful can bury us deeper and deeper alone in a pit of darkness.
 - Why is self pity a sin? The biggest clue to that question is the word "self". When self is dominant, God is not. Self pity is pride flipped upside down. Whereas pride is an obsession with an overly inflated view of one's self. Self pity is an obsession with an overly deflated view of one's self. Both of them are wrong.
 - Philippians 2:4 - 4 Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.
 - If we're going to obey the Scriptures, we have to get our minds off of ourselves.
 - We have to recognize these wrong thoughts, repent of them, and replace them...
 - How do you do that?
 - Not in your own strength...not in your power...but in Christ's strength and in the supernatural resources He has provided for you.
 - Philippians 4:13 – I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me
 - That statement, if you read all of chapter 4, is clearly made in the context of mental health.
 - In times of darkness, we need the encouragement of others, but even more so than that, we need to look to Christ.

That was exactly where Thomas was in this moment. He needed the encouragement of those closest to him speaking truth into his life, but even more than that, he needed Jesus...and in his moment of need, guess who showed up? Jesus.

2.) The Appearance of Jesus

26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them – in our modern vernacular, 8 days later would imply the following Monday, but in 1st century Palestine, the phrase "8 days later" could have included the current day (Sunday), which would place the events that John describes on the following Sunday, one week after Jesus' initial appearance to the disciples. (Carson, 1991)

- That's what I believe the timing of this is.

- I don't believe it's a coincidence that Jesus' resurrection and first two appearances to the disciples all happened on a Sunday. If you want to know why the early church looked to Sunday as the Lord's Day and worshipped on Sunday, this is a major reason why. Sundays are special.
- Application – every time we gather on Sunday, it is a memorial of that first Sunday in which Christ rose from the dead and showed Himself to His followers.
 - o Acts 20:7 - 7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.
 - o 1 Cor. 16:2 - 2 Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.
 - o Revelation 1:10 - 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

It's a week later, and Thomas's position has not changed. In fact, every day that passed probably further cemented Thomas in his unbelief and false assumptions. On this following Sunday, the disciples were gathered together likely in the same room that they had been in previously, with the doors shut and locked, but this time Thomas was with them.

Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said Peace be unto you – in the same manner that He had appeared to them a week prior, Jesus does so again, but this time with Thomas present.

John 20:19 - Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.

After greeting the disciples together, Jesus singled out Thomas and spoke directly to Him. He said...

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.

I love so much what Jesus says here. His words to Thomas here indicate several things to us.

- He knew exactly where Thomas was at. He didn't need someone to tell Him about Thomas's situation, about the pit of unbelief and pessimism that Thomas had dug himself down into. He didn't need someone to tell Him about Thomas's demands to see and touch His wounds. He knew exactly where Thomas was at.
 - o Application: Christ knows exactly where you are at. He knows your name, your situation. He even knows your thoughts, something that no one else in the world has access to. He knew Thomas, and He knows you.
 - o But he didn't just know where Thomas was at.
- He met Thomas where he was at.

- Christ descended down into that pit of hurt, pessimism, and unbelief, and He provided Thomas with what he needed to get out.
- Application: Like Thomas, when we find ourselves in pits of isolation, pessimism, self pity, and discouragement, we need the encouragement of those closest to us, but beyond that, we need Jesus, and we need the tools that He provides to escape that darkness.
 - What tools has Christ provided us to escape the pit of self pity, discouragement, and pessimism?
 - This morning I want to share with you three of them from Philippians 4.
 - The Tool of Thankfulness
 - Philippians 4:4 - 4 Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.
 - We ought to be a joyful, grateful, praising people.
 - When I talk about thanksgiving, I'm not talking about a feeling. I'm talking about as an exercise.
 - The exercise of thanksgiving is the cure for self pity. When we take time to thank God for what He's done and who He is, it moves our mind from darkness to the light. More importantly, it moves our mind from self to God. As children of God, we are an incredibly blessed people. The problem is that we forget that, and instead we ruminate on the burdens of life. How do you combat that? You start intentionally ruminating on the blessings.
 - The more you struggle with discouragement and negative, untrue thought patterns, the more thanksgiving ought to be built into the schedule of your day.
 - I do it once a day, but you might need to do it once an hour.
 - The Tool of Prayer
 - Philippians 4:6-7 - 6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication **with thanksgiving** let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.
 - Prayer is the surrendering of burdens and cares to God. Rather than ruminating in worry and self-deprecation, prayer takes burdens and shares them with someone who can actually do something about them.
 - Worry changes nothing, but prayer changes everything.

Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side – Jesus' words here indicate that He knew what Thomas had said to the other disciples even though He wasn't physically present (omniscience and omnipresence).

- With the other disciples, it took Jesus not only showing them his hands and side, but also eating fish and honey, to convince them that He was the physically risen Lord.
 - o Luke 24:36-43 - 36 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. 37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. 38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? 39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. 40 And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. 41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? 42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. 43 And he took it, and did eat before them.
 - o 1 John 1:1-2 - That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; (For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

We've seen the unbelief of Thomas. We've seen the appearance of Jesus.

That brings us to the question, "What did Thomas do?"

3.) The Response of Thomas

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

Jesus showed up in the midst of Thomas's self pity, and when He did, Thomas's unbelief went out the window as he got his eyes off of himself and onto Jesus.

My Lord and my God – Rather than taking Jesus up on his offer to touch His hands and sides, Thomas responded in that moment with the strongest confession of faith found anywhere in John's gospel: "my Lord and my God".

- "Thomas' utterance cannot possibly be taken as shocked profanity addressed to God...Despite its popularity with some modern Arians, such profanity would not have been found in first century Palestine on the lips of a devout Jew...The overwhelming majority of grammarians rightly take the utterance as a vocative address to Jesus: My Lord and my God! – the nouns being put not in the vocative case but in the nominative (as sometimes happens is vocative address) to add a certain sonorous weight." (Carson, 1991, pp. 658-659)
- John 1:18 - 18 No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

- “The disciples with Thomas (of all people!) as their spokesman, have confessed that the ‘flesh they had known, and now know again in a new way, was also in truth the ‘Word’ who was one with the Father.” (Wright, 2003, p. 668)
- “When Thomas makes this confession, he is looking at the living God in human form.” (Wright, 2003, p. 668)

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed – Jesus here commends Thomas for His faith. He praises him for believing in Him as his Lord and God based on His physical appearance to Him. But Jesus says this to set the stage for the blessing (beatitude) that follows.

- They were given the privilege of seeing Him, but they were also given the tremendous responsibility of giving the remainder of their lives to spread that gospel in the face of intense opposition and persecution.

Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed – Content, happy, harmonious, blessed are those who do not see and yet believe.

- Application – this is the opposite of how we would think of the situation. We would think of the disciples and others who saw the risen Lord as blessed in a greater way than us, but Jesus’ says the exact opposite.
 - “It’s a good thing that you have believed in me as a result of seeing me, but those who believe in Me without the benefit of seeing Me in My resurrected state are blessed in an even greater way.” (Carson, 1991, p. 659)
 - John 13:17 - 17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.
 - The only other beatitude in John’s gospel.
 - 1 Peter 1:8-9 - 8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: 9 Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.
 - “The proselyte is dearer to God than all the Israelites who stood by Mount Sinai. For if all the Israelites had not seen the thunder and the flames and the lightnings and the quaking mountain and the sound of the trumpet they would not have accepted the law and taken upon themselves the kingdom of God. Yet this man has seen none of all these things yet comes and gives himself to God and takes on himself the yoke of the kingdom of God. Is there any who is dearer than this man?”
 - Rabbi Simeon ben Laqish (AD 250) in Tanhuma (Carson, 1991, p. 660)
 - Jesus’ words here look forward to the next step in the Great Commission in which men and women would come to faith not through what they saw with their own two eyes, but rather through the testimony of those like John, Peter, and Thomas who had heard and seen Him with their own two eyes (1 John 1:1).

- In fact, as we have worked our way through John's gospel over the last year, that's exactly what we have been doing. We have been studying the eyewitness testimony of one who was there with Jesus.
- Romans 10:17 - 17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

The story of Jesus and Thomas, for our author John, is a great segway into sharing with his readers the purpose for why he wrote his gospel and giving them an invitation to respond.

"John's readers, like Thomas, need to come to faith; and this is what coming to faith looks like." (Carson, 1991, p. 659)

We've seen the unbelief of Thomas, the appearance of Jesus, and the response of Thomas. This morning we close with...

4.) The Purpose of John's Gospel

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:

John included in his gospel only a small portion of the miracles that he had personally seen Jesus perform.

- Sign 1: Water into Wine (2:1-11)
- Sign 2: Nobleman's Son (4:43-54)
- Sign 3: Pool of Bethesda (5:1-18)
- Sign 4: Feeding of 5000 (6:1-15)
- Sign 5: Walking on Sea of Galilee (6:16-24)
- Sign 6: Healing of the Blind Man (9:1-41)
- Sign 7: Raising of Lazarus (11:1-57)
- Sign 8: Jesus' Resurrection (20-21)
 - But these miracles, culminating in the resurrection, I have recorded for you for a reason...

31 But these are written, that (*here's the purpose statement of the book*) ye (*the reader*) might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

- This is the purpose statement for the book.
 - "Those who have not seen the risen Christ and yet have believed are blessed; therefore, this book has been composed in order that you might believe." (Carson, 1991, p. 661)
 - "John's purpose in writing was to evangelize; the impact of his gospel has far exceeded any hope he could have entertained...John's purpose is not academic. He writes in order that men and women believe the truth that the Christ, the Son of God, is Jesus...But such faith is not an end in itself. It is directed toward the goal of personal salvation: that by believing you may have life in his name." (Carson, 1991, p. 663)

John recorded the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth for a reason:

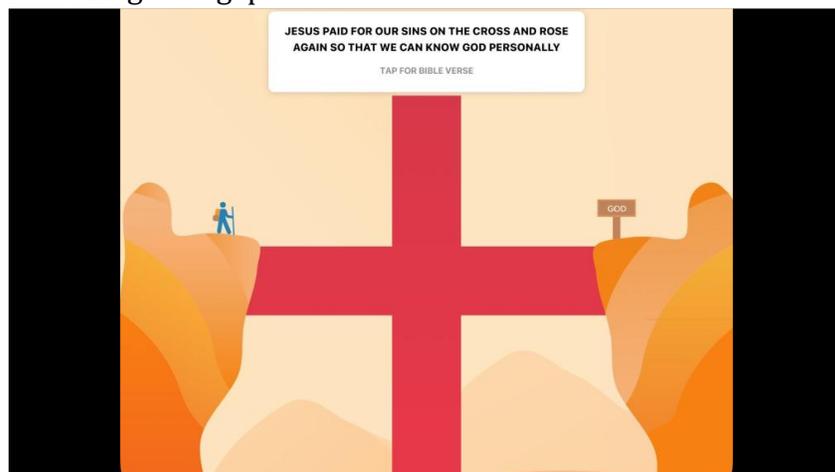
- That you might believe in Jesus and have everlasting life through your faith in Him
 - o John 3:16 - For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.
- Every one of us in this room has problems in our life that we'd like to be delivered from, saved from...
 - o Financial situation (debt)
 - o Family issue
 - o Work problem
 - o Health affliction
- But according to the Scripture, all of those problems pale in comparison to the greatest problem that every single one of us faces: sin.
 - o Sin – living in disobedience and rebellion to our Creator and His design for our lives. Every time we sin it is a personal, painful affront to a God who loves us so much but hates our sin.
 - o Sin creates a chasm between us and God.



- - The price tag of our sin is eternal separation from God. (Rom. 6:23)
 - That's what Hell is. It's separation from God forever.
 - o What makes the problem worse is that there's nothing we can do to bridge the gap between us and God.

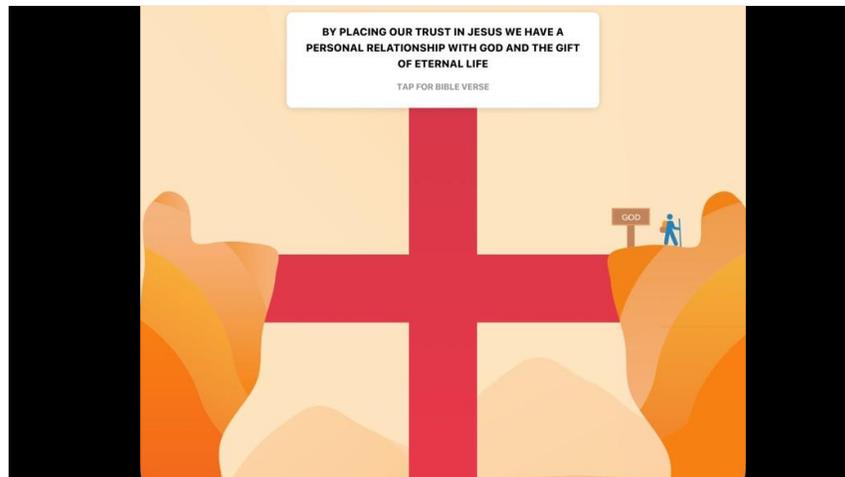


- Rom. 3:10 – there are none righteous enough to bridge that gap.
 - Rom. 3:23 – all have sinned and fall short of being able to bridge that gap
 - Rom. 3:20 – religion and good works are utterly incapable of bridging the gap between us and God
 - By works, no one will be justified in His sight.
 - We were hopeless, separated from God due to sin with no way to bridge that gap.
 - Romans 5:8 – But God demonstrated His love towards us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.
 - Because there was nothing we could do to get to God, God came to us. Jesus came down to this earth 2000 years ago.
- He came to bridge the gap.



- How did He do that?
 - As the sinless Son of God, He died for your sins, and He rose three days later victorious over sin, death, and Hell.
 - God made a way for us to be reconciled to Him, and it wasn't religion, good works, or anything else like that. It was Jesus. It is Jesus.

- The bridge has been built. Christ has done the hard part. The question that remains is whether we will cross it or whether we will ignore it and continue to try to build our own bridge to God.
 - John says, “This is why I wrote my gospel. I wrote it so that you could know about the bridge and so that you might cross it. “
- How do you cross it? Faith.
- John 3:16
- You have to abandon all your attempts to build a bridge to God and by faith in Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection cross the one that He has made for you.
 - You have to stop trusting in anything else to save you from your sin and put your faith entirely in Jesus Christ and His death, burial, and resurrection.



- (Lancaster Baptist Church)
- The Bible teaches that the moment we put our faith in Jesus, our sins are forgiven, we enter into a relationship with God, and we receive the gift of eternal life.

Application

Have you crossed the bridge God has provided in Christ, or are you still trying to reach God your own way? Have you put your complete faith and trust in Jesus Christ as the payment for your sins and the only way to God?

- If not, today is the day of salvation. Don’t put it off another day.
- The moment you die, if you haven’t crossed that bridge yet, that opportunity is gone, and you will spend eternity separated from God.

If you have been saved this morning, you have been delivered from the penalty of sin in your life...but are you trusting in Christ to deliver you from the power of sin in your life?

- Are you in a pit this morning? My friend, if Christ can deliver you from Hell, He can deliver you from that pit...not through your power, but through His strength and His

supernatural resources that He has provided for you (thanksgiving, prayer, and truth).

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? How can you practically apply the sermon to your life this week?*

digging deeper

2.) *Read John 11:1-16. What can we discover about Thomas from this passage of Scripture? How do his actions in John 11 compare to his actions in John 20?*

3.) *Read John 1:1-18. How is Thomas's statement in John 20:28 the culmination of John's introduction in chapter 1? How does John's purpose statement in John 20:30-31 tie in with his introduction in chapter 1?*

looking ahead

4.) *Read John 21:1-14. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does John 21:1-14 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

JOHN 21:1-14

Review

Take your Bibles and open up to John 21:1.

From John's gospel we know that Christ had already appeared to His disciples together twice within the space of a week following His resurrection.

- The first appearance took place on the night of that first Easter Sunday.
 - o The disciples were gathered together in a private room with the doors locked. Peter was sharing how the Lord had just appeared to him. The Emmaus travelers were sharing how the Lord had just appeared to them, and then poof, out of nowhere, Christ appeared in the middle of the room.
 - o He assured the disciples that He was alive. He called them to go forth with the good news of His death, burial, and resurrection. He empowered them with the promise of the Holy Spirit, and He authorized them for their calling on power and authority of His Word.
 - o However, one of the disciples was not there. Thomas was away, likely by himself, and when the disciples found him and told him that the Lord had appeared to them, he would not believe.
- He remained in that state for a solid week until the following Sunday on which the second appearance of Christ to His disciples took place.
 - o Once again, the disciples (including Thomas this time) were gathered together in a private room with the doors locked. Then poof, out of nowhere, Christ appeared in the middle of the room. He greeted them all, but then spoke directly to Thomas. He reached down into Thomas's pit of darkness, pessimism, and unbelief, and what did Thomas do? He responded with the strongest affirmation of faith in Jesus anywhere in John's gospel: "My Lord and my God."
 - o Then John ended chapter 20 with the following conclusion.
 - o John 20:29-31 - 29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed. 30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: 31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

I don't know what your thoughts are, but to me that conclusion sounds like a great ending to the entire book. It seems like a really good stopping place. If you had never read John's gospel before, and someone handed you a copy of the book without chapter 21, you probably wouldn't feel like you were missing anything.

There's a reason for that. John's gospel, like many literary works, has a prologue/introduction (1:1-18), a body (the story of Jesus's life and ministry) (1:19-20:31), and an epilogue/conclusion (21:1-25).

The presence of a prologue suggests the necessity of an epilogue. (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 4593)

- Illustration
 - o John 1:1-18 – the trailer
 - o John 1:19-20:31 – the movie
 - o John 21 – the post credits scene

This morning, we are going to dive into John's post credits scene as we study the third recorded appearance of Jesus' to the disciples.

As we study this appearance, the first aspect of it we see is...

1.) The Setting of the Appearance

1 After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise shewed he himself.

When did this appearance take place?

After these things – after His second resurrection appearance to the disciples (which took place seven days after Easter), but before His ascension into heaven (which took place 40 days after Easter). This appearance took place at some point in time inbetween seven and forty days after Easter.

Where did this appearance take place?



Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the Sea of Tiberias (*Sea of Galilee*) – this appearance did not take place in Jerusalem in the South, but rather in Galilee 70 miles to the North. This is the significant because Jesus had told the disciples at the Last Supper (Matt. 26:32) that after He had risen, He would see them in Galilee...it's also significant because the angels told the women after Jesus had risen that Jesus would see them in Galilee. Knowing this, the disciples made the 70-mile journey from Jerusalem back to Galilee to wait for Jesus.

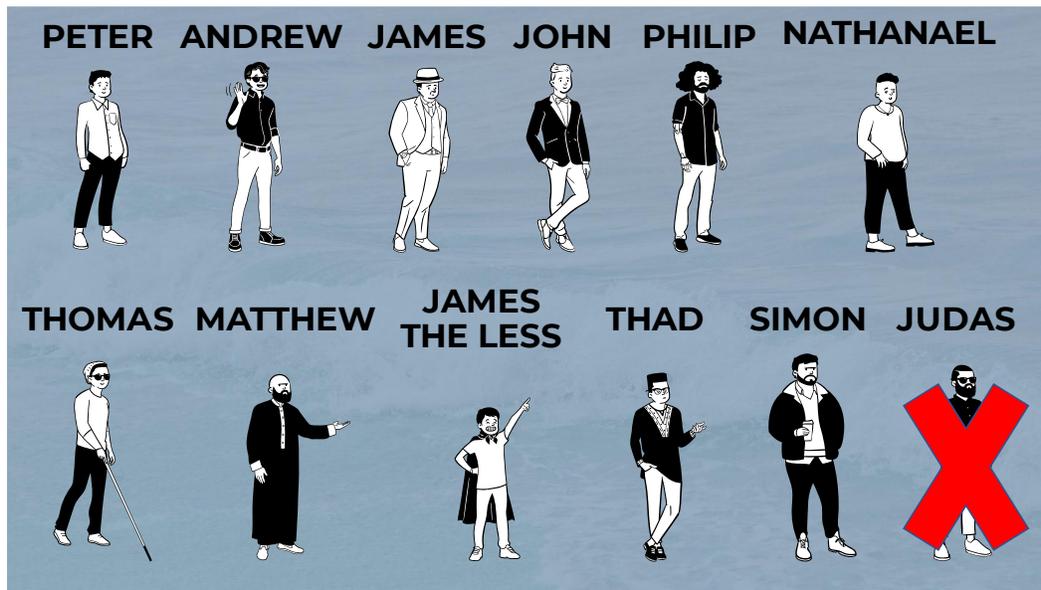
And on this wise shewed he himself – this is how Jesus manifested Himself for the third time to His disciples.

Matthew 26:32 - But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.

Matthew 28:7 - And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

Mark 16:7 - But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.

John 6:1 - After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias.



Who did Jesus appear to?

- I've got here a visual representation of the twelve apostles minus Judas (who hanged himself following his betrayal of Christ).
- Peter & Andrew (Peter's the ring leader & Andrew is his brother)
 - o They were fisherman
- James & John (brothers; along with Peter they were part of Jesus' inner circle).
 - o They too were fisherman with their dad Zebedee.
- Philip (was from the same town as Peter and Andrew: Bethsaida)
 - o After Jesus called him in John 1, he went to find a buddy of his and told him about Jesus. That buddy was named:
- Nathanael aka Bartholomew (was from Cana of Galilee)
 - o He was probably a fisherman (due to his presence in this story)
 - o When Philip told him of Jesus of Nazareth, Nathanael replied, "Can anything good come from Nazareth."
 - o Philip said, "Come and see." Nathanael did and he followed Jesus too.
- Thomas (who we highlighted last week)
 - o He was probably a fisherman (due to his presence in this story)
- Matthew aka Levi (tax collector from Capernaum in Galilee)
 - o He was a Jewish employee of Rome that his fellow Jews would have seen as a traitor.
- James the less (less - little or younger)
 - o His father's name was Alphaeus.
- Thaddeus aka Lebbaeus & Judas son of James
- Simon the Zealot (before following Christ he was a revolutionary that believed in using violence to overthrow the Roman rule)
- Judas Iscariot (who betrayed the Lord and committed suicide)

Who was there for this third appearance?

2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

There were together Simon Peter – the leader

- listed first, as was typical, due to his leadership in the group

And Thomas called Didymus – Thomas the twin

And Nathanael of Cana in Galilee – which is where Jesus turned the water into wine and where He healed the nobleman's son

And the sons of Zebedee – James and John, who were in their father Zebedee's ship mending their nets when Christ initially called them to follow Him...and immediately they left the ship and their father and followed Him (Matt. 4:21-22)

- This is likely why Zebedee is mentioned here.

And two other of his disciples – these two were probably not apostles, not part of the 12. They were just followers of Jesus in a general sense. (Plummer, 1902)



Why did Jesus appear to them?

3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee – What happens here is really significant because for these men, fishing was not a hobby. What was it? It was a vocation. It was a way of life. It was what they did with their lives before they met Jesus...before He called them to be fishers of men.

- Christ had risen from the dead. He had called them to a great commission. But He told them to wait until the time at which the Holy Spirit would come down and empower them.
- What did they do? They returned to Galilee, and they waited...until they didn't. Then all of the sudden, they went back, in that moment to their old way of life. (Kostenberger A. J., 2013, p. Loc 4633)
- "The passage illustrates two contrasting dependencies from which they could choose. The disciples could depend on their former trades and pick up on life as they had left it before Jesus called them, or they could continue in gospel ministry dependent on His power and provision." (MacArthur, 2006, p. 1009)
- Peter decided to go back to fishing, and the others followed suit.

They went forth and entered into a ship immediately – when it talks about them entering into a ship here, from the Greek we know that they didn't just enter into a ship. They entered into the ship, suggesting that the boat perhaps belonged to one of the disciples. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 1010)

And that night they caught nothing – the whole night (which was apparently the best time for catching fish on the Sea of Galilee) they labored and in their own power back in their old way of life, and they did not catch a single fish.

- Illustration – I enjoy fishing when I catch fish...but for me, there is nothing more frustrating than fishing and not catching fish
 - o Here were these former professional fishermen that decided to go back to fishing, and do you know what God said? “Oh no you don’t.” Between the seven of them, all night long, they did not catch a single fish.
- John 15:5 - I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.
 - o You cannot please God, and you cannot honor God outside of His will and direction for your life.
- Christ had called them to fish for men, but now they had gone back to fishing for fish. There’s nothing wrong with fishing for fish in and of itself...but when God has called you to do something other than that and you divert from God’s calling on your life, there is something wrong with that.
 - o Application: there is nothing wrong with being a servicemember or an engineer or a nurse or whatever it might be in your life, but if God is directing you to do something other than that, and you divert from or ignore God’s calling on your life, then there is something wrong with that.
 - o There’s nothing wrong with Tarshish, but there is something wrong with Tarshish if God has called you to Nineveh.

Matthew 4:18-20 - And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.

Luke 5:10-11 - And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

We’ve seen the setting of the appearance: the who, when, where and why. Next, we see the reminder of their call.

2.) The Reminder of their Call

THE REMINDER OF THEIR CALL



4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

But when the morning was come – day was breaking

Jesus stood on the shore – apparently waiting for the disciples



But the disciples knew not that it was Jesus – they didn't recognize Him from such a great distance (about a football field away) having toiled all night

5 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? – the Greek word for “children” was at times used in a similar way as the word “lads” or “boys” in modern vernacular. (Carson, 1991, p. 670)

- Boys, have you not caught anything?
 - o The way Jesus asked the question anticipated a negative response.

They answered him, No. – Nope. Nothing.

- That's pretty embarrassing for professional fishermen.

6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship and ye shall find – Unbeknownst to the disciples there was a large school of fish on the right side of the boat. Although they were unaware of this, Jesus was not. With some authority, Jesus told the fisherman to cast their nets on the starboard side of the boat.

- Illustration – when you are going through a dry spell in fishing, there is often no shortage of unsolicited advice from your fellow fishermen
- They'd been going at it all night. They hadn't caught anything. Then, all of the sudden, there's this random guy shouting at them from the shore. He tells them, with some authority, to cast their nets on the starboard side of the ship.
 - o "Oh, the right side of the ship? Man, we've been fishing off the left side this whole time. Thank goodness you came along."

They cast therefore – why? Not because they recognized Jesus, for they did not know who was speaking to them until later.

- I'll tell you why I think they did. When you've had that bad of a fishing trip, you're willing to try just about anything to reverse your luck. What's the worst that could happen? You take the guy's advice and catch nothing?... and you get to prove the know it all on the shore wrong in the process?

And now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes – and there were so many fish in the net, that the net was literally too heavy for seven grown men to pull it out of the water and lift it into the boat

- Illustration – the excitement of finally getting one on the hook!

7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord – What led John to this conclusion? Why did what had just happened confirm for him that the man on the shore was in fact Jesus? I'll tell you why. It's because what happened on that boat was a Deja vu moment that would have reminded Peter, James, and John of when Jesus had called them three years prior to lay down their nets and become fishers of men. In that moment on the Sea of Galilee Jesus recreated the scene at which He had first called them to follow Him.

Luke 5:1-11 - 5 And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, 2 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. 3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship. 4 Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into

the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. 5 And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net. 6 And when they had this done, they inclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake. 7 And they beckoned unto their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink. 8 When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. 9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the draught of the fishes which they had taken: 10 And so was also James, and John, the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men. 11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

- This initial calling of these fishermen is recorded in Matthew 4:17-22, Mark 1:16-20 as well as Luke 5:1-11. Mark's account is nearly identical to Matthew's, and yet Luke provides us with a more detailed picture of this calling.
 - o Jesus was teaching on the shore of the Sea of Galilee
 - o There was a large crowd, and it was probably hard to see and hear him
 - o He noticed two boats right near the shore (one of them was Peter's who he had previously met)
 - o He entered into Peter's boat (perhaps the very boat the disciples were fishing from in John 21). They cast off a bit from the shore, and Jesus sat down and taught the people out of the ship.
 - o Jesus finished speaking and told Peter to launch the boat out in the deep and put down the nets.
 - o Peter told Jesus that they had been fishing all night and caught nothing, but nevertheless Peter consented because Jesus had asked.
 - o What happened?
 - o The net filled with fish to the point that the net broke.
 - o They called for the other boat (which James & John were on) to come out and help reel in all the fish.
 - o They filled up both boats with the fish, and there were so many fish, that the boats began to sink a little.
 - o Peter fell down on his knees and said, "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." James and John were likewise astonished.
 - o Jesus said, "Fear not; from henceforth thou shalt catch men."
 - o Luke 5:11 - and when they had brought their ships to land, **they forsook all, and followed him.**

In Luke 5, following the miraculous catch, Jesus called the disciples to cast down their nets and follow Him. Here, in John 21, the disciples had picked back up those nets, and Jesus recreated the scene of their calling to remind them put those nets back down...because that was not what He had for their lives.

- John has this deja vu moment, and says, "It's the Lord!"
- Whereas John was quick to perceive, Peter was quick to action.

Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher's coat unto him, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea – Peter may have been only wearing a loincloth in the morning hours of the warm spring day, or the language here could also indicate that he had on his inner tunic, but now his outer tunic. Realizing that it was Jesus on the shore, Peter quickly put on his outer cloak, and jumped into the lake to swim toward shore. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 1013)

- Usually you take off layers when you swim. You don't put more on. (Barnes, 1834)
- Perhaps he did this for modesty's sake.

8 And the other disciples came in a little ship; (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,) dragging the net with fishes.

And the other disciples came in a little ship...dragging the net with fishes – Peter swam to shore leaving behind the other disciples to maneuver the boat to shore, while dragging the net full of fishes along in the water (because it was too heavy to lift up in the boat).

For they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits – the distance to shore was about 100 yards (a football field)

- Illustration - Olympic size swimming pools are 50 yards
- The author's point of view remaining with the boat while Peter swam to shore is another indicator of eye witness testimony. The point of view of the author stayed with the boat because the author was in the boat.

We've seen the setting of the appearance. We've seen the reminder of their call (three years prior), and now finally this morning we see...

3.) The Breakfast with Jesus

9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

As soon as they were come to land – when they arrived on shore

They saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread – During His earthly ministry, Jesus had washed the disciples feet, and here following His resurrection, He once again served them by providing the weary disciples with a hot breakfast.

- What did Jesus serve for breakfast?
- Illustration – One of the things that has really stuck out to me during our study of Jesus' life this past year is how much He enjoyed fish.
- Just think about it for a second.
 - o What did most of Jesus' disciples do for a living? Fish.
 - o When Jesus fed the multitudes, he did so with five loaves and two what? Fish.
 - o When Jesus appeared to the disciples that first Easter night, what did He eat? Fish.
 - o Here in John's last recorded resurrection appearance of Jesus, what did He serve the disciples for breakfast? Fish.

10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught – The singular fish Jesus was cooking would start the meal while they cooked up some of the other fish that the disciples caught.

11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty three – whereas Peter bailed on getting the boat and fish to shore, at least he helped get the net full of 153 large fish to shore.

- Illustration – the fish were “← →” this big
- What was significant about this number? Probably nothing.
- On a practical level, it does make sense that someone would count the fish they had caught. “This is nuts. I wonder how many we caught.”

And for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken – despite the fact that there was such a harvest of fish, the net did not break (in contrast with what happened in Luke 5, when the net did break)

12 Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine – Jesus had already told them to bring the fish, and now, it’s almost like Jesus has to spell it out for them. “Guys, come, sit down and eat with me.” You might imagine them all sort of standing there unsure of what to do, perhaps ashamed of the fact that Jesus had caught them red handed picking up the nets they had laid down three years prior. (MacArthur, 2006, p. 1014)

And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? Knowing that it was the Lord. – There is a mixture here of perplexity, awe, and conviction. They know that He is the Lord, and yet it’s abundantly clear that He’s not the same as He was before the resurrection. He’s been glorified, and yet despite the fact that He’s different, in reverence, no one dared ask Him who He was. They knew who He was. (Plummer, 1902)

- Perhaps perplexed/amazed that He obviously wasn’t the same as He was before the resurrection. He was glorified. Perhaps puzzled still by the strangeness of a dying and resurrecting Messiah. Perhaps perplexed by the concept of resurrection before the end times. (Carson, 1991, p. 674)

Despite Jesus’ point blank invitation to come and dine, the disciples were still apparently frozen, and so Jesus came to them.

13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

14 This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

“The miraculous catch of fish and the meal He provided for them demonstrated to the disciples that Jesus could and would still meet their needs. This story also reminds all believers that obedience always brings blessing (cf. Gen. 22:18; Ex. 19:5; Lev. 26:3–12; Deut. 28:1–14; Pss. 19:11; 119:1–2; Isa. 1:19; Jer. 7:23; John 13:17; James 1:25; Rev. 22:7). The point at the historical moment this event happened and the primary sense of the event was to overcome the disciples’ fear of failure and weakness that was causing them to drift back into their old ways. What our Lord did here settled forever in the minds of the apostles that they were called to serve the Lord Jesus Christ for the rest of their lives.” (MacArthur, 2006, p. 1015)

In that moment Jesus reminded the disciples of His calling on their lives, He provided for their needs, and He ministered to them with His presence in their time of waiting.

Application – I don’t know what God’s specific calling for your life is, but I do know a few things.

- I know that His plans are better than your plans.
 - o Isaiah 55:8-9 - 8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. 9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.
- I know that where God guides, He provides.
 - o Matthew 6:31-33 - 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. 33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.
- I know that where God calls, He equips.
 - o Eph. 3:20 – He is the one that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Application

We all have our plans for our lives. I get that, but when is the last time you asked the Lord, “God, what are your plans for my life? I’m willing to do whatever you want. I’ve been fishing for fish, and I’m happy to continue to do that, but I want to know if that’s what you have for my life.”

Proverbs 3:5-6 - 5 Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

- What if I miss God’s will for my life?
- If you are willing and submissive, God will bring you into alignment with what He has for you in your life.
- Illustration – in my life, God broke up a relationship, shut down an MBA program, and took my job to get me from where I was to what He had for me

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? How can you practically apply the sermon to your life this week?

digging deeper

2.) Read Luke 5:1-11. How does Jesus' initial calling of Peter, James, and John compare with the events described in John 21:1-14?

3.) Reread John 21:1-14. In what ways is this story an object lesson for the task of evangelism? Compare and contrast the story of the disciples' fishing for fish with our present day task of fishing for men.

looking ahead

4.) Read John 21:15-25. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?

5.) Think application. How does John 21:15-25 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?

JOHN 21:15-25

Introduction

We are finally at the end of the gospel of John! This section we are in is sort of the end-credits scene of this gospel; it is here to sort of wrap up the story of Jesus.

As we saw last week, the disciples, instead of waiting on the Lord, go back to their old lifestyle of fishing. Jesus then came to them for the third time to call them back to what he had planned for their lives. He did so by performing a miracle and causing them to catch a multitude of fish when they hadn't caught anything all night. Peter, then, leaves the boat and swims to shore to see Jesus, where Jesus had set up a breakfast of fish and bread for them. The disciples dragged their fish to shore, 153 of them, and brought some to Jesus to cook for breakfast.

This was Jesus reminding them of the day when He called them to be fishers of men, to leave their old lives behind and follow Him with all their heart. This is what He is calling us to do as well, to go after what He wants us to do with our lives with all of our heart.

However, there is one major thread that is still unresolved in this Gospel; namely, Peter's denial of Jesus Christ. All the way back in John 13, Jesus told the disciples that He was going away, which referred to His death and ascension (Carson, 1991), and that they were unable to follow Him where He was going. Peter responded with a very bold claim.

John 13:36-37, "36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. 37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake."

Peter boldly told Jesus he would follow Him to the death! Jesus, who really knew Peter's heart, told Peter a hard truth.

John 13:38, "38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice."

Jesus knew that when push came to shove, Peter would deny Him three times. This prophecy was fulfilled in chapter 18.

John 18:15-17, "15 And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest. 16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple, which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. 17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not."

Peter was asked by this servant girl whether he was one of Jesus' disciples, and Peter, probably for fear of retribution, outright denied Christ.

John 18:25-27, "25 And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not. 26 One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? 27 Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew."

We learn from the gospel of Matthew that when he was questioned a second time, Peter swore an oath, which means he laid a curse on himself if he were not telling the truth and appealed to something sacred to prove his truthfulness. (Carson, 1991) (sort of like someone swearing on a stack of Bibles today) Then he was questioned a third time, and Peter, stronger than before, swore by an oath that he did not know the Lord. Peter didn't just deny the Lord. He strongly denied him. (France, 2007)

And it was at that moment that the rooster crowed, and Peter realized what he had done. The other gospels tell us that he left the house of the high priest and went out and wept bitterly. He was completely ashamed of what he had done.

Peter, the bold disciple, who would "follow Jesus to the death", strongly denied his Lord three times. This was an abysmal failure. When Peter should have stood up for Christ, he backed away with his tail between his legs, and denial of Christ in the New Testament is not taken lightly.

Matt. 10:32-33, "32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. 33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."

Mark 10:38, "38 For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Jesus loved Peter, had taught him, served him, but Peter responded by disowning his Lord. He had utterly failed his Lord. And if the story ended there, it would have been very bleak, wouldn't it? But what we are going to see in our passage of Scripture is that Jesus was not done with Peter. Even though Peter denied his Lord, Jesus reaches down with His grace, love, forgiveness, and mercy, and fully restores Peter to Himself. While this story highlights the seriousness of Peter's sin, it also highlights the amazing grace and restoration of Jesus. (Carson, 1991)

Topic - Failure in the Christian life is not final, because of the restorative heart of Jesus Christ.

1.) The Restoration of Peter to Ministry

John 21:15-17, "15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. 16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. 17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep."

After their breakfast, the disciples went for a walk with Jesus, with Peter walking in step with Christ. It is on this walk where Jesus confronts Peter about his denial.

Now there might have already been some restoration between them when Jesus appeared privately to Peter after his appearance to Mary Magdalene. But Jesus needed to make sure that Peter was publicly restored since he had publicly denied him. (Carson, 1991) Which makes sense right? Who knows what sort of awkward conversations that would have caused. "Wait didn't you deny Jesus?" "Ya me and Jesus took care of it by ourselves." It was important that he was restored publicly, and it does seem throughout this passage that whatever private restoration there was, Peter still had a bit to go.

Jesus looks at Peter, and asks him, "Peter, do you love me?" Jesus got down to the very heart of the matter, whether Peter loved him. (Carson, 1991) The reason Peter had denied Christ was not because he was facing too much pressure, or anyone else would do the same thing in that situation. He denied the Lord because he did not love the Lord.

Peter's response is not one of self-righteousness or self-confidence, because the only thing he appeals to at this moment is Jesus' knowledge. Lord you know my heart, you know that I love you. (Carson, 1991)

Jesus does not respond with condemnation nor does He respond with a list of tasks for Peter to do before he can be restored. He simply gives Peter a command, "Feed my sheep."

He does this a second time, "Peter, do you love me?" Peter again responds "Lord, you know that I love you." And Jesus again gives him a command, "Care for my sheep."

Jesus then asks him a third time! Peter is grieved by how many times Jesus asked this question. And he responds by saying "Lord, you know everything, you know I love you!" Again, Jesus responds by saying, "Feed my sheep."

Why does Jesus ask Peter three times whether he loved Him? I have heard it preached before that Jesus did this three times to restore Peter from a mere brotherly love to a special, divine, unconditional love for Jesus. The interpretation normally goes something like this...If you just understand the difference between the Greek words for love in this passage, it will unlock the special meaning of this passage of Scripture. (Ward, 2022)

"Storge is the affection one feels for a puppy. Eros is a sexual kind of love. Phileo is brotherly love. Agape love gives for the sake of giving, never expecting anything in return." (Courson, 2003)

Keeping it with just three of them, Eros is lust, Phileo is a brotherly, emotional, friendship love, and Agape is an unconditional, non-emotional, Christlike love. (Ward, 2022)

In Jesus' question, "Do you love me?", the greek word for love is ἀγαπᾶς, or Agape. When Peter responds with "Lord, you know I love you.", he is using the greek word φιλῶ, or Phileo. So, according to the definitions, Jesus is asking Peter, "Do you unconditionally love me?" and all Peter can respond with is the lesser love, "You know I love you like a friend (phileo)." And the third time Jesus asks the questions he actually asks "Do you Phileo me?", which is Jesus meeting Peter where he is at spiritually, and Jesus will meet you where you are at. (Courson, 2003)

The problem with this interpretation is that the definition determines the context rather than the context determining the definition.

First, from the Gospel of John itself, there is no special meaning of the Greek words agape and phileo. Agape does not have a special definition of unconditional, Christlike love,

because John 3:19 says that “men loved (agape) darkness rather than light.” Both phileo and agape are used interchangeably for God the Father’s love of Jesus in John 3:35 and 5:20. (Carson, 1991)

Second, from the context, it seems John just likes variety in his words. Jesus uses two different Greek words for “feed”, two different words for “sheep”, and two different words for “know”. No one is looking at the difference between these words to find some sort of special interpretation. (Carson, 1991)

Here's a good bible study rule: Put less weight on definitions of words and more weight on studying passages. (Ward, 2022)

It is tempting when doing Bible study to scour a dictionary to find some sort of deep, divine definition that will unlock the interpretation of a passage of Scripture. But God has spoken to us in ordinary language, and definitions of words in the Bible are simple. Looking up words in a dictionary is helpful. I do that almost on a daily basis. But your study will be much more fruitful if you put less weight on studying words and put more weight studying passages of Scripture. Read sentences in their context and allow the context to determine the definition of words, not visa versa. (Ward, 2022)

So why did Jesus ask him three times whether or not he loved Him? First and simply, Peter denied Him three times, therefore, Jesus needed Peter to confess his love for him three times. But Jesus also does this to fully restore Peter as a shepherd of the flock of God. Peter responds to the questions by saying, “Lord, you know that I love you, you literally know everything!”, and to his relief, Jesus accepts his answer.

Peter, even though he had abysmally failed his Lord, even though he had strongly denied him, is fully restored by Jesus. And He showed that He fully restored Peter to his ministry by giving him these commands, “Feed my sheep.” See, Jesus didn’t just forgive Peter and then tell him, “You are no longer worthy of service.” He goes above and beyond in restoration by giving Peter the role of the shepherd of his flock. He restores him to the role of an elder or pastor.

The words that Jesus uses in His command give us some first glimpses into the office that Peter was to hold as a pastor. Jesus uses two different words for “Feed”, but both are very close to each other in meaning.

Βόσκει - to tend to the needs of animals, to pasture and cause animals to eat
(BDAG/LouNida)

Ποίμαινε - “to watch out for other people, to shepherd, of activity that protects, rules, governs, fosters...in a sense of lead, guide” (BDAG)

His responsibility as a shepherd was to feed, care for, lead, guide, and protect the flock of God. Notice that Jesus retains possession of the flock, “Feed my lambs.” The church is not Peter’s, it is Christ’s; Peter has simply been given the role of managing the flock, not owning it, which shows just how radical and wonderful the restoration of Jesus is. (Carson, 1991) He takes Peter from being a denier to being a Pastor, an elder, an apostle.

Peter mentions this role in 1 Peter 5:1-4, “5 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. 4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away”

He was graciously given the responsibility of caring for, feeding, teaching, guiding, and protecting the church of God.

Application

Failure is not final in the Christian life because of the wonderful restoration of Jesus. And in Peter’s case, his failure was abysmal, he literally disowned the Lord. But Jesus wasn’t done with Peter, and he isn’t done with you. What does this passage teach us about handling failure in the Christian life?

You might be in here and you really identify with Peter, because you have drastically failed the Lord. But what this passage first teaches us about failure is that is not how Jesus sees you. He died for that sin just like any other, and the Bible teaches us that if we confess our sins and repent of them, we have an advocate with the Father who will forgive us!

1 John 1:9 and 2:1

Just confess the sin, get it out of your life, Jesus will forgive and restore you! But sometimes it is still easy to hold onto our sin after Jesus has forgiven us.

Failure is not final for the believer because of the wonderful restoration of Christ.

Transition

But this passage of Scripture not only teaches us how to handle failure, it also teaches us how not to handle failure.

2.) The Restoration of Peter to Suffering

John 21:18-22, “18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. 19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. 20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? 21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? 22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.”

Peter is not only restored to shepherding but also to suffering for the sake of Christ. And as we will see, this scares Peter, and makes him start comparing the cost of discipleship. Jesus in verse 18 is basically saying that when Peter was younger he would tighten his own belt and walk wherever he wanted to go. (CSB, 2018) Jesus is emphasizing the freedom of youth. This is in contrast to the next part of the verse, where Jesus basically tells Peter that when he is old someone will stretch out his hands, another person will tighten your belt, and another will carry you where you don't want to go. John immediately tells us that this was a prophecy of the death that Peter would face, which was crucifixion. (Carson, 1991)

The phrase “thou shalt stretch forth thy hands...” is a reference to how the cross beam would be tied to the back and shoulders of the one being crucified, and they would be forced to carry their own cross. (Carson, 1991) Jesus prophesied the death of Peter. And John adds the interesting note that this death was going to be the way in which Peter glorified God.

What is so interesting is that this was already foreshadowed in John 13.

John 13:36-37, “36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. 37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.”

Jesus was simply saying to Peter, “You can't follow me to the death now, but after my crucifixion, you will.” And Peter boldly responded with “I will lay down my life for thy sake.”, which obviously didn't work out. But remember, failure was not final for Peter. What

is so amazing is that Peter is restored to the mission of glorifying God in the exact same way that Jesus did. Peter had the amazing privilege of imitating Christ in his death. Not only by the fact that he was crucified, but also that his death brought glory to God the Father.

This theme is picked up in Peter's epistle, 1 Peter 4:14-16, "14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, ahappy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified...16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf."

What is really interesting is that by the time that this Gospel was written, Peter had already been put to death, possibly under the reign of Nero. (Carson, 1991) Historically speaking we are certain that Peter died by crucifixion, because of the unanimous testimony about it from the first century on. (McDowell, 2015)

It is commonly said that Peter was crucified upside down, because he was too humble to be crucified exactly like Christ, but the evidence for it is inconclusive. This account is based on later testimony from a 2nd century apocryphal work known as the Acts of Peter, and it has a ton of legendary material in it such as Peter raising a fish from the dead and a guy named Simon flying through the air in a miracle battle with Peter. (McDowell, 2015) (James, 1924) Regardless, Jesus graciously gave him the opportunity to do what he had failed in, to glorify God the Father in his death.

And this is precisely what he says to Peter. He prophesied Peter's death, and then he turns to him and says "Follow me." And what is so interesting is that this scares Peter, and he starts to compare the cost of discipleship with others.

"And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me. 20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? 21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? 22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me."

The cost for Peter to follow Jesus is high, which makes him waiver a bit again. Instead of immediately saying, "Yes Lord, I will follow you", he immediately tries to figure out John's fate for the sake of comparison. Peter says, "Lord, what about John?" By pointing out that he was the one leaning on Jesus' chest at the last supper, and being the one who Peter asked to find out who would betray Jesus, points to a special intimacy between Peter and John that really explains Peter's question to Jesus. (Carson, 1991)

Jesus basically says it is none of your business; you follow me no matter what the fate of others is. Don't compare the cost of discipleship. Jesus says that even if it was God's will that John would not die till I come back, it doesn't matter. You follow me. (Carson, 1991)

Peter was to stop comparing the cost of discipleship and follow Jesus to the death. (Carson, 1991)

Application

When we are being restored from failure, and Jesus calls us to follow him again, there will always be a cost.

"For whosoever will save his life shall lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake shall find it."

All of us have the cost of giving up sin. And it is easy to compare the cost of our giving up sin with others, especially when it is one of the "big sins". It can be easy to have the attitude "No one else has to sacrifice this much to give up this sin." "No one else understands what it feels like to have to give up this lifestyle." "Josh you don't understand, it would cost me everything to follow Jesus, it would feel like part of who I am is dying." "No one else has to die to self like me."

And we can use this as an excuse to not follow Jesus, because no one else has had to suffer like I have to follow Jesus. But Jesus' response to Peter is the response to us, "What is it to you if they suffer less? You follow me." It is not to follow Jesus if everyone has equal suffering, it is to follow Jesus no matter the suffering. All Christians are called to "Deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow Jesus."

You know why we can do that? Because Jesus is better. You know why we can deny ourselves for Christ? It is not because Jesus gives us an equal share of the cost, it is because we all have an equal share of Christ!

No one has the same cost, but we all have the same Jesus.

Transition

Now John uses this conversation between Jesus and Peter to lead to the end of his book. And he ends his gospel by providing credibility to his testimony.

3.) The Credibility of John as an Apostle

John 21:23-25, “23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? 24 This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true. 25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.”

Again, John is following closely behind Jesus and Peter. John takes a moment in these verses to address a rumor that had risen up in the early church, that he (John) would not die till Jesus came back. This rumor, if allowed to run rampant, would undermine the truthfulness of his Gospel.

Because of what Jesus said about him, “if it is my will that he remains till I come...”, some people in the church thought that he would live till Jesus returned, and the older he got the closer they thought they were to the return of Christ. The obvious problem with this is that when John died, their faith would have been rocked because Jesus didn’t come back, and many skeptics would have been vindicated in their disbelief. This would also bring down the credibility of his Gospel, because if it was claimed by John that Jesus would return at the death, and it didn’t happen, John’s writing of the life of Christ was false. And as we saw a couple weeks ago, he wrote this book to provide signs and evidence that Jesus was the Son of God. A simple misunderstanding could bring down the credibility of his Gospel. (Carson, 1991)

John refutes this rumor by saying, “yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?” Jesus did not say that I wouldn’t die. Rather what he said was, “Even if it was my will that he would not die, what is that to you?” Jesus was giving a hypothetical example to prove a point to Peter.

“24 This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

This shows the deep contrast between his life and Peters. While Peter glorified God in his death, John lived a long life, and was called by God to “testify of these things and write them down.” (Carson, 1991)

Jesus gave John the mission to write about the Son of God, who came in the flesh to reveal the Father, who came to die for our sins and rise again, to offer eternal life. As 20:31 says, “31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.”

And John settles his authority even more when he says “and we know that his testimony is true.” John is establishing his eyewitness testimony as an apostle, which gives him authority to write about the life of Christ.

It recalls to our mind John 1:14, “14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” It recalls how he was part of the inner circle of Christ, a disciple who was deeply trusted by Jesus. It recalls how he was the beloved disciple, who laid on the chest of Jesus at the last supper. It recalls the teaching of Jesus about the Holy Spirit, how He would indwell the disciples, and bring to their remembrance everything that Jesus said and did. It recalls how he was a witness of the resurrected Christ.

All of this gives John great credibility and authority as an apostle to write about these truths, who Jesus is, the Son of God, and what he came to do, to give us eternal life, and to prove these by signs and wonders. (Carson, 1991)

And here we come to the last verse of the Gospel of John, where he concludes, not with establishing his credibility, but with a great sense of humility and awe at the works of Christ.

“25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.”

The Jesus who he writes about is not only the submissive Son of God who died and rose again, he is the Logos Incarnate. John 1:1-3, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The same was in the beginning with God, 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”

If John really tried to undertake writing all of the works of Christ, the Logos, the creator, the savior, as one commentator said, “the world would be a very small and inadequate library indeed.” (Carson, 1991) Although John is identifying himself as a credible apostle, he wants to make it abundantly clear that his Gospel does not even come close to giving Jesus all the glory and attention He deserves. (Carson, 1991)

Conclusion

John ends his Gospel with the restoration of Peter. Even though he had denied the Lord, he was restored by Jesus to ministry and sacrificial death.

This reminds us that failure is not final because of the restoration of Jesus. And if you are in the audience today, and you are struggling with the shame of failure, allow Jesus to restore you. And don't be like Peter and compare the cost of discipleship. None of us have the same cost, but all of us have the same Christ.

Further, John, at the end of his gospel, provides credibility to himself as an apostle possessing authority to write this book. And he wants to make it abundantly clear, that his gospel has not even scratched the surface of all the glory and attention that Christ should receive.

STUDY QUESTIONS

applying inward

1.) *What resonated most with you from the sermon this past Sunday? How can you practically apply the sermon to your life this week?*

digging deeper

2.) *Read John 21:15-17 and 1 Peter 5:1-4. Catholics use this passage in John to show Peter was the first pope. Given the similar descriptions of an elder in both John and Peter, do you think Jesus gave Peter any special authority or power?*

3.) *Read John 21:18-20 and Matt. 16:24-26. What are some practical examples of costs that come from following Jesus? How can we practically follow Jesus no matter the cost?*

looking ahead

4.) *Read Matt. 1:18-25. What happens in this passage of Scripture? Is there anything that sticks out to you? What is something new in this passage that you may have not noticed before?*

5.) *Think application. How does Matt. 1:18-25 practically apply to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?*

APPENDIX 1

THE CASE FOR & AGAINST THE WOMAN CAUGHT IN ADULTERY

The Case Against

External Evidence

1. The PA is not found in the earliest manuscripts
 - a. Support 1 - Of the ten earliest Greek MSS (66, 75, Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Alexandrinus [A], Ephraemi [C], Bezae [D], Borgianus [T], Washingtonesis [W], and Purpureus Petropolitanus [N]), only one includes the PA, the much-criticized Codex Bezae (full of various interpolations and potential scribal curiosities) (29-30) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
 - i. **Contra 1 - Codex Bezae's account of the PA has signs of authenticity**
 - a. Support 1 - Bezae appears to include a very primitive form of the passage at hand compared with later versions of the PA.
 - b. Support 2 - Bezae does not give, either in its text or the margins, answers to the most provoking questions about the passage, including what everyone seems to want to know: what did Jesus write on the ground? (31) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
 - ii. **Contra 2 - The earliest four manuscripts (66, 75, Sinaiticus, Vaticanus) may form a family of related manuscripts since they are all from the same region. The fact that they are the oldest manuscripts known today may be a consequence of geography. As such, some textual critics like Maurice Robinson argue for the significance of other transmission lines.**
 - a. Support 1 - A lack of manuscript-evidence from the 100's and 200's for a text-type does not imply that the text-type did not exist in those centuries. Justin, Irenaeus, and Tertullian used the Western Text (as Metzger and other textual critics acknowledge), but we have no substantial Greek manuscripts that represent the Western Text of the Gospels until the 400's or 500's, when Codex Bezae was made. The lack of Byzantine manuscripts from the 100's and 200's may merely mean what the lack of Western manuscripts from the 100's and 200's means: the Byzantine and Western texts were not in popular use in Egypt, the only place where one can reasonably expect that papyrus manuscripts from that period would be preserved

(thanks to Egypt's low-humidity climate). (Loc. 174) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)

- b. Support 2 - Regardless of the omission of the PA in a relatively large number of witnesses, were it not for its omission in the relatively small group of early Alexandrian witnesses (66, 75, 8, B, and several textually related witnesses),⁸ there would be no strong reason to doubt the essentially Johannine nature of the passage. (136) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
- c. Support 3 - (137) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)

Continuous-text MSS containing the PA in whole = 1495
or part¹⁵

Lectionary MSS containing the PA (mostly only = 495
8:3-11)¹⁶

Continuous-text MSS omitting the PA entirely¹⁷ = 268

Lectionary MSS examined that do not contain = 677
the PA¹⁸

Total MSS examined to date = 2935

- iii. Contra 3 - Many manuscripts also appear to have lectionary influence, which could explain the PA's omission if certain verses were excised for public reading. (29-30) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
- iv. Contra 4 - Jerome chose to include it in his Vulgate, commenting later that it is found "in many copies of both the Greek as well as the Latin."⁶⁶ This is certainly an admission that the PA was not included in all manuscripts, but it does suggest that the PA was included in enough to persuade Jerome to include it, and we should assume that this would likely include many manuscripts that are older than the earliest witnesses we have today. (31-32) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
- v. Contra 5 - If we do not pretend that Pacian, in Spain, and Ambrose, in Milan, were passing around the same manuscripts of John, then the deduction stands that these two patristic writers, by themselves, imply a line of ancestry for the Latin text of the pericope adulterae that goes back at least to the production-date of Codex Vaticanus. (Loc. 346) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
- vi. Contra 6 - Lectionary influence provides a plausible explanation for the omission of John 7:53-8:11 in the manuscripts
 - a. We have strong evidence that in the early church they would have readings of Scripture passages on certain special days.

One of those special days was Pentecost, and the reading for that day was John 7:37-52 plus John 8:12 (the final verse being included in order for the reading to end on a positive note).

- a. The lectionaries uniformly confirm that the Pentecost-lection consisted of John 7:37-52, combined with 8:12. Second, the early establishment of this lection for a major annual feast-day raises the question of why, had the text of John never contained the pericope adulterae, anyone would (as those who wish to excise the passage must believe someone did) insert a “floating anecdote” directly into the Pentecost-lection. It would be as startling and provocative as inserting 12 new verses into the middle of the account of the Nativity. (Loc. 309) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
 - b. In order to make this clear, the one who performed the public reading would mark his copy of the Gospel of John with notes or marks to remind himself that on Pentecost Sunday, when he reached John 7:52 to skip forward to the end of John 8:11 and read John 8:12. Picture, then, the puzzle that presented itself to a copyist who down the road used the reader’s Bible as what he was going to copy from: as he copies down the text of John chapter seven, he sees, after the statement at the end of 7:52, instructions in the margin, which say: Skip ahead. Unaware that these instructions were meant for the reader on Pentecost Sunday, he interprets them as if they were meant for him, the copyist. And so he skips ahead until he finds instructions in the margin which say, Restart here. Therefore this dutiful copyist follows these instructions, and accordingly he does not copy John 7:53-8:11, just as – he supposes – he was instructed. And the manuscript which contained this mistake proceeded to affect both the main Alexandrian transmission-stream and whatever transmission-streams to which it was exported.
 - c. John 7:53-8:11, when marked as a segment of text not to be included in the Pentecost-lection, was vulnerable to accidental deletion at the hands of early Egyptian copyists. (Snapp Jr., 2016, pp. Loc 240-280) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
- b. Support 2 - The absence of John 7:53-8:11 in some ancient versions – including not only Coptic dialects, but also the Ethiopic, Gothic, and Peshitta versions – is another important piece of evidence against the genuineness of the passage.
- i. Contra 1 - on the premises that the passage was lost in Egypt in the 100’s, and that the resultant omission had a large impact on the transmission of the text of the Gospel of John, this is not very surprising.
 - ii. Contra 2 - Granting that some versions of the Gospels produced in the 200’s-400’s do not include the story about the adulteress, other

versions – specifically, three Old Latin transmission-lines, the Vulgate, the Palestinian Aramaic, and copies of the Harklean Syriac – include the story. (Loc. 294) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)

2. There is little to no discussion of the PA in the early Patristic writings
 - a. Contra 1 - See the external evidence from the church fathers in the case for the PA below
3. The PA is found with marks of suspicion
 - a. Contra 1 - Contrary to what you may read elsewhere, we do not have 270 manuscripts with asterisks alongside John 7:53-8:11. We have something like 98 manuscripts with asterisks or marks of some sort beginning at John 7:53, and something like 131 manuscripts with asterisks or marks of some sort beginning at John 8:2 or 8:3, and something like 41 in which the marks don't fit either of those two descriptions. The marks in the second group were not intended to convey scribal doubt (does anyone imagine that copyists thought that John 7:53-8:2 was genuine, but 8:3-11 was questionable?) They were, instead, intended to point out the location of the lection for Saint Pelagia's Day, within the section of text that was to be skipped on Pentecost. (Loc. 462, 544) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
 - i. Support 1 - Considering that in **MS 685**, the lection-title "For the [Feast-Day of the] Penitents" is written at the top of the page, and considering that the squiggly lines begin and end where that lection begins and ends, it is extremely unlikely that the squiggly lines were added as "indications of doubt." The purpose of these lines was to show the lector where that particular lection started and stopped; the normal symbols were not used because they were liable to be confused with the symbols for the Pentecost-lection. (Loc. 480) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
 - ii. Support 2 - Now let's consult **Codex M** (021, Campianus, from the 800's). In Codex M, an asterisk appears at the beginning of John 7:52 – and it is accompanied by a jump symbol. At the same line, in the outer margin, there is a faint small red "+" symbol. Another red "+" appears beside the beginning of John 8:3. On the next page, an ἀρχου symbol (meaning, "restart" or "resume") and an asterisk appear at the beginning of John 8:12, while in the outer margin there is a lectionary-related note, which means, "For the fifth day [i.e., Thursday] of the fourth week," followed by the incipit-phrase with which, on the fourth Thursday after Easter, the lector was to begin reading John 8:12-20. John 8:12-20 is, you see, the lection in the Synaxarion assigned to that day. Meanwhile, in the last line of the first column, in a space between 8:12 and 8:13, there is a red cross (one of many which separate sentences in this manuscript), accompanied in the lower margin by a note which means, "The end of the lection for the Feast" (that is, the end of the Pentecost lection). Thus, the reasonable interpretation of the two asterisks in Codex M does not that they convey scribal doubt; it is that these asterisks were added to help the lector navigate the lection for Pentecost. These asterisks' purpose

- was to draw the lector's attention to the instructions to skip from the end of John 7:52 to the beginning of John 8:12 when reading the lection for Pentecost. (Loc. 495) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
- iii. Support 3 - Let's consult **Codex E** (07, Basiliensis, from the 700's). In Codex E, at the end of John 7:52, a jump symbol instructs the lector to skip ahead to the *arxou* (restart) symbol, which is located immediately before John 8:12. A column of red asterisks appears to the left of the text of John 8:2-11, and a red "+" appears beside the beginning of John 8:3. A *telos* (stop) symbol appears at the end of John 8:12, and in the margin at the top of the page on which John 8:12 appears are the heading and incipit for the lection for the fourth Thursday after Easter, and in the margin alongside 8:12 is the *αρχη* symbol to show the lector where that lection begins. The asterisks alongside John 8:2-11 were added to indicate the extent of the lection for the Feast-Day of the Penitents. (If a copyist were to add marks to convey scribal doubt about the pericope adulterae, he would be more likely to begin the asterisks at 7:53, rather than at 8:2 or 8:3.) (Loc. 495) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
 - iv. Support 4 - Even in the manuscripts in which all of John 7:53-8:11 is accompanied by marks, it is not necessary to conclude that the copyist who added the marks considered the passage spurious (although in some manuscripts this may be the case). Some of these manuscripts simply echo a slightly different division of early lections. In the main form of the lection-divisions, the lection for Pentecost consisted of John 7:37-52 plus 8:12. In another form, the lection for Pentecost consisted of John 7:37-8:2 plus 8:12. This form is attested in Codex Lambda (039), which has a "jump" symbol at the end of John 8:2, and asterisks alongside 8:3-11, plus the previously mentioned margin-note. The Palestinian Aramaic lectionary also has the break between 8:2 and 8:3. (Loc. 544-560)
 - o In this second form of the lection-divisions, margin-markings were added to tell the lector to skip 8:3-11, and a misunderstanding of these marks has caused those nine verses to be omitted in 18 manuscripts. This resembles the same sort of mistake which, centuries earlier, caused the omission of John 7:53-8:11 in an early ancestor of manuscripts such as Vaticanus and Sinaiticus: marks intended to mean "Skip this when reading" were misinterpreted to mean "Excise this when copying." (Loc. 560) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
4. The PA is found in multiple locations among New Testament manuscripts (near John 7:52, at the end of John, at the end of Luke 21)
 - a. Support 1 - James R. White has mentioned that in minuscule 225, the pericope adulterae is found after John 7:36, and submitted this as "plain evidence of its later origin."
 - i. **Contra 1** - this is another way in which copyists simplified the lector's job; by placing the pericope adulterae immediately before the entire

text of the lection for Pentecost, the Pentecost-lection became one uninterrupted block of text. (Loc. 590)

- Support 1 - In 225, John 13:3-17 is found not only in the Gospel of John, but also in the text of Matthew, after Matthew 26:20. This adaptation conforms to a lection-cycle that was annually read at Easter-time. The claims that the movement of John 7:53-8:11 to before, or after, the text of the Pentecost-lection imply that it was a “floating” passage have no more merit than the notion that John 13:3-17 was a “floating” passage. (Loc. 590) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
 - ii. Contra 2 - When we observe manuscripts in which the pericope adulterae has been moved to a location before the beginning of the Pentecost-lection (that is, before John 7:37), or after the end of the Pentecost-lection (that is, after John 8:12), we are looking at are lectionary-related adjustments, not evidence that the passage was ever floating around in search of a home. (Loc. 603) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
- b. Support 2 - There is a small group of manuscripts (mainly consisting of members of family 13) in which the pericope adulterae appears at the end of Luke 21
- i. Contra 1 - This too is an adaptation to a lection-cycle. After John 7:53-8:11 was removed from the text of John in order to format the Pentecost-lection as one continuous block of text, the excised passage was transferred to a location where it would conveniently follow the previous day’s lection in the Menologion. Earlier in Luke 21, verses 12-19 serve as the lection for October 7, the feast-day of Saints Sergius and Bacchus. The next convenient insertion-point after Luke 21:19 is at the end of the chapter – and the contents of Luke 21:38 (“Then early in the morning all the people came to Him in the temple to hear him”) naturally invite the insertion of the lection for the next day: October 8 – the feast-day of the Penitents. (Loc. 603) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
- c. Support 3 - The family 1 group of manuscripts (and 23 other manuscripts) locate John 7:53-8:11 (or portions of the pericope) after John 21
- i. Support 1- In manuscripts 1 and 1582 we find the following annotation: “The chapter about the adulteress: in the Gospel according to John, this does not appear in the majority of copies; nor is it commented upon by the divine fathers whose interpretations have been preserved – specifically, by John Chrysostom and Cyril of Alexandria; nor is it taken up by Theodore of Mopsuestia and the others. For this reason, it was not kept in the place where it is found in a few copies, at the beginning of the 86th chapter [that is, the 86th Eusebian section], following, ‘Search and see that a prophet does not arise out of Galilee.’”
 - Contra 1 - the note claims that when it was noticed that most exemplars did not have the pericope adulterae, but a few of

- them did, a decision was made to move the passage to the end of the Gospel. (Loc. 619)
- Contra 2 - The first thing to see here is that the annotation makes it clear that this step was taken after the pericope adulterae had already been found in its usual location, after John 7:52. In addition, it must be emphasized that this transfer of the passage from John 7 and 8 to the end of the Gospel was not initiated in medieval times; it was done early enough to affect the Armenian version, before the 430's. (Loc. 633) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
 - a. The direction in which we see the pericope adulterae moving is not into John 7 and 8, but from that location. (Loc. 647)
 - d. Support 4 - There are three Georgian manuscripts (including Sinai Georgian MS 16) in which the pericope adulterae follows John 7:44.
 - i. Contra 1 - These manuscripts are not particularly old. Even the oldest Old Georgian manuscripts of John – in which the pericope adulterae does not appear at all – are from medieval times.
 - ii. Contra 2 - What has happened here is that the Georgian text of John, which in its earliest stage did not contain the pericope adulterae after John 7:52, was revised by someone who possessed an exemplar that had a note about the pericope adulterae that resembled the note that we see in the family-1 manuscripts. This note stated that the pericope adulterae had been found “at the beginning of the 86th chapter,” that is, at the beginning of the 86th Eusebian Section, which begins at the beginning of John 7:45. Perhaps the note in the Georgian reviser's exemplar did not proceed to quote from 7:52. Or perhaps the reviser thought that the quotation from 7:52 was a reference to 7:40-41. Either way, having read the annotation that says that the pericope adulterae was found at the beginning of the 86th Eusebian Section, that is exactly where he inserted it. (Loc. 674-687) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
5. The omission of an originally present twelve verse segment would be impossible
- a. Contra 1 - one equally might counter with the greater transmissional unlikelihood and relative impossibility of anyone adding such a lengthy segment into the midst of an existing document (unlike the matter of possibly adding to the ending of Mark) numerous objections being raised by both copyists and readers otherwise familiar with the text—this particularly when such an insertion in the historical context of the early church would provoke a theological crisis in relation to the apparently easy dismissal of adultery running counter to the polity of the second-century and later church. (156) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
 - b. Contra 2 - The Theory that John 7:53-8:11 Was a Floating, Edited, Accepted Insertion is Intrinsically Unlikely
 - i. Support 1 - In April of 2014, at a conference of scholars at the Southwestern Theological Baptist Seminary in Wake Forest, North

Carolina, Dr. Maurice Robinson made this point emphatically: responding to Chris Keith's suggestion that someone had written the story to show that Jesus was literate, Robinson pointed out that no one writes stories that way. We do not find stories that begin, "Once upon a time, everybody went home." (Loc. 948)

- ii. Support 2 - And thus what appears, from a distance, to be a simple theory - there once was this story floating around, and someone put it into the text of John - becomes more complicated when we view it up close: there once was this story floating around, and somebody rewrote it, added extra introductory material to it, and then - for whatever reason (some say to show that Jesus was literate; some say to teach something about clemency in cases of major sins; some say something else) - inserted it into the Gospel of John, right in the middle of a passage which was read annually at Pentecost. (Loc. 964) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)

Internal Evidence

1. The PA interrupts the Tabernacle Narrative

- a. Support 1 - part of the reason why these interpreters favor the non-inclusion of John 7:53-8:11 is that without those 12 verses, Jesus' statement in 8:12 can be interpreted as a typological claim upon the imagery of the ceremonial lampstand-lighting which occurred on the last day of the feast, in roughly the same way that Jesus' statement in John 7:37-38 is capable of being understood as if Jesus was staking a typological claim upon the imagery of the ceremonial water-pouring which occurred on that day of the feast.
 - i. Contra 1 - John is not as interested in synchronizing Jesus' statements to the beat of the temple's ceremonies as he is in reporting events as they happened, and leaving it up to readers to make the typological connections. But if one wants to see a typological emphasis in 8:12, then simply notice that Jesus' statement that He is the light of the world is particularly appropriate in the early morning, as the lights that illuminated the temple were surpassed by the sunlight. (Loc. 822-836) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
 - ii. Contra 2 - When the narrative is read without John 7:53-8:11, however, the very next thing that John wrote, after saying that the chief priests and Pharisees told Nicodemus, in their private meeting, that no prophet has risen from Galilee (or, adopting a different reading, that no prophet is to arise from Galilee), is, "Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, 'I am the light of the world,'" and so forth. With sudden harshness the scene changes from the Pharisees' private meeting to Jesus speaking to them (and Pharisees responding). But with John 7:53-8:11 in the text, the narrative flows more smoothly: the private meeting of the chief priests and Pharisees is concluded; Jesus is teaching the same group of people in 8:12 that is present in 8:2; the Pharisees' presence with Jesus in 8:13 is explained

by their entrance in 8:3. (Loc. 808-822) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)

- b. Support 2 - John 7:53-8:11 creates a discrepancy with 8:13, which describes Pharisees speaking to Jesus, on the grounds that if the Pharisees left, as described in 8:9, there would be none to speak to Jesus in 8:13.
 - i. Contra 1 - nothing but a determination to squint a problem into existence requires anyone to imagine that the Pharisees who brought the adulteress to Jesus, and subsequently departed, were the only Pharisees in the temple that day, as if no other Pharisees could be in the crowd.
 - ii. Contra 2 - Consider the case of John 9:35-41: there, Jesus seeks out the man who had received sight, and after Jesus speaks in verse 40, "some of the Pharisees who were with him" ask a question, even though no hint has been made about how or when these Pharisees arrived. They just step out of the background. This is just the way John writes. (Loc. 852-867) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
- 2. The PA is linguistically incompatible with John's Gospel
 - a. Support 1 - The presence of non-Johannine vocabulary: out of 82 vocabulary words used in 7:53-8:11, 14 do not occur elsewhere in John's gospel.
 - i. Contra 1 - When the method is applied to other literary works than the New Testament, the analogy breaks down (e.g. Cicero).
 - o The statistical method does not take into account the mood, purpose and subject matter of the author.
 - o G. Udney Yule, a professional statistician at Cambridge University has shown that it takes at least 10,000 words to form any solid statistical basis for authorship. In 7:53-8:11, there are only 174 words. (Alan Johnson's - A Stylistic Trait of the Fourth Gospel in the Pericope Adulterae)
 - ii. Contra 2 - The statistical method can be applied to sections of writings where we know the author is the same and prove them to be from a different hand.
 - o John 2:13-17 can be subjected to the same scrutiny as 7:53-8:11 even though there is no doubt to John's authorship of it.

	7:53—8:11	2:13—17
TOTAL WORDS ¹⁶	168	73
TOTAL VOCAB.	81	47
TOTAL HAPAX IN JOHN	13 (16%)	14 (30%)
TOTAL HAPAX IN SYNOPTICS	1 (1%)	3 (6%)
TOTAL HAPAX IN N.T.	4 (5%)	4 (9%)
HAPAX IN GREEK BIBLE	2 (2%)	4 (9%)
LUKAN PREFERRED WORDS ¹⁷	4 (5%)	2 (4%)
JOHANNINE PREFERRED WORDS ¹⁸	14 (17%)	4 (9%)

o (Alan Johnson's - A Stylistic Trait of the Fourth Gospel in the Pericope Adulterae)

Support 2 - Specific examples of Non-Johannine Vocabulary

- i. Support 1 - "Ὁρθρου ("dawn" or "early") and ὄρος τῶν ἐλαιῶν

- Contra 1 - both find use in LXX passages associated with the Feast of Tabernacles. Ὀρθρου is found in Jeremiah (7:25, 25:4, 33:5, 39:33, 42:14, 51:4), which would provide connections with judgment of the Temple (cf. Jer. 7) and with reference to the water ritual (cf. Jer. 2:13 17:3),²³ and in Hosea (2:14-23, 3:4-5, 12:9), which has links to Israel's wilderness period.²⁴ Ὀρος τῶν ἐλαιῶν is found in Zechariah 14, which provides connection with the lection for the Feast of Tabernacles, as already discussed. It seems probable that John is making subtle connections with the setting of this text. (25) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
- ii. Support 2 - λαός for “people” rather than the more commonly Johannine ὄχλος;
 - Contra 1 - because Jesus was likely speaking with “his own” (Jn 1:11), that is the Jews in the Court of Women, rather than the masses outside in the Court of the Gentiles, λαός may be the more appropriate term. Ὀχλος would refer to the common masses, but λαός may speak to the specific gathering of Jews in the Temple courts. (25) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
- iii. Support 3 - References to sitting, stooping and standing are unusual for John. This is the only time in John's Gospel that Jesus is explicitly said to sit and teach.
 - Contra 1 - there are other rarities in John's Gospel: Jesus goes to a wedding (2:1-12), meets privately with a Pharisee (3:1-15), goes to Samaria (4:1-42), seeks someone he healed earlier (9:35), weeps (11:35), etc.
 - Contra 2 - Sitting may be the most appropriate posture for teaching the small crowd that remained after the “last and greatest day of feast” (7:37). Standing would then be the necessary action to address those who confront him in the verses that follow—stooping to write in the dirt would subsequently be required from the standing position. (25-26) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
- iv. Support 4 - The mention of the specific sin of adultery
 - Contra 1 - Other than unbelief, specific sins are not mentioned in John, but a specific sin would appear to be necessarily listed in a court proceeding, even if the proceeding is informal. The scribes and Pharisees bring a woman who has been caught in a specific act, and they ask Jesus to rule on this act in accordance with the Law. The same could be said for the term ἀναμάρτητος; Jesus may be explicitly referring to the prescribed sinlessness of the ones carrying out capital punishment as required by the Law. (26) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)

- v. Support 5 - There are no fewer than six words with the *kata* prefix in just twelve verses, which is admittedly odd given that there are no κατά-prefix verbs in the rest of John.
 - Contra 1 - But again, given the unusual nature of the court-like scene that unfolds, we might reasonably expect unusual vocabulary to be required. Each of the six verbs is found in the “trial” section of the text, not the introductory verses, and each may be used to heighten the intensity of these proceedings, since κατά refers to “being against something” or “doing something completely.” For example, while κρίνω is used frequently to refer to “judging” in John, κατά may intensify the verb to more forceful “condemning.” Jesus claims in 8:11 that he refuses to “condemn” the woman unlike her accusers, the scribes and Pharisees. The high concentration of κατά-prefix verbs is likely the strongest example of non-Johannine terms, but to claim that the unusual nature of the events in the PA could not warrant these terms would be difficult if not impossible to prove. (26) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
- vi. Support 6 - Πρεσβυτέρων is not technically non-Johannine since its singular πρεσβύτερος appears a handful of times in the Johannine Epistles, but the term is nowhere to be found in the Gospel itself outside of the PA.
 - Contra 1 - Its appearance may be part of the dramatic telling of events. It is the elders, either those with the greater respect or perhaps those who were “older and wiser” who are the first to depart after Jesus invites the sinless ones to commence with the planned stoning of the woman. (26) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
- vii. Support 7 - In contrast, a clearly non-Johannine term is γραμματεῖς, the group paired with the Pharisees. The Synoptic Gospels frequently mention them together, but John never does so outside of the PA.
 - Contra 1 - The nature of the events that unfold in the PA opens a place for them. Jesus is challenged with a question about the Law. Who better to judge his interpretation than the supposed experts on the Law?
 - Contra 2 - Likewise, there is the location of these events: the temple court is home turf for the scribes. (26-27) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
- viii. Support 8 - “Scribes and Pharisees” appearing together
 - Contra 1 - This would indicate that a partnership aimed at destroying Jesus may have been formed following the conversation in 7:45-52.
 - Contra 2 - the expression “scribes and Pharisees” may be an idiomatic phrase and therefore in common use, or perhaps it

has been intentionally borrowed from the Synoptics. John does borrow from the Synoptics on occasion.

- a. Support 1 - For example, Jesus' warning about non-fruit-bearing trees being cast into the fire in John 15 is similar to that which is found in Luke 3:9; Jesus' statements about the harvest in Matthew 9:37-38 and Luke 10:2 resemble that in John 4:35; and reference to the Jews calling Abraham their father in John 8:33ff. parallels Luke 3:8. Most notably, the feeding of the 5,000 and Jesus' walking on the water, both found in John 6, are similar to all three Synoptic Gospel accounts of these events (Mt. 14:15-21, Mk 6:35-44, and Lk. 9:12-17). (27) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)

ix. Support 9 - καταγραφω is "a hapax legomenon in the New Testament."

- o Contra 1 - the κατεγραφεν reading in 8:6 is not the "majority" reading, nor does it even come close. Rather, the "real" majority reading in 8:6 is εγραφεν and these are the statistics that establish the fact, based on the present writer's full collation data for the PA:

Total MSS present for this variant unit: 1241+260 = 1501

Total MSS reading κατεγραφεν (or related forms): 243 (+17) = 260

Total MSS reading εγραφεν (or related forms): 1192 (+49) = 1241

- b. Contra 2 - John frequently and eminently uses *grapho* in his gospel.
 - a. Of the one regarding whom Moses wrote (εγραψεν), Jn 1:45, 5:46
 - b. When quoting OT scripture (γεγραμμενον, γεγραπται, γεγραμμενα, γεγραμμενος), Jn 2:17; 6:31, 45; 8:17; 10:34; 12:14, 16; 15:25
 - c. When self-citing the author's own Gospel (γεγραμμενα, γεγραπται, γραψας), Jn 20:30, 31; 21:24
 - d. Jesus' writing on the ground (εγραφεν), Jn 8:6, 8
 - e. The inscription on the cross (εγραψεν, γραφε, γεγραφα), Jn 19:19, 20, 21, 22
 - f. A further hypothetical accounting of facts (γραφηται, γραφομενα), Jn 21:25. (139)
- c. Contra 3 - Also (since a LXX connection is a component of Keith's case), the LXX has forms of καταγραφω occurring at 2 Chron. 20:34; Job 13:26 (beginning with καταγρ-); Exod. 17:4; Hos. 8:12 (beginning with καταγρ-); and Exod. 32:15; Num. 11:26; 1 Chron. 9:1 (beginning with καταγεγρ-), while in the LXX apocrypha, forms of καταγραφω occur in Sir. 48:10; 1 Macc. 9:22; 14:26; and 1 Esdr. 2:12. These connections remain a component of the "New Moses" motif and imagery found in

the Fourth Gospel, regardless of whether κατεργαγεν is present or considered a crucial component. (137-139) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)

- x. Support 10 - the frequency of occurrences of δε in the PA—eleven times in twelve verses—is non-Johannine as opposed to the more typical Johannine use of ουν, the latter occurring only once in the PA.
 - a. Contra 1 - Frequent occurrences of δε that parallel the eleven PA examples clearly exist elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel, e.g. nine occurrences in John 19:12-21 (7 in NA27); and 9 occurrences in John 18:10-23. (145)
 - b. Contra 2 - Passages of similar length with a δε surplus and a paucity of ουν also occur (thus paralleling the PA). In John 6:1-12, δε occurs eight times (six times in NA27), while ουν occurs only two times; in John 10:38–11:5, δε occurs six times with ουν occurring two times; in John 9:37–10:6, δε occurs six times (five times NA27), with ουν occurring once; and in John 15:27–16:11, δε occurs six times and ουν not at all. (145) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
- c. Support 3 - The lack of Johannine vocabulary

The Case For

External Evidence

1. Manuscripts

- a. Support 1 - in late 2015, the number of known Greek Gospels-manuscripts that do not contain any text from John 7:53-8:11 is 267. The number of known Greek Gospels-manuscripts that contain at least some text from John 7:53-8:11 is 1,476. (Loc. 1110)
- b. Support 2 - notable manuscripts that include the PA
 - i. Codex Bezae, the flagship-manuscript of the Greek “Western” Text of the Gospels and Acts, produced in the 400’s or 500’s, includes the passage with substantial variations from the ordinary Byzantine form(s). (Loc. 1473)
 - ii. The Old Latin evidence includes six distinctly non-Vulgate witnesses that support the inclusion of the story about the adulteress, but also includes four witnesses that support non-inclusion of the story about the adulteress. Their testimony is described by Jonathan Clark Borland in The Old Latin Tradition of John 7:53-8:11, a preview of which can be accessed online. (Loc. 1473)
 1. Pro
 - Codex Veronensis (OL b), produced in the 400’s
 - Codex Palatinus (OL e), from the 400s
 - Codex Bezae (OL d) from the 400s or 500s
 - Codex Colbertinus (OL c) from the 1100s
 - Codex Corbeiensis (OL ff2) from the 700s
 - Codex Sarzanensis (OL j) from the 500s
 2. Con
 - Codex Vercellensis (OL a) from the late 300s
 - Codex Rehdigeranus (OL l) from the 700s
 - Codex Monacensis (OL q) produced in the 500s or 600s
 - Codex Brixianus (OL f) from the 500s
 - a. This seems to imply that the Old Latin manuscripts which include the pericope adulterae are descended from at least three localized Greek forms of the passage, and that in all of these forms, the passage followed John 7:52. (Loc. 1473-1527)
- c. Codex A (produced in the 800’s) includes John 7:53-8:11, with obeli alongside John 8:3-11. (Loc. 1620)
- d. MS 135 (produced in the 900’s) has, according to Burkitt, the following scholium before the pericope adulterae, which is placed after John 21: “This also was discovered in ancient copies, so we felt obligated to write, at the end of his Gospel, what follows here.” (Loc. 1641)

- e. MS 34 (produced in the 900's or 1000's) has, according to Burkitt, the following scholium accompanying the pericope adulterae; the passage is accompanied by asterisks: "It has been determined that the passage with asterisks alongside it, about the adulteress, is not present in a great number of [or, most of] the copies. Yet it is found in the old ones." (Loc. 1641)
- f. MS 565 (Theodora's Gospels, a purple minuscule from the 800's or 900's) does not have the pericope adulterae in its usual location. The text of John in 565 is Caesarean; i.e., it tends to agree with the text found in family 1, in which John 7:53 is found at the end of the Gospel of John. One would therefore expect to find John 7:53-8:11 in that location in 565. However, the testimony of 565 is difficult to discern because the manuscript has been damaged. After John 21, 565 has a note, very similar to part of the note in manuscripts 1 and 1582: "The chapter about the adulteress, in the Gospel of John, not being present in the current copies, was omitted; it was located right after 'does not arise.'"
 - i. Burkitt explained the implication of this note: "In other words, the Pericope stood in the usual place in the MS from which 2pe [= 565] was copied, but the scribe left it out intentionally for what we may call critical reasons." (Loc. 1641-1662)
- g. Codex Ω (045), produced in the 800's, includes the pericope adulterae after 7:52, accompanied by asterisks. (Loc. 1719)
- h. Codex M (021), produced in the late 800's, includes the pericope adulterae after 7:52, with an asterisk accompanying the beginnings of 7:53 and 8:3.) (Loc. 1719)
- i. To restate: before the Palestinian Syriac Lectionary was made, two continuous-text copies of the Gospel of John existed in which, after John 21:25, one manuscript had a note which said, "The Gospel of John was completed in Greek in Ephesus," and the other one had a note after John 21:25 which said, "The Gospel of John was completed by the help of Christ." Then, copyists who were using these two copies as exemplars re-inserted John 8:3-11 into the text of John after John 8:2, but when they did so, they also transferred the notes. When the Palestinian Aramaic Lectionary was made, its creators used continuous-text manuscripts in which those notes were thus embedded in the text between John 8:2 and John 8:3. This explains why the note "The Gospel of John was completed in Greek in Ephesus" appears at the end of the Pentecost-lection in manuscripts A and B, and why the note "The Gospel of John was completed by the help of Christ" appears at the end of the Pentecost-lection in manuscript C. (Loc. 1811)
 - i. Thus, not only does the Palestinian Aramaic Lectionary show us that the Pentecost-lection, in some cases, extended to include John 7:53-8:2 (which explains why, in many manuscripts, only John 8:3-11 is marked with asterisks, to designate the lection for the feast-day of Pelagia, or for the Penitents), but it also shows us that before the Palestinian Aramaic Lectionary was made, John 8:3-11 – not 7:53-8:11! – had been transferred to the end of John in (at least) two of the

earlier continuous-text manuscripts from which the lectionary-makers extracted the text of the lections. (Loc. 1811)

- j. Codex Cyprius (K, 017) was produced in the 800's. In this manuscript, throughout the Gospels, dots interrupt the text, probably echoing the stichometric arrangement of its exemplar. In Codex K, John 7:53-8:11 is in the text of John, after 7:52. In addition, the pericope adulterae forms a chapter in its list of chapter-titles at the beginning of the book. (Loc. 1811-1826) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
2. Early Church Writings
- a. Support 1 - In the seventh chapter of the **Didascalia Apostolorum**, a Syriac text which is generally assigned to the 200's, we find the following statement: "If you do not receive the one who repents, because you are without mercy, you shall sin against the Lord God; for you do not obey our Savior and our God, to do as He also did with her that had sinned, whom the elders set before Him, and leaving the judgment in His hands, departed. But He, the searcher of hearts, asked her and said to her, 'Have the elders condemned thee, my daughter?' She said to Him, 'No, Lord.' And He said unto her, 'Go your way; neither do I condemn thee.' In Him therefore, our Savior and King and God, is your pattern, O bishops." (Loc. 315-330) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
 - b. Support 2 - Far from Syria, in southern Spain, **Pacian of Barcelona** (who became a bishop in 365, at about the same time Codex Sinaiticus was being made) mentioned the passage about the adulteress in his Third Epistle to Sympronian – Against the Treatise of the Novatians. In paragraph 39, bishop Pacian writes with heavy sarcasm: "O Novatians, why do you delay to ask an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, and to demand life for life? Why do you wait to renew once more the practice of circumcision and the sabbath? Kill the thief. Stone the petulant. Choose not to read in the Gospel that the Lord spared even the adulteress who confessed, when none had condemned her; that He absolved the sinner who washed His feet with her tears; that He delivered Rahab at Jericho . . ." (Loc. 330) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
 - c. Support 3 - **Ambrose**, who was bishop of Milan from 374-397, cites John 7:53-8:11 repeatedly and extensively. In Epistle 26, in which Ambrose comments on the passage at length, he states that "The acquittal of the woman who, in the Gospel of John, was brought to Christ accused of adultery, is very famous." This indicates that the passage was not introduced by Ambrose; it was already well-known to his congregation in the illustrious city of Milan. (Loc. 346)
 - i. If we do not pretend that Pacian, in Spain, and Ambrose, in Milan, were passing around the same manuscripts of John, then the deduction stands that these two patristic writers, by themselves, imply a line of ancestry for the Latin text of the pericope adulterae that goes back at least to the production-date of Codex Vaticanus. (Loc. 346) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)

- d. Support 4 - **Ambrosiaster**, another write of the mid/late 300s, also refers to the story. (Loc. 346) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
- e. Support 5 - **Jerome** said in Against the Pelagians, 2:17: "In the Gospel according to John, there is found, in many of the Greek, as well as the Latin, copies, the story of the adulteress who was accused before the Lord." In Latin: "In evangelio secundum Ioannem in multis et Graecis et Latinis codicibus invenitur de adultera muliere, quae accusata est apud Dominum. In the same composition, Jerome offers an interpretation of John 8:6 and 8:8's record of Jesus writing on the ground, explaining that Jesus, when he wrote in the earth, wrote down the names of the woman's accusers, using a phrase from Jeremiah 17:13 ("Those who depart from Me shall be written in the earth") as the lens through which to perceive this. Thirty-three years earlier, in 383, Jerome had included John 7:53-8:11 in the Gospel of John in the Vulgate Gospels. On two occasions, he describes how he went about his translation-project. In the Preface to the Gospels, addressed to Damasus, Jerome wrote that he had revised the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John "by a comparison of the Greek manuscripts. Only early ones have been used. To avoid any great divergences from the Latin which we are accustomed to read, I have used my pen with some restraint, and while I have corrected only such passages as seemed to convey a different meaning, I have allowed the rest to remain as they are." (Loc. 361)
 - i. This implies that Jerome in 383 found John 7:53-8:11 in ancient Greek manuscripts. It also implies that the church in Rome in 383 was accustomed to read the passage. (Loc. 377)
 - ii. In Epistle 27, To Marcella, Jerome wrote, "The Latin manuscripts of the Scriptures are demonstrated to be faulty by the variations which they all exhibit, and my objective has been to restore them to the form of the original Greek."
 - a. So: Jerome depended upon Greek manuscripts when he assembled the Vulgate text of the Gospels – including John 7:53-8:11 – and at the time this was done, John 7:53-8:11 was already being customarily read in the churches in Rome. And, by 417, Jerome had encountered John 7:53-8:11 in many Greek manuscripts and many Latin manuscripts. (Loc. 377)
 - b. His testimony goes a long way toward outweighing the Egyptian manuscripts which do not include the passage. (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
- f. Support 6 - **Augustine** makes it clear that some manuscripts had the passage, and some did not, and he asserts that the passage had been removed in some copies by men who thought that their wives would use it as a pretense to be excused of adultery. That is probably just Augustine's calculated guess – regarding which more shall be said shortly. In addition, Augustine's writings contain excerpts from, and references to, claims made by his Manichaean opponent Faustus and show that Faustus, too, utilized the pericope adulterae. Augustine also mentions that some other opponents of Christianity used the statement that Jesus wrote in the ground with his finger

as an excuse to accuse Christ of childishness. (Loc. 394) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)

- g. Support 7 - **Prosper of Aquitaine** (c. 440) in *Call of All Nations*, Book 1, chapter 8, devotes a paragraph to the passage. (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
- h. Support 8 - **Peter Chrysologus**, preaching at Ravenna c. 450, uses the contents of the pericope adulterae. (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
- i. Support 9 - **Sedulius** (c. 450, in *Carmen Paschale*, Book 4) clearly alludes to the passage. (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
- j. Support 10 - **The author of the composition known as Apologia David** (probably not Ambrose, but someone else in the late 300's) refers to the passage about the adulteress as a lection from the Gospels which was read at the church where he preached. (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
- k. Support 11 - To these witnesses, we must add **Cassiodorus** (c. 570), and the **Nordenfalk Eusebian Canon-tables** (from the early 600's), as witnesses supporting the inclusion of John 7:53-8:11. (Again, for details, see the appendix.) (Loc. 407) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
- l. Support 12 - It would not be surprising if a fourth-century writer situated in Egypt did not use the pericope adulterae, inasmuch as it had already been removed from the text of John in the dominant transmission-stream there. Yet, consider the testimony of **the Egyptian writer Didymus the Blind** (c. 380) in his *Commentary on Ecclesiastes*: "We find in certain gospels: A woman, it says, was condemned by the Jews for a sin, and was being sent to be stoned in the place that was for that. The Savior, it says, when he saw her and observed that they were ready to stone her, said to those that were about to cast stones, 'He who has not sinned, let him take a stone and throw it. If anyone is conscious in himself not to have sinned, let him take a stone and smite her.' And no one dared; because they knew in themselves and perceived that they, too, were guilty in some things, they did not dare to strike her." (Loc. 407)
 - i. Didymus' compositions are in Greek, and his comment was discovered decades ago, but some commentators still recommend that their readers and students rely on Bruce Metzger's *Textual Commentary* for information about John 7:53-8:11, thus ensuring that they will be misled by Metzger's statement, "No Greek Church Father prior to Euthymius Zigabenus (twelfth century) comments on the passage." (Loc. 421) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)
- m. Support 13 - In the early 500's, an account in which Jesus prevented the stoning of an adulteress was in a manuscript of the Gospel of John used by **Mara of Amid**.
 - i. In Book Eight of the *Syriac Chronicle of Pseudo-Zachariah of Mitylene* in the British Library's Add. MS 17202 (produced in the late 500's or 600's), the author mentions that in the Gospels-volume used by Mara of Amid (who lived in exile in Alexandria from 517 (or 519) until 527, the story of the woman caught in adultery was included. (Loc. 421) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)

3. Summary

- ■ 1,476 Greek manuscripts contain John 7:53-8:11.
- ● 267 Greek manuscripts do not contain John 7:53-8:11.
- ■ Papias wrote a story about an accused woman.
- ■ Papyrus Egerton 2 depicts Jesus saying to a healed leper, "Go show yourself to the priests and offer concerning the purification as Moses commanded, and sin no more."
- ■ In the Protoevangelium of James, when a judge declares Mary innocent of adultery, he says, "neither do I judge you."
- ● Tertullian writes about forgiving acts of adultery but does not utilize the pericope adulterae.
- ● Papyrus 66 does not contain the passage.
- ● Papyrus 75 does not contain the passage.
- ● Origen seems unaware of the passage.
- ● Cyprian does not use the passage.
- ■ The author of the Syriac Didascalia Apostolorum loosely recollects the passage.
- ■ The Draguet Fragment indicates that a community of Pachomian monks in the early 300's thought that Jesus had established that the right to judge belongs to those who have not sinned.
- ● Codex Vaticanus does not contain the passage.
- ■ Distigmati in Codex Vaticanus convey scribal awareness of the passage's presence after John 21.
- ● Codex Sinaiticus does not contain the passage.
- ● Bodmer Papyrus III, containing the Gospel of John in Proto-Bohairic, does not contain the passage.
- ■ Pacian of Barcelona recollects the pericope adulterae from the Gospels.
- ■ Hilary of Poitiers might allude to the passage.
- ● Codex Vercellensis does not include the passage.
- ■ Apostolic Constitutions, relaying the contents of the Didascalia, quotes from the passage.
- ■ Ambrose quotes the passage extensively and repeatedly.
- ■ Ambrosiaster recollects that Jesus spared the adulteress.
- ● Apollinarius did not have the passage in his Gospels-text, according to a note in Codex A.
- ■ Didymus the Blind reports that a story about a sinful woman who was about to be stoned until Jesus intervened was in certain Gospels.
- ● John Chrysostom comments on John 7:52 and on 8:12, but not on the pericope adulterae.
- ■ Jerome reports that the story of the adulteress was found in many manuscripts, both Greek and Latin.
- ● Jerome's report implies that he had encountered manuscripts that did not include the passage.
- ■ Jerome includes John 7:53-8:11 in the Vulgate text of John, which he claimed he had conformed to the text of ancient Greek manuscripts.

- ● Codex W does not have the passage. (It does, however, have a blank page after John.)
- ■ Rufinus, when translating Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History, rendered Eusebius' reference to the accused woman in Papias' story as a reference to a woman who was an adulteress.
- ■ Augustine quoted John 7:53-8:11 extensively.
- ■ Some pagans, according to Augustine, were using Christ's actions in John 8:6-8 as the basis on which to accuse Christ of childishness.
- ■ Some individuals with weak faith, or hostile to true faith, according to Augustine, had removed the story about the adulteress from their Scriptures, out of concern that the passage might be misused so as to encourage adultery.
- ■ Faustus the Manichaean refers to the passage.
- ● The Sinaitic Syriac manuscript does not include the passage.
- ● The Curetonian Syriac manuscript does not include the passage.
- ● The Peshitta, as initially produced, does not include the passage.
- ● Nonnus of Panopolis does not use or mention the passage, but uses the surrounding passages.
- ■ Sedulius rephrases the passage in rhythmic Latin.
- ● Theodore of Mopsuestia, author of a commentary on John, does not use these verses.
- ● Cyril of Alexandria comments on John 7:52 and 8:12, but not on these verses.
- ● Codex A does not have the passage (as shown by space-calculations).
- ■ Peter Chrysologus recollects the passage.
- ● Codex Borgianus (T), a Greek-Sahidic manuscript, does not include the passage in Greek or in Sahidic.
- ● The earliest Sahidic manuscripts of John (and copies in related dialects) do not support the passage.
- ● The earliest Bohairic manuscripts of John (and copies in related dialects) do not support the passage.
- ■ Leo the Great quotes John 8:11.
- ■ Vigilius of Thapsus has been listed as support for the passage.
- ■ Codex Bezae includes the passage, with variations, in Greek and in Latin.
- ● Sahidic MS P. Palau. Ribes Inv. 183 does not include the passage.
- ● Codex C does not have these verses (as shown by space-considerations).
- ■ Codex Veronensis had these verses when the manuscript was made.
- ● In Codex Veronensis, the pages that contained John 7:53-8:11 have been removed.
- ■ Codex Palatinus has the passage.
- ■ The source-document of Codex Fuldensis contained the passage.
- ■ Prosper of Aquitaine quotes from the passage.
- ■ Quodvultdeus of Carthage quotes from the passage.
- ● Cosmas Indicopleustes does not have the passage in his summary of events recorded especially by John.
- ■ Codex Colbertinus contains the passage.

- ■ Codex Corbeiensis contains the passage.
- ■ Codex Sarzanensis is fragmentary but contains remnants of the passage.
- ● Codex Rehdigeranus did not have the passage when the manuscript was made.
- ■ A page containing the passage has been sewn into Codex Rehdigeranus.
- ● Codex Monacensis does not contain the passage.
- ● Codex Brixianus does not contain these verses.
- ● Codex Argenteus (the flagship manuscript of the Gothic version) does not contain these verses.
- ■ Gelasius quotes from the passage.
- ● Codex N does not have the passage after John 7:52. Its extant text ends in John 21:20.
- ■ Mara of Amida, according to the Syriac Chronicle associated with Zacharias Rhetor, obtained a manuscript in Alexandria which contained the passage, or a story resembling it.
- ■ Synopsis Scriptura Sacrae mentions the passage, although the reference is out of sequence.
- ■ Paul of Tella obtained a Greek manuscript at Alexandria that contained the passage.
- ■ John 8:1-11 (or 8:3-11) is a lection for the Feast-Day of Saint Pelagia (Oct. 8).
- ■ Cassiodorus quoted John 8:11.
- ■ Gregory the Great quoted John 8:7 and 8:11.
- ■ The author of Apologia David quotes from the passage.
- ■ The Nordenfalk Canons imply that the Gospels-text that accompanied them included the pericope adulterae in John.
- ● Codex L does not include these verses.
- ■ Codex L has blank space between 7:53 and 8:11, conveying the copyist's awareness of a copy or copies which contained these verses.
- ● Codex Δ does not include these verses.
- ■ Codex Δ has blank space between 7:53 and 8:11, conveying the copyists' awareness of a copy or copies which contained these verses.
- ■ Codex Ω has the passage after John 7:52, with asterisks.
- ■ All three manuscripts of the Palestinian Aramaic Lectionary include John 7:53-8:2 as part of the Pentecost-lection, and one manuscript (the earliest) also has a lection consisting of John 8:1-11. Anomalous features imply before the Palestinian Aramaic Lectionary was made, two continuous-text manuscript of John existed in which John 8:3-11 was placed after the end of John 21.
- ● The Ethiopic version in its earliest form does not include the pericope adulterae.
- ● The main Armenian transmission-line does not support the inclusion of the passage after 7:52.
- ● The earliest strata of the Georgian version does not include the passage.
- ● Codex Psi does not include the passage.

- ■ Some Armenian manuscripts include the passage after John 7:52 or at the end of John.
- ● Codex Y does not include the passage.
- ■ Codex Y has two faded asterisks alongside the non-inclusion of the passage.
- ● The list of chapter-numbers and chapter-titles for John in Codex Y does not mention the passage.
- ■ Codex K includes the passage.
- ■ The list of chapter-numbers and chapter-titles for John in Codex K includes the story about the adulteress as chapter 10.
- ■ Codex M contains the story about the adulteress, with asterisks at its beginning and end that seem lectionary related.
- ■ Nikon accuses the Armenians of rejecting the story about the adulteress on the grounds that it was harmful.
- ● A scholium in Codex A, 20, 262, and 1282 states that John 8:3-11 is not in some copies.
- ■ A scholium in Codex A, 20, 262, and 1282 states that the entire passage is in the old copies (presumably the old copies referred to in the Jerusalem Colophon).
- ■ A scholium in minuscules 135 and 301 states that the story about the adulteress was found in ancient copies.
- ● A scholium in minuscule 34 states that the story about the adulteress was not found in many copies.
- ■ A scholium in minuscule 34 states that the story about the adulteress was found in ancient copies.
- ● Euthymius the Athonite included the story about the adulteress in his revision of the Georgian version.
- ● Euthymius Zigabenus says that the accurate copies did not include the story about the adulteress, but he commented on it anyway.
- Totals:
 - 44 against the pericope adulterae.
 - 56 in favor of the pericope adulterae (Loc. 1936-2053) (A Fresh Analysis of John 7:53-8:11)

Internal Evidence

1. The PA contributes to the flow of the Tabernacle Discourse
 - a. Support 1 - The PA blends remarkably well with the theme of interpreting the Law.
 - i. Support 1 - The scribes and Pharisees present a woman accused of adultery to Jesus and declare, "In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. What do you say?" (8:5, emphasis mine). They claim to know what the Law says, but they want to know how Jesus interprets it. (21)
 - ii. Support 2 - Jesus, however, does not take the bait. In fact, he appears not only to properly interpret the Law but also to properly apply it. Adultery is not a sin that you can commit by yourself, and Torah

demands that both parties guilty of it are to be stoned.⁸ Yet only the woman is brought to trial. (21) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)

- b. Support 2 - The PA blends well with the setting of the Feast of Tabernacles in general.
 - i. Support 1 - In 7:53, worshippers “go to their own homes,” which is what they would be expected to do if, as 7:37 suggests, the festival is coming to a close. (21) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
- c. Support 3 - The PA blends well with the theme of Moses and the Law
 - i. Support 1 - Twice in this pericope, Jesus writes on the ground: John 8:6 explicitly says he writes “with his finger” and verse 8 simply says he stooped to write. Together, these references provide a strong connection with Moses’ reception of the Law in Exodus. (22)
 - ii. Support 2 - God is the only one described in the biblical canon as writing with his finger until Jesus does so. John presents Jesus not simply as a recipient of the Law—he shows him to be the author of it. The significance is not what Jesus writes with his finger, but that he writes with his finger, just as God wrote with his. (22) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
- d. Support 4 - The PA connects the narrative between 7:52 and 8:12.
 - i. Support 1 - If one moves directly from John 7:52 to 8:12, there is a very abrupt transition. One need only consider the lack of continuity when the PA is excluded from the context: the chief priests and Pharisees had sent their assistants to arrest Jesus, but they came back empty-handed (Jn 7:32, 45). Nicodemus declares that they need to hear and see what Jesus actually does in a given situation (7:50-51). Yet, “Jesus again speaks to them” (8:12)—even though he had not been brought before them (!), and apparently the same Pharisees continue in dialogue with Jesus (8:13ff.). One would think that such discontinuity resulting from the absence of the PA would be obvious,³⁸ despite the claims to the contrary stated in most articles and commentaries. (141)
 - 1. Contra 1 - The awkwardness between 7:52 and 8:12 is reminiscent of other awkward transitions where two parties resume speaking again in the fourth gospel (e.g. 1:34-35, 8:20-21, 9:8-15, 10:6-7, 18:4-7, 20:19-21)
 - a. Rejoinder 1 - these additional examples of “awkward” transitions all have the same two parties resuming dialogue. This is not the case if we remove the PA.
 - b. If the PA is removed, Jesus would seem to resume dialogue with a group of people among whom he was not initially present. (23)
 - ii. Support 2 - In contrast when the PA, specifically 7:53–8:2, is included, Jesus resumes speaking with “them,” which would likely include both

the people in general and those lurking in the shadows. (22) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)

2. The PA is linguistically interlocked with John's gospel
 - a. Support 1 - John's usage of *de touto legein* ("now this to speak") to introduce short explanatory phrases (cf. John 6:5-6; 6:71; 7:39; 11:13; 11:51; 12:6; 12:33; 13:11; 13:28; 21:19) is seen in the middle of the pericope adulterae in 8:6.
 - i. After the Pharisees have asked Jesus what he should do with the adulterous woman, the author has inserted the interpretive phrase, "Now this they were saying tempting him, that they might have to accuse him" (*touto de elegon peirazontes*). (Alan Johnson's - A Stylistic Trait of the Fourth Gospel in the Pericope Adulterae)
 - b. Support 2 - the PA's reference to Moses
 - i. Support 1 - Moses is certainly emphasized more in John than he is in the Synoptics. John repeatedly contrasts the two and Jesus always come out on top (1:17; 3:14; 5:45-47; 6; 7:21-24; 8:5) (27) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
 - c. Support 3 - the usage of the vocative γύναι (woman)
 - i. Support 1 - The vocative γύναι is also stylistically Johannine. This non-derogatory greeting appears three times in the Synoptic Gospels, twice from the lips of Jesus, compared to five appearances in John, all of which are spoken by Jesus. (28) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
 - d. Support 4 - The expression μηκέτι ἀμάρτανε (go and sin no more)
 - i. Support 1 - This Greek phrase that Jesus utters in 8:11 is identical to what he says in John 5:14. Despite the fact that some scholars like Brown and Lindars have tried to explain away these twin occurrences, this similarity stands and must be accounted for.
 - e. Support 5 - Reference to stoning (λιθάζειν/λίθον ἐπ' αὐτήν βαλέτω)
 - i. Support 1 - Reference to stoning, however, is exclusive to John. The Synoptics are full of controversial stories and even references to Jesus' opponents' desire to kill him, but it is only John who makes references to stoning. In 8:59ff. and 10:31ff., the Jews prepare to stone Jesus because they believe him to be making blasphemous statements. Likewise, in 11:8, Jesus is warned not to go to Jerusalem because the Jews "were trying to stone [him]." (28) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
 - f. Support 6 - John's use of the historical present in the gospel and the PA
 - i. Support 1 - It is more than coincidental that the instances of the historical present in the PA (8:3, ἀγουσιν; 8:4, λεγουσιν) not only reflect Johannine stylistic practice,⁴³ but more importantly, these identical historical presents occur in the same order in the following narrative of the man born blind (9:13 ἀγουσιν; 9:17 λεγουσιν), and in both instances (8:3; 9:13, 15, 16, 40) with Pharisaic participation. (141-142) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)

- g. Support 7 - Verbal parallels between the PA and surrounding episodes
- i. Support 1 - John 7:11 που εστιν εκεινος; John 8:10 που εσιν εκεινοι; John 9:12 που εστιν εκεινος; John 8:5 συ ουν τι λεγεις (περι αυτης); John 9:17 συ τι λεγεις περι αυτου; (142)
 - ii. Support 2 - At a more extended distance, one also should consider the various forms of κυπτω or its compounded forms that also parallel PA occurrences:46 John 8:6, 7 ανεκυψεν – John 8:8 κυψας – Jn 8:10 ανακυψας John 20:5 παρακυψας – John 20:11 παρεκυψεν (142)
 - iii. Support 3 - At a more extended distance, one also should consider the various forms of κυπτω or its compounded forms that also parallel PA occurrences:46 John 8:6, 7 ανεκυψεν – John 8:8 κυψας – Jn 8:10 ανακυψας John 20:5 παρακυψας – John 20:11 παρεκυψεν (142)
 - iv. Support 4 - Further, the Fourth Gospel uses παλιν frequently (forty-five times)—as much as the other gospels combined (Mt. seventeen times; Mk twenty-six times; Lk. twice). Two such occurrences appear in the PA, with a third occurrence following immediately thereafter (8:12). (142) (The Pericope of the Adulteress in Contemporary Research)
- h. Support 8 - Johannine authenticity of the PA is suggested on the basis of the intricate extended network of verbal and thematic correspondences that can be shown to exist between the PA and the remainder of the Fourth Gospel. (145)

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