Lessons in the Gospel of John Oct. Oct.

6, 2021

1. Prayer
2. Opening
   * 1. What do you know of this book?

* + 1. What hopes or expectations do you have for this study?

1. Introduction and Outline 1. John’s gospel has a clear and relatively simple shape. a. Prologue -John 1:1–18

b. “The Book of Signs”- John 1:19-12:50.

* + - * 1. The words and works of Jesus together point to His identity as the Messiah and Savior. So, for example, He claims to be “the Light of the World.” Those who follow Him will not walk in darkness

(chapt. 8: 12).

* + - * 1. He then illustrates this by giving sight to a man who was born blind (chapt. 9). There are seven signs recorded in chapters 1 to 12.

c. The “Book of the Passion or the Book of Glory”-John 13: 1–20: 31.

* + - * 1. As the chapter opens, we have been transported, without explanation, to a room above a house in Jerusalem. It is Thursday afternoon of Passover Week, and a meal is already underway.
        2. As far as we know, only thirteen men are in the room—Jesus and

His chosen Apostles. Now the glory that Jesus has hidden from a

world that has rejected Him will increasingly be revealed to the disciples who trusted and loved Him.

d. It ends with an epilogue John 21:1–25. This is the passage in which Jesus restores Simon Peter to his apostolic ministry.

2. Uniqueness of John’s Gospel

a. Many have said that John’s Gospel is THE true insider’s perspective.

* + - * 1. Over 90% of John’s Gospel is original material not found in the other three.
        2. In John there is no driving out of demons, and no parables, per se. A good many of the stories that are in the other 3 are not in John’s

Gospel.

* + - * 1. John shares 7 miracles of Jesus along with the 7 “I am” statements of Jesus.
        2. John weaves theology and history together…with more emphasis on theology than the other 3.
        3. No genealogies but an extended view of the passion week.
        4. The other 3 Gospels place more emphasis on the “kingdom of

God”…where John places the thrust of his focus of the person of Jesus and His 100% divinity much like the writer of the book to the Hebrews. And as such we will read words like “behold, see, look” more often here than in the other Gospel so that we might see, understand and believe.

* + - * 1. John’s style and perspective are different from the other Gospels. So much so that since the 18th Century scholars have named the other 3 the “Synoptic Gospels” coming from the Greek word that means “able to be seen together.”…since they have many of the

same stories and events in much the same order sometimes even using the same words.

b. The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) show us “His body”— they tell the story from the outside, as it were. But the nearer John’s gospel gets to its climax the more we learn about what was “going on inside” our Lord.

* + - * 1. Clement of Alexandria called John’s Gospel the “spiritual gospel”.
        2. John Calvin spoke to this: “The other three are more copious in their narrative of the life and death of Christ, but John dwells more largely on the doctrine by which the office of Christ, together with the power of his death and resurrection, is unfolded. . .. All of them had the same object in view, to point out Christ, the three former exhibit his body, if we may be permitted to use the expression, but John exhibits his soul. On this account, I am accustomed to say that this Gospel is a key to open the door for understanding the rest; for whoever shall understand the power of Christ, as it is here strikingly portrayed, will afterwards read with advantage what the others relate about the Redeemer who was manifested.”
        3. Thomas Goodwin spoke of John’s Gospel as “a window into

Christ’s heart.”

* + - * 1. Theologian Leon Morris is famous for saying, “John’s Gospel is like a pool in which a child may wade or an elephant can swim.”

3. Dating of the Gospel…

As with John’s other writings it is hard to completely tie this down. There is no specific talk of the Temple in Jerusalem so it could have been written about the same time as the Revelation.

Most scholars say that it was somewhere between 70

A.D. and 90 A.D.

It is believed because of accounts of people who knew John personally like Clement that he outlived all the other apostles and wrote his account a long time after they did…hence the lack of sameness as the other

Gospel accounts.

Some ancient manuscripts have been found that title this work: “The holy Gospel, the preaching of John, which He spoke and published in Greek at

Ephesus.” Or as amended in the Persian text: “The

Gospel of

John, one of the twelve apostles, which was spoken in the city of Ephesus, in the Greek and Roman tongue.” At the very least this shows that the Church at the time attested to the validity of John the Apostle being the one who wrote this.

4. What is “a gospel”?

To most Christians the mere word stands for the 4 historical accounts preserved in the New Testament, which recount the life and teachings of Jesus that the Church has historically considered canonical.

The gospel is the authoritative presentation of the

“good news” or

“good telling” in that what is told is worth the telling and worth the

listener listening. “Good News” is the literal meaning of the Greek word “euangelion” that through Jesus Christ, God has fulfilled His covenant to bring salvation to His people.

The “A,B,C’s” of the Christian faith. For while it does tell us how we come to faith, the gospel also tells us how to live before the face of

God.

5. John’s reason for writing. When studying many Bible books we are often left with wondering what the purpose of the author was in his mind when he wrote his book or books…not so with the

Apostle John. Let’s begin by going to the back of the book first.

a. Read John 19:35-37 and 21:24- What is he telling us here and why?

(1) In John 19:35-37-“He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth— that you also may believe. For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: ‘Not one of His bones will be broken.’ And again another

Scripture says, ‘They will look on him whom they have pierced.’”

… in this passage he is saying…

This is I have borne witness as in I testify before you and God…He speaks as if he is in a court of law…I am an eyewitness to these events thus as an eye witness what I say is true.

This is also made as an oath…a sacred vow before God…like,

# “This is the truth and nothing but the truth so help me God.”

You can trust absolutely what I have said…and then eyewitness accounts were considered trustworthy first.

* And does this for one reason…so that His readers would believe. Faith is not just a leap into the dark without knowledge; rather faith should also seek the truth. For only what is true is worthy of our trust.
* Then he goes to Scripture to verify the fulfillment of prophesy concerning the events that he has witnessed…two witnesses as required in the Law.

1. In John 21:24- “This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true.” In this he is saying:
   * That he knows the sanctity of taking oaths before God and the severity of consequence for giving a false witness/testimony and vow.
   * So John declares even broader than before, which was about the events of Jesus’ death, that everything he has said in this gospel as absolutely true and trustworthy. Nothing in here is a fable or a simple story…this is truth not myth.
   * And with the “we” he may be saying that all the other disciples concur.
2. John assures us twice that he is an eyewitness to these events and he has written as one who was there throughout the whole book to show that these are real and that OUR faith is based in reality.

1. Also, he is saying something a bit deeper.
   * He is testifying to the fact that there is only ONE truth. It’s not HIS truth…as they say today…it is God’s truth that he witnessed firsthand.
   * Also, by saying what he says he is saying this truth will never change…what I say here is true and will always be true…nothing man can do or will try to do can change that. It is as true today…as real today…as contemporary today…as it was in his day since it speaks of Christ.
   * Everyone wants to know what is true…even Pilate. Christ is the

Truth…and all those who are His will hear the truth and follow

Him

1. Why does it matter that this is truth and not myth? Aren’t there things, like moral teachings, that can be learned from myth?
   * For there to be anything “useful” in myth or fictional accounts the substance of it must have come from somewhere else.
   * But in this case specifically…all of this must be true or it is false and as such not useful…not helpful…for we cannot base “good morals” on a lie. We do it as with abortion…buut look where that has gotten us as a culture.
   * Too many people read the Gospels…maybe even the whole Bible …primarily as a “how-to” book on morality.
     + Jesus is a great teacher and example of a life well lived. Jesus gives us lots of attainable goals for the good life. How

to pray like Jesus. How to love like Jesus. How to forgive and tolerate others like Jesus.

* + - But John takes this to a higher level…in calling Him God…then the reader, being honest, is left with…Jesus is either who He says He is or he is a lair and possibly a lunatic as C.S. Lewis pointed out.
    - John doesn’t portry Jesus as a good teacher…but as the Resurrection and the Life…the savior of His elect children for all time.

1. What do you say to friends, family or others that struggle with believing the truthfulness of the Bible…comparing it to other historical works?

b. Now let’s read John 20:30-31-“Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ,

the Son of

God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.” Why did John write this book according to these passages?

* + - * 1. That we may believe that Jesus is the Christ…the Messiah…the long awaited one…the final Son of David …the Son of God…the 2nd person of the Godhead.
        2. That we may have life in His name. Life abundantly in this life and life eternal in the next. If we believe in Jesus we have eternal life.
        3. This is the gospel…the “good news” the “good telling”…the truth…the absolute truth…a truth that is the basis and foundation of the faith that we have in Christ Jesus.

* + - * 1. It is simple and deep at the same time…just like the rest of

Scripture.

A child can understand the simple concepts found here…concepts like Jesus being the Light of the World or the

Living water.

Yet, at the same time the most mature disciple can deep deep and never find all the treasures within.

*6.* As we close tonight.

What has always appealed to you about Jesus? In other words, what is it about Him that draws you to Him?

What is it about Him that motivates us to tell others about

Him?

Lessons in the Gospel of John Oct. 13, 2021

Prayer

Review

What was John’s purpose in writing this book? That we might believe and have eternal life.

How does John substantiate that what he has written is true in the passages we looked at last time (John 19:35-37, 20:30-31, 21:24?

1. He says that he bore witness… as in I testify before you and God…He speaks as if he is in a court of law…I am an eyewitness to these events thus as an eye witness what I say is true.
2. This is also made as an oath…a sacred vow before God…like, “This is the truth and nothing but the truth so help me God.” You can trust absolutely what I have said…and then eyewitness accounts were considered trustworthy first.
3. Then he goes to Scripture to verify the fulfillment of prophesy concerning the events that he has witnessed…two witnesses as required in the Law.
4. And does this for one reason…so that His readers would believe. Faith is not just a leap into the dark without knowledge; rather faith should also seek the truth. For only what is true is worthy of our trust.

1. From last time: “John’s Gospel is like a pool in which a child may wade or an elephant can swim.” – theologian Leon Morris.

1. Children’s Catechism #15- Who wrote the Bible?- Chosen men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit.

C. John 1:1-18- The Prologue

1. How do Genesis 1:1-5, John 1:1-5, and I John 1:1-4 compare?

All 3 speak of Jesus being there in the beginning. As each one uses these

exact words it ties all 3 together.

By paralleling the creation account in all the

Gospels and his letter he is making clear that Jesus was there and is God from before the beginning.

The first thing we see God creating is “the

Light”…John refers to Jesus as the light and life. And this light shines in the darkness…the

sinfulness of men…and cannot be overcome by the darkness.

2. In verse 1. John uses the term, “the Word” to refer to

Jesus. Why? What have you been taught that means?

a. The Word (Jesus) is distinguished from God and at the same time the Word is identified as God. The most foundational sentence concerning the

Trinity.

(1)“The Word”, not… “a Word”= the divine logos, or personified divine wisdom- is a Greek word that John is using in a Hebrew way as an “expression of God”…

* + - 1. …or better, as the author to the Hebrews says, “He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of His power.” Heb. 1:3
      2. We know the Word stands for Jesus because of the context. The Word = He and Him… and then he goes on to name the Word…He and

HIM= Jesus Christ.

b. By calling Jesus “the Word”, John is also saying that Jesus is the embodiment of all of God’s revelation in Scripture.

(1) When God spoke the world into existence Jesus was present and active in all of it…in

fact,

• Gen. 1:3 says, “And God spoke…”

The word “spoke” is “logos” in the Greek translation of the OT.

# • John 1:3- “All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.”

• Hebrews 11:3- “By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made

# out of things that are visible.”

1. Jesus not only teaches us God’s Word but He is God’s Word in the flesh (vs. 14).
2. Jesus is the manifestation of God’s wisdom and God’s presence…and of God’s steadfast love for His own fulfilling the promises of the covenant of grace.

3. What do verses 3-5 tell us about the work and nature of the

Word?

a. Without Him nothing was made that was made. This Word created all things and as such is uncreated Himself. Col. 1:16-17- “For by Him all

things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible,

whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were

# created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.”

1. In Him was life. The Word is the source of all life. Greek word here is

“zoe” which means “the life principle” all of life…not just biological life.

1. This light is the light of men…in contrast to the darkness… the sinfulness of all men… this light shines into the darkness and it cannot be overcome in those who were His from before the beginning.
   1. It is not as some have tried to say that this

Word contains the light…but is in fact

THE light.

* 1. Therefore, John tells us from the very beginning of his book that all men are dead left in darkness, unless Jesus shines

His light upon us.

* 1. It has always interested me how people, in general, have a significant fear about both death and darkness.

1. According to verses 6-8 what was John the Baptist’s purpose?
   1. Always interests me that this John has the same purpose as John the Baptist...to bear witness… to the Light that would shine on His elect and bring them out of darkness.
   2. This tells me that we all have this as a primary way to glorify God…our purpose is to make

Jesus known.

1. As we look at verses 9-13, what things stand out to you?
   1. Light is given to all people…life cannot not flourish without physical

light

* + 1. We see God’s common grace as in the creation account… God saw the darkness and spoke saying, “‘Let there be light’, and there was light.”
    2. But as Jesus came into the world, there seems to be a universal effect as to the point that no one is innocent.
    3. This is not the light of salvation except to those who are His which we will talk about in a minute.
  1. John reiterates Jesus’ divinity yet again when

# He says, “…and the world was made through

Him”.

c. The world and His own people (the Jews) do not know Him.

(1) The darkness is so pervasive that no one can see that He fulfills the OT prophesies.

(2)The darkness…the sin… is so complete that they do not want to see the truth…since the light exposes their sinfulness…first…so that those who are His can even seek forgiveness.

(3)The darkness reveals the rejection of God and the need for the light.

(4) Jesus spoke to this as well in John 3:19-21- “And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God.”

d. That salvation comes from God alone. Vs. 12-13

(1) Those who receive Him, who believed into His name, are born of God...no one else…in fact, he has just said that the natural inclination of all men is to reject Jesus… not receive Him…  Believe and believing is an important word for John.

* He uses this word over 98 times while never using the noun

“faith.”

Believing is used as a dynamic posture, an on-going activity, a living devotion…hence always being in verb form.

* Believing into the name of Jesus meant to John …that those who believe… we are to enter into an all-encompassing, life transformed and transforming, relationship with God the Father, God the Son and

God the Holy Spirit.

(2) Which begs the question how does this (vs. 12) happen?…by God’s work alone…salvation is a sovereign gift to His own which Jesus will explain a bit more in chapter 3. So in verse 13 we read…“…He gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but

of

God.”

# “not by blood”- or “not by bloods”-



* of animals as in the Passover and circumcision…the sacrifices cannot save them. Religion cannot save them. No amount of blood can save them.
* Also, not by bloodlines…that is not being born a Jew as if that bloodline was the most sacred of bloodlines.
* All men are of one blood and all of it at best is tainted with sin and so is NOT good enough for salvation.
* “nor of the will of the flesh”- Man’s “free” will cannot save for as he has said in earlier texts, man’s will is corrupt and carnal only able to reject the truth and the life.
  + All men are walking in darkness with no hope of escape until Christ comes and shines on His people.
  + Is. 9:2- “The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.”
  + Men see God as their enemy because they cannot see Him in their darkness. We fear, naturally what we cannot see so we run.
  + This phrase also emphasizes that another must bring about the necessary change/regeneration…He will bring us into the light it is not a personal decision…since our decision is to run.

“nor the will of man”- this sounds like he is saying the same thing from the last qualifier of those who cannot save themselves.

* + And he may be emphasizing that point because the people…all people … ARE convinced that they can save themselves…set and follow through and control their own destiny.
  + But the text could also be read… “nor by the will of a man” in Jewish thought “a man” signified a great man…a

powerful man…one who says what he wants done and it is done…even a good man, like an Abraham or a David but no matter how powerful they are they cannot save anyone just because it the desire of their will.

* The point?
* None of these will work, because everything about man…everything man touches…even in the best of men (read believers) everything is still tainted with sin so nothing that we could do even if we wanted to (which a dead man has no wants or desires…one walking in darkness only has fear to drive them)..Nothing will work towards our salvation…not even orthodox sacrificial religion.
* Only God- “…He gave the right to become children of

God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh

nor of the will of man, but of God.” Of God…only God who grants eternal life to whom He wills…whom He has chosen before the foundations of the earth… “born from above” as

Jesus will say in Chapter 3 speaking of how passive we are in this process...it is done to us…and FOR His own!

(3) This is the good news of the gospel…the great hope that John wants all of his readers to get...to believe in Jesus Christ.



(4)Have we been born again? Have we the MARKS which always

accompany the new birth— sense of sin,

* + - faith in Jesus,
    - love of others,

righteous living,

* + - separation from the world?
    - Let us never be content until we can give a satisfactory answer to these questions. Paul commands,

“Examine yourselves…test yourselves…to see whether you are in the faith.”

* 1. Children’s catechism # 61- What does it mean to believe in Christ? To trust Christ alone for my salvation.
  2. CC #62- Can you repent and believe in Christ by your own power? No, I cannot repent and believe unless the Holy Spirit changes my heart.

6. Let’s consider vs 14 a minute by itself. *“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the*

*Father, full of grace and truth.”* What is the main truth that John wants to get across here in this verse?

a. The reality of our Lord Jesus Christ's incarnation… or becoming man. The plain meaning of these words is that our divine Savior really

took

human nature upon Himself, in order to save sinners. He really became a man like us in all things, except He never sinned.

1. Like us, He was born of a woman, though born in a miraculous manner.
2. Like us, He grew from infancy to boyhood, and from boyhood to manhood and increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and man. (Luke 2:52.)
3. Like us, He hungered, thirsted, ate, drank, slept, became tired, felt pain, wept, rejoiced, marveled, and was moved to anger and compassion.

•

1. Having become flesh, and taken a body, He prayed, went to “church”, read the Scriptures, suffered from being tempted, and submitted His human will to the will of His Father.

•

1. And finally, in the same body, He really suffered and shed His blood, really died, was really buried, really rose again and really ascended

up into heaven. And yet all this time He was God as well as man! As

God… the Word. As man …He took on flesh and dwelt among us.

1. This would have shocked the Greeks which had a low view of the body…and an interestingly lack of respect for gods. But John is telling them that the Logos you know made and ordered the universe and by the way, He has come in the flesh…a scandal to them.
2. This would have shocked the Jews as well. To them it is impossible and hence, blasphemous to think or say that the one great God of the Pentateuch could or would take on human form…John says to the Jews, the Word of God became flesh…such a scandal for this is not even their perspective of the Messiah.
3. In saying that Jesus dwelt among them after He became flesh John is saying…that God tabernacle with us…another scandal to the Jew that said that God was present in the tabernacle/Temple only. Now the temple of God is resident in a man.
4. God incarnates name is Jesus …Immanuel… “God with us”(Matt.

1:23).

* 1. Jesus came to us to live where we live and made His home with His people for a time.
  2. He came to us and didn’t leave us in our mess.
  3. He came for a relationship… one that we still have through the indwelling of His Spirit within each of us.
  4. This is what makes Christianity different from every other religion…relationship…a personal relationship with His people. In other religions you have to do more and better to get to a god…(not a relationship with a god…they do this just to win the right to be in their presence)... without ever knowing if it works.
  5. In Christianity God knew before the foundation of the world that we wouldn’t be able ever to get to Him on our own…so He came to us and dwelt among us and is still with us through the Holy Spirit.

1. John testifies to what he has seen…what all the disciples saw…Jesus’ glory especially those who were at the Transfiguration…but the others saw His many signs and wonders that pointed to His power and

glory…all things that prove that He is “…the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

7. Now let’s conclude this study with verses 15-18. What all is John telling his readers here?

* + - * 1. That John the Baptist’s own testimony pointed to the reality of the God-man Jesus Christ. Vs. 15
        2. That from Him and through Him we receive continuous grace. “grace upon grace”= one grace has not left before another is upon us… one

blessing after another …or literally from the Greek- “grace in place of grace”. The covenant assurances that are promised and bestowed upon

all God’s elect. Vs. 16

* + - * 1. Vs. 17 seems to be a restatement of vs. 16 with a bit more details.

(1)This verse does not say that Moses gave the Law and then when Christ came He replaced the law with grace and truth. The Law stays in force but since the Law has been fulfilled and was satisfied in Christ’s death and resurrection now we don’t experience the sting of death but the grace and truth that comes from

Jesus…which enables us to desire to keep God’s law for His glory.

* + - * 1. Jesus spoke well of Moses place in redemptive history. Remember what Jesus said to the devil while being tempted, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’” (Matt. 4:4).This word Jesus has in mind is that which was written at the time by Moses…with a view of what would be written as well.
        2. John also calls Jesus the Christ.
        + Jesus is the name his father gave Him as we know from the other gospels….which means He will save His people from their sins. This was already known by the church since the other Gospels were already out.
        + (the) Christ is the Greek word for the Hebrew word “Messiah or anointed One.” This title marks Jesus as the high King over all kings that were ever appointed to deliver

His people.

d. Now let’s look at vs. 18. All the rest of the prologue has affirmed the divine and human status along with some of the accomplishments of Jesus, but this verse goes even further than perhaps any other verse in the Bible.

1. This is definitely a bookend verse to what he started with in verse

1-3.

1. Since man cannot, on his own, reach God…God comes to His elect.

Jesus alone reveals God as the One who has always been at the Father’s side…and by using the word “is” he is also telling his readers where Jesus is currently… verifying what the rest of the Bible says about His ascension.

1. The eye of mortal man has never beheld God the Father. No man could bear the sight. Even to Moses it was said, “‘But, God said, you cannot see my face, for man shall not see me and live.’” (Exod. 33:20.) Yet all that man is capable of knowing about God the Father is fully revealed to us by God the Son.

(4)“God: (the One) and Only God” or “God the Only God or the only Son, who is God Himself has made Him known.” This is an unusual designation just like “the Word” but this tells us that Jesus the Son of God who was and is at the Father’s side reveals the unseen God to us in His life and in His teaching to all who have ears to hear.

(5) As I said the Greek sentence structure here adds a lot of qualifiers that the English doesn’t highlight. So this is how it reads literally, “No one has ever seen God, but the Only Son, Himself God, who is continually in the bosom of the father, that One, reveals Him.”

With the many copies that we have of this Gospel in particular some of this may be qualifiers added by later copyists to try and explain what is meant here.

8. With all these things being truth, can we ever give too much honor to Christ? Can we ever think too highly of Him? How have just these few short verses changed your life?

Lessons in the Gospel of John Oct. 20, 2021

* + 1. Prayer
    2. Review
       - 1. After nearly 3 years with His disciples Jesus asked a very simple question of them, “Who do you say that I am?” Based on the prologue that we looked at last week, how would you answer this question? (Please, let the little ones go first, if they wish).

* + - * 1. Based on our understanding of who Jesus is, what does John tell us is the reason (s) Jesus, the Word, came into the world?

To reveal His Father to those who do and would believe.

He brought light and life to men.

He came to bring His grace to His own children...those who would believe by His granting belief. He is full of grace and truth because He IS grace and He IS THE Truth.

He came to fulfill prophecy proving the Word true. Gen. 3:15 and forward!

C. John 1:19-34- The Testimony of John the Baptist. 1. In Verses 1928 John the Baptist testifies about 3 things in our text.

Who he is NOT!

What he came to do!

Who Jesus is!

2. How does John the Apostle prove those three things in the text here at the beginning about John the Baptists testimony? Why is this testimony important for us today?(use the text to support your

answers)

a. Since he was powerfully doing things in the broad daylight of the day…the spiritual leaders wanted to know who he was for the things he was doing separated him from them …though he was doing the duties of a priest or a prophet.

* 1. From Malachi until this time there had been no accredited Prophets so his presence created quite a stir.
  2. Hundreds of people were coming to him to be consecrated/baptized…ceremonially cleansed for the coming of the

King…

* 1. He was preaching of the coming Messiah…preaching repentance and restoration…

1. It needed to be made clear that this was the messenger not the Messiah…by his own testimony.
2. Truth is very important to John as it should be for all of us!
3. But this is also for those later who would want to know. God knew there would be skepticism…He knew that people would want to elevate John the Baptist.

b. Even John the Baptist, himself, is emphatic concerning who he, John the Baptist is:

(1)“I am not the Christ.” For John, it was unthinkable that attention would focus on himself, because he was not the Messiah. His job was to point to the Messiah.

(2)“Are you Elijah? …I am not.” It might be easy for the priests and Levites from Jerusalem to associate John with Elijah because of his personality and because of the promise in Malachi 4:5-6- “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.” In a sense, John was like Elijah, called to minister in his office and spirit.

• Matthew 11:13-14- “From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, and if you are willing to accept it, he is

## Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

• The disciples and Jesus were talking as they were descending from the mount where Jesus was transfigured in front of them and they had just seen Elijah and Moses we read in Mark 9:11-13-

“And they asked Him, ‘Why do the scribes say that first Elijah must come?’ And He said to them, ‘Elijah does come first to restore all things. And how is it written of the Son of Man that He should suffer many things and be treated with contempt? But I tell you that Elijah has come, and they did to him whatever they pleased, as it is written of him.”

(3)“Are you the Prophet?... No!” This refers to God's promise through Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15-“The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your

brothers—it is to him you shall listen…”, promising a prophet to come. Based on this passage, they expected another Prophet to come.

(4)“Who are you?”….

• “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight8 the way of the Lord,’ as the prophet Isaiah said

* He is the one promised in Isaiah 40:3- “A voice cries: ‘In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.”
* He is the one promised and confirmed in Malachi 3- “Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the LORD whom you seek will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, He is coming, says the LORD of hosts.”

c. But he is just as emphatic as to what he came to do:

(1) “I baptize with water…”

* John understands that his calling from God is to be the messenger…the herald of the great King. His baptism was a preparatory cleansing for the King. Consecration for the royal coming.
* The Jews in John's day practiced a type of baptism….a ceremonial cleansing for the Gentiles that wished to become Jews before they were circumcised.
* Like an Old Testament prophet he calls the people to repent and be consecrated/baptized…prepared for the great event of the coming of the Messiah.

(2) “…but among you stands one you do not know, even He who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to

untie.”

* “but among you stands one…” He recognizes that while he has been called to consecrate the people… what he does is inadequate compared to what this one, that he is unworthy to untie His sandals, will do as far as cleanse His people.
* “…one you do not know…” This will be an on-going problem that Jesus will address openly and forthrightly just like John here. For only some of them would come to know who Jesus is.

If they had known Him they would be wanting to be cleanses and love Him as John does.

* “even He who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” Again John is making it clear that he is NOT to be considered…by making this claim he is saying in the idioms of the day that he is lower than a follower/disciple…even lower than a slave…I’m so low on this totem pole of importance that I am not worthy to untie His sandals…to clean His feet.

Don’t look at me or to me. He had said before in vs. 15, “This was He of whom I said, He who comes after me ranks before me, because He was before me.”

d. In vs. 29-34 the one who had been prophesied to be the Messiah’s herald…His messenger...one like Elijah now continues “preparing the way of the LORD” by announcing who Jesus is…The Lamb of God…and …The Son of God.

(1) “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

* The word “Behold” tells his audience to stop look and listen with the intent of understanding…NOW!
* “The Lamb of God who takes the way of the sin of the world!”…immediately communicates who Jesus is… ◼

The

Messiah, the long awaited King, the Suffering One of

Isaiah (though they seemed to have missed that one), the Lamb that would be led to the slaughter for the purpose of their salvation from prophecy (though they would have missed that one, as well) and got stuck on the KING one. ◼ The imagery would have been very familiar and clear as to whom John was saying this person is. Lambs were sacrificed at the morning sacrifice for the sins of the people for the previous night and a lamb was sacrificed in the afternoon for the sins done throughout the day…so Lamb of God would have resonated with them.

* + This person, who is the Lamb of God… “…is the one who takes away the sins of the world.”

He declares that the long awaited and long expected Messiah is here.

* + This word/phrase… “who takes away” speaks of a one and done sacrifice and that the effects of that work are continuous…which speaks of the continuing virtue of Christ’s sacrifice and the constant efficacy of the cleansing power of the blood of Christ for all His people in the world them now and into the future if He tarries.
  + John will say in his first letter- I John 2:1-2- “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin,

we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.”

One of Jesu’ biggest jobs while He resides in heaven is to intercede for us before the Father.

The Spirit does this as well…shows us how committed the God head is to His own.

* + Interesting phrase here. John says, “I myself did not know him…” They are cousins, of course he knew Jesus. He meant that until that moment he had not realized that the person whose way he was preparing was none other than the eldest son of his aunt Mary, Jesus’ mother.
  + But since He didn’t know who it would be, God told Him how he would know who it is that he

came to be the messenger of, “…but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is He who baptizes with the Holy

## Spirit.’ And

I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son9 of God.” (vs. 33-34) God gave him a sign.

(2) And it is here that John announces him to be the Son of God. “And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”

* + John the Baptist like John the Apostle here is swearing an oath to what he has witnessed from God to confirm that this Jesus is the Son of God.
  + This is the first of a number of proofs that John will give to confirm Jesus as the Son of God.
  + This Jesus of Nazareth is both the Lamb of God…the last sacrifice and the Son of God who takes away sin, something only God can do, even the leadership of the day acknowledged that fact…Mark 2:7- “Why does this man speak like that? He is blaspheming!

Who can forgive sins but God alone?”

* + Of course He has called Him the Son of God back in verses 18 when he said, ““No one has ever seen God,

but the Only Son, Himself God, who is continually in the bosom of the father, that One, reveals Him.” But he is even clearer here.

Lessons in the Gospel of John Oct.

27, 2021

1. Prayer
2. Review
   1. In John 1:19-34 John the Baptist testifies about 3 things in our text.
      1. Who John is NOT!
      2. What John came to do!
      3. Who Jesus is!

* 1. What were some of the things that we learned from John the Baptist’s testimony of Jesus?

1. Now let’s look at John 1:35-51.

1. What titles does John use for Jesus in these verses and what is he communicating by giving these to them and to us?

1. Titles are one thing but John is also wanting us to “meet” this Jesus …to know Him as Messiah, King, Savior and God…but he also wants us to read and “behold” that this is more than a history or a biography because he wants us to remember…Jesus is alive and well today and He still desires that our relationship with Him grow.
2. Reiterates in verse 36, “Behold, the Lamb of God” …twice by John to reinforce what Jesus had come to do…what had been prophesied and promised for Him to do…to save His people from their sins.
3. In verses 38, the two followers of John who decided to follow Jesus at

John’s commendation called Him “Rabbi”- already they see Him as a “teacher” since John pointed Him out…but John had been clear…hadn’t he? They chose in this early stage to hedge their bets?

* + 1. Also note the word “followed” in verse 37 and 38- The Greek word isn’t just hanging

out with Jesus …listening and learning…while that would have been a product and what was probably on their mind at this time.

* + 1. But in the gospel, it takes on a fuller sense of commitment to listen, learn and be a part of and devoted to the mission of Christ. He expected people to be fully engaged with Him in mission no matter the cost.
    2. By using this word John hopes to express the power of the Word…when told who He

is…and later when He says “Follow Me” we see they believed and followed under the power of the Word and most all of them ended up suffering the cost.

1. In verse 41 Andrew to Peter calls Jesus “…the Messiah” ...the longawaited King.
2. In verse 49, Nathaniel is overwhelmed at meeting Jesus and calls

Him,

“Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!”-

* 1. Rabbi- teacher
  2. Son of God
  3. King of Israel- Messiah
  4. He is almost worshiping Him at this point even though it is evident from the rest of the gospels that they didn’t fully understand the titles until after His resurrection.

f. Jesus Himself calls Himself, “The Son of Man” which was Jesus’ favorite title. This title speaks of His Messiahship- and His divinity, but also His humble identification with fallen man through suffering.

(1)Dan. 7:13-14-” I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and He came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before Him. And to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him; His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.”

(2)Rev. 1: 12-18-” Then I turned to see the voice that was speaking to me, and on turning I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands one like a son of man, clothed with a long robe and with a golden sash around His chest. The hairs of His head were white, like white wool, like snow. His eyes were like a flame of fire, His feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and His voice was like the roar of many waters. In His

right hand He held seven stars, from His mouth came a sharp twoedged sword, and this face was like the sun shining in full strength. When I saw Him, I fell at His feet as though dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying, ‘Fear not, I am the first and

## the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive

forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.’” We see

His majesty, dominion, and divinity as the Son of man but also His compassion as He reaches out to John in his fear and lifts him up and He speaks confirming who He is assuring John everything will be good!

1. As we reflect on all that we have looked did you notice what the first words of Jesus were that John recorded for us? 
   1. To those who were beginning to follow Him, He asked “What are you seeking?” Which could also mean…What do you desire? What do you long for?
   2. Later Jesus will ask Mary Magdalene, “Whom are you seeking? Whom are you looking for?” John 20:15

1. Since this is not merely a historical account of Jesus and His ministry, we must ask ourselves this question. “What are you seeking?” Whom do you seek?” As we reflect on these verses; How would you answer this question? Or How did you answer this question?

(1)You see this text is more than a recounting of the events of the day.

1. This is God’s word to us and for us so that we may believe in Jesus.
2. Wrestling with such questions on a regular basis enables us to examine and test ourselves.

D. John 2:1-11

1. Tell us what you have been taught about this passage in the past?

1. This is the first of 7 signs/miracles that John tells us about that we might know without question who Jesus is. According to vs. 11*- “This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested His glory. And His disciples*  *believed in him.”* 
   1. A sign refers to something that distinguishes a person or a thig from others… “first of His signs…”
   2. So, John is saying that Jesus did these signs to point his readers to something more significant than the actual sign/miracle but to Himself as the one who owned and did the sign.
   3. God uses the sign to verify that Jesus was send by Him to do the work

He sent Him to do.

3. Why do you think it was significant that Jesus “begins” His powerful ministry at a wedding?

a. Marriage was still seen as a gift from God.

1. A marriage was the type of occasion then that looked to God’s provision and a support of God’s creation mandate…as well as an institution that is “good” for all mankind.
2. It has been said, "Society is never in a healthy condition, and true religion never flourishes in that land where the marriage tie is lightly esteemed. They who lightly esteem it have not the mind of Christ. He who "beautified and adorned the estate of matrimony by

His presence and first miracle that He wrought in Cana of Galilee," is

## One who is always of one mind. "Marriage," says the Holy Spirit by

Paul, "is honorable in all." (Heb. 13:4.)

1. We learn, also from these verses, that there are times when it is good and plea sent to celebrate and rejoice. Our Lord Himself sanctioned a wedding-feast by His own presence. He did not refuse to be a guest at "a marriage in Cana of Galilee." "A feast," it is written, "is made for laughter, and wine makes merry." (Eccles. 10:19.) Our Lord, in the passage before us, approves both the feast and the use of wine.
2. Whole villages would have been invited to such events.

(1) Cana was the hometown of Nathanael so they probably felt the need to invite Jesus, 4 disciples (at this point).

(2)Also- Mary, Jesus’ mother, who may have had a role in the wedding since it seems it was the servants who came to her about the wine

first and then she is the one to instruct them concerning what to do after she talks with Jesus.

1. Interestingly enough, there is evidence from history that in the ancient Jewish world that if the provisions ran out before the wedding was over the groom could face a lawsuit. Hospitality was taken that seriously in the ancient world.
2. Fun fact: Mormonism teaches that this was Jesus’ wedding so he could populate the next world. Some traditions teach that this was john’s wedding and that he really left all…leaving the woman at the altar, if

you will, to follow Jesus…but nowhere in the Bible or accepted history is this proven. Absurdities have abounded since the time of the

Fall.

4. What is the miracle and what does this miracle reveal about who Jesus is?

1. Turning water to wine at the time a need is registered. By a mere act of will He changed water into wine, and so supplied the need of all the guests.
2. That He has power over the elements that He created…He is God.

(1) We are not told of any outward visible action which preceded or accompanied it.

(2)It does not say that He touched the stone water jars containing the water that was made wine.

1. It does not say that He commanded the water to change its qualities, or that He prayed to His Father in Heaven.
2. He simply willed the change, and it took place. Sort of like at the beginning when He spoke and it was and is!
3. Also, we read of no prophet or apostle in the Bible who ever worked a miracle after this fashion. He who could do such a mighty work, in such a manner, was nothing less than God.

c. As God…as the Son of Man… Luke records in contrast to John the

Baptist that, “the Son of man has come eating and drinking” (Luke

5:34a)

1. No Nazerite vow here since John’s vow came at a time before Christ, the Bridegroom, was revealed.
2. But now that the Bridegroom has been revealed Luke records Jesus saying, “Can you make wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them?” …In other words, now is the time to celebrate that Jesus has come so the use of wine here is symbolic of that on-going celebration.
3. Also, Jesus refers to Himself as the new wine in contrast to the old wine.

(4)And then, of course, wine like in the Passover was drunk, but now it is drunk in the Lord’s Supper representing the shed blood of Christ…nothing cheap in this drink.

5. But let’s talk about the “elephant in the room”. Is Jesus disrespecting His mother? Vs. 4-5- *“And Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.’ His mother said to the servants, ‘Do whatever He tells you.’”*

* 1. John 2:1–11 is the only text in which the adult Jesus has a conversation with Mary, His mother. He does not address her as

"Mother" but as "Woman.”

* 1. In Jesus’s day, this actually was a title of respect …sort of like Ma’am or madam in a formal sense.
     1. As R.C. Sproul says this not like a cabby saying,

“Where does ya wanna go, lady?”

* + 1. Jesus uses the same address toward Mary at the cross- John 19:26- “When Jesus saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to his mother, ‘Woman, behold, your son!’”
    2. This is also how Jesus addressed the woman at the well- John 4:21“Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the

Father.’”

(4)It was a polite form of address in the culture of the time…recognizing her God given gender was a good thing. Gen. 2:23- “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman…” Man and woman were created in the image of

God elevated above all the rest of creation.

1. By addressing her this way, it seems that Jesus is making the case, ever so subtly that He is also her Lord and creator, but He is not being rude.
2. If calling her “Woman” is not rude, then surely the question is? “’… what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.’”
3. He is making the point of who He is…answerable to no one.
4. This is a Greek idiom and idioms don’t always sound right like “heads up” means “get down.” Idioms often mean the opposite of what is actually said. A strict translation would be more like this… “What business do we have with each other?” Emphasis on “business”. It might also be understood, “Why are you asking me to get involved in this matter when it is the groom’s

responsibility?”

1. Jesus talks a lot about His time …His hour…
   * This lets us know that He works on a divine timetable…nothing is done randomly…like turning the water into wine which He does here without further questions.
   * Mary knew that the time would come for Jesus to manifest His glory…His hour to manifest His glory in this miracle had come but the hour of His death had not yet come so okay I will do this.
2. Some commentators, even Sproul, think that Jesus was “gently rebuking” His mother not to rush Him…
   * But the problem I have with that is that He goes ahead and does what she asked immediately…on His timetable…since that is the only timetable that matters to God.
   * It could have been, I suppose, Jesus was saying to her something like… “Woman, you don’t know what you are asking.”
   * But again, He does the miracle just when it was supposed to be done so I am not sure He would have needed to “rebuke” her even “gently” …even for us in the future.
   * It could be nothing more than Him saying that this is not the hour for me to go public ...so public that everyone knows yet… though obviously some people did know.

(5)But remember much of this conversation seems to be set in Jewish idiom.

e. And with no malice in her from being disrespected, Mary says, “Do whatever He tells you.”

* + - * 1. This statement alone is worth the price of the whole story if you will…
        2. Mary’s words…here and in her Magnificat are words that we need to pay attention to… to be sure. But we do not have to go through her to get to Jesus as the Roman Catholics say. Like any other Christian on one hand she deserves to be listened to…as an image bearer of God she deserves to be listened to…but the fact that

these words are recorded in Scripture…that commands us to listen.

(3)This is the statement that speaks to all of us long after this party is over. “Do whatever He tells you.” And they did…and the party continued.

6. If you were to summarize what John says in these verses what do we learn here about Jesus n verses 1-11?

* + 1. This is the first of many stories suggesting that Jesus is a favored guest welcome at celebrations.
    2. He is who John says He is.
    3. He does respect His mother as we know that a perfect man would.
    4. He is God… and everything and everyone answers to

His Word…

(1) The disciples in following (2) His mother is obedience

1. The servants in obedience (4) The water turning

to wine

* 1. All of these people- the disciples, His mother, the servants saw and knew this to be a miracle!!
  2. Miracles substantiate His word and work.
  3. Jesus likes to have fun.
  4. So, Jesus does not hate wine! Or the idea of people drinking wine.
     1. He doesn’t even make a comment about too much drinking going on since they ran out of wine.
     2. He made a lot of wine- each stone jar would have held between 2- and 30 gallons of water…. meaning Jesus made potentially 180 gallons of wine…up to 900 bottles of wine…of good wine

He believed in doing a sign that shows God’s abundant grace.

* + 1. Or maybe it is just that He commends “good wine” ...the best the master had tasted…from places that seek to bring Him glory…like Texas

Southwind.

* + 1. Fun fact: From RC Sproul. “We have always been taught that the Jews drank wine because the water was bad. History shows that the water from wells was just fine.”
       - * Wine was, however considered a special drink…. reserved for special occasions like meat.
         * If the Jews needed an alternative to water they could have simply made grape juice…since grapes were the second

largest crop in the area…second only to olives.

* + - * + The Old Testament and so also the Jews

sees and treats wine as a gift from God.

Ps. 104:14-15- “You cause the grass to grow for

the livestock and plants for man to cultivate, that he may bring forth food from the earth and wine to gladden the heart of man, oil to make his face shine and bread to strengthen man’s heart.”

* + - * + Another reason why, we can conclude that this was actually fermented wine.

7. Why is what we learn here about Jesus comforting for us today?

a. It has to be a comforting thought that the same almighty power of will which our Lord here displayed

is still exercised on behalf of His believing people today.

(1) We have no need of His bodily presence to maintain our cause.

(2)We have no reason to despair because we cannot see Him with our eyes interceding for us, or touch Him with our hands.

(3)If He has "willed" our salvation and the daily supply of all our spiritual need, we are as safe and well provided for as if He was standing by us.

1. Christ's will is as mighty and effectual as Christ's deed here. The will of Him who could say to the Father, " Father, I desire (or I will) that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me

where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world." (John 17:24.)This is a will that has all power in heaven and earth, and must prevail.

* + - 1. Happy are those who, like the disciples, believe on Him by whom this miracle was so powerfully and silently done. After the miracle the text says, “And His disciples believed in Him.”
      2. A greater marriage feast than that of Cana will one day be held.
      3. Christ Himself will be the bridegroom and believers will be the bride.
      4. A greater glory will one day be manifested than the one manifested here… “This, the first of His signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested His glory…”, when Jesus shall take to Himself His great

## power and reign. “Blessed will they be in that day who are called

to the marriage supper of the Lamb!” (Rev. 19:9)

8. Not so fun Facts:

1. Those who deny that miracles happen all together say that the master of the feast had been dipping out of the stone water pots and then when the water pots grew empty the dregs of the wine was still in them. So, when the servants added water, as Jesus ordered them to,

the dregs of wine gave the water the taste of wine and the guests…even the master of the feast were already so drunk that they didn’t know the difference. In other words, Jesus engaged in a bit of trickery.

1. Older Christians that I have known have said that since drinking alcohol is always wrong…then what Jesus did was this. Jesus told the servants to fill the pots with water and give the people water since water is the best wine. Turning water into water…I guess “drinkable water” was the miracle… going on the assumption that they didn’t have good water to drink.
2. The miracle is that Jesus made water into wine…not grape juice…but wine as Jews would have known the difference and would have been offended. It is only through the type of miracle that we have talked about that we now read in verses

11- “This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested His glory. And His disciples believed in him.” How does anything less manifest His glory as the Son of

God.

Lessons in the Gospel of John November 3, 2021

1. Prayer
2. Review 1. What were some of the things John communicated to us with Jesus’ titles from last time?

2. If you were to summarize what John says in chapter 2:1-11, what are some things we learn here about Jesus?

* + 1. This is the first of many stories suggesting that Jesus is a favored guest welcome at celebrations.
    2. He is who John says He is.
    3. He does respect His mother as we know that a perfect man would.
    4. He is God… and everything and everyone answers to

His Word… (5)

The disciples in following (6) His mother is obedience

1. The servants in obedience
2. The water turning to wine
   * 1. All of these people- the disciples, His mother, the servants saw and knew this to be a miracle!!
     2. Miracles substantiate His word and work.
     3. Jesus likes to have fun.
     4. So Jesus does not hate wine! Or the idea of people drinking wine.

C. John 2:12-25

1. Look at John 2:12-17.

a. Vs. 12 seems to be “just” an informational/historical verse but what things does this verse reveal us? Why is it important?

1. Jesus didn’t travel alone.
2. Jesus had siblings…which mean Mary had other children after

Jesus.

1. Even though we know that Jesus’ siblings didn’t believe in Him at first they were not so embarrassed or concerned with their status in the Temple/synagogue that they left Him alone.
2. Capernaum was His family home at the time as the other Gospels seem to indicate.

1. Is this the same cleansing of the temple that the Synoptics record in the last week of Jesus’ life on earth? If so, why is it here at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry?

(1) As R.C. Sproul points out,

* + - * + Many critics point to this as being a contradiction of the Bible.
        + Many critics also say the biblical writers, being men, were not as concerned about chronology as we would be.
        + Others think John takes this event from the end of Jesus’ life and brings it here to continue teaching contrasts:

Contrast between water and wine

Contrast between a physical temple and Christ’s body as the new temple.

But there is so much more going on than simple contrasts.

(2) The problem with the theory that this is the same cleansing as in the other Gospels is that John is very detailed about when this takes

place-

* + - vs. 12- 13- “After this He went down to Capernaum, with His mother and His brothers and His disciples, and they stayed there for a few days. The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.”
    - Just days after His first miracle/sign.
    - Capernaum was a short walk… 12miles or so…he was probably going home.
  1. This after all was Jesus first Passover since beginning His ministry and there was God’s honor involved. This is the same reason that

He will do it again when He goes into Jerusalem to celebrate His last Passover which would become the Lord’s Supper.

* 1. Jesus “went up to Jerusalem” because Capernaum (which was located on the Sea of Galilee) was 696 feet below sea level and Jerusalem was 2,600 feet above sea level. “Went up”= 3296 feet the road climbed=bed from Capernaum to Jerusalem.
  2. So it seems that this did occur early in Jesus ministry AS WELL AS later when the Synoptics record it.
  3. Also knowing people as we do, as Jesus will point out later, we know exactly what these money-changers did the moment Jesus was gone…set up shop again! That is once the pandemonium settled down! So a second cleansing would have been as necessary as the first.

1. What was the problem with all of this “doing business”?
   1. It was being done in the Temple…had it been done outside the

Temple Jesus may not have handled the situation the way He did.

* 1. There were the sellers of animals:
  + People were after all required to bring sacrifices at Passover. They were required by Levitical law to bring certain sacrifices based on their economic situation.
  + But instead they were choosing to purchase them at the temple…convenience…capitalism… at its worst. This was against God’s law…but the leaders settled for convenience and opportunity than the law…justifying themselves by providing a needed service for the people’s sake…of course.

(4) Then there were the money changers-

• Because the Temple tax had to be paid at this time as well…

* The Temple treasurers were very particular about the coinage used. The currency had to be minted from the purest silver.
* No coins with Roman images could be taken into the Temple treasury.
* So they exchanged Roman currency for Tyrian silver, the currency of the nearby coastal city of Tyre.
  + There were a number of different types of currency in Israel and most were very impure.
  + So money changers seeing a business opportunity set up shop to exchange local currencies with the currency of the temple and of course, made a hefty commission in doing so…some have

found records that they charged as much as 12% commission on the exchange…also you could shop exchange rates…

* + This, of course, hurt the poorest pilgrims among them and set brothers in opposition to brothers which was against God’s law.
  + On top of this, some of the Priests…specifically the High Priest often got a cut from these commissions as well to add to their personal wealth.
    - 1. Prior to this time all of this was set up across the Kidron Valley on the Mount of Olives away from the Temple.
      2. During Jesus’ time it was all in the court of the Gentiles which had originally been established as a place of worship and prayer for the Gentile converts to Judaism.

d. Was Jesus’ anger justified?

(1) Yes! Nothing seems to have called from Him such a marked display of holy wrath as the gross irreverence which the priests permitted in the temple…those who would boast of their zeal for God's law.

* + He had watched all His growing up years as the temple courts had been turned into nothing more than a market atmosphere… chaotic, loud, and unforgiving.

For years as a young boy He watched the sacrilege.

* + Now the time was right…the time of “silence” was past…with the coming of John the Baptist…the Word of the LORD is once again heard loud and clear…after all…

1. This is His Father’s house- Jesus is recorded as saying in Luke 2:49 as a 12 year old- “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know

that I must be in my Father’s house?”

1. As it was His Father’s house…there were certain “house rules” that applied…first and foremost as the prophet Isaiah said, “And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to Him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be His servants, everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it, and holds fast my covenant—these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. The LORD God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, declares, ‘I will gather yet others to Him besides those already gathered.” (Is. 56:6-8)
2. I think it is interesting…if He was so enraged...out of control…as some try to paint Jesus here…why doesn’t He just dumped over the bird cages and set the birds free?
   * He is not necessarily against the commerce…especially the pigeon sellers that were there for the poorest…He was against this being done in the Temple and He is against brother taking advantage of brother.
   * He also takes the time to make a whip to run off all the livestock.
   * He is righteously indignant /angry but not out of control and not without being just since this is His Father’s house of worship. And God had set up laws and regulations around what was to be done there.
   * John 2:16-17- “’Take these things away; do not make my

Father’s house a house of trade.’

e. How should the statement, Zeal for your house will consume me.’ affect us today? What are some ways the house of God is abused in our day and age?

“His disciples remembered that it was written, ‘Zeal for your house will consume me.’” This was King David

speaking/prophesying in Psalm 69:9. This was absolutely fulfilled in Jesus…as the disciples remembered.

1. Our churches are not constructed after a divine decree.
2. Nor have the things of the church been set aside as were the things God had prescribed in His Temple.
3. But they are places where God's word is read, and where

Christ is especially present.

* + The man who professes to worship in them should surely behave with reverence and respect.

The words which Solomon wrote by the Holy Spirit are

applicable to all times, "Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. To draw near to listen is better than to offer the sacrifice of fools, for they do not know that they are doing evil." (Eccles. 5:1.)

1. We in America have lost the awe of worship…rather we seek to be entertained. God has established how we are to worship…and the attitude that He expects His people to exhibit in worship is one of reverence, solemnity and celebration when appropriate.
2. Do not have too many distractions in worship…
   * Just to be clear children are not and should never be considered distractions they are members of the covenant community that are to be taught what God demands in worship.
   * But anything else that distracts should be set aside…that is why preparation for worship is so essential especially for families.
   * Phones instead of Bibles…when an alert comes up you are distracted. I know …getting personal here!
3. The Reformers dealt with the distractions the Roman Catholic

Church had set up…some went too far… taking everything out of

the sanctuary… but it was a hallmark to have less distractions in worship only those things that aided worship and were not additions to what God had prescribed.

2. What do we see in verses 18-22?

a. What is going on and how does Jesus answer the religious leaders?

When the Jews asked for a sign…what they were really asking is by what…or by whose authority do you do these things? Give us some indication of your authority to declare improper what we have permitted.

(2)They knew that both Jesus and John the Baptist were acting as the prophets of old…so they sought authentication…and the best way would be by a sign or miracle…in their minds.

* 1. This was of course, a test, they had no intention of following Jesus just as they had had no intention to follow John the Baptist.
  2. Jesus honored their request but maybe not in the way they intended. The “sign” he offers was still in the future. “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” (5) Of course they took what He said

literally.

* + - They knew that Herod the Great, who had reigned from 40 BC till maybe 2 BC began the Temple expansion program around 20 BC hoping to muster support for his reign of terror.
    - Infrastructure programs make people happy!

•

(1)

* + - Oh with this dating this… then probably dates this incident between AD 26-28. Since the project was not completed until AD 64… (sounds like a Texas construction project).
    - Sooo…how could anyone possibly rebuild the Temple in just 3 days when they had already been working on it for 46 years and it wasn’t complete?

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(1)

You have to ask yourself…did they believe in miracles or not…sounds like NOT!

(6) Jesus said, “I will raise it up.” And He did!...Remembers Jesus said in John 10:17-18- “For this reason the Father loves me, because I

•

(1)

lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it

## from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge

I have received from my Father.”

b. What do we know that the disciples who heard this conversation believed at the time? Vs. 22!

•

(1)

They weren’t even sure who He was yet. They didn’t understand.

They probably were thinking, “Now He has really done it!”

1. After His resurrection they understood…
   * + John records this after Jesus’ resurrection…some 60 years after…

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(1)

* + - Until the Holy Spirit came upon them in full their eyes were not completely opened to the truth.
  + We have Nathanael calling Jesus the Son of God but so was

King David.

* + We even see and hear Peter calling Jesus the Messiah, the son of the living God…so there was some knowledge but to what

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(1) depth since we see Peter deny Him and the disciples leave Him, as had been prophesied.

* + - * After the fact…John says that the disciples “remembered what He said…” and then “they believed the Scriptures” like Ps. 16:10- “For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption.” And “the word that Jesus had spoken.” After the fact…some time

later…they believed what

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(1)

Jesus had spoken…after His resurrection when the Spirit filled them, then they knew all that they didn’t before.

* + - * This was perhaps the FIRST direct word given by Jesus concerning His death and resurrection and there, of course, would be a lot more that the disciples didn’t understand until AFTER His death and resurrection.

1. The actual HERODIAN temple would in fact be destroyed by the

Romans in AD 70…and

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(1)

* Because of that there are many Christians today waiting for the temple to be rebuilt as a sign of the end of the age.
* But they all fail to understand that the temple already has been rebuilt, He is Risen…Christ is God’s temple…and He already dwells in the midst of His people through His Holy Spirit…
* John will speak again of this in Rev. 21:22 -“And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the

Lamb.” And of course, this rebuilding took place at His resurrection after 3 Jewish days in the ground.

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* 1. This IS the second sign John highlights…even though it is one that won’t

come to fruition until a couple of years later.

* 1. Acts 17:30-31- “The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now He commands all people everywhere to repent, because He has fixed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom He has appointed; and of this He has given assurance to all by raising Him from the dead.”

c. A long this line, why do people still search for signs? And why doesn’t God

give them anymore? Christ is the final sign…His resurrection and then

His coming again!

*3.* So with all that we have seen thus far what is going on in verses 23-25?

a. Why wouldn’t He entrust or “commit Himself” to those who, *“believed in His name.”?*

(1) He knows things about the hearts of men that we do not.  He knew that they were not to be depended on.

* He knew they were astonished at the signs which they saw Him work.
* He knew they may have been intellectually convinced that He was the Messiah, whom they had long expected. But they were not disciples. He knew …He knows those who are His. He knows His sheep…John 10:14-“I am the good shepherd. I know my

own…”

* They simply believed because of the signs they saw that He was doing…not because of who He is!
  1. Jesus saw clearly, even if others around Him did not. Andrew, and Peter, and John, and Philip, and Nathanael, perhaps wondered why their Master did not receive these seeming believers with open arms. But they could only judge things by the outward appearance. Their Master could read hearts. "He knew what was in man."
  2. Jesus knew all men just like God in I Samuel 16. He saw…He sees…He knows… beyond appearances to the very heart. He knows the evil...the vileness in men’s hearts. Their hearts

were not right in the sight of God, though their feelings were excited.

(4)The time would even come when His disciples…those who had been called and followed Him would turn their back on Him. He knew men cannot be trusted completely. He is the One after all who told

Jeremiah 17:5- “Thus says the LORD; ‘Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the LORD.”

(5) From J.C. Ryle- The truth now before us, is one which ought to make hypocrites and false professor’s tremble. They may deceive men, but they cannot deceive Christ. They may wear a cloak of religion, and appear, like whited sepulchers, beautiful in the eyes of men. But the eyes of Christ see their inward rottenness, and the judgment of Christ will surely overtake them, except they repent. Christ is already reading their hearts, and as He reads He is displeased. They are known in heaven, if they are not known on earth, and they will be known at length to their shame, before assembled worlds, if they die unchanged. It is written, "I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are

dead. “(Rev. 3:1.)

b. A brief discussion was also had on the word “entrusted” as to what that means.

* + - * 1. First, of all we are told to trust in the LORD.
        2. The King is not required to trust us…in fact he knows better as this passage clearly states.
        3. Jesus seems to be more focused on saying He did not entrust His message to these people.

He did not need their validation or their testimony to prove He is who He says He is.

* + - * 1. He does entrust to us His message to give to others…he does entrust to us the stewardship that He has given us on His behalf and for His glory…but this is our

calling and purpose and our act of obedience…as His servants and slaves we don’t have the option not to do as He says…so the word “entrust” does not mean the same to

Him as it is used by us.

* 1. This should cause us pause… we should check ourselves or examine ourselves…are we believing in Him for the wrong reasons, when we believe? We believe…help our unbelief!”
  2. Interesting side note: John chapter 2 illustrates how

Jesus’ glory and signs was seen publically and convincingly among the masses from the very beginning of His ministry. And it shows that John the Baptist was truthful in all that he had said about Jesus…and there is more to come.

Lessons in the Gospel of John November

10, 2021

* + - 1. Prayer
      2. Review (1) Concerning the cleansing of the Temple, what were some of the reasons that Jesus was justified in doing what He did?

1. Question: how many laws of God can you think of that the priests broke by allowing selling in the Courts of the Gentiles? But it was for the convenience of the people… so it’s okay right?

1. What significance are these first 2 chapters for us today?

E. John 3:1-21 (1) What things do we know about Nicodemus from this text and why are they important?

a. A Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin- a member of the ruling council.

As a Pharisee, he was probably the son of a Pharisee, whose pedigree would have been able to be traced…like a line of royalty.

Heritage/pedigree was extremely important to the Jew…your tribe and your families standing in the tribe could be a point of pride or extreme prejudice. If you were born into a priestly family, you became a priest…a carpenter’s family, a carpenter; a Pharisee’s family, a

Pharisee.

As a member of the ruling class he was considered by John and others as part of the elite of the Jewish society.

Not all Pharisees were elevated to the

Sanhedrin.

* + - * 1. He was from the capital city of Jerusalem.
        2. He is curious and cautious about this “teacher from God” so he “came to Jesus by night” so as not to be seen.

He and others knew this about Him but he was even then struggling to BELIEVE that Jesus is the Messiah…The Son of God.

Like many he struggled with what he knew and what he believed.

What Jesus said to him was different than what he had been taught all his life…and yet there was “something” about Jesus.

R.C. said something in one of the recent broadcasts that I had never thought of before.

Jesus would have been an enigma since He perfectly loved and honored His Father...since there was no sin in Him…He would have grown spiritually in different ways than any other man in history. Yes…He is divine. But he said

that because of his perfectly loving His Father and perfectly following His Father’s will everything that came from His mouth would have been without prejudice or stain and so naturally what He said and did would causes people to “wonder” or “marvel” about Him…making even the devotes Jew whose heart is being nudged want to kow more.

(5)He had been taught that he had to work hard in keeping the Law, the traditions of the elders and hope in his own righteousness that God would credit this to his account so that he might enter the kingdom of God and that is not what he is hearing from Jesus.

1. He being “the teacher of Israel”- means he was also one of the leading theologians of the day.
2. He was a pious man, a man of character/integrity…sincere…not a sinner in the same way as the others that came to Jesus.
3. He addresses Jesus with respect- “Rabbi…”
4. He defends Jesus in John 7:50-51-“ Nicodemus, who had gone to Him before, and who was one of them, said to them, ‘Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?’ They replied, ‘Are you from Galilee too? Search and see that no prophet arises from

Galilee.’”

* + - Anyone from Galilee was looked down on especially by the ruling class. They were viewed as uneducated, of questionable ancestry and a problem…your basic rednecks of Israel.
    - A bonafide prophet would never come from there.
    - He doesn’t say that he is a follower at this time, but we don’t see him agreeing with his colleagues either.

1. After Jesus’ death we see him again bringing 75 to 100 pounds of spice- myrrh and aloe to anoint

Jesus’ body- John 19:3942“Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.” Him and Joseph of Arimathea, also an elite

in the culture but by this time a follower of Jesus, though a secret one, wrapped and buried Jesus body so the assumption is made that Nicodemus is also a believer by this time.

f. We must also remember our Lord's reception of Nicodemus. He did not "break the bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax," (Matt. 12:20) which He saw before Him. He welcomed him …this conversation was not like any of the others with Pharisees and scribes.

* 1. Now let’s focus on verse 1-13. As we have seen, as one of the leading theologians of his time, he makes this statement; *“Rabbi,*

*we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.”* What is he actually saying?

* + 1. He is actually asking the question …has everything I/we have been taught wrong?
    2. He and others recognize something different about Jesus. Could He be the One…the Messiah? But He is not going about bringing in the kingdom as they had been taught he would.
    3. He affirms theologically that he and others know that Jesus’ signs are authentic…for only someone from God could do what He had been doing.
    4. He wasn’t necessarily, personally, confessing Christ as the Messiah, King or God incarnate…but he was stating a theological fact that he and others believed…Jesus must have come from God.
    5. Nicodemus was approaching Jesus curiously knowing some things…but not knowing the important thing.

* 1. So how does Jesus respond to Nicodemus’ statement?

a. At the end of Chapter 2 we are told that Jesus knows what is in men…He knows the hearts of men…so He knows what each man needs

to hear, He knew how they needed to be challenged or shown grace…He knew what was in the hearts of men.

* + - * 1. The rich young ruler needed to be challenged in the area of wealth and faith. (Luke 18:18-23).
        2. The woman caught in adultery needed to hear that she was not condemned (John 8:1-11).
        3. Simon the Pharisee needed to hear that he too was a sinner (Luke 7:36-49).
        4. Nicodemus needed to hear that he needed to be born again.

b. Jesus is about to turn all that Nicodemus knows on its head.

(1) Jesus begins with, “Truly, truly, I say to

## you…”

* Telling him clearly …one teacher to another…that what He is about to say is truly important…of 1st importance…and it is absolutely true.
* 3 times Jesus will say this to Nicodemus in the course of this short conversation:

(vs. 3,5,11) ◼ For emphasis to be sure.

* For clarity.
* But also to assert complete truthfulness about what He is saying to this one that he is showing such patience with… because He knows what is in each man’s heart.

(2) So he would have been listening intently.

• Next Jesus says, “…unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of

God.”

* The kingdom of God = heaven, the place where the reign of God is

made manifest. In the Jewish mind that was an earthly kingdom on this earth dealing with all the oppressors of Israel. Jesus would later say that His kingdom was not

of this world. His physical kingdom comes in the New Earth.

* And He is saying “only those” who are members of God’s family, of His church, His people those who have been converted, those only who are

in Christ…only those will see the kingdom.

* By using the Greek word “unless”, this signals a conditional clause.

Something must happen BEFORE something else can occur. In this case a new birth must happen then one can see and enter the kingdom of

God.

• “Born again”- or “born from above” either would have registered the same response from Nicodemus since all children came from God.

* + It would have gone without saying to Jesus that all men have a physical birth and that that alone would not be enough to get in the kingdom of God…even the Pharisees would have agreed since being born a Jew and perfectly keeping the Law was required technically…even though many believed they could get into heaven simply by being circumcised.
  + So with that being a given, Jesus is talking about a spiritual rebirth…something new to

Nicodemus’s ears.

* + Reborn…remade…gran ted a new life from above was what Jesus had in mind…nothing that man could or would do, could ever get them into the

kingdom of God…it must

be granted from above in the same way God granted /ordained the physical birth of a man. To afform that… here is a bit of hyperbole from John the Baptist- Matt. 3:9“And do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.”

* + “born” actually here is the same word translated other places about

Jesus as “begotten”…as in the

phrase from the Nicene creed…begotten, not made… born of the

Father’s will but not

physically made by Him (just like in physical birth…God ordains the birth to occur but then the woman carries and bares the child) and He exists with the Father in heaven forever as in “from above”...born from the Spirit”

*4.* Given his natural blindness at this time, his next question is not shocking. *“Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?”* How does Jesus add to his previous assertion after this?

1. Jesus knows Nicodemus is being sarcastic in his response to Jesus’ assertion about being born again, because Nicodemus is smart and would know Jesus was not suggesting the absurdity that Nicodemus suggests. But Nicodemus…who wants to understand and learn more …is caught off guard with what Jesus is suggesting

which is different…completely different than anything he had ever learned.

1. I am not saying that Nicodemus is being disrespectful to Jesus…but he is trying to process this through an unbiblical grid….he was beginning to recognize that to believe Jesus is to re-think everything that all the trusted teachers had taught him and all that he had sought out and believed and taught to others. Listening

to what Jesus was saying was challenging him to his core…because he knew He was from God.

1. Especially with the next thing Jesus says, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.” Again, building on what he already said…

“Truly, Truly”… or Of first importance,

* + 1. Unless – there is that conditional statement again.

* + 1. One is born of water and the

Spirit-

* + - Nicodemus would have known about what Jesus was referring to…he would have heard Ezekiel’s words, in his mind, which told the people they needed 2 things… purification and resurrection by the power of God through the

Spirit.

* + - So Ezekiel and Jesus were saying as long as people are impure and spiritually dead they can never enter the kingdom of God.
  + It is something the Nicodemus would have understood. To enter into the kingdom of God a person must be cleansed and then raised by the power of the Holy Spirit.
  + But this is new because he had been taught to enter the kingdom you had to be a Jew

(circumcised/cleansed ) and keep the Law and the Spirit of God will let you in.

 Some have said that this deals with John’s baptism and the work of the Spirit through Christ...which if you link that with the Ezekiel and other OT teachings since John’s baptism was a ceremonial washing/purification Jesus could have had that in mind…but I see no indication that Nicodemus would have even been thinking of John the Baptist.

d. Jesus goes on and says, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”

(1) Why are you struggling with this? Nicodemus was set back because this went against all that he had been taught AND all that he has taught to others as a theologian and teacher of the Law.

* Flesh cannot produce redemption…works will not produce redemption…it never has…and yet that is what they taught.
* “Flesh” as Jesus used the term, has always pointed to the whole nature of man including reason and instincts. Paul also says in

## Gal. 2:16- “…by works of the law no one (shall no flesh) will

be justified.”

• The Jews thought because they were circumcised children of Abraham that they were numbered among God’s people automatically and by virtue of that and keeping the law as best they could they would enter into the kingdom.

1. Jesus is telling him all that he believes is wrong. You have to wonder why ...if the Spirit hadn’t been working on him… he would stand in there with Jesus and take this. The simple truth is that he knew the Scriptures and somewhere inside he knew Jesus was interpreting them correctly…but everything in him wanted to stand

up so he says…

1. Jesus says, “Why are you marveling about what I said about being born again…born from above …when you will affirm that God is sovereign overall and controls all things over all so why would the spirit of God control a man’s salvation?”
2. But Jesus’ argument has not sold him yet…or maybe he just wants more information to take back to the “others”.

e. “Nicodemus said to him, ‘How can these things be?’” Jesus comes back at him with, “Jesus answered him, ‘Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things? Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.”

1. How can you call yourself a teacher of Israel and not know this stuff?
2. I am telling you things that any knowledgeable teacher of God’s Word should know.
3. Truly Truly…I have been clear to you about why I am here and what the Scriptures say…I have even used earthly examples and you still marvel…at the absolute truth that I am telling you.
4. This was typical of those who Jesus met since most looked at what they knew from physical/secular (religious) level and Jesus spoke from a spiritual level.
   * The Jews expected the Messiah to rescue them from the Romans…or whatever oppressor was in power when He came and reestablished an even greater kingdom than David. Even

Jesus’ disciples didn’t get it until later.

* + If this was not on the table then that brought into question everything else as far as the Jew was concerned.
    1. Jesus makes clear to this theologian that he has looked at the Scriptures wrong and that they in fact point to Him…the One who would make the final atonement for His people….which is what the Word has pointed to since Genesis 3:15. Not an earthly kingdom.
    2. Jesus says here that He has the authority to speak as He does, for He knew them and had seen them having had been in the presence of God in heaven.

* + - * 1. How do you react when what you have been taught…what you believe for a while… has been challenged and proven to be false?

* + - * 1. People still react to this stuff negatively today.
        2. Most people don’t want to believe that there are absolute requirements that must be met before a person can go to heaven. They want to believe that if they are good by their own standards they are covered.
        3. And they want this to be by choice…their choice…not that one must be changed by God first, before he can even want to respond to God. God mat seek to change a person but it is still up to us to let Him in all the way.
        4. That man’s natural tendency is to flee from God unless they have been born from above.
        5. The good news for Nicodemus is that he stays in there…for this isn’t all of the changes he will hear about. Jesus is investing heavily in His understanding…Jesus knows this man’s heart and he knows that Nicodemus is His even if Nicodemus is not convinced yet.

7. As we come to verses 14-19…

* + - 1. The first thing we need to remember is that this is all part of the same conversation about how one is born again with Nicodemus.
      2. One is born again or born from above when God grants that spiritual rebirth in the same way He granted the physical birth in the first place.
      3. So His argument in vs. 14 and 15 begins with a very familiar event,

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life.”

* + - 1. What is Jesus emphasizing with this example from

Scripture?

* + 1. He is basically asking as he speaks, When Moses lifted up the serpent (Numbers 21:4-9) is that what delivered the people? Did Moses deliver them? Did they deliver themselves? Nicodemus knows the answer!
    2. No; on all counts. Only those who believed God would deliver them, came to the raised up serpent and were delivered by God. They were drawn by God to believe and only those who believed came and were healed. That belief is by grace alone.
    3. God freely by His grace gave them the “sign”. God’s Spirit moved and enlivened lives to be drawn to the sign. And as God used the serpent He “must” (divine initiative…covenantal promise) use the uplifted… crucified Jesus, the Son of Man to save and give eternal life.
    4. The sign through Moses only staved off death for the moment with no promise of eternity…with

Jesus eternity is secure.

e. It is this thought that brings us to verse 16-18… *“the end-zone verse”…* perhaps the most misused verse Bible…probably not…but it does seem that way. But we must stay with the context so we are looking at vs 1618 and see how it explains Jesus’ point in verses 14-15. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send

His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.” (1) How does the context explain this verse?

* Those who have been born again…only and believe in Jesus Christ alone…this is a very exclusive verse and it is a verse about our justification.
* Born from above…are those who can believe in Him and receive eternal life. Just like He sent the serpent into the camp to heal those who believed.
* God didn’t send the sign into the camp to condemn…though it did have that to those who didn’t believe…but He sent the sign into the camp so that the people would be healed.
* This is not about everybody…only those who have been born again…the context is clear.
  + Only those will benefit from Christ being raised up…going to the Cross paying the debt we owe that we can never pay.
  + This is yet the 2nd time in a short time that Jesus has referenced His death that will secure salvation for His own.
  + This is sort of like “God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life?” Well…maybe He does and maybe He doesn’t. For those who are His is certainly has a deep love and a wonderful plan for our life….BUT for those who don’t…well, they will be condemned as the next verse says.

 This is not much different from what Jesus says later, “I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. No one comes to the father except through me.”

* + 1. Given what He has said in verses 1-18, how are we born again?

Because Jesus paid the price…He went to the cross on behalf of His people. Because of the Godheads actions on behalf of His elect we can be born again.

* + 1. So with this in mind then who naturally is the “world” that is spoken of here?
* His children that are from all over the world.
* Every nation tongue and tribe...
  + It is His children from here in the world that He loves with salvific distinction…while He showers His grace upon the elect and

nonelect…

* + But His true love is only for His own children.
  + As parents we know how that works. We can care for and watch out for the neighborhood children but we love our children and do those things for them exclusively sometimes.
* B.B. Warfield (late 19th Cent to early 20th) spoke to how his generation “loved” this verse as well,

“Strange as it may sound, it is true, that

many…perhaps the majority…of those who feed their souls on this great declaration, seem to have trained themselves to think, when it falls upon their ears, in the first instance at least, not so much of how great…how immeasurably great the love of God is, but rather of how great the world

is.”

* Jesus use of the Word “whoever” … “whoever believes, whoever believes, whoever believes, whoever does what is true” (vs. 15, 16,18, 21) points back to Jesus conversation with Nicodemus “unless a man be born again.” It is not his social status…it is not how well he keeps the

Law…whoever believes will not perish.

We are not good enough to enter in…but belief in Christ is.

* It is only through the Son that those who are called are not condemned.

8. Then he continues proving his point in verses 19-21.

1. Those who are in darkness won’t come to the light because they don’t want their works exposed…just like those who didn’t come to the serpent and perished.
2. Those who come into the light…those who are drawn into the light…those who came to the serpent and believed…their works their healing was clearly seem by all.

1. Jesus came to call men out of darkness into the light. (Is. 9:2; I Peter 2:9). To deliver them from the domain of darkness (Col. 1:13). Whoever follows

Jesus will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life. (John 8:10).

1. So only in Christ are any saved! Only in Christ doing the works that God ordained from before the beginning those works will be deemed acceptable as works of faith …faith fist then good works…I before the face of God…granting us a free conscience…nothing to hide.

Lessons in the Gospel of John November

17, 2021

1. Prayer
2. Review
   1. What were some of the things we learned about Nicodemus last time?

* 1. What were some of the reasons why Jesus showed him such great respect and understanding?

* 1. What basic doctrine was Jesus teaching that was “new” to Nicodemus? A doctrine that shouldn’t have been “new” to him?

a. As “a teacher of Israel” Nicodemus should have known the meaning behind the Word of God’s grace and mercy for all people who would believe.

* + - * 1. As John talked about in Chapter one grace is the equation that Nicodemus and so many others have missed.
        2. Our first birth was an expression of God’s grace, for we are wondrously made in His image. But our second birth…being born again…born from above a second time… inaugurated the neverending beginning of living out of the fullness of your grace— grace upon grace upon more grace.

The grace of being sealed and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, who is constantly telling us we are Abba’s children, destined for the Day we will be like you.

The grace of no fear of dying and true citizenship in the kingdom of God; and

at your return, co-heirship with you of all things.

* + 1. But because of their prejudice the Jews did not really accept the Gentiles even those who came to their understanding of things. Because they had deviated so far from the Word they had changed its original meanings to suit their unbelieving minds.
    2. Even John the Baptist pointed out their shortsighted sinful belief…

Matt. 3:9-“And do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham.”

* + - 1. As we have said…on the surface, by the regular Jewish observer…John’s baptism would have been seen as one of those rare acts of calling the people to be consecrated/purified because of some event…before the first Passover in the wilderness after Egypt…entering the Promised Land…the Temple being

dedicated…

* + - 1. But Luke tells us that John was calling the people…the Jews to a “baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins”

(Luke 3) that is the baptism of preparation that had been placed on Gentiles converts to

Judaism.

* + - * + Gentiles were required to believe in

Israel’s God as displayed in the Pentateuch.

* + - * + Gentiles were then required to be circumcised as the Law prescribes for all who come into the covenant community.
        + Then they had to be baptized/thoroughly cleansed…well because they were Gentiles hence they were “dirtier” than the Jews.
* This requirement had not been instituted by God.
* This requirement was issued by the priests to insure godliness from outsiders.
* But really it just simply revealed the Jewish leadership continual prejudice of the Gentiles as not having been the called ones.

(3) Nicodemus as being in the ruling class of the Pharisees would have heard of John’s preaching and he would have been aware of the secondary message telling all Jews they are not clean enough …just like the Gentiles...but that they needed the Baptism of the Holy

Spirit that the Messiah would bring. Nicodemus being a “teacher of Israel” would have understood the nuanced message that was really the “old” message.

d. Salvation from God and by God through the work of the Spirit resonated with Nicodemus as Christ recalls for Him even from the prophets like Ezekiel 36:25-26- “I will sprinkle clean water on you,

and you shall be clean from fall your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.”

* 1. So Ezekiel and Jesus were saying as long as people are impure and spiritually dead they can never enter the kingdom of God.
  2. It is something the Nicodemus would have understood. To enter into the kingdom of God a person must be cleansed and then raised by the power of the Holy Spirit.
  3. But this is new because he had been taught to enter the kingdom you had to be a Jew (circumcised/cleansed) and keep the Law and the

Spirit of God will let you in.

1. Interlude: Before we move on: 1. The first thing we need to remember is that this is all part of the same conversation about how one is born again with

Nicodemus.

2. One is born again or born from above when God grants that spiritual rebirth in the same way He granted the physical birth in the first place.

1. Chapter 3 continued:14-18
2. So the next stage of Jesus’ argument is in vs. 14 and 15 begins with a very familiar event, “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him may have

eternal life.”

1. What is Jesus emphasizing in verses 14-15 with this example from Scripture?
   1. He is basically asking as he speaks, When Moses lifted up the serpent (Numbers 21:4-9) is that what delivered the people? Did Moses deliver them? Did they deliver themselves? Nicodemus knows the answer!

* 1. No; on all counts. Only those who believed God would deliver them, came to the raised up serpent and were delivered by God. They were drawn by God to believe and only those who believed came and were healed. That belief is by grace alone.
  2. God freely by His grace gave them the “sign”. God’s Spirit moved and enlivened lives to be drawn to the sign. And as God used the serpent He “must” (divine initiative…covenantal promise) use the uplifted… crucified Jesus, the Son of Man to save and give eternal life.
  3. The sign through Moses only staved off death for the moment with no promise of eternity…with Jesus eternity is secure.

1. It is this thought that brings us to verse 16-18… *“the end-zone verse”…* perhaps the most misused verse Bible…probably not…but it does seem that way. But we must stay with the context so we are looking at vs 1618 and see how it explains Jesus’ point in verses 14-15. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.” (4) How does the context explain this verse?
   * + Those who have been born again…only and believe in Jesus Christ alone…this is a very exclusive verse and it is a verse about our justification.

Born from above…are those who can believe in Him and receive eternal life. Just like He sent the serpent into the camp to heal those who believed.

* + - God didn’t send the sign into the camp to condemn…though it did have that to those who didn’t believe…but He sent the sign into the camp so that the people would be healed.
    - This is not about everybody…only those who

have been born again…the context is clear.

* + Only those will benefit from Christ being raised up…going to the Cross paying the debt we owe that we can never pay.
  + This is yet the 2nd time in a short time that Jesus has referenced His death that will secure salvation for His own.
  + This is sort of like “God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life?” Well…maybe He does and maybe He doesn’t. For those who are His is certainly has a deep love and a wonderful plan for our life….BUT for those who don’t…well, they will be condemned as the next verse says.
* This is not much different from what Jesus says later, “I am the Way, and the Truth, and the

Life. No one comes to the father except through me.”

(5) Given what He has said in verses 1-18, how are we born again?

Because Jesus paid the price…He went to the cross on behalf of His people.

* Because of the Godheads actions on behalf of His elect we can be born again.

(6) So with this in mind then who naturally is the “world” that is spoken of here?

* His children that are from all over the world.
* Every nation tongue and tribe...
  + it is His children from here in the world that He loves with salvific distinction…while He showers His grace upon the elect and non-elect…
  + but His true love is only for His own children.
  + As parents we know how that works. We can care for and watch out for the neighborhood children but we love our children and do those things for them exclusively sometimes.
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it is true, that many…perhaps the majority…of those who feed their souls on this great declaration, seem to have trained themselves to think, when it falls upon their ears, in the first instance at least, not so much of how great…how immeasurably great the love of God is, but rather of how great the world is.”

Jesus use of the Word “whoever” … “whoever believes, whoever believes, whoever believes, whoever does what is true” (vs. 15, 16,18, 21) points back to Jesus conversation with Nicodemus “unless a man be born again.” It is not his social status…it is not how well he keeps the Law…whoever believes will not perish. We are not good enough to enter in…but belief in

Christ is.

• It is only through the Son that those who are called are not condemned.

1. Then he continues proving his point in verses 19-21.
   1. Those who are in darkness won’t come to the light because they don’t want their works exposed…just like those who didn’t come to the serpent and perished.
   2. Those who come into the light…those who are drawn into the light…those who came to the serpent and believed…their works… their healing was clearly seen by all.
   3. Jesus came to call men out of darkness into the light. (Is. 9:2; I Peter 2:9). To deliver them from the domain of darkness (Col. 1:13).

Whoever follows Jesus will not walk in darkness but will have the light of life. (John 8:10).

* 1. So only in Christ are any saved! Only in Christ doing the works that

God ordained from before the beginning those works will be deemed

acceptable as works of faith …faith first then good works… before the face of God…granting us a free conscience…nothing to hide.

1. Chapter 3:22-4:3-

a. What do we learn from verses 22-24?

(1)“After this…”

* after the cleansing of the temple…and
* after His theological discussion with Nicodemus.
* To remind us that this is still early in Jesus ministry…even before John is imprisoned.
* And they went into the countryside.

(2)“He remained there with them…” or more colloquially “He spent time with them” -equals

* He did work with His disciples there…that is preaching to the countryside to the towns and hamlets in the areas as well…since there was baptizing going on.
* The word can sometimes carry the meaning of “conversed with” so it would be saying that He was teaching/ “discipling” the disciples …conversing with His disciples about what He had just taught Nicodemus…teaching them what God words really meant.
* This is an example for us today to use…it is the one that He gives the disciples after His resurrection just before His ascension, Matt. 28:19-20- “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the

end of the age.”

* Jesus is saying… “Disciple them in the truth and when they respond to God’s changing their heart baptize them and then disciple them some more for a discipled disciple is a strong warrior of the Lord.”
* Interesting that the average Christians “discipleship” is only done on Sunday morning in the service.
* To be a disciple of the Lord is to be one who seeks to be with the Lord and His people learning as often as possible.

(3)“…was baptizing.” The language could sound as if Jesus was baptizing except for John 4:2-“…although Jesus Himself did not baptize, but only His disciples.”

(4)“John was also baptizing…” this will set us up for the next section.

(5)“…for John had not yet been put into prison.”-The

Synoptic Gospels begin Jesus’ ministry AFTER John is in prison. So why is this here?

* To give us a glimpse of the old transitioning to the new…we will see that more people are coming to Jesus than to John.
* This is John the Apostle’s setting us up for yet another event that will lead to the last words spoken by John the Baptist and John wants us to remember that John the Baptist testified to Jesus right up to the end.

b. Now what is going on in verses 25-30?

(1) Vs. 25-26 Controversy over baptism…even then. Imagine that!  John the Baptist was doing the baptism…

* + The rite of purification for Gentile converts to Judaism…
  + And it could have been seen as well as the rite of consecration by some just as it had always been…
  + He was seen as a “prophet” so this might be expected as one seeking to prepare the Jewish people for the Messiah’s

coming…

* + AND…as it had become custom to baptize Gentile converts…
  + BUT probably with a bit of a twist concerning the Lamb of

God…so there is controversy in the eyes of this Jew.  Or was it a controversy between the types of baptism John was doing and the baptism that Jesus’ disciples were doing? Or maybe it was the fact the Jesus wasn’t actually baptizing? ◼ Jesus was probably teaching about the need for inner cleansing not just outer cleansing which would have seemed strange to John’s disciples.

* + The conversation seems to gravitate towards the difference between the John and Jesus.
  + But also, pridefully they are saying, Jesus is getting more people… “all are going to Him.”
  + It is interesting to me that knowing who John said Jesus was they still were troubled...in their own words they said

jealously, “Rabbi, he who was with you across the Jordan, to

whom you bore witness…look he is baptizing and all are going to Him.”

* + Giving them the benefit of the doubt they may have just been seeking clarification concerning Jesus…but they may have been worried as well.
  + These men are not that different from us…when we get upstaged. Nothing blows a Christian witness quicker than jealousy and spirit of partiality among Christians. Remember

I Cor. 1 where people were pitting one pastor against the other.

*(2)* What does John’s response in verses 27-30 communicate to them and to us 2000 years later?

• Unlike John’s disciples, John knew himself and what he had been called for… so he was not envious of Jesus. “A person

cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven.” (vs. 27a)

* Why do you question this, what do we have that we have not been given from heaven?
* John is saying to them I have never claimed anything more than that I am a messenger the forerunner of the King to announce the coming of the Lord…and He has come. “You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, ‘I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him.’” (vs. 28) Which clearly states my role is a diminishing role even before he actually says it.

• John seems happy for Jesus’ rise in popularity…the King is here…

* He likens himself to the friend of the Bridegroom who would have been seen doing all the work on behalf of the

Bridegroom before the Bridegroom comes…

* Once the Bridegroom is there his job becomes less and less public and the actual job has an ending…but he is still the

Bridegroom’s friend. “The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands

and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom’s voice.

## Therefore this joy of mine is now complete.”(Vs. 29)

◼ As an aside the “friend” doesn’t covet the bride...the friend is happy for the Bridegroom and the bride…so John is not at all jealous but joyful.

 John speaks from the heart just so His disciples and all of us will know later, “He must increase, but I must decrease.”- John understands the divine necessity for this and he is happy.

*c.* What is being communicated in verses 31-36 whether this is being said by John the Baptist as some have said…or said by the Apostle John?

(1) He uses one striking expression after another, to convey a correct idea of the majesty of Christ. He speaks of Him as:

* "the bridegroom" of the Church--as "him that comes from above,"
* "him whom God has sent,"
* "him to whom the Spirit is given without measure,"—
* as Him "whom the Father loves,"
* The one into "whose hands all things are given,"-
* The One to believe in who is life everlasting, or to reject whom is eternal ruin.
* Each of these phrases is full of deep meaning, and would supply material for long sermons.
* We should all be so quick to describe Jesus this way…it has been said often, “We can never make too much of Christ.”
  1. The wording seeming to be similar to what John has said before-as well as what Jesus said of Himself to Nicodemus.
  2. Either Johns makes the distinction between Jesus who is from above and man who is of the earth, and the one from earth cannot and will not have preeminence over the one from above. “He who comes from heaven is above all.”
  3. Whoever says it they are saying that Jesus is preeminent and transcendent.

• For he knows what he has seen and what he heard and

He testifies to those thing to His people…but,

“yet no one receives

his testimony. Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to

## this, that God is true.” Similar to Psalm 100:3- “Know that the

LORD, He is God!”

• The apostle John declares what he has said before, John 1:11-12- “He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God…”

1. What Jesus says is true because what He says are the

Words of God.

1. John says that Jesus is also the special object of the Father’s attention.
2. Jesus controls destiny.
3. It is to Jesus that John the Baptists’ disciples… all men must look for salvation unto life otherwise condemnation awaits.
4. Verses 34-35 is yet another overt Trinitarian view of the

Godhead.

By this time the Trinity would have been fully integrated into the Christian mind set so John does not hesitate to speak of this doctrine as truth…as he did at the beginning of the book.

*d.* I included Chapter 4:1-3 because it seems to go with what we have just talked

about.

1. Jesus left that region and went back into Galilee because he was afraid of the Pharisees?
   * Maybe because there was a rule/law among the Jews… “It is not lawful for a disciple to teach the constitutions or sentences of the law, before his master, but he must be 12 miles distant from him, as the camp of Israel. A disciple that teaches before

His master or in the presence of his master is guilty of death.”… sort of a non-compete rule that may lead to death!

* + Or did He just have another appointment that would take Him and his disciples to a region they dared not go to to spread the gospel.

1. It also is the text that tells us that He himself did not baptize, but only His disciples. I think this is just a statement of fact, BUT…
   * If baptism was necessary for salvation wouldn’t Jesus Himself have been doing it as well?
   * It was necessary for the covenant sign and seal to be placed on new believers and their children…but that wasn’t His job.
   * Interesting, as well of all the people who came to faith under Paul’s ministry it is only 2-3 that he can remember baptizing.

## “Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the Gospel."

(1 Cor. 1:17.)

• Some have thus concluded: that baptism is not the principal part of Christianity. Frequently we read of our Lord preaching and praying. Once we read of His administering the Lord's Supper. But we have not a single instance recorded of His ever baptizing any one. And here we are distinctly told, that it was a subordinate work, which He left to others. Jesus "himself baptized not, but his disciples." Baptism, as a sacrament ordained by Christ Himself, is an honorable ordinance, and ought never to be lightly esteemed in the churches. It cannot be neglected or despised without great sin. But baptism was never meant to be exalted to the position which many now-a-days assign to it in religion. It does not act as a charm. It does not necessarily convey the grace of the Holy Spirit. The benefit of it depends greatly on the manner in which it is used. If baptism was all that some say it is, we would never have been told, that "Jesus himself baptized not." Let it be a settled principle in our minds that the first and chief business of the Church of Christ is to preach the Gospel from which comes the foundation of the sacraments.

Lessons in the Gospel of John January 19, 2022

1. Prayer
2. Review
   1. John’s gospel has a clear and relatively simple shape. Do you remember what it is? On the floor of presbytery candidates for the ministry are expected to outline books of the Bible.
      * 1. Prologue -John 1:1–18
        2. “The Book of Signs”- John 1:19-12:50.
           1. The words and works of Jesus together point to His identity as the Messiah and Savior. So, for example, He claims to be “the Light of the World.” (chap. 8: 12)Those who follow Him will not walk in darkness.
           2. He then illustrates this by giving sight to a man who was born blind (chap. 9). There are seven signs recorded in chapters 1 to 12.

c. The “Book of the Passion or the Book of Glory”-John 13: 1–20: 31.

(1)As the chapter opens, we have been transported, without explanation, to a room above a house in Jerusalem. It is Thursday afternoon of Passover Week, and a meal is already underway.

(2) As far as we know, only thirteen men are in the room—Jesus and His chosen Apostles. Now the glory that Jesus has hidden from a world that has rejected Him will increasingly be revealed to the disciples who trusted and loved Him.

d. It ends with the Epilogue- John 21:1–25. This is the passage in which Jesus restores Simon Peter to his apostolic ministry.

* 1. What are some of the unique things about John’s Gospel?
     1. Many have said that John’s Gospel is THE true insider’s perspective.
     2. Over 90% of John’s Gospel is original material not found in the other three.
     3. In John there is no driving out of demons, and no parables, per se. A good many of the stories that are in the other 3 are not in John’s

Gospel.

* + 1. John shares 7 miracles of Jesus along with the 7 “I am” statements of

Jesus.

* + 1. John weaves theology and history together…with more emphasis on theology than the other 3.
    2. No genealogies but an extended view of the Passion Week.
    3. The other 3 Gospels place more emphasis on the “kingdom of God”…where John places the thrust of his focus of the person of

Jesus.

* + 1. John’s style and perspective are different from the other Gospels. So much so that since the 18th Century scholars have named the other 3

the “Synoptic Gospels” coming from the Greek word that means “able to be seen together.”…since they have many of the same stories and events in much the same order sometimes even using the same words.

* + 1. Thomas Goodwin spoke of John’s Gospel as “a window into Christ’s heart.”
    2. Theologian Leon Morris is famous for saying, “John’s Gospel is like a pool in which a child may wade or an elephant can swim.”

1. How does John answer the question, “Who is Jesus?” in verses 1-18? How does this section answer all the controversies about Jesus that have arisen through the generations?

a. Believing the one who was there …who is of God to speak and to write…

(1) John says Jesus is God.

(2)John says He is the creator. The One who brings light and life even to those who reject Him but especially to those who are His he secures their salvation…our redemption as had been promised by the God head from before the beginning.

* 1. John says He is man…deity and humanity in one person ...the Word became flesh.
  2. John says He tabernacle among us…Jesus connected all those who the Father had given Him to the Father forever. We don’t need a place to meet with God we have a person that connects us…reconciles us back to God forever.
  3. John says He is the one in whom the destiny of all men rests.
  4. John says to receive Jesus is to be born of God…born from above He will further define it in chapter 3…and all of this comes as a gift of grace not our won doing.
  5. John says Jesus reveals the Father to us…Moses had to hide His face from the Father and from the people for a time because of its brightness…Jesus reveals the Father, makes the Father known…our

Father to all who are His.

* + 1. The Word dispels all controversies but then controversies arise because of unbelief…so they will always be with us just like they were in the John’s day…
    2. He is also the Risen Lord…since he is God and man and he said He would rise…He did in fact rise from the dead and John really proves this for his readers decades after Jesus died and rose again...and he will show this to be so in the latter 2/3rds of the book that is devoted to Jesus’ last week- John 13-20.

1. How necessary is a correct view of Creation for a correct view of who Jesus is?

1. Let’s look at verses 9-13 a minute. How would you answer our “free-will” brothers who would point to this passage and say, “See it is our personal choice…all we have to do is accept Christ…we can choose Christ or not choose

Christ.”

a. God made us in His image, He made us for His own glory and for us to imagine ourselves autonomous…that we have the “right to choose”

## “…the world did not recognize Him…His own did not receive Him.”

Far from being a measure of free will or maturity it is the supreme mark of rebellion and an absolute suppression of the truth.

1. Is there a difference between the action of receiving and accepting? If so what is it?

(1) Acceptance speaks of our consent to something…consent to receive…we give permission or we choose it.

(2)To receive places emphasis is on the giver…we are being given something and we are receiving it from someone.

1. The basic difference reveals the truth in a sense…especially with the further definition given in vs. 12 and 13.
2. So just like light and life are given from someone outside of ourselves… so our salvation is given and we receive it as a gift from God to His elect…the ones He gave the right.

1. Why is John the Baptist so important to John in these first chapters? To us?
   1. John would have been seen as a prophet…and he was…and he straddled the OT and the NT in God’s on-going plan of redemption.
   2. To prepare the people for the Messiah’s coming just as it had been prophesied in Isiah and in Malachi.

1. Of what eternal significance is the re-telling of the Wedding at Cana in Chapter

2:1-11?

* 1. This is the first of 7 signs/miracles that John tells us about that we might know without question who Jesus is. According to vs. 11-“This,

the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested His glory. And His disciples believed in him.”

* + 1. A sign refers to something that distinguishes a person or a thing from others… “first of His signs…”
    2. So John is saying that Jesus did these signs to point his readers to something more significant than the actual sign/miracle but to Himself as the one who owned and did the sign.
  1. God uses the sign to verify that Jesus was send by Him to do the work

He sent Him to do.

* 1. A marriage was the type of occasion then that looked to God’s provision and a support of God’s creation mandate…as well as an institution that is “good” for all mankind.
  2. We learn, also from these verses, that there are times when it is good and pleasant to celebrate and rejoice. Our Lord Himself sanctioned a wedding-feast by His own presence. He did not refuse to be a guest at "a marriage in Cana of Galilee." "A feast," it is written, "is made for laughter, and wine makes merry." (Eccles. 10:19.) Our Lord, in the

passage before us, approves both the feast and the use of wine. Which looks forward to The Wedding Feast of the lamb

* 1. All of the people there – John and the disciples, Jesus’ mother, the servants saw and knew this to be a miracle!!
  2. Miracles substantiate His word and work.

1. Just so we are clear…What right did He have to cleanse the temple yet again in verses 13-22? (We see the first cleansing in the Synoptics early in His ministry.) But more importantly what does this action by Jesus teach us today?
   1. It’s His Father’s house… at the time.
   2. There were specific rules governing that house that He, as the heir apparent, would want to uphold for His Father’s honor.
   3. It teaches us to honor the Father above all other things in our words and actions. God’s things…God’s Word…are to be respected as a way of showing respect and honor to Him.

1. In John 3:1-13, how does Jesus reorient Nicodemus’ (the teacher of Israel) thinking?
2. Nicodemus learned…or was reminded… of a birth from above.
3. He was told that this new birth only comes through Jesus Himself …not from keeping the Law…so becoming a believer is a supernatural act of God.
4. That for all of his knowledge and wisdom he still lacked that which mattered …a relationship with God through Jesus.
5. Even he …a “spiritual person”…was still thinking physically about things…but Jesus approaches this spiritually from a perspective Nicodemus would understand as he referenced Ezekiel 36:25-26- “I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from fall your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will

give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.”

* 1. So Ezekiel and Jesus were saying as long as people are impure and spiritually dead they can never enter the kingdom of God.
  2. It is something the Nicodemus would have understood. To enter into the kingdom of God a person must be cleansed and then raised by the power of the Holy Spirit.
  3. But this is new because he had been taught to enter the kingdom you had to be a Jew (circumcised/cleansed) and keep the Law and the

Spirit of God will let you in.

1. What is at the core of why we react negatively when what we have been taught and what we have always known is revealed to be wrong or just off enough to be dangerous?
   * 1. Even Nicodemus “knew he was a teacher from God”…a genuine assertion not like the assertion made in deceit by the Pharisees in

Matt. 22- “Teacher, we know that you are true and teach the way of God truthfully…” …yet he struggled to believe.

* + 1. He knew so much about the Law but he didn’t know the heart of the Law…the heart of the God he served.
    2. Not unlike people today…we would rather cling to what we “know” or think we know than be open to the truth. Many in the church today are convinced that if they live moral lives…and strive to be good that God must take them to heaven…just like

Nicodemus.

* + 1. They cling to a life verses or some other part of scripture sometimes without even knowing what it means. They like the way it sounds or what someone else says it means to them whether it is true or not…it is how they feel and who has the right to tell them they are wrong.
    2. It didn’t make sense to his sensibilities that there was NOTHING he could do to be saved…to enter into the Kingdom of God…that it had to be done for and to him.
    3. The Spirit was working on Him…because he doesn’t appear to have denied it out right…he wanted to know…more! He was open to more...the Spirit was working on him to believe.
    4. But as those who do believe we struggle with what we think we know…and it may not be that those who taught us were seeking to be deceitful just wrong when you look at the Word itself.

1. How does chapter 3:1-15 helps us in answering the question of who “the world” is in verse 16?
   1. Whoever believes equals the statements before concerning “born again” or born from above”.
   2. Also, they are defined back in chapter 1 as those who “receive” what is being given to them… faith that comes through God alone… “born of

God” (vs. 13).

* 1. Understanding, of course, that this included Jews and Gentile believers. As will be fleshed out through this Gospel and the rest of the NT works…but it was spoken clearly of in the OT as well.
  2. There is nothing new here…there is and always has been only one way to faith…that is by it being given to those whom God had chosen before the foundations of the earth…Abraham to us today!
  3. So in these contexts “the world” is clearly defined as believers…God’s elect…God’s chosen ones…those chosen in love before the foundations

of the earth. (Eph. 1)

1. How would you answer your family in Christ that this says, Jesus died for the whole world? Or… Jesus’ death made it possible for us to be saved?
2. Did He really? Then why are some not saved? Because they choose not to accept Christ. Most of the Church DOES NOT believe in universalism.
3. Then, that means that we have something to do with our salvation?
   * + 1. We have free will…they will say.
       2. So, if that is true then our will can supersede God’s will for us? Well…of course not…they will say. Then is there anything that God can’t do without us? Obviously He can’t save us if we don’t agree.
       3. We have just stripped Him of His sovereignty because the Bible says that God can do all things that are according to His will…and it was His will to save…but if some aren’t saved then either not everyone

will be saved or not everyone can be saved except those to whom His will applies.

* + - 1. His death secured for all the world who are His - their/our salvation. His death is sufficient to save everyone but it is efficient to save only those who are His.

(5)So everyone that the Father gives Jesus will be saved…every one of them from every nation, tongue and tribe throughout… “the whole

world.”

* + - John 6:37-40- “For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of Him who sent me. And this is the will of Him who sent me that I should lose nothing of all that He has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.” (See reference to the story in 3:14-15)

* + - Rev. 7:9-10-“After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands…”

12. One more thing in this chapter: In verses 18-21 we see a lot about the condemnation or wrath of God. By what right does God have to condemn those who do not believe especially if they were predestined to perish?

God’s just sentence for all sin…death. Has always been and always will be.

He is just and the Justifier of His elect people. Whoever believes according to God’s action are not condemned…we are granted eternal life when God justifies us by faith alone through grace along by Christ’s work alone.

13. How would you answer the question… (If it came up): why are there regular references to Moses and the OT in these first 3 chapters?

Speaks, perhaps, to the main audience he is seeking to reach.

Like the author to the Hebrews he is making it clear that this Jesus is “greater than” Moses…

But even more than that, he is seeking to show how Moses and the Prophets and all the Scriptures actually point to Jesus and that Jesus is the point of everything they did and said….conditioning them to look for Jesus in these “stories” …these biblical facts that they had been taught.

He wants them to see that He is the promised Messiah. The One to whom the Law and the Prophets pointed. The answer to every promise God ever made.

Lessons in the Gospel of John January 26, 2022

* + 1. Prayer
    2. Chapter 4:1-4. What is John pointing out in these verses?

1. The text that tells us that He himself did not baptize, but only His disciples.

I think this is just a statement of fact, BUT…

* + - * 1. If baptism was necessary for salvation as some have said…wouldn’t Jesus Himself have been doing it as well?
        2. Baptism, as a sacrament ordained by Christ Himself, is an honorable and necessary ordinance, and ought never to be taken for granted in the churches.

(1) It cannot be neglected or despised without great sin.

(2)When rightly used, with faith and prayer, it is calculated to convey the highest blessings.

(3) Baptism was never meant to be exalted to the position which many now-a-days assign to it in religion. “It does not act as a charm.”-

J.C. Ryle

* + - 1. It does not necessarily convey the grace of the Holy Spirit until it is meant to. The benefit of it depends greatly on the manner in which it is used.
      2. It was necessary for the covenant sign and seal to be placed on new believers and their children…but that wasn’t His job.

1. Interesting, as well of all the people who came to faith under Paul’s ministry it is only 2-3 that he can remember baptizing. “Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the Gospel." (1 Cor. 1:17.)
2. John is also pointing out the leaders’ propensity to believe even untruths about Jesus.
   1. John purposefully points to the fact the Jesus did not baptize in contrast to what they had been “told” and they then believed.
   2. John sets the stage for the unbelief of the Leaders and their unwillingness to even hear the truth for themselves...unlike Nicodemus who sought out the truth.
   3. Also, we begin to see that those who report to the leaders are seeking to do this for their own welfare…standing with the leaders…and this will become more apparent as we work through this book.
3. In verses 3-4, Jesus is not leaving that region and going back into Galilee because He was afraid of the Pharisees.
4. Maybe because there was a rule/law among the Jews… “It is not lawful for a disciple to teach the constitutions or sentences of the law, before his master, but he must be 12 miles distant from him, as the camp of Israel. A disciple that teaches before His master or in the presence of his master is guilty of death.” … sort of a noncompete rule that may lead to death!
5. Or did He just have another appointment that would take Him and his disciples to a region to spread the gospel. Vs. 4…says “And He had to pass through Samaria”-
   1. He didn’t HAVE TO go through Samaria…He could have done what the leaders do and go around Samaria.
   2. Jews haven’t gotten along with Samaritans since before Sanballat opposed Nehemiah but this event didn’t help.
   3. They were also a “mixed- ethnicity”…
      * II Kings 17: 24ff tells us that the King of Assyria resettled this region with Gentiles from Babylon and other regions…probably unruly slaves and criminals.
      * He put them there instead of the people of Israel…but there would have been some left who would have intermarried…
      * Also the King of Assyria brought in a priest to teach the people the law of God because God had sent lions to kill these invaders in His land…but the people corrupted the teaching…
      * So they were unclean from a “good” Jews perspective. They disbelieved the actual Word of God and, if possible, worse than

Gentiles.

* 1. They set up their own place of worship on Mt. Gerizim instead of

Jerusalem.

Samaritanism- a Jewish sect- Abrahamic, monotheistic.

Adhere to a Samaritan version of the Torah and their version of Joshua.

They believe Judaism and the Jewish Torah was false.

They traced their religions beginning to when the High Priest Eli left Mt. Gerizim in Samaria to build a new place of worship at Shiloh…a disagreement ensued and a split took place leaving some on Mt. Gerizim to worship.

But as I said above so much was dependent upon the resettlement of Gentiles in the land by Assyria leading to syncretistic beliefs.

This caused them to deny Jerusalem and the Temple there was the proper place to worship.

(5) So Jesus could have gone around…but John is making the point that

Jesus had a mission to do... “…He had to go pass through

Samaria”…He had another divine appointment…to meet someone else…to share the Gospel with the Samaritans.

Jesus came to do His will…here He is doing God’s will …going where God sends Him.

Jesus seeks out the lost- Luke 19:20- “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

C. John 4:6-27 1. What are we taught about Jesus’ human nature by the words, *“…so Jesus, wearied as he was from His journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour (noon).”*?

We learn from this, as well as many other expressions in the Gospels, that our Lord had a body exactly like our own.

He took on Him a nature like our own in all things, without sin.

Like ourselves, He hungered, thirsted, felt pain, and needed sleep.

Why is remembering this about Him important for us today?

We need to remember and understand that He was both God and Man at the same time.

He had to be to be the perfect sacrifice…to be our great high priest…to understand us and all our faults.

It is good for us to see/read that He was wearied…because it helps us to know He understands us when we are weary and heavy laden so we can come to Him for rest.

2. As we get into verse 7 what do we see that is characteristic of John’s

Gospel?

* + - * 1. John delights in showing how Jesus interacts with peoples of all walks of life and both genders.
        2. We’ve seen a protracted conversation with a Pharisee the teacher of Israel over the true message of faith in Christ

Jesus.

* + - * 1. Here we will see a conversation with a Samaritan woman (no name) who had a “bad” reputation within the town…which is so much different that Nicodemus who was thoroughly Jewish (pureblood, not a “muggle”), male, and a morally precise Pharisee.
        2. But as different as they were, what was one thing they both needed that only Jesus could provide for them?
  1. A reoriented way of thinking.
  2. Brought about by

salvation. 3. How did Jesus share the Gospel with this woman and what does this teach us today?Looking at verses

7-26, what do we come to know about this Samaritan woman?

1. We know something is off about her because she comes to the well at noon.
   1. Most drew water either in the early morning or after sunset NOT the middle of the day.
   2. Most women came in groups…for safety …for fellowship.
   3. By coming alone her social status in town is automatically questioned.
2. We know what that something is when Jesus asks her to go call her husband to come and hear Him as well.
   1. She has had multiple husbands…something no even common among her people…hence being treated as a pariah by the other people in town.
   2. And the man she was currently with is not a husband…living out of wedlock.
   3. She knows from His revealing her reputation that He must be a prophet but he is still a Jew and she could not be trusted so she changes the subject back to her position of where God is to worshiped.
3. That she is not any sharper with salvific metaphors than Nicodemus was or the disciples at this stage. She was skeptical about what He was offering.
4. As much as she knew of her religion it didn’t affect her life as it should have as far as her morality is concerned.
5. She wasn’t seeking to believe in Christ…she had just come to get water for the day. Unlike Nicodemus who had been drawn to Christ to talk with Him.

1. But we also know some positive things about her: (1) She isn’t shy…
   * + - Protocols of the day were that most women would not talk to a strange man, especially if

that man was a Jew, because a Jew wouldn’t

talk to her…

* + - * But she breaks that protocol and when Jesus speaks she speaks back.
      * As was suggested since she has “had” so many husbands and she is living with a man now…she would not necessarily be intimidated by a man…may even seek to control him…which seems that she thinks she has the upper hand at least at first.
    1. She tells the truth. She “saw” herself and her condition.
    2. She is religious…she knows at least the basics of her religion. ..but obviously nothing that changed her life.
    3. She is looking forward to the Messiah as well.

1. In these verses (6-26), what do we learn about Jesus’ character from His interaction with the Samaritan woman?
   1. He sought her out…remember He had to pass through Samaria…she was the reason.
   2. He doesn’t back down…even when she tries to control the conversation.
   3. He knew about her reputation and still reached out to her…even asking her for a drink…knowing it would get her attention. But He didn’t see this as a deterrent.
   4. He seems to have treated her with great respect
      1. Even when she questioned him concerning how He could give her water and life…or even taking what He is offering though she knowingly didn’t know what he was talking about but if it would keep her from having to come to this well every day…she would take it.
      2. Even giving her the chance to tell the truth about her life which she does.
   5. He didn’t hesitate to share deep spiritual truths…the Gospel… with her….
      1. Revealing that in His eyes she was worthy to receive such teaching.
      2. Revealing His desire for her heart to be changed…
      3. Revealing His desire that people would drink the water He offers that would spring up in them a water of life so powerful to quench the thirsts of life…the discontentment of life. The water is the metaphor describing spiritual realities from cleansing to contentment to eternal life.
      4. He knew her life was empty and He desired to give her life abundantly
   6. She is actually, in the Gospel of John, the first person that He reveals that He is the Messiah to….and she believes.

1. What is He communicating to her with the statement found in verses 21-24?
   1. That both the Jews and the Samaritans have it wrong…God is worshiped through ceremony and traditions…but on the state of the worshipper’s heart.
   2. There will come a time when that won’t even be an issue and all true believers will worship together in spirit and truth.
   3. The principle contained in these sentences can never be too strongly impressed on professing Christians.
      * 1. We are all naturally inclined to make religion a mere matter of outward forms and ceremonies, and to attach an excessive importance to our own particular manner of worshiping God in a particular church or denomination.
        2. The heart is the principal thing in all our approaches to God.

## "The Lord looks on the heart." (1 Sam. 16:7.)

(3) The smallest gathering of three or four poor believers in a house to read the Bible and pray, is a more acceptable sight to Him who searches the heart than the fullest congregation which is only gathered because of formality.

6. Why do the disciples appear to be dumfounded in verse 27?

1. Jew did not normally associate with Samaritans…obviously they just had to buy food…but that was a short interchange between men.
2. Jews would not drink from anything that had been touched by a Samaritan especially one with a bad reputation.
3. Jews and Samaritans did not discuss religion since they did not believe the same.
4. Jewish men did not normally talk with women who were not their wives.
5. Jewish teachers did not teach the scriptures and doctrine to women directly.
6. Upright moral men did not associate with known sinners and outcasts of a town.
7. All because Jewish men did not wish to be made unclean.

D. John 4:28-42

(1) What happens after this woman believes?

* 1. She becomes “the first evangelist” in the Gospel of John. This sinner goes to her town telling them about Jesus.
  2. What is amazing about this?

1. The text says, “Many from the town believed in His because of the woman’s testimony. He told me all that I ever did.”
   * In her culture, the testimony of a woman was considered unreliable at best so it wasn’t even allowed in a court of law or the church.
   * On top of the cultural norms, she was an outcast because of her lifestyle.
   * he didn’t have much information…any training in the Gospel… just the simple message that Jesus was the Messiah.
2. It is easy to overlook this amazing statement based on the reality of the day…
   * Just like today the Spirit was at work shattering barriers and turning religious world upside down.
   * He is still shaking the nations as He was then.
3. This chapter begins with the Jewish leaders upset about Jesus’ growing popularity and these who were despised by that same group were coming to Him in faith.

2. Just for fun…what is the point of the disciples exchange with Jesus and His with them in verses 31-38? What does it say to us today?

* 1. They too are still stuck in the material…missing Christ’s teaching of a greater “food and drink than even Jacob’s well and the bread they bought.
  2. Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to accomplish His work.”

1. To do good was not merely duty and pleasure to Him. He counted it as His food and drink.
2. Job said something similar in Job 23:12- “ I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my portion of food.” Jesus said the same about His work. Do any of us look at “our work” that way?
3. A mild rebuke for their dumbfoundeness concerning the woman…and how they should be looking for such opportunities.
4. Obviously he is teaching them that they need to be harvesters...fishers of men …for the Lord…and His kingdom. As they look at the Samaritan woman then to those who came out to see Jesus …the white harvest is before them…as it is before us.
   1. He tells them, “Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their

labor.”

* 1. There is blessing that comes with the hard work. Harvesting is difficult work at best…so is harvesting souls for the Lord.
  2. Work for the souls of men will undoubtedly be filled with great discouragements.
     + The heart of natural man is very hard and unbelieving.
     + The blindness of unsaved men to their own lost condition and peril of ruin, is something past description. "The carnal

## mind is

enmity against God." (Rom. 8:7.)

• But also, the stubbornness of those of the redeemed towards doctrines they do not understand.

(4) The antidote against discouragement in God's work, is an abiding remembrance of such promises as that before us.  There are "wages" laid up for faithful reapers.

* They shall receive a reward at the last day, far exceeding anything they have done for Christ--a reward proportioned not to their success, but to the quantity of their work.
* They are gathering "fruit," which shall endure when this world has passed awayfruit, in souls saved, even if many will not believe, and fruit in evidences of their own faithfulness, to be brought out before assembled worlds.
* Do our hands ever hang down, and our knees wax faint? Do we feel disposed to say, "my labor is in vain and my words without profit?”
* When discouraged let us lean back at such seasons on this glorious promise. There are

"wages" yet to be paid. There is

"fruit" yet to be exhibited. "

## • Let us work on. "Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy! He who

goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him."

(Psalm. 126:6.) One single soul saved, shall outlive and outweigh all the kingdoms of the world.

Lessons in the Gospel of John February 9,

2022

1. Prayer
2. Review
   1. What are somethings you remember about the Samaritan woman?

* 1. What are some things we learned about Jesus’ character from His interchange with the Samaritan woman?

1. He sought her out…she was His reason for coming… “He had to pass through Samaria.”…she and the white fields ready to harvest. He was her Immanuel as well.
2. He doesn’t back down…even when she tries to control the conversation.
3. He knew about her reputation and still reached out to her…even asking her for a drink…knowing it would get her attention. But He didn’t see this as a deterrent.

(3) What was the Samaritan woman’s criterion for knowing the Messiah had come?

## a. Vs. 25-26- “When He comes, he will tell us

all things.

Jesus said to her, ‘I who speak to you am He.’”

b. How had Jesus’ response convinced her of who He is?(1) He confirms that he is the one she is searching for.

1. And that He is the one to tell her all things.
2. The Pentateuch had said God would send one like this…and they believed that!
3. Is that enough? Why?

D. John 4:28-42

(1) According to John 4:28-42, what happens after this woman believes?

1. “So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people…” Let’s consider this passage a minute.

(1) The Bible doesn’t waste words…so what would you say John is communicating here by her actions of leaving behind the water jar and going straightway into the city?

* + Perhaps in her mind “something” else had become more important than the physical water she had originally come to get.
  + Perhaps she actually believes now what Jesus said about “living water”…and, of course, she does.
  + Jesus has been highlighting the “spiritual” over the physical/material for peoples lives get too caught up in the physical aspects of life forgetting that He alone has the Words and water of life….leading us/people to “trust” in what we know…rather than Him…

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Most all the characters we have encountered since the beginning have had an issue with this, as we do today…Nicodemus, His disciples, this woman and maybe even Mary in the whole turning water into wine when a greater need was for salvation.

(2) And just to jump ahead a minute…do these actions give example to what Jesus will says in verses 32-38?

1. After she leaves she goes and tells them, “Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?”
2. Is the criterion of the woman concerning how we will know the Messiah the same as theirs? Again the text says, “Many Samaritans from the town believed in Him because of the woman’s testimony. ‘He told me all that I ever did.’”
3. And then after He had stayed with them for two days they said, “it is no longer because of what you said (‘He told me all that I ever did.’) that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Savior of the World.”
   * 1. This is not a “diss” to the woman. They had believed her.
     2. Jesus came to her…she believed and the Spirit used her …just like He uses us to drawn these people to Jesus. (3) And that belief was confirmed by the Word…Jesus Himself.
4. What again are some amazing things about this turn of events where this whole community seemingly is saved by Christ?

(1) When Jesus told His disciples, “Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see the fields are white to harvest.”

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* + - * When they looked up they saw the ripe fields coming to Jesus.

The Samaritans were coming!

* + - * Jesus had come to them…He is their Immanuel as well...at least those who would believe…Immanuel for every nation tongue and tribe where His elect are placed.
    1. That these people who have never met Him are ready to receive

Him even before they see and hear Him. This reminds me of when

Jesus said, in John 20- “Blessed are those who have not seen me and yet have believed.”

* + 1. That they proclaimed Him Savior of the world.
    - Now this ending title Savior of the world can mean to them referring to one who would save them from impending danger.
    - So by virtue of the Spirit working they seemed to have grasped rather quickly this living water that revealed to them that Jesus had come to rescue them from judgment by bringing pardon to all who believe.

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* + - Interesting…they did not proclaim His “THEIR” savior but the savior of the world…no walls of separation in their minds any longer.

1. She is a woman, and an outcast woman on top of that: In her culture, the testimony of a woman was considered unreliable at best so it wasn’t even allowed in a court of law or the church.
   * On top of the cultural norms, she was an outcast because of her lifestyle.
   * He didn’t have much information…any training in the Gospel… just the simple message that Jesus was the Messiah.

1. It is easy to overlook this amazing statement based on the reality of the day…
   * + Just like today the Spirit was at work shattering barriers and turning religious world upside down.
     + He is still shaking the nations as He was then.
2. This chapter begins with the Jewish leaders upset about Jesus’ growing popularity and these who were

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despised by that same group were coming to Him in faith.

2. Look at verses 31-38 a minute- what is the point of the disciples exchange with Jesus and His with them? What does it say to us today?

* 1. They too are still stuck in the material…missing Christ’s teaching of a greater “food and drink than even Jacob’s well and the bread they bought.
  2. Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to accomplish His work.”
  3. To do good was not merely duty and pleasure to Him. He counted it as His food and drink.
  4. Job said something similar in Job 23:12- “ I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my

portion of food.” Jesus said the same about His work. Do any of us look at “our work” that way?

1. A mild rebuke for their dumbfoundness concerning the woman…and how they should be looking for such opportunities.
2. Obviously he is teaching them that they need to be harvesters...fishers of men …for the Lord…and His kingdom. As they look at the Samaritan woman then to

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those who came out to see Jesus …the white harvest is before them…as it is before us.

(5)He tells them, “Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest. Already the one who reaps is receiving wages and gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, ‘One sows and another reaps.’ I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you

have entered into their labor.”

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(6)There is blessing that comes with the hard work. Harvesting is difficult work at best…so is harvesting souls for the Lord.

(7)Work for the souls of men will undoubtedly be filled with great discouragements.

The heart of natural man is very hard and unbelieving.

* The blindness of unsaved men to their own lost condition and peril of ruin, is something past description. "The carnal mind is

enmity against God." (Rom. 8:7.)

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* But also, the stubbornness of those of the redeemed towards doctrines they do not understand.

(8) The antidote against discouragement in God's work, is an abiding remembrance of such promises as that before us.  There are "wages" laid up for faithful reapers.

* They shall receive a reward at the last day, far exceeding anything they have done for Christ--a reward proportioned not to their success, but to the quantity of their work.

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* They are gathering "fruit," which shall endure when this world has passed

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away--fruit, in souls saved, even if many will not believe, and fruit in evidences of their own faithfulness, to be brought out before assembled worlds.

* Do our hands ever hang down, and our knees wax faint? Do we feel disposed to say, "My labor is in vain and my words without profit."
* When discouraged let us lean back at such seasons on this glorious promise.

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There are "wages" yet to be paid. There is

"fruit" yet to be exhibited. "

* Let us work on. "Those who sow in tears shall reap with shouts of joy! He who goes out weeping, bearing the seed for sowing, shall come home with shouts of joy, bringing his sheaves with him."

(Psalm. 126:6.) One single

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soul saved, shall outlive and outweigh all the kingdoms of the world.

D. John 4:43-54

2. What is John communicating in verses 43-45?

1. His hometown was Nazareth of Galilee and yet the people from

Galilee welcome Him having “seen” all that He had done at the feast.

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1. He was “one of them” so they welcomed Him as one of them…not as Messiah. “A hometown/region boy done good” great publicity for an otherwise despised region.
2. But Jesus Himself had said, that a prophet is not welcome in his own hometown. (SEE also Matthew 13:57 and Mark 6:4) How is this not some kind of contradiction?
3. He seems to be making the point that he will clarify in vs 48…that these people are sign seekers and not truly honoring Him as the

Messiah.

1. Unlike the Samaritans who recognized who He is right off.

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3. Vs. 46-54. Thinking along this line we get verses 46- *“So He came again to Cana in Galilee, where he had made the water wine.”*

What is the point of this passage setting up what comes next?

1. This miracle would have caused quite a buzz about Jesus…who is He …look at what he is capable of…we need to see more.
2. So just as now there are desperate people who go to faith healers as a last resort and Jesus seemed to be a good bet.
3. There didn’t need to be a sense of repentance for them to seek out this miracle worker…just desperation…so in comes the noble man…the official.

* 1. So what was the second sign/miracle that Jesus does? How does this miracle support Jesus claims and the claims of the Samaritans?

* 1. Why do you suppose that Jesus seems so harsh with this official?

1. The Jews would not be satisfied in the least unless there was a miraculous sign.
2. Unlike the Samaritans and the Gentiles who seemingly believed before they saw…they didn’t need to see!
3. Jesus is denouncing this need among His own people.
4. The official asks Him to come with him to cure his son in his home so that everyone will see and it will bring prestige to the official as well. Look at all the publicity this new celebrity is getting it would be good to be seen with him healing his son.
5. Given the context and the admonition it is not hard to extrapolate this thinking.
6. And while this man was probably genuinely hoping for his son to be healed his motives were not purely focused on his son and Jesus

knows that and denies his requests to come and do the miracle in his home.

1. Also, Jesus is known for Hs strong rebukes… “O you of little faith.” Or, “O foolish ones and slow of heart to believe …” to the two on the road to Emmaus comes to mind
2. It is not necessarily wrong to be moved to faith by the sight of God’s powerful hand, but how much more commendable is the heart that willingly takes God at His word without demanding God to submit as attest of His strength.
3. Now lest we judge…we need to remember we seek for signs to believe as well…how many times do we put God to the test for less?

Lessons in the Gospel of John February

16, 2022

* + 1. Prayer
    2. Review 1. We have looked at a number of conversations that Jesus has had with different people.
  1. What do they have in common so far?
  2. How are they different?
  3. What might this teach us about how we are to approach people with the Gospel going forward?

* + - 1. Why do you suppose that it seems so much harder for the Jews to believe in Jesus than the Gentiles/ Samaritans? Why do people today have such a hard time actually believing the gospel of Jesus Christ?

* + - 1. Let’s consider 4:46-54 just a moment longer. What 4 or 5 lessons can we learn from these passages?

a. Just like everyone else, the rich and powerful have afflictions.

We read of an official (who was an officer in service to Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee) in deep anxiety because his son was sick. ..And everything he had done had not worked.

We need not doubt that every means of restoration was used that money could procure. But money is not almighty. The sickness increased, and the official’s son lay at the point of death.

Gold and silver can lift no man beyond the reach of trouble. They may shut out debt and rags, but they cannot shut out care, disease, and death.

Above all, this teaches the believer pray for the wealthy…their lot in life is NOT always as it seems. And we are to be content with such things as we have and not covet what we do not...one might get what they wish for and yet calamity can still strike.

b. Sickness and death come to the young as well as to the old.

* + - * 1. As we parents we have learned this lesson too well…so more severely than others.
        2. We read of a son sick unto death, and a father in trouble about him.
        3. We see the natural order of things inverted. Children are not supposed to die before their parents.

1. Interestingly enough, we see what benefits affliction can confer on the soul.
   1. We read, that anxiety about his son led the official to come to Christ, in order to obtain help in time of need.
   2. But that anxiety seems to have left him immediately after Jesus said his son would live.

He had been utterly anxious before Jesus’ statement and then the text says he believed Jesus’ word and went his way.

* 1. Once brought into Christ's company, he learned a lesson of priceless value. In the end, "he himself believed, and all his

household." These words tell us that this official came to savig faith.

1. Also we learn from this that, that Christ's word is as good as

Christ's presence.

* + 1. We read, that Jesus did not come down to Capernaum to see the sick young man, but only spoke the word, "Go, your son will live.”
    2. This, of course, squares with what John had said in Chapter 1-

Jesus the Creator is the Word made flesh…His Word is sufficient.

* + 1. Almighty power went with that little sentence. That very hour the patient began to mend. Christ only spoke, and the cure was done. Christ only commanded, and the deadly disease stood fast.

1. John wrote this gospel for the expressed reason, “that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.” The healing of the official’s son is one more proof that John offers to this affect.
2. One more for fun: This reminds us Jesus is the only one to go to… no matter that circumstance.

C. John 5:1-18 1. Jesus obviously travels a lot…and there is a lot of feasting going on! The text begins, *“After this (the healing and the conversion) there was a feast*

*of the*

*Jews and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.”*

* 1. He attends feasts...He attends synagogue and the Temple on the

Sabbath.

* 1. He is faithful to the Law, the law that he came to fulfill by His death, resurrection and ascension…obviously not to save Himself but because

He was obedient to His Father’s will which required participation unless providentially hindered.

* 1. Which feast was it? The text doesn’t say…probably Passover, Pentecost or Purim.

2. What do these first 5 verses tell us about the world we live in…the world in which Jesus came into?

1. It’s broken and full of misery.
2. Just like then people look for satisfaction and healing wherever they can… except in the right place.
   1. Pool of Bethesda by the Sheep Gate is real…in fact, it is 2 pools under a portico supported by 5 columns in a northern section of Jerusalem. It is said to have been linked to and kept full by a mineral springs from somewhere outside the city.
   2. People then like people today often put more stock in superstition and myth than in reality.
   3. Legend had it that…the people came awaiting an angel to stir the water so they could be healed…and there are “testimonials” to the “fact” that it works if you can get down into the water in time. Sort of like the

testimonials of all those who have been “healed” by faith healers.

* 1. Some manuscripts of John Gospel actually have a verse

4...our do not. Vs. 4 in some manuscripts, “…paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water; for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool, and stirred the water; whoever stepped in first after the stirring of the water was healed of whatever disease he had.”

* 1. But what do we make of this myth being repeated by

John…

* Well, RC Sproul and many others say that John may not have said it.
* Since many of the different fragments we have actually don’t have this statement.
* But obviously…whether it is in the text or not the invalid man believed… if he could get into the pool when the water was stirred that he would be healed…vs. 7.
* So it is here to show the extent to which people will go when desperate (think official/ father in Chapter 4) to be healed but that we often search for “healing” in the wrong places when our hearts are not changed.

(6)But if some were “actually” healed this would be yet another time where some were healed by unusual circumstances:

* Some healed by a pot of stew- II Kings 4:38-41- “And Elisha came again to Gilgal when there was a famine in the land. And as the sons of the prophets were sitting before him, he said to his servant, ‘Set on the large pot, and boil stew for the sons of the prophets.’ One of them went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine and gathered from it his lap full of wild gourds, and came and cut them up into the pot of stew, not knowing what they were. And they poured out some for the men to eat. But while they were eating of the stew, they cried out, ‘O man of God, there is death in the pot.’ And they could not eat it. He said, ‘Then bring flour.’ And he threw it into the pot and said, ‘Pour some out for the men, that they may eat.’ And there was no

harm in the pot.”

* One healed by touching the bones of Elisha- II Kings 13:20-

## 21“So Elisha died, and they buried him. Now bands of

Moabites used to invade the land in the spring of the year. And as a man was being buried, behold, a marauding band was seen and the man was thrown into the grave of Elisha, and as soon as the man touched the bones of Elisha, he

revived and stood on his feet.”

* Some were healed by the shadow of Peter- Acts 5:14-15-“And more than ever believers were added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they even carried out the sick into the streets and laid them on cots and mats, that as Peter came by oat least his shadow might fall on some of

them.”

* Healing from Paul’s handkerchiefs- Acts 19:11-12- “And God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them.”

1. We see all the brokenness before the Pool…blind, lame and paralyzed.
2. Then we read of a man who had been an invalid for no less than thirtyeight years!
   1. Probably paralyzed based on the little information we have in the text.
   2. For sure he appears to have been friendless, helpless, and hopeless, he lay near the pools, but derived no benefit from them since he was alone.
   3. This man was “alone”…or it could read… “no one is willing”. Alone is a common plague today…all too often these days self-imposed.

(4)The societies of the day looked down on those “lesser” individuals who had physical and emotional infirmities…much like most societies today.

1. This ought to remind us how deeply we ought to hate sin!
   * 1. Sin was and is the original root, and cause, and fountain of every disease…physical, emotional, and spiritual disease… in the world.
     2. God did not create man to be full of aches, and pains, and infirmities…and to be alone.
     3. These things are the fruits of the Fall. There would have been no sickness, if there had been no sin. But speculating about it is not good…because the Fall did happen…sin did enter the world along with misery and death.
2. It seems obvious that if men would only look at hospitals and rehabilitation clinics and all the prescription drugs taken for countless issues, and then, think about what havoc sin has

made on this earth, men would never take pleasure in sin as they do. But then, that is being rational and reasonable…which does not really define fallen men…or even sometimes Christians that don’t truly trust the Lord and His

Gospel to lead.

Lessons in the Gospel of John February

23, 2022

1. Prayer
2. Review- John 5:1-9 1. What do these first 5 verses tell us about the world we live in…the world in which Jesus came into?
   1. Just like today…there is feasting and then there is brokenness and those whose lives are full of misery….and not just physical misery.
   2. Just like then people look for satisfaction and healing wherever they can.
   3. The Pool of Bethesda which seems to have been a mineral springs pool…which even in our day has some curative properties even if not total healing.
   4. The mystery and myth surrounding this pool speaks of men’s confusion with the realities and truth of God’s provision.

c. This ought to remind us how deeply we ought to hate sin!

* + 1. Sin was and is the original root, and cause, and fountain of every disease…physical, emotional, and spiritual disease… in the world.
    2. God did not create man to be full of aches, and pains, and infirmities…or to be alone.

(6)These things are the fruit of the Fall. At the fall of Adam sin did enter the world along with misery and death.

d. There were many others at the pools that day and Jesus didn’t heal any of them…which reminds us that miracles were not His main purpose though a lot more stock is placed in wanting to see signs than hearing Him and His words.

2. What did we say last week about what Jesus says and does to this man in verses 6-9?

* 1. The text says that Jesus “saw” and He “knew” the condition of the man.
     + 1. This dealt with his obvious infirmity.
       2. But it seems to also deal with the man’s heart condition.
       3. This also dealt with the fact that both had been ongoing for a long time.
       4. Which means He SEES and KNOWS us as well…even more so since we are His children.
  2. Then Jesus asks him, “Do you want to be healed or made healed?”
     1. This question seems to get at both his infirmity as well as his heart issue. Jesus seems to know that he had gotten used to being taken care of. Eastern beggars like Western ones for that matter can tend

to lose sight of a desire to care if they are cured of their disease(s)…often they get so used to their condition that they just give up and seek to always be cared for by others.

* + 1. Calvin said, “The sick man does what we all nearly do. He limits God’s help to his own ideas and does not dare promise himself more that he conceives in his own mind.”
    2. For instead of saying “Yes, I wished to be healed, he complains, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up, and while I am going another steps down before me.”
       - * Thinking only of the physical and the only way HE knew he could be healed so he complains.
         * How many of us try to set the terms for healing…strengthening

…believing?

* 1. Then Jesus asserts His authority and commands him to rise and take up his bed/mat and walk- “Get up, take up your bed, and walk.”…and the invalid does so…immediately. “And at once the man was healed and he took up his bed/mat and walked. Now that day was the

Sabbath.”

(1) The very power of Jesus’ command…

• The same power He used to call forth creation. ◼ The words “at once” signify the immediacy of the power transforming this man physically…Jesus speaks and diseased bones and muscle obey!

* This is similar to what we saw in chapter 4 when Jesus said “Go; your son is healed.” And then we have John’s commentary that said the servant said the official’s son was healed exactly at the 7th hour the same time Jesus had spoken the words…
  + The same power when He commanded Lazarus to come forth… heals the man.
  + This very command was for the infirmity to be gone.
  + The man went from impotent, weak and helpless to not only being healed but being healed completely.
* He had been an invalid for 38 years...and apparently with no external help he stands.
* After all that time he would have no strength to stand let alone to pick up his mat. By virtue of being able to take up his bed this confirms that he had been healed being that he now has the strength he needs to carry his own load.
* And then to walk without stumbling…you know how it is when your foot falls to sleep and you take off.
* This was truly a miracle of epic proportions.
* One of the proofs of our spiritual cure is rising and walking in the way that Jesus prescribes.

1. Here is a Jew that doesn’t question what he is being offered at this point. Since no one else was helping him, he responded to Christ’s command by immediately doing as he was commanded.
   * He couldn’t get healed on his own. He heard Jesus…not knowing who He was…offering him to get up and so he did.
   * Even non-believers can do extraordinary things when given a hand up! Or in this case…a word to get up! He was commanded…compelled to step out of his comfort zone and it paid off…as

this was Christ’s will for him to be healed to reveal His power.

* + This healing then is certainly not in response to anything religious or faithful about the man.
  + Jesus out of His sheer compassion seems to heal the man, not because the man came to faith or was at all righteous.
  + No less than 9 times in the gospel we read of Jesus being moved with compassion and pity on people. So not only does He know us completely, but he is also moved by our misery even the misery of non-believers.

1. God through Jesus commands us to repent, to obey His commands...He doesn’t invite us…just like He didn’t invite this man but rather commands this man to Rise…take up your bed/mat…and walk!
2. And all of this occurred on “…the Sabbath.”

C. John 5:10-18

1. Now comes the challenge to Jesus’ authority. Look at verses 10-13. What’s the problem? What has got the Jews…that is the religious rulers all upset? a. It was the Sabbath!

1. Their law stated you couldn’t carry a burden of the Sabbath…a bed could be considered a burden. In fact, they had defined “burden” 39 different ways and the last definition was carrying something… anything:
   1. A needle in one’s robe.
   2. Even wearing ones artificial teeth or ones wooden leg on the Sabbath if you went from one place to another.
   3. Even today: This story was news in Israel back in 1992. It seems a fire broke out in an Orthodox Jewish neighborhood in an apartment complex and the complex ended up burning down as the people waited confirmation from a Rabbi that it was alright to call the Fire Department on the Sabbath.
      * + Observant Jews are forbidden from using the landline telephones on the Sabbath, because doing so breaks an electrical current which is defined as work.
        + And, of course, causing the Firemen to work on the Sabbath.
        + Rest of the story…2 more apartment complexes burned down by the time they got a “yes” to call the Fire Department by the Rabbi.
2. They were so blinded by their rules, not the Law, (Greek word here is simply, “It is not permitted.”) (so it speaks to their rules not God’s) that they missed the remarkable healing?
3. Jesus regularly maintained that IT IS lawful on the Sabbath to do good. He ignored the scribal regulations causing Him and His followers to often come into conflict with the religious leaders.
   * 1. Everything that is done by Jesus and His disciples will be a source of controversy going forward.
     2. No matter what “good” is done it will always be seen as a direct assault to the religious leaders supposed authority and on their laws and traditions.

* + 1. Vss. 16-18- “And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because He was doing these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, ‘My Father is working until now, and I am working.’ This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because not only was He breaking the Sabbath, but He was even calling

## God His own Father, making Himself equal with

God.”

* To the leaders Jesus became the man who broke the rules…just like when He cleansed the temple before…
* But this was worse because it was on the Sabbath and He was blaspheming as well…just a couple of reasons to see His end as soon as possible.
* They were upset since they perceived truthfully that Jesus was taking to Himself the same authority over the Sabbath as the one who created the Sabbath… which was not a law given only at Sinai but was also a creation ordinance…so He is claiming to be God…they understood His claims.

e. What were the religious leaders actually asking when they asked the man,

## “Who is the man who said to you, ‘Take up your bed and walk?’”

1. They weren’t interested in the FACT that the man was healed.
2. They wanted to deal with a Sabbath breaker.
3. And by the healed man’s answer of not knowing who it was who healed him he is saying:

• From his perspective it could have been a priest…someone with authority…for who else would have talked to him…who told him to take up his bed and walk. “The man who healed

## me…that man said to me take up your bed.”

* He is covering his tracks because he knows the law so he is hoping to dodge any allegations that he was at fault.
* But he was also trying to highlight the miracle rather than the infraction.

*2.* Looking at verse 14-15. What do we see Jesus doing? And the man?

a. “Afterward Jesus found him in the temple and said to him, ‘See, you are well! “Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you.’”

1. “See, you are well…or have been made well.” The term “well” is in the Greek perfect tense…communicating permanence maybe in contrast to those who weren’t really healed and found themselves back at the well days later.
2. “Sin no more, that nothing worse may happen to you.’”
   * This is not necessarily highlighting that it was some certain sin that had caused him to be an invalid in the first place.
   * Jesus is telling him to live in sin is worse than to have to live with being an invalid the rest of his life.
   * Jesus puts his infirmity in perspective. The infirmity is temporary in this life…for life is temporary…but on-going sin has eternal consequences which is much worse than he can even imagine. It is like Jesus was saying, “You thought that

being an

invalid was bad…live a life devoted to sin and it will be worse than you can imagine.”

* + The point is: Jesus calls Him to repentance and gives him a stern warning.
  + Not unusual for Jesus. Look at Luke 13:1-5 “There were some present at that very time who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And He answered them, ‘Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in

Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.’”

## b. “The man went away and told the Jews that it was

Jesus who had healed him.”

(1) So the man who was healed by Jesus turns Jesus in to the authorities.

* He is healed and he was most assuredly happy about that.
* But he probably also wanted to be able to participate in Temple worship and he wouldn’t have been able to it if he had not told them who healed him since he needed their blessing to say he was healed and pure once again.
* Also, he wanted to make sure his name was cleared from any Sabbath infraction and charge that could lead to him being put out of the community.

(2) A reminder that not everyone is saved even with Jesus standing right in front of them and healing them.

c. Oh that we would remember, when we have been healed from

sin or from physical and emotional issues that we would wake everyday thanking God rather than acting like it just something that happened.

*3.* Why would Jesus heal an ungrateful soul as this one? Can you think of any other times He does this?

* + - 1. The crowds- Matt. 14:14- “When He went ashore He saw a great crowd, and He had compassion on them and healed their sick.”
      2. The Lepers- Luke 17:11-19…10 lepers only one returned and gave thanks.
      3. Malchus’ ear -Luke 22:50-51- “And one of them struck the servant of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said, ‘No more of this!’ And He touched his ear and healed him.”
      4. It is recorded by those who count such things…of the 35 miracles

recorded in the Gospels only 10 seem to exercise faith.

*4.* How does this passage apply to me?

a. J.C. Ryle and others speak to Christians today saying, “Let us leave the passage with grateful hearts, and bless God that we have such a Gospel and such a Savior as the Bible reveals. Are we ever sick and ill? Let us remember that Christ sees, and knows, and can heal as He thinks fit. Are we ever in trouble? Let us hear in our trouble the voice of God, and learn to hate sin more. Let us learn to say from now on, ‘Let me sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto me.’"

Lessons in the Gospel of John March 2,

2022

* + - * 1. Prayer
        2. Review

1. What was the purpose of John telling this story of healing the invalid? And what more do we learn about

Jesus here?

That He is merciful and compassionate even to non-believers.

John’s goal is always the same: “Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book;

but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the

Christ, the Son of

God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.” John

20:30- 31

Jesus regularly maintained that IT IS lawful on the Sabbath to do good. He ignored the scribal regulations causing Him and His followers to often come into conflict with the religious leaders.

* + - * 1. Everything that is done by Jesus and His disciples will be a source of controversy going forward.
        2. No matter what “good” is done it will always be seen as a direct assault to the religious leaders supposed authority and on their laws and traditions.

d. Jesus is on a mission and that mission will be

completed just as He sees fit…just as the Godhead had decided…for He has come to do the will of His Father.

2. We talked about the fact that sometimes we come across a section of Scripture and we are left wondering how this should affect us today. So with that in mind what lessons are we to learn here from this story of Jesus healing the invalid?

He approaches those who would come to believe in the same way He approaches those who won’t believe. One singular message.

His style may change but one message.

The plan of God’s redemption is bigger than we give it credit for…and it is one that even we question way too much.

I often wonder…if I was there and was watching this and I saw Jesus getting turned into the officials/Jews…rulers…by the man whom He had just healed out of His mercy and compassion…I might be tempted to say this whole thing was a waste of everyone’s time…not only did the man not become a Christian but he turned Jesus in to the official to save his place in the Temple.

I might even be tempted to wonder what’s the point at all…since I am often like the ones Jesus has talked to...consumed with what is

in from of me not wanting to think of the “long game” or the “endgame” for that matter.

C. John 5:19-24 1. Who is Jesus’ main audience in these verse?

a. To grasp this let’s back up to vs. 17, “But Jesus answered them, ‘My Father is working until now, and I am working.’”

1. So He is talking to the Jews/rulers who were upset that He broke their Sabbath regulations.
2. Maybe the disciples and maybe some others are probably there as well…but since the Bible doesn’t tell us we don’t know for sure who all else was standing around.
3. Jesus didn’t try to explain to the religious leaders that He had not truly worked on the Sabbath…according to the real Law.
4. He simply makes the point that they know all too well that God, His Father worked and is working on the Sabbath to keep everything in sync that He has created so therefore the Son of

God has also worked and will work on the Sabbath according to

the Law….not the scribal restrictions.

In my files I have a quote by an atheist that reads, “Just say ‘No’ to a god who claims to be all powerful, but then requires a nap only after 6 days of creating…see Genesis 2:2.”

• Of course this is wrong for so many reasons. For the Bible says that God neither sleeps or slumbers…see Psalm 121:3-4- “He will not let your foot be moved; He who keeps you will not slumber.

## Behold, He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.”

• Anyone with half a brain tied behind their back including the Jewish rulers knew this but these men in their haste and zeal to protect God and His law from us forgot as a basic principle: The rest of God on the 7th Day was given for man’s benefit, not God’s… demonstrating a pattern of worship and rest necessary for the well-being of mankind.

1. Jesus could have said, “Though my Father rested on the 7th day from His work of creation, He has never rested for a moment from His providential government of the world, and from His merciful work of supplying the daily needs of all His creatures. Were He to rest from such work, the whole frame of nature would stand still. So I also do works of mercy on the Sabbath day. I do not break the fourth commandment when I heal the sick, any more than my

Father breaks it when He causes the sun to rise and the grass to grow on the Sabbath."

1. We must understand:

* Neither here nor elsewhere does the Lord Jesus overthrow the obligation of the fourth commandment.
* Neither here nor elsewhere is there a word to justify the vague assertions of some modern teachers, that "Christians ought not to keep a Sabbath," and that it is "a Jewish institution which has passed away."

1. Our Lord places the claims of the Sabbath on the right

foundation.

* + - He clears the day of rest from the false and superstitious teaching of the Jews.

* + - Of all the things that can be done on the Sabbath/ Lord’s Day, Jesus shows us clearly that works of necessity and works of mercy (as the Confession says) are no breach of the fourth commandment.

1. But for us there is little danger of keeping the Sabbath too

strictly.

* + - The thing to be feared is the disposition to keep it too loosely and partially, or not to keep it at all.
    - The tendency of the age is not to exaggerate the fourth commandment, but to cut it out of the Decalogue, and throw it aside altogether.
    - We faithful need to stand all the more against this tendency… teaching the next generation of its importance.
    - The experience of 20 centuries supplies sufficient proof that the Church flourishes little when the Sabbath/ Lord’s Day is not kept rightly and well.
  1. But of course this type of talk rather than causing them to fall on their faces before the Lord of Glory simply incited them more hence vs. 18- “This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill Him, because not only was He breaking the Sabbath, but He was even calling God

His own Father, making Himself equal with God.”

* 1. Rather than worshiping Him they choose to seek to kill Him.

2. But then he continues in the conversation with the Jews/rulers vs. 19-24. What is He communicating to them in this passage?

1. Jesus extended His discussion explaining His relationship with the Father and the work with the Father…The God head always has the broader truth in mind since He set up the plan of redemption from before the foundations of the earth and He is unfolding it in time and space.
2. Jesus is an absolute truth teller… “Truly, Truly, I say to you…”

(1)This statement is absolute truth…Greek word- “amen”- truly or most assuredly.”

•

(2)R.C. says this is the double “amen”... “truly, truly”…calls attention at the beginning of a statement to the importance of what is about to be said.

The Greek “amen” is carried over from the Hebrew word

“amen”. It has also crossed over into Latin and English with only slight variations in pronunciation. And it is pronounced

“am-ane”

When this is used at the end of a statement it means… “and so it is” or “so it will be fulfilled.” This is an expression of absolute trustworthiness of what is said and the one who is saying it.

(3)So by using “amen” Jesus is also saying that He has first-hand knowledge that what He says is true and that He has the authority to say it.

(4)Oh by the way,…that is how Rabbi’s approached their subjects as well…so He is teaching these rulers in an official capacity…

probably another reason to hate Him…since to them He was a “poser” presuming this position onto Himself.

(5)As we have said many times when God repeats Himself more than once in a statement we better sit up and listen closely.

c. Fun fact: Here is one of those times where we are told something that He CANNOT do. What is it and why is it important to this discussion?

1. He cannot work independently from the Godhead.
2. Since He does not do anything “independent” from His Father the healing was the under the Father’s direction through Him.

1. For He and the Father and the Spirit are “ONE”.
2. But, of course, He is asserting His own unity with God the

Father.

* 1. No other reasonable meaning can be put on the expressions--"*…*the Son can do nothing of His own accord, but only what He sees the Father doing. For whatever the Father does, that the Son does likewise. For the Father loves the Son and shows Him all that He Himself is doing. And greater works than these will He show Him, so that you may marvel."
  2. Such language, however deep and high, appears to mean that in operation, and knowledge, and heart, and will, the Father and the Son are One--two Persons, but one

God. Truths such as these are of course beyond man's power to explain particularly. Enough for us to believe and rest upon them.

* 1. Jesus’ work is the perfect reflection of the work of the Father… sees vs 17 again.
  2. “And greater works than these will He show Him, so that you may marvel."
  + Turning water into wine.
  + The healing of the official’s son.

Healing the official’s child.

* + He will do even greater things…which is next!

1. Next Jesus asserts, His own Divine power to give life.
2. He tells us, “For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom He will."
3. Life ...in Christ…is the highest and greatest gift that can be given.

* It is precisely that thing that man, with all his cleverness, can neither give to the work of his hands, nor restore when taken away.
* But life, we are told, is in the hands of the Lord Jesus, to give at

His discretion. Dead bodies and dead souls are both alike under

His dominion. He has the keys of death and hell. In Him is life.

He is the WAY, The Truth and the life. (John 1:4, John 14; Rev.

1:18.)

1. Next, He asserts, His own authority to judge the world. “For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him.”
   * 1. All power and authority over the world is committed to Christ's hands. He is the King and the Judge of mankind.
     2. Before Him every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall

confess that He is Lord. (Phil. 2)

* + 1. He that was at once despised and rejected of man, and then condemned and crucified as a criminal, shall one day hold a

great judgment, and judge all the world. "…on that day when,

according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by

Christ

Jesus.”

(Rom. 2:16.)

1. But it is not His desire to leave it there, He wishes to offer this selfsame gospel even to these if they would only repent and believe- “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.”
   * 1. He is telling them how easy it is to have eternal life.
     2. “..whoever hears…”
   * there is a lot more going on here than a mere auditory response…

There is also understanding…seeing…knowing… truth…and that only comes when someone is born again...born from

above…When an elect heart is moved so that we can respond to

God’s call on our life.

* + The moment we are justified is the same moment the Spirit comes to reside in us to give “understanding”… which is also the same moment eternity is placed on our heart.

1. As I was researching this passage I found something that struck me as odd. “…whoever hears my word and believes Him who sent me has eternal life.”

 The Greek does not say… “Believe in Him”…or “believe in me” but it says… “…believe Him who sent me…”

* + Given where He ends up at the end of the chapter talking about how they did not really believe Moses’ writing He is saying here that those who believed God’s Word before have eternal life.
  + This is a conversation that He has with these rulers throughout His ministry because while the may have memorized God’s Word…like their forefather’s they did not know Him and walk in His Word.
  + Of course, to believe God and His word in the OT was equal to believing in God.
  + And by implication those who did not believe God’s Word of old do not receive eternal life. See vs. 29.

 He weaves certain themes throughout this passage to clearly tell them who He is and by whose authority He does what He does.

1. But He is also telling them that it is only through Him. For what

He is saying is either the babblings of an insane man or of God

Himself.

•

* + - * + There is no neutral ground here for people seeking to achieve it

calling Jesus a good man and a good teacher…

* + - * + He is either who He says He is clearly or He is clearly insane.
        + It is saying the power is in His Word alone.
        + He who believes passes from the death of the Covenant of

Works into everlasting life promised and secured by the Covenant of

Grace.

D. John 5:25-30

* + 1. He finished vs. 24 with another absolute truth to them…the second since verse 19. But after calling them to repentance and belief He makes yet another absolute statement to them along with yet another explanation.

* + 1. What would they have heard Him saying in this section?

a. Since He just healed the invalid what they probably heard was Him saying that He is going to make dead people hear and then they will come back to life…now. “…an hour is coming, and is now here.” (1) These are the ones He just talked about in verse 24.

* + - 1. This is true for those who are spiritually dead…for His elect.
      2. Again, just like He already said in verse 24, the spiritually dead will be made alive by the power of His word alone.

b. They would have heard Him say again that He was making Himself equal with the Father and they would be correct. (See vs. 18) (1) They knew God (Elohim, Adonai) to be the judge of mankind.

1. They knew God (Elohim, Adonai) to be the giver of life.
2. Jesus is saying that the Father has given Him this ability- “For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son also to have life in himself.”

•

* + See vs. 21…in how they share this attribute.

* + That God (Adonai) had shared His attributes of life and judgement with Jesus.
  + Remember: they do not believe in God… 3 in one…no Trinity. So it would have been blasphemous that He was saying that God shared these with Him this way.

•

c. This is amazing stuff they are hearing Him say. Exactly what the Messiah would say. But then He says, “Do not marvel at this…” at what He has said so far. If you think that is amazing… now He says something the Pharisees, in the group, could have agreed with…that there would be a resurrection someday.

* + 1. He goes from talking about the rebirth of His elect …all those who hear and believe.
    2. Then He speaks of everyone in the whole world both “…those who have done good to the

resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.” •

He is telling us a few of extraordinary

thing…

* + - * Everyone “good” or “evil” will live forever…one to eternal life the other to eternal judgment/damnation.
      * He is telling them and us that there are only 2 classes of humans…Elect and nonelect. Those who believe and do good…that which brings God glory…and those who

are evil and are of the non-elect. These kind of thing

does not win Him many friends…if He is such a good teacher and good man.

* + - * This has always been God’s plan.
      * Just as the plan had been to judge…heal and rescue from this present evil age…it has always been to judge those who are not

His, as well.

* + - * And it will be Jesus who commands them to rise on that Day.
      * He is not talking about salvation by works…though these might have perceived that that was what He is saying…
      * Rather as one theologian put it…“The lives they live form the test of the faith they

## profess.”

(3) Jesus explained this amazing truth to tell these religious leaders exactly who He is and the nature of His authority and His deity… if they haven’t fully grasp it up to this point.

d. He tells them yet another thing about Himself in vs. 30- “I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of Him who sent me.”

1. Jesus is qualified as a judge because of who he is and the role He plays in the Godhead… is impartial.
2. Also, because He does not seek His own but because He seeks to do His Father’s will.
3. Twice now He has said, “I can do nothing on my own.” Emphasizing who He serves.

Lessons in the Gospel of John March 9, 2022

1. Prayer
2. Review

1. What does Jesus seem to be doing as He talks with these rulers of the Jews in verses 19-30?

* 1. Showing them respect in that He uses the same methods of teaching that they do.
  2. Pointing out to them who He is and by whose authority He has for doing the things He is doing. The 2 things they will ask

Him over and over again…just like they ask John the

Baptist…as they should have asked, by the way.

* 1. He is also revealing the way of salvation is through Him alone…not through the law.
  2. Then He is calling on them to repent and believe…vs. 24. And as He does this He is also calling them up quick…as He will do later…to the fact that they and their forefathers did

NOT BELIEVE GOD otherwise they would believe Him.

* 1. Then He reiterates all that He has already said with the caveat concerning the resurrection from the dead…

(1) This is to make His point so that they are left with only 2 choices… (2) that Jesus is who He says He is or He is a blasphemer and a lunatic.

* 1. Mere intellectual assent won’t get them into heaven either.

2. Why does Jesus make the point twice, *“I can do nothing on my own.”* in verse 19 and in verse 30?

1. He cannot work independently from the Godhead.
2. Since He does not do anything “independent” from His Father the healing was the under the Father’s direction through Him.
3. For He and the Father and the Spirit are “ONE”. He is asserting the unity of the Godhead ...no other reasonable meaning can be placed on this statement.
   1. Such language, however deep and high, appears to mean that in operation, and knowledge, and heart, and will, the Father and the Son are One--two Persons, but one God.
   2. Truths such as these are of course beyond man's power to explain particularly. Enough for us to believe and rest upon them.
4. This is important because they will treat Him as if He is working alone as all the other “Messiah’s” have done.

D. Chapter 5:31-39

1. What is he communicating to them in verses 31?

a. That His witness alone is not sufficient since God’s word demands 2-3 witnesses.

(1) It always interests me that we allow for the witness of one person all the time. That we easily believe someone and what they say without any evidence to support their claims.

* + We will follow politicians because of their claims without researching their claims to see if they are true…too often based on just what we hear and whether we like it or not…or how they look.
  + People “join” churches simply by giving their money and showing up…no testimony allowed. Or they are rebaptized when the Bible is clear rebaptism is unnecessary at best and reveals a weakness of faith at worst. 2. We see this evidenced throughout on how easily God’s

people stray from the truth based on good speaking skills or someone telling them what they want to hear…false teachers look and sound good when you cannot discern or don’t care about the differences between truth and heresy. (Think Galatian and Corinthian letters.

Also vs. 43 as well.)

b. That He can give witnesses to the truthfulness of what

He is saying.

2. What/whose testimonies does He point to in verses 32-39?

a. John the Baptist- vs. 32-35-

1. Jesus sought to prove who He is by the accepted method lay down in the law that required 2 or 3 witnesses. It is also a testimony to hardness of the hearts that heard this that they are not persuaded to believe. But it only supports the truth of the old saying--that unbelief does not arise so much from lack of evidence, as from lack of will to believe.
2. Jesus speaks so highly of John, "He has borne witness to the truth"-

-"He was a burning and a shining light.”

* + Look at how ell Jesus knew John and what John did…so much to use him as a witness to prove who

He is.

* + Oh, that our life could be so looked at in the same way.
  + Of course, it is through Christ … Let us believers remember this: Even at our worst we may boldly say with David--"As for me, I am poor and needy, but the

LORD takes thought for me. You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God!" (Psalm 40:17.)

* + But the real question is, would our testimony be a good witness or a bad one to men?

1. Even the religious rulers had sought out John’s testimony at first. Jesus says in verse 35- “and you were willing to rejoice for a while in his light.”
2. And John testifies openly after meeting Jesus- John 1:32-34-“And John bore witness: ‘I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and it remained on Him. I myself did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’ And I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God.”
3. The Father and the work He is doing that was given to Him by the

Father. Vs. 36-37.

* 1. The works/miracles of the Lord receive far less attention, in the present day, as proofs of His Divine mission.
     + - Too many regard them with in silent disbelief, as things they have never seen so it is hard to get excited about it themselves…though miracles happen every day.
       - And then there are the many who would openly testify that they do not believe in the possibility of such things as miracles, and would like to strike them out of the Bible as weak stories and distractions from the moralistic teaching of

Christ.

* 1. This thread has run throughout this small discourse. 5 times He says the Father sent Him…in the same wording of the Father sending His prophets.
  2. But, there is no getting over the fact, that in the days when our Lord was on the earth, His miracles and works produced an immense effect on the minds of men.
     + - They aroused attention to Him who worked them. “Do not marvel at this…” They excited inquiry, even if they did not convert.
       - There were so many, they were so public, and they were so incapable of being explained away, that our Lord's enemies could only say that they were done by Christ working in conjunction with Satan.
       - That they were done, they could not deny. "So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council and said, ‘What are we to do? For this man performs many signs.’” Or “does many miracles." (John 11:47.)
       - The facts that “wise men” pretend to deny now, no one pretended to deny 2000 years ago.

1. The Word of God itself- vs. 38-39…
   1. But He is not just talking about the physical works He has done but He is also speaking to the prophesies of the OT that told the people how to know the Messiah had come…based on the kind of things He

would do…

* + - God’s Word through Isaiah, Isaiah 42:1- “Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon Him…” See also

Matt. 12:18

* + - God’s Word given to Matthew to all who could hear at Jesus’ baptism since Matthew wasn’t there,
    - “And when Jesus was baptized, immediately He went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on Him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my beloved Son,4 with whom I am well pleased.’”

(Matt. 3:16-17)

* + - Matt. 11:2-6 – “Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said

to Him, ‘Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?’ And Jesus answered them, ‘Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.’”

* + - John 14:11- “Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.”

(2) From Moses, to the prophets, to John the Baptist to The Word Himself…Jesus Christ…all gave witness… “Search the

Scriptures…and it is they that bear witness about me…” (vs. 39).

• Scriptures=The Old Testament

* Every part of the Bible is meant to teach us about

Christ.

* Christ is not merely in the Gospels and Epistles.
* Christ is to be found directly and indirectly in the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets.
* In the promises to Adam, Abraham, Moses, and

David--in the types and emblems of the

ceremonial law--in the predictions of Isaiah and the other prophets--Jesus, the Messiah, is everywhere to be found in the Old Testament.

• And yet they could not and did not and would not…see…hear…or understand…even with the same Truth that had been handed down by their father’s standing right in front of them because they could and have never heard and could and have never seen…and probably never will just like the vast majority of the fathers.

*D.* Chapter 5:38-47

1. What are the reasons Jesus gives for their unbelief?

a. They may search the Scriptures that they alone would give them salvation…

* + 1. They were seeking to do everything perfectly…but without being the Elect they cannot and will not understand and they are left in their unbelief.
    2. The scriptures testify to Christ and the salvation that is granted through Him alone.

b. Because of their unbelief they are unwilling to come to

Him.

1. Which is true for all men unless and until their hearts have been changed. For as dead men there are no real desires and no desires then no coming to the only thing that matters. Dead, paralyzed…however you want to say it the do not come because they cannot come to Him unless He draws them.
2. Thousands, in every age, are constantly working to shift the blame of their conditions off themselves.

* They talk of their inability to change.
* They tell you complacently, that they cannot help being what they are!
* They know, undeniably, that they are wrong, but they cannot be different!
* Such talk will not stand the test of the Word of Christ before us because the unconverted are what they are because they have no will to be better. Jesus already said about them, "And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people

loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed." (John 3:19-20.)

* The words of the Lord Jesus will silence many--"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! See, your house is left to you desolate." (Matt.

23:37-38.) Total inability to choose.

(3) They had all the proof one could have but they had not been changed and granted life so they will not come.

* 1. They do not have the love of God in them…eternity has not been written on their hearts. Rather they will actually follow after another that is not the Christ before they would follow after

Him…since they will follow someone…it is in our nature.

* 1. They are too caught up in their own position and prestige which is given to them by each other.

1. Their pride prevented them from seeing …just like today.
2. They were willing to be hypocrites to ensure their positions of power rather than look to the One who could truly empower them.

e. They say they followed Moses…keeping his law and the law they have come up with themselves…BUT, Jesus says that Moses will

in the end judge them since he will clearly point out the error of their way to the

Father…

* + - * 1. They could not keep the Law perfectly so they are lost.
        2. They did not believe in the One he wrote about so they are lost.
        3. Think of the parable from Luke 16:19-31 of the rich man and

Lazarus.

2. Again what is His reasoning for bringing Moses into the picture again?

* 1. To judge them by their own standard.
  2. He is saying, “But you didn’t really follow Moses for if you were a disciple of

Moses you would have been a disciple of me and believed my

words.”

* 1. Jesus did not call these leaders to a new or different faith. He called them to believe what Moses, what the Scriptures, what His works, what John the Baptist each testified about: that He was and is the Messiah, the Son of God and

God the Son.

* 1. But they were unable to believe as decreed by God so even with all the evidence in front of them they could not receive it.
  2. So again we can’t just decide to believe on our own…it is the work of God through Jesus Christ alone.
  3. We must never neglect the teaching of the Old testament as so many are prone to do. Why?
     1. The simple fact that the writers of the New Testament continually refer to the Old Testament.
     2. They speak even of the most miraculous events recorded as if they are true.
     3. These 2 alone should silence our doubts.

* + 1. Is it at all likely, probable, or credible, that we of the 21st Century are somehow better informed about Moses than Jesus and His Apostles? God forbid! As Paul would say. Then let us stand fast, and not doubt that every word in the Old Testament, as well as in the New, was given by inspiration of

God.

*E.* Another principle to take from this: Scripture interprets Scripture.

In this passage alone, vs. 19-47, we see Jesus telling us truths about Himself, or about His Word, or about His Father/the

Godhead or about the people to whom He is mostly speaking…the

Jewish leaders…

At the same time, He is interpreting for us what He means in all of these with His Word…from the OT and from His own mouth

at that

time…giving us a clear tool for verifying the validity of Scripture. a. It is not based on what the Church says it is.

* 1. It is not based on personal interpretation and what we want it to say.
  2. It is based on the Word interpreting the Word alone.

Lessons in the Gospel of John March 16, 2022

* 1. Prayer
  2. Review 1. What are some of the things we learned about Jesus in this chapter?
     + - 1. He is one with the Father.
         2. He can work and does the work of the Father…the

Godhead whenever and that that is not a violation of

God’s law…like healing this invalid by the power of

His word.

* + - * 1. He is who He says He is…and He has also provided witnesses to this and from where His authority comes from.
        2. He isn’t working alone.
        3. ?

2. Jesus offered the Gospel to these Jewish religious leaders and then gave them reasons for their unbelief. What were some of the reasons does he say for their unbelief and why was it necessary to point it out?

f. They may search the Scriptures that they alone would give them salvation…

1. They were seeking to do everything perfectly…but without being the Elect they cannot and will not understand and they are left in their unbelief.
2. The scriptures testify to Christ and the salvation that is granted through

Him alone.

g. Because of their unbelief they are unwilling to come to Him.

(4) Which is true for all men unless and until their hearts have been changed. For as dead men there are no real desires and no desires then

no coming to the only thing that matters. Dead, paralyzed…however you want to say it the do not come because they cannot come to Him unless He draws them.

1. Thousands, in every age, are constantly working to shift the blame of their conditions off themselves.
   * They talk of their inability to change.
   * They tell you complacently, that they cannot help being what they are!
   * They know, undeniably, that they are wrong, but they cannot be different!
   * Such talk will not stand the test of the Word of Christ before us because the unconverted are what they are because they have no will to be better. Jesus already said about them, "And this is the

judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed."

(John 3:19-20.)

* + The words of the Lord Jesus will silence many--"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you

were not willing! See, your house is left to you desolate." (Matt.

23:37-38.) Total inability to choose.

1. They had all the proof one could have but they had not been changed and granted life so they will not come.
2. Unlike Andrew, he knew because Moses and the whole Old

Testament spoke of Him. John 1:43-45-“The next day Jesus

decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, ‘Follow me.’

Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and

Peter.

Philip found Nathanael and said to him, ‘We have found

Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote,

Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.’”

* 1. They do not have the love of God in them…eternity has not been written on their hearts. Rather they will actually follow after another that is not the Christ before they would follow after Him…since they will follow someone…it is in our nature.
  2. They are too caught up in their own position and prestige which is given to them by each other.
     1. Their pride prevented them from seeing …just like today.
     2. They were willing to be hypocrites to ensure their positions of power rather than look to the One who could truly empower them.

j. They say they followed Moses…keeping his law and the law they have come up with themselves…BUT , Jesus says that Moses will in the end judge them since he will clearly point out the error of their way to the

Father…

* + 1. They could not keep the Law perfectly so they are lost.
    2. They did not believe in the One he wrote about so they are lost.
    3. Think of the parable from Luke 16:19-31 of the rich man and

Lazarus.

3. What lessons did we/do we learn for our walk today from this chapter?

C. Chapter 6:1-21

1. These verses describe two of our Lord's most remarkable miracles. Of all the great works that He did, none were done so publicly as these.

Of all the miracles related in the Gospels, the feeding of the

5000 is the only one which all the four

Gospelwriters alike record. (Matt. 14:15-33; Mark 6:30-52; Luke

9:10-17 and here…with 3 of the 4…exclusion of Luke recording

Jesus walking on the water) This fact alone (like the four times repeated account of the crucifixion and resurrection) is enough to show that these are miracles demanding special attention.

1. Fun fact: Sea of Galilee is actually a large lake (the lowest freshwater lake in the world) in Northern Israel and it has many names:
   1. Sea of Chinnereth or Kinnereth- Num. 34; Josh. 13
   2. Lake of Gennesaret (Greek form of Chinnereth)- Luke 5
   3. Sea of Galilee- Matthew, Mark and John-600 feet below sea level.
   4. Sea of Tiberius –A.D. 20-30 Herod Antipas had dedicated a city on the shore to the reigning emperor Tiberius so it was natural then to be given the name Sea of Tiberius.
2. John sets the scene for these 2 great miracles. Most of us know these amazing miracles well. What do we learn about Jesus in these two miracles?
   1. Jesus is compassionate in wanting to care for them physically. In Mark’s account it says that Jesus is tired but he still teaches and heals…because of His compassion.
      * 1. This is not a people who have been without food for a lengthy time…these are folks that have simply missed a meal or two that day…but even at that given that the boy had food probably

some of them would have prepared for a long day.

* + - 1. While Jesus could have sent them home with a good conscience…He doesn’t for He has compassion on them.
    - He wishes to provide for them…he cares about something as trivial as a meal… for their comfort and wellbeing. God is concerned about food, welfare

and provision…when the Bible says that God will meet our needs

...it is true.

* + - And He will provide an abundance from so little.

(3) This also demonstrates for His disciples the giving nature of God.

b. He is sovereign and all powerful.

1. We have obviously seen that before…but this is huge. 5000 men possible 12 or 15 thousand people; men, women and children. This miracle is on such a grand public scale.
2. Barley loaves were considered the poor man’s bread along with pickled fish like sardines to flavor the barley loaves… ◼ Barley loaves and fish were staple food for Galileans.

* 5 loaves and 2 fishes to feed all these people with 12 baskets left over…The people, “…had as much as they wanted.”…

“…and the people had eaten their fill.” They had their fill of food…it wasn’t

just a snack.

* Barley loaves a poor man’s…humble man’s bread…Jesus said,

## “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

As the Sovereign He appropriated the food of one of His servants for the good of everyone there…multiplying the broken pieces sufficiently to feed everyone well.

1. This miracle has confounded non-believers for years…non-believers who say there just isn’t enough evidence that Jesus existed or if He existed there is not enough evidence that He did miracles.
   * + 12-15 ,000 people could give witness to this one event…lots of evidence..1st hand evidence.
     + As I said last week even the religious leaders did not deny the miracles Jesus did.
     + It is only in the last 200 years that skeptics have called into question that Jesus did miracles.
2. He is One who has all power over dead hearts.
   * + Not only can He mend that which is broken--build up that which is ruined--heal that which is sick--strengthen that which is weak.
     + He can do even greater things than these. He can call into being that which was not before, and call it out of nothing…so that 5 loaves and 2 fish can feed 12-15,000 their fill.
     + This miracle shows us His sovereign nature over the elements. He has already shown us how He is sovereign over water for that matter…turning water to wine. He will show us also that

He controls the waters in such a way to walk on them in the next miracle.

1. Then how about this… He came to His disciples as they were rowing on the stormy lake, "walking on the sea”. He walked on them as easily as we walk on dry land. That which is contrary to all natural reason was perfectly possible to Christ. We don’t often think this way but:

* + HE WALKED ON WATER…no one had ever done that! He rues over all!
  + The Lord Jesus is not only the Lord, but the Maker of all creation. "All things were made by him; and without

him was

not anything made that was made." (John 1:3.)

* + It was just as easy for Him to walk on the sea as to form the sea at the beginning--just as easy to suspend the common laws of nature, as they are called, as to impose those laws at the first.
  + Smart men talk some serious nonsense sometimes about the unchangeable nature of the "laws of nature," as if they were above God Himself, and could never be suspended. After all God did suspend the sun from going down, as well as created the Sun and the moon and the stars so as their Creator He can do with them as He pleases.
  + It is well to be reminded sometimes by such miracles as that before us, that these so-called "laws of nature" are neither immutable nor eternal in God’s hands…ours, yes…but not God. There was a beginning, and there will one day be an end according to the plan and will of God…not man.

1. Was it His sovereign power that moved the boat so fast across the water? “…immediately the boat was at the land to which they

were going.”

* Some have said this is yet another miracle.
* Or, perhaps His mere presence calmed the disciples so much and took away their frustration knowing Jesus is with them in all

that He calls them to do that the time across the water seemed faster especially after the seas are calmed?

* All the accounts speak of the seas becoming calm after Jesus gets into the boat except this one which John assumes that His audience would have already known.

c. In His sovereignty, we also see humbleness.

1. At Jesus’ temptation in the wilderness He had refused to miraculously make bread to feed Himself, but He did here for others and with others what He would not do for Himself.
2. “Perceiving then that they were about to come and take Him by force to make him king, Jesus withdrew again to the mountain by Himself.” (Vs. 15) • He had come to serve not be served. He felt He must withdraw.  How few ever refuse greatness when offered to them!
   * How many are continually seeking great things for themselves, and forgetting the injunction--"Seek them not!" (Jer. 45:5.)

He humbly acknowledges who He is before His disciples when He comes walking across the water,

* + “But He said to them, ‘It is I; do not be afraid.’ Then they were glad to take him into the boat…”
  + This is a full disclosure statement of who He is and that is why they are glad.
  + Jesus who they loved was back with them.
  + But even more than that personal physical relationship which is a comfort and would make them glad… what He said goes beyond the simple relationship of man to man, to the relationship of God to man. Yahweh is here! I am Yahweh!
  + He gives His covenantal name with the expression, “I am who I am”…just like He gave to Moses. I am who I am, so do not be afraid.
  + This is another of the many “I am” statements in John though commentators don’t give it much press. They speak of the 7 “I am” statements but Jesus used this more often than that.
  + The Greek here is “ego eimi”. Both words mean “I am” so Jesus is saying, “I am, I am , here now” later He will says, “ I am…the

bread of life …the door…the way, the truth and the life…the good shepherd…the vine.

* + In fact, the first one in this gospel is probably found in Chapter 4:26- “Jesus said to her, ‘I who speak to you am He.’” Jesus said to her, “Ego Eimi”- “I am, I am” He who speaks to you.” I

am the God of your fathers, namely Moses… “I am that I am.” But also Isaiah where we see in the Greek OT this phrase, “I am, I am is the One my people will hear speaking” at the end of Is. 52:6. Or even before this in Isaiah 43:10- “You are my witnesses, declares the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he.” This is also my name, my eternal covenantal name from of old…the One who will Redeem His people…all His people.

* + Another one of these not so public “I am” statements is when

Jesus says, “Before Abraham was, I am.” This is perhaps the

“biggest” of all of them. Jesus makes it very clear …if anyone was still wondering… that He is the eternal God incarnate…the long awaited promised One.

* + These don’t just speak of God’s relationship and Jesus’ coming to His children…but they also speak of His authority as God...the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob…the God/Messiah they had been taught would come.
    - Jesus humbly reveals His self to them and well as speaking of His power and authority all at the same time.
    - The Greek phrase “Ego Eimi” is used no less than 24 times in this Gospel.

d. All of this to show and tell all who are listening who He is…the sovereign Creator God who is the promised Redeemer of His elect peoples.

Lessons in the Gospel of John April 13, 2022

1. Prayer
2. Review

4. After reading these two accounts in 6:1-21, what are some things we learn and we can take away for our day to day?

* 1. How many “hopeless” situations have you had to deal with in your life…at least hopeless from our/your perspective which never includes all the facts?
  2. How many times are we presented with an opportunity to trust God and we blow it? But this was impossible, Philip was saying.
  3. It is easy to criticize these people for following Jesus because He gave them bread and healed their sick…but how often do we only show love for God when He gives us what we want…and then effectively turn our backs on Him when He doesn’t give us what we want? We must love and obey Him simply for who He is …our Lord and our God.
  4. Mark’s account tells us that Jesus was actually watching them as they crossed the lake. “And He saw that they were making headway painfully, for the wind was against them.” Mark 6:48
  5. How often in the midst of difficulty to we wonder where God is? When He is right with us…His eye is always on His own.
  6. Or, how often do we understand that the difficulty may have be God’s will for us at the time…as it was for these disciples…. when on their own they couldn’t make great headway…until Jesus comes to them and then they are immediately…or at least it feels that way

…across the lake.

Their work …following Jesus’ will to cross the lake …was not in vain, but they like us need to know that Jesus is with us in order to be effective for Christ.

1. Sometimes problems catch us by surprise…especially when we believe we are in and doing God’s will as these disciples were doing for Jesus had told them to go across the sea to Capernaum.
2. Any of us would be afraid if we saw Jesus walking on the water…none of us would be calm in our faith at a time like this…we would all fail the test.
3. Doesn’t always seem that the storms of life always seem worse at night...we can see so much better in the light ...of the day.
4. Think about what happens when Jesus comes into our lives.
   * + - We come to KNOW Him…so when He speaks…we should be calmed and moved and challenged and know we are love…for He is love! His Spirit reveals to us His name, His titles, His ways…all of which is geared towards His Father’s glory and our good always.
       - Sometimes life is like the resistance the disciples encountered …we are pulling on the oars but we aren’t getting anywhere and we are about to give up and be engulfed.
       - But as soon as Jesus gets in the boat…that is when we are able to truly focus on Him and His promises it is often amazing how the peace of God calms us.

* + - * This passage doesn’t tell us, that He calmed the seas...it simply says they were glad He was with them and they were able to get to their destination. God doesn’t always take the difficulties away and make thing easier but He always gets us through the darkness...the valley of the shadow of death…since He is with us. He can get us through the storm.
      * Do we believe it?

5. How many different Jesus’ are there in the Church and outside the Church and how do those images stack up to who He says He is in His word? a. We try to redefine who Jesus is in our day and age…

b. We follow the Jesus we “see” the one that matches up to our opinion too often.

C. John 6:22-34

1. What do we learn about human nature from verses 22-34? Think about this and seek to enumerate as many things as possible from this text.

1. That people only see and hear what they want to see and hear…unless or until their eyes have been opened and their hearts changed so they can see.
2. People want to be “seen” with the “cool kids”. They wanted to be among the “celebrity.” This was the

“place to be!”

1. That people believe they are entitled to receive more once they have received anything.
2. They believe all they have to do is do the right kind of work to receive from God what is theirs by birthright. Jewish…or the American Dream…it is our birthright

to get what we want…and if you work hard enough you can always achieve your dreams…wrong!

1. We all like to ask questions until we get the answer that we desire. We are convinced if we keep asking that we will wear down the one in authority. They ask Jesus 3 questions and by the end we see their motivation.
   1. “Rabbi, when did you come here?”- vs. 25
   2. “What must we do, to be doing the works of

God?- vs. 28

* 1. “Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform?”- vs.

30

1. We/they have a general distain for those in authority.
2. People think of things and the here and now…not salvation and not eternity.
3. That people can even become addicted to signs and wonders…one reason why Jesus repeated spoke of the ones who didn’t see or need to see but still believed.
4. That people cannot “see” Jesus on their own…they are totally unable.

2. What do we learn about Jesus in these verses?

1. As we have seen throughout Scripture from Genesis onward…God can see the heart of men...our hearts.
   * 1. On one hand this is an attribute of God…but it is also a product of true discernment even by us…we can easily be deceived when we aren’t really paying close attention. But the Scriptures call on us to be discerning reminding us the power is within us to do so…if we truly love as God prescribes.
     2. But then, we see Him exposing the false motives of those who followed Him for the sake of the loaves and fishes.
     3. They had followed Him across the Lake of Galilee. It might have seemed that they were ready to believe in Him, and do Him honor. But He knew the inward springs of their conduct, and was not deceived. "You are seeking me,

not because you saw the signs/miracles, but because you ate your fill of the loaves."

1. Jesus understands His own authority as shepherd and

Lord.

* 1. Of course, Jesus did not mean to encourage idleness when He commanded them, vs. 27-“Do not work for the food that perishes…” Labor was ordained to be man's occupation before the fall. Labor is honorable in all men. So Jesus is

not saying, “Do not work for food” for that would be going against a creation mandate to

work…

* 1. What Jesus was commanding them against was, neglecting the soul to care for our own bodies…

(3)

* + - That is, putting ourselves and our wants and desires ahead of what is most needed to food of faith.
    - J.C. Ryle dealt with this in his own time. He says, “What Jesus reproved was, the common habit of laboring only for the things of time...the temporary, and letting alone the things of eternity-of minding only the life that now is, and

disregarding the life to come.”

1. We must all understand that Jesus did not say these words before them/us without good cause.
   * He is reminding us of how we allow ourselves to get too attached to this world which is passing away.
   * This command should catch us all up short since we all fall into this from time to time.
   * How many of us are doing the very thing against which Jesus warns us? We/they are laboring night and day for "the food that

perishes," and only doing for our souls if there is enough time in this culture.

* + Think about it this way… (An example from dead pastors) …We set the table and eat the meal…and then the next night we do the same thin all over again, and we have to get more food because every helping we enjoy is gone. Jesus is obviously saying, “Don’t spend your life pursuing that sort of thing. Don’t spend your life pursuing what has no ultimate significance.”
  + Jesus said, Matt. 6:20-21- “lay/store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your

heart will be also.”

* + Those who seek first the kingdom of God, will never fail to find what God has promised, secured and established for them- Matt. 6:31-34- “Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek

after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of

God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Therefore, do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.”

1. Then He says, “…but for the food that endures to eternal life…” He would have us take pains to seek the food and satisfaction for our souls. That food is provided in rich abundance in Him. But he that would have it must diligently seek it.
2. And as our Good Shepherd it is He who provides for us what we need,

“…which the Son of Man will give to you. For on Him God the

Father has set His seal.” (See also Psalm 23)

* + I don’t know about you but these words are so gracious and encouraging!
  + Whatever we need for the relief of our hungering souls, Christ is ready, willing and able to give. His promise is true…in fact, when we think about it these things have already been given in our justification.
  + Whatever mercy, grace, peace, strength we require, the Son of man will give freely, immediately, abundantly, and eternally through the

Holy Spirit.

* + He is far more willing to give than man is to receive.
  + Something more about this “Son of man” phrase. Why would it not be good to use the term “Messiah” of Himself in this crowd in particular?
* Messiah speaks into their thinking of an earthy kingship.
* Also, Messiah holds a particular militaristic meaning for

these people.

* Finally, Son of Man was “new” terminology in the religious speak of the day so it didn’t come with any particular baggage unless,

like the Pharisees you understood, what we call today, the OT reference….and they didn’t.

• And, on top of that, “For on Him God the Father has set His seal.” God has authenticated by these miracles and His own word about Him that He has been given all authority in heaven and on earth which had been prophesied as well.

(6) We see Jesus’ patience when we see the people revealing their ignorance again when after Jesus has said what He has, about seeking the food He will give (which by the way sets up all that

comes afterwards), they say, “What must we do, to be doing the works of God?”

* This reveals that they didn’t hear what Jesus had just said.
* According to verses 59 they were all in a synagogue at this point so they would have also been influence by their surroundings.
* It reveals the prejudice concerning salvation that they have been taught by the Pharisees and Sadducees. “What shall we do

## that we might work the works of God?" Doing, doing, doing, was

their only idea of the way to heaven.

* But given how this conversation continues it seems more to mean… “Just tell us what we have to do so we can get what we want from you. Tell us what top do to get more bread and maybe you as King.”
* It is interesting to me that they saw Him as someone who could tell them these things…but then they did look at Him like the prophet Moses had told them to...or did they?

1. But Jesus being so very patient, knowing that they are coming at their soteriology from a biased/sinful position…since most of them were sinners says, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom

He has sent.”

* + What patience since He has told them all this before.
  + Interesting…justification is by faith/belief not by works.
    - The rest of the chapter as well as what has come before confirms this statement.
    - Their Father Abraham believed God and God counted to him as righteousness. ◼ But it was God who worked in him that he could believe.  Here the Son of God, the Head of the Church, declares that believing on Him is the highest and greatest of all

"works!" It is "the work of God."

* + - This is a great irony…because it is not a work at all… to believe…we believe because we have been justified by faith through Christ alone. John 1:13, John 3, 6:44,65. It is truly all God’s work…it is not man’s reward or payment for his own works as this crowd obviously believed.
    - The work of believing God is the on-going work of sanctification and our own working out our salvation with fear and trembling.

 Did the Jews want something to do in religion? Let them know that the greatest thing they had to do was, to cast aside their pride, confess their guilt and need, and humbly believe.

1. Jesus patience but firmness is on display in the last section to be sure in vs. 30-34.
   * + - * Obviously some of these people had not been at the feeding of the thousands or if they were… and as we see throughout the

Gospels…the people simply wanted more signs or in this case more food.

* + - * + But either way they ask a question that would have irritated me to no end, “So they said to Him, ‘Then what sign do you do, that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform? Our fathers ate manna in the wilderness; as it is written He gave them

bread to eat.”

Lessons in the Gospel of John April 27, 2022

* + - 1. Prayer
      2. Review

1. Why did say that these passages, specifically 50-58 are not primarily about the Lord’s Supper as many have sought to use them for?

It does expound the truth of the Lord’s Supper.

Speaking of His flesh like this most assuredly speaks to His death…a death that is both voluntary… “I will give” and vicarious… “I give for the life of the

world”…elect from every nation tongue and tribe.

Receiving Him as Bread is receiving/believing

what

He accomplished on the Cross….to save His people.

2. What are the Jews, the Leaders of the people seeking to do here in verse 52?

(Remember we are in the synagogue.)

* + - 1. Twist Jesus’ words. See II Peter 3:16-“There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, pas they do the

other Scriptures.” They were seeking to turn the crowd against Him.

* + - 1. It is probable that the Jewish leaders willfully twisted

Jesus’ Words because they saw the people leaning into

Him….after all Jesus had defined in vs. 51 what He meant by flesh…sacrificing His own life for those who are His.

* + - 1. The metaphor that He gave in verses 53-58 was one that the teachers of the Law would hear as a direct reference to the sacrificial system that they understood and taught.
    1. Speaking of sacrifice…He is saying for all to hear again that only His sacrifice would be sufficient to take away the sins of His people.
    2. That the sacrificial system they now knew would not ever suffice….in fact the Temple would be gone in less than 40 years and there haven’t been any sacrifices since….and won’t be because the Risen One is the Messiah that had been longed prophesied… the One they rejected…the One from whom most of them will receive His ultimate wrath.
    3. Vs. 40 and vs 54 say basically the same thing for all to hear who have ears to hear and a desire to hear.

d. This is Old Testament teaching:

* + 1. These words also reflect the words of Isaiah 55:1-2-

“Come, everyone who thirsts, come

to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.”

* + 1. But the leaders and then the people would not listen and so they would not receive what He was giving…just like their forefathers who rejected the word of the LORD.
    2. So you would think…since they were in the synagogue at the time that some of this would have clicked…and it probably did for those who were meant to receive.

3. What are we meant to learn from this section for today?

C. John 6:60-71 1. The disciples call this a “hard saying” in verse 60. Why? (Greek translation- “Upon hearing this many of His disciples said, ‘This is a hard/harsh/difficult teaching; who can hear/ comprehend/ understand it’”

1. They didn’t understand and they wouldn’t fully understand until He had ascended which He references to in verse 62.
2. They also seemed harsh to those who heard…because what He has been saying is becoming evident.

(1)“But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe.”

(vs. 36)…

(2)“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.” (vs. 44)…

(3)“It is written in the Prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me— not that anyone has seen the Father except He who is from God; He has seen the Father. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life.” (4548)…

(4)“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.”(vs. 53)…

1. A hard saying from the gospel Matthew- “Then the disciples came and said to Him, ‘Why do you speak to them in parables?’ And He answered them, ‘To you it has been given to know the secrets of

the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to

the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.” (Matt. 13:10-13)

1. By implication the hard saying is this: all those who don’t believe are not His and will not have eternal life…in fact, the reality is this:

most of them don’t and won’t believe…so yeah, a hard saying. Leaving the 12 to wonder about themselves.

1. Interesting that this “harsh saying” comes from Jesus. Today’s folks desire that nothing harsh ever came from His mouth. But coming from the Lord we need to look long and hard and be instructed accordingly.
2. The people will see it as a hard saying and will leave Him. Because they are getting the message now. They know this is about his death not

about actually eating His body or drinking His blood...that is just the excuse they are using to leave because of what He is actually saying:

* 1. National heritage will not save them
  2. National religion will not save them…they never were children of the promise unless they believe in Jesus Christ as the promised One sent to save His people from their sins.
  3. The fact that they have had the scriptures will not save them…since they

DO NOT know the Scriptures otherwise they would know

Him.

* 1. They had the Temple of God and that won’t save them either.
  2. The sacrifices won’t save them and get them nto the kingdom they supposedly long for, because they were never meant to anything but give a momentary since of acceptance that they are being and doing as God commanded.

1. Their fickleness reminds me of his people today that go along in their “faith” praising and singing His praises until they encounter a teaching they don’t like or don’t agree with. How many people today leave a church…or the Church over the teaching of predestination and election…justification by faith…substitutionary atonement.
2. Jesus is saying ultimately,
   * 1. You have to be drawn to me…you won’t come on your own.
     2. You have to be united to me by my work alone.
     3. You have to feast on the bread of life…my words that come to you through the Holy Spirit…this is NOT a casual relationship…I expect a commitment of whole hearted pursuit of all the He teaches and commands.
     4. R.C. Sproul puts this commitment this way, “You have to take all of me, as if you were ingesting me.”

2. What point is Jesus making to his disciples (all those, including the 12, that followed Him) at this point in vs. 62-66?

1. Grumbling disciples…surprise…many of them have been grumbling about one thing or another all along.
2. Now Jesus asks, “Do you take offense at this?” Language is so important.
   1. There is an important distinction in Christian ethics…thank R.C. Sproul and John Frame for this…that we all need to grasp…there is a difference between offense given and offense taken.
   2. It seems these days that we take offense at things people do or say when there was no offense given or intended. They were merely stating the facts.
      * Many take offense when we say that there are only two genders…male and female.
      * Others take offense when we say the child in utero is in fact a human….Or if we say abortion is not a right…or that it has nothing to do with health care.
   3. What is really happening is that we chose to take offense because we don’t like or don’t agree with what is being said. We choose to “feel” insulted when no insult was intended.
   4. We are commanded as Christians not to give offense…but it works the other way as well…we are not to take offense where no offense is intended…requiring us to be discerning.
   5. One more thing…Jesus doesn’t apologize for telling the truth.
3. Instead of apologizing He asks another question, “Then what if you were to see the son of Man ascending to where He was before?”

Would you take offense to that as well? That is the resurrection and ascension?

1. He seems to almost be poking them in their offense when he says, “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.” He seems to be communicating

3 things here:

(3) Our Lord says, "It is the Spirit who gives life."

* + - * By this He means that it is the Holy Spirit who is the special author of spiritual life in man's soul.
      * By His agency it is first imparted, and afterwards sustained and kept up.
      * If the Jews thought He meant that man could have spiritual life by bodily eating or drinking, they were greatly mistaken.

(9) Our Lord says, "The flesh is no help at all." By this He means that our human nature…our flesh… affords us nothing by way of life.

Spiritual benefit is not to be had through the mouth, but through the heart.

We are morally impotent---our flesh profits us nothing.

(10) Our Lord says, “The words that I have spoken to you are spirit

and life.”

By this He signifies that His words and teachings, applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit, are the true means of producing spiritual influence and conveying spiritual life.

The Spirit makes us alive through the Word of God

By words thoughts are created and aroused. By words mind and conscience are stirred. And Christ's words especially are spiritstirring and life-giving….they change the disposition of our hearts towards our surroundings

(11) Just to wrap up:

There is a tendency in many minds to attach an excessive importance to the outward and visible or "doing" part of religion.

They seem to think that the sum and substance of Christianity consists in Baptism and the Supper of the Lord, in public ceremonies and forms, in appeals to the eye and ear and excitement.

Surely they forget that it is "It is the Spirit who gives life," and that the "flesh is of no help." It is not so much by noisy public demonstrations, as by the still quiet work of the Holy Spirit on hearts that God's cause prospers. It is Christ's words entering into consciences, which "are spirit and life."

1. And of by the way…you want to take offense let me tell you again, “But there are some of you who do not believe.’ (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) And He said, ‘This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.’” (1) Even in His humanity He was granted by the Father to know… Christ has a perfect knowledge of the hearts of men.
   1. Many /most of the disciples that were with him fall into this category that He has said often in just this chapter.

* 1. Sentences like this (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe) are found so frequently in the

Gospels that we are apt to underrate their importance. Yet there are few truths which we shall find it so good for our souls to remember as that which is contained in the sentence before us. Our Savior is one who knows all things including our hearts!

* 1. Even this audience wouldn’t like the concept or idea of

“PREDESTINATION” – They would not and could not believe unless God took the action and granted to them an audience…

* + Again, “no one can come”…this speaks of universal inability. The word can here does not describe permission but power or ability.
  + People are unable to do this “unless it has been granted to him by the

Father.”

* + The truth that Jesus once again describes is that it doesn’t matter your Jewishness…it doesn’t matter how many sacrifices you bring or how much tithe and offering you give…one cannot come to the Father unless the Father grants it.
  + God must do something to enable us to overcome our moral inability.
  + This was yet another pill too hard for them to swallow.

(5) And that was the last time they would stand for this…He has said this twice now…which went against everything they had believed

up to that point and so, “After this many of His disciples turned back and no longer walked with

Him.”  He would not be made king.

* + - He would not provide food and drink for them like Moses.
    - He spoke about such things that are hard to understand….
      * On one hand, they would have known that He was not talking about eating and drinking His actual flesh and blood,
      * But on the other, what He was saying about spiritual food only being given to those whom the Father has chosen to give it to, and only to some of them since He has made it clear that most of them do not believe, thus not falling into the category of receiving or being granted access.
        + Election is a hard doctrine for some to swallow.

Jesus was teaching moral inability and dependence upon God’s grace alone. They were a proud people that was a hard pill to swallow as well.

This doctrine has offended many through the centuries.

* + - * + So they “…turned back…” or as the Greek actually says,

“…they returned to the things that were behind…” The things they left behind to follow Jesus.

They withdrew from following Him ever again.

They would have openly denied ever believing in

Him.

They turned their backs on Him because they were offended by what He said.

They returned to the old ways of their old faith. ◼ They returned to the world. ◼ They left because they never were part of Him. (6) Just so we are clear: Is this text telling us that we can lose our salvation? How do we now the correct answer?

I John 2:19-20- “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us. But you have been anointed by the Holy One, and you all have knowledge.”

Or He who has ears to hear…

Or maybe better yet, John 6: 37-40- “All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but

## the will of Him who sent me. And this is the will of Him who sent

me, that I should lose nothing of all that He has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the

will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and

believes in Him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

3. Now what about those who are left in verses 67-71?

a. To the Twelve He asks, “Do you want to go away as well?”

1. They are so well known that everyone would know who the Twelve are just by saying the word.
2. The question seems to expect the answer that it receives.
3. Also, the question is pointed to the twelve with little concern, at this point, for those who left.
4. What actually is Peter admitting for himself and the rest with this statement?

John 6:68-69- “Simon Peter answered Him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know (or we are sure/certain), that you are the Holy One of God.’”

They got it!

At least the last part...they figured enough out to know that He has the words of life. Peter didn’t deny that Jesus’ sayings were hard…but He affirms they are the words of life…even if he doesn’t fully understand them yet.

They understand that there is nowhere else to go for this.

(4)“Oh…and unlike these who have left…we actually believed and have come to know that you are the Holy One of God.”- Simon

Peter

1. But then there is vs. 70-71. Is it just there for historical drama?

(1)First thing we see is that His statement stands in contrast to Peter’s confession…not even all of them believed and know that Christ is the Holy

One of God.

Secondly…Jesus seems to acknowledge the faith of the 11 while at the same acknowledging the apostasy or the spirt of the devil/slanderer/false accuser/adversary-- in Greek- “diabolos”=devil.

Judas’ still exist in the pews of our churches. They existed in the time of John and Paul…I could tell you stories…but I won’t.

(4)Fun fact: Iscariot just tells us what town he was from often translated

Kerioth (sounds like Carriot) …a city in Southern Judah, south of

Hebron.

Lessons in the Gospel of John May 11, 2022

* 1. Prayer
  2. Review

1. What was it that the disciples…those who followed Jesus … said irritated them about

Jesus in verses 60-71? But then what was the real problem? a. God’s predestination b. God’s election

* + - * 1. God’s sovereignty
        2. Jesus telling them they aren’t God’s

* + - 1. What about the 12?

* + - 1. Some of us come from church backgrounds that didn’t teach predestination or election…or if they did they taught that this was a Presbyterian heresy…how did you react to this doctrine the first time you heard it?

* + - 1. What are we to learn from these passages for our day to day?

* 1. John 7:1-13

1. Some information about the first couple of verses:

a. “After this…”

(1)This is obviously after the events we just talked about but it also speaks of much time between then and now that the other Gospels record.

(2) The many miracles and teachings which our Lord did, that we see in the other Gospels while Jesus "walked in Galilee," are passed over by John in comparative silence.

(3)And according to John 6:4, the Passover had been at hand so He most likely went up to Jerusalem for the Passover and it is then that He found out it wasn’t a safe place for Him to be at the moment…His time would come. “He would not go about in Judea, because the Jews were

seeking to kill him.”

(4) So the time span between these events are probably 6 months or so.

* 1. But the events which John was especially inspired to record are those which took place in or near Jerusalem. This is the third visit recorded so far…John

2:13 and 5:1

* 1. So John picks up the storyline with the Feast of Booths/ Sukkot- Lev.

23:40-43

In spite of the danger it would have been Jesus’ duty, under the law, to go up to Jerusalem for this feast.

This Feast followed the Jewish New Year and the Day of Atonement.

This was the last of the Fall festivals.

This feast was a weeklong where the people lived in makeshift booths of branches and leaves, instituted by God for the people to remember God’s gracious provision in the wilderness…and the completion of that year’s harvest which God had just graciously given.

Moses had often warned the Israelites not to forget the God who had redeemed them from slavery once they were prosperous in the Promised Land. So the booths not only reminded them of God’s provision for them in the wilderness but also they were to remind them not to forget that they have what they have now by God’s gracious bounty towards them.

(5)Interesting…town dwellers even today still do this:

In the courtyard of the house, if they have one…

On the flat roof of their dwelling if they do not have a courtyard or backyard.

Even on a balcony

* + 1. What were His brothers wanting from Him in verses 3-5? What was the purpose behind pushing Him to go now to the Feast?

a. They thought He needed more exposure…or did they?

Their advice was all about attention for Him.

Did they know about the threats and were willing to send Him out anyway.

b. His brothers didn’t have His best interests in mind, obviously.

(1)Jesus had brought shame on their family from the town folks. It would have been natural for the talk to get around and Him…the one they had seen in diapers the Messiah…preposterous!

(2) If Jesus is who He says He is…and they doubt that very much at this point…then conventional wisdom would dictate that He needs to be doing more miracles in Jerusalem instead of in Galilee.

* + - * + Especially now among the crowds at the feast. Biggest crowd

…biggest return.

* + - * + If He wants to be King He must show His kingliness.
        + Galilee is no place for a King to work.

(3)If you want to grow your church you must do thigs that win over the people…entertain them…meet their needs…their perceived needs…heal them physically.

(4)“For not even His brothers believed in Him.” This really sets the stage as to why they said what they did.

* + - * + This had to hurt Mary, but then she was only a woman in that culture and these men had not been changed yet.
        + It was bad enough that His own people, "the Jews sought to kill

Him." But it was even worse that His brothers did not believe.

* + - * + Concerning the doctrine of election we need to look closely at this passage and consider.

All need to understand that seeing Christ's miracles, hearing Christ's teaching, living in Christ's own company, were not enough to make men believers.

The mere possession of spiritual privileges never yet made any one a Christian.

All is useless without the effectual and applying work of God the

Holy Spirit.

No wonder that our Lord said in another place, "No man can come to me, unless it is granted him by the father." (John

6:65.)

*(5)* Pastor J. C. Ryle offers this word of encouragement to those of us who have unbelieving family or those who claim and do not act accordingly: *“The true servants of Christ in every age will do well to remember this.*

*They are often surprised and troubled to find that in religion they stand alone. They are apt to think that it must be their own fault that all around them are not converted like themselves. They are ready to blame themselves because their families remain worldly and unbelieving. But let them look at the verse before us. In our Lord Jesus Christ there was no fault either in temper, word, or deed. Yet even Christ's own brethren did not believe in Him. Our blessed Master has truly learned by*  *experience how to sympathize with all his people who stand alone. This is a thought "full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort." He knows the heart of every isolated believer, and can be touched with the feeling of his trials. He has drunk this bitter cup. He has passed through this fire. Let all who are fainting and cast down, because brothers and sisters despise their religion, turn to Christ for comfort, and pour out*  *their hearts before Him. He "has suffered Himself being tempted" in this way, and He can help as*

*well as feel."*

* + 1. Why does the text say that the world hates Jesus in verses 6-9? *“Because He testifies about it that its works are evil.”* a. What does that mean, really?

(1) These words reveal one of those secret principles which influence men in their treatment of Christ and us as Christians.

They help to explain that deadly enmity with which many during our Lord's earthly ministry regarded Him and His Gospel

and…

The enmity that still exists in the world particularly… but even the distain that is evident in our own culture today.

It was not so much the high doctrines which He preached, as the high standard of self-sacrifice and submission that He proclaimed, which gave offence.

It was not even His claim to be the Messiah which men disliked so much, as His witness against the wickedness of their lives.

In short, they could have tolerated His opinions if He would only have spared their sins.

b. How does this help us as we consider what is going on around us concerning

Christianity?

(1) The principle is one of universal application. It is at work now just as much as it was 2000 years ago.

The real cause of many people's dislike to the Gospel is the holiness of living which it demands.

It doesn’t help that the Church is so inconsistent in its teachings and actions…

But it is the Word itself that all too often is the stumbling block… as it says in I Peter 2: 4-8- “As you come to Him, a living

## stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual

house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For it stands in Scripture: ‘Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone, a cornerstone chosen and precious, and whoever believes in Him will not be put to shame.’ So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe. ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone’, and ‘A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.’ They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were

destined to do.”

(2) Teach abstract doctrines only, and few will find any fault.

(3)Denounce the fashionable sins of the day, and call on men to repent and walk consistently with God, and thousands at once will be offended.

* We see this as the Church stands for life…especially right now in this moment with the possibility of the overturn of Roe vs. Wade….and the vandalism against the Roman Catholic Church specifically….
* Or the Church’s position on marriage between one man and one woman…
* Or the Church’s position against all deviant lifestyles.
* Or the Church’s position against….
* The Church’s position is not based in opinion but in God’s Word.

1. The true reason why many profess to be non-believers, and abuse Christianity, is the witness that Christianity bears against their own

bad lives. Like Ahab, they hate it, " And the king of Israel said to

Jehoshaphat, ‘There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the

LORD, Micaiah the son of Imlah, but I hate him, for he never prophesies good concerning me, but evil.’” (1 Kings 22:8.)

1. They don’t really know the truth about Jesus…they only know the Jesus that they have been told about or the Jesus that they have constructed in their own minds…the one they can personally define and control.
2. So when the truth comes out about Jesus and the doctrines we profess especially when those doctrines like “life” (or the other

“BIG 3 listed above) go counterculture we will receive push back…

* + our ability to witness will be hampered because of the evil that we live in…as it was predestined to happen….AND…
  + the lack of us being able to witness is a judgment prophesied against the people.

1. II Tim. 3:1-5- “But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable,

slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good,

treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.” When did this begin?

* + - Some would have us believe that this time has just begun…many in the Church want to point to Trump or Obama and Biden…because prior to them the Church’s mission was to be missional…warm and winsome we were told.
    - But John tells us in I John 2:18-19- “Children, it is the last hour, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. Therefore we know that it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.”
    - The Church has been too weak in the last few decades forgetting that we are always in a battle…we are called to love to be sure, but compromise is never an option.

1. One last thing, this also means that the attack on our faith from within and without us will intensify.
   * + Since we live in this world we do not want to look at it with skepticism …we want to believe that everyone is savable…we want to believe that this world is in which we live is not as bad

as it seems…Job dealt with that tension…and yet the world is that bad…we must grasps this…

* + - The world is that bad and it is dead set against the message of Christ and that much in need which requires us to stand firm and live the witness we say we have first before our spouses and our children…then our church family…and then the world. (And while I have segregated the above we are to be doing this all at the

same time.)

Lessons in the Gospel of John May 25, 2022

1. Prayer
2. Review- John 7:1-10

1. What is to be learned from Jesus’ brothers in vs. 3-5?

* 1. A prophet is not accepted in His own hometown…and by many in His own family.
  2. That our opinions hold sway over the truth all too often.

2. According to Jesus in verses 6-9, what is the reason the world hates Him? What does this mean for us today?

a. These words reveal one of those secret principles which influence men in their treatment of Christ and us as Christians.

(1) They help to explain that deadly enmity with which many during our Lord's earthly ministry regarded Him and His Gospel and…

(2)The enmity that still exists in the world particularly… but even the distain that is evident in our own culture today.

1. It was not so much the high doctrines which He preached, as the high standard of self-sacrifice and submission that He proclaimed, which gave offence.
2. It was not even His claim to be the Messiah which men disliked so much, as His witness against the wickedness of their lives.
3. In short, they could have tolerated His opinions if He would only have spared their sins.
4. The Holiness that God demands makes everyone self-conscious and irritated and hateful.
5. John makes this clear in the rest of his writing as well. I John 3:12-13- “We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother’s righteous. Do not be surprised, brothers, that the world

hates you.”

* 1. Even His own brothers mocked Him- “If you do these things…”

vs. 4

* 1. They mocked Him because they didn’t believe in Him- “For not

## even

His brothers believed in Him.” Vs. 5

g. This also means that the attack on our faith from within and without us will intensify.

1. Trouble is that since we live in this world we do not want to look at it with skepticism …we want to believe that everyone is savable…we want to believe that this world is in which we live is not as bad as it seems…Job dealt with that tension…and yet the world is that bad…we must grasp this…we must know and accept the enemy of God and of the

Church.

1. The world is that bad and it is dead set against the message of Christ and that much in need which requires us to stand firm and live the witness we say we have first before our spouses and our children…then our church family…and then the world. (And while I have segregated the above we are to be doing this all at the same

time.)

3. Vs. 1-10 continued. Wait a minute. Look at vs. 10- “But after His brothers had gone up to the feast, then He also went up, not publicly but in private.”

again. Are we catching Jesus in a lie here? First, He says that it is not His time and that He is not going up …in fact, He remained in Galilee as His brothers went off. So what is going on here? What did we say was going on the last time Jesus said that it

wasn’t His time and then He went ahead and made the wine anyway?

1. Christ has determined the time line for all that He does. He is in effect saying, “I will determine when I go up to Jerusalem.”
2. The gospel repeatedly stresses that Jesus had a sense of divine timing.
3. Unlike His brothers, who did not know God…Jesus knew God… and

He is sensitive to the Father’s will.

1. His brothers were in no danger from the world but Jesus was…the hour of His death had not yet come. If He had gone in with His family, there may have been a riot and they may have been hurt…besides it was not His time to get the recognition that they said He needed to be king.
2. He went up in secret performing the role laid out for Him by the Father as He makes

His way to the cross.

1. It is interesting that even though He doesn’t appear to be there at the time…He is still being spoken about.

(1)“The Jews were looking for Him at the feast, and saying, ‘Where is He?’ And there was much muttering about Him among the people.

While some said, ‘He is a good man,’ others said, ‘No, He is leading the people astray.’ Yet for fear of the Jews no one spoke openly of

Him.” (Vs. 11-13)

* 1. Just like atheist today they often spend more time seeking Him to disprove His existence… to find contradictions then Christian seek Him for our very lives and witness.
  2. In the face of such a passage as this, the endless differences and divisions about religion, which we see on all sides, in the present day, ought never to surprise us.
  + The open hatred of some toward Christ—  The bold confession of the few faithful ones—
  + The timid, man-fearing temperament of the many in the Church
  + The unceasing war of doctrines and strife over the gifts of the Spirit which the Churches of Christ are so sadly familiar. These are only modern symptoms of an old disease.
  + Such is the corruption of human nature… that Christ would be considered the cause of division among men, wherever He is preached.
    - So long as the world stands, some, when they hear of Him, will love, and some will hate—some will believe, and some will reject.
    - That deep, prophetical saying of His will be continually verified— “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to

the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her motherinlaw. And a person’s enemies will be those of his own household." (Matt. 10:34.) Even His own brothers...for now.

(4) Just a side note: We have said that When we see the term “the Jews” we are talking about the Jewish leadership at the time and we are…

* BUT…you have to wonder as well, If John is not making a further distinction.
* Back up in verse 2 he speaks of “the Jew’s Feast of the Booths”. Why would he say it this way?
  + - * This gospel was written either 40 or 60 years after Christ’s ascension – AD. 70 or AD 90. A substantial time had elapsed and the Church is growing and changing taking on the “flavor” of the

Gospel.

* + - * John is also making a distinction for this decades old church between the Church and the Jews and the

ceremonial laws they follow…this of course…was supported by Pau as well who spoke so much of the condemnation of the

Law on those who try but can’t keep it.

* + - * So John makes this distinction saying “the Jew’s Feast” rather than “our” Feast or just “the Feast “making the point that while he may be ethnically

Jewish, he is no longer bound to the

Law but to the Gospel of Christ.

C. John 7:14-24

2. After His brothers left to begin the Feast and after everyone seemingly was looking for Him we see Jesus coming up to the

Feast… vs. 10- “But after His brothers had gone up to the

feast, then He also went up, not publicly but in private.” But then the text gets more specific, vs. 14- “About the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and began teaching.” So, it seems, at some point

after the feast began He went up privately so the rulers couldn’t find Him and then He went to His favorite place…the Temple to teach. What is interesting about this?

* 1. It does seem to be His favorite place…ie. His Father’s

House.

* 1. He doesn’t seem to be concerned about timing at this point.
  2. How many times had He been in the Temple teaching before and the Jews never took Him from there?

3. Interesting don’t you think, John tells us back up in vs.1“He would not go about in Judea, because the Jews were

## seeking to kill Him.”He had been at the

Passover 6 months before so He knew the climate. But now He is back in Jerusalem in the Temple teaching during the

Feast of

Booths/Tabernacles and what is it that the rulers are complaining about? Vs. 15- “The Jews therefore marveled, saying, ‘How is it that this man has learning, when he has never studied?’”

1. They are complaining about His credentials to teach

…really…and just a short time ago they were seeking Him to kill Him? How does that make sense? God’s timing confounds even the greatest intellect.

1. It is true that they have challenged and scrutinized His credentials before…they are constantly asking Him where

His call came from and by whose authority He teaches.

1. They could all produce proof that they had studied and been trained under such men as Gamaliel, Hillel in one or more rabbinic traditions and that they were called to represent those teachings on the Sanhedrin or as scribes.
2. It is ironic that they would at this juncture…be questioning

Him about His credentials…rather than just taking Him.

1. Of course, this is the same Jesus who at age 12 astonished everyone with His teaching in the Temple and has ever since. Luke 2:41-47 “Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, but supposing him to be in the group they went a day’s journey, but then they began to search for Him among their relatives and acquaintances, and when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for Him. After three days they found Him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. And all who heard Him were amazed at

## His understanding and His answers.”

4. As was His custom, Jesus answered their inquiry this way, “My teaching is not mine, but His who sent me. If anyone’s will is to do God’s will, He will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority. The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of Him who sent Him is true, and in Him there is no falsehood.” (vs. 16-18)What is He telling them again? What is He telling us to day? Why don’t we always “hear” what He is saying?

1. Again He makes clear… (how many times had He done this so far) …that His teachings and His doctrines that He is teaching are not His own…they came from another source.
2. They were looking for credentials from one of the accepted

“teaches of the Law” to give what He was saying credibility. But He instead says …again… that His teacher was better than those human sources…for His teacher was His Father...God

Almighty.

1. But wait a minute…let’s be clear…another source? He is God after all…but He clearly has said and is saying a separate source.
   1. Christ human nature grew in wisdom and in knowledge and in obedience.
   2. The human nature of Jesus did not come equipped with the omniscience of His divine nature. Jesus clearly limits His human nature in many places ...specifically about the day and hour of His return- Mark 13:32- “But concerning that day or that hour, no one

knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the

Father.”

* 1. Christ’s human nature was able to be tempted by everything known to man. He was hungry…He suffered loss…He thirsted. And He was not immune to the experience of the sins of men though remained sinless.

1. We must embrace the two natures of Christ and we cannot separate them.
2. The difficulty of finding out "what is truth" in religion is a common subject of complaint among men.
   * 1. They point to the many differences which prevail among Christians on matters of doctrine, and profess to be unable to decide who is right.
     2. In most cases this professed inability to find out truth becomes an excuse for living without any religion at all.
     3. It is an excuse not to grow if one claims to be a Christian and a reason to mock if one is not a

Christian.

* + 1. Because we all like our “truth” …since everyone today has their own truth.
       - These men loved hearing themselves spout their beloved teachers.
       - They loved hearing themselves speak and pray…they loved how others had to listen to so much self-praise.
       - For someone else to come along and seek to steal their thunder…our thunder…well, that is just wrong.

4. What does He say specifically to these men here in 19-24- “Has not Moses given you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why do you seek to kill me? The crowd answered, ‘You have a demon! Who is seeking to kill you?’ Jesus answered them, ‘I did one work, and you all marvel at it. Moses gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. If on the Sabbath a man

receives circumcision, so that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because on the Sabbath I made a man’s whole body well? Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.”

...and why it is important for us today?

1. The Jews at Jerusalem were ready to condemn our Lord as a sinner against the law of Moses, because He had done a miracle of healing on the Sabbath day.

(1)They forgot in their blind enmity that the fourth commandment was not meant to prevent works of necessity or works of mercy.

* + 1. Jesus had done a work on the Sabbath but not a work forbidden by the law.
    2. So they actually brought down on themselves the rebuke, "Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.” Judge by the measure of the law not your traditions and/or opinions.

1. We are often too ready to be deceived by an appearance of GOOD.
   1. We are often in danger of rating some men as very good Christians, because of a little outward profession of religion or even just the wearing of a cross, and even because they come to Church on Sunday… they wear the clothing of pilgrims, but they talk the language of the world.
   2. We forget that all is not good that appears good, even as all is not gold that glitters, and that daily practice, choice, tastes, habits, conduct, private character, are the true evidence of what a man is.
   3. In a word, we conveniently forget our Lord's saying— “Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment.”
2. On the other hand, we are also too ready to be deceived by the appearance of EVIL

(1) We are in danger of determining some men are not true Christians, because of a few faults or inconsistencies, and "making them

offenders because of a word." (Isa. 29:21.)

(2)We must remember that the best of men are but men at their very best, and that the best saints may be overtaken by temptation, and yet be saints at heart after all.

(3) We must not hastily suppose that all is evil, where there is an occasional appearance of evil. The holiest man may fall sadly for a time, and yet the grace within him may finally get a victory. Is a man's general character godly?

Then let us suspend our judgment when he falls, and hope on. Let us "judge with right judgment."

* + By God’s standard not ours which is the final authority to all the

“confusion” in the Church and among one another.

* + Matt. 7:1-2- ““Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you.”

1. And then there is the fact that we often think too highly of OURSELVES.
   * 1. Whatever we think of others, let us beware of making mistakes about our own character.
     2. Let us seek to be just, honest, and fair… walking in the Word of the Lord not men…ourselves included.
     3. Let us not flatter ourselves that all is right, because all is apparently right before men.

"The LORD, looks on the heart." (1 Sam.

16:7.)

(4)So let us judge ourselves with righteous judgment, and repent continually while we live so that we may assured of the faith that we have in Christ Jesus…recognizing that we will be disciplined for our sins because the Lord loves us…if He didn’t we would be condemned with the world. I Cor. 11:32- “But when we are judged

by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.”

e. That is what it is to "judge with right judgment."

D. John 7:25-52

1. It is interesting how much distain these folks have of their

religious leaders…how they see the inconsistency. John 7:25-26- “Some of the people of Jerusalem therefore said, ‘Is not this the man whom they seek to kill? And here He is, speaking openly, and they say nothing to Him!

Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Christ?” a.

Mockingly of the religious leaders.

* + 1. Undeterred by the fact that the religious leaders want to kill Him…no one is stepping up to help them by detaining Him.
    2. The authority’s inaction may have also added to those who seem to believe later on in the narrative.

1. What evidence in these verses do we have that these people did not know who Jesus was?
   1. 5 times from here through vs 52 we see them…the people and the religious leaders referring to Him as “the man…or this man” for that is how they saw Him.
   2. They were speaking about what they did not know… “But we know where this man comes from” ...to appear knowledgeable…for they did not know where He came from…He will tell them…again…from His Father...His origin was from above.
2. They would have known…or at least the religious leaders would have known His pedigree…
   * While the religious rulers and some of the people may have said that He was a Galilean. This wasn’t in ignorance except maybe those who just mimicked what they were told…this was to incite the crowd against Him.
   * The fact was, that our Lord was born at Bethlehem, that He belonged legally to the tribe of Judah, and that His mother and Joseph were of the house and lineage of David.
   * It would be unheard of in that day and age to suppose that the Jews could not have found this out, if they had honestly

searched and inquired. Pedigrees, genealogies, and family histories were most carefully kept by the Jewish nation.

1. They were also wrong when they said, “…and when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from.”

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1. The Pharisees got wind of the increasing support for Jesus, though they did not believe…maybe even to quell the crowd that was wondering why they were being so weak in not “scooping” up Jesus who was right there… John 7:31-32- “Yet many of the people believed

in Him. They said, ‘When the Christ appears, will He do more signs than this man has done?’ The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about Him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to

arrest him.”

1. The people and the leaders kept questioning who he was further revealing their rejection of who was standing before them as many of them were destined to do. Vs. 40-44… A Lesson for us today…to maybe stop arguing about the insignificant that we might have a true witness on the salvific issues.
2. We also see the strong prejudice against Jesus:
   1. The rulers as they strongly condemned the guards who went to arrest Jesus and came back empty handed,
   2. The crowds that were listening and the ones who believed and (3) Even

Nicodemus

(4) The people of Galilee…which was an area of mixed-race people where the law was not observed as they thought is should be.

Verses 45-52

1. The Pharisees lied to make their case at the end with Nicodemus

(someone who would have known better)

* + - 1. The Prophet Jonah II Kings 14:25, had come from the region of

Galilee or

* + - 1. Even Elijah, I Kings 17:1 for Gilead extends northward to

Galilee…

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1. Then there is Jesus’ own words. “You will seek me and you will not find me. Where I am you cannot come.” See also- John 8:21- ““I am going away, and you will seek me, and you will die in your sin.

Where I am going, you cannot come.”

* + 1. The audience had no idea what He was talking about…they would have thought Him cryptic in His remarks. They may have thought

He was talking about leaving and going into the Greek-speaking regions where no self-respecting Jew would ever go.

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He is.

* + 1. Obviously, these words were spoken here were meant to be taken on a prophetical sense of His coming ascension…His glorification!
       - * And just like after the prophets had been killed there were most likely those who would seek Him

to feel good or some other reason…and they would not find Him.

* + - * + See Prov. 1:28-31- “Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer; they will seek me diligently but will not find me. Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD, would have none of my counsel and despised all my reproof, therefore they shall eat the fruit of their way, and have their fill of their own devices.”

3. Twice in this set of verses we read the words, “…but no one laid a hand on him…”(vs. 30, vs. 44). What does this reveal to his readers as much as 60 years after Christ ascended and to us today?

1. God’s sovereign plan will not be thwarted. God’s in control of even unbelieving hearts. Man can do nothing except God give

Him leave to do so.

1. There is a mine of deep truth in the words before us, which deserves close attention.
   1. They show us plainly that all our Lord's sufferings were undergone voluntarily, and of His own free will.

He did not go to the cross because He could not help it.

He did not die because He could not prevent His death.

* 1. Neither Jew nor Gentile, Pharisee nor Sadducee, Annas nor

Caiaphas, Herod nor Pontius Pilate, could have injured our

Lord, except power had been given them from above.

* 1. All that they did was done under control, and by permission.

The crucifixion was part of the eternal counsels of the

Trinity.

* 1. The sufferings and death of our Lord could not begin until the very hour which God had appointed. This is a great mystery.

But it is a truth.

1. The servants of Christ in every age should treasure up the doctrine before us, and remember it in time of need.
   1. It is "full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly people.”- J.C. Ryle.
   2. Let such never forget that they live in a world where God overrules all times and events, and where nothing can happen but by God's permission.
   3. The very hairs of their heads are all numbered. Sorrow and sickness, and poverty, and persecution, can never touch them, unless God sees fit. God’s hand guides and governs all things here below and there above, and makes no mistakes.
2. One more thing that supports the point we have been making. Look at the conversation in vss. 45-49, “The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to

them, ‘Why did you not bring him?’ The officers answered, ‘No one ever spoke like this man! The Pharisees answered them, ‘Have you also been deceived? Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him? But this crowd that does not know

the law is accursed.’”

* + 1. As one Puritan put it, “The authorities went to arrest

Jesus, but Jesus arrested them with His Words.”

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    2. So instead of sending them back out to arrest Jesus the feast concluded and everyone went to his own house, but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives vs. 53. If these verses are even there. Why?

## “Because His hour had not yet come.” (Vs 30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1;

17:1)

1. What is “the great day of the feast”?
   * 1. This is the day they looked forward to…all the crowds would gather for the ceremony of pouring out of water…commemorating when God gave their forefather’s water poured out from the rock in the wilderness. Ex. 17; Numbers 20.
     2. This last day was called Hoshana Rabbah- the Great Hosanna, which as we have said before means “save us now!” On this day they walked around the altar 7 times pouring out the water on the altar. It is at this moment it appears that Jesus stands up

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Jesus’ point?

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  2. But keeping with the ceremony, He was more than likely referring

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Isaiah 44:3-4- “For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants. They shall spring up among the grass like willows by flowing streams.”

Or maybe even, Ezek. 36:25-27- “I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from fall your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.”

(3) Jesus had already used this image before with the Samaritan woman but it falls on deaf ears here.

Lessons in the Gospel of John October 5, 2022

A. Prayer B. Review 1. What was John’s purpose in writing this book?

Other than the fact that God told him to …

John 20:30- “Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His

name.”

2. What would you say is the main themes of each chapter? a.

Chapter 1

1. Chapter 2
2. Chapter 3
3. Chapter 4
4. Chapter 5
5. Chapter 6
6. Chapter 7

What has John taught us about Jesus so far?

Given all the encounters with people from the rulers to followers to nonbelievers, how are we the same as them? How are we different?

C. Just to get back into the text proper, let’s look again at the end of

John

7. John 7:25-52

1. It is interesting how much distain these folks have of their religious leaders…how they see the inconsistency. John 7:25-26-“Some of the people of Jerusalem therefore

said, ‘Is not this the man whom they seek to kill? And here He is, speaking openly, and they say nothing to Him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Christ?”How does this passage clue us into how they felt? d. Mockingly of the religious leaders.

* + - 1. Undeterred by the fact that the religious leaders want to kill Him…no one is stepping up to help them by detaining Him.
      2. The authority’s inaction may have also added to those who seem to believe later on in the narrative.

1. What evidence in these verses do we have that these people did not know who Jesus was?
2. 5 times from here through vs 52 we see them…the people and the religious leaders referring to Him as “the man…or this man” for that is how they saw

Him.

1. They didn’t want to name His name… for to do so would be giving Him more credibility than they thought He deserved.
2. They were speaking about what they did not know… “But we know where this man comes from”...to appear knowledgeable…for they

did not know where He came from…He has told them and He will tell them again…from His Father...His origin was from above.

(3) They would have known…or at least the religious leaders would have known His pedigree…

* + - While the religious rulers and some of the people may have said that He was a Galilean. This wasn’t in ignorance except maybe those who just mimicked what they were told…this was to incite the crowd against Him.
    - The fact was, that our Lord was born at Bethlehem, that He belonged legally to the tribe of Judah, and that His mother and Joseph were of the house and lineage of David.
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said to them, ‘Why did you not bring him?’ The officers answered,

‘No one ever spoke like this man! The

Pharisees answered them, ‘Have you also been deceived? Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him? But this crowd that does not know the law is

accursed.’”

1. As one Puritan put it, “The authorities went to arrest Jesus, but Jesus arrested them with His Words.”
2. They had heard the authority in Jesus’ voice and they found themselves unable to arrest Him. This is a powerful reminder and testimony to the power of God’s word on the hearts of men…for these men would have been trained in their task…but it seems they understood something was different in this “Man’s” authority.
3. Or maybe it was something like that we see in the OT when God confounded the troops attacking God’s people or moved Israel’s enemies to do things they weren’t even thinking about doing.
4. So instead of sending them back out to arrest Jesus the feast concluded and everyone went to his own house, but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives vs. 53. If this verse is even there. Why “Because His hour had not yet come.” (Vs 30; 8:20; 12:23, 27; 13:1; 17:1)

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        1. Jesus had already used this image before with the Samaritan woman but it falls on deaf ears here.
        2. Our souls, especially, those of believers, thirst for God. We have a deep longing and thirst that nothing else can satisfy.

Non-believers have this as well…they just do not want to and really cannot associate it with the One True God so they worship anything else.

For the believers we often find ourselves dry and parched in this fallen world because we have not drank from the living waters continually of Christ.

Christ invites us all…who believe …to come continuously and to drink our fill.

All those who are re-born in Christ naturally seek their fill of Christ regularly.

This offer is for all who believe- Jew, Gentile, man , woman and child…priest and outcast, royalty and fisherman.

1. Reflection questions (some I will ask…some I will not).

What kinds of things do you thirst after?

What does this thirst reveal about your deepest needs and desires?

How would you say Jesus satisfies your spiritual thirsts?

Lessons in the Gospel of John November

9, 2022

Prayer

Review

1. What are the main things that Jesus wants His hearers to know from this encounter in chapter 8?

That He is God… “I am who I am.” “Before Abraham was, I am!”

That He comes to do the will of His Father who sent Him.

(1) He is the One who fulfills the prophesies from Gem. 3:15 onward through the rest of the OT.

## • “He is the light of the world.”

• The One who has come to set His people free…all those who have, are and will abide in His Word.

(2) He is the One sent to bring the redemption promised in the Covenant

of Grace… (3) He comes to glorify His Father.

c. They don’t get it because they can’t get it!

* 1. Even at the end of this discourse the pickup stones to stone Him as their understanding of the Law would permit…but it would seem that it is as much out of frustration as it is the sanctity of the Law.
  2. Many times, throughout the discourse He gave them ample ammunition to declare Him a heretic…but their frustration was seen in their lack of ability to counter His argument in the debate about who He is….and instead turn to insults rather than truth…since there was no truth in them.

2. What would you say are some of the take aways for us today from chapter 8?

C. Chapter 9:1-41

1. What is the point of miracles in the Gospels? To substantiate the message.

1. How does this miracle substantiate His message from

Chapter 8?

* 1. He is God… who else could do this?
  2. He has come to do His Father’s will- vs. 3-5- “It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of Him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the

## world.”

1. This man was born blind and he was a beggar…a condition of all fallen men.
2. This man was blind thus living in and with the darkness…a condition of all fallen men.
3. Jesus came into the world to set us free from both…blindness and beggar.
4. Even the testimony of the man born blind seems to testify to this fact- vs. 32-33 “Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone

opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing.”

1. This actually may be the 5th blind person Jesus has healed. 2 in

Matthew 9:27-31; 1-in Mark 8:22-26; 1 in Mark 10:46-51- Bartimaeus (see also Luke 18:35-43) and then lastly, 1 here in our text.

3. So, let’s consider some of the lessons taught in vs. 1-7. Reading that again, what lessons do you see?

1. First thing, is that Jesus is not flustered by much by the confrontation that just occurred where they picked up stones to kill him and vs 1 says, “As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.” Doesn’t seem like much of a comment…but…
   1. He does not appear disturbed by what had just happened…the wording indicates a leisurely stroll as he passed by…walking along.
   2. A complete disregard for His enemies for His time had not yet come.
   3. But compassion for those He had come to save.
2. Sin is in the world and that explains all things wrong in the world.

(1)“a man blind from birth” - Blindness is a condition of a fallen world.

* He was blind since birth and so he had to be taken care of all his life by his parents and then as a beggar in the Temple.
* In a world in which he lived sight would have been treasured…obviously necessary.
* If Adam had not fallen it is not likely that these types of infirmities would ever have occurred in this world.

(2)The question of the disciples reveals their sin as well. “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

* Their sin is shown in how quickly they jump to a wrong judgment.
  + They have succumbed to the teachings of men.
  + The teaching was that the healthy and the prosperous are blessed by God and the infirmed and lowly are cursed by

God.

* + Even Job’s “friends” believed this to be true.
* Also, since he was blind, they showed no desire to help, only to use him for discussion in theology or the law.
* The question puts forth a false dilemma.
* The disciples put forth only two possibilities for this condition…his own sin or the sin of his parents…
* Tradition taught the following as possibilities for suffering, trial, hardship and poverty: 1)generational sin,
  + 1. sin in a past life,
    2. as a baby he sinned in the womb,
    3. his preexistent soul sinned before it was placed in his body,
    4. maybe it was a punishment for a sin that he was yet to commit...

c. Sin is a product of this world and all that comes with it but Christ is better…He is God over all even the sin that tends to cause us to drift in our faith.

1. We see Him doing that which in itself was impossible as was testified to by the healed man. But nothing is impossible to God. He actually gives eyesight to one who was born blind.
2. Such a miracle as this is meant to teach an old truth, which we can never know too well.
   * It shows us that Jesus the Savior of sinners "has all power in heaven-

-and earth."

* + Such mighty works could never have been done by one that was merely man. In the cure of this blind man, we see nothing less than the “light of the World” doing what He came to do!

1. Such a miracle, above all, is meant to make us hopeful about our own souls and the souls of others.

* Why should we despair of salvation while we have such a

Savior?

* Where is the spiritual disease that He cannot take away?
* He can open the eyes of the most sinful and ignorant, and make them see things they never saw before.
* He can send light into the darkest heart, and cause blindness and prejudice to pass away.

(4) But as usual Jesus will give another more plausible reason which substantiates the teaching of chapter 8, as we have seen. “Jesus answered, ‘It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.”

* They hadn’t thought about that…with all that they had seen…that option wasn’t even on the radar.
* Teaching us how we should be always anticipating God keeping His promise knowing that it may not be…and actually probably won’t be…as we expect.
* Interesting thing is, how could have Jesus answered this question and been truthful before telling them the purpose for this man’s blindness?
  + When they asked who sinned, Jesus could have easily said… “Adam!”
  + This would have affirmed beyond a shadow of doubt the correct understanding of the doctrine of

Original sin. But that wasn’t the point of this event.

* + For this blindness was a direct result of the Fall of Adam not a specific sin on the man’s part…he

probably had a list a mile long…but that was not why he was blind.

* + - * Jesus doesn’t deny here that some infirmities and trials are directly caused as punishments by God …but He is teaching his disciples specifically that it is unwise to judge that all sufferings are punitive and that there is more going on than what they can see.
      * He was blind so that God could be glorified in Hs power.
      * Our suffering and affliction…all ordained by God…are meant

to

glorify Him and strengthen us in our faith.

So all our suffering and affliction is under God’s control and will be dealt with appropriately.

* + - * Shocking statement is made here to these disciples and to the blind man…his blindness was the plan of God for him that Jesus might glorify His Father through healing the man.
      * God can and will use all things to glorify Himself.

d. Christ teaches about opportunity.

(1) What did He mean to communicate when He said, “We must work the works of Him who sent me while it is day; night is coming, when no one can work.’”

* + - Some manuscripts say “I must work…” Whether it is “I” or “we” the mission is to be carried out at all costs.
    - Jesus knew well that his own earthly ministry would only last three years altogether, and knowing this He diligently redeemed the time. He had things to do and people to save.
    - His mission was clear so He took all the opportunities that the Godhead had set up to reveal the power of God to those who could see.
    - Morning, noon, and night He was always carrying on the work which the Father gave Him to do and only that work. It was His food and drink to do His Father's will, and to finish His work.

His whole life breathed one sentiment--"I/we must work--the night is coming, when no one can work."

1. But interestingly He says… “We must work…”. (Some newer manuscripts say

“eimi dei” = “I must” but not the oldest ones.)

* + The saying is one which should be remembered by all professing

Christians.

* + The life that we now live today is our day. Let us take care that we use it well, for the glory of God and the good of our souls and the souls of others.
  + Let us work out our salvation with fear and trembling, while it is called today.
  + There is no work in the grave, toward which we are always moving faster and faster.
  + Let us pray, and read, and keep our Sabbaths holy, and hear God's Word, and do good in our generation, like men who never forget that "the night is coming." ...our death is always near.
  + We must remember our time is very short. Our daylight will soon be gone.
  + Opportunities once lost can never be retrieved. A second lease of life is granted to no man. Whatever our hand finds to do, let us do it with our might. "The night comes, when no man can

work."

1. We learn that God uses a multiplicity of methods to do His work to reveal that the power is in God and not in a method.



* + Sometime God does His miracles immediately by command like when the water turned to wine or when He raises Lazarus from the grave…this is God working without means.
  + God delight is carrying out His will with means. God uses things…His creation to manifest His power.

* + In healing the blind man, He might, if He had thought fit, ◼ To have merely touched Him with His finger,
    - Or maybe just a simple command. We are told that “Having said these things, He spit on the ground and made mud with the saliva. Then He anointed the man’s eyes with the

mud and said to him, ‘Go, wash in the pool of Siloam’

(which means Sent). So he went and washed and came back seeing.”

(vs. 6-7)

* + - Oh, and using His spit/saliva would not seemed weird to anyone back then.
      1. Saliva, especially the saliva or a prominent or distinguished person was believed to possess certain curative properties.
      2. In fact, it was widely held that fasting saliva was actually curative in eye disorders.
    - One method is not better than another, it was merely His decision…sort of like writing /doodling in the dirt.

1. It seems that John may be reminding his audience that this type of miracle done this way is not unusual or unexpected.
   * + - This man’s obedience reveals that he shares a chief characteristic with Jesus’ disciples…when Jesus commanded then they did...

who when told to follow Jesus didn’t hesitate. The blind man does not hesitate.

* + - * Like Naaman the Syrian in II Kings 5:1, 10-14-“Naaman, commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great man with his master and in high favor, because by him the LORD had given victory to Syria. He was a mighty man of valor, but he was a leper…So

Naaman came with his horses and chariots and stood at the door of Elisha’s house. And Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, ‘Go and wash in the Jordan seven times, and your flesh shall be restored, and you shall be clean.’ But Naaman was angry and went away, saying, ‘Behold, I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call upon the name of the LORD his God, and wave

his hand over the place and cure the leper. Are not Abana and

Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Could I not wash in them and be clean?’ So, he turned and went away in a rage. But his servants came near and said to him, ‘My father, it is a great word the prophet has spoken to you; will you not do it? Has he actually said to you, ‘Wash, and be clean?’” So, he went down and dipped himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the word of the man of God, and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.” Naaman obeys God’s command through Elisha, even though reluctantly, to go and wash and is healed revealing a faith in the Word.

* + - * And like Naaman, he is able to bear witnesses to God’s power with the result of his obedience.

Then comes the interesting phrase, “(which means Sent). He is signifying that Siloam means Sent which suggests that more than the man’s obedience is involved.

◼ References in the OT to Shiloah/Siloam/Shiloh

(Gen

49:10 ESV-

“tribute” other translation say “Shiloh” as referring to the

Messiah;

◼ Is. 8:6- “the waters of Shiloah” was seen as messianic as

in the

“sent one” from the Father that would be rejected.  Thus, perhaps the healing itself and the details involved point to Jesus as the Messiah...they certainly reveal that He is in fact the light of the world bringing those who were in darkness into the light…Is. 9:2- “The people who walked in darkness have

seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.”

1. Many have tried to make this about creation…making man from the dust of the ground…Jesus’ healing with mud…but this act seems to

be more showing forth the power of the Sovereign, doing His Father’s will, and showing compassion.

* + We need not doubt that in this, as in every other action of our Lord, there is an instructive lesson.
  + It teaches us, we may well believe, that the Lord of heaven and earth will not be tied down to the use of any one means or instrumentality.

1. In conferring blessings on man, He will work in His own way on His own time table, and will allow no one to prescribe to Him.
2. Above all, it should teach those who have received anything at Christ's hands to know that there is an expected response. The blind man did not come to Him…Jesus ...our Immanuel came to the blind man…but even so, in this case, He expected an appropriate response of a faith filled action.

Lessons in the Gospel of John November 16, 2022

1. Prayer
2. Review
3. What is the point of miracles in the Gospels? To substantiate the message.



1. What were some of the lessons from vs. 1-7?

F. Why so much controversy about this guy? Vs. 8-41 1. Controversy with his neighbors- vs.

8-13.

a. Controversy with his neighbors (probably people from the area of town that his parents lived.) What was the problem? And why was there a problem?

They know this guy…what is going on?

1. John use of the term neighbor seems interesting…  We are to love our neighbor as ourselves.
   * This guy seems to have been a known person that they had related to regularly.
   * He is, of course, a fellow Jew, though in their opinion on the “outs” with God.
2. It seems too amazing to believe ...they knew no mere man could do this.
3. They knew that they would have to take him to the Pharisees to verify the miracle and to make sure he was clean…might be better to hedge your bets so they didn’t get into trouble.



Like

typical people “let’s not take a stand unless we absolutely have to. Similar to polls…three categories…yes…no... I don’t know. There are some things that are so obvious and yet there will always be those who say “I don’t know.”

b. In the midst of this controversy he tells them who healed Him…He mentions Jesus “The man called Jesus…” vs. 11.

* + He doesn’t seem flustered by all of the commotion…he freely testifies…apparently unaware or unconcerned concerning what

we will find out later…that the Pharisees had basically put a curse on any and all who would “believe in Him”.

* + It is obvious that he didn’t know who Jesus was or claimed to be…
  + The people would have…in fact, someone told him who the man was that healed him since there is nothing in the text that says Jesus told him His name.
  + And on top of that, he won’t even know what Jesus looks like until near the end of the event.

2. Controversy with the Pharisees. Vs. 13-34.

a. Again what is the problem about? What all is going to get under the Pharisees skin?

(1) It’s the Sabbath. And there Jesus is working on the Sabbath again. “Now it was a Sabbath day when Jesus made the mud and

opened his eyes.”

* Kneading of food was specifically forbidden.

As was making clay bricks…because you have to knead them to work out the air pockets all with so many other traditional laws they could point to.

* So kneading or working clay to make a paste would be as well.

(2) Jesus is a sinner and must be rejected.

* + No matter what He has done…He can’t be from God because He doesn’t keep the Sabbath… the way they say it should be

kept…

* + Jesus had already had this conversation with them before about their misinterpretation of the Law.

1. Controversy amongst themselves again? Vs.16- “But others said, ‘How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?’ And there was a division among them.” You have to wonder if this is Nicodemus and some of those who were more sympathetic to

Jesus.

1. They were unwilling, at first, to believe this man had been born blind. So controversy between them and the man.
   * And this was a necessary position for them otherwise they would have to admit to who Jesus says He is.
   * Unable to respond in a straight forward way because of the position they chose to hold they resorted to stereotyping and personal abuse.
   * So they call his parents vs. 19-22. “‘Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?’ His parents answered, ‘We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. But how he now sees we do not know, nor do we know who opened his eyes. Ask him; he is of age. He will speak for himself.’ (His parents said these things because they feared

the Jews, for the Jews had already agreed that if anyone should

confess Jesus to be Christ, he was to be put out of the synagogue.) Therefore, the parents said, ‘He is of age; ask

him.’”

* The parents aren’t necessarily throwing the man under the bus here…they are seeking to protect their status in the Temple…but legally he was of age and should be called to answer for himself.
* This is a bit of a rebuke against the Pharisees for not doing their job as they should…which gives us insight into how this guy is able to rebuke the Pharisees later.
  1. So they seem to give the man born blind an option. “Give glory to God. We know that this man is a sinner.” Can you figure out why they would have said this?
  + There are a lot of people around ...there seem to be many of the Pharisees around and they are not in agreement.
  + So they seem to be offering the man a compromise.
  + The man could easily have given glory to God and left it alone.
  + But he had more integrity than they did. “Whether he is a sinner I do not know. One thing I do know, that though I was blind, now I see.”
  1. Now in their frustration, that he didn’t take the bait they go after him. Vs. 26-33- “‘What did he do to you? How did he open your

eyes?’

What do you think of the man’s response? “He answered them, ‘I have told you already, and you would not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? Do you also want to become his disciples?’ And they reviled him, saying, ‘You are his disciple, but we are disciples of Moses. We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he comes from.’ The man answered, ‘Why, this is an amazing thing! You do not know where he comes from, and yet he opened my eyes. We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does his will, God listens to him. Never since the world began has it been heard that anyone opened the eyes of a man born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do

nothing.”

1. The man who was born blind is tired of their games. “Do you also want to become his disciples?”
2. They call the man Jesus’ disciple and he does not refute it, in fact, the last statement seems to support he is already leaning that way.
3. A great testimony speaking of the obvious. Capt. Obvious struck again.

* If they didn’t know who Jesus was then why was He even in the Temple teaching? Are y’all out to lunch or what?
* The man who was healed knows the scriptures better than they…but even more importantly he understands them.
* He is clear…it was the Messiah that was prophesied to do these things…that is why the man comes to worship Jesus in vs. 38-“ He said, “Lord, I believe,” and he worshiped Him.”

1. So He schools them…you talk about controversy…He knew more of what needed to be said and stood up for than they did…so he left them

with little choice, “They answered him, ‘You were born in utter sin, and would you teach us?’ And they cast him out.” …of

the Temple because he shared the truth…a truth they couldn’t accept...just like most Jews and Gentiles today.

1. The first part of the statement was absolutely true “YOU were born in utter sin…” ...but the second part shows their arrogance toward the truth.
2. They obviously forgot what David said about everyone including him… we are not just born in utter sin but we are all conceived in utter sin. Because to the Fall we are sinful from our mother’s womb.

3. What was Jesus’ response to the man when he was cast out, vs. 35-41?

1. The religious leaders reviled him, insulted him, and rejected him and cast him out of the Temple… but Jesus came to him and found him.
2. No sooner was this poor blind man cast out of the Temple and his people than Jesus finds him and speaks words of comfort.
   1. He knew full well how heavy an affliction excommunication was to an Israelite, and at once cheered him with kind words.
   2. He now revealed Himself more fully to this man than He did to any one except the Samaritan woman. “‘Do you believe in the Son of Man?’ He answered, ‘And who is He, sir, that I may believe in Him?’ Jesus said to him, ‘You have seen Him, and it is He who is speaking to you.’” vs. 35-37

We have here one among many beautiful illustrations of the mind of

Christ.

* 1. He sees all that His people go through for His sake, and feels for all, from the highest to the lowest.
  2. He keeps account of all their losses, crosses, and persecutions. "Are they not all written in His book?" (Psalm. 56:8.)
  3. He knows how to come to their hearts with consolation in their time of need, and to speak peace to them when all men seem to hate them.
  4. The time when men forsake us is often the very time when Christ draws near, saying, “You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off; fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for

I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." (Isaiah. 41:10.)

4. According to vs. 39-41, what is Jesus teaching them?

a. He brings judgment …division between the blind and those who see.

1. To the man born blind He said, “You have seen Him, and it is He who is speaking to you.’ He said, ‘Lord, I believe,’ and he worshiped Him. Jesus said, ‘For judgment I came into this world, that those who do not see may see, and those who see may become

blind.” vs. 37-39

1. Those who “see” through the lens of the law and their own elitism are actually blind and will remain so.
2. They get a bit indignant with Him again asking if He included them in the blind category since they didn’t understand what He was saying.
3. Jesus says to them, “If you were blind, you would have no guilt; but now that you say, ‘We see,’ your guilt remains.”
4. Jesus cold have just said “yes” to their inquiry but that would not have exposed the depth of their problem.

* Jesus changes things up on them…knowing they would not understand…but others might.
* Instead of insisting these leaders are blind, Jesus points out that they themselves claim to “see” clearly and better than anyone else.
* But that reveals the problem: those who are self-confident would not ask for anything from someone they disrespect…He has nothing for them.
* So implicitly they remain blind in their self-confidence and pride. Jesus is saying there are none so blind who do not know they are blind …to the truth.

b. He brings sight to those who cannot see…salvation to His own.

* + - * 1. Those who could not see…now see clearly!
        2. Those who were blind spiritually and morally

Jesus will give sight….a light will shine upon them.

c. He is the healer…and He is the judge. Jesus judges those who

are blind…that is there is a difference between the one who is blind and knows it and the one who just shuts his eyes and won’t believe what he knows.

Here is the message: To be so self-deceived as to shut one’s eyes to the light of the world is a most desperate state to be in and proves the inability and lack of faith that comes with such.

5. What does this whole chapter teach us today?

Lessons in the Gospel of John January 18, 2023

* + - 1. Prayer
      2. Review 1. What was John’s purpose in writing this book?
    1. Other than the fact that God told him to …
    2. John 20:30-“Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.”

2. How has John shown us thus far that Jesus is in fact the Christ, the Son of

God??

## a. Chapter 1- (1) Vs. 1-3- “In the beginning was the Word, and

the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.”

(2) Where was Jesus at the creation? What is John saying about Jesus from the very beginning of his book?

b. Chapter 2- (1) In Vs. 18-20 Jesus says, “So the Jews said to

## Him, ‘What sign do you show us for doing these things?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three

days I will raise it up.’ The Jews then said, ‘It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days?’”

(2) What did He mean and what is He saying about Himself? c.

Chapter 3-

1. At least 3 times in this passage Jesus says, “Truly, truly, I say unto you…”
2. What is He saying and why is that important for us?
3. Just for grins, read John 3:14-18. In this context who will be saved by Christ substitionary atonement? e. Chapter 4-

(1) Jesus said the woman at the well,

## “I who speak to you am He.”

(2) What is He revealing about Himself

in this passage to her a sinner? “He is the great “I

am…ego eimi= I am I am” f. Chapter

5-

1. Vs. 19- “I can do nothing on my own.”
2. I thought He is God. What is He revealing about Himself here? That He does not work alone!
3. Chapter 6- (1) John 6:43-44, 65- “Do not grumble among yourselves.

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.” (2) What did we talk about concerning these verses…what does this tell us about the relationship of the Godhead?

1. Chapter 7-

## (1) Consider Vs. 37-““If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.”

(2) What is this actually communicating to us today about Jesus? j. Chapter 8 k. Chapter 9

(2) Now let’s look 8:31-38, one my favorite passages in the while book…“So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed Him, ‘If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’ They answered him, ‘We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free’?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you. I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father.’” Reading this again, what are some things that come to mind that it is telling you right now?

a. The importance of God’s Word… (1) Walking in that word…living and abiding in that word…leads to our freedom from the world and sins

control over us…

1. Which means if/when we do not heed this we will suffer.
2. Jesus will say in a few days…I am the Way, the Truth and the Life adding greater strength to His first statement, to be sure.
3. He also clarifies who the Truth is within this passage when He says,

“So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed

* 1. We, true believers, are called to persevere, non-believers …will not.
  2. We, true believers, know that sin is the problem...
  3. These verses, show us, lastly, the nature of true freedom.
  4. It is not simply in being a child of Abraham… which would have really hurt their pride.
  5. Our Lord declares this to the Jews in one comprehensive sentence. He says, "If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."
  6. The only freedom that is real and lasting is that which is the property of the true Christian those of us who are IN CHRIST!
  7. Those only are perfectly free people whom the Son of God

"sets/makes free." All else will sooner or later be found to be slaves.

e. With all of these and more being true what would you say is the best news in

this passage…He reveals what He does for His own…and He defines for

us in these verses what a true believer looks like. We all like such

clarity…What does He highlight here?

1. Those who abide in His Word are truly His disciples…abiding…living breathing, doing…totally devoted to His Word is devoted to Him…
2. His Words must have a place in us…which means it is to be seen in and through us…what we say, do and think.
3. As His people we actually love Him…as He defines love... sacrificing type of love…abiding in Him…walking in His steps kind of love…Eph. 6:24-“Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible.”
4. The ones who are of God… hear, listen and obeying His words…
   * + Know what He is saying…and can see its meaning in life in general…this is an intimate knowledge of God Himself which gives us comfort and hope.
     + Understand His words…and willingly obeys His Word.
     + Can teach His words to others…
     + And His Word will have an impact on our lives in good times and in tough times.
     + When we stop depending upon the Word despair sets in because we have unmoored ourselves from the safety of our refuge and we flounder around not sure how to get back.
     + By abiding in the Word…living and being dependent upon it…we know who we are and that knowledge sets us free from what others , the world, even ourselves try to tells us who we are. All the extra voices confuse and lie to us.

(5) With Christ, we need not be afraid of the devil and his schemes.

* + - James 4:6-7 tells us, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’ Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. “
    - Paul says, “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.” (Rom.

16:20)

* + - Then John says in I John4:3-4- “…every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already. Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for

## He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.”

4. Here are the wonderful main truths of these few passages:

1. We are freed from the guilt and consequences of sin by the blood of Christ.
2. Justified, pardoned, forgiven, we can look forward boldly to the Day of Judgment, and know that the peace of God is with us and in us through Christ Jesus.
3. We are freed from the power of sin by the grace of Christ's

Spirit.

1. Sin has no dominion over us.
2. Renewed, converted, sanctified…free… we seek to mortify sin daily, and are no longer led captive by it.
   1. Freedom, like this, is the portion of all true

Christians on the day of our justification.

* 1. Freedom, like this, is their portion forevermore. Death cannot stop it. The grave cannot even hold their bodies for more than a little season. Those whom Christ makes free are free to all eternity.

f. Without this freedom in Christ alone…all other freedom is simply temporary privilege. Think about this:

* + 1. Free speech, political freedom, commercial freedom, national freedoms/ or constitutional rights--all these cannot smooth down a dying pillow, or disarm death of its sting, or fill our consciences with peace.
    2. And on top of that, they can all be taken away and /or abused.
    3. Nothing can do that but the freedom which Christ alone bestows. He gives it freely to all who seek it humbly.

5. Now let’s consider again, in review, chapter 9.

1. What is the point of miracles in the Gospels? To substantiate the message of Christ. What Miracle (s) do we see here? Healing of a man born blind and him coming to faith.
2. Why was there so much controversy surrounding this guy?
3. What was Jesus’ response to the man when he was cast out, vs. 35-41?
   1. The religious leaders reviled him, insulted him, and rejected him and cast him out of the Temple… but Jesus came to him and found him and brought him into a greater family.
   2. No sooner was this poor blind man cast out of the Temple and his people than Jesus finds him and speaks words of comfort.

• He knew full well how heavy an affliction excommunication was to an Israelite, so He comes to Him, “Jesus heard that they

had cast him out, and having found him …”.

* + - Being cast out…no one was allowed to converse or be in his presence.
    - But Jesus found him…came to him…Himself…his Immanuel! • He now revealed Himself more fully to this man than He did to any one except the Samaritan woman. “‘Do you believe in the Son of Man?’ He answered, ‘And who is He, sir, that I may believe in Him?’ Jesus said to him, ‘You have seen Him, and it

is He who is speaking to you.’ He said, ‘Lord, II believe’ and

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Him” vs. 35-38

d. We have here one among many beautiful illustrations of the mind of

Christ.

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4. The time when men forsake us is often the very time when Christ draws near, saying, “You are my servant, I have chosen you and not

## cast you off; fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am

your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." (Isaiah. 41:10.)

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  + But that reveals the problem: those who are selfconfident would not ask for anything from someone they disrespect…He has nothing for them.
  + So implicitly they remain blind in their selfconfidence and pride. Jesus is saying there are none so blind who do not know they are blind …to the truth.

(2) He grants salvation/sight to those who cannot see…salvation to His own.

* + - * + Those who could not see…now see clearly!
        + Those who were blind spiritually and morally Jesus will give sight….a light will shine upon them.
      1. He is the healer…and He is the judge. Jesus judges those who are blind…that is there is a difference between the one who is blind and knows it and the one who just shuts his eyes and won’t believe what he knows.
      2. Here is the message: To be so self-deceived as to shut one’s eyes to the light of the world… is a

most desperate state to be in and proves the inability and lack of faith or the weakness of faith that comes with such.

1. Looking at chapter 9 again, what would you say is the main thing it is seeking to teach us about Jesus?

6. All of this is well and good…but so what? What difference does it really make in our lives especially when things get hard?

Lessons in the Gospel of John January 25, 2023

1. Prayer
2. John chapter 10- This chapter comes on the heels of Jesus’ calling out the religious leaders as blind towards the “things” of God. 1. Let’s begin by looking at vs. 1-21.

2. Verses 1-6, “‘Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes

before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger

they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the

voice of strangers.’ This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what He was saying to them.” What would say is interesting about Jesus speaking this way?

1. One thing that is interesting to me about this statement (within quotations) is that it is true…every one of his listening audience would have known it was true.
   1. Verifying that Jesus knows what He is talking about culturally and common sense wise. The common man had no problem understanding

Him and believing Him.

* 1. Verifying yet again that He tells the truth.

1. Also, like the truth concerning those who are blind and those who can really see at the end of Chapter 9 this true illustration had a different message for the religious leaders.
   1. There was one message for the common people as we talked about above…
   2. And an entirely different message for the religious leaders … the ones

He is primarily still talking to…

* + - The ones spoken of here as not understanding what He was saying.
    - And they wouldn’t understand because of their hard hearts against Jesus as Jesus has told them over and over again throughout these last few chapters.

(3) Given how “true” this illustration is…indisputable in its content then the message He will explain in a minute is absolutely true as well.

1. In the true illustration we see the shepherd leading his flock. What does the shepherd do that causes the sheep to follow him?

(1) They know the shepherds voice who is calling them (by name the text says…meaning some may have known their little flock but this is certainly talking about the specific call of the shepherd known only to them)… “The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name

## and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.”

1. It isn’t by sight but by his voice that sheep know to follow him. What does that tell us about one of man’s chief desires starting with Moses to see the Lord?
2. The story is told of a young man given the task to care for His father’s sheep. The father tells his son, “My boy, when you take care of and when you lead your father’s flock, remember to give a certain call and continue always to give that certain call of the father throughout your life as a shepherd, so that when the sheep hear they will know your voice and follow you wherever you lead them, for the sheep know not the shepherd by face and garments, but by his call!”
3. Another story I came across in my reading: We often only think of WW I affecting Europe but the Middle East was hard hit by the war and the tug of war that went on to capture what was then Palestine. So it was during this time this story is told: During WWI, some soldiers tried to steal a flock of sheep from a hillside near Jerusalem. The sleeping shepherd awoke to find his flock being driven off. There was no way that he could recapture his flock by force, but he didn’t need to, he simply called out to his flock with his distinctive call…the sheep heard him and returned to their rightful owner. The sheep didn’t know the robbers voice so they went to the only voice they knew.

3. Next we move into Jesus explaining the true illustration in verses 7-21.

a. There is a lot to unpack here, but what things jump out to you? And what is He saying here that is applicable to us today?

1. Again, He says, ““Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.
   * He has spoken truth so far so what He has to say in explanation is true as well.
   * He makes a bold follow up statement.
2. The very men who had just said in so many words, "We see," were denounced with holy boldness, as "thieves and robbers."
3. Oh…and there is only One person who can lead the true Israel of God…and that is Him.
4. The "door," in this sentence, must evidently mean something far more than outward calling and commission.
   * The Jewish teachers were not in the least deficient in this point— they could probably trace up their orders in direct succession to Aaron himself.
   * But it is also true that ordination is no proof whatever that a man is fit to show others the way to heaven, just that he knows enough to say the right things.
   * The true sense of the "door" must be sought in our Lord's own interpretation and the common sense meaning used every day.
   * In smaller sheep herders a pen was set up at night to hold the sheep in place…because of the many dangers at night…and the shepherd himself would serve as the door…laying in the doorway keeping the sheep n and predators and thieves out.

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If it was a group of shepherds bedding down for the night they would determine different people for different watches of the night to hold that position. So as Jesus explains His earlier story

He begins by saying as the shepherd He is the door…

* + The door here as in the true illustration above speaks of the proper way to gain entry…as Jesus will say again in chapter

14, “I

am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes through the

Father except through me.”

* + - It is Christ Himself who is "the door.”…and shepherd even before He says it.
    - No one gets salvation except through Him…he is the proper way…in fact…the only way to gain entrance.

b. Then He gets even clearer: All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.”

* 1. Those in that day and age and many, if not most, of the religious leaders of old would fall into this statement since many of these guys could run their lineage (real or otherwise) back to forerunner who had held this position.
  2. Since we are talking about religious leaders here, anyone who enters into the ministry without Jesus Christ are no better than thieves and robbers…as these were. Yes, there are people who enter this profession for position …for fame…for power…just like then.
     + The false shepherd of souls is he who enters the ministerial office with little or no thought about Christ, from worldly and selfexalting motives, but from no desire to exalt Jesus, and the great salvation that is in

Him.

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* + - Christ, in one word, is the cornerstone and the foundation of the true minister.

1. The true shepherd of souls is He who enters the ministry with a single eye to Christ, desiring to glorify Christ, doing all in the strength of Christ, preaching Christ's doctrine, walking in Christ's steps, and laboring to bring men and women to Christ.
2. The sentence before us is a sorrowful and humbling one.

• It condemns the Jewish teachers of our Lord's time and before.

* + - The word “thief” in Greek implies deception and trickery…they are the sons of their father the devil after all.

The word “robber” implies violence and destruction in the Greek...breaking and entering violently!

* + - Jesus said of them, “I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. Jesus is the Only

One

who can and does bring life for His own.

* + - They taught nothing rightly about Messiah. They rejected Christ Himself when He appeared. So the true believers, “…the sheep did not listen to them.”

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* + - It is only in and through Jesus that anyone can find the true rest in life…the pasture the Shepherd provides in Psalm 23;1- “The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures.”

While they came to steal, kill and destroy, Jesus came, “that they may have life and have it abundantly.”

* + - The word “abundantly” in the Greek is a mathematical term that generally denotes surplus…but not necessarily in the way we think of surplus…
      1. The abundant life isn’t especially a long life…though it can be.
      2. The abundant life isn’t an easy, comfortable life…though there will be times of ease.
      3. The abundant life as described in Scripture is a life of satisfaction and contentment in

Jesus Christ.

* + - * The actual Greek word here is “perissos” which means especially when talking of the Godhead…

“to the full”…”completely full” …”utterly

complete”

* + - * A.W. Pink says this about this word “abundant”, “Everything in God is on a grand scale. Great power-He shakes the world. Great wisdom-He balances the clouds. His mercy and grace is

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commensurate with His other attributes: it is Godlike mercy, infinite mercy! Well may it be called abundant since it be infinite. It will always be abundant, for all that can be drawn

from it will be as a drop in a bucket to the sea itself.”

Eph. 3:20-21- “Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever.

Amen.” Super abundant nature of God.

◼ John had said in 1:16… “…grace upon grace…”

…one grace hasn’t left before another is upon us…that is how abundant is His grace and mercy… boundless…utterly complete and endless...infinite in nature!

c. But then He clarifies His role even more. He has been talking about being a shepherd with His use of the “door” but now He gets more specific and says in vs. 11-15, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.” (1) The Good

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Shepherd: • By calling Himself the Good Shepherd…what does that makes us? How are we like sheep? v.

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* By announcing Himself to be the Good Shepherd He ties Himself with all the references to the coming Shepherd through David’s line and then it substantiates all the other reference to Shepherd in the NT. (See Gen. 49:24; Is. 40:11, Ezek. 34:23; Heb. 13:20; I

Peter 2:25, 5:4; Rev. 7:17)

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* By calling Himself the Good Shepherd He makes Himself out to be the great antagonist of the robbers.

As Good Shepherd He stakes His claim as the Head shepherd of His flock.

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(2) What are the characteristics of a Good Shepherd that He highlights for us in this text? The first characteristics of this Good

Shepherd-

## “The good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.”

* SACRIFICE for His own.
* It is what He came to do…it is what He is to do to bring

His Father glory.

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* In contrast to the hired hand…the wolf…the robber and the thieves that are currently there pillaging the sheep or only thinking of their best interest.
* This was predetermined by the Godhead… Isaiah

## 53:10- “Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush Him;

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He has put Him to grief; when his soul makes8 an offering for guilt…”

* Zech. 13: 7-“Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, against the man who stands next to me, declares the LORD of hosts. Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; I will turn my hand against the little ones.”
* Acts 2: 22-24-“Men of Israel, hear these words:

## Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God

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with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves know— this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. God raised Him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for Him to be held by it.”

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(3) The Good Shepherd knows His sheep, and is known by His sheep, “I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me”

• Jesus defines the word “know”…as a oneness…an unbreakable connection one with the other when He says, “just as the Father knows me and I know the Father”

* The Godhead defines each other.
* The bond they have is unbreakable…incorruptible… eternal.

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And reiterates what that oneness causes Him to do, I lay down my life for the sheep.” Which tells us how important sacrifice is for us one to another as well.

The title “pastor” translates from the same ancient Greek word translated as shepherd. It is a title that is granted and then continually earned. Jer. 3:15-“And I will give you shepherds after

my own heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding.”

* 1. And yet He clarifies this role even more vs. 16- “And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.”

As has been prophesied since the beginning He is speaking of the Gentiles.

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There will be neither Jew or Gentile…but

one Church

..one flock…with one

Good Shepherd.

What holds this one flock together?…

Hearing the voice of the one Shepherd…and those who imitate His voice.

The unity of the flock depend upon the proximity to Him…loyalty to Him.

This doesn’t speak of denomination…separate flocks…it speaks to what is to bind us together…Jesus and the whole counsel of God that comes with Him.

OOPS!!- When Jerome was translating this into the Latin Vulgate he translated “one flock” as “one fold” hence giving foundation and credence for this doctrine of one true Church of Roman Catholicism. This also led to the notion that there can be no salvation outside of the RC church.

* 1. 4 times Jesus speaks of laying down his life for the sheep. 2 times before and then 2 times here in vs. 17-18- “For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”What is He communication here by saying this?
     + 1. Christ died of His own voluntary free will.
       2. The point before us is of utmost importance.
          - We must never suppose for a moment that our Lord had no power to prevent His sufferings, and that He was delivered up to His enemies and crucified because He could not help it.
          - The treachery of Judas, the armed band of priests' servants, the enmity of Scribes and Pharisees, the injustice of Pontius Pilate, the crude hands of Roman soldiers, the scourge, the nails, and the spear—all these could not have harmed a hair of our Lord's head, unless He had allowed them.
          - Well might He say those remarkable words, "Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and He will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? But how then should the

## Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so? " (Matt. 26:53-54.)

• There were all those times where He simply walked away from stoning…or the soldiers fell down in His presence when He told them who He is…or the soldiers were so impressed that they couldn’t arrest Him…it was not His time…for He was in charge of the time.

(3) The plain truth is, that our Lord submitted to death of His own free will, because He knew that His death was the only way of making atonement for man's sins.

* He poured out His soul unto death with all the desire of His heart, because the Godhead had determined to pay our debt to God, and redeem us from our sin.
* Heb. 12:2-3- “who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider Him who endured from sinners such hostility against Himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.”
* His death was not the death of a martyr, but the death of a triumphant conqueror a war fighter, who knows that even in dying He wins for Himself and His people a kingdom and a crown of glory.
  + Mission success is all that matters...life and death not so much.
  + May prefer not to have to die but if that is the price for mission success dying knowing of that success makes it a joy.
* Not an indirect suicide as some have suggested but as we have seen a planned submission to death then to emerge victoriously alive according to the Father’s command…the Godheads expressed decision of Hos he would be glorified and His people saved … received from the Father.

1. One last thing: What is going on in vs. 19-12? “There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. Many of them said, ‘He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?’ Others said, ‘These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?’”
   1. John tells us that while they are fighting over this…they are also right to look at the words and the works before making a decision…but…
   2. It is only a decision that can be made correctly by those who are His…otherwise one is left with C.S. Lewis’ dilemma that he placed before a crowd once while he was lecturing… “Is Jesus a liar, lunatic or Lord?” The empirical evidence only points in the direction of our hearts…believing heart or non.
2. Jesus calls Himself the Good Shepherd and that all others are just hirelings. Who are the hirelings today?

* 1. The first answer is probably all those who are in authority in churches that shouldn’t be…this is the negative side of this as described here:
     + This one flees at the first sign of trouble

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* + - Leaving the sheep to fend for themselves
    - Because they were not called to be a “shepherd” by God.

* 1. 2nd answer is Pastors/elders who have been called by God to be undershepherds…,.we are still hirelings because…we need to remember the sheep don’t belong to us…the Pharisees had forgotten that.
     + The elders and I are hirelings…
       - Called and hired by the Good Shepherd…to shepherd His sheep…
       - The people do vote for their pastor and their elders and deacons…these men must have first been called by God or they are not true shepherds.
       - Only the Good Shepherd can call…then the people confirms by the movement of the Holy Spirit.
     + We are not the Good Shepherd…we will not do it perfectly…there is only one Good Shepherd and as such only one Shepherd who can and will care for His children always rightly…the only one who is always dependable.

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* + - As His hirelings we pray that we do the job well… knowing that we will not care for His sheep as He can for we need His care as well… for we are sheep, too.

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* 1. Only Jesus came to lay down His life for His sheep.

* + - He alone had the authority to do so…

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* + - He alone could appease God’s wrath and satisfy God’s law…this is not something a hireling can do…we can intercede for God’s sheep but we cannot grant forgiveness from eternal damnation.

* + - We are called to judge the sin of God’s sheep or the validity of one’s profession…but only God through Christ and the work of the

Spirit can change a person’s heart. (See John 20:21-23)

1. So, to wrap up these verses what does John tell us that explains that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God?

1. And again… but so what? Jesus has made it abundantly clear that life on this world is only going to get harder. So what difference does all of this really make in

our lives?

Lessons in the Gospel of John February 8, 2023

* + 1. Prayer
    2. Review- Chapter 10:1-21

* 1. What were some of the ways that John confirmed for us that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God in the first 21 verses of the chapter?

* 1. We ended last time looking at verses 19-21-“There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. Many of them said, ‘He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?’ Others said, ‘These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?’”

What did we say were some of the things going on here in this conversation and why is it important?

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a. Jesus’ own words literally fulfilled- Jesus said in Matt. 10:34-36-“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a person’s enemies will be those of his own household.”

1. The fault was not in Christ or His doctrine, but in the carnal mind of His Jewish hearers.
2. Jesus shows clearly the dividing line of humanity…it has nothing to do with ethnicity, or gender…but between belief and unbelief.

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1. Only 2 kinds of human beings…

* Elect believers given the kingdom.
* Non-elect kept out of the kingdom.
  + - 1. John tells us that while they are fighting over this…they are also right to look at the words and the works before making a decision.

For miraculous works can be valid kk testimony but only in concert with the faithfulness of the Word of

God.

* + - 1. We need to remember and consider so we are never surprised when we see the same thing in our own day.
  1. Human nature never changes. So long as the heart of man is without grace, that is how long we must expect to see it dislike the Gospel of

Christ.

* 1. Just as oil and water cannot combine, so in the same way unconverted people cannot really like the people of God. "The carnal mind is enmity

against God." "The natural man receives not the things of the

Spirit of God."

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* Rom. 8:7-8-“For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God’s law; indeed, it cannot.

8Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”

* 1 Cor. 2:14- “The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.”

(3) So the servant of Christ must think it no strange thing when we go through the same experience as our Master.

* As time goes on and we get closer and closer to Christ in our sanctification we will often find our ways and opinions concerning the true faith the cause of strife in our own family.

* We will have to endure ridicule, harsh words, and petty persecution, from the children of this world….just as Christ did.

d. It is only a decision that can be made correctly by those who

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His…otherwise one is left with C.S. Lewis’ dilemma that he placed before

a crowd once while he was lecturing… “Is Jesus a liar, lunatic or Lord?” The empirical evidence only supports the direction of our hearts…believing heart or non.

3. Now let’s consider vs. 22-30

a. What do we call this Feast of Dedication today?

(1) Hanukkah which celebrated the cleansing and rededication of the temple after 3 years of desecration by Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria. Under Antiochus:

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* Possessing of a copy of the law was punishable by death.

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Circumcising children was punishable by death and mothers who did it anyway were crucified with the children hanging around their necks.

* The great altar was turned into an altar for Zeus.
* Pigs were sacrificed regularly on the altar.
* At least 80,000 Jews were killed with an equal number sold as slaves.

(2) The rise of the Maccabeans ended this reign of terror and purified the temple and they lit the menorah (lampstand) with only enough oil for one day but the oil lasted until there was enough time to press out and consecrate a sufficient amount…8 days…the 8 days of Hanukah.

b. While walking in the temple which was His habit…since He saw this as His Father’s house…hence His house…what happens and what is Jesus’ response again? “It was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the

colonnade of Solomon. So the Jews gathered around Him and said to Him, ‘How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.’ Jesus answered them, ‘I told you, and you do not believe.

The works that I do in my Father’s name bear witness about me, but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep.”

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(1) Fun fact: Colonnade of Solomon ---think portico like at the US Capitol.

* A big covered space or walkway with massive columns named after Solomon who built the first temple and a corresponding porch (I

Kings 6:2-3).

* It separated two other well-known places…On the eastern side the

Temple’s Outer Court (the Women’s Court) and to the West the

Court of the Gentiles.

* Peter and John healed a lame man there after Christ’s ascension and then preached to a large crowd- Acts 3:11- “While he clung to Peter

and John, all the people, utterly astounded, ran together to them

in the portico called Solomon’s.”

* Early believers actually met here together with the apostles. Acts 5:12- “Now many signs and wonders were regularly done among the people by the hands of the apostles. And they were all together in Solomon’s Portico.”

1. The Jews surrounded Him so He couldn’t just walk away as He had in the past.
2. Even with this tactic Jesus is not alarmed.
3. What are they doing when they ask, ‘How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.’ ?

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* It is a sign of the unbelief that after Jesus had so well proved Himself to be the Messiah…they still refused to believe it.
* They are mocking Him.
* They are seeking to place the blame on Him. This is like telling a police officer if the state would only put speed signs every 100 feet then I would stay at the required speed.
* They were also wanting to be clearer so they could bring charges, as they will later, to the Roman governor.

(5) He says, “I told you” so what has He specifically told them?

- I am the One who came from heaven.- John 3:13, 6:38

* - Whoever believes in me has eternal life.- John 3:15 and again in this chapter
* I am the Son of God.- John 5:19-23
* “I told you” that I will judge all of humanity. John 5:19-23

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* That all should honor me just as they honor my Father- John 5:1923
* That the Scriptures speak of me. - John 5:39-
* That I …Jesus… perfectly reveal God the Father.- John 7:28-29
* “I told you”…that I always please my Father and never sin- John

8:29, 8:46

* That I am uniquely sent by God to carry our His will- John 8:42
* “Before Abraham was I am”- declaring His divinity openly.- John

8:58-

* I am the Son of Man prophesied in Daniel.- John 9:37-
* “I told you” with the the blatant “I am” statements.- John 6:48,

8:12, 10:9, 10:11

* That I will raise myself from the dead- John 10:17-18

* The problem wasn’t that Jesus was unclear the problem was that they had been rejected and were not part of His flock…and didn’t have ears to hear. So they are blind guides and deaf to the truth of the Word...of Jesus.

(6) Vs. 24-26-“Jesus answered them, ‘I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father’s name bear witness about me, but you do not believe because you are not among my sheep.”

* This is like a true indictment of them clearly telling them…again…that they are not believers and they will not enter the kingdom of God.

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* Twice in these verses He says they “do not believe”- emphasizing that they are not His sheep. Of course, this is something He has told them before.
* If you don’t believe my words …then you should have believed my works which point to the Father and the Messiah that had been prophesied.

c. His main response has to do with His own. But there are those who do “see” and who do “hear”…His Sheep. “My sheep hear my voice, and I know

them,

and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, sis greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.”

1. We often read the quotation, "My sheep shall never perish." While that is substantially correct, those are not the precise words Christ used. This is what He actually said: "My sheep hear [heed!] my voice, and I know

[approve] them, and they follow Me [contrary to their natural

inclinations]: And I give to them eternal life; and they (His sheep) shall never perish" (John 10:27, 28)

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1. The word "sheep," no doubt, points to something in the character and ways of true Christians.

It would be easy to show that weakness, helplessness, harmlessness, usefulness, are all points of resemblance between the sheep and the believer.

* + But the leading idea in our Lord's mind was the entire dependence of the sheep upon its Shepherd.
  + Just as sheep hear the voice of their own shepherd, and follow him, so do believers follow Christ.
    1. By faith we listen to His call.
    2. By faith we submit ourselves to His will.
    3. By faith they lean on Him, and commit their souls implicitly to

His direction.

• The ways of a shepherd and his sheep are a most useful illustration of the relation between Christ and the true Christian.

(3) The expression, "My sheep," points to the close connection that exists between Christ and believers. Back in vs. 14- we read “I lay down my

## life for the sheep.” This could also be read , “I lay down my life for my sheep.”

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* We are His by gift from the Father, His by purchase, His by calling and choice, and His after being given a new heart by the Spirit.
* In the highest sense we are Christ's property; and just as a man feels a special interest in that which he has bought at a great price and made his own, so does the Lord Jesus feel a peculiar interest in

His people.

(4) Expressions like these should be carefully treasured up in the memories of true Christians.

d. What are the promises given to His sheep? And how should they affect our day to day? "I know them. I give them eternal life. They will never perish— no one will snatch them out of my hand.”

* + 1. Again we are known by Him…we are seen through and through…to the heart…and He still loves us for He knows we are His the gift of the Father to Him.
    2. Jesus is the one and Only One who grants this to His sheep.
  + Christ "gives" His people "eternal life."
  + He bestows on us freely a right and title to heaven, pardoning for all time our many sins, and clothing us with His perfect righteousness.
  + Money, and health, and worldly prosperity He often wisely withholds from us. But He never fails to give us all the grace, peace, and glory we need.

1. He grants to us that we will never perish…never will we suffer the 2nd death…oh, we will suffer in this life…but never in the next.

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1. He grants to us the promise of never losing our salvation. • For He is the

Key of David…the One who holds the keys to death and the grave and

everything else ...the One who has opened the door…reminding us yet again that we are securely in His hand and that we are unsnatchable! ◼ No one or nothing can take it from us.

* The Father gave us to Jesus…us…those He had chosen before the foundation of the world.
* Jesus’ work on the cross secures this promise to all who are His.

• Eternal security really cannot be refuted…Jesus says eternal, forever, no one…it is not in God’s nature to revoke His promises that He has granted to us.

(5) It has been said, “A stronger form of speech defining and defending what Jesus came to do can hardly be found in the whole range of the

Bible.”

1. What is your reaction to Jesus’ words that hold so much certainty for today concerning these promises?

1. With this in mind…the red-letter words of Jesus…how do you suppose that anyone can support from Scripture the doctrine that we can lose our salvation?

* 1. There is a clear distinction between those who aren’t His sheep and they will never be given a place in the kingdom…

* 1. And those who are His sheep who’s place has been secured and assured with these statements even before He has gone to the cross.
  2. By using words like “eternal life” and “never perish” and “no one will snatch them out of my hands…out of the Father’s hand” the doctrine of man that says we can lose our salvation is shown to be heresy…unless

Jesus is a liar.

* 1. He has said it before and will say it again:
* John 6:39-40- “And this is the will of Him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that He has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life, and

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will raise him up on the last day.”

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John 17:22-24- “The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.”

*g.* But then Jesus goes and does it again, “I and the Father are one.” What is the problem with His statement for Jewish Leaders?He once again He makes a

clear statement of His deity and the nature of the Godhead.

* 1. To them then and today…there is only One God singular…even though the Hebrew word for God Elohim is plural…and the Scriptures in Gen. 1 speak of the Godhead in plural terms… “in the beginning God

(Elohim) created…” “The spirit hovered over the earth” “us, our”…

* 1. To place yourself together with that one God was blasphemous… unless of course...you ae who you say your are.
  2. The whole Godhead…Trinity…was and is still today anathema to the

Jew.

* 1. He is telling them He is co-equal with the Father in His essence, power and glory.
  2. And by refusing this teaching they are openly opposed to God

Himself.

* 1. WCF 3-3- In the unity of the Godhead there be three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.
  2. WLC- Question 9: How many persons are there in the Godhead? Answer:

There be three persons in the Godhead, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one true, eternal God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory; although distinguished by their personal properties.

* 1. Conclusion: Jesus’ sheep respond to His voice, others reject Him. The implicit truth of election is unambiguous in this passage.
  2. How should these statements alone cause us to look at life as we walk in these latter days?

*4.* Now let’s consider 10:31-42.

* 1. As a reaction to the last statement “I and the Father are one.” “The Jews picked up stones again to stone Him.” Again given their hypocrisy- why?
     1. They are really feeling the heat…
     2. While they did not want to believe and they could not believe… they still knew the Scriptures and the Scriptures had confirmed that the Messiah would be doing just what Jesus had been doing….

* + 1. So the heat is turned up and their sinful hearts are spurring them on to do the work of their father…the work of destruction.
    2. The unbelieving Jew at Jerusalem was neither moved by our Lord's miracles, nor by His preaching. They were determined not to receive Him as their Messiah.
  1. So…vs. 32-“Jesus answered them, ‘I have shown you many good works from the Father; for which of them are you going to stone me?’”

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1. It was clear they had lost whatever argument they thought they were winning since they couldn’t point to one thing He had done that was opposed to that which had been foretold of the Messiah.
   * Stoning Jesus just because they thought He blasphemed without a trial was not allowed in the Law.

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* + Besides that the Romans forbid the Jews carrying out capital punishment.

So their outrage was not based in the Law but in their supposed selfrighteousness.

* + Surgeon commented this way on this text… “If they cannot answer holy arguments with fair reasoning, they can give hard answers with stones. If they cannot destroy the reasoning, you may, perhaps destroy the reasoner.”

1. But there was no real crime that could be laid to His charge.

1. He was one whose whole life "went about doing good." Acts 10:38- “God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.”
2. There was no fault or inconsistency in His character. Such a man had never walked on the face of this earth. But yet the Jews hated Him, and thirsted for His blood. How true are the words of Scripture—"They

hated Him without a cause” “Whoever hates me hates my Father also.

If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: ‘They hated me without a cause.’” ." John 15:2325(Psalm

35:19-21)

1. But as before they believed He blasphemed God. “The Jews answered him, ‘It is not for a good work that we are going to stone you but for blasphemy, because you, being a man, make yourself God.’”
2. The Jews clearly understood what the Jehovah Witnesses and others today do not…Jesus clear claim to divinity…His claim to be God.
3. Jesus is NOT making Himself God…He is NOT making Himself anything…but in word and work He is showing Himself to truly be The 2nd person of the Godhead…the Son sent to do the father’s will.

c. Then Jesus gives an interesting come back, vs. 34-38 “Jesus answered them,

‘Is it not written in your Law, ‘I said, you are gods’? (think also of Moses to

Aaron in Ex. 4;15-16) If he called them gods to whom the word of God came—and Scripture cannot be broken— do you say of him whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world, ‘You are blaspheming,’ because I said, ‘I am the Son of God’? If I am not doing the works of my Father, then do not believe me; but if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me and I am in the Father.” What is the point He is making here with them?

1. Fun fact: Jesus must be talking with the Pharisees here because the Sadducees only believed that the Pentateuch was the Law.
   * His use of Psalm 82, here, as the Law would not go over well and thus His argument would not be understood by the Sadducees.
   * But the Pharisees saw the whole OT along with some oral traditions as the Law. So Jesus seems to be speaking to them…who he calls

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hypocrites, robbers and thieves, and wolves, and white washed sepulchers…and more.

* + We find Him using a text out of Psalm 82 as an argument against His enemies, in which the whole point lies in the single word "gods."
  + The meaning is given here but we also see it in Ex. 4:15-16 to a degree.
  + But also He may be using this as a contrast if those who were given direct access to God and His word to give to others were to be considered “gods” how much more me who actually is God?

1. And then having quoted the text, He lays down the great principle, "the Scripture cannot be broken."

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* + It is as though He was saying that wherever the Scripture speaks plainly on any subject, there can be no more questions about it. The cause is settled and decided.
  + Every jot and tittle of Scripture is true, and must be received as conclusive.
  + There are difficulties in Scripture, we need not shrink from conceding, things hard to explain, hard to reconcile, and hard to understand. But in almost all these difficulties, the fault, we may justly suspect, is not in the Scriptures but in our own weak minds.

In all cases we may well be content to wait for more light, and to believe that all shall be made clear at last.

* + One thing we may rest assured: The wisest course is to walk in the old path—the path of faith and humility; and say, "I cannot give up a single word of my Bible.” “All Scripture is breathed out

## (through inspiration) by God. The Scripture cannot be broken."

* The Scriptures can never be emptied of its force/power when they are inconvenient. It cannot be broken, it actually breaks everything that seeks to stand in its way.
* Jesus appeals to the Word as the best evidence of His own Divine mission. He bids the Jews look at them, and deny them at their peril.

1. Then they react as they have in the past, “Again they sought to arrest

Him, but He escaped from their hands.” How could He get away again?

1. What did He go away to do? We see the kingdom growing, “He went away again across the Jordan to the place where John had been baptizing at first, and there He remained. And many came to Him. And they said, ‘John did no sign, but everything that John said about this man was true.’ And many believed in him there.”
2. His work wasn’t done yet…and it wasn’t His time to be offered up...yet there was no sense of fear in Him…like “I have to get out of this place to

save my life.” What was going on was… “I have to get out of here because I have another appointment…more to do for my Father before my time comes to an end.”

1. This area was called Perea (on the eastern side of the Jordan River, Rueben, Gad and ½ tribe of Manasseh) was the domain of Herod Antipas, where the rulers in Jerusalem had no authority. Jesus would be safe from harassment and death there…at least temporarily.
2. Being in Jerusalem one might think that people there would be welcoming…but in Perea a despised place from the Jews perspective men believed in Him.

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1. They believed because not by anything John the Baptist did or did not do…but because everything he said about Jesus has proven to be true. A prophet is one whose word always comes true…as John’s did.
2. No matter what man does God works goes on.

Lessons in the Gospel of John February 15, 2023

1. Prayer
2. Review
   1. Last time, what were some of the ways that John confirmed for us that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God in the last 21 verses of the chapter?

* 1. How did Jesus respond to the accusations of blasphemy? Why is that important?

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* 1. What does it means to you that “the Scriptures cannot be broken”?

1. John chapter 11
2. The chapter we now look at is one of the most remarkable in the New Testament. It describes a miracle which is not recorded in the other Gospels—the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Nowhere shall we find such convincing proofs of our Jesus’ divinity. It was just the right way to conclude His earthly…the victory of Bethany should closely precede the crucifixion at Calvary.

1. Let’s read John 11:1-46
   1. HEADS UP: 50- points to the first person who can tell me Lazarus’ Hebrew name.
   2. Another 50 points for the best theory or reason why John would use Lazarus’ Greek name with a mostly Jewish audience.
      1. Lazarus is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Eleazar which means “God is my help”
      2. Most Jews had two names…Greek and Hebrew.
      * Lazarus- Greek. Eleazar- Hebrew
      * Thomas- Hebrew. Didymus/The Twin-Greek. Vs. 16
   3. As we consider this section of Scripture what are some of the important lessons that leap out at us?

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1. This is a fallen world where death reigns supreme because of sin. “Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill.”

• Lazarus was deathly ill! By the time Jesus gets this message he may already be dead.

* + - The Lord Jesus, who had power over all diseases, could no doubt have prevented this illness, if He had thought fit. But He did not do so.
    - It was part of His plan that Lazarus be sick, and in pain, and weary, and to languish and suffer like any other man.

• We need to remember and ponder this truth because we live in a world full of disease and death.

* + - Sickness, by its nature, can never be anything but trying and taxing to us.
    - Our bodies and souls are linked together, and that which attacks and weakens the body can hardly fail to also influence the mind and soul.

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* + - But sickness, we must always remember, is not always a sign that God is displeased with us; it is generally sent for the good of our souls so that we might depend on one and another and upon

God.

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1) It reminds us of the curse, hence, it tends to draw our hearts away from this world, and to direct them to things above. 2) It sends us to our Bibles, and teaches us to pray.

* + - 1. It also helps to prove our faith and patience, and shows us the real value of our hope in Christ.
      2. It reminds us that we will not always live, and tunes and trains our hearts for our great change.

◼ With these things in mind let us not be fearful of illness.

* + - 1. And given what Jesus will do here even before raising Lazarus we must believe that the Lord Jesus loves us when we are sick no less than when we are well.

* + - 1. Given the number of times John speaks of Jesus’s love for them, even Lazarus we know that this is a testing of their faith not a denial of His

Love.

• Just as an aside: John gives a parenthetical statement here about which Mary he is talking about…see John 12:1-5

1. This passage teaches us of simple faith and how to act it out.

• The sisters sent a simple word confident that that was what they needed to do.

“So the sisters sent to Him, saying, ‘Lord, he whom you love is ill.’”

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* + They were requesting Him to come…for they didn’t know what else to do, on one hand, but on the other, they knew He was the

One to ask.

* + They left the matter there, in the full belief that He would do what was best. James 1:6- “Let him ask in faith, with no doubting.” Here was the true faith and humility of saints! Here was gracious submission of will!

• They were also convinced because of that love that He would do something...though they had something different in mind. They didn’t see the bigger picture of how God was to use even Lazarus’ death to Jesus’ glory and the good of the people.

* + No doubt when those whom we love are sick, we are to use every reasonable means for their recovery.
  + We must spare no pains to obtain the best medical advice.
  + Like the sisters at Bethany, we must send up a prayer to Christ.
  + And finally, let us not forget, in the hurry and excitement of our feelings that none can help like Him, and that He is merciful, loving, and gracious.

1. This passage teaches us that He is in charge and has a bigger picture in mind than our momentary suffering.

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* + - * + So this teaches us that we must all too often wait on the Lord to show us what He is doing.
        + Waiting is hard especially when the circumstance is so urgent in our minds.
        + Waiting causes us…eventually to look to Him and then walk n the way He leads.
        + Waiting is hard in the dark night of your soul…because we want to be done with it and everything to get back to “normal”...but it can’t…it can never be as it was…and it wasn’t meant to stay the same.

* + - * + Waiting is hard when something like death has always been so final. ◼ There is no reference for overcoming death in her mind.

◼ With death there is an immediate sense of helplessness because we somehow have convinced ourselves that we ca fix anything.

It is never that He doesn’t care about our struggles, but like everything else...everything is done only in His time frame.

He loves these people and so He would know that they were in anguish at their brothers passing but it was all part of a larger plan. “Now Jesus loved Martha and

her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that

Lazarus was ill, He stayed two days longer in the place where he was.”

Lazarus did die, so what did Jesus mean when He said,

“This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”?

He tells His disciples that this death would not be a final death.

They would understand more of when He resurrected and the Spirit comes to give them understanding.

◼ His delays are not necessarily denials.

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3 times in John we see Him being asked to do something (John 2:1-11- Wedding Feast; John 7:1-10 when His brothers asked him to go to the Feast and here)

In each case, He at first denies and then follows through revealing that He had come to do His Father’s will in His time. His delays would bring greater glory to His father.

◼ He delayed on purpose.

* + - * 1. To heal a sick person would have been great but to heal a dead person …one dead four days (beyond the Jewish traditional 3 days to see if the person would resuscitate themselves)…now that would be the climax of Jesus’ ministry.
        2. So that God will be glorified through this suffering and then resurrection.
* But even the disciples didn’t get the bigger picture. Even having Jesus with you with the things He said and did …one would think they would trust He knows what He is doing.
  + Going to Jerusalem so soon didn’t make “good sense” to them.
  + Going to wake up a friend who had been ill even made worse sense to them.

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* + And even after why He told them He had to go back to Judea Thomas says, “Let us go, that we may die with Him.”
    1. Sounds like a loyal statement…but it is not…because that is not why He is going to Judea at this time.
    2. None of them will be willing to die with Him when push comes to shove.
    3. Some have said that Thomas was not believing here…I think it is more sarcasm than anything else. He seems to be a man who puts his foot I his mouth and then has to eat His words.

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* Things such as these are often going on around us all the time. ◼

The servants of Christ are often placed in circumstances just as puzzling and perplexing as those of the disciples.

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* + - They are led in ways of which they cannot see the purpose and object; they are called to fill positions from which they naturally shrink, and which they would never have chosen for themselves.
    - Thousands in every age are continually learning this by their own experience. The path they are obliged to walk in is not the path of their own choice.
    - At present they cannot see its usefulness or wisdom.
    - What can we learn about prayer from verses 4-6?

(4) This passage shows us his compassion for His own and His kindness to others.

* Jesus speaks of the death of His friend with compassion. “Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I go to awaken him.”

* + - The death of true Christians is "sleep". Using a softer word before He has to be plain spoken to discuss the death of one of

His own.

* + - It is a solemn and miraculous change, no doubt, but not a change to be regarded with alarm. They have nothing to fear for their souls in the change, for their sins are washed away in

Christ's blood.

* + - Christians have nothing to fear for their bodies in the change; they will rise again, refreshed and renewed, after the image of the

Lord. ◼ The grave itself is a conquered enemy.

* What does this simple exchange in verses 21-37 teach us about how we should look at death and how we should talk about death?

* How does He show His compassion differently to Martha and Mary?

What does this communicate to us for how we help people in grief?

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* + - Both these holy women had faith enough to say, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." But Martha added more, “But even now I know that whatever you ask from God,

God will give you.”

* + - A type of lament for they complained against God knowing that

He had the power to keep Him from dying if He willed it.

* + - To me Martha’s declaration is a strong sign of faith while limited in scope…much like the brothers Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in Daniel 3:16-18. She like they are resolved to submit to the father’s will.
    - Martha knew that Jesus also had the power to raise her brother (I suspect, Mary did as well) but the grief in her heart demanded

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an answer and Jesus gave it, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?”

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Martha obviously believed in the resurrection on the final day.

* + - But Jesus says not just then…but also today, Jesus is saying to her, “I, even I, your Master, am He that has the keys of life and death in His hands right now.”
      * 1. Jesus didn’t claim to HAVE resurrection and life.
        2. Jesus didn’t claim to UNDERSTAND the secrets behind the resurrection and the

Life.

* + - * 1. Jesus said emphatically that He IS the resurrection and the

Life.

* + - * 1. Not only do I get this power from the Godhead, but I am these.

Apart from ME there is NO resurrection or Life. 5) Only God himself or a lunatic would make such a statement. 6) What are some of the implications of this whole statement for us today?

“Jesus said to her, ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.”

7) Spurgeon said, “Death comes to the ungodly man as a penal infliction, but to the righteous as a summons to his Father’s palace: to the sinner it is an execution, to the saint an undressing. Death to the wicked is the King of terrors: death to the saint is the end of terrors, the commencement of glory.”

◼ But He also challenges what she believes, “Do you believe this?”

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| 1)      ◼ | We all need challenges on this topic regularly…for it is foundation to life. |
| 2)    3)  4) | This is matter which deserves the close consideration of all true Christians.  Many complain of lack of comfort and peace in their faith.  All too often it is because of vague and indefinite views of Christ that cause all their perplexities. |
| 5)    6) | We must try to see more clearly the great object on which our faith rests.  We must grasp more firmly His love and power toward those who believe, and the riches He has laid up for them even now in this world. |
| 7)  this?" | We must grasp that there are many things of which our Lord might well say to many, as He did to Martha, "Do you believe |
| 8) | The text tells us she emphatically believed, |

## “Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the

Son of God, who is coming into the world.”

1. The word “I believe” in the Greek is emphatic …it is her asserting her full belief and total trust (read conviction of faith) in what He has just said…maybe even anticipating some great thing to happen that she can’t even imagine.
2. So, Jesus is NOT dealing with a weak

Christian, she understands more about the

true faith than His disciples seem to at any given moment… He is dealing with a grieving sister and friend who genuinely is searching for the right answers with the right attitude…and so He answers her to her need.

* Mary on the other hand, the grief in her heart demanded an action and Jesus demonstrated His love and grief because that was what she needed. “When

Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who had come with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in His spirit and greatly troubled…Jesus wept.”

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* How did He show kindness to the mourners and others that were there?
  + - * It seems that the house of Martha and Mary at Bethany was filled with mourners when Jesus arrived. At least some of them would not have known the true faith but we see their loyalty to have stayed with the sisters for 4 days after the burial of Lazarus. This was not normal behavior except maybe immediate family. Jesus is obviously moved by this loyalty and desire to serve the sisters.
      * In their kindly coming to offer comfort they reaped a rich and unexpected reward.

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They beheld the greatest miracle of Jesus. They were eyewitnesses when Lazarus came forth from the tomb. And just like His time in Perea across the Jordan “many…believed in

Him.” Vs. 45

* It is important for us to see that one method of comforting the grieving may not work for another one even grieving the same loss…if we love someone we know their needs.
  + To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, to weep with those who weep, to try to bear one another's burdens, and lighten one another's cares—all this will make no atonement for ooo

sin, and will not take us to heaven…yet it is healthy for the heart of those grieving and healthy for our hearts as well.

* + Too few seem to be aware that one secret of being miserable is to live only for ourselves, and that one secret of being happy is to try to make others happy.
  + It is not for nothing that these words were written by Solomon, "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the

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house of feasting,” and "The heart of the wise is in the house of

mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of mirth." (Eccl.

7:2, 4.)

* He weeps at the loss of His friend though He knew He would raise Him from the dead to live for a few more years. So why shed the tears?
  + He is a man…and He shares in the grief of everyone there… this

was His friend after all.

* + The one who can save to eternity also is one who feels the grief of

His people…He is no way indifferent to suffering…in fact, Hebrews tells us, “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.”

Hebrews 4:15

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* + He shows us it is not sinful to grieve. Grieving tries and tests us but it is not wrong...in fact the Bible says, Grieve as those with hope.

He also shows us that deep feelings are okay for men to show and

not to be ashamed of.

* + Everyone there would see how He entered in to the grief unlike any

other teacher that they had seen.

* This whole passage shows us distinctly that He is God.
  + He knew Lazarus was dead when the message came to Him of Lazarus’ illness…for there was to be purpose in it.
  + The one who created the days, and time, and seasons speaks authoritatively about a 12 hour day for working out the things that God has given us to do in the day light. “Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if .

anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him.”

* + 1. So that we won’t stumble into the night finishing up what we have been given to do.
    2. There is sufficient time in each day to do all that God gives us to do…at home, at work and at worship.
    3. So don’t waste the time given there is only 12 hours of daylight to do as God directs....it is a gift as well. 4) But He is clearly saying I still have more to do.

(5) Lastly, this whole passage shows us distinctly that He is God.

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So don’t waste the time given there is only 12 hours of daylight to do as God directs....it is a gift as well. ◼ But He is clearly saying I still have more to do.

1. Then He commanded them to take away the stone. Why?
   1. Obviously it would have been as easy for Him to command the stone to roll away from the tomb. But that wasn’t the miracle.
   2. Here, as in other cases, He chose to give man something to do, remember, “go and fill” or “pick up your mat and walk” or “go wash”?
   3. Here, as elsewhere, He taught the great lesson that His power was not meant to destroy man's responsibility. Even when He was ready and willing to raise the dead, He would not have man idle.
   4. The lesson:

• In doing spiritual good to others—in training up our children for heaven—in following after holiness in our own daily walk—

www. in all these things we know that we are weak and helpless and

the Bible points that out, "Without Christ we can do

nothing."

* + - * But still we must remember that Christ expects us as he directs.

"Take you away the stone" is the daily command which He gives us.

* + - * Let us beware that we do not stand still in idleness, under the pretense of humility.
      * Let us daily do what God puts before us to do, and in this Christ will meet us and grant His blessing.

1. What is He communicating to the crowd when He speaks directly with the



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Father in verses 41-42? “And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, ‘Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this on account of the people standing around, that they may believe that you sent me.”

* 1. Always the teacher, priest, and prophet.
  2. The wonderful language is totally used by Him is unlike anything said by Prophets or Apostles, when they worked miracles.
  3. In fact, it is not prayer, but praise. It evidently implies a constant communion going on between Jesus and His Father in heaven, which it is past the power of man either to explain or conceive.

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* 1. We need not doubt that here, as elsewhere in John, our Lord meant to teach the Jews the entire and complete unity there was between Him and His Father, in all that He did, as well as in all that He taught.
     + Once more He would remind those who He did not come among them as a mere Prophet, but as the Messiah who was sent by the Father, and who was one with the Father.

* + - Once more He would have them know that as the words which He spoke were the very words which the Father gave Him to speak, so the works which He wrought were the very works which the Father gave

Him to do.

* + - In short, He was the promised Messiah, whom the Father always hears, because He and the Father are One.
    - As significant as this truth is, it is for the peace of our souls to believe it thoroughly, and to grasp it tightly.
    - Let it be a settled principle of our faith that the Savior in whom we trust is nothing less than eternal God, One whom the Father hears always.
    - Happy is he who can say, "I know whom I have believed, and that He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him."

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Tim. 1:12.)

1. Why are these next lines (verses 43-44) still relevant to us today! As the keeper of the keys of life and death He commands it and Lazarus comes forth from the dead!

“When He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come out! The man who had died came out, his hands and feet yyy.

bound with linen strips, and his face wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, ‘Unbind him, and let him go.’” (1) A voice of absolute authority.

* + - * + He commanded Lazarus to come forth from the dead. An established fact according to John.
        + He didn’t seek to woo him out of the tomb. He didn’t stand at the door and knock.
        + Lazarus’ resurrection was accomplished without means, medicines, his own help, or CPR…but by the powerful word of God.

Some have argued just like with our salvation that Christ only supplied the initial power for the resurrection and that Lazarus had to respond…want to come back, if you will.

This was NOT a cooperative work…just like our salvation is NOT a cooperative work.

Lazarus did respond to Christ’s command and came out. He who was dead was made totally alive so he rose and came forth out of obedience to Christ.

His restoration to life preceded his response to come forth.

• Then He commanded the people to unbind Him.

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* + 1. This great miracle cannot possibly be exaggerated. The mind of man can scarcely take in the vastness of the work that was done.
    2. By the power of His word alone, just like at creation, He gave life. Lazarus was enabled to come forth because He had first been made alive.
    3. Here, in open day, and before many hostile witnesses, a man, four days dead, was restored to life in a moment. Here was public proof that our Lord had absolute power over the material world!
       - * A corpse, already corrupt, was made alive!—
         * Here was public proof that our Lord had absolute power over the world of spirits!

* + - * + Well may the Church of Christ maintain that He who could work such works was "…Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen." (Rom. 9:5.)

1. If anyone had a question this one event would solidify what He had been saying.
   * Some would be saved.
   * Others would be made angrier…for His time was right around the corner.

1. What comfort are we to derive from this?
   * Comfort in that the loving Savior of sinners, on whose mercy our souls entirely depend, is one who has all power in heaven, and earth, and is mighty to save.
   * Comfort in the thought that there is no sinner too far gone in sin for Christ to raise and convert. He that stood by the grave of Lazarus can say to the vilest of men, "Come forth… loose him, and let him

go."

* + Comfort in the thought that when we ourselves lie down in the grave, we may lie down in the full assurance that we shall rise again. The voice that called Lazarus forth will one day pierce our tombs, and bid soul and body come together.
  + "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.”(1 Cor. 15:51-53.)

1. Do you ever wonder how someone could see a dead man raised from the grave and not be saved?

1. Do we see ourselves in this story in anyway?

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* + - When something unexpected strikes that causes pain for the believer we can easily seek to blame God and others…at least for the moment.
    - We almost always fail to consider there is a bigger picture playing

out here...because we know that it didn’t have to happen this way.

* + - Don’t we sometimes struggle with understanding God’s plan? How can we trust in Him even when it seems like things aren’t going the way they should?
    - We need to be more open in our grief to asking God, What am I to

learn here?

Lessons in the Gospel of John February 22, 2023

* + 1. Prayer
    2. Review

What did Chapter 11:1-46 teach us about our Lord and

Savior?

Given the two reactions found in vs-45 and 46, do you ever wonder how someone could see a dead man raised from the grave and not be saved?

C. John 11:45-57

1. Specifically in verses 45-53, what is going on and what does it reveal about the nature of men? “Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what He did, believed in Him, but some of them went to the Pharisees and told them what Jesus had done. So the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered the council and said, ‘What are we to do? For this man performs many signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.’ But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, ‘You know nothing at all. Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish.’ He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad. So from that day on they made plans to put him to death.”

* + - 1. First thing we observe in verses 45-47 is how the words and work of Jesus divides humanity again into two groups...those who will believe and those who will not.
      2. But we should also remember that actions cannot save.

* + - * 1. Let us beware of supposing that miracles alone have any power to convert men's souls, and to make them Christians. The idea is a complete delusion.

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* + - * 1. To think, as some do, that if they saw something wonderful done before their eyes in confirmation of the Gospel, they would at once cast off all indecision and serve Christ, is a mere idle dream.

* + - * 1. It is only the grace of the Spirit in our hearts…renewed hearts, and not miracles, that our souls require.
        2. The Jews of our Lord's day are a standing proof to mankind that men may see signs and wonders, and yet remain hard as stone.

* + - * 1. It is a deep and true saying, "If they do not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be convinced if someone should rise from the dead.” (Luke 16:31.) This from the

Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus…(not the man just raised).

1. We should observe, in these verses, the desperate wickedness of man's natural heart.
   1. A tremendous miracle was wrought within an easy walk of Jerusalem.
      * A man four days dead was raised to life, in the sight of many witnesses.
      * The fact was unmistakable, and could not be denied; and yet the chief priests and Pharisees would not believe that He who did this miracle ought to be received as the Messiah.
      * In the face of overwhelming evidence they shut their eyes, and refused to be convinced. And “gathered the council” …the Sanhedrin against Him.

* + - * Councils were most often called for the good of the people…with their meetings public not private.
      * This council was not called to seek mutual advice but to set a clear path of murder.
      * Just a side note here…this would have been recounted to John by either or both Joseph of Arimathea or Nicodemus afterwards.

* + - "For this man," they admitted, "performs many miracles."
      * They “privately” (since they met privately) acknowledged that Jesus performed signs that authenticated His claim as Messiah and God.

The denied Him before because they weren’t convinced He was the

Messiah.

Now everything points to the fact that He is the Messiah and they admit it with these words. But they still denied Him…opposed Him…and were afraid of His influence over the people and the

Romans.

So death is the only answer. Caiaphas said, “Nor do you understand that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish.”

* + - * But so far from yielding to this testimony, they only plunged into further wickedness, and "they made plans to put Him to death."

* + - * + The events in Bethany did not move them to belief rather to “panic”…for position and favor with Rome…their sworn enemy. Such is the sinfulness of man.

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* + - * + Great, indeed, is the power of unbelief! A willingness and desire to commit murder to protect themselves and the nation overpowers their thoughts.
  1. They are meeting to decide Jesus’ fate…as if they had the power to actually do that. It is almost comical to consider that men still believe they hold their destiny in their own hands.

1. We also need to remember the blind ignorance with which God's enemies often act and reason.
   1. These rulers of the Jews said to one another, “If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.”

* 1. But the Romans had already come and taken away their nation…so that wasn’t really the issue…
  + Their place/positions were actually granted to them by the

Romans…remember Annas had been High Priest but Rome removed him from his position, then the Romans appointed Caiaphas, Annas’ son-in law that year to be High Priest…

* + But even so their positions certainly were important to them even if granted to them by the Romans.

(3) They rushed madly on the path they had chosen, and the very thing they feared came to pass. What happened after they put to death the supposed threat?

* + After a few years, the very calamity they had dreaded, that Jesus had prophesied would occur, took place—the Roman armies did come, destroyed Jerusalem, burned the temple, and carried away many as slaves.
  + In short, the words of Psalm 2:2-6 are verified. “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Anointed…He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD holds them in derision. Then He will speak to them in His wrath, and

terrify them

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in his fury, saying, ‘As for me, I have set my King on Zion, my holy hill.”

God can make the designs of His enemies work together for the good of His people, and cause the wrath of man to praise Him.

In days of trouble, and rebuke, and blasphemy, believers may rest patiently in the

Lord.

The very things that at one time seem likely to hurt them, shall prove in the end to be for their gain.

(4) But even in unbelief, God still uses the unbeliever for His will…even contrary to their own intentions. “He

(Caiaphas) did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.”

He is urging them to put Jesus to death but even in that he was prophesying Jesus’ death and its benefit.

He didn’t realize it as well…but these words called to an end of the priesthood as it was then and as it had been before…this gathering…just like the gathering used in “gathering of the council” would set the stage for a new “polity” of the Church.

That the death of Jesus would also gather together the sheep of “another fold” into one fold.

iiii.

And at the death and resurrection of Jesus He secures for the Jewish believers a place in God’s kingdom through the ages.

Again, they are of one mind to makes plans and stick to those plans… “…to put Him to death."

(5) In these latter days, we must not wonder about the fact that we see abounding unbelief in our own times, and in and around our own homes.

It may seem at first unexplainable to us, how men cannot see the truth which seems so clear to ourselves, and do not receive the Gospel which appears so worthy of acceptance.

But the plain truth is, that man's unbelief is a far more deeply seated disease than it is generally accepted even in the Church.

It is shown as they oppose the logic of facts, reasoning, sound argument and even moral persuasion.

Nothing can melt it down a heart of stone but the grace of God.

So we must never count it a strange thing, if we see many people just as hardened and unbelieving as the

Jews.

2.Considering human behavior and all that we have seen in this chapter up to this point, why does John tells us the details of vs. 54-57? “Jesus therefore no longer

walked openly among the Jews, but went from there to the region near the

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wilderness, to a town called Ephraim, and there He stayed with the disciples. Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and many went up from the country to Jerusalem before the Passover to purify themselves. They were looking for Jesus and saying to one another as they stood in the temple, ‘What do you think? That He will not come to the feast at all?’ Now

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the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where He

was, he should let them know, so that they might arrest Him.” a.

Just to be clear Jesus did not walk among them out of fear…

1. It was not YET time…but it is coming within a few days.
2. “A city called Ephraim”- 10-15 miles Northeast of

Jerusalem close to Samaria—

* + Ephron of II Chronicles 13:19- “And Abijah pursued Jeroboam and took cities from him, Bethel with its villages and Jeshanah with its villages and Ephron with its

villages.”

* + Ophran of Joshua 18:23-

* + Jewish history confirms this and the fact, that this city repeatedly changed names depending upon who was in charge at the time.

kkkk.

1. Some have speculated that by staying away from the lime light for a few days it would have made His Triumphant

entry into Jerusalem more dramatic…and certainly that seems to have been the case prior to His entrance. “They were looking (seeking) for Jesus and saying to one another as they stood in the temple, ‘What do you think? That He will not come to the feast at all?”

b. But on to the Passover, it is interesting, what importance unsaved men sometimes attach to outward ceremonies, while their hearts are full of sin. If I look pious, then I am…in their own mind and the minds of others.

1. We are told that many Jews "went up from the country to Jerusalem, before the Passover, to purify themselves."

* + Most of them, it may be assumed, neither knew nor cared anything about inward purity of heart.
  + They made much to do about the washings, and fastings, and ascetic observances, which formed the essence of popular Jewish religion in our Lord's time and the time before His coming; and yet they would be willing in a very few days to shed innocent blood.

1. Strange as it may appear, these very sticklers for outward ceremonies were found ready to do the will of the High Priest and the Pharisees, and to put their own Messiah to a violent death.
2. And, at the same time, the leaders are MAKING the people complicit in the sin as well… “Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone knew where He was, he should let them know, so that they might arrest Him.”

Which they will have added to their many sins as well at judgment.

1. Extremes like this meeting together for common purpose even in the Church with unbelief are far from uncommon even today…ceremony must be upheld for my position and prestige.

pppp

* + The High Priest were usually Sadducees and normally uncooperative with the Pharisees but they had a common

“enemy” in Jesus.

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* + Experience shows that a bad conscience will often try to satisfy itself, by a show of zeal for the cause of religion, while the "weightier matters" of the faith are entirely neglected.
  + Startling as these assertions may seem, they are abundantly borne out by plain facts.
    - The cities and churches where Lent is kept at this day with the most extravagant strictness are the very cities where the carnival before Lent is a season of glaring excess and immorality.
    - The people in some parts of Christendom, who make much to do one week about fasting and priestly absolution, are the very people who another week will think nothing of murder!
    - These things are simple realities. The hideous inconsistency of the Jewish formalists in our Lord's time has never been without a long succession of followers.

c. Let us settle it firmly in our minds that a life which expends itself in zeal for outward formalities is utterly worthless in God's sight.

mmmm.

1. The purity that God desires to see is not the purity of bodily washing and fasting, of holy water and self-imposed asceticism, but purity of heart.

1. External worship and ceremonialism may "satisfy the flesh," but they do not tend to promote real godliness.
2. The standard of Christ's kingdom must be sought in the sermon on the Mount— "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." (Matt. 5:8) or Col. 2:23- “These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.”

* 1. To recap, what does this passage teach us about Jesus being the Christ, the Son of

God?

ww.

* 1. Do you see yourselves in this story? If so, how? If not, why not?

Lessons in the Gospel of John March 8, 2023

* + - * 1. Prayer
        2. Review

What did chapter 11 teach us about the nature of man?

What did Chapter 11 teach us about our Lord and Savior?

C. The Hour Has Come- John 12

The chapter we now begin finishes a most important division of John's Gospel. Our Lord's *public* addresses to the unbelieving Jews are here brought to an end. After this chapter, John records nothing but what was said in *private* to the disciples. Over half of John’s gospel is devoted to the last week with Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection. One week and over 50%. And that week begins 6 days before the

Passover which would begin Thursday night after sundown.

We open this chapter with Jesus back in Bethany for a party on Saturday night after the Sabbath…6 days before the Passover. John 12:1-11- “Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. So they gave a dinner for

Him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with Him at table.” What do we learn here in these verses from all these different people? a. Saturday night, once sundown occurs and the Sabbath is over a party is held for Lazarus’ having been raised by Christ.

This begins the activities of the Passion Week…He begins the week with a party and ends his week with the Passover Feast/ Lord’s Supper inauguration before heading out to the garden.

Martha is serving…of course…for this follows her giftedness of hospitality and servanthood.

Matt. and Mark tell us that this party may have been at the home of Simon the Leper…who may have been a relative of Marth, Mary and Lazarus…hence Martha serving.

The only discrepancy seems to be the timing of this dinner…and that may be easily explained in two ways:

* A different meal altogether 2 days before the Passover.
* It seems that both Matthew and Mark may be introducing the meal parenthetically to present the immediate motives for Judas’ actions and as is usual when Hebrews write…ignoring usual chronology.

(3) What do Martha’s actions teach us for today?

* Martha realized her gifts and this was the way she desired to serve the Lord and her brother.
* She is selfless…thinking of others first.

d. Mary anoints Jesus’ feet and Jesus does not discourage her…in fact, after Judas’ rebuke He seemingly encourages the action as appropriate.

(2) It wasn’t unusual to wash a guest’s feet…but not during the meal.

* + Usually a guest’s feet would be cleaned when they entered a home and a dab of anointing oil placed upon their head.
  + But Mary anoints His feet with the oil. She considered her precious/expensive oil only good enough for this purpose. ◼ What should this teach us about how we look at “our” possessions?
  + To attend to the feet of guest was a lowly servant’s job…so Mary reveals her humbleness and thankfulness for who Jesus is.
  + And to wipe it off with her hair showed her personal devotion and the personal nature of their relationship. Mary let her hair down in public which was NOT something respectable women

did in public…

(3) The oil was an extreme gift…

* + One pound was an excessive amount.
  + Worth, according to Judas who took care of the money, over a year’s wage.
  + It was worth so much that it irritated Judas.

1. Finally what do Mary’s actions teach us for today?

e. Speaking of Judas, what all do we learn about him here that we don’t see in this much detail anywhere else?

1. He complains about the amount that the oil is worth…an amount 3 times more than what he will sell out Jesus for.
2. He complains because he was a thief…and he would have liked that for the treasury so that he had more money to “dip” in to.
3. He was a liar…because he faked his indignation.
4. He was uncaring…as he revealed how inconsiderate he was toward Mary…and by extension then, Martha and Lazarus from whom he was receiving the grace of hospitality.
   * He was also inconsiderate of Jesus…who was not stopping her ...and he thought he knew better.
   * If he really cared he would have remained silent and watched and waited upon Jesus.
   * Matthew 26:6-12 seems to indicate that this type of negativism spread through some of the other disciples as well.
5. Seeing Judas’ heart this way we come away with a better understanding of the setting he staged that would bring about his own destruction.
6. A cold heart and a stingy hand will generally go together.
7. Hardness appears in Judas Iscariot, who, after being a chosen a disciple, turns out, at last, to be a thief and a traitor. So long as the world stands this unhappy man will be a lasting proof of the depth of human corruption.
8. What does Judas’ presence in the midst of all of this…being numbered among the disciples…participating in all the feasts and struggles related to Jesus’ mission…what does this communicate about the Church?

* There are many professing Christians of a like spirit in the present day.
* It seems that quite a few baptized people cannot understand zeal of any sort, for the honor of Christ. The church is full of people who:
  + Hear of a large amount of money to push trade or to advance the cause of science, and they approve of it as right and wise.
  + Hear of any expense incurred for the preaching of the Gospel at home or abroad, for spreading God's Word, for extending the knowledge of Christ on earth, and they tell you plainly that they think it waste.
  + Many never give even a small amount to such objects as these, and they count people who do as fools.
  + Worst of all, they pretend concern for the poor while covering up their own shortcomings.
  + And they find it convenient to forget the well-known fact that those who do most for the cause of Christ are precisely those who do most for the poor financially and those who are poor in spirit..

1. Jesus defends Mary and explains why she is doing what she is. “Jesus said, ‘Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial. For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me.’” What is Jesus teaching them and us today with these statements?
   1. First, “Leave her alone”...don’t be rude to this sister in her devotion and humility. Don’t let the culture dictate how you respond.
      * “Sit down and shut up!” Publically calling him out for his actions since Judas determined to show such prejudice and disrespect.
      * Don’t treat her with disrespect.
      * He was being disrespectful of Jesus…acting as if He didn’t know any better…or that Judas knew better.
      * He was being disrespectful of Martha and Lazarus and Simon the leper (in whose home they had been invited for this celebration.
      * Mark’s gospel tells us what else Jesus says of her act of devotion- Mark 14:89“She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial. And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.”
      * It’s as if Jesus is saying, “Have you not listened to me? My time is surely coming as I have told you over and over again. Her humility and devotion displays the prophecy being fulfilled.”
   2. The Greek is actually unclear here: “‘Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of my burial.’”
      * It could read, “She has done this for the day of my burial”… looking forward to the end of the week.
      * Or “she will keep it for the day of my burial.” Indicating that she doesn’t pour it all out at this point for it to be used later.
      * OR…since she doesn’t actually anoint Jesus later that this anointing is a precursor to the one done later which seems to square with Mark’s reasoning, “she has anointed my body

beforehand for burial.”

1. What does vs 9- “When the large crowd of the Jews learned that Jesus was there, they came, not only on account of Him but also to see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead.” Tell us about the crowd?

They were thrill or celebrity seekers not really interested in who Jesus is and what He came to do.

This whole raising from the dead was “front page news” they had to see it for themselves…just like many today. So many in recent weeks went to the revival at Asbury University just to see or gawk and say they were there like Woodstock!

(3)“ not only on account of Him”…tells us what their true motive was.

(4) Oh, and these will be the same people cheering Him on the next day on what we call Palm Sunday.

1. Finally, we have the chief priest weighing in vs. 10-11… “So the chief priests made plans to put Lazarus to death as well, because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus.”What is going on here?

Actually, as we will see, many of the Jews weren’t truly believing on Him for faith…but they seemingly at the first of the week to be believing on Him as the new political king…which kind of puts a dampener in the plans at the moment.

Many were thrill seeking…but not that many believed on Him as Savior and Lord.

They had to get rid of all the evidence thinking that somehow it would strengthen their case. They could not deny the fact of his having been raised again. Living, and moving, and eating, and drinking within two miles of Jerusalem, after lying four days in the grave.

As we have said before most of the “chief priests” were Sadducees who didn’t believe in the resurrection…Lazarus is living proof of a resurrection from the dead. So having him around was an embarrassment to their worldview.

When men hate Christ, as Jesus told us, they also hate those who represent Him …those whom He blesses…they must oppose us...it is their very nature.

(4) Those who seek to deceive do not see the falsehood of their own words.

The One who raised Lazarus could raise him again.

Fighting against the will of God reveals their bias against anything attributed to Jesus.

Lessons in the Gospel of John March 15, 2023

* 1. Prayer
  2. Review- John 12:1-11

Compare and contrast the attitudes of Mary and Martha against Judas.

What were some of the reason that was Jesus so abrupt with Judas?

1. “Leave her alone”…said in public was like “sit down and shut up”.
2. He was being disrespectful of Mary’s act of worship that was, by the way, being accepted by Christ.
3. Mark’s gospel tells us what else Jesus says of her act of devotion- Mark 14:8-9-“She has done what she could; she has anointed my body beforehand for burial. And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her.”
4. He was being disrespectful of Jesus…acting as if He didn’t know any better…or that Judas knew better.
5. He was being disrespectful of Martha and Lazarus and Simon the leper (in whose home they had been invited for this celebration.

3. What do we as Christians take away from this exchange that would be helpful in our daily lives with others?

1. We are to show respect to others as much as possible and especially the household of God.
2. We must be ready to call out rudeness and falseness.

C. John 12:12-19- The Triumphant Entry of Christ into Jerusalem.This is Sunday the first day of the week.

1. What is reveal to us concerning Jesus’ behavior on this day in just verses 12-15?

* + - 1. As a rule He did not court popular attention. He did not "cry or strive, or cause His voice to be heard in the streets." (Matt. 12:19.) …as a general rule. He will do that later on in the chapter, but up until not…not a habit.
      2. But here …in this last hour…we see Him making a public entry into Jerusalem, attended by an immense crowd of people, and causing even the Pharisees to say, "Behold, the world has gone after Him."- (vs. 19)

1. They always liked hyperbole when speaking about Jesus especially if it was a lie.
2. Politically it would become helpful when they talk with Pilate later on in the week.
3. Sooo…The time had come, at last, when Christ was to die for the sins of His people. The time had come when the true Passover Lamb was to be slain, when the true blood of atonement was to be shed.
4. That there can be no question…His suffering is a voluntary act.
5. He didn’t have to come to Jerusalem…He chose to do His Father’s will.

1. But what this means is that Jesus entered into an exciting, tense and potentially explosive situation.

* The Romans wanted to keep things under

control, so things did not get out of hand.

* The Jewish authorities also had concerns since they did not want to upset the Roman authorities.
* It was an intense and unstable situation for Jesus and the disciples.

1. He is being praised as He will be on the Last day even by non-believers! Prophecy fulfilled!
2. But then even they will know His true identity… which has not been hidden from these people…they just choose to accept something else.
3. We will also, see this later when He doesn’t fight the soldiers who take Him or fight the mock trials.
   * 1. How does Jesus’ willingness to go into Jerusalem and eventually to the Cross encourage us today in our day to day?

* + 1. Look at vs. 16- for a minute- “His disciples did not understand these things at first, but when Jesus was glorified, then they remembered that these things had been written about him and had been done to

Him.” What does this tell us

about the purpose for affliction in our lives? a. “But when He was glorified…” …

(1) Glorification is good…but what led up to that glorification.

Rejection

Mocking

Beating

Scourging

Crucifixion

Death between to criminals as if Christ was guilty of anything.

Excruciating physically and emotionally

* + - * 1. But also His resurrection and ascension …His glorification completed.
        2. Something none of us have ever had to endure to the extreme that He did…not even Paul…Writer to the Hebrews reminds us- Heb.

12:4-“ In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted

to the point of shedding your blood.”

1. We learn more quickly in pain and affliction.
   1. Psalm 119: 50- “This is my comfort in my affliction, that your promise gives

life.”

* 1. Psalm 119:67- “Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep your word.”
  2. Psalm 119:75- “I know, O LORD, that your rules are righteous, and that in faithfulness you have afflicted me.

1. His disciples suffered the loss of their master…and the feared that the officials were coming for them next. We understand this…
   * 1. But this, this was surely the end of their hope. This is so often where we find ourselves, if we’re honest.
     2. We have walked with Jesus and have seen his power.
     3. But a new loss or a new bout of suffering leaves us in a place that seems to have exhausted all possibility of hope.
2. But the affliction and the Spirit enable them to understand.
3. His disciples did not understand these things, until after Jesus was glorified

(Jn. 12:16; cf. 7:39)

* + - 1. At that time, the Spirit brought these things to mind (cf. Jn. 16:13) and gave them “eyes to see” and understand.
      2. The same occurred with what Jesus said of the temple and his body

(2:22).

4. What good thing do we learn about His disciples that should be learned by all of us?

Jesus has said that the Holy Spirit would come upon them and they would understand all that He had told them…and all that they had seen.

They, in time were led to even understand why the things that were done to Him had to be done…a short period of time really….for they had work to do.

And so, we can know that the Spirit works the same way with us…so rather than being fearful of our perceived inadequacies we need to take the work and promises of the Spirit seriously…combining that with the teaching we find in Bible-centered- Christcentered churches. 5. Just so we are clear…why is the crowd surrounding Him and seeking Him out?

Vs.17- 18-“The crowd that had been with Him when He called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead continued to bear witness. The reason why the crowd went to meet Him was that they heard he had done this sign.”

If one could raise a man from the dead surely He could relieve them of the oppression of Caesar!

6. What else do we know about this crowd and their expectation for

Christ?

1. Palm branches were symbols of Jewish Nationalism starting from the time of the Maccabean Revolt. So for many this was just a patriotic parade.
2. Hosanna’s rang out but they were in reference to a new king like David…using

David’s own prophecy…Psalm 118:25-26- “Hosanna…“Save us, we pray, O LORD!

O LORD, we pray, give us success! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the

LORD! We bless you from the house of the

LORD.”

1. The crowd looked at Jesus as a potential political and national leader.
   1. Again, how good have those been through the ages…even the “good kings” made bad calls as well and were sinful.
   2. They were thinking of one thing from history (Solomon’s riding the same path as Jesus, on his father David’s donkey, at His coronation while others plotted to take his throne) and prophecy and Jesus was thinking of something more substantial than an earthly king according to Zechariah’s prophecy from Zech.

9:9-

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; righteous and having salvation is He, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

* 1. This was also an answer to the prophecy of Gen. 49: 10-12-“The scepter shall not depart from Judah nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. Binding his foal to the vine and his donkey's colt to the choice vine, he has washed his garments in wine and his vesture in the blood of grapes. His eyes are darker than wine, and his teeth whiter than milk.”
  2. A fulfillment of God’s true King. God’s way…through His death and resurrection…shedding of blood to wash away the sins of His people.
  3. There are many reasons the triumphal entry of Jesus was important.
     + It served as a fulfillment of prophecy, recognition of His role, and prepared the way for the events that led to His death and resurrection.
     + It also reminds us of the importance of recognizing Jesus as the King He is, not necessarily as the king we desire.
     + It is plausible that the people who shouted "Hosanna" later shouted "Crucify him!" They desired deliverance from Roman rule but Jesus came to deliver us on a much deeper level—from the power of sin.
     + The triumphal entry is something Christians continue to celebrate and commemorate today. Truly Jesus is our deliverer and King, worthy of our praise and adoration.

1. In answer to the prophecy the people were doing just as they were supposed to do…and if not them then the stones would have cried out in answer to prophecy!

7. Fun fact: Everyone who could would bring a lamb for the Passover meal…if they couldn’t afford a lamb they would dine with someone who had a big enough one to share.

a. Josephus records that one year there were over 256,500 lambs outside Jerusalem brought for slaughter.

With this kind of thing lambs were literally driven up to the city every day.

Jesus would have entered the city Jesus the great Lamb of God and would have been surrounded.

They would have been preparing for slaughter and he was as well.

* 1. Jewish law required that the Passover lamb live with the family for 3 days prior to the sacrifice- Ex. 12:5-6- “Your lamb shall be without

blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.”

* 1. Everyone who came into the city including Jesus would have been surrounded by lambs all around.

8. How are the words of verses 19-“ So the Pharisees said to one another, “You see that you are gaining nothing. Look, the world has gone after him.”

prophetic, just like the words of Caiaphas in chapter 11:50-52? “‘Nor do you understand

that it is better for you that one man should die for the people, not that the whole nation should perish.’ He did not say this of his own accord, but being high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but also to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.”

* + - * 1. The leaders were doing what they do best by exaggerating and not reading the crowd since many in the crowd would be their best buds by the end of the week.
        2. They spoke in hyperbole to try and make their point…to strengthen their justification and resolve to kill him.
        3. These words are concerned that a few Judeans were being influenced. But their words actually express John’s conviction that he was conquering the world.

D. John 12:20-26*-* Now there was a subset of the crowd…who seemed sincere. “Now among those who went up to worship at the feast were some Greeks. So these came to

## Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, ‘Sir, we wish to see

Jesus.’ Philip went and told Andrew; Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. And Jesus answered them, ‘The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.” 1. What is going on? What’s the point of this conversation in the midst of the activities of the day?

a. Greeks who had come up to the feast...

1. Curious…on-lookers to see what the feast was about.
2. Converts to Judaism who were Greeks.
3. God-fearers…Greeks who had a lot of respect for this monotheistic religion but had not been circumcised.
4. Now they are also curious about Jesus.

Who these Greeks were, what they meant, why they desired to see Jesus, what their inward motives were—all these are questions we cannot answer.

• It is enough for us to know that they showed more interest in Christ than Caiaphas and all his companions.

1. A day or two may have elapsed since Jesus rode triumphantly into Jerusalem…and as was His practice He would have been in the temple teaching.
   1. It seems from Mark’s Gospel that He had run out the money changers again. Mark 11:15-17- “And they came to Jerusalem. And He entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and He overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. And He would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. And He was teaching them and saying to them, ‘Is it not written, My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations? But you have made it a den of robbers.’”
   2. Did these Greeks see that Jesus was once again cleansing the outer court which was the court of the Gentiles?
   3. And they wished to see Him…to present themselves to Jesus.
2. Similarly to the Magi (men of the East) when Jesus was a couple of years old…here are Gentiles (from the West) coming to Jesus at the end of His life in response to prophesy.
3. Then Jesus says to the inquiry concerning these Gentile men seeing Him,

“The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.”

* 1. Multiple times before Jesus had said that it was not yet His time…John

2:4, 7:6,8,30, 8:20.

* 1. Also, many other times it was made clear that it wasn’t His time as He walked through the crowds or the guards were so perplexed they let Him go because it wasn’t His time yet.
  2. But now, with the seeking by these Gentiles …He takes this opportunity to say,

“The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.”

* + - Obviously Jesus is “signaling” that His mission is near complete…when the sheep of the other flock will come to Him.
    - John 17:1- “When Jesus had spoken these words, He lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given Him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all who whom you have given Him.”
    - These Gentiles would get Jesus’ answer to their request on the other side of the cross if they were of His elect.
    - And it is the Cross where He will be initially glorified…that which the world would see as a humiliation Jesus saw as exaltation for that was why He had come…to die for the sins of His people…Jew and Gentile who had been chosen/elected before the beginning of time.
    - But His ascension is also t a sign of His glorification which will be complete in the New Heavens and New Earth.

“The hour is here”…the end has come …the end of this life and the beginning of the next…nothing will stop it…it is almost over.

1. What does He mean by what He says next? Vs. 24-26- “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.”
   1. It’s a metaphor: The grain of wheat is Him , His life and ministry…and that grain must fall so that the seed will flourish…the kingdom will grow after His crucifixion.
      * A crucifixion not a coronation!
      * Its glory was to take its rise not from victories won by the sword, and from accumulated treasures of gold and silver, but from the death of its King.
      * His death, like a grain of seed, was to be the root of blessings and mercies to countless millions of immortal souls.
      * In short, the great principle of the Gospel was once more exhibited— that

Christ's vicarious death (not His life, or miracles, or teaching, but His death, as was prophesied) was to bring forth fruit to the praise of God, and to provide redemption for His elect.

* + - This seed was guaranteed to bring forth fruit… “Truly,Truly I say to you…”
  + So Jesus’ death does not make fruit possible… ◼ Jesus’ death secures/ guarantees much fruit.
  + His people will be saved…that is why He came into this world…His death secures our life…forever and ever!

1. This deeply illustrious picture was followed by a practical application, which closely concerns ourselves, “Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

“

* + He that would be saved must be ready to give up life defined by the world itself, if necessary…even phyiscal death When we respond to Christ we die to the world.
  + He must bury his love of the world, with its riches, honors, pleasures, and rewards, with a full belief that in so doing he will reap a better harvest, both here and hereafter.
  + He who loves the life now, so much that he cannot deny himself anything for the sake of his soul, will find at length that he has lost everything.
  + He, on the contrary, who is ready to cast away everything most dear to him in this life, if it stands in the way of his soul, and to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts, will find at length that he is no loser. • In a word, his losses will prove nothing in comparison to his gains.

1. And the benefits? If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.”

“Serve” in one form or another occurs 3 times in this text…speaking of His Children who will serve Him.

* + - “Diakonos”- speaks of the servant that serves at the side of the Master. Like His Valet if this were Downton Abbey or the Lady’s maid ...these servants were trusted and close.
    - Which in most cases is the most honored position of the servants in the master’s household.
      * The short statement “He must follow me” is like a soldier follows the order of his commanding officer, as the servant follows his master, as the scholar follows his teacher; as the sheep follows its shepherd, just so ought the professing Christian to follow Christ. There is often reward in following orders.

* + - * Faith and obedience are the leading marks of real followers, and will always be seen in true believing Christians.
      * Their knowledge may be very small, and their infirmities very great; their grace very weak, and their hope very dim. But they hear

Christ’s voice, believe what Christ says, and strive to do what Christ commands. And of such Christ declares, "They serve Me, they are

Mine and the Father will honor them."

* + - * And we do this because ultimately the world will disown us and we will be homeless…but in Christ we have a promise of a place…a home…a refuge with Him always.

## “where I am, there will my

servant be also”

Lessons in the Gospel of John March

22, 2023

1. Prayer
2. Review- John 12:12-26
3. What point was Jesus’ making in His triumphal entry and how is this approach different from how He has acted in the past?

1. What was the purpose for the Gentiles coming into the picture at this juncture according to Jesus Himself?

1. What specific point is Jesus making concerning servanthood in verse 26-“If anyone serves me, he must follow me; and where I am, there will my servant be also. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him.”? a. ALL Christian are servants of Christ wherever we are.
2. To be servants of Christ we are to be bond-slaves…not questioning Him at any point.
3. To be servants of Christ we are to serve Him as He prescribes.
4. To be servants of Christ means that we are loved, honored, and have the greatest gift of life…eternal life and a home always with Him.

b. All Christians are servants of one another, as well…we belong to Christ and in Christ we belong to each other. This, then, enables us to want to serve even non-believers with word and deed in our proclamation of Christ to all.

## D. Now let’s look at John 12:27- “Now is my soul troubled. And what shall

I say?

‘Father, save me from this hour? But for this purpose I have come to this hour.”

1. In verse 27 we see something that is hard to understand. So how would you explain what is going on?

1. John won’t write about Jesus’ prayer in Gethsemane, but the idea behind that prayer is obviously evident here.
2. To say, as some do, that the only cause of our Lord's trouble was the prospect of His own painful death on the cross, is a very unsatisfactory explanation.
   * 1. If this was the case, it might justly be said that many a martyr has shown more calmness and courage than the Son of God.
     2. Such a conclusion is becoming more and more common. Because this is the only conclusion for such people who adopt the modern notion, that Christ's death was only a great example of selfsacrifice.

c. Was He beginning to feel the pressure of the imputation of man’s sin settling in on Him?

* + 1. Our sins were really laid on Him and He hates sin and yet must bear the weight of the sin of His own for all time.
    2. For to be our substitute He must take on all our sin to satisfy God’s wrath and bring justice to His law.

d. At the same time is this any different from when He wept over Jerusalem…or for Lazarus for that matter?

Remember- Luke 19:41-43- “And when He drew near and saw the city (Jerusalem), He wept over it, saying, ‘Would that

you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. For the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up a barricade around you and surround you and hem you in on every side and tear you down to the ground, you and your children within you. And they will not leave one stone upon another in you, because you did not know the time of your visitation.’”

* 1. This is while He is on His way riding the foal of a donkey just before His Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem.
  2. Can you imagine what the people walking along with Him would have thought at these words…or were they so caught up in the celebration they didn’t hear His lament and the prophesy of their downfall.
  3. And then there were the loud Hosannas and the coming of the Gentiles the next day which made all of this real for the man Jesus…and all of it gave way to this great disturbance in His soul.
  4. In Verse 37-40 we see a further reason for His disturbance of soul. He knew they couldn’t and wouldn’t believe. “When Jesus had said these

things, He departed and hid Himself from them. Though He had done so many

## signs before them, they still did not believe in Him, so that the word spoken by

the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: ‘Lord, who has believed what he heard from us, and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?’ (Isaiah 53:1)Therefore they could not believe. For again Isaiah said, ‘He has blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, lest they see with their eyes, and understand with their heart, and turn, and I would heal them.” (Isaiah 6:10)

* They can’t believe and it fulfills prophecy to that effect.
* They are incapable of believing because they are unable to repent even with the message compellingly on display before them because God had judged that they wouldn’t believe.
* John has recorded Jesus saying similar things throughout the first 12 chapters of this book…No one has the ability to believe in Him unless the Father draws him or her…unless the Father acts upon his or her heart to believe.
* Again, affirming what He has said from the beginning…there are only 2 types of people in the world…those who are His and believe and those who aren’t and reject Him.
* This is God telling John that God has refused to save the masses who have heard Jesus and witnessed His miracles.

1. So we don’t see hesitation from our LORD but consternation. Noting the heart of

His own ethnic people and the rejection that had come upon them by God Himself

He is greatly troubled just like when He wept over

Jerusalem with indignation…just like at Lazarus’ grave.

1. No surprises awaited Him… just a monumental task…the godhead ordained this from before the beginning…and all things ordained by God are ordained with a purpose and are governed by Him.

• He knew that was the reason He had come. “And what shall I say?

‘Father, save me from this hour? But for this purpose I have come to this hour.”

* + - “I can’t say that”… because I know better. It is my mission…it is what we decided...any perceived hesitation is actually recognition for the work before

Him.

* + - Most men don’t like to run into the fire…or into battle… not knowing if they will come back…but they do it because that is what they have been trained for…that is the mission … and the mission supersedes life itself because so many other lives are on the line. Selflessness is just that… giving yourself for the good of others!

• He knew what was coming and being a man He also knew the amount of pain that lay before Him…and yet we are told in Hebrews 12, “who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”

1. He knew that within days, now, He would be taking on ALL the punishment due us to give us the grace we could never earn…grace that we were not entitled to…grace we did not deserve. But that doesn’t take away from the weight of what lies ahead of Him.
2. Knowing all that lay before Him we see and hear Him say, “Father, glorify your name.”

• His resolve is steadfast!

## • “So Father, I will glorify your name even with all that is coming.”

1. One more thought on this from R.C. Sproul. Think about what we have seen so far.
   1. His power has been on display in His mighty miracles.
   2. We have heard His words as He taught the Scriptures with absolute authority.
   3. We have heard his rebukes of the ruling religious classes with authority.
   4. Here He says, “Now is my soul troubled.” The word use here is the word for “revulsion” or “horror”. “The end is here and I am horrified by what lies before me.” As any sane person would be if they knew the horrors before them.
   5. But that is not the end of it.
   6. “And what shall I say? Father save me from this hour”. Not a question but a simple statement like the one He will make in the Garden a few days from now. Jesus is experiencing a crisis moment like any other person would…that we have a hard time granting Him to have.
   7. But, just like in Gethsemane in a few days, He quickly reminds Himself of the purpose of His coming “But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father glorify your name.”
      * Jesus doesn’t say “Father, glorify my name.”
      * For the Son would be glorified by what He is about to do, but the higher purpose, the main purpose for Jesus’ coming was that the Father be glorified by the satisfaction of Hs justice.
2. What does this communicate about how we are to handle hardship and suffering in this life?
   * + - 1. We learn from our Lord's example that inward conflict of soul is not necessarily in itself a sinful thing.
         2. Too many, from not understanding this point, go about depress and in despair all their days on their way to heaven.

They feel like they have no grace, because they find a fight in their own hearts.

They refuse to take comfort in the Gospel, because they feel a battle between the flesh and the Spirit.

* + - * 1. This passage challenges us to recall the experiences of our Lord and lay aside their doubting fears.
        2. It challenges us to study the experience of His saints in every age, from

Paul downwards, and understand that as Christ had inward and

outward conflicts, so must Christians expect to have them also. To give way to doubts and unbelief robs us of our peace.

* + - * 1. There is a faithless despondency, unquestionably, which is blameworthy, and must be resisted, repented of daily, that it may be pardoned.

2. Now we come to vs. 28-30- “Father, glorify your name.’ Then a voice came from heaven: ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.’ The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, ‘An angel has spoken to him.’ Jesus answered, ‘This voice has come for your sake, not mine.” What all is going on here for them and for us?

1. First thing we must remember is that God’s voice was heard 3 times in the Gospels …during His life and ministry…This is the third time God speaks audibly from heaven about His son. Matt. 3:17; 17:5…each time God gives

His approval for the work ahead.

1. So what does God mean as He answers Jesus by saying, “Then a voice came from heaven: ‘I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again.’”?
2. This doesn’t necessarily mean a repeated action “I have” and “I will” but it most assuredly means an intensification of the action. The use of the word “again” here in the Greek speaks to His glory being intensified…this time fully and finally.
3. For the Son will complete the mission placed for Him that will glory His Father.
4. This miracle was meant to show the intimate relations and unbroken union of God the Father and God the Son, throughout the period of the Son's life and ministry. At no period during His incarnation was there a time when the eternal

Father was not close to Him, though unseen by man.

1. This miracle was also meant to signify to bystanders the entire approval of the Son by the Father, as the Messiah, the Redeemer, and the Savior of man.

* That approval the Father was pleased to signify by voice three times, as well as to declare by signs and mighty deeds, performed by the Son in His name.
* These things we may well believe but in the end it is something of a mystery.

c. But if this voice had come for their sakes why didn’t they understand?

1. The voice sounded like thunder. Can you think of any other time where the people thought what we were told was God’s voice sounded like thunder? So God is

consistent.

1. It came for their condemnation and judgment…for it confirms the One who they will crucify.
2. They did not have ears to hear so they did not understand.
3. Do you ever find the Word of God just sounding like thunder …not making sense? What is the remedy to that problem for those of us who have ears to hear?

3. Now we come to the judgment of vs. 31-33, “Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all

people to myself.’ He said this to show by what kind of death He was going to die.” What do you understand by this passage and how do you think you would react?

* + - * 1. The spirit of this world was judged by the way it treated Jesus at the cross.
        2. This not only judges the world but also defeats Satan.
        3. Col. 2:13-15- “And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This He set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in Him.”
        4. “lifted up” tells us two things:

It speaks to elevation – as being lifted up on a cross

And it speaks to His exaltation- being raise up from the grave and then raised up to the right hand of the Father.

The promise is that all His people from every tongue and tribe will come to Him, Isaiah 11:10-11-“In that day the root of Jesse, who shall

stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire,

and his resting place shall be glorious. In that day the Lord will extend his hand yet a second time to recover the remnant that remains of his people, from Assyria, from Egypt, from Pathros, from Cush, from Elam, from Shinar, from Hamath, and from the coastlands of the sea.”

Remember John 3:14-15-“ And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.”

Remember John 6:44- “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.”

Vss. 37-40 make it clear that it is not ALL people…for all people won’t and can’t believe in Him.

But only those from every “corner’ of the earth who have been chosen before the foundations of the world.

“ALL” –many will have a fascination with Jesus but only ALL who are His will be drawn to Him.

4. He has just leveled a prophetic judgment upon them, even alluding to His death and how He will die, along with a prophesy of the elect being drawn into the kingdom. They seemingly get at least part of it but what does their answer tell us about what they get in vs. 34? “So the crowd answered him, “We have heard from the

Law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?” a. It reveals their ignorance of the law.

(1) It tells us that they had only been taught the passages in the Law that speaks of His triumphing as the Messiah…in the wrong context.

For there were many passages concerning the perpetuity of His reign. Is. 9:7 speaks of His reign forever.

So they weren’t taught correctly.

* + - * 1. Remember there were no Bibles or parchments for the “regular” people. So they were absolutely dependent on correct teaching from the leaders…and that hadn’t been happening much since Malachi’s time.
        2. They seemingly were unaware of the Suffering Servant passages or they were misinterpreted by the teachers of the Law.
        3. They were not taught about a second coming of the Messiah…they were not taught about an afterlife…even though the Pharisees said they believed in a resurrection.
        + The teachers of the Law spoke of the Messiah coming and reestablishing David’s kingdom but even greater…and those of the Israel who had died would be resurrected into this Kingdom and all would live forever.
        + But the teaching on the resurrection wasn’t so clear.

b. So they were beginning to actually wonder who Jesus was. The crowd who wanted a political ruler couldn’t consider His sacrificial death. It didn’t fit their worldview and no one likes to have their worldview challenged.

5. But Jesus challenges their thinking just like the prophets of old. Vs. 35-36-“So Jesus said to them, ‘The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.’ When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them.” What is He doing?

1. These people had proven themselves and their unbelief, in fact, He will point out that unbelief in the following verses 37-40 that we already looked at. So He is not talking to most of them…if any…but He is talking to us.
2. The lesson of the word is applicable to the whole professing Church.
   1. It’s time for doing good in the world is short and limited.
   2. The door of salvation by faith in Christ will not always be open—it will be shut one day forever, and the number of God's elect will be completed.
   3. The fountain for all sin and uncleanness will not always be accessible; the way to it will one day be barred, and there will remain nothing but the lake that burns with fire and brimstone.
3. And the lesson of the word is specially applicable to ourselves as individuals, as well.
   1. Our own time for doing God’s will is short and limited; let us take heed that we make good use of it. Let us "walk while we have the light."
      * We have Bibles? Let us not neglect to read them and live by them.
      * We have the preached Gospel? Let us not linger between two opinions, but believe to the saving of our souls and others, as Paul tells Timothy.
      * We have the Lord’s Day and the Sacraments? Let us not waste them in idleness, carelessness, and indifference, but throw our whole hearts into worship and His work.
      * For believers, His light is about us and around us and near us on every side. Let us each resolve to walk in the light while we have it.
   2. Also another thought on walking in the light as we have the light in and with us…
      * + If you would prevent severe discipline in our lives, we need improve our time well in the school of the Word, Sacraments and prayer.
        + Along this line, Thomas Case says in his book, A Treatise on

Afflictions…on the reason for affliction in our lives as believers, “While you sit under the teachings of the gospel, labor to get knowledge answerable to the means, and grace answerable to your knowledge.”

* + 1. But something interesting occurs in vs. 41-43, “Isaiah said these things because he saw His glory and spoke of Him. Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.” The question we have to ask ourselves is this: All that we have been told about what a believer is could this belief that John talks about have been genuine? If so, How?
       1. The passage from Isaiah he is referring to is from Isaiah 6:1-6 where Isaiah was caught up in a vision to the throne room of God.
       2. But if you don’t serve Christ …as of vs 26…can you be a believer? Is there such a thing as a “secret disciple”?
          1. Secret discipleship seems to be an oxymoron…
          2. It has been said, “The secret will kill the discipleship or the discipleship will kill the secret.”
       3. But commentators are harder on these timid ones than we would be right? Are all Christians heroic in their faith?

* + 1. Jesus has already rode into Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey declaring for all to see that He is the Messiah , now we see Him loudly exhorting for all to hear. In fact, this is the last message that He will give publically. Vs. 44-50- “And Jesus cried out and said, ‘Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in Him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees Him who sent me. I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has Himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.’” –vs. 44-50. Wow, what a closing message. What do we take from this? a. First of all, this appears to be a summation of many of the different messages and times that He has told the people who He is.
       1. The Father and Him are one…you cannot have the Father without the Son and you cannot have the Son without the Father.
       2. He is the true light for those who were chosen before the foundations of the earth by the Father and given to Him.
       3. At this time, Jesus had not come as a judge Himself…but as Redeemer…He will come again as Judge. But as He has said often…since they do not follow the Word as Abraham and Moses and even David they are judged by the Word as their forefathers were judged.
       4. As He has said before, all that He has said has come from the Father along with the authority to say it since He was sent to glorify His Father.
       5. He is making this point now because in a little while we will hear Him say to His disciples “As the Father has sent me, I also now send you.” They are to do as He has done in all respects…there is no deviating from the message or approach.

Lessons in the Gospel of John March 29,

2023

* 1. Prayer
  2. Review
     1. What did John teach His audience (which includes us) about who Christ is in chapter

12?

* + 1. Jesus has ridden into Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey declaring for all to see that He is the Messiah, now in verses 44-50 we see Him loudly exhorting for all to hear. In fact, this is the last message that He will give publically. “And Jesus cried out and said, ‘Whoever believes in me, believes not in me but in Him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees Him who sent me. I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness. If anyone hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him; for I did not come to judge the world but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has Himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak. And I know that His commandment is eternal life. What I say, therefore, I say as the Father has told me.’” – What did we

say last week that we were to take away from this?

* + - 1. First of all, this appears to be a summation of many of the different messages and times that He has told the people who He is.
      2. The Father and Him are one…you cannot have the Father without the Son and you cannot have the Son without the Father.
      3. He is the true light for those who were chosen before the foundations of the earth by the Father and given to Him.
      4. At this time, Jesus had not come as a judge Himself…but as Redeemer…He will come again as Judge. But as He has said often…since they do not follow the Word as Abraham and Moses and even David they are judged by the Word as their forefathers were judged.
      5. He is making this point now because in a little while we will hear Him say to His disciples “As the Father has sent me, I also now send you.” They are to do as He has done in all respects…there is no deviating from the message or approach.

C. John 13:1-18a- Jesus washing the feet of His disciples.

1. This is Thursday of the Passion Week. However, some have said it is Wednesday, but if that is the case then chapters 14-17 happen on Thursday afternoon and evening after the Passover Meal…But John is not as clear as the other Gospels. The actual date is only important when he makes it clear it seems. I believe it is Thursday afternoon and the meal is already underway.

1. The chapters into which we now embark have been called by Thomas Goodwin

(1600-1680) - *“a window into Christ’s Heart.”*

* + 1. Alexander Maclaren (1826-1910) stated about these chapters, *“Nowhere else is*  *His speech at once so simple and so deep. Nowhere else have we the heart of*  *God so unveiled…The immortal words which Christ spoke in the upper chamber are His highest self-revelation in speech, even as the Cross to which they led up in His most perfect self-revelation in act.”*
    2. We have in these 5 chapters…Chapters 13-17…a real gift to us 2000 years later.

1. These final chapters highlight a traumatic time in the life of our Lord and His disciples. I know we have all read them and heard them, if you have been in Church for any length of time…but have we meditated on them, truly?

a. Begin by just sitting back and listening…As I quickly retell this story through His death and resurrection…think about the stages.

* + - * 1. It is probably the early afternoon on Thursday, and we are climbing the stairs to the Upper Room where 13 men have come together for the Passover meal.
        2. During the meal the Messiah, their rabbi, gets up takes off His outer garments and begins to wash the disciples…even Judas’… feet.

This was an act never done by a rabbi. The disciples were always the servant of the rabbi…but they were never required to wash their rabbi’s feet.

This was an act not even done by the householder but only by a slave.

This was an act not REQUIRED of a Jewish slave but only a Gentile slave.

So the very fact that Jesus undertook this task during His Passion Week fills this narrative with great significance. Jesus undertook washing His disciple’s feet in the shadow of the Cross.

In fact, Luke tells us that at this time in the meal they were all arguing about which of them was “the greatest”. Luke 22:24-27- “A dispute also

arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. And he said to them, ‘The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves.” It is in this context that Jesus gets up to wash THEIR feet.

Soon He will dismiss Judas Iscariot shortly after that He will tell Peter that he will betray Him before the dawn and before they leave for the garden Jesus will pray the longest recorded prayer in the New Testament….This one truly is the “Lord’s Prayer” in chapter 17.

* + - 1. From there picture yourself scattered by the palace guard while their teacher is taken away and you don’t know what they will do to Him.

* + - 1. He will go before the deposed high priest Annas…then to Annas’ son-in-law

Caiaphas. He will then be taken to the judgment hall of the Roman governor

Pontius Pilate then to King Herod, making the circuit back to

Pilate.

* + - 1. Pilate will judge…Jesus will be scourged and then turned out to the Via Delarosa on His way to Golgotha carrying the crossbeam of His own cross but because of the trauma of the scourging and the blood loss another is selected to carry the crossbeam. From there He will be crucified.
      2. By this time on Friday Jesus’ lifeless body will be taken down from the cross and will be placed in a garden tomb…dead and buried.
      3. The next day, on the Sabbath, the chief priest will plead with Pilate to set up a guard at the tomb so that His body might not be stolen.
      4. Then early Sunday morning He rises from the dead, as He said He would and now lives forever. King OVER the mountain…His people and all creation!
      5. Obviously, this was all traumatic for John since He, a simple fisherman, records this with such accuracy as much as 40 years later…in fact, these events take up more than half of His Gospel.

1. Thinking through this sequence…that is meditating on these facts…what questions come to mind when thinking of how these facts effect your day to day faith? a. Is the Lord Jesus Christ central in my thinking and living?
   * + - 1. William Bates On Divine Meditation: “He hath from eternity spent his thoughts upon you, and they are every moment going forth towards you; there should be a continual return of our thoughts to him. God hath given his Son to you, and will you not give your thoughts to him?

It is the most unkind recompense to neglect this duty of meditation.”

* + - * 1. Considering all that He did how do I honor Him daily with my thoughts, words and deeds?

1. What truth are we told according to vs. 1 that we should hold onto about Jesus today and why?
   * + - 1. He knew the time had come…indeed in less than 24 hours he would be on a cross, dying and buried.
         2. With all of this before Him He had determined to show and tell His disciples how much He loved them.
         3. He has loved them well to this point…they were his…his people…His elect.

## (1) One pastor put it a long time ago, “Jesus has done some things for all men, but He has only done ALL things for some men…His own!”

(2) God’s wider love for the world…His common grace…is not displaced by His concentrated love for His friends and family for we who are in Christ experience its fullness.

1. He will love them “…to the end”.

(1) To the end of His time on earth….He will carry out the mission before Him to shed His blood and go to the cross as an atoning sacrifice for all His sheep…His people.

(2)“ …to the end…=To the fullest extent…to the uttermost”- “eis telos”- is what the Greek communicates…telling us that Jesus’ love extends much farther than His earthly ministry….His love has no limits from a time and space perspective.

(3) Always and forever! Phil. 1:6-“And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus

Christ.”

1. This gives us assurance to navigate this evil world until He returns or we are taken in death. For it is His love that gives us identity…we are His and He loves His own to the end!

*6.* Vs. 2 and 3 is an interesting sentence; “During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper.” How would you tell others what’s going on here?

1. We don’t know when for sure the decision was made to betray

Jesus…maybe Mary breaking open the bottle of expensive oil and him not getting any praise for his words was “the straw that broke the camel’s back”.

1. But we know that on Tuesday or Wednesday of this week he went to the religious leaders and devised the scheme to arrest Jesus for 30 pieces of silver.
2. But, in the end, it was just one more thing that answered prophesy affirming to Jesus that this part of the plan that the Godhead had placed

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in motion before the foundations of the earth was coming to its climax…He rose confidently in what He had to do.

Lessons in the Gospel of John April 12, 2023

1. Prayer
2. Review
   1. In John chapter 13:1, what seems to be the most important thing that John wants to highlight forty years later?
      1. He will love them “…to the end”.

(1) To the end of His time on earth….He will carry out the mission before Him to shed His blood and go to the cross as an atoning sacrifice for all His sheep…His people.

(2)“…to the end…=To the fullest extent…to the uttermost” - “eis telos”- is what the Greek communicates…telling us that Jesus’ love extends much farther than His earthly ministry….His love has no limits from a time and space perspective.

* + - 1. Always and forever! Phil. 1:6-“And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.”
      2. Sean did not hesitate in understanding the fullness of these few words.
    1. This gives us assurance to navigate this evil world until He returns or we are taken in death. For it is His love that gives us identity…we are His and He loves His own to the end!

* 1. What is the second thing John wishes to highlight in verses 2 and 3 before he moves into Jesus’ act of washing the feet of the disciples? Judas’ actions were just one more thing that answered prophesy affirming to Jesus that this part of the plan that the Godhead had placed in motion before the foundations of the earth was coming to its climax…He rose confidently in what He had to do.

1. John 13: 4-18a
   1. Most of us have read and heard this event often throughout our Church life…so now let’s look at vss. 4-18a-“He laid aside His outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around His waist. Then He poured water into a basin and

began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around Him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to Him, ‘Lord, do you wash my feet?’ Jesus answered him, ‘What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.’ Peter said to Him, ‘You shall never wash my feet.’ Jesus answered him, ‘If I do not wash you, you have no share with me.’ Simon Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!’ Jesus said to him, ‘The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.’ For He knew who was to betray Him; that was why He said, ‘Not all of you are clean.’ When He had washed their feet and put on His outer garments and resumed His place, He said to them, “Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen.” This is such a familiar event; let’s approach this analytically and devotionally.

* + 1. After reading this or hearing this again, what questions come to your mind?
    2. What answers come to your minds?
    3. Concerning this specific event in this list of Passion Week events, what have you considered that ought to change in your life?
    4. This has been a brief lesson in Christian Meditation that ought to be done even before you pray…with meditation your prayers will be informed and richer.
    5. This can be done with the sermon text of any text you are considering so that you ca get so much more out of it.

* 1. We must see this in the context that all the disciples in the room were arguing about which of them was “the greatest”. Luke 22:24-27- “A dispute also arose

among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. And he said to them, ‘The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves.” It is in this context that Jesus gets up to wash THEIR feet.

* 1. Some things to consider after this exercise.John is in so much awe over this event that he is the only one to recount it. I have always found it interesting that God brings this event to John’s mind in the shadow of the Passover/Lord’s Supper that is covered by the other Gospel writers. 
     1. John had begun by telling us, “Jesus knew that His hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.”
     2. So this narrative begins with talk of Jesus’ never ending love and then

John tells us about the sign that He gives that defines this love…He washes

the disciples feet…servanthood in the face of a discussion of who is the greatest!

* + 1. It is interesting that this is the event he focuses on that night, with so many details, while the others focus on Jesus changing the Passover meal into the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper…a perpetual meal until Christ returns.

1. Based on what they had just been arguing about…who is or will be the greatest in the kingdom…we could see this as a random act of teaching based on the events at the time…but it appears to be as planned by Jesus as the Lord’s Supper is in the other Gospels.
2. Jesus washing “his” feet seems to have had a profound effect on John’s life, for the details are so clear and exact even 30 or 40 years later. But this must have been something that stayed with him throughout his lifetime.
3. The Spirit enabled him to remember just as Jesus had told them He would…vs. 7, 12:16, 14:20,26.
4. We are to be just as methodical and obvious in how we serve others so there is no doubt that they are the center of our attention.
5. As their teacher and Lord…Jesus is teaching them what is to define them as disciples…not being the greatest but being the servant.
6. This serves as an illustration of the servant command that Jesus speaks of in the other gospels “The Son of man came not to be serve but

## to serve, and give His life as a ransom for many.” (Matt. 20:28; Mark 10:45)

(7) In this foot washing Jesus is showing them by this dramatic and meaningful approach a sign both of who He is and what He has come to do.

* This foot washing He reveals both His identity and His purpose of His ministry…
* He is pointing out to us how sacrificial servanthood ought to be characteristic with us as well.

1. Jesus seems to be embracing His humiliation as He prepares for the scourging, rejection and crucifixion.
2. What point is emphasized when Jesus says, “The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean....”?
   1. Peter once again was not paying close attention.
      * When Jesus says, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.” That should have been the end of any discussion…
      * But Peter not satisfied by Jesus’ word asks and then declares to his Lord and teacher “You shall never wash my feet!”
      * And then, of course, he must walk back his statement and overcompensates going from one extreme to the other by saying, “Lord, not me feet but also my hands and my head!” in an over spiritualized fashion… He still does not see the point.
      * Remember they had just been arguing about who would be the greatest.
   2. But, of course, Jesus is talking about the redemption in Him alone, of His own. The disciples…(namely Peter representing them) …
   3. Jesus clarifies that the disciples as believers are already clean of sin except for the son of perdition.
      * This is the “once for all (time)”element of His Christ work for all believers…

Heb. 9:24-28- “For Christ has entered, not into holy places made with hands, which are copies of the true things, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God on our behalf. Nor was it to offer himself repeatedly, as the high priest enters the holy places every year with blood not his own, for then he would have had to suffer repeatedly since the foundation of the world. But as it is, he has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him.”

* + - But there is a need for on-going forgiveness through repentance… we do not need a new sacrifice but fresh repentance and confession which leads to fresh cleansing daily.
    - Salvation is a one-time act of justification by faith.
      * What follows is the lifelong process of sanctification: a daily washing away of the stain of sin.
      * As we walk through the world, some of the world’s spiritual filth will cling to us, and that needs to be washed away— forgiven by Christ. John tells us in another place, 1 John 1:9“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”
      * Peter and the other disciples—all except Judas, who never belonged to Christ—needed only this “minor” cleansing.

1. After washing their feet Jesus asks, “Do you understand what I have done to you?”
   1. Jesus’ washing the disciple’s feet anticipates, symbolically, the washing that is accomplished by the cross, Jesus’ supreme selfsacrifice…self-humiliation…. He said,

“I lay down my life…”

* + - Jesus Himself would wash them and us clean with His blood so that they and us will never need that washing again.
    - Just like in baptism…It looks back if we are adults to our hearts having been changed by God’s work…or forward, in the case of our infants as we anticipate the day they respond to the action of the spirit on their lives.
    - Water baptism is a sign and seal of the covenant but it is also a symbol of the cleansing that was accomplished by Christ on the Cross… something yet to be accomplished in time and space at this time.
  1. “Understand” here and in verse 7 is a key word in the Christian vocabulary and in our character.
     + Understanding is the key to transformation.
     + Understanding the Gospel a Spirit gift enables us to KNOW the Love of Christ for us.

1. So, far more than a simple act of humility and service to be sure.
2. What point IS He making when he says, “For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.”?
   1. He gives us an example of true servanthood-
   2. A purposeful willingness to humble Himself in service to His followers…even Judas.
   3. “An example”-
      * Here speaks of a child diagramming a sentence to understand it and then to copy it out and memorize it so that it becomes part of them abled then to recall.
      * In I Peter 2:12, Peter tells us the Christ left us “an example” in that the picture is of the same child, perhaps, copying a word or a phrase that a teacher writes on the board.
      * Jesus wrote the book on lifestyle; copy it, diagram it so as to fully understand it and then write your story…with an eye to the way He wrote His own story.
      * We are to become living copies…examples!
      * Obviously, Jesus did this to set an example for the church. If God the Son incarnate is willing to gird Himself with a towel and to perform the most menial, even humiliating act of hospitality, to wash the dirty, stinky feet of His sandal-shod disciples—walk about West Texas with sandaled feet and see how quickly your feet become filthy —then how much more ought we be willing to subordinate ourselves to our brothers and sisters for whom Christ died? Scripture says, “If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed

## your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you” (vv. 14–

15).

• As His followers, we are to emulate Him, serving one another in lowliness of heart and mind (sacrificially) seeking to build one another up in humility and love.

* Part of that humble service is to forgive one another (Colossians

3:13).

* When we seek to be the “greatest”, neglect to serve others, or refuse to forgive, we displease the Lord.
* True greatness in His kingdom is attained by those with a servant’s heart (Mark 9:35; 10:44), and they will be greatly blessed John12:26-“If anyone serves me, the Father will honor

him.” And again in our text, 13:17-“If you know these things, blessed are

you if you do them..

1. So this is not a perpetual practice like a sacrament but a characteristic that defines us as we serve and love as Jesus did full of purpose and willful humbleness in the service of God and others…however that may look depending upon the need…we are to use our time, talent and treasure to serve.
   * If Jesus did this deliberately to set an example for the church, then why has not the church adopted this practice as a sacrament? The first part of the answer is that the question assumes that sacraments are practices created by the church and not instituted the by the Lord.
   * There have been some who see this as a sacrament through the years.
   * The earliest church recognized this and only observed two sacraments. While the Roman Catholic Church has 7 Sacraments…5 of those 7 were canonized until the 13th century...with those 5 being sacraments the church instituted on their own which did not come from Christ Himself.
     + Baptism and the Lord’s Supper…both were reiterated in the NT as coming from the Lord to the church as means of grace.
     + While “foot washing” is not mentioned in that way…only seen as an act of hospitality done by a widow one other time. 1 Timothy 5:10- “widow…and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted

herself to every good work.”

1. No one is above doing for another. There are no exceptions to the feet we may be called to “wash”. We are not allow to say
   * “I will not serve the likes of him…or the likes of her.”
   * For He makes it clear that his example of servanthood is the example we are to follow and we don’t get to pick in choose very often. After all Jesus washed Judas’ feet.
   * For we are one in Christ and called to copy all that He did.
2. Those who give themselves to service to God and to others will glorify God in it. “Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.”

As a “Truly, truly” statement we must pay close attention and seek to understand what He means.

Then do as He says.

1. And they will be blessed, “If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.”
2. Just to be clear, Jesus did NOT lay aside any of His deity…He laid aside His dignity as a man, for those around Him. He never abdicated His authority over “all things” from John 13;3.

Lessons in the Gospel of John April 19, 2023

* 1. Prayer
  2. Review
     1. As we said last week, most of us have read and heard this event often throughout our

Church life…vss. 4-18a

* + - 1. If you did the exercise what more did God reveal to you about this text or what did he confirm to you about this text?
      2. Concerning this specific event in this list of Passion Week events, what have you considered that ought to change in your life?

* + 1. What were some of the main take a ways from verses 4-18a?
       1. He showed them His love physically by washing their feet.
       2. He left them an example of servanthood as long as they follow His pattern of putting everyone else first.
       3. He revealed the promises to those who are His.
          1. They/we are cleansed by the power of His blood as He washes us…we can’t do this for ourselves.
          2. We are blessed and will be blessed when we serve one another as He served them and serves us.

C. John 13:18b-35

1. In this chapter He has been speaking and continues to speak of this one that would betray Him throughout this meal as we look at vs. 18b-30-“I know whom I have chosen. But the Scripture will be fulfilled, ‘He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.’ I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am He. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me. After saying these things, Jesus was

troubled in His spirit, and testified, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.’ The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom He spoke. One of His disciples, whom Jesus loved, was reclining at table at Jesus' side, so Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom He was speaking. So that disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to Him, ‘Lord, who is it?’ Jesus answered, ‘It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it.’ So when He had dipped the morsel, He gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him.

Jesus said to him, ‘What you are going to do, do quickly.’ Now no one at the table knew why He said this to him. Some thought that, because Judas had the moneybag, Jesus was telling him, ‘Buy what we need for the feast,’ or that he should give something to the poor. So, after receiving the morsel of bread, he immediately went out. And it was night.” (John 13:2,10-11,18,21-30) Who is Jesus talking about and why is it even important to us today? a. Judas.

b. It is important once again for us who are His for He knows who are His and who aren’t. He said, -“I know whom I have chosen.” To make the distinction once again between true believers and those who aren’t.

* + - * 1. The Church may be deceived, and rank men as Apostles, who are nothing better than brethren of Judas Iscariot.
        2. But Jesus is never deceived, for He can read hearts. And here He declares with peculiar emphasis, "I know whom I have chosen."
        3. It is so good to have been chosen… for the time is coming when we will be confessed before the Father once and for all times.
    1. Again so much detail given by John. This whole event really raddled Him. This stuff with Judas affected John immensely. We have known of Judas’ betrayal since chapter 6: 70-71-“Jesus answered them, ‘Did I not choose

you, the twelve? And yet one of you is a devil.’ He spoke of Judas the son of

Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray Him.”

* + 1. John also told us more in chapter 12:4-6- “But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples (he who was about to betray him), said, ‘Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?’ He said this,

not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it.”

* + 1. But here in verse 2 we read, “During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him…”vs. 2
  1. Interesting the understanding the Spirit had given John about Judas to give to his readers.
  2. The actual word here that is translated “put into his heart” is

“thrown into his heart.”

* 1. By contrast Jesus threw water into the basin…On another occasion Jesus was thrown into the wilderness at His temptation.

1. If you were to narrow all of Judas’ sins down to one main sin which one does the Bible seem to highlight?
   1. Thievery…which is just another word for (2) Covetousness from which all His other sins seem to stem from.

(3) Why might it be important to look intently at our sins and see what particular sin they stem from?

1. This is a memory that was strong for John, that God through John wants to teach to these people about servanthood a definite contrast to covetousness…alongside Jesus’ washing the feet of the disciples...teaching the same message…as they coveted to be the greatest.
   1. He doesn’t talk about Jesus washing the feet of Judas…probably too raw even after all these years.
   2. He saw that His Lord and Savior was unnerved by this and it stayed with Him for all of these years.
   3. So he revisits this whole thing again.
      * Jesus speaks of one that is not clean …and that when He speaks of those who are clean that He is not talking about all of them in that room.
      * “Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me. The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom He spoke.”
        + - This announcement would have jarred all the disciples as we see in the next verse. Matthew and Mark both record this scene and the dismay that affected the disciples.
          - One of us? Not a chance? But which one?
          - Can you imagine what this revelation did to the group dynamics?
   4. Jesus also shows His love towards them by telling them ahead of time…giving them a heads up if you will.
      * + “I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am He.”
        + He uses “ego eimi” at the end as almost a period…we who believe He is the great I AM.
      * Here once again is a glimpse of our Savior …He is who He is.
      * There are 23 “I am” statements in John each expressing His total divinity.
        + - He knows there is going to be a lot of confusion so as is His pattern…a pattern of revealing His will to His own…in love He lets them know. Confusion for the moment will ward off unnecessary confusion later.
          - For Judas is the one spoken of in Psalm 41:9-“He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.” Knowing this would certainly

stabilize them later… explaining the “unexplainable”

(5) John is detailed with this as well even talking about Satan entering into Judas again.

• Satan enters Judas- just like when the evil spirits entered into the pigs and then took them on the path over the cliff…Satan controls his own to do as he pleases.

This is not Satan possessing a believer. Once possessed by the Spirit of God nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

This is just like in Luke 22:3-6-“Then Satan entered into Judas called Iscariot, who was of the number of the twelve. He went away and conferred with the chief priests and officers how he might betray him to them. And they were glad, and agreed to give him money. So he consented and sought an opportunity to betray him to them in the absence of a crowd.”

Satan can pester us as believers to try to get us to do things against God’s will …but He only temps…we decide what to do.

Having said that, we should never take Satan for granted…it is true… “greater is He that is in us” but the devil is as a lion waiting to spring forward upon us with temptation

1. Whenever we are not prepared…
2. Whenever we get to comfortable…
3. Whenever we get to self-assured
4. Whenever we suppose in our mind to think we can sin and get away with it.

• Satan had long been at work.

* This is one of the backstories of all the Gospels.
* From the events at His birth, to the Temptation in the

Wilderness, to Judas’ betrayal that was set off on Wednesday of that week, to His death and crucifixion of which Satan would have cheered thinking he had finally dealt with Jesus as if anything he did put Jesus there. As the father of lies…he even believes his own lies…it is his nature. ◼ In fact, given that this explanation of who it was that would betray him, “It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread

when I have dipped.”…then he dipped and gave it to Judas….is in

all the Gospels…you would have thought they would have all gotten it…but it seems they weren’t looking until days or months later when all of these events came to mind again.

• We know how this works…Is there anything I missed about that person…or what Christ had said?

Then the guilt sets in as to the fact that Jesus was clear and I/we didn’t understand or do anything to stop it.

Maybe this is the reason for this being so vivid in John’s mind so many years later.

Jesus reveals that He knows and is commanding Judas to get on with it, “So when He had dipped the morsel, He gave it to Judas, the

son of Simon Iscariot. Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, ‘What you are going to do, do quickly.’ (13:26-28)

Jesus dismisses Him without Judas seeking it.

Jesus says in so many words, “What you are going to do, you will now do according to my Father’s plan and under His sovereign control; and this will ultimately be for my glory and for the salvation of my people.”

Martin Luther was always quick to point out,

## “The devil is God’s devil!”

1. Judas had seen grace in Jesus’ life and he had heard it in His words, so what is it specifically that would cause him to refuse and reject the very grace that Jesus offered? Sinclair Ferguson in his book Lessons from the Upper Room: The Heart of the Savior offers these observations.
   * + Being a thief and an unbeliever he was driven by the law. Those driven by the law often refuse and reject grace.
     + What Jesus was offering must “cost” us something, in his mind...like the cost of the oil given by Mary. The Law states we must do the law…if what Jesus is pushing is anti-law then he must be dealt with.
     + So the answer to the question, “What sends him headlong into betrayal”… is the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

* + - I don’t know about you but:
    - If I had been sitting there prepared to betray someone and that person came to me to wash my feet …to serve me intimately in some way…I would be furious that this person might make me look bad in my attempt to betray who I now believed to be a betrayer Himself…betrayer of the Law.
    - I certainly would have been extremely uncomfortable…probably squirming in my seat.

1. But let us be clear, this is not talking about us not trusting people in our own circles is it? What is the point for us today?
   * It is important to us because it is the fulfillment of prophecy… Ps. 41:9- “Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me.” Specific prophecy for the Messiah.
   * It is important for Jesus to tell His disciples that He is not surprised by this betrayal…it is all part of the plan.
   * He is also telling them He knows they are not a part of the plan that this was Judas’ part alone to play.
   * He knows who He has chosen and for what role.
   * The betrayer would lift his heel against Him. This phrase in the Hebrew speaks of treachery, disloyalty, dishonesty and deceitfulness one to another…or even an unexpected attack or cruelty though nothing here was unexpected except by the disciples who felt that each were on the same page.
   * A betrayal of the Lord was devastating. But the betrayal coming from their own ranks as we said earlier, would have caused lots of issues among themselves…but Jesus had said a number of things that would eventually give them comfort:
     + Vs. 10- “And you are clean, but not every one of you.”
     + Vs. 18-20-“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.’ I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am He. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.”
     + Vs. 26- “It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it.” So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot.
2. What other details here did you encounter that you weren’t sure about or were new to you?

* Interestingly He is commissioning them for what lies ahead… “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.”
  + The world may do their worst to them as they did Jesus,
  + But the promise is clear whoever will receive them receives Christ Himself…
    1. Identity in Christ…
    2. Authority to speak as Christ’s representative and what they say that squares with Jesus is from Jesus as if He was actually there.
    3. Because when they receive the Apostles, they receive the Son and they receive the Father truly.
  + So Christ expects them to remember their commission and not be ashamed and afraid.
* A few times in the last 2 chapters alone do we read the Jesus’ soul is troubled…agitated, shaken up as in shaken to His core.
  + Can we even begin to judge the burden that has been with Him throughout His life?
  + His death and suffering on the cross were only the completion of His sorrows.
  + But all throughout His life—partly from the general unbelief of the Jews—
  + partly from the special hatred of the Pharisees and Sadducees—
  + partly from the weakness and infirmity of His few followers—
  + He was in every way "a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." (Isa. 53:3.)
* The disciple to whom Jesus loved…the one he left His mother with…the closest to Him?
  + He calls himself this 4 times in the book…John 13:23, 19:26, 20:2, 21:20.
  + This is perhaps not an arrogant statement.
    1. It’s in scripture as a fact.
    2. It seems according to the grammar John is emphasizing God’s love for him …like He does all of His elect not boasting as if he was any better or different.
  + “Whom Jesus loved…”…without naming himself enables all of us to say that if we be so bold!
  + But there must have been some type of perceive connection…why else would Peter ask John to ask Jesus who the betrayer was after all he was in inches from Jesus himself?
  + And since John asked Jesus he didn’t seemed to ask to loudly so Peter may not have known the answer until later since events began to happen pretty quickly after that and bedside Jesus will begin to speak to His disciples.
* “And it was night” why is this detail here?

2. John 13:31-35- “When he had gone out, Jesus said, ‘Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him at once. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going you cannot come.’ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.’”

a. How was Jesus glorified in the fact of Judas’ betrayal according to verses 3132?

“When he had gone out, Jesus said, ‘Now is the Son of Man glorified,

and God is glorified in Him. If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify

Him in Himself, and glorify Him at once.”

1. Just before this we see Jesus sovereignly sending Judas out to do what he is supposed to do- “What you are going to do, do quickly.”
2. 5 references to glory in the space of 2 verses!
   * The world looked at the cross as the ultimate humiliation and it was to Christ in that sense…
   * But Jesus looked at the cross knowing what would be accomplished there and beyond, “who for the joy that was set before him endured

the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.” Heb. 12:2

1. All the acts were finally set...everything would transpire as it was supposed to.
2. An event is about to take place tomorrow, which, however painful to them who love Jesus, is in reality most glorifying both to Jesus and the Father.
   * Our Lord's saying was true. It glorified His wisdom, faithfulness, holiness, and love.
     + It showed Him wise, in providing a plan whereby He could be just, and yet the Justifier of the ungodly.
     + It showed Him faithful, in keeping His promise, that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head.
     + It showed Him holy, in requiring His law's demands to be satisfied by our great Substitute.
     + It showed Him loving, in providing such a Mediator, such a Redeemer, and such a Friend for sinful man as His co-eternal Son.
   * The crucifixion truly brought glory to the FATHER.
3. The crucifixion brought glory to the SON.
   * It glorified His compassion, His patience, and His power.
   * It showed Him most compassionate, in dying for us, suffering in our stead, allowing Himself to be counted sin and a curse for us, and buying our redemption with the price of His own blood.
   * It showed Him most patient, in not dying the common death of most men, but in willingly submitting to such horrors and unknown agonies as no mind can conceive, when with a word He could have summoned His Father's angels, and been set free.
   * It showed Him most powerful, in bearing the weight of all a world's transgressions, making a fool of Satan and keeping him from his prey.
4. This act had been promised in the prologue of John’s Gospel: “The Word became flesh…and we have seen His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”
   * + - * They had witnesses some of that glory in Chapter 2 when He turned water into wine…and then in John 11:4 speaking of the reason for Lazarus’ death-““This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.”
         * The first “fulfillment” of this was probably on the Mount of

Transfiguration when John and Peter saw Him in His glory.

* + - * + Now here at this time after the dark spot in the room was sent out into the night.
        + John 12: 32 says, “And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” So the physical glorification begins when He is lifted up.
        + And it will happen again at the ascension.

Lessons in the Gospel of John April

26, 2023

* 1. Prayer
  2. Review
     1. What things did we learn about Jesus in verses 18-32? Mankind? Ourselves?

* + 1. What do we learn about the Christian life from Jesus with all of this talk about Jesus being “troubled” in His spirit?
       1. Jesus was obviously troubled, on one hand, by what lay before Him…and each succeeding event like washing the disciple’s feet brought His crucifixion closer.
       2. But, on the other hand, He was troubled by the sin that He saw around

Him…He wept over Jerusalem…He was indignant and wept over Lazarus.

* + - 1. For us we need to mourn more…for our sin and the sin around us. We get “outraged” but do we mourn, even in our indignation? Do we love so deeply as Jesus loved His own? Are we more ready to judge than we are to forgive?
      2. We need to also realize that this Christian life is hard and is supposed to be hard…to keep us humble…submissive…always seeking after God because we know we that nothing is impossible with God, and nothing truly noteworthy is possible without Him.
      3. And we have the added burden of on-going sin that he didn’t have…that burden that causes us trouble when we realize how our judgments are based in the bias of the sin and no one knows.
      4. That is why repentance and belief are so crucial for they enable us to look objectively taking out the log in our own eyes before we judge our brother and sister…enabling us to forgive them as Jesus forgave us and still at the same time holding them accountable and seeking their best which is to be walking with the Lord as well.
      5. Just some of the musing while I meditate seeking God and what He would have us take away from these familiar texts.

* + 1. How was Jesus glorified in the fact of Judas’ betrayal according to verses 31-32? “When he had gone out, Jesus said, ‘Now is the Son of Man glorified, and God is glorified in Him. If God is glorified in Him, God will also glorify Him in Himself, and glorify Him at once.”

C. John 13:33-35

2. What is He communicating in vs. 33-“ Little children, yet a little while I am with you. You will seek me, and just as I said to the Jews, so now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going you cannot come.’”?

* + - 1. This is the only place in the Gospels that Jesus actually addresses His disciples as little children.
      2. This would have been devastating to the disciples who left everything to follow Him...we will see peters reaction soon.
      3. They are growing and maturing…but nothing will grow them up more than the events that are yet to come…the suffering and death of Jesus and then their own suffering as they seek to proclaim the truth of Jesus.
      4. Death and in this case confirmed resurrection from the dead changes us from merely children seeking childish things to seeking the things of God.

3. What is the foundation of all that God does from creation to redemption to the New Heavens and New Earth?

* + - 1. The foundation of all that God is and does is LOVE!
      2. We are here …everything is here because of His divine LOVE!
      3. Hence that LOVE is always on His mind!
      4. And it is this LOVE that He expects to motivate us as well in all things that we think, do and say so that He is glorified in it all!
      5. The worldview centers around power and control…a stark contrast to be sure that we need to consider more as we contemplate why things happen the way they do and for what reason.
      6. It is with this in mind Jesus will now command them and us!

4. Vs, 34-35 are priceless verses. “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” In these last hours what is He communicating to them that is still a command for us today?

a. In many church traditions the Thursday before the crucifixion is called Maundy Thursday.

* + - 1. The word Maundy in the Latin means “mandate or commandment” Because Jesus told them He had a new commandment for them. “Love as I have loved you.”
      2. According to Jesus this is what it means to be a disciple of His.

b. This command is to love one another : “A new commandment I give to you, just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

1. It is called a "new" commandment,
   * The Greek word used here implies “freshness” the opposite of worn out…rather than recent or different. This commandment will be preserved in a new and fresh way. ◼ We might say “new and improved”.
     + The smartphone was a combination of 2 things that already existed, a computer and a phone, and yet the combination became something new.
     + This commandment is similar in that the command to love was not new, but the example of how to love would be. John 15:12-13 –“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”
   * Not because it had never been given before, but because it was to be more honored, to occupy a higher position, to be backed by a higher example than it ever had been before.
   * His death would certify the type of love…agape love that He expects of us one to another. A foot washing, willing to die for kind of love for one another.
2. Interesting, almost as soon as the false disciple had left the faithful eleven, comes the injunction, "Love one another."
3. Immediately after the sad announcement that He would leave them soon, the commandment is given, "Love one another."
4. Interesting…now only those who are clean surround Him so He is talking to His own when he says for us to “love one another”.
5. This command is made to us, all of us, who are in Christ, so we cannot NOT do it the way He says… “Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.”
   * + The command is obviously, not new.
     + But the extent as shown in humbly serving one another and by His going to the cross…showing us the length that we should go to love one another who are in Christ.
     + Spurgeon said, “We are to love our neighbor as ourselves, but we are to love our fellow-Christians as, Christ loved us, and that is far more than we could ever love ourselves.”
6. Or we will not have the unity that that the Bible calls for…and our witness will be made useless when people don’t see us loving as He loved us.
7. This statement also, informs us as to our identity...we are His and we are His disciples… as we love one another as He has loved us. So our identity is wrapped up in our purpose…to love the Lord with all that we are and our neighbor as ourselves.

c. Above all, it was to be the test of Christianity before the world. "By this shall all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." This type of love should identify us!

1. This is the legacy Jesus left behind: namely the example of His love!
2. This is the kind of love the regards others more important than ourselves…the kind of love that does not insist on its own way…the kind of love that seeks unity in Christ over all things, no matter how put out we may be.
3. This is the heart of the Gospel and what it means to be a Christian.
4. What message does it send to others when we, as believers, fail to love as He loved?
5. If people described you would this be one of the characteristics they would use?  d. We must remember:
6. Let us take heed that this well-known Christian grace is not merely a notion in our heads, but a practice in our lives.
7. Of all the commands of Jesus there is none which is so much talked about and so little obeyed as this.
8. Yet, if we mean anything when we profess to have love toward all men, it ought to be seen in our actions and our words, our attitudes, and our behavior at home and everywhere, our conduct in every relation of life…this is how others will judge us…right or wrong. But it is how Jesus wanted other to judge us…"By this shall all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." So that others will come and ask about the hope and love that comes from us to them. (4) Specially, it ought to show itself forth in all our dealing with other Christians. We should regard them as brothers and sisters, and delight to do anything to promote their happiness.
9. We should absolutely hate the idea of envy, malice, and jealousy towards a member of Christ, and regard it as a downright sin.
10. This is what our Lord meant when He said, “just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.”
11. J. C. Ryle said, “Let us note that our Lord does not name gifts or miracles or intellectual attainments as the evidence of discipleship but LOVE…the simple grace of love, a grace within each of the poorest, lowliest believer is the evidence of our discipleship.”
12. How had He just exampled what He commanded them here?
    1. Again this commandment is not “new” in the sense of “novel” or having never been said before.
    2. It is an old commandment to love God and to love neighbor.
    3. But it is given new significance with added meaning (if anyone doubted Hs meaning) in its fulfillment in Jesus.
    4. This love did indeed come true for a time…Tertullian, (2nd and 3rd century Christian theologian and apologist from Carthage North Africa) in his work entitled Apology, speaks of the testimony of pagans who said, “See how these Christians love one another” This is powerful apologetic for the gospel one that needs to be seem more and more in the world we live in.
13. What are some of the reasons that it is so hard to love as Jesus says to love here…to love others as He loved us?
    1. Our own on-going sin gets in the way…selfishness, shame, pride.
    2. It is supposed to be hard for us…that is what spiritual discipline is all about.
    3. It is hard…actually it is impossible to love as Jesus loved without the power of the Holy Spirit and without putting in the work daily to overcome things like:
    * Denying ourselves, taking up our cross, and following where Jesus leads (Matthew 16:24)
    * Putting to death what is earthly in us (Colossians 3:5), and not letting sin reign in our mortal bodies, to make us obey its passions (Romans 6:12)
    * Doing nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility counting others more significant than ourselves (Philippians 2:3)
    * Putting on compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other as the Lord has forgiven us (Colossians 3:12–13)
    * Rejoicing always, praying without ceasing, and giving thanks in all circumstances (1 Thessalonians 5:16–18)

(4) This kind of love is so radical that God forged a new word to describe it “agape”.

* This word is only used in Greek writings one other time outside of the NT, as far as researchers can tell.
* The concept existed in the culture but it is forged here by God to describe this new type of love expected and commanded of all His children for one another.
* This is a divine kind of love that is not found “naturally” in mankind.
  + Jesus told His disciples that we naturally love those who love us, but loving our enemy is something that comes from God.
  + Agape is not an impulse generated by a feeling…it is solely a decision…a choice to love, as God did for His own before the foundations of the earth.
  + Matt. 5:43-48- “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even

the Gentiles do the same? You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

* + Remember, when Jesus tells us to love our enemies He is not commanding us to have good feelings toward them. He is telling us to choose to act in His love and character, whether we feel like it or not.
  + A godly friend forgives a brother or sister that hurts them; they don’t seek to hurt them in return.
  + Truth is, none of us earned Jesus’ agape love …none us deserve it…and none of us are entitled to it…it wasn’t that long ago we were enemies of God ourselves…yet Jesus gives it to His own… freely. So as Jesus has loved us we are to love one another.
* Paul told us in I Cor. 13 that we can do all the right things but without agape love…self-sacrificing love… it means absolutely nothing.
* This is what it means to follow the One who is the Way the Truth and the Life.

D. John 13:36-38

* 1. Interesting Peter doesn’t seem to hear what Jesus has just said. He speaks up and says, “Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, where are you going?” Why now does Peter take exception to this when Jesus has said multiple times up to this point that He was going to die?
     1. After 3 years they hear Him…really!
     2. They still don’t understand.
     3. What long journey are you going that we can’t go…after all we gave up everything for you?
     4. Is he still struggling with his place in the royal cabinet?
     5. Jesus had just given them a direct command and he has missed it because all he heard was something that Jesus had said before but now he is uncomfortable with the implications.
     6. Peter is so much like us!

* 1. So what does Jesus mean when He says again, “Jesus answered him, ‘Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward.’” ?
     1. Peter didn’t understand, again, that he could not do what Jesus had come to do…die to take away the sins of His elect.
     2. Jesus did know what was expected of Him and what would be expected of Peter later.
     3. But Peter’s impetuousness like with the comment about giving him a full bath doesn’t go so well. Peter said to him, “‘Lord, why can I not follow you

now? I will lay down my life for you.” Jesus answered, ‘Will you lay down your life for me?

* + 1. Christ must first die for Peter before Peter can “die” for Him.
    2. I can only imagine how Peter took what Jesus said at the end, “Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.”

Like all of us…we make claims…but when push comes to shove and his life is actually on the line…Peter will deny Jesus 3 times…as Jesus just told him.

* + - 1. And not just quietly but loudly and with curses, even at a girl, no less, that “made him” to have been with Jesus.
      2. When peter protested Jesus shows him that He knew all of Peter’s weaknesses and flaws within him better than he did.

Lessons in the Gospel of John May 10, 2023

1. Prayer
2. Review

1. What is the main thing Jesus is teaching His disciples in chapter 13 that still is ours to know and live out today?

* + 1. Not just to love our neighbor, which has always been the command to love our neighbor as our self…based on the love we have for Our Father.
    2. But rather He is teaching them HOW to love one another…just as He has loved them…
       1. by serving one another humbly- “For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.”-Luke 18:14
       2. by putting others needs before our own- “…in humility count others more significant than yourselves.”- Phil. 2:3
       3. by loving this way to the end.
       4. Loving in such a way that it is clearly seen by all for how we love will be the standard by which other Christians and non-Christians use to determine the depth and or extent of our profession…or our lack of profession. “By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you

have love for one another.” John 13:35

* + - 1. By eventually going where they can’t come …the Cross…court of the Godheads love for all His children…He is teaching about a special sort of love.
         * This “agape” love goes first to our brothers and sisters in

Christ…though we are to even show our enemies the character of love described by Jesus.

* + - * + I love this by Spurgeon said, “We are to love our neighbor as ourselves, but we are to love our fellow-Christians as, Christ loved us, and that is far more than we could ever love ourselves.”

c. “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (1) The last clause is conditional with the “if”.

* + - * + “If” we obey this command we wear the badge/mark the Christ gives.
        + Since this is a command it can be violated and it is so much by Christians.
        + It is possible to be a Christian without exhibiting this type of love …but if we expect non-believers to know that we are Christians we must show off the mark.

Francis Schaeffer always talked about the fact that THIS IS THE MARK of the Christian…to love as Christ loved anything less is a rejection of the faith we have been given!

*2.* We must remember that this is one continuous conversation between 13 through 17. So as we begin to look at this last section of chapter 13 it leads us naturally into the conversation of chapter 14 which we will look at in a minute. Looking back, a minute to 13:36-38; what does this event teach us about ourselves?a. That we are so much like Peter.

* + 1. Let it be a settled principle in our faith, that there is weakness in all our hearts of which we have no adequate understanding, and that we never know how far we might fall when we are tempted.
    2. Rom.12:3-“For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.”
       1. We think too well of ourselves sometimes, like Peter, that there are some things we could not possibly do.
       2. We take pity on others who fall…glad that it wasn’t us.
       3. Other times, we comfort ourselves with the thought that at any rate we would not have done so.
       4. We know nothing at all. The seeds of every sin are resting in our hearts waiting to get out, even when renewed, and they only need occasion, or carelessness and the withdrawal of God's grace for a season, to get out and make a mess of things.

d. Like Peter, we may think we can do wonders for Christ, and like Peter, we may learn by bitter experience that we have no power and might at all.

* + - 1. I Cor. 10:12- “Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.”
      2. We need s humble sense of our own innate weakness,
         * a constant dependence on the Lord for strength,
         * daily prayer to be held up and to be held accountable for our thoughts, words and deeds, because we cannot hold up ourselves—these are the true secrets of Christian security.

*C.* John 14:1-11

1. What command does Jesus give them right after He tells Peter that he will betray Him and why? Vs. 1-“Let not your hearts be troubled.”

* + 1. The discipled had more than enough reason to be troubled. They were finally getting that something is amiss!
       1. Jesus had said one of them was a traitor and seemingly no one save for John knew who that was and for some reason he wasn’t talking.
       2. That by saying Peter would deny Him the implication was that they all would in one way or another…most of them hid.
       3. And he had just said that He would be leaving them that night.
    2. All of this and more would have set them on edge and yet Jesus commands,

“Let not your hearts be troubled.”

* + - 1. He was not saying that we would leave a trouble free life.
      2. He is saying that we could have an untroubled heart even in the midst of trouble and hardship.

He commands them at that moment…Stop being troubled, overwhelmed, in despair! The Greek could also be translated “Stop, set your heart at ease”!

* + - * + Our Lord has never taken any delight in the doubt or struggles of His people.
        + But He does call us to account concerning the emotions we let run rampant.
        + We all need to heed this…since what come into our lives comes from God for our good, the good of others and God’s glory.
    1. How does He expect us to not be troubled in the midst of troubling circumstance? “Believe in God; believe also in me.”
       1. Instead of giving in to their troubled hearts He says to put their trust totally in God and Himself as the One who controls all things.
       2. This was a radical command from Jesus.
          - Both words “believe” are in the imperative/command form.
          - He is telling them and everyone who will eventually hear this to trust Him as much as they would trust God the Father….this goes beyond the normal Jewish monotheism. He and the Father are one.
          - Believing in God the Father as He is represented by the Son has always been a prerequisite as Jesus told the religious leaders as He has told Hs disciples.
          - So Jesus’ solution to this “trouble” is a real and true relationship with Him.
       3. And implied is the promise that when they/we do this…comfort and peace will follow.
       4. But that is not always what happens. Why?
          - The Puritans say that sometimes it is God’s will to put us into darkness for a season…to discipline us…to teach us.
          - Also, everything is accomplished in a season…or through a process…we need to be willing to wait on the Lord expectantly for these to be experienced.
          - They also say, that like Peter we haven’t cultivated our faith well enough…we haven’t taken the time to prepare ourselves for trouble…or we are unaware the trouble exists and we get complacent…then when it happens we are troubled beyond measure.

2. In verses 2-4 what reasons does He give for calming our troubled heart? “In my

Father's house are many rooms (a place to stay). If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going.”

a. He speaks with authority concerning heaven…for it is His Father’s house and so it is His as well…and there is a place for us.

* + - 1. Jesus doesn’t wonder about life beyond death, He knew what was waiting.
      2. He tells His disciples what is waiting for them. “…many rooms.”

(mansions) Grk. – “dwelling places”…a place to stay just for you! Just for us…all who believe.

b. Love always prepares a welcome. “I go to prepare a place for you”

* + - 1. Jesus Himself will “go” and prepare this place for us! Just like He wasn’t taken to the cross by His divine will he went to the cross…same here by His divine will he will go and prepare a place for us personally.
      2. Like expectant parents preparing a nursery or a special place for the baby.
      3. Preparing your place for beloved friends to come and stay…getting ahead of time the things they will need so they will have no needs.
      4. And by saying He is going to prepare a place He is also communicating that he is confident of the arrival at the right time.
      5. He is also telling them that His death is not an ending but the path to fulfilling much more good for their/our behalf.

c. Then He told them of His return. “I will come again and will take you to myself”

* + - 1. They didn’t have to come and find Him He would come to them.
      2. Not just after His resurrection or even the coming of the Holy spirit in fullness upon them.
      3. But also at their death’s, which for most was to be sooner than they supposed…
      4. But then, when He gathers up all His people at the end of the age and makes all things new!
    1. The last reason they can be calmed from their troubles that Jesus gives is that they will be where He will be. “…where I am you may be also”
       1. While they may be soon departed He is saying we will be together again. A Great comfort and reason not to be troubled!
       2. We must take comfort in that even as he prepares a place for us. Jesus also prepares us for that place. Phil 1:6- “And I am sure of this, that he who

began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus

Christ.”

* + 1. But then He ends with “And you know the way to where I am going.”
       1. Confidently asserting that they in fact do know where He is going.
       2. But just like us we have to have our memories jogged occasionally.
       3. Also, confirming they are His and that they will understand and figure all this out at the right time.
    2. The strength of Jesus’ counsel lies in the way He explains why and how His disciple’s hearts need not be troubled. For while there are reasons for their hearts to be troubled, there are greater reasons for not letting them be troubled.

* 1. Now how are we to understand the apparent contradiction here? After Jesus says that they/we know the way He is going, in verse 5 Thomas pipes up (tired, I guess of letting Peter ask all the questions) and says, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?”
     1. Jesus knows them and us better than we do ourselves so He can expect more!

* + 1. On one hand, the knowledge of the disciples was very small.
       1. They knew little before the crucifixion and resurrection compared to what they might have known, and little compared to what they afterwards knew after the day of Pentecost.

(2)About our Lord's purpose in coming into the world, about His sacrificial death and substitution for us on the cross, their ignorance was almost unbelievable since Jesus had been telling them all along.

(3) It might well be said, that they "knew in part" only, and were children in understanding.

c. And yet, on the other hand, the knowledge of the disciples was very great.

* 1. They knew far more than the great majority of the Jewish nation, and received truths which the Scribes and Pharisees entirely rejected.
  2. Compared to the world around them, they were in the highest sense enlightened.
  3. They knew and believed that their Master was the promised Messiah, the Son of the living God; and to know Him was the first step towards heaven.
  4. All things go by comparison. Before we lightly esteem the disciples because of their ignorance, let us take care that we do not underrate their knowledge. They knew more precious truth than they were aware of themselves. One commentator said, “Their hearts were better than their

heads.”

d. Again, just like us, all believers are apt to undervalue the work of the Spirit in their own souls, and to think they know nothing because they do not know everything.

* 1. Many true Christians are thought more of in heaven while they live, than they think of themselves.
  2. There is One above who takes far more account of heart knowledge than head-knowledge.
  3. Some go struggling all the way to heaven because they know so little, and think they will miss the way altogether, and yet have hearts with which God is well pleased…all because they believe themselves unworthy of heaven…and they are on their own merits but we have the merit of Christ so to think that way is almost blasphemous.

4. Now we come to that famous statement that is hardly ever completed in verse 6-7,

“Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the

Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.’” How does this answer Thomas’ dilemma? What comfort is there is His words for us?

a. Jesus doesn’t say that He will show them/ us the way…He says He is the way.

1. Jesus didn’t promise here to teach them/us the truth; He said that He is the truth.
2. Jesus didn’t offer us any secrets to a good life; He said He is the life.

1. Think of it this way:
   * I am wondering about; not knowing where I am going.- Jesus says, He is the Way.
   * I am confused and overwhelmed; I don’t know what to think. Jesus says, He is the Truth.
   * I am dead inside and don’t know if I can go on. Jesus says, He is the Life.
2. He is the Way, the Truth and the Life…all answers to our being trouble is found in Him and they already knew that on one hand…just like when I help you answer your own question!
   * Jesus is "the WAY,"—the way to heaven and peace with God. He is Himself the door, the ladder, and the road, through whom we must draw near to God. Through His blood we may draw near with boldness, and have access with confidence into God's presence.
   * Jesus is "the TRUTH,"—the whole substance of truth which the mind of man requires. Christ is the whole truth, and meets and satisfies every desire of the human mind.
   * Jesus is "the LIFE,"—the sinner's title to eternal life and pardon, the believer's root of spiritual life and holiness, the surety of the

Christian's resurrection life. He that believes on Christ has everlasting life. He that abides in Him, as the branch abides in the vine, shall bring forth much fruit. He that believes on Him, though he were dead, yet shall he live. The root of all life, for soul and for body, is Christ.

(5) Jesus beckons them and us to grasp and hold fast to these truths.

* + To use Christ daily as the way,
  + to believe Christ daily as the truth— • to live on Christ daily as the life,
  + this is to be a well-informed, a thoroughly furnished and an established Christian…so that when trouble comes, and it will come, we are ready!

1. Then he says, “No one comes to the Father except through me.”
   1. Jesus can’t be clearer…no one…absolutely no one get to the Father…into heaven except through Him.
      * He sets aside the Temple and all the rituals.
      * He sets aside every other religion in the world…excluding all who do not believe in Him and come to Him …He is the exclusive Way, Truth and Life!
   2. God is so holy that all men are guilty and debtors in His sight.
      * Sin is so sinful that no mortal man can make satisfaction for it.
      * There must be a mediator, a redeemer, between ourselves and God, or else we can never be saved.
      * There is only one door, one bridge, between earth and heaven—the crucified Son of God.
      * Whoever will enter in by that door may be saved; but to him who refuses to use that door the Bible holds out, no hope at all.
      * Without shedding of blood there is no remission.
   3. Many are willing to say the Jesus is legitimately “Away” to God, but they say that all religions will get us to the same place.
   4. Some say it isn’t fair of God to have only made one way. But God isn’t into fairness or we would all be in hell!
   5. If Jesus is not the only way as he claims then He is a liar or a lunatic because He absolutely states here the He IS the Only way through which people can come to heaven.
2. And He backs that up with what He says next, “If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know Him and have seen Him.”
   * + 1. He has said something similar before (in fact 4 other times )so that we will know the Father because the Father and He are one.
       2. The disciples had learned and do know much about God that they had not learned from the rabbis who neither knew God or truly worshipped Him since they denied Jesus was his Son.
       3. But knowing their weakness…in that they had not yet endured His crucifixion and resurrection and ascension he knows when they will fully know Him and the Father.

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**May 17, 2023**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review- John 14:1-11**
3. **Jesus commanded them, *“Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me.”* What had been so troubling up to this statement being made?**
4. **His reiterating that His hour had come.**
5. **They had SEEN their Master was troubled.**
6. **On the day of the Feast of Passover the Master washed their feet.**
7. **On the same day, He had told them that one from their number would betray Him.**
8. **Jesus keeps telling them He is going somewhere where they cannot go…speaking of His death and being placed in the tomb.**
9. **Jesus rebukes Peter twice in one evening…He has to wash His feet…and then that Peter will deny Him 3 times.**
10. **This is just a few of the things that may have had them troubled.**
11. **Jesus answer to not being troubled…not letting the trouble paralyze them… *“Believe in God, believe also in me.”* It is that simple and that hard at the same time.**
12. **What is Jesus’ declaring in vs. 6 that the disciples just weren’t getting for any number of reasons? *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”***
13. **Think of it this way:**
14. **I am wandering about; not knowing where I am going.- Jesus says, He is the Way.**
15. **I am confused and overwhelmed; I don’t know what to think. Jesus says, He is the Truth.**
16. **I am dead inside and don’t know if I can go on. Jesus says, He is the Life.**
17. **Jesus beckons them and us to grasp and hold fast to these truths.**
18. **To use Christ daily as the way,**
19. **to believe Christ daily as the truth—**
20. **to live on Christ daily as the life,**
21. **This is what it is to be a well-informed, a thoroughly furnished and an established Christian…so that when trouble comes, and it will come, we are ready!**
22. **I was reading an article the other day where a theologian somewhere posed a question to other theologians of mixed “Christian” varieties: What is the most offensive word in the Bible? What do you think it might be?**
23. **The answer seemed to be the definite article “the”…that’s right the definite article “the”. Seems inoffensive to me.**

* **But given this passage in vs 6**, **if Jesus had said, *“I am a way,”* our lives would be much easier at certain times.**
* **But He didn’t. He tells us that He is THE way, THE truth, and THE life. No one comes to the Father except through Jesus.**

1. **Jesus also said in Luke 10:22- *“All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him.”***
2. **The world perceives these proclamations as prejudice – the bigotry of exclusivity. And, indeed, it is – unless it’s true!**
3. **However, people don’t mind this exclusivity in other areas of their life. If there is only one safe exit from a burning theatre, then it is not unkind to point a way from the other exits and say, *“This is the way.”***
4. **All other religious solutions tell people to get to God by measuring up to some standard of goodness or reaching some state of consciousness. Jesus alone taught that we could not reach to God, so He mercifully reached to us through His Son.**
5. **Since He is the way that God provides, love demands that we not pretend there are other ways but proclaim Him as the One to put your faith in.**
6. **Then because they need to know, again He says, *“No one comes to the Father except through me.”***
7. **Jesus can’t be clearer…no one…absolutely no one gets to the Father…into heaven except through Him.**

* **He sets aside the Temple and all the rituals.**
* **He sets aside every other religion in the world…excluding all who do not believe in Him and come to Him …**
* **He is the exclusive Way, Truth and Life!**

1. **God is so holy that all men are guilty and debtors in His sight.**

* **Sin is so sinful that no mortal man can make satisfaction for it.**
* **There must be a mediator, a redeemer, between ourselves and God, or else we can never be saved. And that mediator is Jesus!**
* **There is only one door between earth and heaven—the crucified Son of God.**
* **Whoever will enter in by that door may be saved; but to him who refuses to use that door the Bible holds out, no hope at all.**
* **Without shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.**

1. **How are these two verses vs.1 and 6 strengthening and helpful for us today? How do they really answer any and all questions we can ask about God and the faith He gives to His elect?**
2. **John 14: 9-31**
3. **Having said all of this what is going on with Philip in vs. 9-11? *“Philip said to him, ‘Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does His works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.”***
4. **Has Philip seen anything different in Jesus’ character from what he knew of God’s character? Has he seen anything in Jesus’ attitude towards His own that what he knew of God’s attitude towards His own? Jesus had given him and all the other disciples all the proof they needed to believe this.**
5. **He is almost like the Pharisees…**
6. ***“Yeah you have done some amazing things but just one more thing …peal back the veil so we can see the Father, the One that is the most important here.”* Thinking like a Jew putting Jesus in a lesser role even though He told them this before.**
7. **Or maybe: I believe but just like us… *“Show me something else, like the Father (which hasn’t gone too well historically) …and I will really believe.”***
8. **However, this kind of settles the old argument that the God of the OT is different from the God in the NT. Jesus shows us the same love, justice and mercy and goodness that His Father does for He and the Father are One. *“Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me?”***
9. **Jesus reminds Philip here of what He has said before to remind Philip and us of who He is.**
10. **Just like back up in verse 1, He calls on Philip and us to trust Him. *“Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.”*  He is saying here however, *“All y’all believe me!”* This word is placed in a plural imperative form. It is time for them to fish or cut bait!**
11. **We must believe that everything Jesus says and did is true.**
12. **All that Jesus has said and done pointed to this fact…and the disciples should have known this already.**
13. **How is it possible to follow Jesus so closely and still not know Him? Does this happen today? How?**
14. **When we see Him through our own lenses we don’t know Him.**
15. **When we see Him without the help of constantly being in His word meditating on what we find there we will only know Him partially.**
16. ***“In this life we only see through a glass darkly, but then we will see him face to face!”***
17. **In vss. 12-31 we will see particular assurances (more assurances) that Jesus will give to His troubled disciples. Jesus is telling them what will happen when He is gone, but the great truth is the three person of the Trinity that He is highlighting along with the assurances.**
18. **What do we see in verses 12-14 that would assure His disciples? *“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.”***
19. **When Jesus departs His work will continue on earth. Those who believe in Him WILL DO His work.**

* **Just like when He said we are to love just as He loved now He tells us that even with Him gone we are to carry on as if He is still with us.**
* **We are to work the way that He would work…seeking to live in such a way that reveals that He is the Way, the Truth and the Life.**
* **This is yet another call to “*keep and work”* like we had back in Gen. 2:15…we are to protect, preserve and enable Jesus to be known by all that we think, do and say.**
* **And they are to do this knowing that He has their back from the throne.**
* **Our striving to keep the faith is undergirded by God in Christ keeping us.**
* **Jesus begins highlighting the Trinity here when He tells them that He is going to His Father…the Father.**

1. **Our Lord is working with us and for us, though we cannot see Him. It was not so much the sword of Joshua that defeated Amalek, as the intercession of Moses on the hill on behalf of the people. Ex. 17:11- *“Whenever Moses held up his hand, Israel prevailed, and whenever he lowered his hand, Amalek prevailed.”***
2. **What does Jesus mean when He says we will do even greater works than Him? These works aren’t greater in that they are more sensational but rather greater in magnitude…in that the kingdom would grow by leaps and bounds as they did the work they were sent to do.**

* **Was He just talking to His disciples...are they the direct reference to the word “you” in 12-14?**
* **If so then it is a promise to the men in that room…since they are troubled at the possibility of His going away.**
* **He is assuring them that when they do as He has done they will see greater things done through them**
* **After Peter’s first sermon in Acts 2 more were converted than what is recorded during Jesus’ entire ministry.**
* **There are few miracles of healing even though maybe more than Jesus (Acts 3-28) but even with that the great emphasis is the great number of conversions. They prayed in Jesus’ name and He answered their prayers and the Church was established strong and stable.**
* **The actual Greek is read *“greater things”* which seems to indicate greater in their influence for the Gospel.**
* **The word *“works”* isn’t there in the Greek text, in fact, neither is “things” but that is what usually follows and in this case also the expectation that Christians would do greater even than the works of Jesus as far as the sheer numbers who come into the kingdom.**
* **Given that Jesus raised the dead, walked on water calm the storm with a word, fed thousands with what was hardly enough for 6 people…it is not about *“greater works”* than Jesus …but greater magnitude/influence/more conversions.**
* **In fact, it seems we should be weary of such claims and people who seek to do them. Matt. 7:21-23-*“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”***
* **And all of this is because He goes to His Father.**
* **Because Jesus goes to the Father they will have a greater influence.**
* **Because Jesus goes to the father they will have direct intercession. Jesus doing His work before the Father enables us to do ours.**
* **When we ask according to His character, His purpose and by His standard he will answer them as He wills…so that the father is glorified by His work and our work!**

1. **Does what Jesus says here in verse 13-14 mean that we have carte blanche to ask for whatever we want? *“Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.”***

* **He will go to the Father as an intercessor for all that we ask for in His Name that complies with His will.**
* **Some people think that this is a carte blanche to ask for whatever we want just as long as we add *“in Jesus Name”.***
* **But this doesn’t often happen…take away war, cancer, etc.**
* **So that must mean that Jesus is a liar or He isn’t as capable as we are led to believe…Really!?!?**
* **But He will intercede and grant us, in His time and in His way, what corresponds to His will and is for His glory even if we do not see it or understand how He answers.**

1. **Since this is true, how is it that so many of us, Christians, have so little?**

* **Our Lord did say after all , *"Whatever you shall ask in my name, that will I do . . . If you shall ask anything in my name, I will do it."***
* **These words are a direct encouragement to the simple, yet require a great duty of praying.**
* **Everyone who kneels daily before God, and from his heart and prays has a right to take comfort in these words.**
* **Weak and imperfect as our supplications may be, as long as they are put in Christ's hands, and offered in Christ's name, they shall not be in vain.**
* **According to this we have a Friend at Court, an Advocate with the Father; and if we honor Him by sending all our petitions through Him, He pledges His word that they shall succeed.**
* **Of course, it is taken for granted that the things we ask are for are for our good, because we know what’s best for us. BUT whatever is really good for us, we need not doubt we shall have, if we ask in Christ's name.**
* **But the answer to the question is quite simple and James answers it, *“What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. You adulterous people!”* – James 4:1-4.**
* **So we have little because we ask little. The people then are no better than we are, because they do not ask their Lord to make them stronger in the faith.**
* **Our weak desires are the reason of our weak performances.**
* **We are not focused on our Lord, but in ourselves.**
* **We are blessed when we remember the words, *“I am the LORD your God, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it.”-* Ps. 81:10.**
* **Jesus makes it clear how we are to stay connected with Him through prayer.**

1. **What do we see in verses 15-17 that would assure His disciples? *“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.”***
2. **This “If” is in the Greek optative mood and could also be translated as “Since”**
3. **He will say this line in similar ways throughout this night.**
4. **He is saying, *“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”* In that obedience is a certain consequence for our love for Christ.**

* **Because we have been justified we love Him and because we love Him we obey Him.**
* **If we do not obey him (paraphrasing from John’s 1st letter) that is proof that no matter what we say, there is no love for Christ in our Hearts.**
* **Remember Jesus requires an “agape” love from His followers… the kind of love He displayed.**

1. **What commandments does He speak of?**

* **To serve one another out of love.**
* **To love one another as He loved them and would love them…sacrificially…placing one another before themselves.**
* **He commanded them to believe/trust God and to believe/ trust in Him also.**
* **So the marks of a true Christians that He is highlighting here are service for one another because of our love for one another. All people will now we are His disciples as we love one another as He loved.**
* **These character qualities are NOT OPTIONAL for the believer anything less Jesus is saying that we don’t love Him!**
* **This love is shown in our obedience…because the source of our obedience is love towards Him.**
* **Spurgeon said, *“Obedience must have love for its mother, nurse and food. The essence of obedience lies in the hearty love which prompts the deed rather than in the deed itself.”***
* **So we are commanded to DO as He did…focusing on this they will be able to deal with their grief and live in the power of the coming Holy Spirit...doing even greater things than Him.**
* **I John 2:5-6-*“*…*whoever keeps His word, in Him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in Him: whoever says he abides in Him ought to walk in the same way in which He walked.”***

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**May 24, 2023**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **Why is the definite article “the” seen as prejudicial to many even many who claim to be Christians? What is our responsibility to these and others who may be triggered by such words?**
4. **What did Jesus mean when He says we will do even greater works/things than Him?**
5. **Does what Jesus say here in verse 13-14 mean that we have carte blanche to ask for whatever we want whenever we want? *“Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.”***
6. **Of course not, this would be against everything other teaching on this matter.**
7. **If we ask anything in His name we better be asking correctly as He would have us to ask. In His name…while a positive can be an extreme negative is we are asking selfishly as there may be consequences.**
8. **Some people think that this is a carte blanche to ask for whatever we want just as long as we add *“in Jesus Name”.***
9. **He is basically saying that He will intercede and grant us, in His time and in His way, what corresponds to His will and is for His glory even if we do not see it or understand how He answers.**
10. **In vss. 12-31, last week we began to see particular assurances (more assurances) that Jesus will give to His troubled disciples. Jesus is telling them what will happen when He is gone, but the great truth is… the three person of the Trinity that He is highlighting along with the assurances.**
11. **In verses 12-14 Jesus gave His disciples the assurance that his work would continue through them and they would see amazing things of the kingdoms growth. They may have been troubled by the fact that with Him going away that everything that had been accomplished up to that point would be stopped and discontinued…but He is essentially assuring them that they will continue the work in His absence and that he will be with them through this process.**
12. **Now we come to verse 15-17, what assurances does He give to His disciples here? *“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.”***
13. **This “If” is in the Greek optative mood and could also be translated as “Since”**
14. **He will say this line in similar ways throughout this night.**
15. **He is saying, *“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.”* In that obedience is a certain consequence for our love for Christ.**
16. **Because we have been justified we love Him and because we love Him we obey Him.**
17. **If we do not obey him (paraphrasing from John’s 1st letter) that is proof that no matter what we say, there is no love for Christ in our Hearts.**
18. **Remember Jesus requires an “agape” love from His followers… the kind of love He displayed.**
19. **What commandments does He speak of?**
20. **To serve one another out of love.**
21. **To love one another as He loved them and would love them…sacrificially…placing one another before themselves.**
22. **He commanded them to believe/trust God and to believe/ trust in Him also.**
23. **So the marks of a true Christians that He is highlighting here are service for one another because of our love for one another. All people will now we are His disciples as we love one another as He loved.**
24. **These character qualities are NOT OPTIONAL for the believer anything less Jesus is saying that we don’t love Him!**
25. **This love is shown in our obedience…because the source of our obedience is love towards Him.**
26. **Spurgeon said, *“Obedience must have love for its mother, nurse and food. The essence of obedience lies in the hearty love which prompts the deed rather than in the deed itself.”***
27. **So we are commanded to DO as He did…focusing on this they will be able to deal with their grief and live in the power of the coming Holy Spirit...doing even greater things than Him.**
28. **I John 2:5-6-*“*…*whoever keeps His word, in Him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in Him: whoever says he abides in Him ought to walk in the same way in which He walked.”***
29. **What is the benefit of the Holy Spirit that He speaks of here? *“And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. You know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.”***
30. **Look at the assurance of not leaving them alone… without anyone of the Godhead to be with them! They would have been worried about not knowing what to do…Jesus is here to tell them that the Father will send them the Spirit/Helper so that they will not have to skip a beat.**
31. **Follow the sequence here… If you love Me… you will keep My commandments… and I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper…**

* **He is not leaving them alone.**
* **AND…He is showing them how and what to pray for.**

1. **The Holy Spirit is called here a Paraclete- “Helper” –Advocate, in a legal sense…Intercessor, Comforter, Advisor with the absolute truth.**
2. **I love this from R. C. Sproul: He asked a question of his seminary students:**

* **In the NT, who is the Paraclete? They answer quickly and gladly that they had gotten at least one answer right...The Holy Spirit!**
* **He says, That’s right AND not right. It is true that the Holy Spirit is “A” Paraclete, but Jesus does not call Him THE Paraclete…Jesus calls the Spirit *“another helper/Paraclete”* because He is THE Paraclete! I John 2:1- *“My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.”***
* **The text says *“another Helper”*- *“another”* = Greek word *“allen”* which equals another of the same quality and kind… so just like Christ and the Father. One in essence as the Westminster Confession says in Chapter 2.**
* **Also, the Spirit is always referred to as He not an it! And this One is more than with us but “in” us!**

1. **What are some things we learn about the Spirit here?**
2. **The Holy Spirit is spoken of as "a Person." To apply the language before us to a mere influence or inward feeling, is an unreasonable strain of words.**
3. **The Holy Spirit will be with us forever…never to be lost or taken from us…as no one can snatch us out of His hand either.**
4. **The Holy Spirit is called *"the Spirit of truth."* It is His special office to apply truth to the hearts of Christians, to guide them into all truth, and to sanctify them by the truth. When we are lost in the swirl of the lies of the world…there is truth in the Spirit of Truth….and Christ who is the Truth.**
5. **The Holy Spirit is said to be one whom *"the world cannot receive and does not know."* His operations are in the strongest sense foolishness to the natural man. The inward experiences of conviction, repentance, faith, hope, fear, and love, which He always produces, are precisely what the world cannot understand.**
6. **The Holy Spirit is said to *"dwell in"* believers, and to be known by them. We know the experiences that He creates, and the fruit that He produces, though we may not be able to explain them, or see at first when they come. But we are what they are—new men, new creatures, light and salt in the earth, contrasted to the worldly, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.**
7. **The Holy Spirit is given to the Church, to abide with us until Christ comes the second time. He is meant to supply all the needs of believers, and to fill up all that is lacking while Christ's visible presence is removed. He is sent to abide with and help us until Christ returns.**
8. **He says that they we will know that the Spirit has indwelt us. How, particularly?**
9. **What do we see in verses 18-24 that would assure His disciples? *“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.’ Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, ‘Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?’ Jesus answered him, ‘If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Fathers who sent me.”***
10. **Even though Jesus is leaving He will still make Himself known to His disciples…and they won’t be alone…left as orphans.**
11. **First, in His resurrection they will physically see Him.**
12. **Then, through sending the Holy Spirit they/we will know that the Godhead is with us.**
13. **Lastly, the bodily return in His 2nd Coming.**

* **It is like the message which the angels brought to the disciples after the ascension… *“Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come (again) in the same way as you saw Him go into heaven.”* Acts. 1:11.**
* **It is like the last promise which winds up the Book of Revelation*…“He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming soon.”* Rev. 22:20.**
* **As personal as these saying are, this one stated the night of before His crucifixion is a personal and comforting return*—"I will come to you."***

1. **Even though He is leaving… He will live and they/we will live because we are in Him.**
2. **Puritan Thomas Boston once said, *“There is a mysterious and indissoluble union between Christ and every true Christian. The man that is once joined to Him by faith, is as closely united as a member of the body is united to the head.”***

* **Christ's life secures the continuance of spiritual life to His people.**
* **We shall not ultimately fall away, even though we will grow weary and feint and the waters will appear to over take us and the fire consume us.**
* **We shall persevere to the end.**
* **The divine nature, of which we are partakers in Christ, will not perish.**
* **The incorruptible seed within us cannot be destroyed by the devil or the world.**
* **Weak as we are in ourselves, we are closely knit to an immortal Head, and not one member of His mystical body shall ever perish.**
* **Christ's life secures the resurrection life of His people.**
* **Just as He rose again from the grave, because death could not hold Him one moment beyond the appointed time, so will all His elect rise again in the day when He calls them from the tomb.**
* **The victory that Jesus won when the stone rolled away, and came forth from the tomb, was a victory not only for Himself, but for His people. If the Head rose, much more the body.**

1. **Even though He is leaving them there will come a day where they will know beyond a shadow of doubt and fully trust.**
2. **At His resurrection when the dead Christ rose again…that kind of thing changes a person.**
3. **At the indwelling fully of the Holy Spirit who will remind then and give them understanding to know.**
4. **But, most assuredly when He returns and the shroud is completely dropped.**
5. **By leaving them the Spirit, the union we have in the Godhead will be known as well… *“I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you.”* (Jesus will say this often in the course of this night to continue to assure His disciples and us generations later.)**

* **This union is marked with the knowledge of God’s will.**
* **This union is marked by obedience to God’s will.**
* **This union is marked by love…the love of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit.**
* **This union is marked with Life even in the face of death.**
* ***“Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”***

1. **What is Jesus seeking to teach them with Judas’ question? *“Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, ‘Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?’ Jesus answered him, ‘If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Fathers who sent me.”***
2. **Just so we are clear…this Judas (not Iscariot) seems to be Thaddeus of Matt. 10:3- *“Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus”* and Acts 1:13- “Judas son of James.”… Thaddeus/Judas maybe another name as well seems to be the *who sent me.”***
3. **Wow, a good question finally! Judas /Thaddeus asks the right question, How will you be manifested to us and not to the world?**
4. **Jesus’ answer is basically this:**

* **Do as I did …walk as I walked...suffer as I suffered…serve as I served…love as I love…doing all of these and I will be manifested among you and in the world. Matt. 5:16- *“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”***
* **Keeping His/Christ’s commandments is the best test of our love for Him which proves He is manifested in us.**
* **Keeping His Word and *“we will come to him”* – Father, Son and Holy Spirit combined WILL come to us…an absolute certainty for all who are in Christ Jesus…and “*make our home (place, dwelling) with Him.”* The continuous covenantal promises to be our God and us His people and that He will always dwell with us.**
* **Those who do not keep His word are those in whom Christ is not manifest…they are not believers.**

1. **What do we see in verses 25-31 that would assure His disciples? *“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe. I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me, but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.”***
2. **You gotta love this first statement---**
3. ***“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you.”* He knows they are still not paying attention but because it is His word it will not return void…**
4. **So we see another reason for the Spirit to teach and to remind… to give understanding… *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.***
5. **This settles the theological “discussion” concerning if the Spirit comes just from the Father or is He is sent by both the Father and the Son.**

* **The Spirit is sent from the Father in Jesus name…**
* **So from both of them…all 3 working together within their perspective roles to accomplish redemption.**

1. **The Spirit is the way that the Father and the Son express themselves to us and in us.**
2. **It is the Spirit that would confirm in them that what they said and did was sanctioned by God and for us… the Spirit assures us of our faith enabling us to BELIEVE IN GOD AND BELIEVE IN HIM ALSO.**
3. **Next he says something extraordinary, *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”***
4. **A common farewell, wishing shalom…But shalom doesn’t just mean absence of trouble, this peace includes all things that makes up our highest good in Christ.**
5. **Now this is not any ordinary Peace…but His peace.**

* **Think Rom. 5:1 kind of peace- *“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”***
* **John 16:33- *“I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”***

1. **He is the Prince of Peace after all. IT is His to give to whom He chooses.**
2. **This is why that it is not like the peace the world (which is temporary at best) may offer.**
3. **What He gives He gives to all eternity, and never takes away. He is ready to give abundantly above all that we can ask or think. *"Open your mouth wide,"* He says, *"and I will fill it."* Psalm 81:10.**
4. **It is because of this peace now that He winds back around to where He was at the beginning of this talk. *“Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”***
5. **There is nothing lacking on Christ's part for our comfort, if we will only come to Him, believe, and receive.**
6. **The chief of sinners has no cause to be afraid. If we will only look to the one true Savior, there is medicine for every trouble of heart.**
7. **Half our doubts and fears arise from dim perceptions of the real nature of Christ's Gospel.**
8. **If we would only have the faith of a mustard seed we could have untroubled hearts in a messy world.**

* **Is. 26:3- *“You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.”***
* **Is.32:17-18- *“And the effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever. My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.”***

1. **Again, Jesus tells His disciples about His departure ahead of time to strengthen their faith. *“You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe. I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me, but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.”* What do you think they heard? What were they expected to hear?**
2. **Rather cryptic on one hand…and clear enough on the other.**
3. **But the Lord wanted His disciples know:**

* **That Satan, *"the prince of this world,"* was about to make his last and most violent attack on Him.**
* **He was mustering all his strength for one more tremendous onset.**
* **He had failed in the wilderness, so now he thinks he has a shot and is was coming up with the temptation of the 2nd Adam in the garden… of Gethsemane, and then on the cross of Calvary.**
* **But to make sure they take heart He declares, *"He has no power over Me." –* in other words He is saying in a rather short declaration- “*There is nothing he can lay hold on. There is no weak and defective point in Me. I have kept my Father's commandment, and finished the work He gave me to do. Satan, therefore, cannot overthrow Me. He can lay nothing to my charge. He cannot condemn Me. I shall come forth from the trial more than a conqueror.”* This is why we can and are conquerors when we persevere to the end.**
* **Jesus will go to His death on His and the Father’s terms…not Satan.**

1. ***Then He says, “Rise, let us go from here.”***
2. **They don’t actually leave until John 18:1 if we consider the next couple of chapters spoken before He leaves.**
3. **So He may be saying, *“Let us prepare to leave with the Assurances that I have just given you in the Holy Spirit, my peace and the fact that Satan has no control over the events that are getting ready to happen.”***
4. **The Greek word for *“let us go”-* *“agomen”* is an interesting word and may shed some light on this passage…since they won’t actually be leaving right away.**

* **This is a military term…in troop context advancing to meet to enemy.**
* **As if He was saying… *“Since the enemy is coming, let us go to meet Him!”* Let’s go on the offensive. Remember the armor of Ephesians is mostly offensive in nature.**

1. **What do you suppose all of these assurances would do for them later on? What do they do for us today?**

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**Sept. 27, 2023**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **What was John’s purpose in writing this book?**
4. **Other than the fact that God told him to …**
5. **John 20:30-*“Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.”***
6. **If you have re-read chapters 1-14, in what ways did we see this purpose being shown so far?**
7. **Chapter 1:1-3- *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.”***
8. **At least 3 times in Chapter 3 Jesus says, *“Truly, truly, I say unto you…”* thus speaking to His absolute authority… something that many pointed out along the way.**
9. **The many *“I am”* statements! “He is the great I am…*ego eimi*= I am I am” corresponding to the OT- *“I am who I am”***
10. **Chapter 8:31-38 is another of my favorite passages in the whole book…*“So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed Him, ‘If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.’ They answered him, ‘We are offspring of Abraham and have never been enslaved to anyone. How is it that you say, ‘You will become free’?’ Jesus answered them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.  I know that you are offspring of Abraham; yet you seek to kill me because my word finds no place in you. I speak of what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father.’”*  One of many statements separating the people into 2 groups…Believers and non-believers…those who do God’s will and those who reject God’s will and do the will of their “father” Satan.**
11. **All the miracles we witnessed in these first 14 chapters. Miracles substantiate the message and person of Christ.**
12. **As if He hasn’t been clear up to this point he says in Chapter 14, *“I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes through the Father except through me.”***
13. **Chapter 14 more than any other chapter at this point highlights the Trinity to reveal His divinity but also the harmony…oneness of the 3 persons.**
14. **Chapter 13:34-35 are priceless verses. *“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”* In these last hours what is He communicating to them that is still a command for us today?**
15. **In many church traditions the Thursday before the crucifixion is called Maundy Thursday.**
16. **The word Maundy in the Latin means “mandate or commandment” Because Jesus told them He had a new commandment for them. *“Love as I have loved you.”***
17. **According to Jesus this is what it means to be a disciple of His.**
18. **It is called a *"new"* commandment,**
19. **The Greek word used here implies “freshness” the opposite of worn out…rather than recent or different. This commandment will be preserved in a new and fresh way.**

* **We might say “new and improved”.**
* **The smartphone was a combination of 2 things that already existed, a computer and a phone, and yet the combination became something new.**
* **This commandment is similar in that the command *to love* was not new, but the example of *how to love* would be. John 15:12-13 –*“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”***

1. **Not because it had never been given before, but because it was to be more honored, to occupy a higher position, to be backed by a higher example than it ever had been before.**
2. **His death would certify the type of love…agape love that He expects of us one to another. A foot washing, willing to die for kind of love for one another.**
3. **Interesting, almost as soon as the false disciple had left the faithful eleven, comes the injunction, *"Love one another."***
4. **Immediately after the sad announcement that He would leave them soon, the commandment is given, *"Love one another."***
5. **Interesting…now only those who are clean surround Him so He is talking to His own when He says for us to *“love one another”.***
6. **This command is made to us, all of us, who are in Christ, so we cannot NOT do it the way He says*… “Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.”***
7. **The command is obviously, not new.**
8. **But the extent as shown in humbly serving one another and by His going to the cross…showing us the length that we should go to love one another who are in Christ.**
9. **Spurgeon said, *“We are to love our neighbor as ourselves, but we are to love our fellow-Christians as, Christ loved us, and that is far more than we could ever love ourselves.”***
10. **Or we will not have the unity that that the Bible calls for…and our witness will be made useless when people don’t see us loving as He loved us.**
11. **This statement also, informs us as to our identity...we are His and we are His disciples… as we love one another as He has loved us.**
12. **So our identity is wrapped up in our purpose…to love the Lord with all that we are and our neighbor as ourselves.**
13. **The secular world sees our identity as something that we achieve instead of receive. They take the brokenness of a fallen world and fashion it into identities in everything but Jesus Christ.**
14. **Above all, it was to be the test of Christianity before the world. *"By this shall all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."* This type of love should identify us!**
15. **This is the legacy Jesus left behind: namely the example of His love!**
16. **This is the kind of love the regards others more important than ourselves…the kind of love that does not insist on its own way…the kind of love that seeks unity in Christ over all things, no matter how put out we may be.**
17. **This is the heart of the Gospel and what it means to be a Christian.**
18. **What message does it send to others when we, as believers, fail to love as He loved?**
19. **We must remember:**
20. **Let us take heed that this well-known Christian grace is not merely a notion in our heads, but a practice in our lives.**
21. **Of all the commands of Jesus there is none which is so much talked about and so little obeyed.**
22. **Yet, if we mean anything when we profess to have love toward all men, it ought to be seen in our actions and our words, our attitudes, and our behavior at home and everywhere, our conduct in every relation of life…this is how others will judge us…right or wrong. But it is how Jesus wanted other to judge us…*"By this shall all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."* So that others will come and ask about the hope and love that comes from us to them.**
23. **Specially, it ought to show itself forth in all our dealing with other Christians. We should regard them as brothers and sisters, and delight to do anything to promote their happiness.**
24. **We should absolutely hate the idea of envy, malice, and jealousy towards a member of Christ, and regard it as a downright sin.**
25. **This is what our Lord meant when He said, *“just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.”***
26. **J. C. Ryle said, *“Let us note that our Lord does not name gifts or miracles or intellectual attainments as the evidence of discipleship but LOVE…the simple grace of love, a grace within each of the poorest, lowliest believer is the evidence of our discipleship.”***
27. **How might this passage (like oh so many others) help us in actually dealing with the identity crisis that leads to loneliness in our culture today?**
28. **Just to remember as we leave this review: These words have always been binding on the people of God, but they have unique relevance for us today. They call on the church to be a place not only where truth is made known but also where a unique form of love is found.**
29. **In John 13, Jesus ties the plausibility of the Christian faith to the extent to which the world observes his love in the church.**

* **As we have said, this type of love is unique to Christian communities, and this verse supports that there should be something uniquely compelling about the kind of love Jesus’s disciples embody.**
* **This love for one another, as Christ loved us… makes the reality of the gospel “unignorable” to the outside world.**

1. **What role does “forgiveness” play in our being able to love as Jesus loved us? If the answer is that obvious then why is it so hard to forgive our brother or sister and love as Christ has commanded?**
2. **Other than the bold statement of Jesus specifically declaring His divinity in Chapter 14- *“I am the Way, the Truth and the Life, No one comes to the father except through me”*, who else takes up a major spot in this chapter? The Holy Spirit! What things do we find out about Him here?**
3. **The Holy Spirit is spoken of as "a Person." To apply the language before us to a mere influence or inward feeling, is an unreasonable strain of words.**
4. **Fun fact:**

* **In the Greek language every noun is grammatically designated to be masculine, feminine or neuter.**
* **The word for “spirit” is most often neuter. Normally even when a pronoun referring to “spirit” is used …it too is neuter.**
* **Except here and the rest of John the pronoun is masculine, breaking grammatical form as a way of gently affirming that the Holy Spirit is a person and HE is personal.**

1. **Also, the Spirit is always referred to as He not an it! And this One is more than with us but “in” us!**
2. **The Holy Spirit will be with us forever…never to be lost or taken from us…as no one can snatch us out of His hand either.**
3. **The Holy Spirit is called *"the Spirit of truth."***
4. **It is His special office to apply truth to the hearts of Christians, to guide them into all truth, and to sanctify them by the truth.**
5. **He is the One who mediates the very presence of the Godhead to the believers.**
6. **When we are lost in the swirl of the lies of the world…there is truth in the Spirit of Truth….and Christ who is the Truth.**
7. **The Holy Spirit is said to be one whom *"the world cannot receive and does not know."***
8. **His operations are in the strongest sense foolishness to the natural man.**
9. **The inward experiences of conviction, repentance, faith, hope, fear, and love, which He always produces, are precisely what the world cannot understand.**
10. **The Holy Spirit is said to *"dwell in"* believers, and to be known by them.**
11. **We know the experiences that He creates, and the fruit that He produces, though we may not be able to explain them, or see them at first when they come.**
12. **But we are what they are—new people, new beings, light and salt in the earth, contrasted to the worldly, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.**
13. **The Holy Spirit is given to the Church, to abide with us until Christ comes the second time.**
14. **He is meant to supply all the needs of believers, and to fill up all that is lacking while Christ's visible presence is not here.**
15. **He is sent to abide with and help us until Christ returns.**
16. **It is the Spirit that would confirm in them that what they said and did was sanctioned by God and for us… the Spirit assures us of our faith enabling us to BELIEVE IN GOD AND BELIEVE IN HIM ALSO.**
17. **He is our Counselor, Advocate, Comforter, Helper.**

* **When Comforter was coined for the Latin translation it came from a Latin word that meant to strengthen or to strengthen along with.**
* **The Spirit is sent from the Father in Jesus name…**
* **So from both of them…all 3 working together within their perspective roles to accomplish redemption.**

1. **But, He is “another Comforter/Helper/Paraclete”**

* **We should never think counselor in the same sense as a camp counselor or psychological counselor.**
* **The Greek word here for *“another”* has overtones of *“another of the same kind”-* divine/God.**
* **Jesus is clearly saying that He is sending someone to stand in His place in the same way as if He personally was here.**
* **This word Paraclete/Advocate is only actually used one other time in the N.T., I John 2:1-2-*“My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins…”* as the One who speaks to the Father in our defense!**
* **Months ago I read the outline of a chapel sermon delivered by Charles Hodge to the students of Princeton Theological Seminary in 1861.**
* **In the sermon Hodge explores the idea of an “advocate” before a court of justice for a person accused of a crime. Imagine the charges are against you, but you have a defense attorney. What is that relationship like? Hodge writes, *“that the relationship of an advocate to a client should be one of great intimacy and power. If your defense attorney is brilliant in court, your case is brilliant. If she is eloquent in court, your case is eloquent. Whatever your attorney does is imputed to you. ‘The former [the advocate] personates the latter [the client], puts himself in the client’s place. It is while it lasts, the most intimate relation. The client . . . is not heard . . . not regarded. He is lost in his advocate. This is the relation in which Christ as our advocate stands to us. He appears before God for us. We are lost in him. He, not we, is seen, heard and regarded . . . Christ thus assumes our position.”***

1. **What is Jesus seeking to communicate in vs. 21? *“Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.”* And vs. 23- *“If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”***
2. **He is giving us more information concerning being a true disciple. Since He is and has been talking about how we are to be defined by the love we have for one another then the commandments He has in mind are the ones He has referred to before: *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the prophets.”-* Matt. 22:37-40**
3. **He is also talking about our union…our covenant relationship that He will talk more about in the next chapter.**
4. **This union is marked with the knowledge of God’s will.**
5. **This union is marked by obedience to God’s will.**
6. **This union is marked by love…the love of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit…and the love we are to have one for another…the same love in which He loved us.**
7. **This union is marked with Life even in the face of death.**
8. **In other words, one must LOVE the Lord in order to keep His Word…love Him and “abide in Him” as we will see in the next chapter is the truest form of intimacy…union.**
9. **The Godhead gives the precious gift of His Word…but only to His own…those who don’t love Him don’t know what to do with it.**
10. **How should verses like these change the way we live in the church and in the world?**
11. **Just so we are clear going forward, how comforting is vs 25 and 26 to us today? *“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”* Compare 15:11- *“These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”***
12. **They more or less wouldn’t have been comforted by these words at this point since they were still dealing with His announcement of His going.**
13. **But for me…Jesus’s love is so true that He lets us know what is going to happen so we looking back know none of it was by chance…it wasn’t a swoon game…it was real like everything else that He had said and done.**
14. **The promise of the Helper…something they needed but probably didn’t use at first…but for me the promise of a Helper when days are dark can be extremely comforting when I pay close attention.**
15. **My problem is that I lose focus…I do not believe the Words of Christ and begin to doubt. Not a doubt that leads me to Christ but one that causes me to question my faith.**
16. **But the helper always brings me back “to myself”…a son of God…so that I once again can see the Way, the Truth and the Life.**
17. **What did Jesus mean when He said in John 14: 27, *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”***
18. **A common farewell, wishing shalom…But shalom doesn’t just mean absence of trouble; this peace includes all things that make up our highest good in Christ.**
19. **Now this is not any ordinary Peace…but His peace.**
20. **Think Luke 1:79 kind of peace, *“…to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”* John (the Baptist) would be the one who would introduce the people to the One… Prince of Peace… along with the way of peace…the only way…through Jesus Christ our Lord.**
21. **Also think John 16 kind of peace- John 16:33- *“I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”***
22. **He is the Prince of Peace after all. IT is His to give to whom He chooses.**
23. **Repeatedly, the Bible, not the least of all Isaiah’s prophecy, has anticipated *“peace,”* the total well-being that flows from a right relationship with the living, Sovereign Lord.**
24. **Early on he tells us that the Messiah would be *“the Prince of Peace”* (Isa. 9:6), introducing a reign of everlasting peace (Isa. 9:7).**
25. **Ultimately it is the Lord who establishes peace (Isa. 26:12).**
26. **But while this is good news (Isa. 52:7), such peace is reserved for those who trust him (Isa. 26:3). “*There is no peace … for the wicked”* (Isa. 48:22).**
27. **Those who trust God become witnesses who fully and gladly recognize that their reconciliation with God has been accomplished by the Servant: *“the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed*” (Isa. 53:5).**
28. **The result that is anticipated, in Isaiah 54–55, is:**

* **A great peace for Zion’s children (Isa. 54:13),**
* **A *“covenant of peace”* that will never be removed (Isa. 54:10),**
* **A great procession of God’s people who *“will go out in joy and be led forth in peace”* (Isa. 55:12).**

1. **This anticipates the ultimate result found in the Cross work of Christ, *“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”***
2. **This is why that it is not like the peace the world …which is temporary at best.**
3. **What He gives He gives to all eternity, and never takes away. He is ready to give abundantly above all that we can ask or think. *"Open your mouth wide,"* He says, *"and I will fill it."* Psalm 81:10.**
4. **It is because of this peace now that He winds back around to where He was at the beginning of this talk. *“Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”***
5. **There is nothing lacking on Christ's part for our comfort, if we will only come to Him, believe, and receive.**
6. **The chief of sinners has no cause to be afraid. If we will only look to the one true Savior, there is medicine for every trouble of heart.**
7. **Half our doubts and fears arise from dim perceptions of the real nature of Christ's Gospel.**
8. **If we would only have the faith of a mustard seed we could have untroubled hearts in a messy world.**

* **Is. 26:3- *“You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.”***
* **Is.32:17-18- *“And the effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever. My people will abide in a peaceful habitation, in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.”***

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**Oct. 4, 2023**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **What would you say are the main talking points of chapter 14?**
4. **How important to our daily life is the peace that Jesus left with us His children? Why?**
5. **John 15:1-11- *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit He takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”***
6. **What was the main event that occurred just before Jesus says this to His disciples? (Hint: John does not talk about it.) And how would that set the stage for this conversation?**
7. **He had just celebrated the Passover/Lord’s Supper with them.**
8. **So what will this new relationship look like? The Vine and the branches.**
9. **He had also just told them of the new relationship they would have with Him through the indwelling of the Spirit, as well.**
10. **Technically, this passage is written as a parable. What do we know of parables?**
11. **This is a story for only true believers to understand. Only those with ears to hear. Matt. 13: 10-13- *“Then the disciples came and said to him, ‘Why do you speak to them in parables?’ And He answered them, ‘To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.” (*Not capable of understanding.)**
12. **If they are not capable of understanding then they are unable to get any blessing from them.**
13. **This particular parable seems to come to us for 2 reasons:**
14. **That the Father in Heaven is the gardener…**
15. **And it is the fruitful branches, and not the unfruitful ones, that the gardener prunes…**

* **The others *“Every branch in me that does not bear fruit He takes away…He takes away”* …He casts aside!**
* **There are those in the world and in the Church that He created and some have even professed faith.**
* **He distinguishes between the groups with the words… *“those who abide in me”***
* **Pruning is seen as His love for us. *“…every branch that does bear fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.”***

1. **Afflictions are never in themselves joyous or pleasant to us. We have a hard time ever welcoming them into our lives. Many afflictions cut deeply in our lives. According to this parable it can’t be otherwise.**
2. **Throughout we have taken note of the *“I am”* statements of Jesus… (especially Sean). As we begin to look at this passage what do we see here concerning the *“I am”* statement of Jesus that we have not seen before?**
3. ***“I am the Bread of Life”* – John 6:35. 48**
4. ***“I am the Light of the world”-* John 8:12, 9:5**
5. ***“I am the Door”-* 10:7,9**
6. ***“I am the Good Shepherd”*- John 10:11,14**
7. ***“I am the resurrection and the Life”-* John 11:25**
8. ***“I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life”-* John 14:6**
9. **Now we come to 15:1- *“I am the true vine and my Father is the vinedresser.”***

* **These are the main 7 statements highlighted by commentators among the many more that Jesus uses to distinguish Himself.**
* **This one is different for Jesus distinguishes here between His role and the role of the Father.**
* **The Gospels show us that much of the teaching concerning OT Israel was fulfilled in Christ.**
* **The vine image is no exception as He now states *“I am the true vine…” …* the True Israel of God and it is He who fulfills all that was and is required of the Israel of God…God’s True Church…made up of Jews and Gentiles from every nation tongue and tribe who are IN CHRIST.**
* **In the OT, believers were called a vine… Psalm 80:8-11; Isaiah 5; Jer. 2:21…and the culture was built around agriculture…with one of the key crops being grapes.**
* **The people were called the vine by God, because He planted it and tended to it and He expected it to bear fruit in keeping with righteousness to all the nations.**
* **God has always been the vinedresser but the people were His direct representatives as long as they followed His ways.**
* **Jesus is using the vine imagery to teach them about the new reality the Spirit creates: *“I am the vine; you are the branches.”* You are nourished by your Spirit-effected union with Me. I am in you, and I give you life. You are in Me, and you draw on My resources to bear fruit for My Father’s glory.**
* **In this relationship, the heavenly Father is like a vinedresser who cares for the vine.**

1. **So, we are to see the events and circumstances of our life as all part of His viticulture—including His use of His pruning knife—for He wants to see us become more fruitful!**
2. **God the Father with His sharp knife removes the extra from the branches…It is our Father’s pruning…No hand but His ever holds the knife.**
3. **So we can be sure that there is no needless or careless cutting…nor any type of mistake from His work…to helps us be more fruitful.**
4. **Here is a strong principle: An abiding confidence that all trials, sorrows and losses in this life are part OF OUR Father’s pruning should stop any question, silence every fear and give peace and rest to our hearts in pain.**
5. **He is our Father…in most cases that should be enough for us.**
6. **Just so we are absolutely clear: *“…every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.”***
7. **His *“pruning”* is not a mark of God’s anger or disapproval rather they are a mark of His approval/favor for His own.**
8. **His *“pruning”…*His affliction, His keeping us in check with our sins, His desire that we stay healthy and be even more fruitful…is because we are already fruit-bearing branches or He wouldn’t bother to prune us….with the goal of *“…bear(ing) more fruit.”***

* **So the pruning is to make us MORE fruitful.**
* **This is accomplished by cutting away the earthly things and the human joys which then send more of a GOD HONORING LIFE INTO SPIRITUAL THINGS THAT BRING Him glory and edify His people.**

1. **His NOT *“pruning”* IS a sign of His disfavor. In time and space, God may leave these fruitless branches alone for a while but the bottom line is this there is no place in the kingdom for uselessness…and something that doesn’t produce fruit is dying or dead and needs to be cast aside!**
2. **How does this text, help us to correctly define our identity?**
3. **Those who are in Christ have been declared clean…Not because of anything they did…but by Christ’s declaration alone which will be followed by His work on the cross for them, that is a byproduct of His word for us and all the elect who came before and after us.**

* **Vs.3- *“Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.”* And He has yet to ascend the Cross, die and resurrect ensuring the salvation that He states that they have and are identified by.**
* **Remember this is the Word…Christ… that is so powerful:Rom. 1:16-17- *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel* (the Word of God), *for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.* *For in it* (the gospel) *the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, ‘The righteous shall live by faith.’”***

1. **This is a legal declaration like the priest would do by accepting their offering in the OT.**
2. **A legal status…cleansed…a believer …in Christ!**
3. **This guarantees that the relationship will not change…so our identity never changes…even if we don’t feel it. John 10:28-30- *“I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”***
4. **Then He follows this with a command… *“Abide in me…”***

* **Because we are cleansed by His declaration we can abide in Him and be fruitful.**
* **This is not an invitation to believe. We can’t abide in Him until we have been declared justified…cleansed!**

1. **Abiding does not save us, but it is one of the signs of our salvation.**
2. **The secular world sees our identity as something that we achieve instead of receive. They take the brokenness of a fallen world and fashion it into identities in everything but Jesus Christ.**
3. **Those who are in Christ are defined by their fruit. And the fruit of our union with Jesus is …Obedience and Love! Remember:**
4. **The obedience Jesus commands is the fruit of His redeeming work and the display of His personal glory.**
5. **John 13:34-35-*“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”***
6. **John 14:15- *“If you love me, you will keep my commandments.”***
7. **John 14:23- *“If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with Him.”***
8. **Our fruitfulness is based on our Love of Him…being in Him… we are fruitful.**
9. **The truth of this affects our understanding of our identity. *“I am the vine, you are the branches.”* Speaks clear of how close our relationship is with Him.**
10. **The sap and juice that flow from the stem are the origin and maintaining power of all its leaves, buds, blossoms, and fruit. Cut off from the stem, it must soon wither and die.**
11. **The union between Christ and believers is just as close, and just as real. In themselves believers have no life, or strength, or spiritual power and identity.**
12. **Our identity cannot be in what WE want to be.**
13. **Our identity cannot be in what others tell us what ought to be (unless what they are telling us is underscored in God’s Word.)**
14. **Our identity cannot/never be found in what we do vocationally…which is how we …males and females… define and judge ourselves.**

* **All of us in one way or another seek to chase a lie…called the American Dream.**
* **And by the Church and the culture chasing this dream…it has set the stage for people to chase other “dreams” because the American Dream is often unattainable as our most things that are put up on a pedestal by men.**

1. **Our identity is found in abiding in Christ.**
2. **What is the New Testaments most common way of describing Christians? How does the NT identify us?**
3. **Christian? Rarely… Acts 11:26, Acts 26:28; I Peter 4:16…it really doesn’t describe us but seems to be a derogatory name like Puritan is or fundamentalist.**
4. **We see the terms *“saints”, “disciples” and “believers*” a lot.**
5. **But the most used word or phrase to describe us in the NT is the phrase *“in Christ”*…200 plus or minus times in the NT.**
6. **This is who we are …in Christ. Our union with Christ is the heartbeat of the Christian life…who knew that identity would come to play such a huge role in our culture and Church? Obviously God did!**
7. **According to this passage what does are we being told that it means to abide in Jesus?**
8. **By the power of Christ’s atoning death on the cross, we abide with the God of the universe in Christ, and through that relationship, we bear fruit which is part of what He desires of us so we can glorify the Father.**
9. **Abiding in Christ is not a passive thing…it is extremely active...a verb.**
10. **This s not a feeling or a belief it is something we do.**
11. **Basic Greek= “remain” or “stay” or “live”, or “continue”, or “dwell”, which entails focusing on the One we are to abide in and doing as He did and would do based on His Word.**

* **Other synonyms: hold fast, cleave, stand firm…not being moved….al action words.**
* **Our lives will reveal our abiding as our most treasured possession that defines us.**
* **If you want to abide in Christ…dwell in Christ we must let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly. Col. 3:16- *“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”***
* **Then what’s the answer to this simple question? What needs to remain in us if we’re to remain in Jesus?**
* **His word needs to be kept in our hearts.**
* **Abide…remain…carries a sense of being at home and settled. Jesus is saying His word needs to find a long-term home in us.**

1. **Abiding equals also a commitment to stay…to never leave…like taking a vow...which is supposed to something that is unbreakable by command…Num. 30:1-2-*“This is what the Lord has commanded. If a man vows a vow to the Lord, or swears an oath to bind himself by a pledge, he shall not break his word. He shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.”***
2. **Jesus commands us to abide in Him.**
3. **Jesus commands that we bear fruit.**
4. **Jesus commands it and it will happen…we who are His will bear fruit.**
5. **Also, He says we will NOT bear fruit for Him apart from Him.**
6. **All PRETTY ACTIVE BUSINESS!!!**
7. **Abiding in Him is ultimately important for our life and sustenance, for without Him we can do nothing…glorifying to God or satisfying to us or those around us. Vs. 5- *“Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”***
8. **What does this last phrase mean to us and how we are to look at life?**
9. **Our independent spirit sometimes leads us to try to solve life’s challenges and our sin our own way.**
10. **Yet here, Jesus teaches we can do nothing apart from Him that truly satisfies our hearts or solves our problems and at the same time brings God glory.**
11. **We need His grace to mop up our messes and fix our problems.**

* **Amazingly, He delights to do so to bring us to spiritual maturity.**
* **He provides His grace to turn us from our own resources, receive His forgiveness, and live the future of His heart’s design.**

1. **But we naturally turn to our own resources and devices, to address our problems and sins. The truth is we constantly need His Spirit to help us to turn to Him and to enable us to abide in Jesus by realizing we can do nothing that truly satisfies or repairs our soul apart from Him.**
2. **This Scripture, when understood, enables us to know the embrace of a gracious God who is willing to pardon our sins and to bless our eternity with Him.**
3. **Sinclair Ferguson gives the church 4 truths (from his book, Lessons from the Upper Room) about abiding in Christ:**
4. **Union with our Lord depends upon His grace. Of course, we are actively and personally united with Him by faith …John 14:12- *“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.”***

* **Showing grace, forgiving one another, serving one another sacrificially are just some of what He means.**
* **We need to remind ourselves frequently, therefore, that we have been given a new identity in Him…which should also transform the way we treat others.**
* **Faith itself is rooted in the activity of God.**

1. **Union with Christ means being obedient to Him. Abiding involves being nourished by The Word and sacrament and then responding accordingly to the teaching of Jesus… John 15:7a- *“If you abide in me, and my words and my words abide in you…”***
2. **But also this union comes with a specific promise: *“…ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.”* Vs. 7b-8**

* **This is a distinct promise of power and success in prayer. And what does it depend on? We must *"abide in Christ,"* and Christ's *"words must abide in us."***
* **A promise in which God delights in making happen …the Father is glorified in doing this for us!**
* **But we don’t see this type of power in our prayers very often. Why is there so little power of prayer like this in our own time?**
* **Simply because there is so little close communion with Christ, and so little strict conformity to His will.**
* **We really do not *"abide in Christ,"* as He prescribes, and therefore our prayers are too often in vain.**
* **Christ's words do not abide in us either, as our standard of practice, and therefore our prayers seem not to be heard.**
* **We ask and receive not, because we ask wrongly, as James reminds us.**
* **We need to meditate on this: let this lesson sink down into our hearts.**

1. **He that would have answers to his prayers must carefully remember Christ's directions.**
2. **We must keep up intimate relationship with the great Advocate in heaven, if our petitions are to prosper and the Father will be glorified to grant our requests that conform to His standards.**
3. **Christ underlines a further principle in John 15:9-10*“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.”***

* **We saw these same types of statements back in chapter 14 when we talked about our union ...our relationship in Christ is based in love…for God and for one another as He loved us.**
* **This states clearly that the believer rests his or her life on the love of Christ alone.**
* **Jesus makes it clear over and over again, true love for Him is seen in our keeping His commandments for His glory and the good of His people.**
* **Why, then, should we obey Jesus’s commands?**
* **Just to be clear this is not telling us how to BECOME a follower of Jesus but rather this is the outworking of the love Christ has granted to us who are followers of Christ. Vs. 3 told us that- *“Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.”***
* **We are already in His love and we are to love as Christ loves… no other options…this is the nature of our relationship.**

1. **We are called, as part of the abiding process, to submit to the pruning knife of God in the providences by which He cuts away all disloyalty and sometimes all that is important (to us), in order that we might remain in Christ all the more wholeheartedly.**

* **Vinedressers prune their vines.**
* **Part of the genius of our Lord’s illustration is its multifaceted nature.**
* **Vines grow through the influence of the soil, the sun, and the rain. But they also grow healthy through the use of the pruning knife: *“Every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit”* (John 15: 2b).**
* **I have done this and what is left behind are small twigs, the effects of the workers’ knives—a myriad of evidences that it had been pruning season. But the knives had been used not to destroy but to enable the branches to bear fruit.**
* **If we knew nothing about horticulture or gardening, the sight of someone cutting pieces off vines or bushes would seem like mindless destruction. But it is necessary for healthy growth—to produce a stronger plant and better fruit.**
* **The branches of a vine cannot feel pain. Unlike them, we can. But like them, we do not understand all the Vinedresser is doing. So, when we are pruned, we ask questions: “*Why is God doing this? Does He not care about me?”* Our natural response to pruning is to say: *“Please stop! Don’t You see this is hurting me?***
* **God will often increase the holiness of true Christians by His providential dealings with them.**
* **Just as the gardener prunes and cuts back the branches of a fruitful vine, in order to make them more fruitful, God so sanctifies believers by the circumstances of life in which He places them.**
* **Trial is the instrument by which our Father in heaven makes Christians more holy.**
* **This is the process by which He *"prunes"* us, and makes us more fruitful. The lives of the saints in every age, are the best and truest comment on the text.**
* **Never, hardly, do we find a saint, either in the Old Testament or the New, who was not purified by suffering, and, like His Master, a *"man of sorrows."***
* **Fruit is the thing that our Master desires to see in us, and he will have it from us. He will not spare the pruning knife if He sees we need it. In the last day we shall see that all was well done.**

1. **The disciple that *"abides in Christ,"* like a branch abiding in the vine, will always bear fruit.**

* **What does the "fruit" look like here?**
* **Repentance toward God,**
* **Faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ,**
* **Holiness of life and conduct,**
* **Desire to share with others the grace we have seen, Etc.**
* **These are what the New Testament calls "fruit."**
* **These are the distinguishing marks of the man who is a living branch of the true Vine.**
* **Where these things are lacking, it is vain to talk of possessing dormant grace and spiritual life. Where there is no fruit there is no life. He that lacks these things is *"dead while he lives."***

1. **It has been said, *“Everything is removed from the branch which tends to divert the vital power from production of fruit.”***
2. **In other words…or just these words, by depending upon Christ’s grace, we are able to obey His commands, rest in His love whether we fail or succeed, and submit to His will as he makes us more like Him.**
3. **Puritan Willian Spurstowe said this in association with our text: *“The principle of every believer’s life is Christ, and the means of its preservation are the promises, whose virtue and efficacy is such, as happily suits itself with the several age and conditions of believers.”***
4. **When we fail to abide in Jesus, what happens in our daily lives? List as much as you can.**
5. **Just to be clear: Who are they that are cast away? *“Every branch in me that does not bear fruit He takes away…” Vs. 2a* and *“If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.”- vs. 6***
6. **Non-believers for sure…but a designated class of non-believers. Those who are with us for a while, who we see throughout the NT.**
7. **J.C. Ryle, *“There are ‘branches in the vine’ which appear to be joined to the parent stem, and yet bear no fruit. There are men and women who appear to be members of Christ, and yet will prove finally to have had no vital union with Him.”***
8. **Matt. 7:21-23- *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’*”**
9. **Mat. 13: 5- *“Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil, 6 but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away.”* With the explanation in Matt. 13: 20-21- *“As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy, yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.”***
10. **I John 2:19- *“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out, that it might become plain that they all are not of us.”***
11. **John continues this withered-branch scenario when he speaks in I John about those who DIDN’T *“continue”…* didn’t abide… with us in Christ.**
12. **True believers are those who are fruitful…productive…others are not.**
13. **What does it look like when we attempt to do the Lord’s work without abiding in Him?**
14. **We can run around like a chicken with our heads cut off all we want.**
15. **All too often we do just that…**
16. **Not saying “No” to things we aren’t called to…or**
17. **Doing something because it has always been done, even if the reason for doing it is unknown…**
18. **Or because we want people to see just how much a church person we are…with the expressed purpose in our mind to motivate “them” to do more in the Church.**
19. **Or because we believe we sink or swim in our own power.**
20. **But the Scriptures remind us again and again that true fruitfulness is found out by abiding in Christ alone. True fruitfulness is found in resting in Him and then doing what God prepared beforehand for us to do…and then walk accordingly for God’s glory.**
21. **We want to focus so badly on the focus of come and do, but the true message of the gospel bids us to come… and die…to self!**
22. **Before we can’t do for God we must die the death required of us.**

* **II Cor. 5:17- *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.”***
* **Gal. 2:20- *“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”***

1. **We can’t run or begin to do anything for God without first being granted faith and given a new identity in Christ.**
2. **There is DOING in our new identity, but it is anchored in the fact that we are in Christ and are to do as He did…and we are BECOMING more like Christ as we continue to abide in Him.**
3. **For our work for Christ is directly affected by the faith that comes from Christ to us. In other words without faith we cannot and will not be fruitful for the Father.**
4. **So the doing is important, but to focus on doing without abiding centers our efforts on sheer force of our will rather than becoming more and more like Christ by submitting to His will.**
5. **All our activity is fruitless if we are not abiding in the Vine…Christ Jesus.**
6. **So we must ask ourselves; Are we abiding in Christ, or are we abiding in the security of the work of OUR hands? OR… Ae we abiding in Christ, or are we walking in shame at the lack of work coming from our hands?**
7. **If we are fruitful, it is only because He has given us the increase and we are left to praise Him for it.**
8. **If we are floundering in our faith, we can rest in the fact that our true worth comes from His work on our behalf, and we praise Him for that.**
9. **How does time with Jesus nourish our soul in a similar way the food, water or wine nourish the body?**
10. **According to verse 11, why does Jesus want us to abide in Him?**
11. **Jesus mediates the Father’s love to us (vs. 9) and the result of our obedience to Him is great joy. Jude 21- *“Keep yourselves in the love of God.”***
12. **So that we would have His joy…the same joy that drove Him to the cross, Heb. 12:2- *“…who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame…”***
13. **With His joy… our joy then becomes complete…fuller!**
14. **Compare 14:25-26- *“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”***
15. **What fullness of joy will this enable because of the Godheads steadfast love for us…His children.**
16. **With that in mind, how does that help you as you think about abiding in Him?**
17. **Often we tell ourselves that we just don’t have time today to read our Bibles or pray. What practical ways can we use what Jesus says here to fight against this tendency?**
18. **What has helped you to carve out time for abiding in the midst of a busy life of doing?**

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**Oct. 11, 2023**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **How should these words change the way we do business as Christians in a fallen world? John 15:1-2-“*I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. 2 Every branch in me that does not bear fruit He takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit.”***
4. **Reminds us of who actually is in charge since we forget…or deny!**
5. **That as God, *“I am who I am”*, He can do whatever is within His nature to do and that is to keep His covenant for His own glory and the good of His children who He has called and appointed to go.**
6. **That He loves us so much that He wants what best for us and that is to bear fruit for Him and His kingdom.**
7. **Just Like He taught us to pray, *“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”***
8. **In the first 11 verse of chapter 15 Jesus uses the word *“abide”* at least 10 times. What is the force of the word that Jesus is emphasizing with his disciples and us?**
9. **Abiding equals also a commitment to stay…to never leave…like taking a vow...which is supposed to something that is unbreakable by command…Num. 30:1-2-*“This is what the Lord has commanded. If a man vows a vow to the Lord, or swears an oath to bind himself by a pledge, he shall not break his word. He shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.”* No options…no redefinitions allowed!**
10. **He says we will NOT bear fruit for Him apart from Him. John 15:4-6- “*Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”* And we must bear fruit to be His.**
11. **Our independent spirit sometimes leads us to try to solve life’s challenges and our sin our own way.**
12. **Yet here, Jesus teaches we can do nothing apart from Him that truly satisfies our hearts or solves our problems and at the same time brings God glory.**
13. **We need His grace to mop up our messes and fix our problems.**

* **Amazingly, He delights to do so to bring us to spiritual maturity.**
* **He provides His grace to turn us from our own resources, receive His forgiveness, and live the future of His heart’s design.**

1. **But we naturally turn to our own resources and devices, to address our problems and sins. The truth is we constantly need His Spirit to help us to turn to Him and to enable us to abide in Jesus by realizing we can do nothing that truly satisfies or repairs our soul apart from Him.**
2. **This Scripture, when understood, enables us to know the embrace of a gracious God who is willing to pardon our sins and to bless our eternity with Him.**
3. **He commands us… *“Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.”* This means we have no other choice when we are in Him and at the same time we do not want to do anything else.**
4. **I wish this was my default to always believe and act accordingly…I find myself often repenting after the fact because I would rather seek a solution on my own…rather than trust and submit to God in every circumstance and situation.**
5. **The great thing is I cannot thwart His plans or decrees…so when I am disobedient God’s will… will be accomplished through me or someone else…pray that it be us!**
6. **He begins by saying *“abide in me”* and then He says *“abide in my love”.* What is He communicating to us by “changing” the phrase a bit?**
7. **When Jesus says, *“These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”,* what is He communicating to us 2000 years later?**
8. **?**
9. **R.C. Sproul put is so well… *“Jesus was “a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief” Isaiah 53:3). Yet beyond the pain, the sorrow, the affliction, and the humiliation stood One whose life was marked by joy. This, too, was His legacy to His disciples and to us. We may weep, we may endure pain, we may be crushed by the exigencies (urgencies) of life and the affliction that we experience in this world, but in the depths of our hearts and souls there should be a spirit of joy. Nothing more clearly marks the Christian than the joy he or she manifests apart from circumstances. It was Jesus’ purpose that His joy would BE (remain) in His disciples and that their joy be FULL Jesus experienced the fullness of joy when He sat down at the right hand of His Father and had His glory restored; the glory He had enjoyed with the Father from eternity. This is the joy He shares with us.”***
10. **John 15:12-17**
11. **Vs.12*- “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”* This is the short version of John 13: 34-35- *“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”* See verse 17-“*These things I command you, so that you will love one another.***
12. **Again, how are we to love one another as God’s people? As He loved us!**
13. **This also helps us to understand what He describes it as a “new command.”**
14. **God has always commanded His people to love one another, so it is not new in the sense of never having been told or heard before.**
15. **As I have said, it comes with a newness because of this unique love of Jesus for us which fuels it.**
16. **He supplies us with the highest standard of love*—"Love one another as I have loved you."* Nothing lower than this is optional. It is something we must always be working toward for the glory of God and the good of one another.**
17. **Having been loved by Jesus in this extraordinary and unprecedented way, we are to love one another in the same way. The love we are to show is love we have already received.**
18. **He commands this of us…it is not optional. We don’t do well without options…we don’t like to hear it.**
19. **We recognize that there is absolutely no way for us to love as Jesus loved us who were the most unloving of His creation…and yet He did just that…loved the unloveable…us.**
20. **We are commanded to model this type of love for one another and for our neighbor…and we can’t…or can we?**
21. **Thankfully He talks so much about the Spirit so we know that He provides for us THE WAY to carry our this command.**
22. **It is a positive duty laid on our consciences to practice this grace.**
23. **Where there is no Christlike love, there is no grace, no work of the Spirit, and no reality in our faith.**
24. **How does verse 13 tell us that the love of Jesus different than any other kind? *“Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”***
25. **True love is sacrificial…and none has ever been as sacrificial as Jesus’ love for His own.**
26. **Many in this world have been willing to face death and actually die for others…but Jesus has done something even greater.**
27. **He was willing to bear the physical and spiritual death we deserve…all those who have believed…are believing now…and will believe.**
28. **Paul speaks of this amazing love towards us while we were still at war with Him, Rom. 5:6-8- *“For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”***
29. **With all that we have considered up to this point how would you define the type of friend Jesus calls us to be in verse 13-15 and how should that effect who we hang out with mostly? *“Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.”***
30. **We all need proper friends in life. Jesus is the truest of all friends.**
31. **Consider Prov. 17:17- *“A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”***
32. **Or Proverbs 27:*6 and 9- “Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy… “Oil and perfume make the heart glad, and the sweetness of a friend comes from his earnest counsel.”***
33. **Good friends are consistent…they remain friends in good times and bad. They always stick around: they are not just there because you are useful to them.**
34. **They are also, honest…prepared to say the hard things in love. For a true friend is more concerned with you then they are with themselves.**
35. **Tim Keller once said, *“A true friend always lets you in and never lets you down.”* Pretty high standard for friendship especially when we know that we will all, at some point, let each other down. But it is the kind of bar that Jesus sets, isn’t it? *“Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.”***
36. **How do Jesus’ friends reveal themselves in verses 12-15?**
37. **The greatest love a friend can show a friend is to lay down one’s life for that person, to sacrifice everything on the persons behalf.**
38. **When Jesus says in verse 14, *“You are my friends if you do what I command you.”* He is not making a conditional sentence, as the grammar may suggest,…He is actually saying, given the salvation that we have been granted and the desire and practice of abiding in Him, …He is saying, *“You are MY friends so subsequently you WILL DO whatever I command you.”* and then He gives us verse 15.**
39. **Remember this from James 2:22-23- *“You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness’—and he was called a friend of God.”* This example shows us that when we believe God, having been justified…and do as He says…that makes us friends with God.**
40. **Anne Bradstreet, Puritan poet in America in the mid 17th Century , having come to America with the Massachusetts Bay Colony, said concerning these passages… *“No friend I have like Thee, for mortal helps are brittle dust.”***
41. **What does Jesus say is the difference between a friend and a servant? In verse 15?**
42. **A servant knows what he has been instructed to do.**
43. **A friend is given the inside track, if you will, on what is going on so far as possible.**
44. **We guard what we say to others, but we are as open with a friend as we can be.**
45. **Imagine for a minute...us, being the friend of the King of kings. What privileges come to mind? What expectations come with that friendship?**
46. **In verses 16-17, what more does Jesus tell us about why we are His friends and what other principles can we apply to choosing our friends? *“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, He may give it to you. These things I command you, so that you will love one another.”***
47. **Christ chose His disciples…the ones who would follow Him…even Judas, the son of perdition, was chosen to follow for a time…**
48. **Judas gives us pause and an understanding into how people in the church are not all of the Elect…**
49. **We are to choose our closest friends from the Lord’s family…starting with our own church.**
50. **The choosing here is evidently twofold.**
51. **It includes not only the election to the Apostolic office, which was peculiar to the eleven, but**
52. **The election to eternal life, which is the privilege of all believers. (See vs. 7- *“If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.”***

* **And it is to this last "choosing," as it specially concerns ourselves, we may profitably direct our attention.**
* **Election to eternal life, is a truth of Scripture which we must receive humbly, and believe implicitly.**
* **Why the Lord Jesus calls some and does not call others, this is almost too deep for us to get our minds around except for the fact that He is sovereign and His words and actions support this as fact.**
* **God does the work of grace in a man's heart through Christ, or else a man will never be saved.**
* **The Father chose us before the foundation of the world…those to whom He would give salvation through Jesus Christ. Then as Jesus says, the Father gave us to Him…so within the Godhead they all chose…so it is appropriate to say…Christ choose us and placed His Holy Spirit within us , or else we would or could never choose Christ.**
* ***"Salvation is of the Lord."* (Jonah 2:9.)**
* **Election. Those whom have been chosen, He chooses not only that they may be saved, but that they may bear fruit, and fruit that can be seen and fruit that abides. Where there is no visible fruit of sanctification, we may be sure there is no election.**
* **Armed with such principles as these, we have no cause to be afraid of the doctrine of election. Like any other truths of the Gospel, it is liable to be abused and perverted. But to a pious mind, as the seventeenth Article of the Church of England truly says, it is a doctrine *"full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort."***
* **To not believe this doctrine is to not believe God’s Word. Jesus and Paul alike remind us that if anything is required by us then it is no salvation at all… and all is lost.**
* **It is unfortunate that the church in the last couple of hundred years is NOT unite of justification by faith alone through Christ alone as it was for the first 1800 years.**
* **To say that it is our choice…that Jesus died to make salvation possible for man to choose…are statements much like the ones that Paul stood opposed to in Galatia…and the Church stood opposed to in its early years calling such claims heresy!**

1. **Christ expects us to bear fruit because we are his friend…in fact we will bear fruit…. We are to spur one another on to love and good works which is encouraging and holding one another accountable to do that which God has appointed beforehand for us to do.**
2. **Christ’s promise when we abide in Him and keep His commandments as His children the Father *“may grant to us what we ask Him when it is within His will.”* We are to do the same for true friends…spend less time denying them and more time giving ourselves for them.**
3. **This is a grand promise just like the one we say in verse 7.**

* **So we must remember if we are not in communion with Him, if His commands are not regulating my conduct, then my prayers may remain unanswered.**
* **While God’s promises proceed from His grace, yet it always needs to be remembered that grace reigns *“through righteousness”* but it never sets aside human responsibility. Rom. 5:21- *“so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”***
* **If I ignore the laws of health I must not be surprised that sickness comes and prevents me from enjoying life in this world…in like manner when I neglect His law I have only myself to blame when I fail to receive to experience the many promises that God has given me.**

1. **This also answers the question, *Why do we pray in Jesus’ name?* because he tells us to.**

* **Jesus’ name is an expression of all that He is...His character and his ways…and also His mission for the Father.**
* **With this being true, then praying in His name is not about just tacking it on at the end of a prayer out of duty.**
* **It also means, being mindful of who His and His purpose as we come to God in prayer.**
* **Our prayers are to be shaped and constrained by what we know of Jesus and His word.**
* **When we pray in Jesus name we are essentially saying …**

***“for the sake of His holy name!”***

* **We pray in His name because of the assurance that comes with being in Christ…and that based on that union the father will grant to us what His will allows…as we ask what most honors our Lord Jesus.**
* **We submit ourselves and our prayers to the glory of our God more than for selfish gain.**
* **When we come in Jesus’ name we are NOT coming demanding as toddlers do…actually we come confessing our inability and our need of God’s wisdom and provision based on Christ’s merits to bear fruit that is good and will bring God glory.**

1. **We are to always seek His way to love one another as Christ loved us! *“These things I command you, so that you will love one another.”***
2. **Since chapter 13 we have seen this refrain a number of times. *“so that you will love one another.”* …In other words…we MUST love as He has loved us!**
3. **Why does He need to keep repeating this command to them and to us?**

* **The passage before us opens with a renewed exhortation to brotherly love.**
* **Obviously, the Lord believes it to be needful to press this grace on the attention of His disciples.**
* **Rare, indeed, must genuine love be, when such repeated mention of it is made!**
* **One amongst them had just been called out as a traitor…that must have struck them hard.**
* **Why would they put themselves out there if people are just going to hurt them?**
* **Oh and this ties into the next verse…since the world is going to hate us…we must love one another.**

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**Oct. 18, 2023**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **Since chapter 13 we have seen this refrain a number of times. *“so that you will love one another.”* What is Christ’s clear and pointed point?**
4. **In other words…we MUST love as He has loved us!**
5. **We are to always seek His way to love one another as Christ loved us!**
6. **Why does He need to keep repeating this command to them and to us?**
7. **Obviously, the Lord believes it to be needful to press this grace on the attention of His disciples.**
8. ***“Rare, indeed, must genuine love be, when such repeated mention of it is made!”-* Thomas Boston**
9. **Because as William Perkins says, “*Men’s hearts are so possessed with self-love, and they are so addicted to their own praise, that it is grief to them to hear any praised beside themselves; whereas love binds* *us as well to take care for the good name of others, as of our own.”* -William Perkins- The Works of William Perkins**
10. **Oh and this ties into the next verse well…since the world is going to hate us…we MUST love one another. Even when we hold one another accountable we must do it in the spirit of love and reconciliation first with the Lord and then with us, when possible.**
11. **John 15:18-25**
12. **Who in here likes to be hated? Everyone knows that it can be one of the worst experiences that we can go through in this life…especially if that hatred is unwarranted. But as Christ’s followers it is an experience we MUST be prepared for. Again…it is NOT OPTIONAL…not something that we can get away from in this life.**
13. **What language does Jesus use here in verses 18-19 to describe our relationship to Him and the world? *“If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.”***
14. **First thing to consider here is that that little word *“If”* can also mean *“when”*…just so we begin to understand the fullness of what He is saying. *“When the world hates you, know that it hated me before it hated you.”***
15. **This word for *“hate”* (*memiseken*) in the Greek is in the perfect tense of the verb which implies that the world’s hatred is a fixed attitude…it is there nature…and this fixed attitude of hatred will carry over upon His disciples and us as well.**
16. **The earliest Christians new this hatred in many parts of the Kingdom.**
17. **The Roman historian and politician, Tacitus spoke of the Christians at the time, *“they are hated for their crimes, whom the mob call Christians. They are charged with hatred of the entire human race.”***
18. **Another Roman historian, Suetonius wrote *“(These people are) of a race of men who belong to a new and evil superstition.”***
19. **Even Pliny the Younger, a Roman governor, who often sounded amenable to Christians stated, Christians on one hand, have harmless practices and seek to love others yet on the other hand, they are a depraved and excessive superstition with the potential of sedition…so after seeking to get the Christians brought before him to confess their crimes (presumably for being a Christian and being unwilling to worship Roman gods) …after 3 chances he would have them executed.**
20. **It is not without significance that the disciples/Christians are commanded to be known by our love and the world will be known naturally by its hatred.**
21. **Jesus is quick to point out to them…if you think things are bad now…they are only going to get worse.**
22. **The world hated Him…they killed Him.**
23. **And by virtue that the world has hated …does hate… will hate the true Jesus…not a manufactured one… they will, in fact, hate us.**
24. **In these last days…it must become evident where our loyalties lie…with Him not the spirit of this age.**
25. **In many parts of the world even today …Christians are thrown into prison, tortured and killed for their faith.**
26. **But we are feeling some of that even here in the West…when we stand for God and His Word…we are ridiculed and hated.**
27. **Now to be clear…no one would of themselves purposefully choose this…so Jesus reminds them, *“…I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.”***
28. **Also, there is the fact, that we used to belong to the world…and we have become a traitor to the world by siding with Christ.**
29. **Following Him is more than a fondness like toward a favorite movie star or athlete.**
30. **By following Him there has been a fundamental shift of our identity and loyalty which will be tested more and more until Christ returns.**
31. **Jesus has chosen us to be identified with Him…because we wouldn’t have been if it had been left up to us.**
32. **Our relationship with the world has changed to such a degree that it will provoke deep animosity. I Peter 4:4-5*-“With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you; but they will give account to Him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.”***
33. **But the type of hatred is more than simply maligning you though that may be hurtful especially when it comes from those who you have considered friends …or it comes from being falsely accused.**
34. **So, beware the praise of the world. Luke 6:26- *“Woe to you, when all people speak well of you.”* If you have made friends with the world you must have compromised Christ somewhere.**
35. **What does the hatred of this world reveal according to vs. 20-21? *“Remember the word that I said to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know Him who sent me.”***
36. **See John 13:16- *“Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.”*  (See also Matt. 10:24- *“A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master.”)***
37. **Interestingly, it reveals that we are in Him when we are persecuted.**
38. **We are His beloved…his friends and His servants...the trifecta of why the world will treat us as they treated…as they do… treat Him.**
39. **The world doesn’t speak of an outward hatred for Jesus…but the world truly doesn’t know the true Jesus or like their ancestors they would openly hate him as well.**
40. **But redefining Him into their image or simply ignoring Him also hates Him.**
41. **Being in Christ we must expect to be hated…and what we have to say will be rejected like Christ and the prophets before.**
42. **John Knox had an interesting word to say about this passage- *“If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.”* He said*, “…they will pay the same attention to your words as they did to mine: that is, none!”* In context this makes more sense.**
43. **What is the point of this hatred…this persecution and oppression…this tribulation as Jesus says? To be like Jesus and to guarantee our admittance in the Kingdom of Heaven.**
44. **Matt. 5:10-12- *“Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”***
45. **Luke 6:22-23-*“Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets.”***
46. **Twice Jesus says *“If I had not…”* in verses 22-24, what has He done, and what has happened as a result? *“If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin. Whoever hates me hates my Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not be guilty of sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father.”***
47. **Jesus is NOT saying that those who belong to the world were somehow sinless before this.**
48. **His point is that His coming has made their guilt all the more obvious. Paul points out how the Law exposes sin…but even more so the sinless and Holy person of Jesus…causing the world to have to hate Him.**
49. **Vs. 25 reads- *“But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled: ‘They hated me without a cause.’”* What is the point?**
50. **Another clear indicator that God’s plan is coming to fruition since this is a fulfillment of prophesies that there would be and there wasn’t at the time a JUST cause for the world to hate Him.**
51. **Interesting play on words…for as the Bible says and the NT confirms those who receive the Law…who ae champions for the law… are condemned by the Law.**
52. **Law refers to the OT in general…all the Scriptures they say they hold dear.**
53. **The lost are not to be thought of as having any aspirations or desires for the things that are of God. Or any genuine sorrow for their sins…wrong doings or mistakes. There is not one ounce of godly sorrow…for there can’t be.**
54. **They are angry and defiant as is seen in these words, *“Whoever hates me hates my Father also... They hated me without a cause.”* Sin will ultimately assume its evil form…so we must know it when we see it…and we must be anticipating it from all those who are not in Christ.**
55. **Ps. 35:19- *“Let not those rejoice over me who are wrongfully my foes, and let not those wink the eye who hate me without cause.”***
56. **Ps.69:4- *“More in number than the hairs of my head are those who hate me without cause…”***
57. **One author has put it this way, *“Grace is disruptive before it is redemptive. The gospel sabotages all forms of self-salvation…self-arrogance… selfishness.”***
58. **But there is one more thing for us to consider concerning this and our being in Christ: Jesus’ followers are expected to live in such a way that we don’t give the world a reason to hate us…they are to hate us without cause! See I Peter 4:14-18- *“If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler. Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name. For it is time for judgment to begin at the household of God; and if it begins with us, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?”***
59. **How might these verses 18-25 help us to be prepared to be hated and to walk on through it?**

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**Oct. 25, 2023**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review- How might these verses 18-25 help us to be prepared to be hated and to walk on through it?**
3. **He tells us who the enemy is.**
4. **He tells us what the enemy will do.**
5. **He tells us what we should avoid doing.**
6. **He tells us and them that there is great blessing in being persecuted for His name sake.**
7. **John 15:26-16:4**
8. **After all of this, why is it important for him to remind them and us that the Spirit is our Helper, Advocate in verses 26-27? *“But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, He will bear witness about me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.”***
9. **Because He is going away.**
10. **The world may hate Him and us but God’s response is the same that it always has been to continue to show Himself to the world…so that His elect will come forth into His kingdom and the non-elect will be judged.**
11. **Jesus has already described the Spirit as *“another Helper” (*John 14:16,26) and in the face of this opposition to His people, we can begin to see why we might need the work of this Helper on our side.**
12. **Jesus twice tells us that the Spirit comes from the Father but also adds the He Himself will send the Spirit for us in these last days. So the whole Trinity is involved with us receiving the gift of the Spirit at the moment we believe.**
13. **The Spirit will testify to our spirit…witness to our spirit…about Jesus…**
14. **Reminding us when we forget…**
15. **Empowering us when we need it…**
16. **Defending us when we are being led to believe anything other than the gospel.**
17. **He will also give us assurance of faith in times of doubt.**
18. **But again, interestingly not just the Spirit but the Apostles, themselves.**
19. **This goes beyond or adds more clarification to 14:26- *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”***
20. **With the Spirit in them they will provide expert and first hand testimony about God to the world …as the prophets of old…but also a testimony of God’s gospel to God’s people in the days of persecution, oppression and death.**
21. **It is their testimony ...their witness… that they must give…as we must give…we are not to simply relax in our salvation and expect the Spirit alone to do it all.**
22. **We are accountable to share the gospel wherever we find ourselves with the witness we have been given to all men. The universal call is to all men…but only the elect will respond…for only the elect have ears to hear as Jesus has already said.**
23. **In chapter 16:1-4, what more does Jesus tell us about how the world’s hatred will be expressed? *“I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away. They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me. But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you. I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you.”***
24. **Again, He is telling this to them so they won’t fall away just as we have been saying and so they won’t be surprised and caught off guard. When we encounter this hostility inside and outside the church we may not be blindsided.**
25. ***“Falling away or stumbling”…* the Greek word is not like the word stumbling block to which we might trip over… unaware that it is there…actually this word here speaks of *“…the springing of a trap which might go off when we least expect it.”***
26. **He now shows them and us that there will be religiously motivated opposition…from exclusion to death from the religious “elite”…**
27. **These are unbelievers in the church…those who presume onto themselves superiority over all others. Think Saul/Paul.**
28. **And all will be done in the name of God…as if they are offering up an offering to God to receive His favor…which will cause the compounding their judgment in the end!**
29. **When such things happen in our day, we can remember that it is all exactly as Jesus said it would be.**
30. **So that when we encounter hostility we won’t be blindsided or caught off guard.**
31. **If we live in the expectation that the world will and does hate us then we will always be alert to what Jesus says…not to frighten us, thus seeking to withdraw for the world but to remain in it so we are emboldened to testify to the faith He has granted to us.**
32. **What does He mean with these words of vs. 4? *“But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you. I did not say these things to you from the beginning, because I was with you.”***
33. **It is unfortunate concerning this verse break here…obviously we will continue cause vs. 5, and following also goes with this but to break it up doesn’t make sense here.**
34. **They wouldn’t necessarily experience what he is saying while He was here because everyone’s focus was on Him…but after He left their focus would turn in the disciples/Christians in general.**
35. **Think on this. How will you bear witness in your day to day? What might stop you from doing so?**
36. **Make no mistake it is here and spreading…the hatred of the world and the unbelieving church.**
37. **God’s plan for the world is to always reveal Himself to it so His elect can come into the kingdom on His timetable.**
38. **We, then, are NOT to withdraw from the world but we are to remain in it, and to preserve in bearing witness to Jesus even in the face of the toughest opposition, knowing that we have been chosen to bear eternal fruit. John 15:16- *“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide.”***
39. **So first pray for our own witness, thanking God he has called us to follow His Son who was and is hated so we can share His good news.**
40. **Then let us pray for the witness of our brothers and sisters in the faith, especially those being persecuted, oppressed and killed in the world right now. Pray that God might give them courage, faithfulness and love and that those who hate them may come to love Christ to whom they willingly sacrifice their lives.**
41. **John 16:5-11**
42. **In verses 5-7-*“But now I am going to Him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.*  Jesus has been reminding them of what has been going on as He prepares them for His departure. How have the disciples been reacting so far? What are they seemingly focused on and what are they missing?**
43. **There have been only one or two inquiries into where Jesus is going…interesting that they weren’t wanting to know more about where exactly it is He is going.**
44. **Their main focus has been on the mere fact that he is leaving them, which has led to their other reaction of grief at the thought of losing him.**
45. **In other words, they are only concerned with themselves and their “LOSS”.**
46. **They don’t see an upside…to His going away…even though he has repeatedly told them since they are so caught up on themselves.**
47. **But according to vs. 7-*“Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.”…* what is Jesus saying concerning that fact that is better for Him to go?**
48. **This is the actual heart of this section of John.**
49. **The disciples will no longer have Jesus with them…they will have Jesus in them by the Holy Spirit.**
50. **By the Spirit they will have far more of Jesus than they have enjoyed up to this point.**
51. **Some say, if only I had the advantages of the disciples to walk with Jesus then I would believe not be swayed. But the reality is we would be mistaken. We are in a spiritually better position living now than the people that went before us …especially those during the time of Jesus and back.**
52. **It is to their *“advantage’*” that He go away. I doubt they saw it that way. They did not KNOW this Helper…they KNEW Him. But later they will contemplate this word…”advantage” to them and us. What are some of the advantages?**
53. **In the Spirit Jesus can be with every believer everywhere at the same time.**
54. **The Spirit brings fullness into our emptiness…order to our chaos so we can worship and glorify the Father and the Son.**
55. **With the Spirit within us we can understand Jesus better.**
56. **With the Spirit within we are assured of our relationship with the Father and our place in the kingdom…we are mark with the precious Holy Spirit.**
57. **The Spirits presence enables Him to go where He is needed most to the right hand of the Father…a much more important place than He is at the moment.**
58. **With the Spirit and them to spread the Word more people will hear than would have been possible for just Jesus.**
59. **While Jesus was alive and with them they were confused, self-centered, afraid, and stubborn…but when the Spirit came upon them in His fullness after Pentecost…(a one-time event) …they became bold, wise, courageous, submissive and giving. Sees like another advantage to me!**
60. **What is the Spirit going to do in the world according to 8-11? *“And when He comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.”***
61. **At the end of chapter 15, the Helper we are told will bear witness to Jesus and the disciples and us will aid in this task...but here the Spirit takes front and center as He should they and we merely support as we are used by the Spirit to do the Father’s will.**
62. **The Helper/Counselor comes to convict the world concerning sin…since Paul tells us that Christ was raised by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom.8) and by that resurrection the Spirit convicted Jesus’ enemies…exposing their guilt , righteousness since Christ was raised for our justification and made righteous in Him and judgement as at the cross Christ *“disarmed principalities and powers”* …making a public spectacle of them triumphing over them…(Col. 2:15).**
63. **He does this because Jesus is returning to the Father and no longer exercises the role of convicting people Himself.**
64. **John 16:12-15**
65. **What would you be thinking if you were there with Jesus and after He has said all that He has said, now He says, vs. 12- *“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now.”***
66. **It is easy isn’t it to see why all of this is hard to take in.**
67. **Their world has been turned upside down…so they can become men who turn upside down the world for Christ’s sake…which is normal for the Gospel…to turn our worlds on its head…by the news that He is leaving and that He must go so He can send the Spirit whom they do NOT KNOW.**
68. **And then He says, He has even more for them but they can’t handle it all right now. Can’t you hear them thinking...maybe you would be as well… “Oi Vey!” You have got to be kidding. There is more! What more can there be? And you are right we can’t handle what we have!**
69. **He has taken them as far as they can go without the Spirit…interesting concept/truth.**
70. **Not that He CAN’T do it…but it is the Spirit’s purpose to do it. The plan of the Godhead being fulfilled.**
71. **The word *“now”* means He has brought them to this place at this particular time…NOW...but their education isn’t over as He will say in a minute. As He also told them in John 13:7*- “Afterwards you will understand…”* and 14:26- *“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”***
72. **Now we must remember that this was partially fulfilled by Him in the 40 days between His resurrection and His ascension as well where He taught them more *“about the kingdom of God”* (Acts 1:3). But it would seem His main thought was on what the Spirit would teach when He came upon them in fullness.**
73. **What does Jesus’ promise them in response to this statement in vs. 13-15? *“When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth, for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak, and He will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for He will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that He will take what is mine and declare it to you.”***
74. **That the Spirit will be the way these disciples …and us…will grasp Jesus’ overall teaching…like the Trinity that He has just thrown on them.**
75. **First, the Spirit will come upon them in fullness and He will guide THEM into all the truth they will need to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Samaria and the uttermost parts of the world.**
76. **Then, for us, who receive the Spirit at our conversions, He will teach each of us individually and corporately… in worship and group studies.**
77. **This truth the Spirit has been given by the Godhead to teach …is truth about what is going to happen.**
78. **One of the Spirit’s roles is to take what is given Him by the Father and the Son and reveal it to the Apostles.**

* **So the main work of the Spirit is to point people to Christ. *“He will glorify me…”***
* **It was once said, *“The Spirit is self-effacing, always wanting to direct our gaze and focus to Jesus.”***
* **To be a Spirit-filled is to be Jesus –centered.**
* **The work of the Spirit will always lead us to a great love for Christ.**

1. **But also His presence within us assures us that the testimony…the witness of the disciples/apostles that is passed on to us is true.**
2. **Think about this statement, *“When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth…”* Speaking of advantages…Now that IS AN ADVANTAGE!!!!**
3. **What more do we learn of the Trinity from verse 15?**
4. **Jesus said before (John 5) that the Father had shared everything with Him.**
5. **And this is what the Spirit has taken and has and will reveal to the Apostles.**
6. **There is a co-equality in all things.**
7. **J.C. Ryle reminds us here, *“Then let us never forget, in reading the Bible, to pray for the teaching of the Holy Spirit. We must not wonder if we find the Bible a dark and difficult book, if we do not regularly seek light from Him by whom it was first inspired. In this, as in many other things, ‘we have not because we ask not.’"***

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**Nov. 1, 2023**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review- John 16:8-15**
3. **What does this passage vs. 8-11, tell us that the Spirit is going to do in the world and what does that mean for us? *“And when He (the Spirit) comes, He will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.”***
4. **At the end of chapter 15, the Helper we are told will bear witness to Jesus and the disciples and us will aid in this task...but here the Spirit takes front and center as He should… they and we merely support as we are used by the Spirit to do the Father’s will which of course, will cause the world to be drawn to Jesus or reject Jesus as they were destined to do I Peter 2:8- *“and ‘A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense.’ They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.*”**
5. **The Helper/Counselor comes to convict the world concerning sin…since Paul tells us that Christ was raised by the power of the Holy Spirit (Rom.8) and by that resurrection the Spirit convicted Jesus’ enemies…exposing their guilt, righteousness since Christ was raised for our justification and made righteous in Him and judgement as at the cross Christ *“disarmed principalities and powers”* …making a public spectacle of them triumphing over them…(Col. 2:15).**
6. **He does this because Jesus is returning to the Father and no longer exercises the role of convicting people Himself.**
7. **What does Jesus’ promise them in response to this statement in vs. 13-15? *“When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth, for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak, and He will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for He will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that He will take what is mine and declare it to you.”***
8. **That the Spirit will be the way these disciples …and us…will grasp Jesus’ overall teaching…like the Trinity… that He has just thrown on them...and the reason for His death that He has been talking to them about all along.**
9. **First, the Spirit will come upon them in fullness and He will guide THEM into all the truth they will need to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Samaria and the uttermost parts of the world.**
10. **Then, for us, who receive the Spirit at our conversions, He will teach each of us individually, and corporately… in worship and group studies so that we can do as he has commanded His disciples…to love one another as He has loved us and then to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Samaria and the uttermost parts of the world.**
11. **This truth the Spirit has been given by the Godhead to teach …is truth about what is going to happen.**
12. **One of the Spirit’s roles is to take what is given Him by the Father and the Son and reveal it to the Apostles.**

* **So the main work of the Spirit is to point people to Christ. *“He will glorify me…”***
* **It was once said, *“The Spirit is self-effacing, always wanting to direct our gaze and focus to Jesus.”***
* **To be a Spirit-filled is to be Jesus –centered.**
* **The work of the Spirit will always lead us to a great love for Christ.**

1. **But also His presence within us assures us that the testimony…the witness of the disciples/apostles that is passed on to us is true.**
2. **Think about this statement, *“When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth…”* Speaking of advantages…Now that IS AN ADVANTAGE!!!!**
3. **Why does Jesus use the term Father for God so often? How is IT an advantage for us?**
4. **Another advantage… we are to call God…Father…which recognizes who He is and what our identity is in Christ. We are the children of the Most High God…what an identity. It is almost as if He knew we would have an identity crisis!!!**
5. **The use of the title “Father” is not a metaphor as some today have espoused.**
6. **And it is His Fatherhood that is to be our model. He is the original…the alpha…we are the copy. When we say “Father” we are using what is called a theomorphism -speaking about humans in terms of language that belongs originally to God.**
7. **The truth to hold on to:**

* **God is a father to His children; they were therefore created to want and need Him as our Father.**
* **He helps us understand this by the very way He has created us.**
* **We are not modeling His fatherhood after ours.**
* **Rather, we need Him for exactly the same reason a fish needs water…it is how and why we were created.**

1. **John 16:16-33**
2. **What 2 events is Jesus describing in vs. 16? *“A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me.”***
3. **Death on the cross and burial. They will not see Him for 3 days.**
4. **Resurrection….raised from the dead…**
5. **How do the disciples respond and why in verses 17-18?-*“*** ***So some of His disciples said to one another, ‘What is this that He says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me’; and, ‘because I am going to the Father’?’ So they were saying, ‘What does he mean by ‘a little while’? We do not know what He is talking about.”***
6. **This was new news to them…that they would see Him again…or was it?**
7. **How many times has He told them that He had to die and the He would rise in 3 days?**
8. **Matt. 17:22-23; Mark 9:30-32; Luke 18:31-34; John 2:19-22 to name just one from each gospel and there are many more…most ending with the phrase *“But the disciples did not understand…”*. Weren’t they paying attention?**
9. **Can’t we understand their confusion?**
10. **He had just been talking about the fact that He is leaving them…then He said He had more to teach than they can handle…now He says this.**
11. **I get it…it is a lot to take it.**
12. **I think we should, as well, though we have the luxury of hindsight we should not be too quick to judge that they didn’t understand…how often do we find ourselves in the same place as them…after God has told us in His word over and over again? Or how should this cause us to deal with our weaker brothers and sisters?**
13. **How does Jesus answer their quagmire in verses 19-22?- *“Jesus knew that they wanted to ask Him, so He said to them, ‘Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, ‘A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me’? Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.”***
14. **As He has been saying, they will experience great pain. Loss and agony…some more than others because of their actions…while they will see that the then known world rejoices at His death and burial. *“The troubler of Israel will be finally dealt with!”* Or will He?!?!**
15. **But the day is coming sooner than they will imagine that their joy will be full for He will be back with them in the flesh…and the pain will subside… for a time.**
16. **And this is true for us…while the world hates Him now and us …His return will be a time of great rejoicing for all His elect and the rest of creation besides those who ae not His. Rom. 8:23- *“And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.”***
17. **That which causes great pain also brings great joy…**
18. **Joy in seeing Him in 3 days to be sure.**
19. **But joy in their salvation that He secures and confirms for them by His death and resurrection.**
20. **And this joy will be last. I Peter 1:8-9- *“Though you have not seen Him, you love Him. Though you do not now see Him, you believe in Him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.*”**
21. **Through the Spirit, in worship, with fellow believers, through the sacraments and in prayer we enjoy His intimate presence…Yet ANOTHER advantage of His going away.**
22. **What else does He say will change during this time in verses 23-24? *“In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, He will give it to you. Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.”***
23. **The disciple’s relationship with the Father is going to move onto more stable footing.**
24. **Previously they had to go to Jesus with concerns and questions, now they will be able to go straight to the Father in Jesus’ name.**
25. **Just to clarify:**
26. **We believe that up to this time the disciples had never realized their Master's full potential.**
27. **They had certainly never understood that He was the one Mediator between God and man, in whose name and for whose sake they were to put up their prayers. You can hear the thoughts in their mind… “He’s just a man isn’t He? But, He is more than that, as peter said, He is the Son of the living God. But only God can answer prayers?!?”**
28. **Jesus schools them here they are distinctly told that going forward they are to *"ask in His name."* just like they had been taught to go to the God/ Elohim/Yahweh/ Adonai in prayer…so He is God.**
29. **It is clear as well that Jesus would have us know that if we cannot see Him with our eyes any longer, we can talk with Him, and through Him have special access to God. *"Ask and you shall receive,"* He proclaims to all His people in every age again; *"and your joy shall be full."* (See 15:11- *“These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.”***
30. **Let the lesson sink down deeply into our hearts. Of all the list of Christian duties there is none to which there is so much encouragement, as prayer. It is a duty which concerns all.**
31. **Why has Jesus NOT been speaking literally and when will he speak clearer? Vs. 25.- *“I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father.”***
32. **The things that Jesus has had to say have been said without context as far as the disciples are concerned.**
33. **With His death, resurrection and the fullness of the Spirit coming upon them they will understand. (see vs. 13 again- *“When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth…”***
34. **The indwelling of the Holy Spirit will enable the disciples to have a personal experience with the Father that they hadn’t had before…but more importantly, if that is possible…**
35. **They will have a fuller experience with the Trinity …the Godhead… in a way they wouldn’t have had otherwise enabling them to do greater things than even Christ did in His 3 ½ years in ministry.**
36. **Once they know the Godhead more personally they will know more fully what Jesus says in His word…**
37. **Once they know intimately the Godhead their witness will be effective.**
38. **And the same is true for all believers.**
39. **In Vs. 26-28 Jesus brings up what He had previously said about praying in His name. What does He add to this truth in these verses? And what potential misunderstanding does He want to avoid?*” In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; for the Father Himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”***
40. **If He wasn’t clear, He says this again so they will come to understand that being able to approach the Father on their own gives them and us incredible access.**
41. **By praying in His name it shows them and us that we share in His Sonship.**
42. **Jesus also clarifies just in case they think of Him only as a priest who HAS to make intercession as a mediator…**
43. **He is a mediator…**
44. **He is the Comforter…**
45. **He stands between us and the Father so the Father sees Him …**
46. **But we speak directly to the Father because of how the Father loves us who are in Christ.**
47. **Jesus facilitates in a way I do not fully understand and yet we also speak directly to the Father. Jesus is not the Father’s secretary. He is God as well.**
48. **But the real truth is this: *“the Father Himself loves you*”.**
49. **All of this is to say that we are family now and He loves us so we can come to Him any time we wish!**
50. **Our Lord Jesus Christ makes much of a little grace, and speaks kindly of those who have it. How weak was the faith and love of the Apostles!**

* **In a very few hours, they would be buried under a cloud of unbelief and cowardice! These very men whom Jesus commends for loving and believing, before the morning sun arose, would forsake Him and flee.**
* **Yet, weak as their graces were, they were real and true and genuine.**
* **Let us take great comfort in this blessed truth.**
* **The Savior of sinners will not cast off those who believe in Him, because they are babes in faith and knowledge.**
* **He will not break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax.**
* **He can see reality under much infirmity, and where He sees it, He is graciously pleased.**
* **The followers of such a Savior may well be bold and confident.**
* **They have a Friend who despises not the least member of His flock, and casts out none who come to Him, however weak and feeble, if they are only true.**

1. **Jesus will say in Chapter 20 to Mary, *“Go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’”* (John 20:17)**
2. **None of them had been taught by their parents to pray, “*Our Heavenly Father …or… “Our Father who art in heaven…”*  but here Jesus reveals the Father to them telling them that they can go directly to the Father…the King of the universe… as the sons of God that they are.**
3. **In the midst of their fears and confusion he seeks to comfort them with this advantage of His leaving. Here is the medicine that cures that they won’t t fully comprehend until after he is gone:**

* **John 10:29-30- *“My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.”***
* **John 14:9- *“Jesus said to him, ‘Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father.’”***
* **And here John 16:27- *“…for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God.”***

1. **Vs. 28 seems to be the clearest of summations for His whole ministry. He came doing the Father’s will that will be accomplished soon and He will return to the Father.**
2. **What do the disciples reveal about themselves in verse 29-31, that Jesus calls them out on? *“His disciples said, ‘Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech! Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God.’ Jesus answered them, ‘Do you now believe?’”***
3. **Because Jesus said He had been using figurative speech they are blaming Him for their confusion…much like Adam… *“The woman whom you gave to be with me…”***
4. **Or…they are thinking that what Jesus said would happen has just come to pass because now they understand so much better than they did just a few minutes ago.**
5. **In a sense both are true…to a degree. They are pointing to Him as the source of their confusion and they did have a taste of what is coming.**
6. **We see also, in this passage, that the best Christians know but little of their own hearts. We see the disciples professing loudly, *"Now You speak plainly—now we are sure—now we believe."* Brave words these are! And yet the very men that spoke them, in a very short time were scattered like timid sheep, and left their Master alone.**

* **We need not doubt that the profession of the eleven was real and sincere. They honestly meant what they said. But they did not know themselves.**
* **They did not know what they were capable of doing under the pressure of the fear of men and of strong temptation.**
* **They had not rightly considered the weakness of the body, the power of the devil, the shallowness of their own faith. All this they had yet to learn by painful experience.**
* **Like young recruits, they had yet to learn that it is one thing to know the soldier's drill and wear the uniform, and quite another thing to be steadfast in the day of battle.**
* **Even the best of us find that we still can be defined as Prov. 15:11 describes*-“Sheol and Abaddon lie open before the LORD; how much more the hearts of the children of man!”***
* **It is God alone who can see into our hearts*…*He sees through everything and everyone and knows even what we are thinking before we think it.**
* **Jesus’ ability to know …throughout the Gospels…the unspoken thoughts of the people around Him is yet another way that this is shown for only God can do this.**
* **J.C. Ryle says, *“The true secret of spiritual strength is self-distrust and deep humility.”***

1. **What they understood was Jesus’ 4 part summary in vs. 28- *“I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.”* ...so they finally understood something!**
2. **They are brave words to be sure… *“Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God.” …*but in a few short hours they will scatter like sheep without a shepherd revealing their true hearts at that moment.**
3. **BUT…We need not doubt that the profession of the 11 was real and sincere. They honestly meant what they said.**
4. **But they did not know themselves. They did not know what they were capable of doing under the pressure of the fear of men and of strong temptation.**
5. **They had not correctly assessed the weakness of the flesh, the power of the devil, the feebleness of their own resolutions, and the shallowness of their own faith. All this they had yet to learn by painful experience.**
6. **Like young recruits, they had yet to learn that it is one thing to know the soldier's drill and wear the uniform, and quite another thing to stand firm in the day of battle.**
7. **You believe NOW?!?!? Where have you been the last 3 years when I have clearly described how the Son of man would have to die and in 3 days to resurrect?**
8. **In other words, they have not yet reached where they will be…they are still in training.**
9. **What is about to happen to them? And what is Jesus teaching them and us in verses 32-33? In other words, what reason (s) does this passage give for us to not lose heart? *“Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”***
10. **They will all fail their profession just made.**
11. **We sing the great hymns that call us to arms…that call us to follow Him…we sing and profess our undying loyalty…**
12. **But the reality is we easily scatter like mice or roaches.**
13. **Do we take the time to think of all the places he went that we wouldn’t go.**
14. **How many times He has beckoned us to follow Him and we have gone in the opposite direction?**
15. **This is what Jesus’ closest friends were about to do to Him and he is telling them.**
16. **They have no need to fear men…as the Father is with Him so the Father is with us.**
17. **Think about this...they will all leave Him…**
18. **But the Father will never abandon Him… even on the cross …since that is one of the events that He will have to endure in the immediate future along with false imprisonment, mocking, and flogging to within an inch of an ordinary life.**
19. **Not only that we do not need to fear but He has said these things so that we will know that in Him we Have peace. *“I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”***
20. **He would have us know that we are to nearer to Him as the only fountain of comfort.**

* **He does not tell us that we shall have no trouble in the world.**
* **He holds out no promise of freedom from tribulation, while we are in the body.**
* **But He tells us to rest in the thought that He has fought our battle and won a victory for us.**
* **Though tried, and troubled, and anxious with things here, we shall not be destroyed. Instead He says, “But take heart: I have overcome the world.”**

1. **Christ promises peace...His peace enables us to *“take heart” .* Through His work there is peace with God, and equally by the Spirit’s ministry there will be restoration.**
2. **Christ promises victory… *“I have overcome the world.”* In Christ there is and will be triumph and we will become more than conquerors.**
3. **Even in theirs and our failures He is still teaching and encouraging.It is as if He is saying, *“You don’t have the power to overcome the world.”* That would be bad news if He hadn’t finished … *“But take heart; I have overcome the world.”* We can’t and we don’t have to because HE DID!**

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**Nov. 8, 2023**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **What would you say is the main message (s) of chapter 16?**
4. **Thinking back on chapters 14-16, what are some things that Jesus has said that you needed to see and hear to be able to trust Him more and live accordingly?**
5. **John 17- Christ’s High Priestly Prayer**
6. **Most of the instruction that Jesus wants to give to these disciples has been given …much of which they won’t understand…fully understand… until the Holy Spirit comes upon them in fullness. But in a way, He is still instructing them as they listen to His prayer to the Father.**
7. **Jesus prays frequently in the Gospels, but this is the longest of the prayers that we have preserved. He is allowing them and us to hear something as intimate as His communication with his Father for they and we are no longer servants…but friends and brothers and sisters. In this prayer He is praying for Himself, His disciples and for His Church…us…made up of different people from different languages and tribes throughout the generations. Hence, Christ’s High Priestly Prayer for it followed the pattern of the High Priest on the Day of Atonement:**
8. **First the High Priest would pray for Himself and the ministry that he was about to exercise...John 17:1-5**
9. **Second the High priest would pray for those who were consecrated with him to the Lord’s service…his direct priests and Levites. John 17-6-19**
10. **Then, lastly, He prayed for all those who will become His people. John 17:20-26**
11. **The Day of Atonement is here and as such, Jesus prays as He has commanded the High Priests of old.**
12. **Jesus prays for Himself. John 17:1-5- *“When Jesus had spoken these words, He lifted up His eyes to heaven, and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, since you have given Him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given Him. And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.”***
13. **What does Jesus pray for in vs. 1 and why is this what He prays for now? *“Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you,”***
14. **Interestingly, His first request is for Himself to be glorified.**

* **This is not a reflective glory like Moses had for a short time or we have because we are in Christ…like the Moon reflecting the light of the Sun. Jesus will call it *“my glory”-* in vs. 24.**
* **This is receiving back the fullness of His nature, for the glorification of the Son is the glorification of the Father since they are One. Vs. 5- *“And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.”***
* **Just reading that Christ *"had glory with the Father before the world existed"* tells us that it is His in the Godhead.**
* **Unlike Moses and David, He existed from all eternity, long before He came into the world; and He shared glory with the Father, before He was made flesh and born of Mary.**
* **This was the main goal of His mission. To glorify the Father!**
* **This is Jesus’ greatest longing. This has always been what the Son has desired that He would bring glory to His Father.**

1. **Because Jesus is getting ready to be handed over to His killers …the time has come.**

* **All the times He has spoken of *“not His hour”* have pointed to this *“hour”.***
* **The hour is here it is right in front of Him and He is fully aware that it can’t be put off.**
* **This is the moment planned in eternity past and so He needs to pray to His Father which was His habit of doing throughout the Gospels.**

1. **The prayer of John 17 reveals more of the Trinity’s inner workings to help them and us appreciate how much has gone into what they have seen.**
2. **How does vs. 2 explain what Jesus has just prayed for? In other words how is the father glorified by Christ according to this verse? *“…since you have given Him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given Him.”* (Remember, this has been said before, in many ways, see John 5:21- *“For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom He will.”)***
3. **Jesus’ prayer that the Father be glorified is not some vague unspecific request…Jesus has specifically been given authority to this end.**
4. **Jesus is the eternal Son, the 2nd Person of the Trinity *“In the unity of the Godhead there be three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son. ”-* WCF 2.3**
5. **The Father is glorified and Jesus is glorified in the work that the Father sent Him to do. God is glorified by His people…the people He chose before time and had given to Jesus …and are drawn by the Spirit into faith receiving eternal life and acting according to God’s will. Limited/ Particular Atonement.**

* **See vs. 4-*“I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.”***
* **Interesting that He says He has accomplished the work that the Father gave Him to do. In what sense is this true?**
* **Jesus is headed to the cross and to the tomb…just as He has said. In less than 24 hours He will say… *“It is Finished!”***
* **His death and resurrection secures salvation for all His elect in all times, in all places, for all of time.**
* **Salvation secured is the means by which the elect can come into relationship with God.**
* **Unlike the first Adam, who failed to do God's will and brought sin into the world, the second Adam has done all, and left nothing undone that He came to do.**

1. **According to verse 3 what is this eternal life that Jesus spoke of in vs. 2? *“And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”***
2. **This is not the waters from the fountain of youth…nor is this being reincarnated unto a better life (if you are lucky)…or being united with loved ones long gone.**
3. **The essence of this eternal life is in knowing…absolutely… God the Father and God the Son, Jesus Christ through the work of God the Holy Spirit.**

* **How many times did Jesus call the scribes and Pharisees to account about how they didn’t know God…they didn’t really know Abraham…or Moses…for all of these knew Him.**
* **Since they didn’t know them they don’t know Him…in fact, the only one they know is their father… Satan.**
* **The mere knowledge of God is not sufficient, and saves none. Satan knows God and knows He exists.**

1. **This should in no way surprise us since Jesus has already said the He is The Life.**

* **The Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit are the sources of life.**
* **So we shouldn’t expect to find fullness of life in any other place but in intimate fellowship with the Trinity..**

1. **Jesus prays for his disciples in John 17:6-19. In praying for His disciples He takes up the largest amount of room in His prayer. (more than Half the chapter) John 17:6-19-*“I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. 8 For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. 9 I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. 11 And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15 I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.”***
2. **Robert Murray McCheyne once said- *“If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies. Yet the distance makes no difference; the fact remains, He is praying for me.”***
3. **In John 17:6-8 how does Jesus describe His disciples. *“I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. 8 For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.”***
4. **They are described as belonging to God before time.**
5. **They were of the world in one respect but since they were chosen by God before the foundations of the earth they were always God’s.**
6. **The Father has given them to Jesus as a gift from His Father…and Jesus has given them what God had given to Him to give to them because they are no longer servants but “friends”, brothers and sisters, in Christ. He speaks intently about this gift:**

* **Vs. 6-*“I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world.”***
* **Vs. 6- *“Yours they were, and you gave them to me…”***
* **Vs. 9-*“I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.”***
* **Vs. 11-*“keep them in your name, which you have given me,”***
* **As the disciples listened to His prayer I can only imagine how encouraged they would be by these words.**
* **Jesus basically describes them … as the men whom the Father has given Him … John 6:39-*“All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of Him who sent me. And this is the will of Him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that He has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”***
* **What is the will of the Father given to Jesus in this passage?**

1. **That He should not lose any that the Father has given Him, but raise them upon the last day.**
2. **The will of the Father is that all who look upon the Son in faith should have eternal life, and Jesus makes it so by raising them up on the last day.**

* **Why should any of this matter to us? Sinclair Ferguson says that God has in essence said to Jesus *“My Son, I love these men so much that I am giving them to You in order for You to finally save them.”***

1. **They are these who have obeyed …that is, kept His word.**

* **Interesting, that Jesus would describe them this way…we have seen all their warts and weakness of faith and understanding up to this point…in just the last chapter…so they obviously hadn’t been paying attention to everything that the Lord had been saying. Listen, again, to what Jesus says of them**
* ***“…they have kept your word.”***
* ***“…they know that everything that you have given me is from you.”***
* ***“…they have received them…”***
* ***“…they know in truth that I came from you…”***
* ***“…they have believed that you sent me.”***

1. **Even though the Spirit hasn’t fully come upon them yet to lead them into a fuller understanding,**

* **According to Jesus, they still know and understand many of the dynamics of the Father and the Son of how the truth comes to us from the Father and through the Son, and they will even know fuller when the Spirit comes upon them in fullness.**
* **Yet these very weak servants were the men of whom the gracious Head of the Church speaks here in high and honorable terms because they are no longer just servants but friends, brothers in Christ.**

1. **And they know all of this because of the words that have come from Jesus …who is the Word!**
2. **What incentives does this revelation by Jesus give you to listen more intently to the words of Jesus and do them accordingly?**
3. **What can we learn from this description about ourselves?**

* **In due time Jesus is praying specifically for His apostles in these verses, BUT…**
* **What He has said of them are also true of all His people.**
* **Obviously, Jesus sees far more in His believing people than they see in themselves, or than others see in them. The least degree of faith is very precious in His sight.**
* **Like this quote from Gandalf in the Hobbit- *“I have chosen Mr. Baggins and that ought to be enough for all of you. If I say he is a Burglar, a Burglar he is, or will be when the time comes. There is a lot more in him than you guess, and a deal more than he has any idea of himself. You may (possibly) all live to thank me yet.”***
* **He told them and us that He would love us to the end…that no one can snatch us from His or His Father’s hands…because we are precious in His sight.**
* **We have heard the same call, and now belong to Jesus due to the sovereign choice and work of our Sovereign before time and accomplished in time.**
* **Have we actually heard these words as well from the last chapter? John 16:27- *“for the Father Himself loves you”***

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**Nov. 15, 2023**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **What was the point (s) of Jesus praying for Himself in 17:1-5?**
4. **His first request is for Himself to be glorified…because His hour had come.**
5. **This is not a reflective glory like Moses had for a short time or we have because we are in Christ…like the Moon reflecting the light of the Sun. Jesus will call it *“my glory”-* in vs. 24.**
6. **This is receiving back the fullness of His nature, for the glorification of the Son is the glorification of the Father since they are One. Vs. 5- *“And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.”***

* **Phil. 2:5-11-*“Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, 6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”***
* **Why would Jesus need to empty Himself or set aside the fullness of His glory?**
* **Why now does He have the need…or is it perhaps desire… to take it up again?**
* **Just reading that Christ *"had glory with the Father before the world existed"* tells us that it is His in the Godhead.**
* **Unlike Moses and David, He existed from all eternity, long before He came into the world; and He shared glory with the Father, before He was made flesh and born of Mary.**
* **This was the main goal of His mission. To glorify the Father!**
* **This is Jesus’ greatest longing. This has always been what the Son has desired that He would bring glory to His Father with His own glory.**

1. **He also speaks of the accomplishment of what the father had sent Him to do…not the Father didn’t know but when we talk to the one we love the most we often tell them what we already know…He was telling the Father that he had done His will.**
2. **The prayer of John 17 reveals more of the Trinity’s inner workings to help them and us appreciate how much has gone into what they have seen.**
3. **So far what has Jesus prayed for for His disciples in 17: 6-8?**
4. **That they would be kept in the godhead.**
5. **That they would know that he is always praying for them.**
6. **Continuing Jesus praying for His disciples John 17:6-19- *“*-*“I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. 8 For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. 9 I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. 11 And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15 I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.”***
7. **Turning our attention now to vs. 9-12. What does Jesus pray for them? *“I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.”***
8. **He begins by being very specific concerning who His audience is…just as He has described them so lovingly… if anyone was wondering who He is talking to and about …Jesus is clear. *“I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.”***
9. **The doctrine before us is one which is specially hated by the world and many in the Church.**

* **Nothing gives more offence, and stirs up such bitter feeling, as the idea of God making any distinction between man and man, and loving one person more than another.**
* **Yet the world and many in the Church’s objection to the doctrine is, as usual, weak and ignorant of the Bible’s redemptive story and how from the beginning He has separated His people from those who aren’t His people.**

1. **As He loves and prays for these believing men, He prays and intercedes for all believers …the elect ones… from every nation, tongue and tribe….those to whom the Father had chosen before the foundations of the earth and given to Christ.**
2. **This special intercession of the Lord Jesus is one grand revealed secret of their and our safety.**

* **We are daily watched, and thought of, and provided for with unfailing care, by One whose eye never slumbers and never sleeps. Jesus, “*is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."* (Heb. 7:25.)**
* **They will never perish, because He never ceases to pray for them, and His prayer will absolutely always prevail.**
* **They will stand and persevere to the end, not because of thier own strength and goodness, but because Jesus intercedes for us.**
* **Judas fell never to rise again; while Peter fell, but repented, and was restored. The reason of the difference lay under those words of Christ to Peter, *“…but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail."* (Luke 22:32.)**
* **Thomas Hooker (Colonial Congregational minister) said*—"No man's condition is so safe as ours—the prayer of Christ is more than sufficient both to strengthen us, be we ever so weak; and to overthrow all adversary power, be it ever so strong and potent."***

1. **Then He prays for the Father to keep them in His name until the Holy Spirit comes. He prays for the Father’s protection based upon His Holy name…His Word…based upon His character…who He is!**
2. **They probably didn’t even realize how Jesus protected and preserved them while He was with them… His mere presence protected them and preserved them as a unit…even though Judas never was…but even he basked in the common grace of God as long as he was with the others.**
3. **The goal of this is to preserve the unity…the oneness that Jesus enjoys with them and they with Him and the Father. The same oneness that the Son has with the Father is to be a characteristic of His people. Now, tell me, what does that look like…or what is it supposed to look like in time and space?**
4. **Looking at vs. 13-19 we see the rest of what He prayed for for them. What is He praying for here? *“But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15 I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.”***
5. **He prays that His joy would be made full in them. He knows that they will be crushed at His leaving, especially the way He will leave them. His desire is that they would once again experience a fullness of joy.**
6. **Jesus obviously wants nothing more than for His people to share His joy.**
7. **This prayer is a means to that end, both in what He is asking of the Father and the understanding His disciple will gain in listening in on this prayer.**
8. **He has told them what He has needed to tell them and the world will hate them…another reason to pray that God would keep them unified for the world will hate them…they will need one another.**
9. **So He asks for God to protect them while they are in the world so He asks His Father, *“I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.”***
10. **This word *“keep”* has shown up before.**

* **He asked the Father to *“keep them in your name”* –John 16:11**
* **Jesus prayed and commended His disciples for having *“kept”* God’s Word. John 17:6**
* **And then, in vs. 15, to *“keep them from the evil one.”***
* **Interesting, don’t you think. He teaches us this great lesson: He thinks it better for His people to remain in the world and be kept from its evil, than to be taken out of the world and removed from the presence of evil altogether.**
* **Pleasant as it might seem at the moment to be snatched away from conflict and temptation, if we think just a little we can see that it would not be profitable.**

1. **How could Christ's people do any good in the world, if taken away from it immediately after conversion?**
2. **How could they exhibit the power of grace, and make proof of faith, and courage, and patience, as good soldiers of a crucified Lord?**
3. **How could they be duly trained for heaven, and taught to value the blood and intercession and patience of their Redeemer, unless they purchased their experience by suffering?**

* **J.C. Ryle says, *“To abide here in this valley of tears, tried, tempted, assaulted, and yet kept from falling into the finality of sin, is the surest plan to promote the sanctification of Christians, and to glorify Christ. To go to heaven at once, in the day of conversion, would doubtless be an easy course, and would save us much trouble. But the easiest course is not always the path of duty. He that would win the crown must carry the cross, and show himself light in the midst of darkness, and salt in the midst of corruption.”***
* **Think of it this way…we…God’s elect walk around with a target painted on our backs.**
* **Think about this a minute…they…we …need the prayers of Christ and the power of God to Keep us…that we might remain in Him. We have been redeemed, adopted and this is true because of the love of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit keeping us.**

1. **This is especially important with Him since He is leaving them in a matter of hours and they having to wait on the fullness of the Spirit to come upon them. But this will be true even after the Spirit comes upon them in fullness.**
2. **Good news: Our striving to keep the faith is undergirded by God’s keeping us so that we will be different than the world.**
3. **And then He will pray to His Father to go a step further, if you will, *“Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.”***
4. **Jesus asks specifically to sanctify them in His word so that they can *keep* and *be kept* in God’s Word.**
5. **He knows the only way they can be able to do what He has sent them to do is for them to be sanctified in God’s Word.**
6. **Bathed in God’s word so that they will learn the Gospel in the Old and New Testaments to be able to live it, teach, it and call people to repentance by it.**
7. **And what more might He mean?**

* **In the NT… to sanctify… to be set apart for God’s special pleasure and use. Set apart from the corruption of the world for God’s use and by His pleasure.**
* **It can also speak of a more gradual on-going purification… but it also means and usually refers to a once-for –all radical and decisive work of God’s free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.**
* **WSC #35- What is sanctification? *Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.***
* **This is a work that is done in cooperation with the Godhead though it is God alone the preserves us through our sanctification to the end.**
* **This work of sanctification is a stretching work and can be God afflicting us through circumstance, situations and people…believer and non.**

1. **With this in mind He says, *“And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.”***
2. **He is already Holy *“hagios”* but now He becomes the altar and the sacrifice so that they and we might be sanctified as well.**
3. **His death and resurrection would secure this for His disciples and for all of us who came after them.**

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**Jan. 24, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review- John 17- Christ’s High Priestly Prayer**
3. **What is the test of the type of love Jesus expects for us to have one to another?**
4. **John 15:17**
5. **I John 3:16**
6. **This love is so undeserved that is why it is all of Grace. I John 4:10**
7. **Of the 3; faith, hope and love…only love abides forever. I Cor. 13:13**
8. **What is it that Jesus teaches about the importance of unity among His disciples that we often fail to deliver on?**
9. **Most of the instruction that Jesus wants to give to these disciples has been given …much of which they won’t understand…fully understand… until the Holy Spirit comes upon them in fullness. But in a way, He is still instructing them as they listen to His prayer to the Father.**
10. **What role is Jesus portraying in this prayer and why is that important?**
11. **Role of High Priest…seen in His prayer being the same 3 parts that the High Priest of old was to pray by God’s command and direction on the Day of Atonement.**
12. **First, the High Priest would pray for Himself and the ministry that he was about to exercise...as Jesus does here- John 17:1-5**
13. **Second, the High priest would pray for those who were consecrated with him to the Lord’s service…his direct priests and Levites. As Jesus does here-John 17-6-19**
14. **Then, lastly, He prayed for all those who will become His people. John 17:20-26**

* **For the real Day of Atonement is here and as such, Jesus prays as He has commanded the High Priests of old.**
* **All that the High Priest was to do was simply a type of what Christ would do.**
* **So this is a fulfilling of Prophesy as King is our and THE Prophet, Priest and King.**

1. **The chief Intercessor …He who was to always stand in the gap between God and His children.**
2. **By fulfilling this prophecy he is also telling them that that is what He will do for His own until the Day of His Return.**
3. **Now let’s look at the prayer itself again, starting with John 17:1-5. *“When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, ‘Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, 2 since you have given Him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. 3 And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. 4 I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. 5 And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.”***
4. **What was the point (s) of Jesus praying for Himself here?**
5. **According to verse 3 what is this eternal life that Jesus spoke of in vs. 2? *“And this is eternal life, that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”***
6. **Next, Jesus prays for his disciples in John 17:6-19. In praying for His disciples He takes up the largest amount of room in His prayer. (more than Half the chapter) John 17:6-19-*“I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world. Yours they were, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. 7 Now they know that everything that you have given me is from you. 8 For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. 9 I am praying for them. I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. 10 All mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. 11 And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your name, which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are one. 12 While I was with them, I kept them in your name, which you have given me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost except the son of destruction, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. 13 But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves. 14 I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 15 I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. 19 And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.”***
7. **How does Jesus describe His disciples?**
8. **They are described as belonging to God before time.**
9. **The Father has given them to Jesus as a gift from His Father…and Jesus has given them what God had given to Him to give to them because they are no longer servants but “friends”, brothers and sisters, in Christ. He speaks intently about this gift:**

* **Vs. 6-*“I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world.”***
* **Vs. 6- *“Yours they were, and you gave them to me…”***
* **Vs. 9-*“I am not praying for the world but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours.”***
* **Vs. 11-*“keep them in your name, which you have given me,”***
* **As the disciples listened to His prayer I can only imagine how encouraged they would be by these words.**

1. **They are these who have obeyed …that is, kept His word.**

* **Interesting, that Jesus would describe them this way…we have seen all their warts and weakness of faith and understanding up to this point…in just the last chapter…so they obviously hadn’t been paying attention to everything that the Lord had been saying.**
* **Listen, again, to what Jesus says of them**
* ***“…they have kept your word.”***
* ***“…they know that everything that you have given me is from you.”***
* ***“…they have received them…”***
* ***“…they know in truth that I came from you…”***
* ***“…they have believed that you sent me.”***
* **Yet these very weak servants were the men of whom the gracious Head of the Church speaks here in high and honorable terms because they are no longer just servants but friends, brothers in Christ.**

1. **What can we learn from this description about ourselves?**
2. **In due time Jesus is praying specifically for His apostles in these verses, BUT…**
3. **What He has said of them are also true of all His people.**
4. **Obviously, Jesus sees far more in His believing people than they see in themselves, or than others see in them. The least degree of faith is very precious in His sight.**
5. **He told them and us that He would love us to the end…that no one can snatch us from His or His Father’s hands…because we are precious in His sight.**
6. **We have heard the same call, and now belong to Jesus due to the sovereign choice and work of our Sovereign before time and accomplished in time.**
7. **Have we actually heard these words as well from the last chapter? John 16:27- *“for the Father Himself loves you”***
8. **What does Jesus pray to the Father for on their behalf in verses 9-19?**
9. **He does NOT pray for any except those the Father has given to Him….the Elect alone!**

* **By praying this way…He is making sure that they are confirmed in Christ as Christ’s because as He says the Father gave them to Him.**
* **To be a good steward of that gift of the Elect He must pray for them…and will pray for them…always.**
* **Robert Murray McCheyne once said- *“If I could hear Christ praying for me in the next room, I would not fear a million enemies. Yet the distance makes no difference; the fact remains, He is praying for me.”***

1. **Jesus has manifested Himself and the Father to them…so He asks for His Father to keep them in the truth when He is gone…and that will be as He has said recently by the coming of the spirit.**

* **By praying this for them…the leaders of God church know that He is praying for us to be kept in the truth as well.**
* **By praying for them…the disciples/ Apostles…we know His truth will remain in us who are His something we need not question when we are seeking him and His will for the people of God humbly and obediently.**
* **This special intercession of the Lord Jesus is one grand revealed secret of their and our safety.**
* **We are daily watched, and thought of, and provided for with unfailing care, by One whose eye never slumbers and never sleeps. Jesus, “*is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them."* (Heb. 7:25.)**
* **They will never perish, because He never ceases to pray for them, and His prayer will absolutely always prevail.**
* **They will stand and persevere to the end, not because of their own strength and goodness, but because Jesus intercedes for us.**
* **The reason Peter repented, and was restored lay in the words and action of Christ on Peter’s behalf, *“…but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail."* (Luke 22:32.)**
* **Thomas Hooker (Colonial Congregational minister) said*—"No man's condition is so safe as ours—the prayer of Christ is more than sufficient both to strengthen us, be we ever so weak; and to overthrow all adversary power, be it ever so strong and potent."***

1. **He prays that His joy would be made full in them. He knows that they will be crushed at His leaving, especially the way He will leave them. His desire is that they would once again experience a fullness of joy.**

* **Jesus obviously wants nothing more than for His people to share His joy.**
* **This prayer is a means to that end, both in what He is asking of the Father and the understanding His disciple will gain in listening in on this prayer.**

1. **He asks for God to protect them while they are in the world so He asks His Father, *“I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one.”***

* **This word *“keep”* has shown up before.**
* **He asked the Father to *“keep them in your name”* –John 16:11**
* **Jesus prayed and commended His disciples for having *“kept”* God’s Word. John 17:6**
* **And then, in vs. 15, to *“keep them from the evil one.”***
* **Interesting, don’t you think. He teaches us this great lesson: He thinks it better for His people to remain in the world and be kept from its evil, than to be taken out of the world and removed from the presence of evil altogether.**
* **Pleasant as it might seem at the moment to be snatched away from conflict and temptation, if we think just a little we can see that it would not be profitable.**

1. **How could Christ's people do any good in the world, if taken away from it immediately after conversion?**
2. **How could they exhibit the power of grace, and make proof of faith, and courage, and patience, as good soldiers of a crucified Lord?**
3. **How could they be duly trained for heaven, and taught to value the blood and intercession and patience of their Redeemer, unless they purchased their experience by suffering?**
4. **He will pray to His Father to go a step further, if you will, *“Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world.”***

* **Jesus asks specifically to sanctify them in His word so that they can *keep* and *be kept* in God’s Word.**
* **He knows the only way they can be able to do what He has sent them to do is for them to be sanctified in God’s Word.**
* **And what more might He mean?**
* **In the NT… to sanctify… to be set apart for God’s special pleasure and use. Set apart from the corruption of the world for God’s use and by His pleasure.**
* **It can also speak of a more gradual on-going purification… but it also means and usually refers to a once-for –all radical and decisive work of God’s free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.**
* **This work of sanctification is a stretching work and can be God afflicting us through circumstance, situations and people…believer and non.**

1. **With this in mind He says, *“And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth.”***

* **He is already Holy *“hagios”* but now He becomes the altar and the sacrifice so that they and we might be sanctified as well.**
* **His death and resurrection would secure this for His disciples and for all of us who came after them.**

1. **Now Jesus prays for the believers that would come in the future in vs. 20-26. *“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. 24 Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. 25 O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. 26 I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”***
2. **So we see now that He is no longer praying for Himself or for His disciples…who specifically is He praying for now and with what purpose in mind?**
3. **Everyone that will come to believe after the disciples.**
4. **That we would know just how loved we are since this statement is being prayed on the night of His passion.**
5. **But it is also an indication of His will for us.**
6. **And we also need to remember; as He interceded for the Apostles, He intercedes for us…and that intercession not only encourages and secures us; it also teaches us how to live in conformity with His will.**
7. **Just like with His disciples, Jesus emphasizes unity in vs. 20-23, why is this so important to Him? *“I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word, 21 that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, 23 I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.”***
8. **I don’t know about you but to think that Jesus prayed for me/us so long ago… this way …gives me great hope that He still does.**
9. **Jesus explicitly prays 3 times for this, twice asking that His followers *“may be one”* and then *“that they may become perfectly one..”* or *“…that they may be brought to complete unity”* 3 times informs us of how important this is to Him.**
10. **Here is a strong proof of the value of Christian unity, and the sinfulness of division, that Jesus speaks of it this many times.**

* **How painfully true it is that in every age divisions have been the scandal of religion, and the weakness of the Church of Christ!**
* **How often we, Christians, waste our strength in contending against one another, instead of contending for the faith against sin and the devil!**

1. **We also need to remember the context of this prayer. Jesus is about to be betrayed, arrested and killed. But even more than that He is about to face all the sin of all His elect from all time, to experience the wrath due us because of His love for us. Yet, of all the things He could have prayed for, this seems to be the most important.**
2. **What does Jesus tell us about the type of unity He wants His followers to have in vs. 21 and 23?**

* **Can we even fathom that kind of oneness? Marriage?**
* **Jesus has a very specific kind of unity in mind. The oneness He prays for is to be like the oneness He and the Father enjoy within the Trinity. Just as the Father and the Son are spiritually united so too are all who are in Christ.**
* **This is not something we could fabricate on our own. It comes to us who are in Christ.**
* **It is to be the foundation of their witness- vs.*21 “…that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.”* And then again in vs. 23- *“I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.”***
* **In other words this unity MUST be evident to all who are looking…this is yet another non-negotiable…**
* **But also, another advantage to Him going away…for from His death and resurrection all believers are imputed with His righteousness which links us to the Godhead and the Spirit empowers us to be able to live accordingly.**
* **This is a corporate command we are all to exhibit this unity for the good of the world knowing that He called and sent us as He did the Apostles corporately.**
* **We may meet them individually but what we do reflects on the rest of the Body that can and should then draw the person we met to the church.**
* **It is the fellowship of the church family that non-Christians will most powerfully encounter the kingdom and the new creation when the church body is evidently unified.**
* **The problem with most evangelism is that it is so individualistic…everything relies on a personal encounter…but it isn’t about us…it is about proclaiming the message and then moving them toward the church where the body of Christ exists… many evangelism programs…many para-church organizations…many of us forget how important the church is for a person to really experience the kingdom on earth.**
* **BUT…How huge a statement is this *“…so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.”***
* **The Father loves us as much as He loves the Son**
* **Deut. 7:7-8- *“It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, 8 but it is because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers, that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.”***
* **I John 4:9-11- *“In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.”***
* **R.C. Sproul said, *“The love, concern, and compassion we have one for another should be so atypical of the world that they serve as definite proofs that Jesus was not merely a great moral teacher but the true second person of the Trinity, sent by God. This unity should also testify to the world that God loves believers as much as He loves Jesus His Son. ”***
* **This will draw His own and cause many to reject the truth.**
* **What do Paul’s words to the Ephesians add to our discussion here on unity? Eph. 4:1-3- *“I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”***
* **Do you see it? Unity is not something we construct but rather it has been given to us and we must maintain it by walking in a manner worthy of our calling.**
* **This unity comes through the Spirit of God…another advantage of the Spirit.**
* **This passage is an answer to Jesus prayer in our passage from John 17…He prayed that His people would be one, and they are one…even when we don’t act that way. So the question is what kind of witness do we give off?**

1. **Before leaving this section, what has Jesus done for us according to vs 22, and what does it mean to us that He has? vs. 22-*“* *The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one…”***

* **That the relationship that He enjoys with the Father is something that we can, do and will enjoy as well.**
* **Love and unity equals His glory because short of Him being in us through the Holy Spirit and giving us of His righteousness…His glory…we could never do and be as He commands.**
* **Sinclair Ferguson put it this way in Lessons from the Upper Room, *“In very simple terms, what Jesus is praying for is that when people encounter the church, that they will see many different pieces of a puzzle fitting together and revealing His own face. Tus, when our Lord’s prayer, offered for the church of every age, is answered in our local church family, the glory of Christ will become visible.”***

1. **Look at vs. 24-26, again, for a minute. *“Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. 25 O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. 26 I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”***
2. **What does Jesus want for me and you as believers according to verse 24?**

* ***“I desire that they also”* means Jesus’ desire is that those who have come to faith through the teaching of the Prophets and Apostles.**
* **2 things.**
* **He wants His people to be with Him where He is going…(remember John 14:3- *“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.”***
* **He wants us to see His glory.**

1. **He wants His own to see His glory.**
2. **It is His glory for His own that can and will give us a satisfaction that nothing else can or will.**
3. **Knowing God by faith and by sight…with all our heart… being able to see Him work in others and in our life…gives us the rest that is only found in His glory which to be honest is only a shadow (*now we see in a mirror darkly*) of the fullness that we will see on that that Day But it is ENOUGH to keep us.**
4. **It is in beholding Christs glory even in this life that we are changed and transformed after the image of Christ.**

* **These are 2 ways of saying the same thing: He wants us to SEE Him, up close and personal as He really is!**
* **One day we WILL be with Jesus.**

1. **When we die, we will go directly to be with Him.**
2. **But if He returns before we die in this life, He will come to establish the heavenly city making all things new here in the New Earth, where we will be with Him and see Him face to face.**
3. **The Shorter Catechism has a couple of helpful Qand A’s on this:**
4. **Q37: What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death? A37: The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory; and their bodies, being still united to Christ, do rest in their graves till the resurrection.**
5. **Q38: What benefits do believers receive from Christ at the resurrection? A38: At the resurrection, believers being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgement, and made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity.**
6. **Either way we will be with Jesus. WIN- WIN!!!**
7. **What does Jesus say His people know in verse 25? *“O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me.”***

* **As Christians, He is saying, we have an inside track on what is going on when we follow His direction.**
* **We know the Father because we are in Christ. Only the Son can reveal the Father John 1:18; 14:6-7- *“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 If you had known me, you would have known my Father also.”***
* **We know that the Father has sent His Son into the world to secure salvation for His own that he has given to Christ.**
* **The world…well, it cannot and does not know for these things are *“spiritually discerned”* and the natural man cannot discern such things.**

1. **What does Jesus mean by this knowing the Father in vs 26?*“I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”***

* **Knowing God is not like knowing the rules to a game.This is an intimate connection through the Holy Spirit.**
* **It is a lifelong process of Jesus revealing the Father to us and His continuing to do so.**
* **There will always be more to know and then there is the classic…more to be re-taught because of the fallen nature within us seeking to get us to consciously forget the truth about God.**
* **Just like in vs 22 Jesus makes the same point in a slightly different way by saying that the love of God that we experience and enjoy is the same love that Jesus Himself receives from the Father.**
* **This learning of God, however, is not like other kinds of learning.**

1. **It is not ultimately about just acquiring knowledge…massing hordes if information.**
2. **It is about having a greater sense of God’s love for us…like the old saying… *“to know Him is to know His love.”***
3. **How should these truths shape the way we see our relationship to the Godhead?**

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**Jan. 31, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **Considering the magnitude of things we have learned from chapters 13-17 especially, how should these truths shape the way we see our relationship to the Godhead?**
4. **Based on all that we have read up to this point, especially in the prayer of chapter 17…how would you answer the question, What is Jesus’ main concern?**
5. **That God’s honor be preserved and that we, His people, might understand the depth of His love for us and the love we are to have for one another.**
6. **All that we enjoy in Christ…we enjoy because He took the walk…died and rose again to secure salvation for all His elect from every nation tongue and tribe…and generation…from the Garden forward till the consummation.**
7. **John 18**
8. **These verses begin John's account of Christ's sufferings and crucifixion. We now enter on the closing scene of our Lord's ministry, and pass at once from His intercession to His sacrifice. We shall find that, like the other Gospel writers, John enters fully into the story of the cross for this is the climax of Jesus’ earthly ministry. But we shall also find, if we read carefully, that he mentions several interesting points in the story, which Matthew, Mark, and Luke, for some wise reasons, have passed over.**
9. **The night is getting on there is a place for them to be. John 18:1-3. *“When Jesus had spoken these words, He went out with his disciples across the brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which He and His disciples entered. Now Judas, who betrayed Him, also knew the place, for Jesus often met there with His disciples. So Judas, having procured a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons.”* Where are they going and what is about to happen?**
10. **Historical note:**
11. **The Brook Kidron was the small stream or drain from the temple and would be reddish and may have smelled from the blood of the thousands of sacrifices of lambs for Passover.**

* **From the altar there was constructed a channel that went down to the Brook or became the Brook Kidron.**
* **All the blood and refuse from the altar would have been washed into that channel.**

1. **What a picture that would have painted for Jesus. I wonder if His disciples even noted the illustration of all that blood of the Passover lambs.**
2. **Jesus is finished speaking to and praying. It’s time to go…time to begin His short walk to the cross to be crucified.**
3. **Garden of Gethsemane, (not mentioned by name here but Matt. 26:36 and Mark 14:32 do) where:**
4. **Luke 21 speaks of Jesus spending the nights with His disciples on the Mount of Olives…a place in the Garden that they would have frequented a lot. Interesting, that Jesus spent time in this garden.**
5. **Being a familiar place…he was not trying to hide from His enemies, He went to the place that Judas would know to find Him…for His time had come.**
6. **He will taste the first taste of betrayal from Judas and His disciples.**
7. **Where He will be arrested.**
8. **Interesting that Judas had a large group of soldiers and officers with Him. (Brings the old saying *“you and whose army?”* to a whole different level, don’t you think?) Were they expecting a fight…or maybe a replay of all the times they were unable to take Him before…figured, at least, one of such a number wouldn’t be swayed by this man….boy, how wrong they would be in just a couple of minutes! Again!**
9. **A Roman detachment/maniple (sometimes translated but rarely) - 200 hundred men**
10. **Raman contingent/cohort of auxiliary= 600 men**
11. **But the Greek word is actually *“sperien”* which equals 1/10th of a legion= 1000 men (240 calvary and 760 infantry) well-armed and ready for battle…**
12. **Since there is a definite article in the Greek “*the sperian”* this is referring to the battalion garrisoned in the Antonia Fortress.**
13. **Interesting fun fact: Of all the people serving in the Temple it was the *officers from the chief priests* referred to here that were actually descendants of the tribe of Levi!**
14. **Now let’s look at vs. 4-14. *“Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to Him, came forward and said to them, ‘Whom do you seek?’ They answered Him, ‘Jesus of Nazareth.’ Jesus said to them, ‘I am He.’ Judas, who betrayed Him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, ‘I am he,’ they drew back and fell to the ground. So He asked them again, ‘Whom do you seek?’ And they said, ‘Jesus of Nazareth.’ Jesus answered, ‘I told you that I am He. So, if you seek me, let these men go.’ This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken: ‘Of those whom you gave me I have lost not one.’ Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant and cut off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.) So Jesus said to Peter, ‘Put your sword into its sheath; shall I not drink the cup that the Father has given me?’ So the band of soldiers and their captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him. First they led him to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that it would be expedient that one man should die for the people.”* Now, all kinds of questions come to my mind. But look at this text again…what things come to your mind? What have you not noticed before? What seems strange? What ironies exist? What comes to your mind after reading this text?**
15. **Vs. 4 says, *“Then Jesus, knowing all that would happen to Him…”***
16. **How stupid did Judas think Jesus was? Did he really think He could out smart Jesus maybe even surprise Him? What would have been a clue that Jesus was expecting all of this? John 13:27- *“Jesus said to him, ‘What you are going to do, do quickly.’”***
17. **Jesus knew then and by His authority commanded Judas to go and do…**
18. **Jesus knew what His hour would bring. On one hand, He had been preparing for this hour His whole life.**
19. **Jesus goes on the offensive, *“Whom do you seek?’ They answered Him, ‘Jesus of Nazareth.’ Jesus said to them, ‘I am He.’ Judas, who betrayed Him, was standing with them. When Jesus said to them, ‘I am he,’ they drew back and fell to the ground. So He asked them again, ‘Whom do you seek?’ And they said, ‘Jesus of Nazareth.’ Jesus answered, ‘I told you that I am He. So, if you seek me, let these men go.’ This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken: ‘Of those whom you gave me I have lost not one.’”***
20. **I said, Jesus goes on the offensive here, how would you describe what we see Jesus doing in these verses?**

* **Volunteers Himself...as He voluntarily submits to the will of the Father in this?**
* **Jesus takes the lead…not waiting for them.**
* **Jesus took the lead to fulfill Hs own prophesy.**
* **And by the power of the great *“I am”* they will let His disciples go … *So, if you seek me, let these men go.’ This was to fulfill the word that he had spoken: ‘Of those whom you gave me I have lost not one.’”* (John 6:39, 17:12)**
* **They are let go by Christ’s command even after the violence perpetrated on them by Peter. *“Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it and struck the high priest’s servant and cut off his right ear. (The servant’s name was Malchus.)”***

1. **John knew this servant possibly proving John’s connection to the high priest as we will see in vs. 18.**
2. **Carrying weapons was not uncommon in such a perilous time with all the traveling they did. Luke 22:38 tells us that the disciples actually had 2 swords on this occasion.**
3. **John is the only one to name Peter by name.**
4. **It seems Peter was wanting to go all commando and fulfill his previous promise that he would die for Christ…seeking to prove his point not Jesus’. Matthew 26:35. Oh and Peter chose a non-soldier to attack!**
5. **How many times do we seek to prove our faith by the actions of our own choosing?**

* **I said offensive or takes the lead because it seems like He is in a hurry to get on with it…in that the time is now…let’s get “r” done.**

1. **What is significant about what He answers them when they say they are looking for *“Jesus of Nazareth”?***

* **We are told that the first time that our Lord said to the soldiers, *"I am He, they drew back, and fell to the ground."***
* **All 200 hundred, 600 or 1000? What about the calvary? Judas too? So Yes, Dorothy, Judas too!**
* **So where is Judas during all of this?**
* ***“…standing with them.”* Not the disciples but with the troops to betray Him and take Him away.**
* **Judas *“was standing with them."* What is the irony here?**

1. **Yet this was a man who for three years had been a constant companion of Christ.**
2. **He had seen His miracles, had heard His sermons, had enjoyed the benefit of His private instruction, had professed himself a believer, had even worked and preached in Christ's name!**

* **We must remember Judas Iscariot. His history is meant to be a lesson.**
* **The power of His person “*Ego Eimi”-* short form of and understood to mean *“I am who I am”* .**
* **He simply says… *“I am”*… this comes from the verb *“to be”.* The English adds the pronoun He. It can be done since it is understood.**
* **Jesus uses it 3 times after all…very significant.**
* **Jesus consciously proclaims Himself to be God with this statement connecting these words to the many other uses in John and in the Pentateuch.**
* **This is not the first time something like this had happened:**
* **He couldn’t be stopped when He came into Jerusalem.**
* **He couldn’t be stopped either time that He cleared the temple.**
* **When they came to stone Him he merely walked through their midst.**
* **When they had come for Him before they were thwarted because it wasn’t His time. His majesty was too much for them.**
* **He took the lead and they were caught off guard…Whom do you seek? Judas was right there. But they wanted to be sure…no mistakes this night.**
* **We need to remember that our Lord suffered and died of His own free will. He did not die because He could not help it; He did not suffer because He could not escape. All the soldiers of Pilate's army could not have taken Him, if He had not been willing to be taken.**
* **Jesus was a willing sufferer. He had set His heart on accomplishing our redemption. He loved us, and gave Himself for us, cheerfully, willingly, gladly, in order to make atonement for our sins. It was *"the joy set before Him"* which made Him endure the cross, and despise the shame, and yield Himself up into the hands of His enemies.**

1. **How many miracles did the soldiers and the temple servants witness that night?**
2. **At the sound of the “I am” they fell to the ground…**
3. **The healing of Malchus’ ear.**
4. **With this evidence before them what was their response to the things they saw and why? Vs. 12-14- *“So the band of soldiers and their captain and the officers of the Jews arrested Jesus and bound Him. First they led him to Annas, for he was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was high priest that year. It was Caiaphas who had advised the Jews that it would be expedient that one man should die for the people.”***
5. **And yet their hearts were still hardened to fulfill their duty.**
6. **They were not meant to do anything else but the Lord’s will.**
7. **Both groups saw miracles.**

* **Yet both remained unmoved, cold, indifferent and insensible, as if they had seen nothing out of the common way.**
* **They went on seemingly unmoved with the business at hand so they took Jesus, bound Him, and led Him away.**

1. **We may even today wonder about why it is so hard for people to see the truth that is as plain as nose on their face? Or we may wonder why so many people hate Christians who do so much to aid and help others in non-Christian countries? Well…the answer is before us…the hearts of unbelievers are not meant to be moved…AND… the evils that we see in our day are part of God’s plan.**
2. **What is so amazing about the fact that they were able to arrest, bind Him and take Him away without incident?**
3. **We see the Son of God taken prisoner and led away bound like a dangerous criminal…insulted and treated with contempt.**

* **And yet this unresisting prisoner had only to will His deliverance, and He would at once have been free.**
* **He had only to command the confusion of His enemies, and they would at once have been confounded.**
* **Above all He was One who knew full well that Annas and Caiaphas, and all their companions, would one day stand before His judgment seat and receive an eternal sentence. He knew all these things, and yet condescended to be treated as a dangerous criminal without resisting.**

1. **Something else is very clear here. The love of Christ to sinners is *"a love that passes knowledge."***

* **To suffer for those whom we love, and who are in some sense worthy of our affections, is suffering that we can understand.**
* **But to suffer voluntarily, when we a have the power to prevent it, and to suffer for a world of unbelieving and ungodly sinners, unasked and unthanked—that would be a line we would not want to cross…and yet Christ did …for His own!**

1. **So He was led away captive, and dragged before the High Priest (both of them actually one in favor with the Romans the other not so much), not because He could not help Himself, but because He had set His whole heart on saving His own, by bearing our sins, by being treated as a sinner, and by being punished in our stead.**

* **He was a willing prisoner that we might be set free.**
* **He was willingly arraigned and condemned, that we might be absolved and declared innocent. *"He was made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."* (1 Peter 3:18; 2 Cor. 8:9; 5:21.)**
* **Surely if there is any doctrine of the Gospel which needs to be clearly known, it is the doctrine of Christ's voluntary substitutionary atonement.**
* **He suffered and died willingly, because He knew that He had come to be our substitute, and by substitution to purchase our salvation.**

1. **What do we make of Caiaphas’ prophecy? Why do you suppose John reminds us of what Caiaphas said at this juncture?**
2. **You gotta love it…unknown to him how *“…expedient it would be that one man should die for the people!”* Go back to John 11:49-53.**
3. **In the unknowing prophecy Caiaphas spoke logically (The good of the many outweighs the good of the one) but not morally...for it was wrong to put an innocent man to death.**
4. **One of the reasons that John reminds us of what Caiaphas says is to show the judgment against Jesus was already decided…that it would not be a fair trial.**

* **There was no thought of justice here.**
* **He was a cynical politician imposter to the role of High Priest who had already spoken favorably of Jesus’ death and this could get him back into the good graces with the Roman governor.**

1. **Another reason is God’s on-going providence…out of the mouth of fools comes the truth as well.**
2. **What does it say about Jesus and His mission that he went so willingly as He began the immediate journey to the cross?**
3. **What does Jesus’ reaction to all of this teach us about obedience to God?**
4. **I have asked this before in other context, so I will ask it again here in the context of vs. 1-14; in what ways are humility and obedience related?**

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**February 7, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **Considering John 18:1-14, what does it say about Jesus and His mission that He went so willingly as He began the immediate journey to the cross?**
4. **What does Jesus’ reaction to all of this teach us about obedience to God?**
5. **Peter’s denials and the trial before Annas and Caiaphas.**
6. **With Peter’s previous declaration about who Jesus is***“The Son of the living God”* **where does the weakness in Peter come from? Vs 15-18 and vs. 25-27- *“Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple. Since that disciple was known to the high priest, he entered with Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, but Peter stood outside at the door. So the other disciple, who was known to the high priest, went out and spoke to the servant girl who kept watch at the door, and brought Peter in. The servant girl at the door said to Peter, ‘You also are not one of this man’s disciples, are you?’ He said, ‘I am not.’ Now the servants and officers had made a charcoal fire, because it was cold, and they were standing and warming themselves*. *Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself.”--- “Now Simon Peter was standing and warming himself. So they said to him, ‘You also are not one of his disciples, are you?’ He denied it and said, ‘I am not.’ One of the servants of the high priest, a relative of the man whose ear Peter had cut off, asked, ‘Did I not see you in the garden with him?’ Peter again denied it, and at once a rooster crowed.”***
7. **Who is the other disciple who was known to the high priest?**
8. **John. John speaks of himself this in the abstract like this… *“the disciple that Jesus loved”*… *“the disciple who was known to the high priest”***
9. **He was possibly a relative…or a business partner in the fishing industry.**
10. **He was also known by the servant girl as well…so he could bring Peter in to the courtyard. She says to him, *“You also are not one of this man’s disciples, are you?”* In other words, she knew of another…hence John.**
11. **It is amazing to see the degree of weakness that may be found in a real Christian.**
12. **We see this exemplified in a most striking manner in Peter.**

* **We see that famous disciple forsaking his Master, and acting like a coward—ashamed to own Him when he ought to have confessed Him—or saying nothing…for it was just a girl who help open the door after all.**
* **But finally denying three times that He knew Him. 3 times he emphatically states *“I am not”*…one of His disciples.**

1. **You remember Jesus prophesying this, right? John 13:36-38- *“Simon Peter said to him, ‘Lord, where are you going?’ Jesus answered him, ‘Where I am going you cannot follow me now, but you will follow afterward.’ Peter said to him, ‘Lord, why can I not follow you now? I will lay down my life for you.’ Jesus answered, ‘Will you lay down your life for me? Truly, truly, I say to you, the rooster will not crow till you have denied me three times.”***
2. **For all of his hoopla about standing by Jesus side and dying with Christ, if need be…John tells us, *“Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself.”***

* **John gives some justification for this… *“it was cold .”***
* **But given the context and his emphatic denials…he was also hoping to blend in and not be noticed.**
* **In his mind it would be dangerous to be noticed and to confess that he too was a follower of Jesus…because he really was having a hard time trusting Jesus.**

1. **And this takes place after receiving the Lord's' Supper—after hearing the most touching address and prayer that the ears of man have ever heard.**
2. **This fall of Peter is intended to be a lesson to the whole Church.**

* **It is recorded so we will see just how easy it is to fall in fear.**
* **It is a light mercifully set up in Scripture, to prevent us doing something similar.**
* **It shows us the power of fear of man. Few are aware, perhaps, how much more they fear the face of man whom they can see, than the eye of God whom they cannot see. These things are written for our benefit.**
* **It also shows us the danger of pride and self-confidence. If Peter had not been so sure that he would never deny his Lord, he wouldn’t have been so open to this lesson.**

1. **Peter no doubt fell shamefully- Luke 22:60-62- *“And immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. And Peter remembered the saying of the Lord, how He had said to him, ‘Before the rooster crows today, you will deny me three times.’ And he went out and wept bitterly.”***
2. **But he did rise again.**

* **Luke 22:31-34- *“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, that he might sift you like wheat, but I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.’ Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, I am ready to go with you both to prison and to death.’ Jesus said, ‘I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow this day, until you deny three times that you know me.”***
* **John 21:15-17, where Jesus tells Peter 3 times to feed or tend His sheep, re-commissioning Him or more than likely re-assuring him of the previous calling as Apostle was still in place.**

1. **He was not left to reap the consequence of his sin, and cast off for evermore like Judas because the Lord had prayed for Him.**
2. **How are we like Peter exactly, today?**
3. **How is Jesus’ great promise to Peter (*“And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers.”)*  still comforting to us today?**
4. **We are not left to doubt that he rose a wiser and better man, since the rest of scripture makes that clear.**
5. **If Peter's fall has made Christians see more clearly their own great weakness and Christ's great compassion, then Peter's fall has not been recorded in vain.**
6. **Then we can leave this event with the comfortable reflection that we have a merciful and gracious High Priest, who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and will not break the bruised reed even when we sin, because of His covenantal love that will not change.**
7. **What are we to take away from Jesus being before Annas in the middle of the night vs. 19-24? *“The high priest then questioned Jesus about His disciples and His teaching. Jesus answered him, ‘I have spoken openly to the world. I have always taught in synagogues and in the temple, where all Jews come together. I have said nothing in secret. Why do you ask me? Ask those who have heard me what I said to them; they know what I said.’ When he had said these things, one of the officers standing by struck Jesus with his hand, saying, ‘Is that how you answer the high priest?’ Jesus answered him, ‘If what I said is wrong, bear witness about the wrong; but if what I said is right, why do you strike me?’ Annas then sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.”***
8. **This priestly aristocracy was in a hurry…**
9. **the last thing they needed would have been witnesses for the defense…which they were supposed to hear first.**
10. **The crowds had been favoring Jesus…so they were uncertain about the “polling”…better to do this while people are sleeping.**
11. **Just to be clear, judicially nothing about the trials will be according to the Law of God.**
12. **The trial is best seen when you put all the Gospels together but the Sanhedrin broke their own law in at least these following ways:**
13. **Capital trials had to meet during the day.**
14. **They were supposed to have advanced notice so that as many members of the Sanhedrin could be there as possible…at least half were required for a quorum.**
15. **There was supposed to be a public notice of a capital crime.**
16. **Their meeting was held in a private home rather than their official chambers in the temple… far from prying eyes.**
17. **They could render a verdict only after as entire day and night had passed. Passover was being celebrated.**
18. **Trials were forbidden on the Sabbath and during festivals. Passover wouldn’t end until sundown on the Sabbath.**
19. **Executions were forbidden during festival with rare exceptions made for the most heinous crimes.**
20. **They were supposed to diligently cross-examine witnesses, and if they contradicted one another, their testimony was to be thrown out and the false witness executed.**
21. **Interrogators were not to try to coerce the accused into admitting his crime.**
22. **Though public flogging were not illegal…spitting at and on, striking and taunting were against Jewish law.**

1. **Interesting don’t you think, that Annas wanted to know things that had been seen by all who had been paying attention…**
2. **He wanted to know about His disciples…like John who it seems was known as a follower of Christ.**

* **Jesus never spoke of His disciples during this time…**
* **Names would have been a death sentence or at least an expulsion from the Temple and local synagogue.**
* **He had after all cut a deal with the soldiers that they might be spared.**

1. **He wanted to know about the doctrine that he taught.**
2. **In other words, he brought Jesus before him and asked Jesus to tell him what Jesus was guilty of.**
3. **Jesus actually tells Annas that He has hidden nothing…**
4. **Everything had been in public…**
5. **Everything He taught could be recounted by others.**
6. **He spoke the truth of the Law and gospel without hesitation.**
7. **Jesus was not being uncooperative here… he is asserting His lawful right for there was not to be any charges brought before witnesses could be produced to prove a charge.**

* **The high priest was not to hear first from the accused but from the witnesses for the defense and then the witnesses to the possible charge or those who could substantiate the charges.**
* **Then their testimony had to be verified by 2 or 3 witnesses and if found invalid then they would stand accused of whatever the one accused was accused of.**
* **So Jesus is asserting His legal right to hear the evidence against His teaching being lawful.**
* **Hence the officer who struck Jesus broke the law as well by striking Jesus with the palm of his hand thus rendering a judgment of untruthfulness before the witnesses or evidence had been presented. But this was simply a sign of the indignities to come.**
* **Annas could not or would not answer Jesus’ question concerning why they broke their own standards…so he sent Him to Caiaphas so He could be further insulted and tried unlawfully as we see in Matt. 26:57-68 and Luke 22:63-65.**
* **This is why the Lord says to us believers that since the world hated Him the world will hate us if we seek to make Him known.**
* **Even when there is no wrong doing to point to as Peter says in I Peter 3:15-17- *“In your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God’s will, than for doing evil.”***

1. **Annas felt it below his dignity to speak to a blasphemer so he did not answer Jesus’ question.**
2. **Why was Jesus such a threat to the religious leaders? We understand that unbelievers are blinded from the fullness of the truth…so all they could see was their “power” and wealth and positions, being placed in jeopardy… which were tenuous at best with the Romans. How does sin make us blind to the truth? (This is a serious question…please take some time to reflect on this…since the fullness of God’s revealed will has been shown to us.)**

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**February 21, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **What do we learn about ourselves from Peter’s denials?**
4. **Why was Jesus such a threat to the religious leaders?**
5. **We understand that unbelievers are blinded from the fullness of the truth by God Himself.**
6. **But they could see and all they could see was their “power” and wealth and positions, being placed in jeopardy… which were always tenuous, at best, with the Romans.**
7. **Jesus before Pilate.**
8. **Phase #1- John 18:28-40- *“Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor’s headquarters. It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor’s headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover. So Pilate went outside to them and said, ‘What accusation do you bring against this man?’ They answered him, ‘If this man were not doing evil, we would not have delivered him over to you.’ Pilate said to them, ‘Take him yourselves and judge him by your own law.’ The Jews said to him, ‘It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death.’ This was to fulfill the word that Jesus had spoken to show by what kind of death He was going to die. So Pilate entered his headquarters again and called Jesus and said to Him, ‘Are you the King of the Jews?’ Jesus answered, ‘Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?’ Pilate answered, ‘Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?’ Jesus answered, ‘My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.’ Then Pilate said to Him, ‘So you are a king?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.’ Pilate said to him, ‘What is truth?’ After he had said this, he went back outside to the Jews and told them, ‘I find no guilt in him. But you have a custom that I should release one man for you at the Passover. So do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?’ They cried out again, ‘Not this man, but Barabbas!’ Now Barabbas was a robber.”***
9. **John’s account of the interrogations of Jesus is much briefer that the other Gospels. John keeps his account simple to focus on a particular theological point. What is it?**
10. **It is the same point he has been making all along…the one that came front and center for everyone finally in the garden.**
11. **The point: that Jesus, the Son of God, allowed Himself to be sacrificed as the covenant Passover Lamb.**
12. **And it fulfills Jesus’ own prophecy from John 3:14- *“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him may have eternal life.”***
13. **What ironies do we see in these first few verses while the Jews spoke to Pilate? Given their willingness to “break” Jewish law to convict and innocent man and condemn Him to death we see these at least: *“They themselves did not enter the governor’s headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover.”***
14. **These hardened men were actually engaged in doing the wickedest act that mortal man ever did. They wanted to kill their own Messiah. And yet at this very time they talked of being *"defiled,"* and were very concerned about the Passover!**
15. **The Pharisees *“paid tithe of mint…while they neglected judgment, mercy, and faith."* (Matt. 23:23.) The very Jews who thirsted for Christ's blood were the Jews who pretended to fear the defilement of a Roman judgment hall, and made much to do about keeping the Passover!**
16. **The things they had done already would have been enough to keep them from eating the Passover according to the Law…in other words keep the rest of the Passover celebration that concluded on Saturday evening…but no one saw.**
17. **The examination began in the open air before a Gentile. As if they wanted people to see now. They wanted the Romans to think they had done things above board.**
18. **They are serving the Romans rather than their God.**
19. **They had worked with the Romans in the early parts of the morning to arrest Jesus. They would have had to have Pilate’s permission.**
20. ***Not lawful to put anyone to death*. How many times had they tried and couldn’t achieve success in this.**

* **So they had already illegally passed a death sentence upon Jesus…but wanted Pilate to carry it out.**
* **We have condemned Him…we have done our part…now your part in this partnership is the execution.**
* **Also there were other times that they ignored the Roman injunction- think Acts 7:54-60- the stoning of Stephen.**

1. **John does not tell us, but after Pilate seeks to send them away because they won’t give an accusation… they lie…such keepers of the truth they are!?!**

* **Luke 23:2- *“We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding us to give tribute to Caesar, and saying that he himself is Christ, a king.”***
* **Lying was yet another irony since they would be standing for the truth of God’s Passover.**

1. **What would you say surprised and maybe confused Pilate by Jesus’ answers?**
2. **The Jews had claimed Jesus had subverted the Roman authority and had named Himself king.**

* **So he naturally asks Him, *“Are you the king of the Jews.”***
* **I say naturally for he needed to ascertain if Jesus was a political threat …I mean he had been dealing with Zionist terrorist for a while.**
* **If Jesus was one of these then the course to capital punishment would be an easy one.**

1. **But when Pilate asked Him straight out if He was the king of Jews, Jesus surprised Pilate by answering him:**

* **First with a question, *‘Do you say this of your own accord, or did others say it to you about me?’***
* **His answer seems to indicate that he has surprised by Jesus’ question. *“Am I a Jew? Your own nation and the chief priests have delivered you over to me. What have you done?”***
* **He would have been flabbergasted that a criminal would even speak to him.**

1. **But Pilate seems to know that this is no ordinary prisoner …seems to know that Jesus hasn’t done anything worthy of death…**
2. **so since He didn’t believe the Jews, which was his custom He asks Jesus *“What have you done?”***

* **But Jesus doesn’t answer this question… but the one Pilate asked before… *“Are you the King of the Jews?”***
* **And what an answer: that He had no desire to fight for an earthly throne because His kingdom is not from the world.**
* **Why would Jesus use the words *“of”* or *“from”* as in, *“my kingdom is not of this world”* and then just a couple lines later say *“my kingdom is not from the world.”*? What does Jesus mean by kingdom? Why would the answer to that even be significant to Pilate? And to us?**
* **Using the term *“kingdom”* here Jesus is referring to His rule over time and space…not a kingdom in geographic space…His kingdom was now and not yet.**
* **Hence, His kingdom/rule is not *“of this world”* or *“not from this world.”***
* **But interestingly enough there is a domain connected to His rule…**

1. **That domain is in His people from every nation, tongue and tribe.**
2. **But the kingdom of God and the Church are not synonymous. But there is a symbiotic relationship.**
3. **The kingdom of God creates the church. His Church exists to gather new citizens those who the Spirit irresistibly calls.**
4. **His authority doesn’t come from the Church…but from the Godhead over the Church.**
5. **The Church witnesses to the kingdom of God…its mere existence testify to God’s rule.**
6. **The Church is the instrument of the kingdom in that God through the Spirit as the primary mechanism to expand the kingdom.**
7. **The Kingdom of God is already but not yet…present in Christ and through the work of the Church to make the kingdom known and yet we are looking forward to the New Heavens and New Earth when all things are renewed.**

* **Why would the answer to that even be significant to Pilate? And to us?**
* **The kingdom of God does not advance by armies and literal warrior-saints but by the power of God. It might have been good if those who were stirred up by the Crusades would have spent a bit more time meditating on this text…or maybe even the Christian Nationalists today.**
* **Pilate seems to have believed Jesus was not political threat…so he asks him a deeper question.**

1. **Truth…How does Jesus little speech on the truth seem to affect Pilate?**

* **He finds no fault in Jesus… only a philosopher maybe…or maybe someone teetering on the edge of sanity not worth of his time and Roman justice…but based on the other accounts Pilate is moved by Jesus.**
* **So Pilate is drawn by Jesus to ask the obvious question. *“What is truth?”***
* **Was it sarcasm?**
* **Was it a real reflection by someone who has never had an answer to that question?**

1. **Two things:**

* **How is Pilates question still relevant today?**
* **For there are so many that are caught up in the thinking of the day.**

1. **There is no absolute truth.**
2. **You have your truth… I have mine.**
3. **Truth is something personal and not necessarily transferrable…in fact, don’t try to force your truth on me.**

* **Believers in every age must remember that our Lord's conduct in this place is meant to be our example.**
* **Like Him we are to be witnesses to God's truth, salt in the midst of corruption, light in the midst of darkness, men and women not afraid to stand alone, and to testify for God against the ways of sin and the world. The duty is clear and plain.**
* **But truth is only “knowable” by believers who seek out the truth in Christ.**
* **Solomon’s words are still relevant for us from Prov. 2:3-5-*“My son,… if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God.”* The Truth will set us free!**
* **How did Jesus answer that question for Pilate and us?**
* ***“For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”***
* **He is truth! John 14:6- “I am the way, the Truth and the Life.”**
* **He did not come to win a kingdom with the sword, and to gather adherents and followers by force. He came armed with no other weapon but *"truth."* This was one great purpose of His ministry.**

1. **So to finish out this first phase of trial before Pilate, what is Pilate’s solution?**

* **Someone must die today. Barabbas was already slated to go to a cross…**
* **In the gospels Barabbas is accused of at least 3 crimes…theft /robber, insurrection/terrorist and murder (Mark 15:7).**
* **So being magnanimous or simply thinking that the Jews would not want to upset the Roman governor offers them something from their own customs concerning the Passover.**
* **Surely they won’t put to death an innocent man…their King… when there was a bonafide criminal to put to death!**
* **But the people had been paid off (Matt. 27:20; Mark 15:11) to shout the answer the priests wanted…much like many crowds today of rioters in our own culture.**

1. **Why is it significant that Jesus was innocent? How does that make His sacrifice for our sin effective?**

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**March 6, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **Truth…How does Jesus little speech on the truth seem to affect Pilate?**
4. **He finds no fault in Jesus… only a philosopher maybe…or maybe someone teetering on the edge of sanity not worth of his time and Roman justice…but based on the other accounts Pilate is moved by Jesus.**
5. **So Pilate is drawn by Jesus to ask the obvious question. *“What is truth?”***
6. **Was it sarcasm?**
7. **Was it a real reflection by someone who has never had an answer to that question?**

* **Had he gotten to a point of curiosity and concern.**
* **Had he come to the place of many Romans that their gods weren’t cutting it.**
* **Was he like others drawn to Jesus but not changed?**

1. **How did Jesus answer that question for Pilate and us?**
2. ***“For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.”***
3. **He says He is truth! John 14:6- “I am the way, the Truth and the Life.”**
4. **He did not come to win a kingdom with the sword, and to gather adherents and followers by force. He came armed with no other weapon but *"truth."* This was one great purpose of His ministry.**
5. **John 19- Phase 2 of trial vs. 1-16**
6. **Why do you suppose Pilate felt it necessary to have Jesus flogged when he was headed to be crucified? Vs. 1-4- *“Then Pilate took Jesus and flogged Him. And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head and arrayed Him in a purple robe. They came up to Him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ and struck Him with their hands. Pilate went out again and said to them, ‘See, I am bringing him out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him.’”***
7. **Maybe he had hopes to satisfy the mob who appears to have been whipped up to a frenzy at this point.**
8. **But he was a brutal man no matter how unsettled he had been in Jesus’ presence.**
9. **So he has Jesus scourged and mocked physically. Maybe he hoped the crowd would see the punishment and end this since he had found no fault in the man.**
10. **Flog/ Scourge= the prisoner was strapped to a pole or a frame of some kind. This scourging was done according Roman practices.**

* **The whip was made with long leather straps embedded with metal and bone at the end to cause the shredding of the backside of the victim to whip the prisoner within an inch of their life.**
* **This action literally tore a man’s back into strips. Few remained conscious from the pain and then the massive blood loss …many died and others went mad according to church historians of that time.**
* **It actually was a test and a game (wagers were taken) to see who could do the most damage without killing the prisoner.**
* **Scourging had 3 purposes at that time:**
* **Punishment**
* **Confession**
* **In the case of one going to be crucified, it was administered to weaken the prisoner so that he would die more quickly on the cross.**

1. **To mock him physically and mentally next, *“And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head and arrayed Him in a purple robe. They came up to Him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ and struck Him with their hands.”***

* **Everything about this was intended to humiliate our Lord. Here the roman authority mocks Him as a king.**
* **The thorns on this particular thorn bush rivaled our own thorn bushes. These thorns grew as long as 12 inches.**
* **They were placed on Jesus head then they would have been pushed into His head to further cut, pierce and bloody His head in fulfillment of prophesy.**
* **Many of the earliest church fathers attested to the fact that according to those who were there Jesus wore the crown as He was crucified.**
* **The purple robes is what kings and rulers wore in that day…mocking Him even more especially when He is eventually brought out to the crowd.**
* **The Romans mocked Him by giving Him titles… *“Hail, King of the Jews!”…*it was meant to humiliate.**
* **Then they also struck Him…for who doesn’t want to strike a king?!?! Getting out their frustration on this one who symbolized royalty to them in the moment…cruel and evil but fulfilling a moment of pent up frustration for their own leaders.**
* **The Jewish leaders had mocked him as the Messiah- Matt. 26:67-68- *“Then they spit in His face and struck him. And some slapped Him, saying, ‘Prophesy to us, you Christ! Who is it that struck you?’”***

1. **Pilate wished to exonerate himself by bringing Jesus out and saying what he had said before…that Jesus was innocent.**

* **As a judge he had both reason and responsibility to release this innocent man of any wrongdoing with no punishment.**
* **But politically his job was hanging in the balance of how he ruled these unruly peoples. This would have all been part of the official record that went to the Emperor.**

1. **Pilate never declares Jesus guilty of anything.**
2. **Now let’s look at verses 5-6. Pilate knew their laws…he had been here…standing in front of these men… more often than he should have been when they were wanting some favor from the Romans. Other times he would have known of executions they carried out without wanting or needing Roman intervention. But this man was a celebrity. And look at him now…beaten and mocked with blood, sweat and spit all over Him. So what is Pilate seeking to do? What kind of game was he playing with them? *“So Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. Pilate said to them, ‘Behold the man!’ When the chief priests and the officers saw Him, they cried out, ‘Crucify Him, crucify Him!’ Pilate said to them, ‘Take Him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no guilt in Him.’”***
3. **Pilate is sitting on his judgment seat and he declares, *“Behold the man!”***
4. ***“Behold”*…look carefully, consider carefully what you see and what you want to do!**
5. **Look at this guy; does He look like a threat?**
6. **I will not declare Him guilty of anything.**
7. ***“the man,”* almost prophetic don’t you think? Maybe for the first time…but look closely…God wants us...His children… to look closely into what Jesus came to do and did…so that we don’t find ourselves compromising or becoming apathetic or worse...unmoved by what He went through on our behalf.**
8. **He is mocking them as well…Pilate never missed an opportunity it seems to get back at these people.**
9. **In these words there is almost a call to judgment to all who did this to Him...Jew and Gentile…look at what you do…consider what you do…and what the outcome will be for your souls!**
10. **Pilate sought on many occasions according to the other gospels to grant Jesus’ release but it is cleared that he failed to get the multitude to pity him instead they, especially the religious leaders called for His death. *‘Crucify Him, crucify Him!’***
11. **Even with the way Jesus would have looked…they were full of hatred.**
12. **It was the only thing that would satisfy their blood-lust.**
13. **These men represent all non-believers… all those who hate Jesus throughout time…all those who reject Him and His teachings even if they wouldn’t physically call for His death.**
14. **Again, Pilate knowing their laws tells them to take Jesus and crucify him since he can find no fault in Him…that is 3 times…now… that this sentiment has been recorded… 18: 38, 19: 4 and here.**
15. **Let’s consider this section here ...verses 7-11- *“The Jews answered him, ‘We have a law, and according to that law He ought to die because He has made Himself the Son of God.’ When Pilate heard this statement, he was even more afraid. He entered his headquarters again and said to Jesus, ‘Where are you from?’ But Jesus gave him no answer. So Pilate said to him, ‘You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you? Jesus answered him, ‘You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin.”* This section begs a few questions.**
16. **What “new” charge was being leveled in Pilate’s presence and why are they leveling it now?**
17. ***“He ought to die because He has made Himself the Son of God.”***
18. **So now they breakout the big guns…if calling Himself a king wasn’t enough for Pilate to render the acceptable judgment…then how about a man so delusional that He makes Himself to be the Son of God?**

* **They wanted Him dead not because He claimed to be king, but because He claimed to be God, the unique Son of God.**
* **In John’s Gospel more than perhaps the others Jesus never hid who He is and even made it abundantly clear that He knew who He is.**
* **The Jews understood who He claimed to be when He called Himself the Son of God…but they also knew it because of what He did in fulfilling the prophecy.**

1. **What is Pilate afraid of?**
2. **The text doesn’t say whether he was angry, amused or amazed when he learned Jesus made Himself to be the Son of God.**
3. **The text says instead, *“…he was even more afraid.”*  Exceedingly afraid….as the Greek might indicate.**

* **Answers some other questions about why he treated Jesus with such an audience …something not done with a prisoner…**
* **Also tells us why he has said 3 times… *“…I find no guilt in Him.”***
* **Also, answers why he would try to have him released so many times.**

1. **Did he see more in Jesus than just a man? Did His answers give him pause like no one else? Did he see this man as the man that could end his career if this wasn’t handled correctly...politically?**
2. **Was his own sense of pagan religiosity getting the best of him?**

* **Every Roman had some sense of “belief” in deities…from the Emperor to the higher gods like Zeus and others.**
* **Every Roman had a heightened since of the existence of demi-gods …the children of the gods having mated with a human.**

1. **Or was it his wife’s premonition that is not recorded for us in John’s Gospel: Matt. 27:19- *“Besides, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent word to him, ‘Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I have suffered much because of him today in a dream.’”***
2. **Given Pilate’s exceeding fear, what does his next question mean? *“Where are you from?”***
3. **Pilate is desperate and he wants Jesus to give him the definitive answer so that he might let Jesus go.**
4. **Jesus had offered that information many times to the religious leaders… *“I come from my Father”* and similar things.**
5. **But in Pilate’s fear he asks a good question...because to know the answer from where Jesus comes from is to know Jesus.**
6. **Jesus doesn’t answer him…because Pilate already knew the answer to the degree that a non-believer can know.**
7. **What is the point of this final exchange? Vs. 10-11- *“So Pilate said to Him, ‘You will not speak to me? Do you not know that I have authority to release you and authority to crucify you?’ Jesus answered him, ‘You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above. Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin.”***
8. **Jesus’ silence, like in the other gospels fulfills the prophecy in *Isaiah 53:7- “He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so He opened not his mouth.”* This silence probably added to Pilate’s fear of Jesus as well.**
9. **Pilate gets personal with his prisoner, *“You will not speak to me?”* In other words, *“Now you aren’t talking to me?”***

* **In a courtroom, titles are how one is addressed and how the judge addresses himself.**
* ***“Me”* is extremely personal for a Roman official …but he is scared after all… so protocols are dispensed with.**
* **Jesus had been talking to him and now He is not.**

1. **Pilates fear was probably added to by Jesus’ apparent lack of intimidation by Roman authority.**
2. **If Pilate was shaking in his sandals before this answer of Jesus concerning what He thought of Roman power would have put him over the top. *“You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been given you from above.”***

* **Jesus did not deny Pilates power.**
* **He simply acknowledged to him that all power is granted by God and not inherited or given by Rome primarily.**

1. **But maybe Jesus threw Pilate a bit of a bone with His last statement, “*Therefore he who delivered me over to you has the greater sin.”***

* **Jesus didn’t say the Pilate was sinless.**
* **He simply said that the religious leaders …those that had had the Law …were guilty of greater sin. Prov. 1:24-29- *“Because I have called and you refused to listen, have stretched out my hand and no one has heeded, because you have ignored all my counsel and would have none of my reproof, I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when terror strikes you, when terror strikes you like a storm and your calamity comes like a whirlwind, when distress and anguish come upon you. Then they will call upon me, but I will not answer; they will seek me diligently but will not find me. Because they hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD.”***
* **This was God’s plan all along. II Thess. 2:11-12- *“Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”***

1. **The creed is still true…*He suffered under Pontius Pilate*…this name has gone down in infamy. And Jesus is still to suffer.**
2. **The last part of the trial before Pilate. Vs. 12-16- *“From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, ‘If you release this man, you are not Caesar’s friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.’ So when Pilate heard these words, he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called The Stone Pavement, and in Aramaic Gabbatha. Now it was the day of Preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour. He said to the Jews, ‘Behold your King!’ They cried out, ‘Away with him, away with him, crucify him!’ Pilate said to them, ‘Shall I crucify your King?’ The chief priests answered, ‘We have no king but Caesar.’ So he delivered Him over to them to be crucified.”***
3. **Pilate still wants to release Jesus. What stops him in his tracks and why?**
4. **He knew in his bones that Jesus was innocent.**
5. **He had the premonition of his wife and Romans were exceedingly superstitious.**
6. **He knew these men and their propensity to lie and put others in their crosshairs for their own gain.**
7. **Jesus had said...in his thinking…that the high priest was more liable to judgment for this than he was.**
8. **But the moment Caesar’s title is thrown out there publically…all bets were off.**

* **For he was most fearful for his position when all was said and done. For while he wasn’t a traitor he wasn’t a friend of Caesar’s either.**
* ***Friend of Caesar* was a specific title for those closest to the Emperor.**
* **But by making this point they were conveying to Pilate that word would get back to the Emperor of his treason…at least the claim of treason …and that would end his career and maybe his life.**
* **He may have been married to the Emperors granddaughter but he was in Palestine, as governor, as a way of punishment not as a favor.**
* **So in a very interesting way he probably felt he was being judged as much as Jesus.**

1. **Program note: *“judgment seat at the place called the Stone Pavement and in Aramaic Gabbatha”* Gabbatha means elevated place…raised up place…raised platform…which was common so the Roman leader could be high and raised up to make his judgment.**
2. ***“Now it was the day of preparation of the Passover. It was about the sixth hour.”***

* **Probably the Preparation day for the Sabbath of the Passover week for this was Friday.**
* **And it was 6: 00 on Friday morning.**

1. **By now he has acknowledged that he has failed to get Jesus released, so what is the point of continuing to poke the bear? *“He said to the Jews, ‘Behold your King! … Shall I crucify your king?’”***
2. **He never missed an opportunity to get back at them. He hated them as much as they hated him…but they had him.**
3. **His fear drives him to sarcasm needing to get something from this exchange with these people…maybe he could get the satisfaction of making them madder and possibly confused because as we will see he will place a sign over Jesus’ head that said “the King of the Jews” (vs. 20)**
4. **But they continue to invoke the one thing that will get them what they want… *“‘We have no king but Caesar.”* This was also yet another nail in their coffin of God’s judgment.**
5. **Looking at Pilate as we see him in chapters 18-19, in what ways does he represent sinful man?**
6. **Sinful man lacks decision of character.**
7. **Sinful man does not possess the courage of his convictions…probably doesn’t really have anything he would die for.**
8. **Sinful man seeks to compromise with wrong if necessary to protect himself or get what he wants.**
9. **Sinful man will disobey conscience for fear of personal loss.**
10. ***“So he delivered Him over to them to be crucified.”* And as I said before he will always be remembered in the Church.**
11. **An overarching question. How does Pilate, the chief priests, the soldiers and the people fulfill God’s plan, even without them knowing it?**
12. **At least 7 times in John from 18:33-19:16…Jesus is referred to as a King or the King of the Jews by Pilate and his soldiers.**
13. **Now understandably there is some sarcasm here because their disdain for the Jews…specifically the Jewish religious leadership.**
14. **As the morning went on…Pilate wasn’t sure WHO he was dealing with so the title stuck…out of fear and out of disdain.**
15. **Even the non-believers praise Him by using His actual title. For God will be praised.**
16. **The chief priests even refer to Him as the Son of God.**
17. **The people echo what the priests have told them to say…paid them to say…like riots and mobs today it seems.**
18. **This has been prophesied…and it has been accomplished and all these folks were used by God to fulfill His purposes.**
19. **This One…this King must die.**
20. **His reign turns on His death and resurrection.**
21. **And, of course, the truth is He is King of the Jews…that is the children of the promise…the Church!**
22. **Doctrine question: Why is it significant that Jesus was innocent? How does that make His sacrifice for our sin effective?**

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**March 13, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **Seems like the ministry of Jesus has failed. Seems like His adversaries have won? Seems like Satan has finally triumphed after all vs. 16 begins with these words, *“So he (Pilate) delivered Him over to them to be crucified.”* How does this extend the kingdom of God?**
4. **What does this say to us about Jesus’ commitment to His mission and to us?**
5. **John 19:16-42**
6. **Jesus’ Crucifixion-vs. 16-27- *“So they took Jesus, 17 and He went out, bearing His own cross, to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha. 18 There they crucified Him, and with Him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them. 19 Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, ‘Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.’ 20 Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek. 21 So the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, ‘Do not write, ‘The King of the Jews,’ but rather, ‘This man said, I am King of the Jews.’ 22 Pilate answered, ‘What I have written I have written.’ 23 When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took His garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also His tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, 24 so they said to one another, ‘Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be.’ This was to fulfill the Scripture which says, ‘They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.’ So the soldiers did these things, 25 but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, ‘Woman, behold, your son!’ 27 Then He said to the disciple, ‘Behold, your mother!’ And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.”***
   1. **What part of this event is missing from your recollection and why do you suppose that John didn’t think it a necessary thing to tell?**
7. **Roman custom required the one being crucified to carry the crossbar obviously to draw attention to the criminal and his fate and what would be a similar fate for anyone that sought to do as he did.**
8. **So He would have at least begun to carry the cross…then…and in the fullest sense He was considered a sinner, and counted a curse for our sakes.**
9. **But the synoptic Gospels- Matthew, Mark and Luke- all have the brief story of Simon of Cyrene who was compelled to carry the crossbar of Jesus’ cross because Jesus was so weak.**
10. **So He began by bearing the cross bar which reminds us of words to that affect for us:**

* **Matt. 16:24-25- *“Then Jesus told His disciples, ‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”***
* **Luke 9:*23- “And He said to all, ‘If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.’”***
* **What is Jesus communicating to us with these texts and His personal actions carry His crossbar?**
* **He is obedient.**

1. **Whoever has a mind for heaven must discard the influence of the world.**
2. **Giving up the world the Bible tells us that we will be saved… Mark 8:34-35- *“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 35 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it.”***
3. **In the end the Bible tells us we will receive the treasure of heaven…our full inheritance.**

* **He is submissive.**

1. **I Peter 2: 20-21- *“For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. 21 For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.”* This text should bring to mind the ordeal surrounding the actual event of the cross of Christ.**
2. **But in the mean time we must take up the cross. We must be submissive or resigned to His will…which is all too often found in suffering as He suffered.**
3. **That is, all the troubles and afflictions that the Lord is pleased to send upon His people in sanctification… transforming us more and more into the image of Jesus Christ.**
4. **J.C. Ryle said, *“All that have a mind for heaven must lay down the world, so we can take up the cross.”***

* **He is committed to the purpose that He came… *“Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.”***
* **Interestingly as well, that He is willing to allow others to bear His burden (in Simon the Cyrene) which will play out for us as we are to bear one another’s burdens.**
  1. **What different prophesies are fulfilled in this section alone, vs. 17-24…can you think of any of them?**

1. **He was despisedand He went out bearing His cross- Isaiah 53:3-5- *“He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces; He was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was pierced for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His wounds we are healed.”***
2. **Pretty much pick any sacrifice that needed to be finally dealt with outside of the city…(“…*and He went out…to the place called The Place of a Skull, which in Aramaic is called Golgotha.’ )* so let’s consider- Lev. 16:27- *“And the bull for the sin offering and the goat for the sin offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the Holy Place, shall be carried outside the camp.”***
3. **His crucifixion with others being crucified as well- Vs.18- *“There they crucified Him, and with Him two others, one on either side, and Jesus between them.”***

* **This is a fulfillment of**
* **Psalm 22:16- *“ For dogs encompass me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet…”***
* **Is. 53:8- *“By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people?”***
* **Is. 53:10- *“Yet it was the will of the LORD to crush Him; He has put Him to grief…”***
* **And Is. 53:12- *“Therefore I will divide Him a portion with the many, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul to death and was numbered with the transgressors; yet He bore the sin of many, and makes intercession for the transgressors.”***
* **The Persians invented crucifixion but it is said that the Romans perfected it, making it an institution.**
* **It was the form of execution reserved for the worst of repeat offenders.**
* **It had been defined to make the victim die slowly and painfully.**

1. **The victim would be nail with outstretched arm through the forearm right behind the wrist since the hand would rip from the weight.**
2. **Then once they were lifted up their feet would be nailed together just below the heel.**
3. **The nails were large hand-hewn spikes 16 to 18 inches long. It would take a large hammer to drive such nails and all awhile the victim is sustaining that pain as well from the jarring of its weight.**
4. **There was a place for the feet to rest but it was placed just out of reach until the body had slumped enough to actually rest there.**
5. **A person could die from acute shock from blood loss, dehydration, a stress induced heart attack, congestive heart failure, inability to breath as the body slumped further and further down the victims air ways would be all but shut off.**
6. **And as we will see if these weren’t enough to kill the person crucified then they would break the legs and the victim would surely die by suffocation.**

* **Crucifixion was so bad that polite Romans wouldn’t talk about it in public.**

1. **It was right that He is designated as the King, by Pilate’s acclamation and signage. Again it was Roman custom to place a sign with the criminals name and crime Vs. 19- *“Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, ‘Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews’”***

* **Is. 9:7- *“Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.”***
* **Even before our Lord was born, the angel Gabriel declared to the Virgin Mary, Luke 1:32-33- *“He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”***
* **Almost as soon as He was born, there came wise men from the East, saying, “*Where is He who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw His star when it rose and have come to worship Him.”* (Matt. 2:2.)**
* **The very week before the crucifixion, the multitude who accompanied our Lord at His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, had cried, *“Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, even the King of Israel!”(*John 12:13.)**
* **The current belief of all godly Jews was, that when Messiah, the Son of David came, He would come as a political King.**
* **A kingdom of God was continually proclaimed by our Lord throughout His ministry. A King He was and is and will be, as He told Pilate, of a kingdom utterly unlike the kingdoms of this world, but for all that a true King of a true kingdom, and a Ruler of true subjects.**
* **For such He was born. As such He lived. As such He was crucified. And as such He will come again, and reign over the whole earth, King of kings and Lord of lords.**

1. **Verse 20-22 gets at another obscure text- they glared not only at the inscription but Jesus himself.**

* **Ps. 22:7- *“All who see me mock me; they make mouths at me; they wag their heads…”***
* **Ps. 22:17- *“I can count all my bones—they stare and gloat over me…”***
* **Zech. 12:10- *“…so when they look on me, on Him whom they have pierced, they shall mourn for Him…”***

1. **His garments in verses 23-24 are also a subject of prophecy.**

* **Ps. 22:18- *“they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots.”***
* **This tunic probably would have been the purple robe placed upon Jesus for show from Pilate’s collection.So it would have had some value if you didn’t mind that the last one wearing it was a man condemned to death and stained with blood.**

1. **As His mother Mary and the women stood by the cross, Mary undoubtedly remembered this prophecy from Simeon, Luke 2: 34-35- *“Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”***
   1. **What is the point of verses 25-27? *“…but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother’s sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. 26 When Jesus saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby, He said to His mother, ‘Woman, behold, your son!’ 27 Then He said to the disciple, ‘Behold, your mother!’ And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.”***
2. **Look where these women were…what a contrast to the disciple’s and Pilate’s fearfulness…they we *“standing by the cross”* near enough that everyone Jew and Roman would see…and they weren’t afraid.**

* **Teaching us that standing for Christ is always the right thing to do no matter what it may cost us.**
* **Not concerned with her own reputation…but Jesus is.**

1. **By His actions Jesus also fulfilled the Law… Ex. 20:12-*“Honor your father and your mother…”***
2. **Jesus tenderly wishes to care for His mother in His absence.**

* **Even in the agony of the Cross He still had the wherewithal to set His human affairs in order.**
* **She might be considered the mother of a criminal…a lunatic or a liar. She had already had to deal with the talk about Jesus being conceived outside of a constituted marriage. So she would need to be taken care of.**
* **And there was the obvious…parents are not supposed to bury their children and she would need support going forward in her grief.**
* **So He commends her to the loving disciple John.**

1. **Jesus had other siblings. Why entrust His mother to John instead of them?**

* **They probably weren’t even there and they didn’t follow Him yet. Jesus wanted to leave His mother with a trusted believer.**
* **Perhaps, Jesus knew that John would live the longest of all His disciples.**
* **Maybe to emphasized that kingdom family is sometimes more important than blood relatives.**
* **As was mentioned, this also may have been in response to something else Jesus had said about separation of families between the faithful and non. Luke 12:51-53-*“Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. 52 For from now on in one house there will be five divided, three against two and two against three. 53 They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”* Distinguishing the kind of separation that will occur even in biological families because of the gospel and at the same time the importance of the Christian family and our oneness.**

1. **This reminds us of His heart that even on the cross He felt for Mary and this is a heart that never changes.**

* **The Scriptures have been clear that Jesus is always with us to never forsake us, so Jesus never forgets any who love Him, and even in their worst estate remembers their need.**
* **No wonder that Peter says, *“Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time He may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on Him, because He cares for you.”* (1 Pet. 5:7.)**
  1. **John’s main point is not to give a blow by blow description of all that occurred. How does Jesus’ fulfillment of OT prophesies strengthen John’s case?**

1. **The theme and purpose of this book is that all of this is written so that we may believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that by believing we may have life in His name.**
2. **So His main point in this section and the next two sections of John 19 is that prophecy is fulfilled.**
3. **In John’s account of the crucifixion, every sign points to this truth which only strengthens his case.**
4. **The Death of Jesus- vs. 28-37 *“After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), ‘I thirst.’ 29 A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to His mouth. 30 When Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, ‘It is finished,’ and He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.* *Since it was the day of Preparation, and so that the bodies would not remain on the cross on the Sabbath (for that Sabbath was a high day), the Jews asked Pilate that their legs might be broken and that they might be taken away. 32 So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the first, and of the other who had been crucified with Him. 33 But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. 34 But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water. 35 He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe. 36 For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled: ‘Not one of His bones will be broken.’ 37 And again another Scripture says, ‘They will look on him whom they have pierced.’***
   1. **Again yet more fulfillment of prophesy:**
5. **Jesus said to fulfill the Scriptures- “I thirst” fulfilling**

* **Ps. 22: 15- *“…my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death.”***
* **Ps. 69:21- *“They gave me poison for food, and for my thirst they gave me sour wine to drink.”***
* **Jesus had refused the earlier offer of drink (Mark 15:23) because it would have had a narcotic effect on Him…this was simply a wine vinegar …a much diluted wine for laborers and soldiers to quench thirst. It was probably sitting there for the soldiers for the long day.**

1. **The image of the hyssop branch has long standing implications of the saving blood of the Passover Lamb, starting back in Ex. 12…**
2. **None of His bones were broken… Ps. 34:20- *“He keeps all his bones; not one of them is broken.”***
   1. **What does Jesus mean by *“‘It is finished,’ and He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.”***
3. **Of the seven famous sayings of Christ on the cross, none is more remarkable than this, which John alone has recorded. The other gospels report Him crying out in a loud voice but they do report His final words as John does…since this is a first hand account.**
4. **Normally this Greek word… *“tetelestai”…*was a cry of victory by the winner in a contest…He has completed the purpose for which He came… John 1:29- *“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”* This word was also stamped onto a bill of sales or when one paid their debt as in “Paid in Full!”**

* **Atonement for His own is complete.**
* **His perfect obedience was complete.**
* **The satisfaction of God justice and appeasement of God’s wrath is complete.**
* **The ceremonial and judicial laws are fulfilled and paid in full.**
* **Christ’s cross work finishes …once and for all time and once for all His people!**
* **When we look, truly look at the finished work of Christ, we experience His peace. Col. 2: 9-10 tells us we are complete in Him, when we believe. *“For in Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in Him, who is the head of all rule and authority.”***

1. **With nothing left to do…Jesus simply bowed His head and gave up His spirit…**

* **Jesus did not hang His head in defeat, but in the peace of a job completed just as it was supposed to be.**
* **He had the power to take His own life… He… *“gave up His spirit.”* which He does.**
* **John tells us in John 10:17-18- *“For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”***
* **Augustine said of this verse, *“He gave up His life because He willed it, when He willed it, and as He willed it.”***
* **His life was a voluntary surrender…a decision made before eternity… the absolute completion of His will to the Father.**
* **This kind of submission is what is expected of us as well in this life.**
  1. **What does the rest of this section tell us that is “good” for our faith?**

1. **The fulfillment of Scripture is good for our faith once again proving that our God does in fact keep His promises:**

* **The Lamb of God did not suffer a broken bone just like was required of the Passover lamb. See Ex. 12:46 and Num. 9:12**
* **Even taking Him down rather than doing what the Romans preferred…to let a body rot in full view…was answer to the Law…Deut. 21:22-23- *“And if a man has committed a crime punishable by death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, his body shall not remain all night on the tree, but you shall bury him the same day, for a hanged man is cursed by God. You shall not defile your land that the Lord your God is giving you for an inheritance.”***
* **What irony is registered here with this request?**
* **The one’s who called for His murder, were the same ones seeking to look pious by having the body come down.**
* **Also, they didn’t want the reminder.**
* **They were concerned with the feast. Even though they had just put to death the One for whom the feast was established in the first place.**

1. **Jesus was dead …dead…or they would have broken his legs to speed death up. This is good for our faith for if He hadn’t really died there would not be a resurrection and our faith would be futile.**

* **We are told that one of the soldiers instead, *“But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and at once there came out blood and water.”***
* **This supplies a proof that the heart of Jesus was pierced, and that life was extinct.**
* **He did not merely faint, or swoon away, or become insensible, as some have sought to say. His heart actually ceased to beat, and He actually died.**
* **This is of immense importance. For we must all see that without real death there could be no real sacrifice; that without real death there could be no real resurrection; and that without a real death and real resurrection, the whole of Christianity is a house built on sand, and has no foundation at all.**
* **It is so cool for us today to see how helpful this small act by this Roman soldier could help of our faith, when he thrust his spear into our Lord's side proving Jesus was in fact, dead.**
* **Fulfilling Scripture once again. Zech.12:10- *“And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and pleas for mercy, so that, when they look on me, on him whom they have pierced, they will mourn…”***

1. **John testifies that what is said is true as an eye witness to it all. *“He who saw it has borne witness—his testimony is true, and he knows that he is telling the truth—that you also may believe.”***

* **This is his solemn oath to us that he is being truthful.**
* **So we can believe…John 20:21.**
* **Our faith is not a leap in the dark…but it is a verifiable truth. A truth that changes lives. John was there as am “eye witness” to these events.**

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**March 20, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **How does John’s portrayal of Jesus fulfilling so many OT prophesies strengthen His case?**
   1. **The theme and purpose of this book is that all of this is written so that we may believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that by believing we may have life in His name.**
   2. **So His main point in this section and the next two sections of John 19 is that prophecy is fulfilled showing Christ to be the Sin of God prophesied.**
   3. **In John’s account of the crucifixion, every sign points to this truth which only strengthens his case.**
4. **What were Jesus’ final words and why are they significant for us?**
   1. ***“It is finished!”* His last recorded words as He then bowed before the Father and willingly gave up His spirit.**
   2. **Of the seven famous sayings of Christ on the cross, none is more remarkable than this, which John alone has recorded. The other gospels report Him crying out in a loud voice but they do report His final words as John does…since this is a firsthand account.**
   3. **Normally this Greek word… *“tetelestai”…*was a cry of victory by the winner in a contest…He has completed the purpose for which He came… John 1:29- *“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”* This word was also stamped onto a bill of sales or when one paid their debt as in “Paid in Full!”**
5. **Atonement for His own is complete.**
6. **His perfect obedience was complete.**
7. **The satisfaction of God justice and appeasement of God’s wrath is complete.**
8. **The ceremonial and judicial laws are fulfilled and paid in full.**
9. **Christ’s cross work finishes …once and for all time and once for all His people!**
10. **When we look, truly look at the finished work of Christ, we experience His peace. Col. 2: 9-10 tells us we are complete in Him, when we believe. *“For in Him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily, and you have been filled in Him, who is the head of all rule and authority.”***
    1. **With nothing left to do…Jesus simply bowed His head and gave up His spirit…**
11. **Jesus did not hang His head in defeat, but in the peace of a job completed just as it was supposed to be. Hebrews 12:1-2- *“Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.”***
12. **He had the power and the desire to take His own life… He… *“gave up His spirit.”* which He does.**
13. **John tells us in John 10:17-18- *“For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”***

* **Augustine said of this verse, *“He gave up His life because He willed it, when He willed it, and as He willed it.”***
* **His life was a voluntary surrender…a decision made before eternity… the absolute completion of His will to the Father.**

1. **This kind of submission is what is expected of us as well in this life.**
2. **Jesus Is Buried- vs. 38-42- *“After these things Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away His body. 39 Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. 40 So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews. 41 Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. 42 So because of the Jewish day of Preparation, since the tomb was close at hand, they laid Jesus there.”***
   * + 1. **What goes through your mind when I ask the question why Pilate would give permission to take Jesus’ body for burial?**
          1. **Roman law required that the bodies be left to rot on the cross. But there were occasions where necessity occurred and the bodies would have to be taken down early.**
3. **In this case, to appease the religious elites that had talked him into killing an innocent man.**
4. **Or, when they had multiple crucifixions to do in a day.**
5. **Family could petition the Roman authorities but…**
   * + - 1. **When the bodies had to be taken down they were thrown into an area behind the crosses and left to rot and be eaten by the carrion birds and in some places there was a constant smoldering fire to burn the bodies- Gehenna…so the smell was often unbearable even for the soldiers that had to work there, especially in the heat of summer.**
         2. **That is what the Romans would have done with Jesus…save for the request of Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, both of the Sanhedrin at the time and followers of Christ, though in secret.**
6. **Until this event we have never heard of Joseph before. He is talked about in the other Gospels but not until this time.**
7. **Here is a man named among the friends of Christ but whose history, both before and after this crisis, is completely withheld from the Church.**
8. **He comes forward to do honor to Christ, when the Apostles, save for John, had forsaken Him and fled.**
9. **John had already told us that, *“Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in Him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.”* (John 12:42)**
   * + - 1. **Maybe he liked Joseph and Nicodemus …maybe he still felt guilty… so better to have him buried than to throw him away like refuse.**
         2. **But, of course, this was God the Father’s action through these men.**
10. **God had not intended for Jesus to have to endure one more indignity or an extra moment of humiliation…it was after all finished.**
11. **So after He is taken down God provides a burial place for Him in a rich man’s tomb…probably Joseph’s family tomb. Both are classified as wealthy and influential men in the other gospels.**

* **The evening was coming of the beginning of the Sabbath of the Passover week.**
* **Jesus’ family could not have afforded anything like this.**
* **Another prophesy answered, Is. 53:8-9- *“By oppression and judgment He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people? And they made His grave with the wicked and with a rich man in His death, although He had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.”***

1. **Jesus’ humiliation is over.**

* **Now begins His exaltation for He is laid in a new unused tomb which was close at hand.**
* **The grammar implies that these two men alone took His body after it had been let down and applied the spices and then wrapped Him up per the custom of the Jews…**
* **So that no one else could get caught up in the scandal?**
* **Maybe they actually believed the prophecy that stated that Jesus’ body would be laid in a rich man’s tomb.**
* **Maybe they wanted to do this as their offering to Him…like the Mary who had poured oil on Jesus’ feet….to proclaim their allegiance to this Man…their Savior.**
* **What are we to learn from Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus?**
* **Whatever the reason for doing what they did only those with an immense faith would have taken the risk to be associated with Jesus at this point.**
* **We read this about Joseph- Luke 23:50-51- *“Now there was a man named Joseph, from the Jewish town of Arimathea. He was a member of the council, a good and righteous man, who had not consented to their decision and action; and he was looking for the kingdom of God.”* A fellow believer.**
* **Nicodemus encounters Jesus early on but remains mostly silent as he watches and waits. (John 3)**
* **He did step up in John 7 to question the actions of his fellow leaders concerning Jesus.**

1. **Nicodemus originally came by night because he was afraid the others on the Sanhedrin would know.**
2. **But now he has grown unafraid because everyone would know what he and Joseph had done.**

* **We see men who see the dignity in an honorable funeral.**
* **So these were men of deep faith, sincere faith and concerned with the honor of their fellow Christian, in this case, their Lord and savior Jesus Christ.**
* **This shows us that there are Christians out there…that we don’t know about…God uses those we would least expect and never know to do His work in faith. Like Elijah we must be careful to think we are alone.**
* **Let’s consider what these wealthy and influential men actually did.**
* **After Jesus’ body was taken down they would have had to de-spike his hands …I don’t know what you use with such a long spike but that would have been their first task.**
* **They would have had to carry the body to someplace to be prepared…then**
* **His body would have had to be washed completely clean of all that it had endured.**

1. **They would have had to take the crown of thorns off Jesus’ head and any pieces that were embedded in his scalp.**
2. **They would have had to “stuff” the hole where the spear had pierced him.**
3. **These things at least would have had to be done before cleansed the body.**

* **The spices as well had to be applied by hand to make sure every area of the body was treated with the necessary mixture of myrrh and aloe.**

1. **100 litras= Roman pound which is equal to 11 ½ ounces/pound…so the ESV says about 75 pounds.**
2. **The spices preserved the body for a time…slowing down the decaying process-**
3. **Another fulfillment of Scripture- Ps. 16:10 –*“For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol, or let your holy one see corruption/decay.”***
4. **Time consuming and a labor of love by these men.**

* **He was wrapped as a regular person would be for burial.**
* **His body was treated with the dignity and respect of a lawful and clean Jew…not one who had just suffered crucifixion as a criminal.**
* **These men, leaders in the Sanhedrin, would have been unclean for 7 days.**
  + - 1. **With all of this in mind, why do you think that His burial would be made a part of our creed? *“He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried…”***
      2. **Not to over spiritualize everything, if that is even possible given all of the answered prophesy, what would you say is significant about the garden reference, beyond the fact that it was close at hand?**
         1. **The fall of the first Adam took place in a garden. And then he was cast out as a consequence for his sin.**
         2. **This garden is the place from which the Redeemer of the elect was placed at His death but would be the place of His resurrection securing salvation for all His own as he leaves the garden by His own will.**

1. **John 20:1-10- *“Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. 2 So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, ‘They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.’ 3 So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. 4 Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5 And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. 6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, 7 and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; 9 for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. 10 Then the disciples went back to their homes.***

**Reading and hearing this very familiar story again did you hear or see anything you haven’t seen or heard before?**

**For me…*“Then the disciples went back to their homes.”* The savior is missing and you just go home!**

1. **John 16:32- *“Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.”***
2. **The disciples it seemed actually fulfilled Jesus’ prophecy concerning their fear, uncertainty and grief.**

**Obviously, considering the other gospels and what we will see in the next section the women do not go home!**

**Is this a difference between men and women…or what?**

**Describe the scene in your own words. What would have appeared strange to Peter and John?**

**Mary Magdalene comes to the tomb early…probably at daybreak so they could see to apply the spices that they had brought…and so they could deal in the sunlight with the soldiers.**

**Mary sees an open empty tomb…though the text doesn’t say that she looked in to see, obviously she would have considering what she told Simon and the others…after she ran to where they were.**

**She is convinced that someone has taken the Lord from the tomb…which riles up at least Peter and John to go check it out.**

**John did not go in at first even though he was first on scene...but he did look in.**

1. **He would be able to see the grave clothes which would have struck him as odd…Why would someone take off the grave clothes especially if they were in a hurry?**
2. **Fun note: the word for *“run”* here is the word used to describe an athlete sprinting toward the finish line…typical guys running to see who could get there first…always about competition!**
3. **John didn’t mention his name but he didn’t hesitate in telling us who won!**

**Peter went into the tomb as soon as he got there was his personality and he saw what looked to be an orderly scene.**

1. **The Greek seems to indicate that not only were the *“linen clothes lying there”-* the clothes that Joseph and Nicodemus had used after they had anointed His body but they were also folded neatly right where he had lain.**
2. **Then these were separate from the cloth that had been wrapped around His head. *“…the face cloth, which had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself.”* Folded up is key to this as well…it wasn’t in the shape of Jesus’ head…like a preformed helmet or a plaster mold…it was folded and laid in a place by itself.**
3. **By this time in that dry climate the linen clothes would have started to adhere to the body becoming hardened so removal from the body would have been almost impossible without some rips and tears. Some have said that it would have appeared as if He had just evaporated leaving the linen behind.**
4. **This was a unique sight for no human hand could have taken these off in such an orderly way.**
5. **There was no evidence that someone had hastily stolen the body.**
   1. **Then John steps in seeing the scene is convinced of the resurrection.**
6. **The Greek word John uses for *“saw”* here is *“eiden”* which usually means *“to understand, to perceive the significance of something.”***
7. **John doesn’t hesitate…probably remembering at that moment some of what Jesus had said before.** 
   1. **So Mary and Peter were still baffled by the scene and what it meant…not even considering the resurrection as a possibility.**
   2. **Now think with me a minute. How is it possible that they couldn’t come to the same conclusion as John?**
8. **John himself says, *“…for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead.”***
9. **For three long years these two leading Apostles had heard our Lord speak of His own resurrection as a fact, and yet they had not understood Him.**

* **Again and again He had staked the truth of His Messiahship on His rising from the dead, and yet they had never taken in His meaning.**
* **It is amazing, and we should not lose sight the power over the mind which is exercised by wrong teaching in church and by the opinions of people who think they know what they are talking about...even our family who have been mis-taught and then go on to tech others what they know. Case in point:**
* **How many Magi came to Jesus’ manger?**
* **Jesus invites us to believe.**
* **Based on what we have been taught we all begin at different places in our faith no matter how long we have been Christians…we need to show deference to each other for what we know and don’t know.**

1. **Interesting most of the male disciples still don’t believe until they “see” physical evidence…but John simply believed with only seeing a little.**
2. **From this text who is the first one to believe that Jesus resurrected just as he said…and why is that significant?**

**John, the beloved disciple… *“…he saw and believed.”***

**Mary Magdalene was, according to John’s account, the first to see an empty tomb.**

1. **But her and the other women that were with her … the *“we”* (as told in the other gospels) believed His body had been taken seemingly not giving a thought to His resurrection.**
2. **Mary Magdalene had once been plagued by “seven demons” until Jesus freed her from them. Luke 8:2-3- *“…and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out…”***
3. **Commentators through the years, who have treated her fairly have said, *“She was last at His cross, and first at His grave. She stayed longest there, and was soonest here. She could not rest until she was up to seek Him. She sought Him while it was yet dark, even before she had light to seek Him by. In a word, having received much, she loved much; and loving much, she did much, in order to prove the reality of her love.”***

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**March 27, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **1st up: it was pointed out the next day, the answer to the quandary I had to the statement, *“Then the disciples went back to their homes.”***
4. **John 16:32- *“Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me.”***
5. **The disciples it seemed actually fulfilled Jesus’ prophecy since they were consumed with their fear, uncertainty and grief.**
6. **From this text who is the first one to believe that Jesus resurrected just as he said…and why is that significant?**

**John, the beloved disciple… *“…he saw and believed.”***

1. **He seemingly had the most intimate of personal relationships with the Savior…**
2. **He actually at the cross while the others are grieving in hiding.**

**It is significant, as it was pointed out in Bible study that we should know Jesus so well that we have the kind of “Aha, moments” that John did.**

1. **Such clarity only comes from our closeness with Christ and the work of the Spirit.**
2. **Our love for Him should be *“incorruptible or undying”* as Paul tells us and the Ephesians at the end of Chapter 6.- *“Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible.”* Eph. 6:24**
3. **First, let’s read John 20:1-18 and focus on John 20:11-18- *“But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. 12 And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. 13 They said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping?’ She said to them, ‘They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him.’ 14 Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?’ Supposing Him to be the gardener, she said to Him, ‘Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away.’ 16 Jesus said to her, ‘Mary.’ She turned and said to Him in Aramaic, ‘Rabboni!’ (which means Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, ‘Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’ 18 Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, ‘I have seen the Lord’—and that He had said these things to her.”***
4. **Let’s consider Mary Magdalene a moment before we look at the rest of that morning. What do we know of Mary Magdalene? (We started this last week but we “see” more of her in this text.)**
5. **Mary Magdalene had once been plagued by *“seven demons”* until Jesus freed her from them. Luke 8:2-3- *“…and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out…”***
6. **From the time of her exorcism she followed Jesus faithfully supporting the ministry (Luke 8:3) wherever she could… along with Mary the wife of Cleopus, Salome, Joanna and often, Mary, the mother of Jesus.**
7. **Many women followed Him on the way to the cross…these may have been among them as well when Jesus said to them, Luke 23:27-31- *“And there followed Him a great multitude of the people and of women who were mourning and lamenting for Him. 28 But turning to them Jesus said, ‘Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. 29 For behold, the days are coming when they will say, ‘Blessed are the barren and the wombs that never bore and the breasts that never nursed!’ 30 Then they will begin to say to the mountains, ‘Fall on us,’ and to the hills, ‘Cover us.’ 31 For if they do these things when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry?”***
8. **She and the others were there at the cross when all the other disciples except John were gone.**

**And they watch Jesus hang on the cross those 6 hours.**

**They watch Him die. Then they followed to see where He was buried. *“The women who had come with Him from Galilee followed and saw the tomb and how his body was laid.”* (Luke 23:55) (Matt. 27:61-)*“*** ***Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, sitting opposite the tomb.”***

1. **Mary Magdalene was, according to John’s account, the first to see an empty tomb…. But her and the other women that were with her … the *“we”* of verse 2(and as told in the other gospels)… believed His body had been taken seemingly not giving a thought to His resurrection.**
2. **Jesus had delivered her and her past obviously did not disqualify from being His first witness to His resurrection.**
3. **Jesus loved her no matter what she knew or didn’t know.**
4. **His love wasn’t based on what she did or didn’t do.**
5. **Just like the disciples who won’t believe her story at first…He still is going to meet with them for they were His brothers and their ignorance changed nothing.**
6. **She got a treat…she saw angels and they spoke to her.**
7. **She was the first to see the risen Lord…He spoke to her and gave her a message for His disciples.**
8. **Commentators through the years, who have treated her fairly have said, *“She was last at His cross, and first at His grave. She stayed longest there, and was soonest here. She could not rest until she was up to seek Him to serve Him in death. She sought Him while it was yet dark, even before she had light to seek Him by. In a word, having received much, she loved much; and loving much, she did much, in order to prove the reality of her love.”***
9. **It has been pointed out by many that it was to a woman that Jesus first revealed His identity as Messiah and a woman was the first person to whom He appeared at His resurrection.**
10. **What can we learn from Mary Magdalene’s example?**
11. **We can learn what it looks like to be a devoted servant of Jesus. She took her deliverance seriously and sought to give back her whole life.**
12. **We learn from her and the other women what is truly important in their devotion to Jesus…staying with Him throughout the Friday ordeal no matter the cost to their reputation.**
13. **She knew her sins were forgiven and she was accepted so no matter what people said of her she was confident in her faith… she had been delivered from much…7 demons… which seems to denote that her suffering was extremely severe before and completely healed afterwards.**
14. **Seems like such an obvious question asked by the angels, so what was their point?**
15. **As she wept she needed to look into the tomb again, probably still from disbelieve that someone would do such a heinous thing and upon looking, “*she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. They said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping?’”* Another thing I noticed this reading was the placement of the angels…just like the placement of the cherubim at each end of the mercy-seat of the Ark of the Covenant.**
16. **These 2 angels got her attention but she doesn’t seem startled at this point. Alexander Maclaren said of this encounter, *“The presence of angels was of little trifle to Mary, who had only one thought …the absence of her Lord.”***
17. **They, being angels, are seeking to help her see reality based in what Jesus had said…**
18. **They were hoping she would get that there was no reason to cry, but every reason to rejoice…so they push her in her grief…**
19. **But she was unpersuaded by the angels question instead sticking earnestly with her request to know where His body had been moved to…not considering His resurrection even yet.**
20. **Then what happens has to be so unexpected that no wonder she didn’t know who Jesus was at first. Tell this part of the story in your own words.**
21. **She is still waiting at the tomb. She has obviously come back with Peter and John but just like Friday afternoon she waits at His tomb after they leave…so overwrought she doesn’t know what to do…or who she is without her Lord and Savior….where she is to go?**
22. **And she is still crying …weeping…grieving hard when she turns around and see yet a 3rd person.**
23. **Because of her tears she doesn’t recognize Jesus. I know I have cried so hard before that I could not see clearly.**
24. **He asks her, *“Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?’”***
25. **Jesus was also seeking to get her to consider reality. Weeping is not where her head and heart needed to be focused…for He had told her that He would rise from the dead.**
26. **But the shock of the last 2 plus days had been overwhelming.**
27. **She had just heard a similar question so in her grief, somewhat blinded by her tears and thinking Him to be the gardener… the keeper of the cemetery… she asks Him the question that weighs on her heart heavily, *“Sir, if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him, and I will take Him away.’”***
28. **She did not expect to find Jesus alive… so in her grief it is easy to understand her, of all people, still not knowing who He is.**
29. **Then Jesus relieves her of her grief by saying her name in a way that was unmistakable…the way He said her name many times before…and that familiar tone of voice comes through her grief and she shout’s *“Rabboni”* (probably a normal term of endearment for her Lord and Teacher) and she runs to embrace Him in her joy.**
30. **But He says, *“Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father;”* and then sends her on a mission.**
31. **Does this sound harsh? Well…converting Greek and Aramaic/Hebrew can seem that way… the actual words here translated *“Do not cling”* is in the present imperative with a negative attached which means *“Stop doing what you are doing…*not*… do not cling to me.”***
32. **Now apparently she is so set on holding on to Jesus…she had been overwrought and now she is equally overjoyed that she doesn’t want to let go of Him almost to the point of impropriety…He doesn’t want her to embarrass herself.**
33. **Beside He has a mission for her that needs to be accomplished and He is sending her to do it right away…there was no time to lose.**
34. **His meaning is to tell her to stop hanging on like that for she will see Him again… He had yet to ascend to the Father so there will be opportunities to rejoice later but now He has given her a mission, *“…but go to my brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, ‘I have seen the Lord’—and that He had said these things to her.”***
35. **She was the first to relay the word of the empty tomb and she was likewise first to relay the good news that He is Risen!**
36. **Remember we are still in the garden.**
37. **Spurgeon points out, *“In the garden of Eden, immediately after the Fall, the sentence of sorrow and of sorrows multiplied fell on the woman. In the garden where Christ had been buried, after His resurrection, the news of comfort …comfort rich and divine…came to a woman through the woman’s promised Seed, the Lord Jesus Christ. If the sentence must fall heavily upon the woman, so must the comfort come most sweetly to her.”***

* **Because of the curse from the garden, women in that culture and many others have been mistreated as a less than. Jewish women understood this dynamic.**
* **So to be honored this way eventually would have been extremely meaningful…the women who followed Jesus had already been treated with more dignity and respect by Jesus than they had probably ever experienced.**
* **This is a subtle reminder of how the curse was lifted when you are in Christ…sort of like letting Peter know He is forgiven when he is re-commissioned in John 21.**

1. **Jesus gives women high honors in revealing Himself to Mary that day reminding all who see that the curse of the garden has been lifted once and for all time upon those who are His.**
2. **What does this event say to us? What does it communicate about how we are to live so that we can be this type of servant?**
3. **It is a certain fact that those who love Christ most earnestly, and cleave to Him most closely, will always enjoy more communion with Him.**
4. **It is precisely those who wait on the Lord, in the devotion of Mary Magdalene, they are the ones to whom the Lord will reveal Himself most fully.**
5. ***“To know Christ is good; but to know that we know Him and that He knows us is far better.”***
6. **Something else we learn from this is that the fears, griefs and anxieties of believers are often quite needless. Her tears were needless. Her anxiety was unnecessary. Like Hagar in the wilderness, she had a well of water by her side, but she had not eyes to see it.**
7. **How often we are anxious when there is no just cause for anxiety?**
8. **How often do we mourn over the absence of things which in reality are within our grasp, and even at our right hand?**
9. **It has been said that 2/3rd of the things we fear in life never happen at all, and possibly 2/3rd of the tears are shed in vain.**
10. **We need to listen closely when we read God’s Word…for when God speaks in His word it is for our hearing and the hearing of others. For we are to share the Christ we know and not hold Him so tight that no one hears or sees Him through us.**
11. **Even when we take His Word for granted, even when we deny Him, like Peter or we leave without searching for Him… one simple word *“Mary”* or *“my brothers”* lets us know that He still loves us and that His love for us is not based on what we do or don’t do. He took upon Himself all our sins and came back securing salvation for all His own.**
12. **J.C. Ryle reminds, *“To trust deserters, and to show confidence in backsliders, was a compassion which man can hardly understand. So true is that word of David—"Like as a Father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust." (Psalm 103:13, 14.)***
13. **Thankfully for us, because of His death and resurrection these words of Psalm 103:10, as well, are true and give us great hope--*“He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.”***
14. **John 20:19-31**
15. **John 20:19-23- *“On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’ When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.’ And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.’”***
16. **Jesus says, *“Peace be with you”* two times. Why?**
17. **This was the standard greeting among Jews. So this would have naturally been the first words of greetings.**
18. **But they did have the doors locked for fear of the Jews. And Jesus does just appear in their midst.**
19. **By this time they had heard from Mary about His resurrection and from the boys that had been on the road to Emmaus.**
20. **According to Luke’s Gospel even with all of this forewarning, Jesus’ first *“peace be with you”* brought terror and more fear from His disciples. So after showing them His hands and side they settle down enough to actually hear and understand His greeting.**
21. **Was He reminding them of the words He had given them in the upper room the night before His execution? John 14:1- “Do not let your hearts be troubled.” Or verse 27- *“Peace. I leave with you; my peace I give to you…let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”* Well, the answer is yes…for Jesus is recorded in Luke’s gospel as saying something similar to calm them down.**
22. **And now in this peace, Jesus says, *“As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.’”* John words this Great commission a bit differently than the other gospels…**

* **For He frames this in His peace…so what they are about to do… they will not do fearfully or with anxiety.**
* **He also frames it as a continuation of His mission…I have done what my Father sent me to do, now you go and do likewise… complete the mission by my grace and in my peace.**
* **This is for them and every subsequent generation of believers.**

1. **What is going on with the Holy Spirit at this point when the Holy Spirit will come upon them at Pentecost?**
2. **He had just given them their marching orders to complete His mission…something He has told them, is that they cannot do this without Him so He breaths on them the Holy Spirit to empower them and guide them in accomplishing this particular task.**
3. **The task is judging correctly with authority.**

* **They needed discernment with the keys of the kingdom to be able to judge and condemn sin and offer God’s forgiveness something that is unique to the Apostles.**
* **Now it would appear that some of this authority is bestowed on the elders as well as we are called upon to judge cases individually and corporately to the best of our ability to the glory of God and the good of His people…but we are not infallible. The Apostles word, like the prophets, was God’s on such matters.**

1. **But in Acts 2 they will be filled with the Holy Spirit when the Spirit is poured out on them. At Pentecost and after every believer receives and is filled with the Holy Spirit…but the disciples needed something right then, more than they had…it is a partial for the job at hand … a foretaste of what was to come in fullness in 50 days or so.**
2. **John 20:24-29- *“Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, ‘We have seen the Lord.’ But he said to them, ‘Unless I see in His hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into His side, I will never believe.’ Eight days later, His disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you.’ Then He said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.’ Thomas answered him, ‘My Lord and my God!’ Jesus said to him, ‘Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’”***
3. **Why has Thomas always gotten such a bad rap as “The Doubter” when all the other disciples doubted as well before they saw Him with the exception of John?**
4. **Thomas is the Hebrew word for *“twin”* and then there is the Greek word for *“twin”* which is *“Didymus”…*so was he maybe a little bit uncertain about things since it doesn’t appear that his twin is one of the disciples?**
5. **Maybe it was because the sense of the word *“said”* in a perfect tense here in the text. This word means that they kept on telling him that they had seen the Lord and he kept on saying, *“Unless I see in His hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into His side, I will never believe.”***
6. **Maybe it was because he wasn’t with everyone else when Jesus appeared…and he felt left out.**
7. **As I said everyone doubted Jesus’ resurrection before they saw Him but John.**
8. **It is not like he lacks courage. When Jesus proposes to return to Judah, to Bethany, after raising Lazarus in the face of the religious leader plotting to kill Him, Thomas says in John11:16- *“Let us also go, that we may die with Him.”***
9. **And then again in John 14:5, Thomas seems to be asking the questions that are on everyone’s mind- *“Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”***
10. **What did Jesus’ words to Thomas communicate to him? *“Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe.”***
11. **Jesus knew of His doubt. He is saying I knew what you were saying.**
12. **But I love you anyway and am here for you to see and feel, if need be.**
13. **What does Thomas response reveal? *“Thomas answered him, ‘My Lord and my God!’”***
14. **This was his answer to Jesus; statement, *“Do not disbelieve, but believe.”* He did believe, erupting with one of the greatest confessions of the New Testament. *‘My Lord and my God!’***

* **The Word *“kupios”* in the Greek used emphatically and in relation to the word “*Theos”*  is the same Greek word that translates the Hebrew word Yahweh in the OT.**
* **The force of this statement is that He is confessing Jesus to be Yahweh his God!**

1. **That he didn’t need to touch the Lord…just being in His presence was enough. John does not record that Thomas touched anything on Jesus in fact Jesus says, *“because you have seen me.”* He believed.**
2. **But then what is Jesus communicating with this last statement? *“Jesus said to him, ‘Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’”***
3. **There is no rebuke of Thomas’ statement since it was true of all the disciples with the exception of John who believed without seeing.**
4. **Also, with this statement He agrees with who Thomas says He is.**
5. **This is Jesus telling Thomas and the disciples that there will be countless millions down through the ages that will believe without seeing Him in the flesh.**
6. **The faith of those who won’t see Him and still believe is not inferior, but, it is better not to see and still believe.**
7. **This beatitude is also a benediction on all who believe.**

* **We have gone over this before…but just a quick word on the word *“blessed”-* speaks of joy but…**
* **Its greater meaning is the favor we have with God that He declares and grants to all who are in Christ.**

1. **And on top of that it will be Thomas’ confession that may be used to bring many to the faith.**

* **Because of His absolute certainty from one who did in fact see Him in the same way… just like the firsthand account of John at the cross is given to persuade and to assure people that Jesus did die for them/us…**
* **A firsthand account that Jesus did in fact resurrect from the dead so that we will too…**
* **A firsthand account that Jesus ascended so that the Holy Spirit will come upon us who believe so that we are not left as orphans... but actual sons and daughters with an inheritance to eternity.**

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**April 3, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Reflection- Seriously Easter**
3. **What does Easter mean to you?**
4. **How does the fact that Easter occurred effect your day to day?**
5. **Seriously…So what?**
6. **Review**
7. **If Jesus said to us in the room tonight, *“As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.”* what would you understand that He is saying to us?**
8. **Why is Thomas’ confession still important in spite of the fact that he had to see to believe? *“Thomas answered him, ‘My Lord and my God!’”***
9. **A bold and strong confirmation of the divinity of Jesus.**
10. **It confirms his faith. Jesus had said, *“Do not disbelieve, but believe.”* Thomas believes and says, *“You are my Lord and my God.”***
11. **The force of this statement is that He is confessing Jesus to be Yahweh his God!**
12. **Even the weakest faith in Christ is still accounted as faith. Richard Sibbes has said, *“True faith even in the least degree is faith.”* But a weak faith is not always an assured faith.**
13. **It is the growing Christian that is the assured Christian…and we see this in Thomas if even half the stories of his life after this are true.**
14. **This ought to be our strong belief as well. The divinity of the God/man Jesus Christ is a corner stone of Christianity and we are to absolutely believe that and live in that truth.**
15. **The Christian has no cause to fear or be anxious in this life, (we are all too often…but in reality we have no justifiable causes for it as children of the King).**
16. **For we are the only ones who can look to Jesus by faith, and say with Thomas, *"My Lord and my God."***
17. **With such a Savior we need not be afraid to begin the life of real faith, and with such a Savior we may boldly go and do as He did.**
18. **The faith of Thomas becomes another of the things the King has set out to overcome. Throughout this book we have seen Jesus triumph over sickness, sin, evil men, death and sorrow…now with Thomas, Jesus conquers unbelief even in His own.**
19. **This was the reason John’s Gospel was written as we will see in a minute.**
20. **Why are we such doubters? Why do we have to see to believe?**
21. **John 20:30-31- *“Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.”***
22. **Do you find anything interesting in this admission?**
23. **John admits to the fact that he has presented an incomplete collection. (Also in 21:25- *“Now there are also many other things that Jesus did.”)***
24. **Does it cause you to want to ask the question, *“What don’t we know?”* Or are you satisfied with what we have? And if you are satisfied with what we have…why are you satisfied when he just said there is so much more?**
25. **History shows that one collects everything possible about the dead…a biography becomes all we have of the dead.**
26. **But one telling the story of someone who is living tells enough to introduce the person so others are drawn to him.**
27. **God through John seems to trust that a personal relationship with Jesus our living Lord will reveal more to us than John ever could.**
28. **Of course, facts and evidence alone does not cause belief.**
29. **Why aren’t the many other signs that Jesus did in the presence of His disciples important enough to be told?**
30. **These are enough by God’s wisdom give to us by the inspired author to accomplish His purpose.**
31. **Something to look forward to in heaven?**
32. **So he basically rests his case by saying this is enough.**
33. **Why did John write this gospel according to this?**
34. **These are written so that we (you) may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God.**
35. **Though we don’t have everything ( *“…Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book…”)* God gave John enough to explain Jesus and to bring readers to faith in Jesus as the Son of God.**
36. **For this book is not about signs…but about Jesus the One the signs confirm.**
37. **That we may believe that He is the Christ…the covenantally promised King for His chosen people.**
38. **That He is the Son of God…to know Him is to know the Only True God.**
39. **That believing this we (you) may have life in His name.**
40. **Believing in Jesus comes with the absolute promise of life and access in His Name…the Name that is above all Names.**
41. **Life in His name = through the power of the Lord to the person who bears the name of the Lord. In the Bible the *“name of God”* is more than a designation but all that He is in Himself!**
42. **John is echoing what Jesus had already said, *“I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”***
43. **Remember Jesus is *“The Way, the Truth and the Life.”***
44. **In review, why is the resurrection important to us as Christians? What does it actually mean that we have no hope if Jesus was not raised from the dead?**
45. **How would you respond to someone who says, *“I’ve tried to be a good person, and I think that’s what matters most to God, don’t you?”***
46. **What place does morality have in the life of a Christian?**

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**April 10, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **Again, why does the resurrection of Christ important to us as Christians?**
4. **Again, what are the dual purposes for John writing this book? And why is that significant for us Christians and Christians to come?**
5. **John 21:1-14- *“After this Jesus revealed Himself again to the disciples by the Sea of Tiberias, and He revealed Himself in this way. 2 Simon Peter, Thomas (called the Twin), Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two others of His disciples were together. 3 Simon Peter said to them, ‘I am going fishing.’ They said to him, ‘We will go with you.’ They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. 4 Just as day was breaking, Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. 5 Jesus said to them, ‘Children, do you have any fish?”’ They answered Him, ‘No.’ 6 He said to them, ‘Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.’ So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish. 7 That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, ‘It is the Lord!’ When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea. 8 The other disciples came in the boat, dragging the net full of fish, for they were not far from the land, but about a hundred yards off. 9 When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread. 10 Jesus said to them, ‘Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.’ 11 So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn. 12 Jesus said to them, ‘Come and have breakfast.’ Now none of the disciples dared ask Him, ‘Who are you?’ They knew it was the Lord. 13 Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. 14 This was now the third time that Jesus was revealed to the disciples after He was raised from the dead.”***
6. **Some have suggested the John’s Gospel actually ends at vs 31 of chapter 20 and that this is a later addition. How would you speak to that?**
7. **The style and voice emulate John in all respects.**
8. **All of the copies that we have of John’s Gospel all end with chapter 21, so there is no evidence to support these claims.**
9. **It is common to include an epilogue which seeks to wrap up loose ends…and Peter is an interesting loose end, to say the least.**
10. **Why do you suppose that John always writes the appearances of Jesus as unexpected like He does here?**
11. **What are some of the things that John is doing by giving us this account?**
12. **He recording yet another of the several appearances of the resurrected Jesus. These sightings are critical to substantiate the truth claim of Christ’s resurrection.**
13. **Outside of the times within the Gospels, Paul also speaks to these sightings I Cor. 15:5-8- *“and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then He appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep. Then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, He appeared also to me.”***
14. **In Christian circles and many others this was an established fact…indisputable since so many were still alive that could testify to the validity of His resurrection.**
15. **It also validates that He is divine.**
16. **In this incident Jesus’ identity is confirmed and His continual presence with His disciples.**
17. **Even after all but John denied Him He has forgiven them and seeks to still be with them …for He bore their sins to the cross.**
18. **There is no and can be no animosity between forgiven brothers.**
19. **He is also showing us that the disciples, at least these 7, which could stand for the whole, took Jesus at His word and went to Galilee.**
20. **The sea of Tiberius and the Sea of Galilee were used interchangeably.**
21. **A principle handed down through the ages in the Church: When we are uncertain what to do we should simply do our duty and God will guide.**
22. **Perhaps John is showing us that they placed themselves in a place to be used not knowing the specifics as they waited for Jesus to come.**
23. **Peter would have believed that going fishing was His idea… *“Simon Peter said to them, ‘I am going fishing.’ They said to him, ‘We will go with you.’”* But Jesus is the One who commanded them to come there…so it seems to me that it was yet another lesson that He would have them to learn.**
24. **Even with Peter’s denials of Christ, the other disciples were willing to still follow him.**

* **Did they consider their own sins and realize that they had nothing to hold over Peter?**
* **Did they remember it was the Lord who originally commissioned this flawed man to be their leader so they continue to follow Him?**

1. **The band is together waiting on Jesus to show up so they do what they do…fishing…but it is all Jesus’ plan.**
2. **He lets us know that Jesus comes to us wherever we are, *“Jesus stood on the shore; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to them, ‘Children (or Friends/guys, the Greek is the common vernacular for such a hail), do you have any fish?”’***
3. **He is also giving them a reminder of a lesson He has taught over and over again.**
4. **Showing them/us that on their own they can do nothing… *“I am going fishing.’ They said to him, ‘We will go with you.’ They went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing.”***
5. **But in Christ we can do abundantly. *“‘Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.’ So they cast it, and now they were not able to haul it in, because of the quantity of fish.”***
6. **He had shown them this lesson before back at in the early days of His ministry. Luke 5:3-6- *“Getting into one of the boats, which was Simon’s, He asked him to put out a little from the land. And He sat down and taught the people from the boat. 4 And when He had finished speaking, He said to Simon, ‘Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch.’ 5 And Simon answered, ‘Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets.’ 6 And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking.”***

* **In the Luke passage Jesus had been speaking as always about the Kingdom of God.**
* **They had been called to be fishers of men and if they abide in Him they will see abundant fruit. On their own nothing for the kingdom.**
* **We have greater reason to believe that God will bless when He is directing our service. His plans and directives in His Word are the best directives for evangelism and life that we have.**
* **Interesting details, He speaks of the fishermen, the boat and the nets here in the text in John to let us know that God does His fishing through “means”.**
* **Jesus showed them where the fish were but they had to actually do the work in bringing them in.**
* **The Harvest is plentiful but there needs to be harvesters to do the work.**

1. **But the bigger lesson may have been even more easily understood…one of simple obedience…**

* **Even though they don’t seem to know who He is at the time…obedience seems to be the easiest answer to what John is showing us here.**
* **As I said before, this may have sounded too familiar to them so they obeyed rather than questioning as they did in the Luke 5 event.**
* **But then Jesus gives His 2nd command in such a short period, *“Bring some of the fish that you have just caught.’”* Peter’s zeal to come to Jesus is now met with His zeal to obey Him. *“So Simon Peter went aboard and hauled the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them.”***
* **Then He calls them to breakfast…a 3rd command.**

1. **Again, it is John who recognizes Jesus. *“That disciple whom Jesus loved therefore said to Peter, ‘It is the Lord!’”*  Why is He the first and only one to do this?**
2. **He is not showing off he didn’t even name himself in the list.**
3. **Are there those among us that are just that sensitive to the Lord’s presence? Aren’t these the ones we often call to teach and preach for us…so that we can acquire a similar understanding, sensitivity and devotion?**
4. **With that, what does Peter do that is strange and why would he do such a thing? And why do you suppose John needed to record in such detail?(vs. 7) *“When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his outer garment, for he was stripped for work, and threw himself into the sea.”***
5. **He is undressed as He was working…if not naked a loin cloth only.**
6. **He needs to approach Jesus differently…since he is the one who denied Jesus 3 time.**
7. **So out of respect for Jesus…his master. Some have tried to make this likened to Adam and Eve who sought to cover up after they sinned…but this seems to be a bit extra in that we dress up for important people. Certainly he would be wet but he wouldn’t be inappropriate in His Master’s presence.**
8. **So even though he did deny Jesus he still knew that the best place to be is with Jesus no matter what.**
9. **What can we learn from Peter, in this instance?**
10. **When we fall and sin, our pride and Satan will tempt us to hide from God as Adam and Eve did.**
11. **But Peter doesn’t listen to all the naysayers in his head and heart and seeks to come before the Lord.**
12. **It is always good to come quickly to the Lord in confession and in celebration because we should simply want to be with Him no matter how we have failed Him He always forgives us and loves us through it.**
13. ***“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* I John 1:9**
14. **Now what about the fish? 153 to be exact…what have you read or heard or been taught about the number of these fish? Why is the number here? *“the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them. And although there were so many, the net was not torn.”***
15. **First these are large fish. Greek word here is *“megalon”.* Just for fun, what other word does that sound like? Megalodon.**
16. **Augustine thought the 153 is used as a sum of the numbers 1 to 17…17 being the number of commandments plus the 7 fold gifts of the Spirit which we are required to keep and emulate.**
17. **Numerologists have noted that 153 is the added numerical value of the Greek words for Peter and fish.**
18. **Cyril of Alexandria thought that 100 stood for Gentiles, 50 stood for Israel and 3 for the Trinity.**
19. **Jerome taught that the fish were 153 known species that supposedly were living in the Sea of Galilee at the time, to symbolize a full harvest from the entire world…every nation, tongue and tribe.**
20. **Other see this as God having John write yet another account of catching a large amount of fish so that these fishers of men would remember:**
21. **God is the One that directs, guides and secures the harvest of His people.**
22. **That they, like us are called to go and proclaim the kingdom…and even be involved in hauling in the elect to be taught and blessed.**
23. **This time the nets are not torn…symbolizing that none of His are lost and all will be caught up together and brought to the Lord on the Last Day.**
24. **Interesting that the word translated *“torn”* here is the same word for *“rent”* when the curtain was rent in the Temple.**
25. **These are just some of the ways people speculate about numbers whether here with 153 or in Revelation with 1000…men love to speculate, especially about numbers, and try to figure out why something is in the text. I always figured if God wanted us to know then there would be other texts in the Bible to interpret it for us.**
26. **For me it is more plausible that as professional fishermen they naturally counted there largest catch of large fish and like so many other things never forgot them. While Peter would have probably forgotten his own anniversary! LOL!**
27. **May have been a nod to John being an eyewitness that he would remember the number exactly…**
28. **John may have considered this a miracle to substantiate Jesus’ claim to divinity...**
29. **It was not at all common to catch this many fish and all large at this time of the day on the Sea of Galilee.**
30. **Thinking of the miracle from Luke perhaps he wanted to show Jesus’ power once again that speaks to these men directly in a way they wouldn’t have forgotten now that He has risen.**
31. **And the fact that, *“...the net was not torn.”* When in all likelihood a haul of this size would have broken the net just as the one in Luke’s event.**
32. **Again, John shows us Jesus with the disciples what is all of this to remind them and us of? (vs. 12-13) *“Jesus said to them, ‘Come and have breakfast.’ Now none of the disciples dared ask Him, ‘Who are you?’ They knew it was the Lord. 13 Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish.”***
33. **As He had fed thousands earlier now He feeds and serves His disciples. Like at the Last Supper…but this is not that. As an aside, interestingly, the text doesn’t tell us where His food comes from.**
34. **Another action of serving His disciples so that they would remember to serve one another.**
35. **He shows how He loves them after a full night of fishing where they didn’t catch anything until the early morning at Jesus’ command.**
36. **He has demonstrated His Lordship but He seems to be demonstrating something along side of that that He has shown before…by sharing a meal He is reminding them that lordship includes fellowship.**
37. **Meal together at Simon Peter’s home, with Matthew, the Lord’s Supper.**
38. **As we see throughout the Gospels, meals equal fellowship. There is nothing adverse between Jesus and His disciples.**

* **Though they denied Him …each in their own way…He desires communion with those whom He loves and has already forgiven.**
* **He doesn’t hold grudges as we do. He prepared a meal and served the meal so that all could partake together…to commune together as brothers.**

1. **The covenantal love continues to resonate with Jesus calling them to this meal. No betrayal or sin is beyond the healing power of God’s persistent and enduring *“hesed”… “steadfast love”.* Isaiah 54:10- *“For the mountains may depart and the hills be removed, but my steadfast love shall not depart from you, and my covenant of peace shall not be removed, says the LORD, who has compassion on you.”*  Jesus loves His flawed Apostles no matter what.**
2. **Communion is crucial to unity.**
3. **In reading this account…in what way is this account similar to these 2 going to the tomb Easter morning?**
4. **We see Peter and John, side by side, in the same boat, and once more, as at the tomb.**
5. **We see these two good men behaving in different ways.**
6. **When Jesus stood on the shore, in the dim light of the morning, John was the first to perceive who it was, and to say, *"It is the Lord;"* but Peter was the first to spring into the water, and to struggle to get close to his Master.**
7. **In a word, John was the first to see; but Peter was the first to act.**
8. **John's gentle loving spirit was quickest to discern; but Peter's fiery, impulsive nature was quickest to stir and move. And yet both were believers, both were true-hearted disciples, both loved the Lord in life, and were faithful to Him unto death. But their natural temperaments were not the same.**
9. **The recognition of this should help us to us not condemn others as graceless and unconverted, because they do not see the path of obedience from our perspective, or feel things exactly as we feel them.**
10. **In the kingdom of God the man of action and the man of vision often complement each other…perhaps because they are NOT usually the same man…hence the need for the Church and are different gifts.**
11. **How does all of this set us up for Peter’s recommissioning? Is recommissioning even the right word for us to consider?**
12. **Jesus has shown them He keeps His word by coming to them as He said He would.**
13. **Jesus has shown them His love in that no matter what they did in running and hiding… Jesus’ affection and call for them has not changed…just like God’s for Adam and Eve…He came to them and renewed the relationship with them.**
14. **Jesus has shown them His lordship in commanding them in certain areas.**
15. **Jesus reminds them of some of the important characteristics of becoming fishers of men.**
16. **Jesus has shown them the importance of fellowship as His people.**
17. **Jesus shows them that they still have much to learn as He has already told them.**
18. **They have shown their willingness to obey.**

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**April 17, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **How important is unity to Jesus? And how did He show His desire for oneness among His disciples and us going forward in 21:1-14?**
4. **What does the kind of love and forgiveness that Jesus has shown towards His disciples communicate to us about our relationship with one another within the family of God?**
5. **How many times as His people do we hold grudges or even refuse to speak to one another because of some wrong done to us?**
6. **How many times do we love less than Jesus loved?**
7. **How many times do we refuse to forgive one another for the sins committed even when forgiveness has been asked for?**
8. **What is the difference between how we love and forgive and the way Jesus loves and forgives? Why?**
9. **Since we are commanded to love and forgive as the Godhead, what is our recourse since we fall short so often?**
10. **How does all of this set us up for Peter’s recommissioning? Is recommissioning even the right word for us to consider?**
11. **Jesus has shown them He keeps His word by coming to them as He said He would.**
12. **Jesus has shown them His love in that no matter what they did in running and hiding… Jesus’ affection and call for them has not changed…just like God’s for Adam and Eve…He came to them and renewed the relationship with them.**
13. **Jesus has shown them His lordship in commanding them in certain areas.**
14. **Jesus reminds them of some of the important characteristics of becoming fishers of men.**
15. **Jesus has shown them the importance of fellowship as His people.**
16. **Jesus shows them that they still have much to learn as He has already told them.**
17. **They have shown their willingness to obey.**
18. **John 21:15-25- *“When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ He said to him, ‘Feed my lambs.’ 16 He said to him a second time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me?’ He said to him, ‘Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.’ He said to him, ‘Tend my sheep.’ 17 He said to him the third time, ‘Simon, son of John, do you love me?’ Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, ‘Do you love me?’ and he said to him, ‘Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Feed my sheep. 18 Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.’ 19 (This He said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, ‘Follow me.’ 20 Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who also had leaned back against him during the supper and had said, ‘Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?’ 21 When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, ‘Lord, what about this man?’ 22 Jesus said to him, ‘If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!’ 23 So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, ‘If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?’ 24 This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true. 25 Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.”***
19. **Now let’s break this down: vs. 15-19 is one of the most iconic conversations in the NT. So many sermons about it and so many books and so much discussion has been had over the symbolism and the actuality of what is going on. Many have used words like interrogation by Jesus of Peter to describe this interchange, others have said that Jesus is wanting Peter to feel the sting of this three-fold questioning as Jesus felt the three-fold denial, but if we learned anything from the last section concerning the depth of Jesus’ love, forgiveness and desire for a renewed communion is what is really going on here. So let’s say you agree with me and there is something else going on rather than an interrogation seeking Peter to feel the Saviors pain…what would you say that it might be?**
20. **A lot has been said through the years about the significance of the words “love” and “lambs” and “sheep”…most today believe that these words are here simply for stylistic variation and don’t carry the theological significance taught in the last generations. John seems to use *agape* and *phileo* synonymously like none of the other Gospel writers.**
21. **But, I do believe there is a challenge here from Jesus.**
22. **Not an interrogation.**
23. **Not trying to hurt Peter the way Peter hurt Him…that would be retaliation not forgiveness.**
24. **But challenging Peter to look within himself to be even more confident in His faith. For he can’t have questions about Christ going forward within himself. He must be assured and never question His calling or who Jesus is!**
25. **While there may not be some deep theological significance to the words used for “love”, I do believe there is significance for Peter and for us to recognize something about himself/ourself.**
26. **Jesus began His questioning using the word *“agape”* for love…**

* **That totally sacrificial love that Jesus has and is showing even now with Peter. It is a matter of the will.**
* **OT *“hesed”-* steadfast love ...an unbreakable pledge on God’s part. *“Agape”* most often translates this word in the OT Greek.**
* **No betrayal or sin is beyond the healing power of God’s persistent and enduring *“hesed”…*steadfast/covenantal love.**

1. **Peter answers with *“phileo”* love…a brotherly love, a personal attachment for close friends…This is a matter of the heart.**
2. **What he is to notice is that he doesn’t love as Jesus loves yet and Jesus is reminding him and us that there is a difference.**

* **This is what he/we should aspire to if we are going to be His followers…especially the Apostles as they grow the church.**
* **It will take agape love going forward to maintain commitment and “zeal” as Jenni said last week.**

1. **After all 3 questionings Peter maintains the use of *phileo* because that is all he can comprehend right now…and interestingly enough Jesus reverts to the use of *“phileo”* in His third question…revealing His love and understanding for Peter.**

* **He is pushing him to think differently…not punishing Him!**
* **Peter reveals his lack of understanding and growth.**
* **By saying out loud what he says in answer to Jesus he is made to understand his own limitations and possibly what Christ is expecting of him.**
* **At that, Jesus stops pushing having challenged Peter to think about the type of love Jesus expects for His disciples to work toward…making love a matter of the will before the heart.**

1. **Jesus’ questions, *“Do you love Me?”* may seem at first sight a simple question.**

* **In one sense it is. Even a child can understand love, and can say whether he loves another or not.**
* **Yet, *"Do you love Me"* is, in reality, a very searching question… a very exposing question and a very transformative question when we are sure of the answer. Sort of like the question, *“Who do you say that I am?”***
* **We may know much, and do much, and profess much, and talk much, and work much, and give much, and go through much, and make much show of our piety…**
* **And yet be dead before God, from lack of love and true faith…like the Pharisees.**
* **The question to us is: *Do we…really… love Christ?* That is the great question.**
* **Loving Christ with all our heart mind and soul and strength.**
* **Without this there is no vitality about our Christianity.**
* **How often we fail in loving Christ as He loved us in our thoughts, words and deeds.**
* **We are no better than wax figures or brass trumpet or clanging cymbals. There is no life where there is no love.**
* **BUT…we can and do love Him only because He first loved us, still loves us and will love us to the end…that is, always!**
* **So Jesus is not punishing or chastening him…though it may “feel” that way to Peter who obviously denied Jesus 3 times…**
* **He is teaching him to think more deeply and to be more committed than he has been…for what lies behind was a cake-walk in comparison to what lies ahead for him and the disciples.**
* **He is telling him that he is not to dwell on his past failure but to move forward with what he had been called to do.**
* **He wants Peter to clarify within himself and before the Apostles the depth and quality of his commitment to Christ…something we should do on a regular basis.**

1. **Each time Peter confirms his love for Jesus even if it is limited at this point…so his confession remains unchanged. If this was meant as a rebuke a lesser man would have wavered under the pressure.**
2. **Jesus Himself makes no mention of Peter’s past sins. Peter does perhaps…but Jesus doesn’t make a deal out of it.**
3. **Jesus gives no indication that He is in anyway grieved by anything Peter has done up to this point.**
4. **After all Jesus had prophesied Peter would do this!**
5. **Jesus’ love is so perfect that He can do this…knowing Peter’s heart…knowing the anguish he has already suffered within himself…and his desire to be with Jesus (remembered he jumped off the boat to be with Jesus first).**
6. **If what we have said so far is the point of Jesus’ teaching moment with Peter, then what is the point of Jesus’ command to feed the Flock?**
7. **As with everything else Jesus has been saying we cannot doubt for a moment that this 3 time repeated charge was full of deep meaning.**
8. **It was meant to cause Peter to know that his calling and work of an Apostle is still intact, notwithstanding his recent fall. But this was only a small part of the meaning.**
9. **It was meant to teach Peter and the whole Church the mighty lesson, that usefulness to others is the grand test of love, and working for Christ the great proof of really loving Christ.**
10. **It is not forceful talk and verbal profession; it is not even impetuous zeal, and readiness to draw the sword and fight—it is steady, patient, laborious effort to do good to Christ's sheep scattered throughout this sinful world, which is the best evidence of being a true-hearted disciple.**
11. **Jesus gives this mandate once again so that the other Apostles could not entertain the harboring of any feelings over Peter’s inability or unfitness to lead, because of past sins, maybe even his possible unfitness to serve Christ.**
12. **This is the real secret of Christian greatness. It is written in another place, *“But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave, even as the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”* (Matt. 20:26-28.)**
13. **The word *“Tend”* as in *“tend my sheep”*… means exercise the office of shepherd in a formal sense…as to keep, to protect, to lead to still waters and green pastures…Ps. 23:1-3*-“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my scup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall tdwell6 in the house of the LORD forever.”***
14. **All with ears to hear would have heard and known how Jesus was defining Peter’s call…to shepherd as He shepherded.**
15. **Jesus also emphasizes once again that these are HIS sheep.**
16. **Now given all that we have talked about so far in this chapter, what is Jesus telling Peter in verses 18-19? *“Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go.’ 19 (This He said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this he said to him, ‘Follow me.’”***
17. **Seems simple enough to me...**
18. **Jesus knows all things even the way Peter will be martyred for Him…Jesus knows the when and how and why of our deaths as well.**

* ***“When you are old”* is a relative statement for we do not know how “old” he was at that moment….and it wasn’t that many years later that he would be crucified…sometimes between AD 64 and AD 68. Jerome tells us that Peter was martyred during the time of Nero. Some have said that Peter was as much as 17 years older than Jesus to a couple of years younger. No one knows for certain.**
* ***“you will stretch out your hands*”…lets him know he will be crucified.**
* **And his death and this type of death will glorify God…the death of His saints glorifies God.**
* **We don’t think like this.**
* **The Puritans did but we don’t want to even think about death…**
* **But death in this life, however it comes about, is God’s plan so naturally it brings God glory.**
* **J.C. Ryle said, *“He is a wise man who takes John Bunyan's advice, and keeps his last hour continually in mind, and makes it his company-keeper. It was a weighty saying of John Wesley, when one found fault with the doctrines and practices of the Methodists—‘At any rate our people die well.’”***
* **The emphasis here, however, is not on the method of Peter’s death but on the last words that we have seen and heard many times, *“Follow Me”!***
* **This is not merely a life to which we are called…but a consistent walk in the way of the Lord, as the OT always highlighted.**
* **This is *“walking about”* as the Greek word implies.**

1. **This is also not walking alone enjoying a private religion but a public walk that is discernable from all who see us.**
2. **A *“walking about”* that causes others to notice the difference in us…sort of like those highlighted at a “red carpet” event.**
3. **One old Puritan, William Gates stated that we are to be a spectacle to heaven and earth and to hell itself! Everyone is to always see Jesus…not us!**
4. **We have seen Jesus on His way to the cross teaching about the importance of serving and He said we must follow Him…(John 12:26)now on His way to the throne He once again says, *“Follow me.”* He leads the way to the cross and to the throne and we are to follow without hesitation.**
5. **If the prediction itself seems to have some ambiguity, by the time John records this all ambiguity would have disappeared for Peter had been dead by this method for 20 plus years. But we know that Peter did in fact Follow Jesus’ lead!**
6. **Given how Jesus links His last command to *“Feed my Sheep”* with a prophecy concerning Peter’s death He seems to be indicating that time is short…don’t focus on what is behind you that you have been forgiven for by me…but focus on what is ahead. *Follow me!* That is to be your focus…wherever that road leads.**
7. **This command to *“Follow me”* would remind Peter of his original call from Christ to be sure…Mark 1:16-17- *“Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, ‘Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men.’”***
8. **This, of course, is written in the present tense and voice to communicate, *“As you have followed, keep on following me.”* Which would be very encouraging to Peter…it certainly would be to me.**
9. **This is not about Peter’s lack of commitment or finding his commitment ...this is about solidifying in His own mind and the minds of his followers this absolute commitment to the LORD and His Mission to *“Feed my Sheep!”* by following Him!**

**Lessons in the Gospel of John**

**April 24, 2024**

1. **Prayer**
2. **Review**
3. **In what ways in this chapter so far has Jesus shown Peter that He loves Him? (read John 21:1- 19)?**
4. **What does this type of love communicate to us after all these years hence?**
5. **John 21: 20-25- *“Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who also had leaned back against him during the supper and had said, ‘Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?’ 21 When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, ‘Lord, what about this man?’ 22 Jesus said to him, ‘If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!’ 23 So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, ‘If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?’ 24 This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true. 25 Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.”***
6. **Verses 20-23 seem to show us a vindictive side to Peter. What do you suppose is being communicated here, that is important for us today? *“Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who also had leaned back against him during the supper and had said, ‘Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?’ 21 When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, ‘Lord, what about this man?’ 22 Jesus said to him, ‘If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!’ 23 So the saying spread abroad among the brothers that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, ‘If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?’”***
7. **Interesting fact:**
8. **all of this commentary of John letting us know who Peter is referring to…John even includes the question that Peter had John ask Jesus because he was either too afraid or he didn’t want to be thought of as a busy-body…so he would rather ask John…which he did.**
9. **It is also interesting that he chose this event to help define himself…rather than…let’s say when he and James brought their mom to Jesus seeking their own glory!**
10. **I wonder…Did Peter see vs. 15-19 as such a rebuke and decided he couldn’t just stand there and take it so he chose to deflect Jesus’ attention (and the other disciples) to John. You know how this goes, “Yeah, I did it, but what about John?” *“What about this man?”***
11. **Were they such competitors as fishermen and those old rivalries are raising their head again because he feels that the Lord has just chastised him? Is his shame still affecting his attitude even though Jesus has just shown him a great grace in more than one way?**
12. **Petty? Yes…Abnormal human behavior? No…we always want someone else to share in our shame when we get caught and called out for it…though that wasn’t really what Jesus was doing…**
13. **OR…is this response in response to Jesus’ command for Peter to follow Him? If I am going to die this way…what about him?**
14. **If this is the case, it is an interesting first response to Jesus…rather than saying Yes…or I will follow you… he turns to pick on John.**
15. **To deflect what Peter assumed was a personal challenge, rather than the grace that it was, he wanted to know what Jesus was going to do about someone else.**
16. **This is an easy one for us to see as well…because we often do the same thing…deflecting our sinfulness...our lack of doing what the Word requires…deflecting the attention off us to someone else…look at their lack…look at how they don’t live up to your standard, all because we haven’t lived up to the standard.**
17. **If there is a rebuke to Peter it is here. *Vs. 22- “If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? You follow me!’”***
18. **Jesus may have meant this as a form of methodology to teach the disciples how to handle conflict in the future qamong themselves and us among ourselves.**

* **In this, every Christian is commanded to remember his own first priority, and to look to our real home…that is with the LORD.**
* **It would be unwise for us to deny that Jesus’ solemn caution to His impetuous disciple is greatly needed in the present day.**

1. **This is the weakness of human nature that even true Christians have: continually running to extremes…one way or another.**

* **Some are so entirely absorbed in their own inward experience, and their own heart's conflict, that they forget the world and the Church outside of themselves.**
* **Others are so busy about doing good to the world, and the church, that they neglect to cultivate their own souls.**
* **Both are wrong, and both need to see a more excellent way; but none perhaps do so much harm to religion as those who are gossipers or nosey about others' salvation and deeds, and at the same time neglecting their own.**
* **Jesus speaks to Peter’s and our sinful curiosity,*“…what is that to you? You follow me!’”* This is the rebuke we all need to hear…for we are to focus on the calling we have been given and not the one someone has been given…each of us has different gifts so we are to go about the mission differently.**
* **I would have expected Him to say: “Haven’t you been listening to anything?”**
* **I have just shown you such grace.**
* **We have communed together as brothers reinforcing the love I said I had for you.**
* **These men have more than once shown you they are behind you.**
* **I have allowed you to see into the future to see and know things most people never know and see.**
* **And all you are interested in is *“What about this man?”* Really!**
* **Thankfully this is not how Jesus deals with any of us. And it doesn’t seem to be John’s purpose in sighting this as well. Not that Jesus isn’t firm and His word isn’t challenging and convicting and even painful sometimes in carrying it out…but He is always loving… knowing and seeking our best.**
* **Incidentally, the Greek grammar tells us one more thing. By adding and using the second person pronoun *“you”,* Jesus’ command makes the statement emphatic *“You must follow me!”***
* **So this is Jesus being firm and reminding him of what is to be his chief concern.**
* **It is not your concern with how I deal with my other children…you must follow me and feed and tend to my sheep as the leader of these men.**

1. **What is the point of verse 23 for John’s audience and us 2000 years later?**
2. **It illustrates how easy it is to misunderstand things even when you are right there:**
3. **Because you are listening to hear what you want to hear.**
4. **Because you want someone to say something else.**
5. **Because you aren’t really listening.**
6. **It had obviously become a rumor about his life thus taking the focus off Jesus so John seeks to correct it especially with the statement, *“…yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but, ‘If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?’”***
7. **He didn’t say that John would NOT die…**
8. **Jesus said this to highlight who is in control of the how and when…Himself.**
9. **Ending this this way communicates what to his readers and to us? vs. 24-25- *“This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true. 25 Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.”***
10. **He tells us who the unnamed disciple is.**
11. **He tells us that He was an eyewitness to all he has written.**
12. **John gives a vow that all that he has said here is true.**
13. **John wrote the truth about Jesus, but in saying that he is also saying that no one could ever write the WHOLE truth as far as details are concerned.**
14. **What is written here is enough to fulfill his purpose that we might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing we may have life in His Name!**
15. **How did you find this study helpful? How has it caused you to change the way you look at Christ and live in Christ?**