
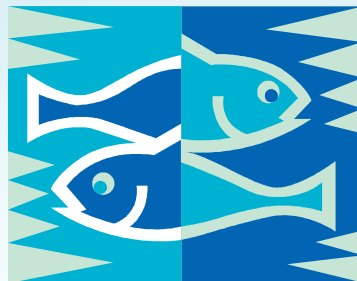




New Testament Survey

Jesus Christ is the Son of God

Studying the Gospel of John



*And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us,
and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten
from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

John 1:14

4



CBLT

Contents

John's View of Jesus.....	3
I. Introduction to John	3
II. In-depth Studies in John	5
Conclusion	8
Jesus: Son of God	11
I. Background Information.....	12
II. Special Emphases	14
III. The Son of God	15
Conclusion	23
Appendix 1. Parable and Miracle Charts	28
Appendix 2. Let's Look at John.....	30

John's View of Jesus



LESSON OUTLINE

- I. Introduction to John
- II. In-depth Studies in John
- Conclusion

LESSON OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson you should:

- 1. Have a good knowledge of the events of the life of Jesus as portrayed in John.
- 2. Have a working familiarity of the Gospel of John.
- 3. Have new insight into the deity of Christ.
- 4. Be able to share in your church from what you have learned through this lesson.

LESSON ASSIGNMENTS

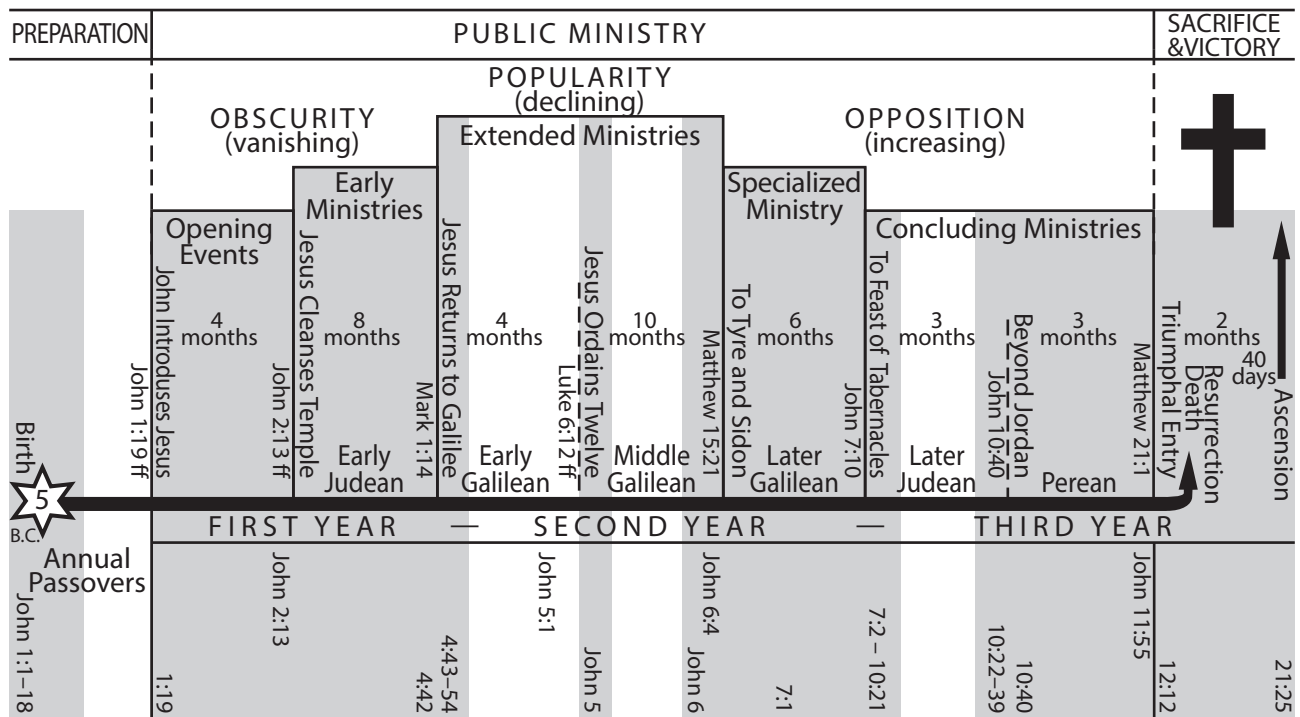
- 1. Read the entire Gospel of John at least twice as you complete the lesson. (This is in addition to the initial scan you will do in Exercise 1.)
- 2. Chart the miracles included in John.
- 3. Complete the Practical Assignment (share a testimony).

I. Introduction to John

John is probably the most beloved Gospel of all. You can never plumb all the depths of this rich book. In this Gospel we have not just a historical account, but deep spiritual insights into Christ's time here on earth. We are going to let you take time to search through the Gospel of John, both to get the general feel for it as well as to look for some of the things more special to this particular book. Savor it as you read. Ask the Holy Spirit to open your heart to a deeper understanding of Christ Jesus.

This looks like a shorter lesson, however it is a full workload because you are searching yourself. Dig in and begin discovering the treasures of John!

LIFE OF CHRIST SHOWING COVERAGE BY JOHN (SHADED AREA)¹



Exercise 1

Take time now to scan *John* quickly. Allot **only** one hour for this and do not allow any interruptions. Keep your notebook handy to jot down your ideas as you read. Don't read every word, but rather focus on the main events and characters, writing them down in your notebook. Also underline in your Bible and write down in your notebook any key words or phrases that you come across. After you have finished your reading take time to write down what you feel to be the main theme of the book—the impression that John wants us to have of Jesus. This is such a quick reading that your thoughts may not be fully developed, but don't worry about that as you will have time later to develop them.

Examine this chart to see how Jesus' life was covered by John. The shaded areas show what John included in his account of Jesus' life as compared to the material that is included in the other three gospels. Notice the references at the bottom of the chart.



Question 1 What part of Jesus' life is John's major focus according to this chart?



Question 2 On what section does John cover in the least detail compared to the other gospels?



Question 3 Notice how the chart is divided into sections with a title on one side of the bold line and a reference on the other (i.e. John Introduces Jesus—John 1:19 ff.). Find the references which are not from John and write them with their title on the lines below.

¹ Jensen I. L. *Jensen's Survey of the New Testament*. — Chicago: Moody Press, 1981. — P. 183.

There are many other important things that you can find on this chart. Take time to study it and look up any references that you find interesting. Remember, this is a comparison of John's coverage of Jesus' life with the coverage of the other gospels—not a comparison to the whole of Jesus' life. All of the gospels focus on Jesus' public life and ministry and include very little information about the first 30 years of His life.

II. In-depth Studies in John



Exercise 2

Read John and mark references to Jesus' deity. You will be working through the book of John two or three times during this lesson; as you do this, note all the references to Jesus' deity. Write the references in your notebook, noting who said them and what they said. In your Bible color or underline with a blue pencil Jesus' claims or references to His deity, and with a red pencil mark those of other people. You will be required to show your Bible to your course coach at the next seminar.



Exercise 3

Notice the many titles of Christ. As you read through John you will notice many different titles for Jesus Christ. Mark these with a green pencil in your Bible and note the titles and references in your notebook. When you have completed this lesson on the Gospel according to John write a descriptive paragraph of Jesus based on His titles as recorded in the book of John. You may want to compare how Jesus described Himself with how other people labeled Him. Your paragraph should be 50-100 words.

We suggest at this time that you read through the book of John doing Exercises 2 and 3. You may not find all of the references to Christ's deity as well as titles used for Him immediately, but don't worry about that. One of the advantages of marking in your Bible is that when you read through it later you will pick up some of the things you missed and can easily mark them. It will also help your focus in later readings and studies.

Once you have done those two exercises prepare to read this gospel again doing Exercises 4 and 5.



Exercise 4

Make your own segment titles for John. On the chart below fill in the segment titles for the book of John. In your notebook justify why the segment divisions were made at 1:19; 10:40; and 12:36b.

1:1	<i>Word was God</i>
1:19	<i>John Baptizing</i>
2:1	
3	

4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10:1	
10:40	
12:1	
12:36 b	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	



Exercise 5

Chart the miracles of John. As you have for the other Gospels, use the chart provided in *Appendix 1* to document the miracles of Christ portrayed in John's Gospel.

Since there are only one or two parables in John we have not included a chart for them. However, you may want to note them at the bottom of one of your other charts.

Now take time to answer these questions based on the work you have already done in this lesson.



Question 4 Did you find a turning point or decisive moment in John's account? If so, where and why do you consider this a climax of John's narrative?



Question 5 How does John identify the purpose of his account? See John 20:30-31.



Question 6 Read John 1:18 very carefully. What does this verse teach us about Jesus' purpose in becoming human?



Question 7 In 1:19-12:36a Jesus focused on individual people mostly. Whom did He focus on in 12:36b-17:26?



Question 8 What verses in chapter 5 show the beginnings of opposition to Jesus?



Question 9 In what chapter does Jesus' arrest take place?



Question 10 Where is the resurrection recorded?



Question 11 How are chapters 20-21 connected with the resurrection?



Question 12 Compare John 1-12:36a with 12:36b-21:25. What kind of a time period does the first half of John cover? What about the second half?



Question 13 What is the content of the last half of John mainly about: miracles or discourses?



Question 14 John 20:30-31 are given as key verses for this gospel: what are the key words of these verses?



Question 15 Why did Jesus perform so many miracles or signs? Was it to make life easier for the people or did He have some other purpose in mind? See John 20:31.

As with the other Gospels we are going to provide you with a basic outline which you will need to memorize for the exam. This is just a bird's eye view.

OUTLINE OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

I. Prologue	(1:1–18)
II. Public Ministry	(1:19 – 12:50)
III. Private Ministry	(13–17)
IV. Passion	(18–19)
V. Resurrection	(20–21)



Exercise 6

Outline John 17. John 17 contains the lengthiest, recorded prayer of Jesus. Take time to read this passage through thoughtfully, and then outline Jesus' prayer in your notebook. What have you learned about prayer through this passage? What title have you given this passage?

Conclusion



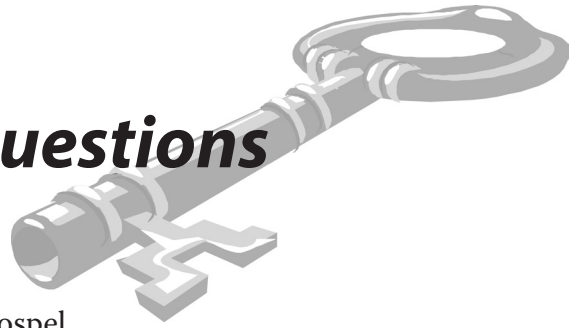
Practical Assignment: Share what you have learned

Write one or two paragraphs about what you have learned from this study of John's gospel. What have you personally learned? What was new to you in this study? What has the Holy Spirit challenged you with? Has your life been changed? What most important lesson that you have learned can you challenge others with? Share this testimony in church or in a small group.



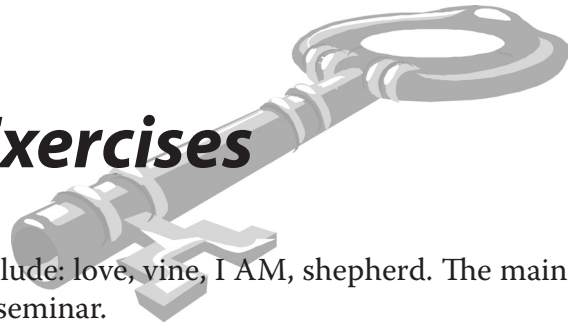
Question 16 Based on everything you have learned so far about John suggest your own title for the Gospel of John. Let it reflect what John's main emphasis was.

Answers to Questions



1. The last six months of Jesus' life.
2. The second year has the least coverage in John's gospel.
3. Mark 1:14—Jesus Returns to Galilee
Luke 6:12 ff.—Jesus Ordains Twelve
Matthew 15:21—To Tyre and Sidon
Matthew 21:1—Triumphal Entry
4. Your answer. John 12 is one climax in the book because it shows the peak of Jesus' popularity with the people as well as some of the opposition He faced. It is a major turning point in John's narrative; from this point forward the story "begins" to conclude.
5. John's self-stated purpose for his account of the gospel was that "... you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." In other words, that people would come to a saving faith in Jesus through John's account of the gospel.
6. According to John 1:18 Jesus came to explain or declare God the Father.
7. He focused primarily on His disciples.
8. Vss. 10-16.
9. Chapter 18.
10. Chapter 20.
11. Chapter 20 records the resurrection and both chapters record post-resurrection appearances.
12. Since John skips Jesus' birth and childhood the first half of John covers the three years of Jesus' ministry; the second half covers the last few days of Jesus' life.
13. Discourses.
14. Signs, believe.
15. Jesus preformed miracles as signs to prove to people who He really is. Although He did have compassion for the people He healed, Jesus also healed many to show His authority and prove His deity.
According to John 1:18 Jesus came to explain or declare God the Father.
16. Your answer.

Answers to Exercises



1. Your answer. Some key words or phrases may include: love, vine, I AM, shepherd. The main theme of John will be discussed more at the next seminar.
2. You may find this difficult depending on your previous knowledge of the Bible and particularly this book. During discussion at the seminar you will probably want to add insights from other students.
3. You may do this exercise as you work on some of the other studies. Don't forget to write your paragraph about what you have learned and be prepared to share it at the seminar.
4. Your answer.

The reason for the segment division at John 1:19 is because this verse begins a new section after the introduction. The division at 10:40 is made because at this point the narrative turns from Jesus' discussions with the Jewish leaders and begins to focus on the cross. After 12:36b Jesus removed Himself from public ministry.

5. Your answer. You will find that John does not record a lot of miracles, but he does record ones which are different from those included by the other gospel writers.
6. Your answer.

A very simple outline of this passage might be:

1. Jesus' prayer for Himself (17:1-5)
2. Jesus prays for His disciples (17:6-19)
3. Jesus prays for the church (17:20-26)

Some have called this passage the High Priestly Prayer.

Jesus: Son of God

8

LESSON OUTLINE

- I. Background Information
 - A. Authorship
 - B. Date
 - C. General Background
 - D. Audience
 - E. Geography of John
- II. Special Emphases
 - A. Divinity of Christ
 - B. Comparison between the Physical and the Spiritual
 - C. Key Verse
- III. The Son of God
- Conclusion

LESSON OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lesson you should:

- 1. Have memorized the following information about the book of John: name of author, audience, purpose of writing, key verse, and an outline of the Gospel.
- 2. Be able to separate the miracles which were included in John from those included in the Synoptics.
- 3. Understand the need for doing evangelistic work personally.
- 4. Have meditated on the resurrection and discovered a new way to communicate its message.
- 5. Have a new love for others in your local church.

LESSON ASSIGNMENTS

- 1. Complete the lesson, including all questions and exercises. Check your work with the answers that we have provided.
- 2. Read Appendix 2 from *A Look at the New Testament*.
- 3. Complete the Practical Assignment (relive the resurrection).

WORD STUDY

Gnostic—An advocate of Gnosticism, which was a religious orientation advocating intuitive knowledge as the way to release a person's spiritual element; considered heresy by Christian churches

I. Background Information

A. Authorship

If a good book is enjoyed by a reader, usually the reader is also interested in the author. In the Gospel of John it appears to be an actual eye witness account of the events and discourses described. There are frequent references to the “disciple Jesus loved” and in 21:24 the testimony of the author, which deepens interest in who was actually recording all of this. Because of how interestingly authorship is dealt with in this book of the Bible, we are going to take the time to let you walk through some of the evidence yourself. This will help you to see more fully some of the principles involved in making decisions about authorship. Let's look at some of the evidence.

1. Direct Internal Evidence



Question 1 Read John 1:14 and then I John 1:1-3. Are these statements of an eyewitness?



Question 2 Now read John 19:35. This is again a claim to be an eye witness. What event preceded this statement?



Question 3 What do you learn about the author in 21:20-25?

The end of the Gospel makes it very clear that the author was identified as “the disciple whom Jesus loved.”

2. Indirect Internal Evidence

Now we will look at the text to see if the author was a Jew or non-Jew. This is only supportive evidence to what we have just seen. We know that all of Jesus' disciples were Jews. Nevertheless, this is the kind of evidence that scholars look for to confirm what has been stated.

In this Gospel Jesus is called the Lamb of God. The serpent in the wilderness is mentioned as well as the sending of manna. Jacob's well, the sheep and shepherd, and the Sabbath are talked about familiarly.



Question 4 Would a non-Jew have written about these things? Or if he had, do you think he might have taken more effort to explain these Old Testament references if he was not thoroughly familiar with them himself? What is your judgment?

There were three main Jewish centers in the world of Jesus' day: in Babylon, in Egypt, and in Palestine. There were Jews in many other places also, but these were the centers of education and indoctrination. How do we know if the author was actually from Palestine, or if he was from another place? We do not have time to go verse by verse, but the author had very certain knowledge about arguments, like purification in 3:25, or the observance of the Sabbath in 7:22-24. He also gave detailed reports of journeys and geography. His writing is alive with detail, even to mentioning obscure places like Salim and Ephraim. When you reread John, think about the author, the way he writes, and his knowledge of events and places.

So how do we come to a final conclusion about who this author is? We have already eliminated Peter. Now read John 1:35-51. Notice that there were two disciples, but one of them is unnamed.



Question 5 Who are the other disciples that are named in this passage?

We could continue on in the process of deduction, but it is too detailed to cover here. Peter, James and John were the three disciples that Jesus seemed to single out for more special attention, and we see a follow through in John's later writings with the theme of love. It is not hard to understand that he was singled out by Jesus in a special way.

The Gospel of John has always by tradition been ascribed to the Apostle John so we have many who have accepted his authorship down through the centuries. And who was this John?

John was a son of Zebedee and the brother of James. It is quite possible that he was Jesus' cousin, which would account in part for their close relationship. Before becoming a follower of Jesus, John was a fisherman working with his father on the Sea of Galilee.

John is recorded as the first disciple who believed in the resurrection of Jesus (John 20:8). In his later life John was exiled to the island of Patmos (Rev. 1:9), but according to tradition returned to Ephesus where he wrote his gospel and the three letters that bear his name.

B. Date

Most evangelicals agree that John was probably written between 90 and 95 A.D. This places the Gospel of John as being written 30 or more years after all of the other gospel accounts. It also helps to explain why John contains so much material that is not in the other gospel accounts and why he does not repeat much of what the synoptic gospels teach us. Since John had access to these he chose to fill out the story of Jesus the Christ, the Son of God. By the time that John wrote his gospel, all of the other disciples had died. John himself was probably in his nineties when he wrote his account. He was able to include in his account all the understanding of Jesus' teachings and miracles without changing the story. In this gospel we have a special gift because John was able to write with the further understanding and wisdom that comes with time.

C. General Background

The Gospel of John appears to have been written against the background of needs and circumstances found in the late first-century church. At that time, heretical teachings known as Gnostic had begun to influence the doctrine and life of the church. Renewed emphasis was thus needed on the teachings of Jesus and the spiritual dimensions of genuine Christian discipleship. One early source indicates that there was need for a "spiritual gospel", and that John wrote to meet that need. In many ways the Gospel was thoroughly grounded in Judaism and the Old Testament background, yet its language made a strong appeal to Gentile readers.²

John wrote to convince people that Jesus is God. He was fighting a heretical group called the Gnostics, who claimed that Jesus—if He was God—could not have been fully human. Not only

² *The Wesley Bible, New King James Version* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990), 1573.

that, but the emperor during this time period was also claiming to be a god and demanded worship as such. Therefore, John needed to refute the Gnostics and provide reasoning for worship of Jesus Christ alone as God.

John's gospel is full of teaching about the perfect incarnation of God in man. Each miracle that John chose was to prove the divinity of Jesus by presenting His power over different realms. The teaching that John included was included to present the perfection of Jesus' mind. Everything that John included was carefully chosen so that, "You may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31).

D. Audience

John wrote to all men. Each of the other gospel writers wrote to a specific people group: Roman, Greek, or Jew; but John wrote to all of these groups with his message of love. By including all of these groups he included all of us too!

E. Geography of John

In John geography does not play an important role. Although there are perhaps one or two places mentioned in John which are unique to the gospel, such as Cana in Galilee, almost every place mentioned in John is covered by at least one of the other gospels.

Now let's review:



Question 6 What books other than the Gospel did John write?



Question 7 What was John's main purpose in writing?



Question 8 What heresy was John fighting with his gospel account?



Question 9 Who was John specifically writing to?

II. Special Emphases

Because John was writing this Gospel much later than any of the others, he chose a unique approach leaving out many of the factual details and miracles and teachings that had already been written about.

The concept of love, both God's love for people and the Christians' love for one another, is prominent in this Gospel. Other key ideas are life, belief, and glory. Contrasting pairs of ideas are frequently found in John, such as light/darkness, belief/unbelief, love/hate, and earthly/heavenly. Major doctrinal concerns include relationships between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; human nature and destiny in the light of God's revelation; and the nature of true Christian faith and discipleship.³

³ The Wesley Bible, New King James Version, 1574.

A. Divinity of Christ

As we mentioned earlier John's gospel focuses on the divinity of Jesus. Some have called it the "spiritual" gospel because it meets the spiritual needs of every kind of man. Indeed,

[t]his Gospel meets the spiritual needs of the soul, whether Jew or Gentile. To this end John gives the great discourses on the new birth; Christ the water of life; the bread of life; the light of the world; the way, the truth, the life; the vine; the resurrection and the life.

Thus the divinity of our Lord appears in His words as well as in His works. It is in these great discourses that the deeper spiritual relation of Christ to His Church appears. These profound spiritual truths are not expressed in parabolic form. The reader ... has probably noticed the fact in reading this Gospel that John does not record any of the parables of the other Gospels and that none of its statements take a parabolic form. He uses figures of speech and illustrations, but not parables, in the proper sense of the word.⁴

B. Comparison between the Physical and the Spiritual

Although we always have this kind of comparison in the Bible, John's Gospel especially stresses the contrast between the physical and the spiritual. In chapter two the comparison is between the Temple as a building and Jesus' own body. In chapter three physical and spiritual birth are compared. In chapter 4 it is between physical and spiritual water. In chapter 6 there is food for the body compared with food for the soul. People in Bible times were materialistic, just like people today. We are drawn to what we can see as opposed to the spiritual values that are unseen. What do you think of when you say "church?" The building—or the congregation of God? How do you measure members of the church? By how often they attend—or how godly they live? By what they wear—or by the fruit of the Spirit?

C. Key Verse

John 20:31 *But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.* John wrote so that people might believe that Jesus was the Son God. He often mentions that some believed and some did not believe. The word "believe" or one of its forms is used over and over in John. Close to 100 times!



Exercise 1

Memorization. Memorize John 20:31. You will be required to know it for the exam.

III. The Son of God

Read *A Look at the New Testament* Chapter 5, and then answer the following questions.



Question 10 Who were the seven witnesses Dr. Mears lists to the fact that Jesus is the Son of God?

Dr. Mears lists 7 "I AM's" but the words from Jesus, "before Abraham was, I AM" are not commonly included in this list. This phrase is a direct claim to deity.

⁴ *The Holy Bible, King James Version*, Analytical Ed. (Chicago: John A. Dickson Publishing Co., 1941), 1230.



Question 11 What was the response of the people to this claim?



Question 12 Why do you think their response was so violent?

You will find the other “I AM” in John 10:9.



Question 13 Now make your own list of the seven “I AM” statements Jesus made, including the one from John 10:9.



Question 14 List the seven miracles which John recorded taking place before the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.

These were specifically seven signs to prove Jesus’ deity. John was very selective in which ones he chose to write down.



Exercise 2

Compare John with other Gospels. Look at your “Miracle Chart” for John and compare it to the charts for the other Gospels in the previous lessons. Why do you think John chose these specific miracles?



Question 15 What kind of reception did the Jews give Jesus (John 1:11)?



Question 16 What should we not count on for salvation?



Question 17 What was so important about the turning of water into wine at Cana? What made this miracle special?



Question 18 On what was Nicodemus basing his salvation?

Nicodemus has a different idea of what it meant to belong to the kingdom of God than what Jesus did.



Exercise 3

Contrast what Nicodemus thought with what Jesus taught. In your notebook make a chart similar to the one below. Then using John 3:1-21 as a base write down the contrasting ideas that Nicodemus and Jesus had about the Kingdom.

Citizenship in the Kingdom

Nicodemus' Concept	Jesus' Concept
1.	1.

You should find at least three such contrasts, but there are more. Be prepared to show your work at the next seminar.

The Samaritans have already been mentioned in Lesson 3, but it is important to the story of Jesus meeting the Samaritan woman at the well in John chapter 4 to know a few more details. You can read about the origin of the Samaritans in II Kings 17:6, 33. Read that now.



Question 19 Who captured Samaria?



Question 20 Who was deported from Samaria?

The king, who at that time was Sargon, then resettled Samaria with people from other lands.



Question 21 Describe the religious practice of these people.

These people eventually intermarried with the Israelites and came to be known as Samaritans. In later times they rejected the idolatry of their ancestors and worshipped only God. However, the religion of the Samaritans differed from pure Judaism in several ways. They accepted only the five books of Moses as the inspired Word of God and always referred to it as "the Law." They accepted no other scriptures. They believed that Mount Gerizim was the scene of the sacrifice of Isaac (Gen. 22), of Abraham's meeting with Melchizedek (Gen. 14) and of the first Hebrew sacrifice after the invasion of Canaan (see Deut. 11:29; 27:12 for references to Mt. Gerizim). This is, of course, the mountain that the Samaritan woman is referring to. The Samaritans actually built a temple for themselves on this Mount, but it was destroyed by the Jews more than one hundred years before Christ. The Jews considered Mount Gerizim as the seat of a rival sect started by Manasseh, son-in-law of Sanballat (Neh. 13:28). These feelings of rivalry and animosity became so strong that devout Jews would extend days to their travel in order to avoid going through the territory of Samaria.

These details will perhaps help you to understand this story better. What Jesus did was extraordinary. That He would even walk through this territory would cast doubt upon Him. That He would

converse with a strange woman was unheard of. That He would ask for something of her hand--! Jesus, by action, was making a very strong statement about prejudice. He was known for reaching out to those despised by the religious.

The woman at the well shared her testimony of what Jesus had done for her with her whole town. This cannot have been comfortable: she was probably the most despised woman in that town and the object of gossip, and yet people believed her. Compare her response to Christ with that of many of the leaders in Jerusalem later. They believed, but they were afraid to admit it (John 12:42-43). Just think the effect their witness would have made in drawing others to Christ!



Exercise 4

Learn from an immoral woman. Are you excited about Jesus Christ? Or, like the Pharisees, are you focused on what you are doing for Christ instead of what He is doing for you? What do you think would happen if you told people at your work and in your neighborhood about what Christ has done for you? What do you think will happen if you don't tell them?

John records that after Jesus healed the nobleman's son, he and his whole household believed on Jesus. In Acts we have other similar stories of whole households converting to follow Jesus Christ. From history we hear about whole armies or towns believing on Jesus. More recently there have been similar movements in India and Africa.



Exercise 5

State what you think about mass conversions. In your notebook explain your opinion about these conversions. Were they real? Do you think God recognizes them? What would the effect be if we tried to reach whole families instead of just one individual from each family?



Question 22 What kind of people were Jesus' closest followers?



Exercise 6

Promote love in your church. How does your church rate against Jesus' command to "love one another as I have loved you?" Is there really a deep closeness among the congregation or are there disagreements, fights and gossip? After answering these questions in your notebook write down one way you can obey this command in your relationships with others in your church.

The Gospel of John is a wealth of information about the Holy Spirit. Jesus tells us things about the Holy Spirit which we do not have in other passages of Scripture.



Question 23 Look up the following verses in John and write down what you learn about the Holy Spirit:

1:33 _____

3:5 _____

6:63 _____

7:37, 38 _____

14:16, 17 _____

14:26 _____

15:26, 27 _____

16:8 _____

16:14 _____

This is not a comprehensive list of the Scriptures on the Holy Spirit in this Gospel. You may want to take time to look more deeply into what Christ said by using a concordance and looking up more verses referring to the Holy Spirit.



Question 24 What is the real secret of the Christian life found in John 15? What are some practical ways that we can implement this truth in our personal lives?



Question 25 Read through John 17 then fill in this chart with Christ's petitions and the purposes of those petitions (note that there is not a purpose listed for every petition):

ANALYSIS		
The Petition		The Purposes
v.1		
v.5		
v.11		
v.13		
v.15		
v.17		
v.21		
v.21		
v.22		
v.23		
v.24		
v.24		



Exercise 7

Pray John 17. In the previous lesson you already outlined this passage in the previous lesson and again reviewed it in the above question. Now take time to kneel in prayer and let Jesus lead you as you pray and read over John 17 again.

We are going to go on to some of the details of Jesus' arrest and crucifixion specifically choosing those things not mentioned in the other gospel accounts.

The scene of the Last Supper with the disciples and the discourse which followed was probably in what is now called the upper city which is the southwest corner of Jerusalem. At the present time this is outside the wall, but in Jesus' day it was within the wall... From this area it seems that Jesus and His disciples made their way eastward through the darkened city streets, or possibly outside the southern wall crossing the deep valley of the Kidron near the southeastern corner of the Temple. The east bank of the Kidron is also the western slope of the Mount of Olives. This is probably near the side of the ancient King's gardens of the Old Testament. It is also the site of modern gardens, because of the presence of water. Olive trees grow here now as then.⁵

Look at chapter 18 as you answer these questions.



Question 26 Why did John not record Judas kissing Jesus?



Question 27 What was Jesus' one request of his captors?



Question 28 What prophecy did this fulfill?

Only in this account is the name Malchus used for the servant whose ear was cut off.



Question 29 What would this imply about the author?



Question 30 Was Peter identified as the one who used his sword in any of the other accounts?

Notice throughout this whole account of Jesus' arrest and trial(s) how bold He was. He knew what He faced. He did not run and hide. When they came to arrest Him, He boldly declared "I am he" twice. The crowd who had come to arrest Him actually fell back at His words. What power must have emanated from Him.

If you will look closely at the account that follows before the High Priest Caiaphas and Pontius Pilate, Jesus stands strong and true. Sometimes in His meekness in submitting to the cross we picture Him as withdrawn or totally passive.



Question 31 What charge did the Jews make before Pilate against Jesus in this account?

It has been well noted by various authors that the Jews were to the very end concerned about their ceremonies and physical uncleanness, even when they were perpetrating the greatest evil of all

⁵ George A. Turner, *Aldersgate Biblical Series, John—B* (Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life Publishing, 1962), 66(S-48).

mankind. What an indictment against them. What hypocrisy of outward holiness in contrast to the shining righteousness of Jesus Christ, the man they had set out to destroy.



Question 32 What did Jesus say about His kingdom to Pilate?

Notice Jesus' open declaration that he was indeed a king—a king standing before a mere Roman governor. No wonder Pilate wanted to get out of this situation. Merrill C. Tenney gives us a brief history of Pilate, stating that he was:

*the 5th procurator, or governmental representative, of imperial Rome in Palestine at the time of Christ, holding this office A.D. 26-36. ... Most procurators disliked being stationed in a distant, difficult, dry outpost such as Judea, Pilate, however, seemed to enjoy tormenting the Jews, although, as it turned out, he was seldom a match for them.*⁶

If it were not for the maddened frenzy of the crowd of Jews, and his worry about his own reputation, he probably would have let Jesus go. But he turned from the truth to his own destruction. (Tenney also reports that within a few years of his removal from the post in Judea Pilate committed suicide.⁷)



Question 33 Who made up the crowd that screamed for Jesus' crucifixion?

These were not the people that Jesus had ministered to every day. These were the leaders, the ones who felt threatened by Jesus, who hated Him because He stood for truth and light, and they stood for hypocrisy and self-service. They could not stand the Light.

As we see Jesus going to the cross, we see Pilate's final denial of who Jesus really was, and an attempt to get back at the Jews who had forced his hand.



Question 34 What was the notice that Pilate had prepared and fastened to the cross?

Pilate finally stood his ground and he absolutely refused to remove the sign written in three languages for the entire known world at that time to read. He had given in to what he knew was wrong, but he had his way in this final act. But he also separated himself from the impact of what Christ had told him about His kingdom—and about truth.

Even in the agony of the cross Jesus remembered His responsibility as the oldest son.



Question 35 Who were the women standing near the cross?



Question 36 List the names of the women from the other gospel accounts.

Matthew 27:56 _____

Mark 15:40 _____

⁶ Merrill C. Tenney, *The Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1967), 656.

⁷ Tenney, 657.

If you study the similarities of these lists you may see why some people identify Mary's sister as the mother of Zebedee's sons, possibly with the name Salome. Because of this association some scholars feel that John was probably a first cousin of Jesus. This would especially make sense in light of the fact that Jesus gave the responsibility of his mother to John. This "disciple whom he loved" is the only one of the disciples mentioned as being near the cross.



Exercise 8

Meditate. Take some time to meditate on the crucifixion and these final hours of Christ's human life. Where were His friends? Who was faithful to Him? Who stepped forward and identified themselves for the first time with Jesus? What were their thoughts as they prepared Christ's body hurriedly for burial? What kind of a disciple are you?

John lays a lot of stress on the piercing of the side of Jesus. He is the only one who reports it. He may have had two purposes. One of those, because this Gospel was written so much later in time, would be to refute those who said He did not really die, or who doubted that He was really human. The other purpose might be symbolic. You can compare the statement about the blood and water in John 19:34 with the mention of water and spirit in John 3, and with the witness of water and blood in I John 5:6-9.

John gives us the most thorough account of the resurrection and the events surrounding it. This is truly the climax to all that he has written. He moves us from the darkest moment in all human history to the triumph of victory over death, sin and Satan. This resurrection is the reason for evangelism. Note Jesus' words to His disciples at His first appearance to them, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." This is the joyous news we have to share with the whole world, a living God, a resurrected Savior who is our bridge. All of the sermons in the Book of Acts feature the resurrection.



Practical Assignment: Communicate the Resurrection Message

Use **one** of the two following options to communicate the resurrection message in your church.

1. Prepare a sermon on the resurrection to motivate people to evangelize with the basis of a "living" faith. Don't focus on the standard Easter resurrection message; give it a new twist. Help people to see the resurrection from a new perspective and incite them to go out and spread the Good News!
2. Using John's account of Jesus' resurrection create a 5-10 minute skit. Use your imagination and put yourself in one of the character's shoes. Describe the scene from their point of view. You will need to arrange several meetings in which you can practice and gather whatever costumes or props that you need. This is meant to be a simple skit, not an elaborate production; make sure that it clearly conveys one truth which you want your audience to understand. If your course coach agrees you may also choose to present this skit at the "end of course" gathering. You must personally participate in this skit to receive credit for this assignment.

NOTE: Option 2 may be completed as a combined effort of several group members. However, you need to discuss this with your course coach first and do equal portions of the work in order to receive credit for the assignment.

As with many discourses and events in John, chapter 21 and the stories it holds are unique to this Gospel. As you meditate on this closing chapter, notice that Jesus again sets the example of serv-

anthood. The Son of God prepares breakfast for His disciples. Are you discipling someone? How have you physically served them?

The human note before John draws this to a conclusion is Peter's question: "Lord, what about him?" And the answer is the same to us as it was to Peter: "...what is that to you? You must follow me." We must have eyes only for Jesus. He calls each one to his separate task.

And the closing verse tells us that Jesus did so many other things that the whole world would not have room for the books to be written. No, we do not have a complete picture of who Jesus was, or who He is. We have what God has chosen to reveal to us. Enough to know Who our Example is. Enough for all we need. When you puzzle over gaps in His story or things you wish you knew, remember that there is enough to live the life that God wants you to live.

Conclusion

John's gospel is somehow extremely personal. Perhaps it is because he presents some of the teachings that Jesus only gave His closest disciples; perhaps it is because of his own great love for Jesus. Whatever the reason John conveys Jesus' deep love for His followers like none of the other gospels do. And because of this deeply personal picture which portrays the depth of love and friendship shared by Jesus with His disciples, we can see that John viewed Jesus not just as his friend, but also as his Master. The closeness of their relationship is felt throughout the gospel, and in John we are all invited to share this same beautiful relationship of Friend with friend and Master with beloved follower.

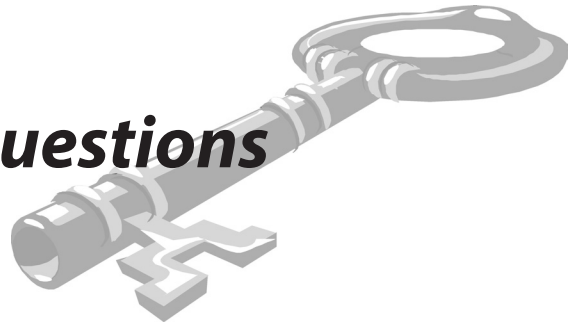
To John Jesus is God. And beyond that John also acknowledges Jesus as his Master. He presents Jesus in a way that we cannot help but feel Jesus' love for us *personally*. Jesus is the Son of God and He loves His Father like no other can, and yet He bears His Father's complete and utter rejection on the cross so that He might prove His love for His disciples. John's Master, his God, is a God of supreme love like no other god has ever been said to be for those who worshipped him.

In John there is no denying the deity of Jesus Christ, there is not even room for doubt. Jesus is God. The God of love.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 3:16-18

Answers to Questions



1. Yes.
2. The crucifixion
3. The disciple who “testifies these things” and wrote them down is “the disciple whom Jesus loved.” This disciple had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and asked who was going to betray Him. (Secondary information: A rumor was spread about him that he would not die.) This passage also shows us it is not Peter.
4. Your answer.
5. Andrew, Peter, Philip, Nathaniel
6. John also wrote 1, 2, 3 John, and Revelation.
7. John stated his purpose: “That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.” John 20:31
8. Gnosticism, which taught that Jesus was not fully human.
9. John was not specifically writing to any person or group; rather his message was prepared for the needs and blessing of all men.
10. (1) John the Baptist, (2) Nathaniel, (3) Peter, (4) Martha, (5) Thomas, (6) John, (7) Christ Himself.
11. They began to throw stones at him.
12. They knew that Jesus was claiming to be God and this was blasphemy according to Jewish law and punishable by stoning.
13.
 1. I AM the bread of life.
 2. I AM the light of the world.
 3. I AM the door.
 4. I AM the good Shepherd.
 5. I AM the resurrection, and the life.
 6. I AM the way, the truth, and the life.
 7. I AM the true vine.
14.
 1. Turning water into wine
 2. Healing the nobleman’s son
 3. Healing the man at Bethesda
 4. Feeding the 5,000
 5. Walking on water
 6. Healing the blind man
 7. Raising of Lazarus
15. They rejected Him.
16. We should not count on our heredity, culture, education, prestige or influence for salvation.
17. Jesus spoke and it was so. This was also the earliest recorded miracle.
18. His blood, the fact that he was a Jew.

- 19.** The King of Assyria
- 20.** The Israelites
- 21.** They worshipped idols and also God.
- 22.** These disciples were basically simple, uneducated men, or as the Mears says, “Nobodies.”
- 23.** Your answers will be similar to these:
- 1:33 Came upon Jesus and was prophesied that Jesus would baptize with the Spirit
- 3:5 Must be born of the Spirit
- 6:63 The Spirit gives life
- 7:37, 38 Jesus said the Spirit would flow from us like streams of living water
- 14:16, 17 He is our Counsellor, the Spirit of Truth.
- 14:26 He will teach us all things and remind us of what Jesus said.
- 15:26, 27 Testifies of Christ, as we must also.
- 16:8 Convicts of guilt
- 16:14 Makes Christ known to us.
- 24.** The secret of the Christian life is to abide in Christ. Abiding has the sense of dwelling in God, actually becoming a part of Him; receiving life itself from Him; not being independent, but totally dependent. Reading our Bibles regularly (as we learned in *Basic Christian Life*), having regular times of prayer, and staying in touch with God all throughout the day, fasting, continually placing our cares in His hands, obeying what we know the Bible says, etc can help us towards that end.

25.

ANALYSIS		
	The Petition	The Purposes
v.1	Glorify the Son	That God be glorified
v.5	Glorify me (Jesus)	
v.11	Protect them	So they may be one
v.13	A full measure of joy for them	
v.15	Protect them from the evil one	
v.17	Sanctify them by the truth	
v.21	That they all be one	
v.21	That they be in “us”	That the world may believe
v.22	That they may be one	
v.23	They may be brought to complete unity	That the world may know
v.24	That they may be with me	
v.24	That they see my glory	

- 26.** Your answer. We might assume that since it is recorded in the 3 other gospels John did not find it necessary to repeat.
- 27.** Let these men go.

- 28.** Jesus did not lose any of those that God gave Him. (see John 6:39)
- 29.** We might assume that the author (John) was more closely acquainted with court of the High Priests. Look at verse 15. As we know, John never personally identified himself in this book.
- 30.** No.
- 31.** They actually made no specific charge in this account.
- 32.** Jesus said His kingdom was not of this world but from another place.
- 33.** The chief priests and their officials.
- 34.** Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.
- 35.** Jesus' mother, her sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene
- 36.** Matt. 27:56— Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons
Mark 15:40 -- Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James the younger and of Joses, and Salome.

Answers to Exercises



1. You should be able to say this verse word perfectly, without any mistakes!
“... but these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name.” John 20:31
2. Your answer.
3. Your answers may vary from those included below.

Citizenship in the Kingdom

Nicodemus' Concept	Jesus' Concept
1. Physical Kingdom	1. Spiritual Kingdom
2. Physical birth	2. Spiritual birth
3. Salvation from earthly enemies	3. Salvation of the Spirit
4. Visible proof of citizenship	4. Proof of citizenship is the Holy Spirit
5. Physical rewards	5. Eternal life

4. Your answer.
5. Your answer.
6. Your answer.
7. Your response.
8. Your answer. Jesus' disciples had made strong proclamations of how they would stand with Him through anything. How willing are you to suffer even a slight rejection for the sake of Christ, let alone death? Don't judge these friends of Jesus too harshly. Why would Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus step forward now? Maybe they were ashamed that they had only believed secretly. Who did stand by Jesus? The women were there, but probably their lives were not at risk. And we do see that John the Beloved was there. What is your love relationship with Jesus the Savior of the world? Use this as a time of examination of your own commitment.

Parable and Miracle Charts

In this appendix we have included charts for you to record the parables and miracles of Jesus. The amount of spaces that we have provided does not indicate how many parables/miracles we expect you to find. We simply wanted to make sure that there was sufficient room for you to record all of your findings.

You'll notice that there is no parables chart for John; there are only one or two parabolic utterances in John. Although there is no chart for these, you may wish to note them at the bottom of this page.

MIRACLES OF JESUS IN JOHN

Scripture	What	Where	Reaction

PARABLES OF JESUS IN JOHN

[illegible]

Let's Look at John

John Portrays Jesus Christ, The Son Of God

Chapter Five from *A Look at the New Testament* by Henrietta Mears⁸

We open the Book of John with the question in mind: "What do you think of Jesus Christ?" Is He the world's greatest teacher, or is He the true God? Was He one of the prophets, or is He the world's Saviour whose coming was foretold by the prophets?

John purposes to answer these questions once and for all.

Seven Witnesses

The Book of John was written that men might believe that Jesus Christ is God. John brings seven witnesses to the stand to prove this fact. Here they are.

What do you say, John the Baptist? *This is the Son of God* (1:34).

What is your conclusion, Nathanael? *Thou art the Son of God* (1:49).

What do you know, Peter? *Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God* (6:69).

What do you think, Martha? *Thou art the Christ, the Son of God* (11:27).

What is your verdict, Thomas? He is *my Lord and my God* (20:28).

What is your statement, John? *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God* (20:31).

What do you say of yourself, Christ? *I am the Son of God* (10:36).

Seven Miracles

We find seven signs or miracles, which prove that He is God. *For no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him*, were Nicodemus' words. (John 3:2)

Turning water into wine 2:1-11

Healing the nobleman's son 4:46-54

⁸ Used by permission.

Healing the man at Bethesda.....	5:1-47
Feeding the 5,000	6:1-14
Walking on the water	6:15-21
Healing the blind man.....	9:1-41
Raising of Lazarus.....	11:1-57

Seven “I Am’s”

There is another proof of His deity running through John. He reveals His God-nature in the “I AM’s” of this book. He says:

<i>I AM the bread of life.....</i>	6:35
<i>I AM the light of the world</i>	8:12
<i>Before Abraham was, I AM.....</i>	8:58
<i>I AM the good Shepherd</i>	10:11
<i>I AM the resurrection, and the life.....</i>	11:25
<i>I AM the way, the truth, and the life.....</i>	14:6
<i>I AM the true vine</i>	15:1

The scene in John does not open at the manger in Bethlehem, but before all worlds were formed: *In the beginning*. Jesus was the Son of God before “He became flesh and dwelt among us.” *In the beginning was the Word*. How like Genesis this book opens!

Christ became what He was not previously—a man. But Christ did not cease to be God. He was God-Man. He lived in a tabernacle of flesh here in this world for 33 years. Incarnation comes from two Latin words, “in” meaning “in,” and “caro” meaning “flesh.” So Christ was God in the flesh.

Methods of Reaching Others for Christ

Preaching

John 1:35–51. Andrew heard John the Baptist preach (1:40).

Testimony of a Brother

Andrew told his brother Peter. This is one of the hardest things to do—witnessing in the family circle (1:41). Try it!

Direct Call of Christ

Philip heard Christ’s claim and followed (1:43).

Witness of a Friend

Philip aroused Nathanael’s interest by saying, Come and see (1:46). This reminds us how much our personal influence can count.

Dr. D. S. Gordon tells the story of a mother who was consoling her little daughter, frightened by a storm. “God will take care of you, dear,” she said as she tucked her in bed. But the fierce flashing and the awful thundering brought an outcry for her mother. The mother comforted the frightened child and said gently, “You know, dear, I told you God is right here and He will take care of you.” The little girl replied, “Yes mother, but you know when it thunders like that a little girl wants some-

body with skin on.” She longed for the human presence, the warm human touch, and the gentle human voice. Is this not what God did? Jesus was God, coming to us “with skin on”—yes, in the flesh. He came to touch men and to be touched, too, with the feeling of their infirmities.

How was Christ the Word received? Read John 1:11. He came to His own (the Jews) and they received Him not. Imagine a father returning from a long trip and coming to his own house and finding the door locked and the family inside refusing to let him in. It is hard even to picture such a thing. But this is just what happened to Jesus. He presented Himself as King to His people, but He was rejected. All through the book we see Jesus dividing the crowds. As He comes out and speaks the truth, the crowds listen. Some believe and some reject. Christ always divides a crowd even today. *He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.* Tragedy indeed! But not all rejected Him. John presents the results of faith.

The Way of Salvation

What We Must Do for Salvation:

But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name (John 1:12).

What to do: *Believe and receive.*

Result: You become a child of God.

What Not to Count on for Salvation:

Sometimes the way to better understand what a thing is, is to find out what it is not. In John 1:13, John tells us what salvation is not. *Which were born, not of blood, nor will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* All of these things are what people are counting on today for eternal life. The “new birth” makes us “sons of God.”

Not of blood—heredity. How much we depend on good birth!

Not of the will of the flesh—culture and education. It is not what we know but Whom we believe that saves us.

Not of the will of man—prestige or influence.

But of God—by the power of the Holy Spirit of God. God comes down and redeems us, if we will only believe and receive Him as Saviour and Lord.

Let us study this Gospel with John’s purpose clearly in” mind. Read it over again, in John 20:31.

Public Ministry — “And Am Come Into The World”

(Read John 1-19—12:50)

Of the seven great witnesses of Christ’s deity (that Christ was God), John the Baptist was first. *Behold the Lamb of God!* When at Jesus’ baptism, John saw the Spirit descending and remaining on Him, he added, *I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.* (1:34) And his final witness is: *This is the Son of God.* (1:34)

In the very beginning, Christ revealed Himself as the Son of God by His words and deeds. The first sign of His deity was the act of turning water into wine. (2:1-11) He merely spoke and it was so. This miracle convinced His disciples that He was the Messiah.

When the rulers asked for a “sign” to prove His authority when Jesus cleansed the temple and drove out the money-changers, He said, *Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.* The rulers were shocked, for it had taken forty-six years to build this edifice. But *He spake of the temple of His body*, John explains. (2:19-22) The supreme proof of Christ’s deity is the resurrection. Read Romans 10:9,10. Have you put your faith in a living Christ?

Jesus gave to this one man the wonderful teachings about eternal life and His love (John 3:16), and the new birth (John 3:6). Nicodemus was a moral, upright man yet Christ said to him, *Ye must be born again.* I Jesus had said this to the woman of Samaria, Nicodemus would have agreed with Him. She was not a Jew and could not expect anything on the ground of her birth as a Samaritan. But Nicodemus was a Jew by birth and he had a right to expect anything on this ground. But it was to him that Jesus spoke, *You must be born from above.*

Suppose that a man born in Ireland would go to the polls on election day with his neighbor, American born. After his neighbor has voted, he steps up and asks for a ballot. “Where were you born?” he is asked. “Ireland.” “Are you naturalized?” “No, not yet.” “I’m sorry then, you can’t vote.” “Why not? You let that man vote and I’m as good as he is. I pay my debts more promptly than he and I’m much better to my wife than he.” “I’m sorry, sir, but all that is beside the point. The fact is that you are not a naturalized citizen; therefore you cannot vote.”

Christ says, *Ye must be born again* in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Have you been born again?

Like the Jews of his day, Nicodemus knew God’s law, but nothing of God’s love. He was a moral man. He recognized Jesus as a Teacher, but he did not know Him as a Saviour. This is just what the world does today. They put Jesus at the head of the list of the teachers of the world, but they do not worship Him as very God.

Jesus revealed to the woman at the well the truth of His Messiahship. This story gives us Christ’s estimate of a single soul. He brought this immoral woman face to face with Himself and showed her what kind of a life she was leading. Her loose view of marriage is not unlike the view taken today by many people. The Lord did not condemn her, but He revealed to her that He is the only One Who could fulfill her needs. Christ revealed the wonderful truth to her that He is the water of life. He alone can satisfy. The wells of the world bring no satisfaction. Men are trying everything, but they still are unhappy and restless. Did the woman believe Christ? What did she do? Her actions spoke louder than any words could have done. She went back and by her simple testimony brought a whole town to Christ. (4:1-42)

In healing the son of the nobleman, we see the second sign of Christ’s deity. During His interview with the centurion, we find Jesus bringing this man to an open confession of Christ as Lord—yes, and his whole household joining with him. (4:46-54)

The miracle of the feeding of the 5,000 was an acted parable. Jesus Himself was

Jesus’ Startling Claims

Claims to Be Equal with God:

Calls God *My Father* (5:17). The Jews knew what He meant. *He made Himself equal with God*, they said. They knew that He claimed God as His Father in a sense in which He is not the Father of any other man.

Claims to Be Light of the World:

I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life (John 8:12).

Claims to Be Eternal with God:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am (John 8:58).

This claim of eternity with God was unmistakable. He was either the Son of God or a deceiver. No wonder the Jews *took up stones to cast at Him.*

the Bread from heaven. He wanted to tell them that to all who put their trust in Him will He give satisfaction and joy. (6:35)

The people wanted to make Christ their King because He could feed them. How like men today! They long for someone who can give them food and clothing. Christ says, *Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.* (Matt. 6:33) Christ would not be King on their grounds. He dismissed the excited multitude and departed into a mountain. Men were disappointed that He would not be a political leader, and so they *walked no more with Him.* (John 6:66)

The people were divided because of Jesus. (7:40-44) We find unbelief was developing into actual hostility, but faith was growing in His true followers. Some said, *He is a good man.* Others said, *Not so, but He leadeth the multitude astray.* Men must say one or the other today, when facing Christ's claims. Either He is God, or an impostor. There is no middle ground. What do you say of Christ?

The raising of Lazarus is the final "sign" of John's Gospel. The other Gospel records give the raising of Jarius' daughter and the son of the widow of Nain. But in this case Lazarus had been dead four days. In reality, would it be any harder for God to raise one than the other? Nevertheless it had a profound effect upon the leaders. (11:47,48) The great claim which Jesus made for Himself to Martha is recorded here: *I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?* (John 11:25, 26)

This scene closes with Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. His public ministry has come to an end. It is recorded that many of the chief rulers believed on Him, without making an open confession.

Private Ministry — "And Am Come Into The World"

(Read John 13-17)

The Jews had rejected Jesus completely. Now He gathered His own around Him, and told them many secrets before He departed from them. He wanted to comfort His disciples, for He knew how hard it would be for them when He was gone. They would be sheep without a shepherd. This little band was "His own," although they were a feeble lot. His last words before His death are recorded in chapters 13 to 17. It is called the Holy of Holies of the Scriptures.

It is wonderful that Jesus should have selected and loved men like these. They seem to be a collection of "nobodies," with the exception of Peter and John. But they were "His own," and He loved them. One of Jesus' specialties is to make "somebodies" out of "nobodies." This is what He did with His first group of followers, and this is what He has continued to do, down through the centuries. Lincoln said he knew God must love common people because He made so many of them.

After announcing His going, the Lord gives His disciples "a new commandment," that "they love one another." *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples.* Discipleship is tested not by the creed you recite; not by the hymns you sing; not by the ritual you observe but by the fact that you love one another. The measure in which Christians love one another is the measure in which the world believes in them or their Christ. It is the final test of discipleship. He mentions this "new commandment" again in John 15:12.

Jesus had spoken of His Father, but now He speaks of the other Person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit. If He (Christ) is to go away, He will send the Comforter, and He will abide with them. This is a wonderful promise for the child of God! Jesus repeats the promise in chapter 15 and again in 16. Look them up. (15:26; chap. 16) Few know of this Presence in their lives. It is by His power that we live. Never call the Holy Spirit "it." He is a Person. He is One of the Godhead.

Jesus reveals the real secret of the Christian life to His disciples in John 15. Abide in Christ. He is the source of life. Abide in Christ as the branch abides in the vine. The branch cannot sever itself and join itself whenever it will, to the trunk. It must abide if it will bear fruit. This is the picture of our lives in Christ. Live and walk in Christ, and you will bear fruit. If you are not abiding in Christ, the fruit will soon disappear. As the branch without the vine is dead, so are we without Christ. A light bulb may be perfect, but if it is not in full contact with the current it will not burn. This, too, is the picture of abiding in the place of power.

After He ended His talk with the eleven disciples, Jesus spoke to the Father. The disciples listened to His loving and solemn words. How thrilled they must have been as He told the Father how much He loved them, and how He cared for them! If you would know the beauty and depth of these wonderful words, kneel in prayer and let Jesus lead you as you pray and read John 17.

Suffering And Death — “Again, I Leave The World”

(Read John 18; 19)

“The hour” had come! The greatest work of Christ on earth remained to be done. He was to die, that He might glorify the Father and save a sinful world. He came to give His life a ransom for many. Christ came into the world by a manger and left it by the door of the cross.

All the disciples but John deserted Jesus in the hour of His greatest need. In that fleeing crowd was James of the “inner circle,” Nathanael the guileless, and Andrew the personal worker. Yet here they were, running pell-mell down the road together, away from their Friend. A sorry sight! Wait! Don’t start blaming them. Suppose you look up and see where you are. Are you following Jesus closely? Remember, majorities aren’t always right. Be sure you are right! Can Christ count on you?

The Judas Clan of betrayers have not all died yet. The Simon Clan of deniers are still with us. The Fleeing Nine Clan are still here. The John Clan of the faithful are still few.

Which badge hangs upon the inside wall of your spirit? Answer this question honestly.

At the cross we have hate’s record at its worst, and love’s record at its best. Man so hated that he put Christ to death. God so loved that He gave men Life.

Our religion is one of four letters, instead of two. Other religions say, “Do.” Our religion says, “Done.” Our Saviour has done all on the cross. He bore our sins and when He gave up His life, He said, *It is finished!* This was the shout of a conqueror. He had finished man’s redemption. Nothing was left for man to do but to believe it. Has the work been done in your heart?

Salvation is costly. *Christ died for our sins.* (I Cor. 15:3) It cost Him His life.

An Indian boy saved his little sister, who had been bitten by a rattlesnake, by placing his lips to the bite and sucking the poison from the wound. But a sore on his own lip meant his death, for the poison spread in his own body. The Lord Jesus Christ heard our cry when we had been bitten by the Old Serpent. He dealt the death blow to our enemy, the Devil, and took the poison of sin for us, and it killed Him.

A doctor lived in a Scotch village. He was noted for his skill and piety. After his death his books were examined and several accounts were found to be marked across in red ink, “Forgiven—too poor to pay.” His wife, quite different, said, “These accounts must be paid.” She sued for the money. The judge said, “Is this your husband’s handwriting in red ink?” She answered, “It is.” The judge replied, “Then there is not a court in the land that can obtain money where he has written, ‘Forgiven.’” Even so, Christ has released us from our spiritual debts, and has written, “Thy sins be forgiven.”

Victory Over Death — “And Go To The Father”

(Read John 20:21)

We have a Saviour who is victorious over death. He “ever liveth.”

On the third day the tomb was empty! The grave-clothes were all in order. Jesus had risen from the dead, but not as others had done. When Lazarus came forth, he was bound in his grave-clothes. He came out in his natural body. But when Jesus came forth His natural body was changed to a spiritual body. The changed body came right out of its linen wrappings and left them, as the butterfly leaves the chrysalis shell. Read what John says, in 20:6-8.

Jesus’ appearances, ten in all, after His resurrection, helped His disciples to believe that He was God. Read the confession of the seventh witness, Thomas the Doubter. (John 20:28) *And Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God.* Jesus wanted every doubt to be removed from each one of His disciples. They must carry out His great commission and bear the Gospel into the world. (John 20:21)

To Peter, who denied Him thrice, Jesus gave the opportunity of confessing Him thrice. He planned to restore him to full privileges of service again. Christ only wants those who love Him to serve Him. If you love Him, you must serve Him. No one who loves Christ can help but serve.

What are Jesus’ last words in this Gospel? “Follow thou Me.” This is His word to each one of us. May we all follow Him in loving obedience “till He come”!