

Chapter-by-Chapter Bible Studies

The Gospel of John

"Is Jesus Really God?"



Bible Studies
by Kathleen Dalton
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Wife, Mother

The Gospel of John
"Is Jesus Really God?"

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Introduction to John

I suggest you begin your study of the New Testament book of John with this 2-part introduction:

First, a few basic pointers on How to Understand the Bible.
And Second, a little background information About the Author and the book

How to understand the Bible:

1. Pray - The Holy Spirit will help you understand what you are reading...or urge you to ask for help when you need it.
2. Observe. Here's some quick and easy ways to do this:
 - Restate the passage in your own words. This makes sure you really did understand the passage.
 - Answer basic questions (ones you can answer simply from reading the passage): Who is in this passage? What are they doing?
Where is this taking place? When is this taking place?

3. Ask Questions

A good question is any question that comes to your mind when you read a passage. There are no bad questions. Encourage yourself to be curious.

- Why are these people doing this?
- What might they have been thinking....feeling?
- Why didn't they do something else?
- Where is God in all of this?
- What does this tell me about God?
- What about their culture do I need to know to understand this better?

For some of your questions you may need a commentary or a good study Bible to get more information. Or you may need to call a friend you trust to help you - or you may want to choose a Bible Study which is covering the particular book of the Bible or topic which you are studying.

Questions are good! Make sure you get your answers not from opinions but from what is absolutely true.

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4. Come to conclusions

Apply this passage to your every-day walk through life. Do you need to change anything you are doing or thinking because of what you learned in this passage? The Word of God is not just for learning...it is for changing us. This is not just a book - it is communication from God Himself to me - and that communication is intended to make me more like Him. Do the painful and uncomfortable thing - ask the Lord how you should change. Then ask Him for help to make that change. Then change.

About the Author and the book:

Who is the author?

- The Apostle John
- he also wrote I, II, & III John
- and he wrote Revelation – at age 90
- was probably 20-30 at the time he followed Jesus
- was probably 75-85 at the time he wrote this book
- was probably the last apostle to die

Look up the following verses and ask yourself the question: “What do I learn about John in this passage?” After you have filled in all the possible answers, check the answers below to see how you did:

Mark 1:19, 20

John 1:35-40

Matthew 20:20-24

Mark 3:17

John 21:1-7

John 19:26-27

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Mark 5:37-43

John 20:3-8

John 13:21-26

Matthew 17:1-9

Here are the answers:

Mark 1:19, 20

- Father, Zebedee
- Brother, James
- Occupation, Fisherman
- From the Galilee area
- From a prosperous family (they had servants)

John 1:35-40

- One of the first disciples of Jesus
- Before that, a disciple of John the Baptist

Matthew 20:20-24

- Mother, Salome, was an ambitious mother....wanted the highest places for her sons

Mark 3:17

- Nickname: Sons of Thunder

John 21:1-7

- The first to recognize the Lord on Galilee's shore

John 19:26-27

- The only disciple recorded as present at the crucifixion
- Appointed to care for Mary, mother of Jesus

Mark 5:37-43

- The inner circle

John 20:3-8

- The first man to reach to tomb, look in, and believe

John 13:21-26

- At the Last Supper, leaned on Jesus' bosom

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- John, in this book, always referred to himself as “the disciple whom Jesus loved”, never by his own name.

Matthew 17:1-9

- Transfiguration – only the three men went: Peter, James, John

Who was he writing to?

- John writes to the Christian community. The temple in Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD, 15 or 20 years earlier. And Christians as well as Jews were scattered all over the known world. There are communities of Christians throughout the Mediterranean area, into Asia and Turkey and throughout the Roman empire.
- The letter was no doubt meant to be circulated.
- The Christians he writes to know a lot about Jesus already because of the other three Gospels
- They are not by now predominantly Jews
- They are still under great persecution for their faith
- They may or may not know John. They probably know about him simply by reputation. There is by now 3 generations of Christians...some who never knew Jesus, never knew any of the apostles
- His book carries weight because of his reputation.
-

When was it written? A.D. 85-95 – The last Gospel to be written

How does the book fit in with the rest of the Bible?

- It describes the life of Jesus, as do the other three Gospels. Since it was written so much later than they, it contains some things that they do not, and leaves out much that they cover
- It ends, as do the other Gospels, before the beginning of the book of Acts. However, the book of Acts had already been written.
- Paul was probably dead by the time this book was written
- Location? The story of the book takes place in Israel
- Time Line? The story of the book takes place from the beginning of Jesus’ ministry in approximately 27 bc – to Jesus’ death and resurrection in approximately 30 ad. John does not cover Jesus’ birth and early life.

Why Was it Written? John himself answers this in John 20:30, 31

The audience John was writing to, remember, were Jewish and non-Jewish people who knew the story of Jesus’ life...probably second-hand. John was concerned that people know how to “pass it on” – each new generation had to know The Word personally. – So

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John was not just imparting facts or telling a story – He was **introducing** Jesus to his readers – and giving them a tool to “pass-it-on”.

What should I get out of it?

By the time you get through studying this book, you should be able to solidly confirm in your mind that Jesus was God...is God, know why you believe it, and be able to communicate that to someone else.

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Who is Jesus?

John 1:1-14 - Questions

1. John talks about someone called "The Word" in vs. 1 - 5. Who do you think "The Word" is? (hint: for a little help, see vs. 14)

2. John tells us 6 things about "The Word" in verses 1 through 5. What are they?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
 - 6.

3. Why does John call Him "The Word"? How does that further describe what Jesus was all about?

4. (:6-8) Who was the person sent from God? And what was his job? (see also Matt 3:1-11)

5. (:9-12) There were three ways people responded when Jesus came into the world:
 1. They did not recognize Him
 2. They recognized Him, but did not receive Him
 3. They received Him

What are some of the reasons they may not have recognized Him?

What did it mean to "receive Him"? Why didn't some?

The ones who did recognize and receive...how are they described?

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6. (:13) How is being "born of God" different than being "born"? How is it the same?

Born of God	Born

8. (:12) Who has the right to become a Child of God?

9. Always apply Bible truths to yourself. Ask yourself:

- Have I recognized Jesus for Who He is?
- Do I believe Jesus is God?
- Have I received Him?

10. (:14) What event is John talking about when he says "The Word became flesh"?

11. (:14) What else do we learn about Jesus in this verse?

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Who Is Jesus?

John 1:1-14 - Discussion Notes

1, John talks about someone called "The Word" in vs. 1 - 5. Who do you think "The Word" is? (hint: for a little help, see vs. 14)

(If you are leading a group discussion, you could possibly come up with two different answers to this question. With either answer you can lead into Question #2.)

Answer #1: Don't know. Let's answer Question #2 and see if we can then come to a conclusion.

Answer #2: Jesus. Right – how did you come to that conclusion? Let's see if Question #2 gives us any more clues.

(Verse #14 gives us some more information about "the Word", and should pretty well answer any lingering doubts that Jesus is "the Word".)

2. John tells us 6 things about "The Word" in verses 1 through 5. What are they?
1. Was in the Beginning (So...how long has "The Word" been around? - When everything began, was already there – it doesn't say the Word was created then, but was there then – like the "I am", no beginning, no end (Ex. 3:13,14)
 2. Was with God
 3. Was God
(since "The Word" was God, and was with God, that makes "The Word" the same as, but separate from, God)
 4. Everything was made through Him ("The Word" is a "he")
 5. Life was in Him
 6. He was light

So – who was "The Word"? (If there is still hesitation, skip ahead and read vs. 14 – this should seal the answer)

Answer: Jesus

Did you know all those things were true of Jesus?

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3. Why does John call Him "The Word"? How does that further describe what Jesus was all about?

When I speak words to you, they are the expression of myself to you. Jesus is the expression of God. He is the way for us to understand and know God. He is God, and we can know Him. He is not distant or unreachable. And He wants to communicate with us.

4. (:6-8) Who was the person sent from God? And what was his job? (see also Matt 3:1-11)

The person sent from God was John – not the John who wrote this book, but John the Baptist

Why did people need someone to help them understand? Why didn't Jesus just show up and say "Here I am – I'm God!"?

When people encounter something they don't understand, or something unfamiliar to them, what do they usually do? Run away in fear. Like the child who has been told never to talk to strangers, then gets lost in the mall, but runs away from the policeman who has found him – because, after all, the policeman is a stranger.

If people don't understand, or are afraid, what do they need to help them? An introduction. Someone they know and trust telling them not to fear – someone to pave the way. That was John the Baptist's job: introduce Jesus to the world...pave the way.

5. (:9-12) There were three ways people responded when Jesus came into the world:

1. They did not recognize Him
2. They recognized Him, but did not receive Him
3. They received Him

- What are some of the reasons they may not have recognized Him?

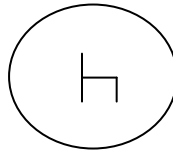
They weren't looking for Him. They weren't thinking about Him. They had never learned anything about Him in their lives.

- What did it mean to "receive Him"? Why didn't some?

"Receive" means more than believe. James tells us that "even the demons believe and tremble." In other words, even Satan and his fallen angels accept the fact that Jesus exists. But they don't "receive" Him. "Receive" means not only believe, but also submit to the One I believe in.

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If this circle represents your life, and the chair in the middle (yes, that's a chair) represents the "throne" of your life, then the person sitting on the throne would be the one who's in control of your life. Are you on that throne....or is Jesus? The person who has "received" Jesus has said to Him "please be the One on the throne of my life....I submit my will to Yours....I will do the things Your way, because I believe You are Who You say You are". Revelation 3:20 gives us a word picture of that moment of "receiving": *"Here I am! (Jesus talking) I stand at the door and knock. (the door of your life) If anyone hears my voice and opens the door (receives Me), I will come in and eat with him (walk through life with him) and he with me."*

The ones who didn't "receive" Jesus, spoken of in this verse, were the ones who made a decision not to. They saw Who He said He was....they understood....they were introduced....but they decided they didn't want to receive Him.

- The ones who did recognize and receive...how are they described?

Answer: a. "believed in His name"
 b. "children of God"
 c. "born of God"

Saying that they are "Born of God" is significant, because prior to this only a Jew, born of Jewish blood, seemed to have the "in" position with God. Although Judaism was supposed to be of faith, beginning with Abraham, Jews had come to think of themselves as privileged by birth.

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6. (:13) How is being "born of God" different than being "born"? How is it the same?

Born of God	Born

8. (:12) Who has the right to become a Child of God?

Even today, it's the one who recognizes Who Jesus is & receives Him. Unlike physical birth, it is not someone else's decision...it's God's....and yours.

9. Always apply Bible truths to yourself. Ask yourself:

- Have I recognized Jesus for Who He is?
- Do I believe Jesus is God?
This is not "head knowledge". If Jesus is God, then I will want to know what He has said and what He wants of me. I can't be passive here.
- Have I received Him?

10. (:14) What event is John talking about when he says "The Word became flesh"

The birth of Jesus in Bethlehem.

11. (:14) What else do we learn about Jesus in this verse?

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He lived with us, we saw Him, and He was full of grace and truth. He was a real person, not just a vision or imagined being. He had a real personality – interacted with people and exhibited characteristics which made him recognizable.

When you think about it, it is especially hard to be full of both grace and truth. Usually it is more of one than the other. Either you are way too merciful and let people get away with things they shouldn't, or you are way too legalistic and never give anyone any "wiggle room" for their imperfections.. But Jesus was both – full of grace – full of truth. The perfect man.

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Who is John the Baptist?
John 1:15-34 - Questions

Look at verses 15-18, and answer:

1. (:15) What method did John the Baptist use to introduce Jesus?
2. Why didn't John the Baptist work through the traditional, religious establishment?
3. (:17) What did Moses give us?
4. (:17) What did Jesus Christ give us?
5. (:18) John (the apostle) says that "no one has ever seen God". How can this be true, when John himself saw Jesus and was with Him for 3 years? – another riddle.

Read verses 19-28, and answer:

6. (:19-22) What three people did the authorities think John the Baptist might be claiming to be?
 - 1 .
 - 2.
 - 3.
7. (:23) Who did John the Baptist say he was?
8. (:24-28) How did John the Baptist answer when they asked him why he had the authority to baptize?
9. (:26) Did John the Baptist know what he was supposed to do for God? What was it?

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10. When before did the life of Jesus and the life of John the Baptist intersect?

11. (:29-34) As John points Jesus out to his followers, what are the 4 descriptions of Jesus he gives to his audience?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.

12. Why did John the Baptist call Jesus the "Lamb of God"?

13. (:34) What was John the Baptist's response to finally meeting face to face with Jesus?

14. (:33) How did John the Baptist know for sure that Jesus was the Son of God?

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Who is John the Baptist?
John 1: 15-34 – Discussion Notes

Look at verses 15-18 and answer:

1. What methods did John the Baptist use to introduce Jesus?

Baptism in the Jordan River
Preaching
and Riddles (:15 & :18)

If you look at a map of Israel you will see that the Jordan River is a few miles east of Jerusalem, therefore it is not at the center of religious activity – Jerusalem. Those who were the religious rulers of the day would have been quite offended and probably angry that anyone was giving the Jewish people the idea they could learn about God anywhere but in Jerusalem, at the Jewish temple, and especially that they could learn such things from someone who was not a recognized authority.

2. Why not the traditional, religious establishment?

They were the problem. They had stopped pointing people to faith in the Messiah. They had been teaching people to look to them, the authority figures, not to God. They had been teaching people to obey laws - but not to know the God Who made them.

3. What did Moses give us?

Law (right & wrong, conscience)

4. What did Jesus Christ give us?

Jesus Christ gives both Grace and truth. The law can make us know what's right and what's wrong (the truth), but it can't give us the desire and ability to do the right and say no to the wrong (grace). Actually, all the law can do is inspire fear in us of doing the wrong thing, or inspire rebellion in us to do the wrong thing, or discourage us because we can't do the right thing all the time...but grace can change us - turn us into people who hate the wrong and love the right...and have the ability to choose God's way and not our own.

5. John (the apostle) says that "no one has ever seen God". How can this be true, when Jesus was God, and John himself saw Jesus and was with Him for 3 years?

A riddle. God is three persons. And also God is one person. God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit and three separate persons - and yet they are also one. Verse 18 helps us understand that although no one has ever seen God the Father, there are those

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who have definitely seen God the Son (Jesus), and that part of Jesus' purpose here on earth was to help us know God by giving us God in the flesh to see and talk to.

Read verses 19 thru 28 and answer:

6. What three people did the authorities think John the Baptist might be claiming to be?

1. Messiah
2. Elijah
3. Prophet

In the Old Testament the prophets foretold of three special people whom the children of Israel were to watch for:

1. The Messiah (Ps. 110:2),
2. Elijah who would come back again and announce the coming of Messiah (Malachi 4:5), and
3. A prophet who would speak with even greater authority than Moses (Deut 18:15).

All three of these were supposed to be men who would “change” things – give a fresh start, a new day for the Jewish nation. These questioning authorities in verses 19-28 are basically asking John the Baptist: “Why do you preach to us the hope of a fresh start? We only recognize Elijah, or the Prophet, or the Messiah as heralds of something so new we would want to be baptized because of it. Are you any of these three? How can you claim to have more authority than us?”

7. Who did John the Baptist say he was?

None of the above

8. How did John the Baptist answer when they asked him why he had the authority to baptize? (verse 23)

Answer:

- He quotes Old Testament Scripture (Is. 40:3-5)
- And he points to Jesus

The passage in Isaiah says: "A voice of one calling: 'In the desert prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.'

Such a powerful way to answer a question. Point to the scriptures - the authority that is higher than even the religious authorities - and say - this is what I'm doing - this is what I am obeying.

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And then point to Jesus - God Himself - the ultimate authority, the One who has the power to break even the pride and blindness of the religious people who have all the answers but do not know God on a personal level.

9. Did John the Baptist know what he was supposed to do for God? What was it? He hadn't yet met Jesus but he knew his job was to be His herald – to introduce Him. He was the “preparer” – Isaiah 40:3. Paths were to be made straight...how do you make a path straight? Kings of that age had thousands of slaves fill in the valleys before them as they traveled, so that their trips would progress easily – John preached repentance for making paths straight in people's hearts (a heart wanting to know God - realizing the need of a Savior) – a startling message since Jews thought themselves worthy to be in God's presence simply because they were Jews.

Religious authorities of any kind who teach good moral living, but do not teach a personal relationship with God are just like these religious authorities of John chapter 1. Do not give your time to listening to anyone who says he is from God unless that someone also teaches that you need to admit and turn away from the sin in your life - and turn fully to Jesus.

10. When before did the life of Jesus and the life of John the Baptist intersect? When Mary went to visit Elizabeth when they were both pregnant. Mary with Jesus.....Elizabeth with John. (Luke 1:39-45)

11. (:29-34) As John points Jesus out to his followers, what are the 4 descriptions of Jesus he gives to his audience?

1. The Lamb of God - Who takes away the sin of the world
2. He comes after me and has a higher rank than me
3. Existed before me
4. I saw the Spirit of God descend on Him - so I know He is the Son of God.

12. (:29) Why did John the Baptist call Jesus the “Lamb of God”?

Here's God again...helping the whole world understand something. The sacrifices of the Old Testament were small dramas to teach people they needed a Savior who would purchase their atonement by shedding his own innocent blood - the sacrificial lambs of the Old Testament pointed to Jesus.

(Leviticus 17:11.) The only way of salvation from sin is for that sin to be paid for by someone totally innocent. Jesus was not just *another* "Lamb of God"...He was *the* Lamb of God. Once He shed His blood, died, and then brought Himself back to life...no lamb would ever have to be sacrificed again.

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13. (:34) What was John the Baptist's response to finally meeting face to face with Jesus? He told the world, "This is the Son of God!"

14. (vs. 33) How did John the Baptist know for sure that Jesus was the Son of God? The dove.

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The First Disciples
John 1:35-51 - Questions

1. (:35-37) What was the disciples' reaction when they saw Jesus as "the Lamb of God"?
2. Was there ever a time when you realized Jesus was the Lamb of God...and then followed Him? When was it?
3. (:40-41) Who were the first 3 disciples?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
4. (:42) What are 4 different names we see for Peter in verse 42?
5. (:43) Who found Philip? (:44-45) Who found Nathanael?
6. (:46) What was Nathanael's reaction to Philip's "witness"?
7. (:47-48) What did Jesus do to help Nathanael believe?
8. What did Jesus do to help each of these men be ready to follow him?
 - Andrew –
 - John –
 - Peter
 - Philip –
 - Nathanael –
9. What ever happened to John, Andrew, Peter, Philip & Nathanael?

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10. Who do you need to introduce to Jesus?

From today's passage, fill out this table
and come to conclusions

Disciple	Reaction to meeting Jesus	What did Jesus Do?	Introduced? Or Cold Turkey?	How Prepared?
John				
Andrew				
Peter				
Philip				
Nathanael				

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The First Disciples
John 1:35-51 - Discussion Notes

Begin today's study by remembering...John the Baptist's job was threefold....he was commissioned by God to:

- Preach repentance so people would be ready
- Point out Jesus for who He was
- Point his own followers to Jesus

1. (:35-37) What was the disciples' reaction when they saw Jesus as "the Lamb of God"? They followed Him. They must have been very ready to want to know Jesus. John the Baptist had done his job.

2. Was there ever a time when you realized Jesus was the Lamb of God...and then followed Him? When was it?

Encourage people in your group to share their own experiences of coming to know Christ as Savior and Lord.

3. (:38-42) Who were the first 3 disciples?

Andrew,
the other one, (the other one was the Apostle John)
and Peter

You will notice, as you study the book of John, that as John writes this account, he never refers to himself as "John". He always says...the "other" disciple, or, especially, "the one Jesus loved", or some other similar description.

Further questions: Peter, who became one of the most influential Apostles...how did he find Jesus?

Andrew went to find him & bring him back

So...What exactly did Andrew do to "witness" to his brother?
He brought him to meet Jesus.

Who was the first person you told about Jesus? (tell your personal story of the first time you witnessed about Jesus)

If you had just met Jesus yesterday, who would you want to tell first?

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4. (:42) What are 4 different names we see for Peter in verse 42?

Simon,
son of John,
Cephas, (stone)
Peter

Peter was very outgoing, very demonstrative, but not exactly a rock! What was Jesus referring to?

His future role as a leader in the fledgling church after Pentecost. There is no record of Peter's response here to his new name, but after 2 years of walking & talking with Jesus, he was able to understand and boldly proclaim: "You are the Christ, the son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16). That's why Peter was called "The Rock".

God sees what you are going to be.

5. (:43-45) Who found Philip? Who found Nathanael?

What did Philip do when he witnessed to Nathanael? He told him about what he had found, and invited him to come check it out.

6. (:44-46) What was Nathanael's reaction to Philip's "witness"?

Skeptical

7 (:47-49) What did Jesus do to help Nathanael believe?

He did something no other man could do. He proved He could "see" what any ordinary man could not.

Why did Nathanael need that? Not sure why he needed it. But Jesus knew he did. Jesus prepares each individual to understand who He is.

8. What did Jesus do to help each of these men be ready to follow him?

- Andrew – John the Baptist's teachings prepared him
- John – John the Baptist's teachings prepared him
- Peter – Jesus spoke to Peter's ego – to his need to be important
- Philip – Jesus called him specifically. He was personal
- Nathanel - Nathanael needed a miracle, a sign

Why does Jesus help us get ready?

The people you are praying for...why don't you include in your prayers the request that Jesus help them be ready to follow him?

9. What ever happened to John, Andrew, Peter, Philip & Nathanael?

- John – An Apostle. He ended up on the Isle of Patmos much later in his life, writing the

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book of Revelation. – Revelation 1

- Andrew – An Apostle, he frequently got the “Second handshake” – always known as James’ brother
- Peter – An Apostle, crucified upside down
- Philip – An Apostle, served in Jerusalem
- Nathanael – An Apostle, also known as Bartholomew

11. Who do you need to introduce to Jesus?

- Make a list, by name if you can, as you mentally walk thru your typical day, week, year.
- Make a list of family and friends.
- Make a list of friends you haven’t seen for quite a while.
- Tell your story. How did you meet Jesus? What has he meant to you?
- Then set about spreading your story:
- “Have I ever told you about my love for Jesus?”
- “...or.... when I gave my life to Jesus?”
- “Do you know who has affected my life more than any other person?”

How do I introduce someone to Jesus?

1. Pray for them
2. Witness to them

What exactly is witnessing? (to pursue this question, see the helps attached to the end of this lesson)

Here is the filled-out table...
 Come to some conclusions about it:

Disciple	Reaction to meeting Jesus	What did Jesus Do?	Introduced? Or Cold Turkey?	How Prepared?
John	Followed Him	Walked in front of him	Introduced	John the Baptist
Andrew	Followed Him Went to find Peter	Walked in front of him	Introduced	John the Baptist
Peter	Stayed with Him	Spoke to his need for importance	Introduced	Brother Andrew

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Philip	Followed Him	Spoke directly to him	Cold Turkey	?
Nathanael	Declared Him to the Son of God	Challenged his skepticism	Introduced	Versed in Old Testament prophecies

Possible Conclusions:

- All of these men responded in faith to Jesus...but not all served in the same ways
- 4 out of 5 were introduced
- All were prepared
- All were addressed by Jesus in the way they needed

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Exactly What is Witnessing?

I have 4 favorite verses which help me understand what witnessing is, and give me the urgency to try to do it, and to continue to learn so that I will get better and better at it:

Matthew 28:19, 20

Acts 1:8

I Peter 3:15

Deuteronomy 6:6-9

Matthew 28: 19 & 20 says: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Just before Jesus left this earth to go back to be with the Father, he left us these very simple directions. After his followers had seen him alive after that cruel death on the cross, and after they had had time to realize the way His resurrection would now change the world, then they were given a job to do. Tell other people about this.

This is our directive, too. Plain and simple. Go and tell. We are not told to fight back against those who did this to Jesus...we are not told to go and hide until He returns...we are not told to share our wonderful story with only those whom we love and care for...we are just told to go and introduce other people to Jesus.

That does leave a question....It's not a question of "Should I?" but "How can I?" So...

Acts 1:8 says: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." The people who heard Jesus say these words had a few days to wait until the Holy Spirit would descend on them as a group, and they would find themselves filled with the fire of God - desirous of only one thing - telling others about the Messiah of Israel...Messiah of the world.

But we don't have to wait. When we bow our knee to Jesus - accept Him as our Lord and Savior - at that moment the Holy Spirit comes to live within us - and He fills us with Himself - and we, too, have the fire of God - the power and desire to be witnesses.

You may be asking..."well then, why don't I feel that way? Why am I so hesitant to speak

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of Jesus? Why am I so tongue-tied when I see that I could speak of Jesus? Why do I never even seem to think about it? Because the fire within you has been banked...tamped down with the cares of this life, the desire for the things of this world, and covered over with unconfessed sin.

But, do not doubt it - the fire is there. We're going to blow on it a little bit today. If you realize, as we are talking about this, that there is some unconfessed sin in your life - confess it and turn away from it. If you realize you are worrying your life away, ask Jesus to change your attitude.

If you are in love with the things which give you a comfortable life, ask Him to open your eyes. Ask Him to show you what a dump this world is...that the very nicest and most beautiful thing you can desire in this world is absolutely trash compared to the home that is waiting for you.

Then look with new eyes at your Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria - your home town, your state, your country - and the whole rest of the world. There are people out there just waiting to be told the story of Jesus - and you have the fire to do it!

OK - I'm stoked up! Ready to go! What do I say?

I Peter 3:15 says: "But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have..." Time to get prepared. That's what we're going to do today - learn how to talk about the story of Jesus and the plan of salvation.

And after we are prepared then the next step is so sweet - just sit, walk, lie down and get up.

Deuteronomy 6:6-9 says: "These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down, and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates." The Old Testament Israelites were told by God to talk about Him as they walked through life. Not to talk about their love for Him only at their weekly meetings, not to share their fire for God only when an audience gathered for a speech...but to talk about God and the things He has done when they were sitting at home with family, when they were walking along the road with strangers, when they were laying down to go to sleep at night, and when they arose in the morning. They were to find ways to share God's presence in the way they dressed and in the way they cut their hair. Their houses were to be testimonies to the worship of the One, True God.

And that's what we are to do, too. Just start talking about what God is teaching you. About how prayer has made a difference in your life. You talk about lots of things every

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day. Talk about God the most.

So...exactly what is witnessing? Telling the people in your life about Jesus -about His birth, life, death and resurrection - and about how accepting Him for who He is means the difference between eternity with God and eternity without God. As believers in Christ we have a command to witness, we have been given the power to witness, we can learn what to say, and we can say it as we walk through our every day lives.

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How to Talk About Coming to Know Christ

- ❖ First of all, share your own story of how you came to know Christ.
- ❖ Then, use a simple way to point out a few scriptures and talk through what they mean. I use "The 4 Spiritual Laws" most of the time because it was the first tract I learned to use when I first became a believer in Christ. As a new believer I was encouraged to learn the 4 Spiritual Laws myself, memorize the verses which were included in the tract, and then to use my new knowledge to tell others about Christ. I have used this easy method of witnessing ever since. A copy of the 4 Spiritual Laws is included in your packet.

Here are a few questions you might ask as conversation-openers if you need to:

- If you would die tonight, do you know for sure you would go to heaven?
- Did you know the Bible says we can know for sure we are going to heaven?
- Do you feel God is interested in you personally?
- Did you know the Bible teaches that God is interested in you personally?
- If you would stand before God tonight, and He would ask you: Why would I let you into my Heaven? What would you say?
- Have you ever wondered if the story of Jesus was true?
- Have you ever wondered if you will go to heaven when you die?
- Are you afraid to die?
- Do you wonder how to tell your children about God?
- Do you feel like you know what your purpose in life is?
- Do you have questions about God?
- Do you believe God exists?
- Do you believe the Bible is true?
- Did you know God actually has a plan for your life?

As your acquaintance responds to any of these questions you can easily say: "I have found some easy-to-understand answers to my questions in the Bible - Have you ever heard of the 4 Spiritual Laws? These are 4 simple basic things taught in the Bible about God's relationship to people - would you be interested in seeing what they are?"

- ❖ Remember as you talk - the work of creating a desire to know Christ is not your job. Your job is to tell the story. The Holy Spirit Himself will help your listener be curious, think of questions, and feel drawn toward God.
- ❖ You don't need to push for a decision. You are not selling. God Himself will give each person a great desire to make a decision to believe in Him. But you can

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certainly ask the question: "Do you want to make a commitment of your life to Jesus?" If the answer is yes - offer to pray with your friend as they tell Jesus they believe in Him and want Him to be their Savior and Lord.

- ❖ Remember - every person on earth has their own time to come to that decision. And not every person will choose Jesus. But you don't know who will and who won't - only God knows that. So relax, be loving and caring, and pray that God will do His wonderful work of convicting of sin and opening eyes to the gift of salvation as you tell the story of Jesus.

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How to Tell Your Story

Here's a short little worksheet - as you think it through and fill it out you will find you have a nice outline of your own personal testimony. After you see what your story is, practice telling it a few times. Practice on your kids, your friends, your husband, your Mom & Dad, your teachers...anyone who will listen for 5 or 10 minutes. Then pray that God will give you an opportunity to tell someone you love - someone who doesn't know Jesus - your story of how you came to know Him.

The first 2 questions will help you define your life before knowing Christ.
The second 2 questions are about the time in your life when you met Christ.
The last 2 questions are about your life since Jesus became the center.

1. Where were you spiritually before receiving Christ, and how did this affect you - your feelings, attitudes, actions, and relationships?

2. What caused you to begin considering God/Christ as a solution to your needs?

3. What realization did you come to that finally motivated you to receive Christ?

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5. How did your life begin to change after you trusted Christ?

Simply reading these through and thinking about your answers is not really going to help you that much. Write out your answers. This forces you to actually put things into your own words - to verbalize what may be a little fuzzy in your head. After you write out your answers, then practice telling your story out loud, you'll be amazed at how easily your testimony will come out of your mouth at just the right time.

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**Witnessing to a Person Involved in a
Cult or False Religion**

Here's our outline:

- **What is a cult?**
- **What is a False Religion?**
- **Is there one way to witness to anyone in any cult or false religion?**
- **What if?**

What is a Cult?

A cult is any religious group calling themselves a **church** which:
does not believe that the One and Only, True God is Jesus Christ.

Here are a few of the cults you may have run into or heard about:

- Armstrongism
- Christian Science
- Jehovah's Witnesses
- Jesus Only
- Moonies (Unification Church)
- Mormonism
- New Age
- Scientology (The teachings of L. Ron Hubbard)
- The Way

What is a False Religion?

A false religion is any group calling themselves a **religion** which:
Does not believe that the One and Only, True God is Jesus Christ

For instance:

- Judaism
- Islam (Muslims)
- Confucianism
- Buddhism
- Etc.

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Is there one way to witness to anyone in any cult or false religion?

Yes, there is. Even though each different cult or false religion has a different slant on untrue teachings, they all have one thing in common: they are depending on their own effort to be considered worthy to live eternally. In other words...they are working their way to heaven.

Your message to them, then, is simple:

your own effort can't make you right with God.

- Talk about God, and what He is like – His Holiness, His love for mankind, His repugnance for sin, His awesome power...so great that He could make the whole world. There is no one like Him anywhere. (Genesis 1:1) (Isaiah 46:9)
- Then talk about sin and the different forms it takes, and what sin does to our ability to have a relationship with this Holy God. And what we deserve because we have sinned. (Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23)
- Then talk about the fact that there is no way for any person to “balance the scales” and somehow do enough good to make up for the bad. Won’t work.... Because even our “good” works are like filthy rags. We are bankrupt spiritually, and desperately need God to come to our rescue (Isaiah 64:6) (Ephesians 2:8,9) because there is an awful punishment waiting for us as a result of our sin.
- Then talk about the price Jesus paid on the cross for us. He became our substitute – standing in our place and taking the punishment we deserved. (Romans 5:8) (John 14:6)
- Then talk about the proper response to realizing what Jesus did for us – saying thank you to Him for loving us so much – offering our lives to Him in submission to whatever He wants. Faith. (John 3:16) (John 1:12)
- No one can, through their own effort or “goodness” ever be good enough to be in God’s presence. Only putting your faith in what God did on the cross will make you right with God.

What if...

What if I get confused? What if my friend gets angry? People involved in cults are trained to debate you out of your beliefs. And people involved in false religions will be very angry at you for being so sure Jesus is God. Either way, simply keep your eyes focused on one goal: sharing the scriptures which are the foundations of truth in your life.

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What if my friend doesn't believe the Bible is true? If your friend puts up a roadblock by saying they don't believe the Bible is true, that is not a problem. Simply share the scriptures anyway. They are like a "sharp, two-edged sword" – and God will work in your friend's heart with the truth he/she has heard, even though they don't believe it is true. They don't have to believe it is true before the truth begins to work on them. A sword will cut you even though you don't believe it will.

What if someone asks a question I can't answer? Ask for the time to research a little and get back with them. Make an appointment to continue the conversation.

What if someone kicks me out of their home...or out of their life...because they are so angry with me? Go. And keep praying for them. Leave the door open for another day.

What if I can't tell the whole story before my friend makes me stop? Follow up later with a letter, e-mail or phone call and try again.

What if my friend laughs at me...or tries to ruin my reputation with others? Actually, this is a good time to smile and say, "Wow – I'm being persecuted...I'm in good company!" *Rejoice, and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so persecuted they the prophets who were before you. Matthew 5:12*

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The Wedding at Cana
John 2:1-11 - Questions

1. (:1-2) Why was Jesus at this wedding?
2. (:3) Why did Jesus' mother, Mary, approach Jesus for a solution to a problem which should have been solved by the Master of the Banquet?
3. (:4) Is He rebuking her for asking? What time hadn't come yet?
4. (:5-8) Why did the servants so willingly follow Jesus' orders....even to the extent of drawing out what had just been water....and giving it to their boss to drink?
5. (:9) When did the water become wine?
6. (:9-10) The Master of the Banquet, and the Bridegroom, were both unaware of what?
7. (:11) What was it about this miracle that encouraged His Disciples to "put their faith in Him"?
8. How did each of the people involved receive Him? How did their perception change..grow? What did you learn about Him?

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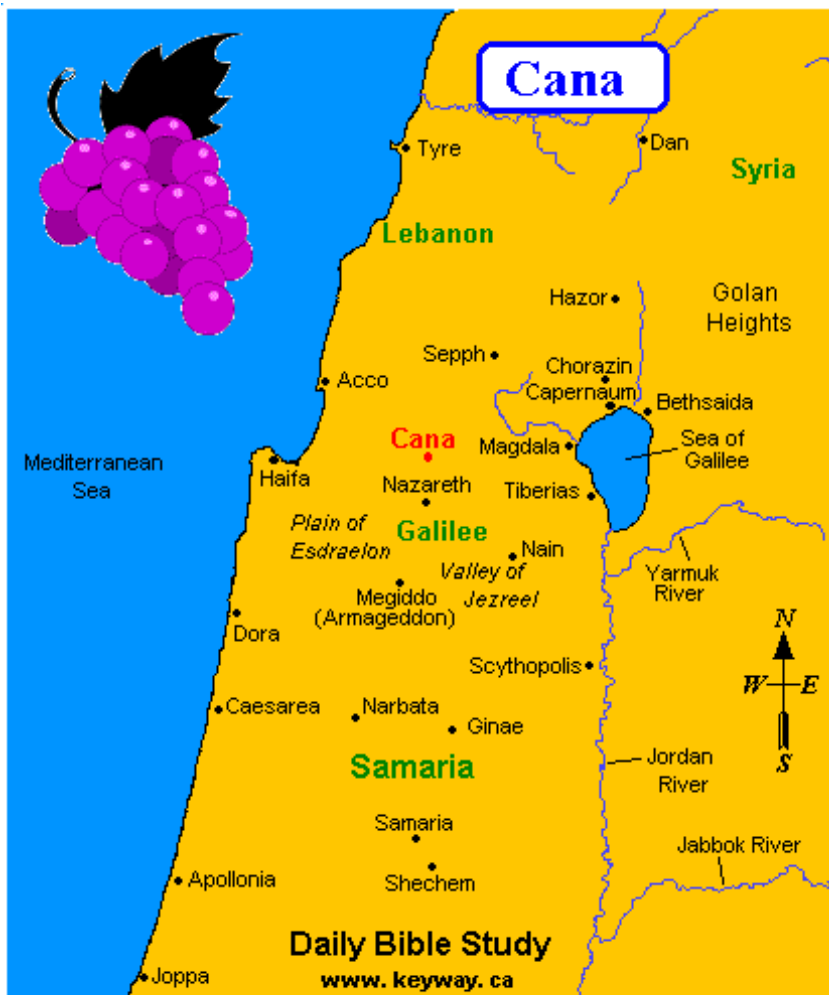
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9. Who are you most like in this story.. Disciples (learning), servants (blindly trusting), Mary (trusting with experience behind you), Bridegroom and Master of the Banquet (unaware)?

The Wedding at Cana
John 2:1-11 – Discussion Notes

If you are teaching this Bible study, the Wedding Passage lends itself to dramatic reading: 3 speaking parts + 1 narrator. Quite often a dramatic reading shared by Bible Study Group members is a great way to read through the passage as you start the study. It takes the passage out of the "just a lot of words" category, and plunges it into the context of real people who lived and felt and wondered.

Mary
Jesus
Master of the Banquet
Narrator



Where is Cana?

- West of the Sea of Galilee.
- North of Jerusalem
- A day's journey (10 to 15 miles) away from Bethsaida.

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Whether or not you use the dramatic reading idea, start out this Bible study by reading through the passage, and naming the people who were there:

- Mary
- Jesus
- Andrew
- John
- Peter
- Philip
- Nathanael
- Bridegroom
- Servants
- Master of the Banquet
- Other wedding guests

1. Why was Jesus at this wedding?

He had been invited. How does someone get invited to a wedding?

- Probably lived near there – show map (it was close to Capernaum)
- The wedding party was probably either family or neighbors

Would Jesus have known about this wedding in advance?

Probably - because in John 1:43, He does seem to be heading back up to Galilee. But, whether he was informed in advance or not, the answer is, yes, He knew. He was God. He knew everything.

Explanation of a wedding ceremony in that time:

- Several days long
- Responsibility for the wedding was the Groom's – he was "giving" the wedding
- The Master of the Banquet was sort of the wedding co-ordinator and answered to the groom

2. So...Jesus was just walking around...no job? How did He have time to just take off and walk to a wedding? And why were the disciples with him? Did they have no jobs either?

It seems that Jesus and His disciples (after He had begun to gather them together into a group) were together some, then apart some. They didn't stay together as a group constantly. But while they were together they shared the every-day things of life, just

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like the picture we see Deut. 6:4-9. This was the Old Testament concept of sharing God with others...in the process of living – “walking through life”. Especially this was how parents passed on their faith in the coming Messiah to their children. When our kids were growing up I remember playing praise tapes on the radio, discussing God at dinner, answering questions in the hallway as we passed each other on the way to different events, or just before bed. What Jesus was doing with His disciples was not too different than that – talking about God and truth and the important things of life – just “along the way”.

3. Why did Jesus’ mother, Mary, approach Jesus for a solution to a problem which should have been solved by the Master of the Banquet?

Possibilities:

- She realized the Master of the Banquet couldn’t or wouldn’t do it
- She had seen Jesus solve problems all His life
- She cared about the groom & didn’t want him to be embarrassed
- She knew Jesus cared

What did she think Jesus could do?

- Whatever was necessary
- She lived with Him for 30 years
- She was expecting Him to be the person He’d been for 30 years

How do we know what God is like? How do we know what to expect of God?

- What He says
- What we see Him do as we walk with Him through every-day life

4. Is He rebuking her for asking? What time hadn’t come yet?

I think He was gently teasing her: “Why me, Mom? I’m not the bridegroom at this wedding.”

So....was He ever going to be a bridegroom?

No....and Yes. No, He was never going to have his mother proudly looking on as He, in his earthly lifetime, joined himself with a woman he loved.

But yes, someday He will marry the one He loves – the body of believers in Him who will someday be complete and ready to join Him for a Marriage relationship forever.

Mary couldn’t have known... She would someday be not looking on at His wedding as His mother, but actually be a part of the bride of her son, as one of many believers in Him.. Wow.

5. Why did the servants so willingly follow Jesus’ orders....even to the extent of drawing

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out what had just been water....and giving it to their boss to drink?
Somehow they trusted Him.

These waterpots would have been ceremonially clean.. It was intended that water would initially be poured into them, then they were prayed over, then to be used for pouring over hands in order to indicate people were “clean” for the meal that was to be served. What the people at the wedding were ready for ceremonially they were about to experience in actuality – the sharing of a meal with One so pure you had to get clean just to eat with Him.

6. When did the water become wine?

Sometime in between filling the pots with water and landing on the lips of the Master of the Banquet

7. The Master of the Banquet, and the Bridegroom, were both unaware of what?

- Who had saved the day
- Who was in their midst

Jesus is working all around us in our lives and others – we are not always aware of it. Has there been a time in your life when you seemed to breeze through what could have been a catastrophe? It's possible you never knew Jesus was taking care of details behind the scenes.

8. What was it about this miracle that encouraged His Disciples to “put their faith in Him”?

- He Revealed His glory through this miracle – like a flash from a diamond
- He met the need at hand
- He answered Mary’s request (prayer)
- He showed some of His character (caring for the little things)

9. Haven’t we seen them “put their faith in Him” before? Are they getting saved over and over again? (1:38, 1:41, 1:45, 1:49)

No...each time they understood something more about Jesus, their faith increased. This is sort of like a child who believes in Jesus early in life. Often that child reaches several “plateaus” of faith. New understandings of Who and What Jesus really is, and each of those increasing levels of faith calls for an increased commitment to Him.

Each of us has a part of us that is able to exercise faith....wants to exercise faith...the Word of God is the only thing that will stimulate that faith. (Romans 10:9)

10. James 2:17 says that if faith is real, action follows. What action do you suppose the disciples took as they left Cana?

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Well, they continued to be His followers. They kept listening to Him. Their need to know him increased.

11. Who are you most like in this story..

- Disciples (learning),
- servants (blindly trusting),
- Mary (trusting with experience behind you),
- Bridegroom and Master of the Banquet (unaware)?

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Why is Jesus Angry?

John 2: 12-25 - Questions

1. (:12) Down to Capernaum, up to Jerusalem: Look at this map of Israel and see if Capernaum is *down* from Cana, and Jerusalem *up* from Capernaum?



2. (:13) What feast of the Jews was being celebrated at this time?
3. (:14-16) What did Jesus find when He went into the temple?
Why did He react the way He did?
4. (:16) Do you have a hard time picturing Jesus angry? Do you think He was angry here? Is anger always wrong?
Look up the following and find out some things the Bible tells us about anger:
James 1:19,20
I Corinthians 13:4,5
Eccl. 7:9
Ephesians 4:26
Proverbs 14:29
Revelation 15:1

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5. (:17) When the disciples saw Jesus act like this, what came to their minds?
6. (:18-19) The Jewish leaders asked Jesus to give them a miracle to prove that He had the right to do what He did in the temple. What sign did He give them?
7. (:19-21) Why did Jesus answer them in that way, when later on He did many miracles in Jerusalem? Why didn't He just perform a miracle for them to prove He was the Son of God?
8. (:22-24) Why did Jesus not "trust" these new believers?

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Why is Jesus Angry?
John 2: 12-25 - Discussion Notes

1. (:12) Down to Capernaum, up to Jerusalem: Look at a map of Israel and see if Capernaum is *down* from Cana, and Jerusalem *up* from Capernaum?



Hmmm...Capernaum seems to be *up* from Cana...and Jerusalem seems to be *down* from Capernaum..

What, then, are these phrases referring to?

Not direction, like North and South, as we would assume, but, actually, up and down, as in high and low. Capernaum is lower in elevation than Cana (thus, down), and Jerusalem is higher in elevation than Capernaum (thus, up). (Ps. 125:2 – Jerusalem – it's not just surrounded by mountains, it is a part of the mountains)

2. What feast of the Jews was being celebrated at this time?
Passover

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Do you know what the significance of Passover was for the Jewish people?

- Celebrated in the Spring
- Always in Jerusalem
- One of the three times all Jewish men were required to travel to Jerusalem – so that they would always remember that all blessings came from God...and, it pointed them toward a need which was more than physical – every man's deep inward need to be forgiven for sin so that he and God could enjoy knowing one another.
- The lamb was sacrificed
- Escape from slavery – Egypt – was remembered
- The blood of the lamb reminded them that they needed a lamb to die for them to save them from death
- Deliverance is from God
- Families would travel together when they could manage it, and eat the Passover dinner together in Jerusalem. "next year in Jerusalem" is repeated after Passover dinners today.

Why was it so important that all these festivals be celebrated in Jerusalem?

That is where God had said he would dwell – in His temple – in the Holy of Holies.(I Kings 8:28-30 and 9:3)

Even today Jewish people revere the small piece that is left of the temple in Jerusalem – the Western or Wailing Wall. Slips of paper in between ancient stones attest to a continuing belief that this is where God hears, sees, and answers prayer.

3. (:14-16) What did Jesus find when He went into the temple?

Why did He react the way He did?

People selling oxen, sheep & doves, and moneychangers

Why were people at the temple exchanging money and selling animals?

For offering sacrifices. Each person would have brought with them either an animal to be sacrificed for their family, or money to purchase an animal.

So if offering sacrifices was what they were supposed to do, why was He angry?

Because they were cheating people with dishonest money exchanges and unfair evaluations of animals brought for sacrifice. They were using the temple as a place to cheat and steal, in the guise of helping people spiritually.

The buying and selling and "business" part of their actions was not the problem – it was the fact that the leaders of the people were living comfortably with sin and thinking that God wouldn't care because they were also in His temple, having journeyed to Jerusalem at Passover, as they were commanded to do. This was Legalism, trusting in the rules to win God's favor, instead of trusting God to change their hearts.

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And...they were teaching the watching world that this was what their God was like – which was exactly the opposite of what God intended them to do. (Isaiah 61:3 – The reason the Jews existed was “for the display of *His* splendor”)

4. (:17) Do you have a hard time picturing Jesus angry? Do you think He was angry here? Is anger always wrong?

Look up the following and find out some things the Bible tells us about anger:

James 1:19,20

I Corinthians 13:4,5

Eccl. 7:9

Ephesians 4:26

Proverbs 14:29

Revelation 15:1

Yes, Jesus was angry. Yes, God has anger. The reason we don't always see this anger is because He mercifully is waiting until an appointed time to exercise His anger. This small incident doesn't even come anywhere near to showing what God's anger will some day look like. He is getting their attention here. He is beginning three and ½ years of breaking down the blindness of the Jewish people. But He is not just acting a part. He is expressing genuine agony and zeal for the way things were supposed to be. He is saying to them, in today's terms: “You are lying, cheating, stealing, committing adultery, swearing, hating – and yet you think that because you get up on Sunday morning, get dressed up, get the kids ready, drive to church, sing & worship & listen to a sermon, you are making God happy....HE IS NOT!!!! HE'S MAD!!!! HE HATES THIS!!!!

Getting their attention.

5. When the disciples saw Jesus act like this, what came to their minds?

A verse from the Old Testament – Psalms 69:9, a verse which gave a glimpse to Old Testament Jews of what their Messiah some day would be like.

“Zeal” is good. It speaks of a feeling that is so intense it physically hurts. Zeal is passion. The Messiah of Israel was hurting inside at the awful comparison of what the temple was and what it was supposed to be.

How did the disciples, untaught and unlearned men, know this obscure verse?

Uneducated, perhaps, in the way of the world, but trained in the things of God.

Deuteronomy 6:4-20. Jewish parents passed on to their children the most valuable knowledge in the world – the very Words of God. Are you doing that? Do soccer, piano, choir, baseball, track, band...yes...and even basketball...have a higher priority in your mind for your kids than the very Words of God?

6. (:18-19) The Jewish leaders asked Jesus to give them a miracle to prove He had the

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right to do what He did in the temple. What sign did He give them?
They were relegating Him to the role of a prophet – Give us a sign. He brought them right back to what He wanted to teach – that He was not just a prophet...He was God!

The temple was the place where God had put His presence in the days of King Solomon – but everyone knew His presence had left years ago– just before the Babylonian captivity, about 500 B.C. Ezekiel the prophet had seen the Lord leave the temple. (Ezekiel chapter 10) Jesus was telling them – I’m back!!!! He was saying He could raise the temple....and Himself....from the dead. When He actually did just that, 3 and ½ years later – they remembered.

Did the Jewish leaders understand what He was saying?
Probably not right then

7. (:20-21) Why did Jesus answer them in that way, when later on He did many miracles in Jerusalem? Why didn’t He just perform a miracle for them to prove He was the Son of God?

Because He didn’t want them to just know He was the Son of God. He wanted them to be sorry for their sins...follow Him...obey...not Head knowledge....Feet knowledge.

Just look at the wonderful teaching techniques used by Jesus:

- He was answering the question they didn’t ask
- He was pointing out to them how much they didn’t know...giving them a hunger to know more
- He was giving them something to help them in the future
- He was willing to risk misunderstanding now in order to teach the whole picture later.

8. (:23-25) Why did Jesus not “trust” these new believers?

He knew their hearts. Many of them were “believing” but not committed. They wanted Him, but then they would want to turn Him into what they wanted, instead of bowing the knee to what He wanted. Not time yet to trust the future to these “believers”.

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Nick at Nite
John 3:1-21 - Questions

1. (:1,2) What different things do we learn about Nicodemus from verses 1 & 2?
 -
 -
 -
 -
 -
2. (:2) Nicodemus called Jesus "Rabbi". What does "Rabbi" mean?
 - Teacher from God (1:38)
 - Authority, importance (Matt 23:8)
 - Also called John the Baptist that (3:26)
 - Beloved teacher – term of endearment, familiarity w/respect (20:16)
 - Extraordinary powers of counsel
 - Today called "Rav", or "Rebbe"
 - Rhymes with "hubby"
 - Literally – "my master"

What does this term tell us about what Nick was thinking about Jesus? Did he wonder at this point whether Jesus was God Himself?

3. (:3) Verse 3 is the answer...what was the question?
4. (:3) Jesus told Nick that he wouldn't see the kingdom of God unless he was "born again". How did Nick respond to that unusual term?
5. (:4-9) Was Nick "born again" at this point?...did he have a personal understanding of what that meant?

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6. (:9-18) Nick had the right response..."please explain". Jesus does. To what 2 historical events was Jesus referring when he said the Son of man must be "lifted up"?

- Something which had already happened in the Old Testament:
- Something which was yet to happen.

7. According to verses 16-18 there are two types of people in the world...condemned people and not condemned people. What determines the type of person you are?

8. (:19-21) Why do people not believe?

9. Did Nicodemus believe?

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Nick at Nite

John 3:1-21 - Discussion Notes

1. (:1,2) What do we learn about Nicodemus from verses 1 & 2?

- He was a Pharisee
- Jewish ruling council
- Came at night
- Acknowledged Jesus as a teacher from God
- Acknowledged Jesus had done miraculous things

Do you think, from what you have seen so far, that Nick knew God? John, as he relates this story to us, is painting a picture of a man who appeared to know God...but really didn't.

2. (:2) Nicodemus called Jesus "Rabbi". What does "Rabbi" mean?

- Teacher from God (1:38)
- Authority, importance (Matt 23:8)
- Also called JB that (3:26)
- Beloved teacher – term of endearment, familiarity w/respect (20:16)
- Extraordinary powers of counsel
- Today called "Rav", or "Rebbe"
- Rhymes with "hubby"
- Literally – "my master"

What does this term tell us about what Nick was thinking about Jesus? Did he wonder at this point whether Jesus was God Himself?

If he knew the scriptures he knew that it was prophesied that the Messiah would be God and Son. Isaiah 9:6, Jeremiah 23:5&6, Psalms 2:7. So I would guess he hadn't yet realized Jesus was the Messiah – the Son of God.

3. (:3) Verse 3 is the answer...what was the question?

Jesus is answering the question not asked. A way to get Nick's attention. The question not asked was: "I'm not sure I'm going to heaven...what do I need to do?"

4. (:3) Jesus told Nick that he wouldn't see the kingdom of God unless he was "born again". How did Nick respond to that unusual term?

Literally. He had no understanding of this term...3 things about this term and this idea were new to Nick:

1. Your Jewishness isn't enough (the sign of the covenant between God and the Jewish people was circumcision...done to you at birth...not a choice.)

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2. This is for the whole world

3. It takes an action on your part.

Jesus is giving Nick something which will start him asking questions... thinking...the right place to go with curiosity is to the truth.

So...What was wrong with the first birth? Why a need to be "born again"? At the first birth you inherited a body which was going to die. Every person needed to be "born again" in order to be guaranteed a body which would never die.

5. (:4-9) Was Nick "born again" at this point?...did he have a personal understanding of what that meant?

I would say no...but it is interesting that Jesus expected a Ruler of Israel to have understood that a spiritual birth was necessary. This was not hidden in the Old Testament. Judaism wasn't a guarantee of eternity – it was a privileged position of telling the rest of the world how to know God– every Jew, especially every Jewish ruler, should have known this.

How is it possible that a religious leader would not truly know God?

Happens all the time. Just knowing the facts is not necessarily believing in God and "knowing" Him.

6. (:9-18) Nick had the right response..."please explain" .Jesus does. To what 2 historical events was Jesus referring when he said the Son of man must be "lifted up"?

- Something which had already happened in the Old Testament: Numbers 21:8,9
- Something which was yet to happen. (Jesus on the cross)

How might that illustration have helped Nicodemus to believe?

Answer: When he actually saw Jesus being lifted up on the cross he could understand and believe.

7. According to verses 16-18 there are two types of people in the world...condemned people and not condemned people. What determines the type of person you are? Believing in Jesus.

8. (:19-21) Why do people not believe?

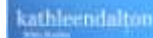
Sin. Nicodemus was afraid of the light – he might have to admit wrongdoing – but with admission comes freedom. Freedom to choose new life.

9. Did Nicodemus believe?

Answer: We don't see a verse which says so, but here is what we do see:

- John 7:50-52
- John 19:38-40

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The logo for Kathleen Dalton, featuring the name "kathleendalton" in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font on a blue rectangular background.

It's Not About Me...
It's Not about Now...
John 3:22-26 - Questions

- 1 . (:22 & 23) What were both Jesus and John doing?
2. (:24) What is this verse referring to?
3. (:25 & 26) What were John's disciples concerned about? Find the phrase...5 words...which describe the problem they saw happening.
4. (:27-35) What was John's answer to their question?
5. What would happen if you could not let go of that job which was never intended to be permanent?
6. In what way does this describe any job we do for Christ?
7. So....It's not about me....there is something more important than my happiness...what in this passage will help me keep this from being a sad thought?
8. Read the rest of John's story: Matthew 11:1-9, Matthew 14:3-13, Mark 6:14-16, Luke 9:7-9. How did Jesus feel about John? Why didn't Jesus spare John from being beheaded?

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It's Not About Me...
It's Not about Now...
John 3:22-26 - Discussion Notes

Opening Question: Think of a job you have done in life which was not meant to last forever. Have several in your group share what that job would have been for them, then ask the group to keep those memories, so you can come back to them later.

To fully take advantage of the context of this passage, take some time here to review the life of John the Baptist up to this point:

Luke 1:5-25 – Birth of John the Baptist foretold

Luke 1:39-45 – Mary, pregnant with Jesus, visits Elizabeth, pregnant with John the Baptist

Luke 1:57-80 – Birth of John the Baptist

Matthew 3:1-17 – John the Baptist begins his ministry, finally baptizes Jesus

Then Jesus goes into the wilderness for 40 days

John 1:19-28 – John the Baptist answers questions by confirming he is not the Christ

John 1:29-38 – John the Baptist points his own followers to Jesus

John 2 – 3:21 Then Jesus goes to Cana, back to Capernaum, back to Jerusalem.

Then....John 3:22-36:

1. (:22 & 23) What were both Jesus and John doing?
Baptizing

What is Baptizing?

Immersion in water to signify something....to illustrate something.

What did it signify to this culture?

- Jewish people were familiar with Mikvah baths (an immersion in water experience) as a preparation for major celebrations
- Immersion, represented a clean start
- Immersion was like a signal that something was about to happen
- Immersion was a sign that the person being immersed was ready to make a commitment
- It was a symbol of something which had happened on the inside.

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Why was John baptizing?

He was urging them to repentance. To get the Jews ready for their Savior. Luke 7:29-30

Why was Jesus baptizing?

Same reason – and he was identifying with John's ministry and message – giving validity to it.

Why wasn't John following Jesus?

Answer will be later, in verses 29-30. Think about this question until we get there.

2. (:24) What is this verse referring to?

John was eventually jailed and murdered (Matt. 14:3-13)

3. (:25 & 26) What were John's disciples concerned about? Find the phrase...5 words...which describe the problem they saw happening.

Jesus Baptized More Than John

What were they concerned about, then? Was it jealousy? Pride? Fear?

Possibly all of the above.

What did they have to be afraid of?

- Their purpose in life was being taken over by someone else.
- Their large crowds had been keeping the Pharisees from giving them trouble. Persecution might increase if the crowds began to follow Jesus. In fact, that is exactly what eventually happened.

4. (:27-35) What was John's answer to their question?

- His ministry was given to him from God. It never was supposed to last forever. It was a temporary ministry. He never was meant to be a part of the celebration of Jesus' Resurrection – the church. He was meant to be a prophet to the Jews of the Old Testament. He was meant to bridge the gap.
- But...look at vs. 29 – his is "full of joy", not fear. John was not unhappy about the ministry God had given to him – He wasn't grieving or afraid about a life about to change...about to end. He had joy.

What was his joy?

Seeing Jesus appear on the scene. *It was his Messiah who got him out of bed every morning...not his job*

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5. What would happen if you could not let go of that job which was never intended to be permanent? (refer to the answers to the original discussion question as you began this question)

Unhealthy results. (Like a student who never gets past 2nd grade because his teacher wouldn't graduate him)

(:36) What would have happened if John had not been able to give up his job?
He would have retained his followers...but they and many, many others would have missed the Son....and their chance to believe and have life.

6. In what way does this describe any job we do for Christ?

Less of what I want – more of Him

Results are forever....the job is temporary.

Think of a situation in a ministry you might have where this would be important for you to know.

7. So....*It's not about me*....there is something more important than my happiness...what in this passage will help me keep this from being a sad thought?

It's also not about now. Keep your eyes on the real life waiting for you.

8. Read the rest of John's story: Matthew 11:1-9, Matthew 14:3-13, Mark 6:14-16, Luke 9:7-9. How did Jesus feel about John? Why didn't Jesus spare John from being beheaded?

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The Woman at the Well

John 4:1-42 - Questions

A little background:

This place where Jesus goes in Chapter 4, the land of the Samaritans near Mt. Gerizim, has a rich history in the Old Testament records.

- This is the place where God had spoken to Abraham once he reached the promised land. (Gen. 12:6)
- Jacob, grandson of Abraham, inherited this land and God's promises from his father, Isaac, (Genesis 20: 3,4) then gave it to his son, Joseph. (Genesis 33:18-20), (Genesis 48)
- This is the place where Joseph's bones were buried. (Genesis 50:12,13)
- The Jewish people were blessed from this place (Deut. 11:29, 17:12)
- When the Jews were taken captive to Assyria in 600 BC, the Assyrians sent "foreigners" (not Jews) back to this place to keep it populated. They settled there, married the few Jews left there, and then set up their own form of Judaism, which did not include worshipping in Jerusalem. These were the Samaritans, disdained and even hated by the Jews for their departure from "pure" Judaism. (II Kings 17:24-41)
- The Samaritans had built a temple here in 400 BC, which the Jews destroyed.
- Samaria is today part of the area is called the "West Bank"



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1. (:1-3) Why did Jesus leave Judea to go back to Galilee?
2. (:4) Why did Jesus go through Samaria?
3. (:5-6) In what town did Jesus and His disciples stop, and where in that town, and at what time?
4. (:7-9) Why did the Samaritan woman think it was odd that Jesus asked her for a drink?
5. (:10-14) What was the difference between “water” and “living water”?
6. (:15) When the woman said, in vs. 15, that she wanted some of the “living water”, do you think she understood what she was asking for?
7. (:16-18) What did Jesus ask her in order to help her begin to understand what “living water” was? How did that help?
8. (:19-26) What 2 “topics” did the woman then bring up...things which she had legitimate questions about, but which also kept her from having to discuss her real problem? What was her real problem?
9. (:27-30) When the woman ran back into town she told everyone that she had found a man who might be “the Christ”...what opened her eyes to Who He was?
10. (:31-38) A little look at Jesus’ growing relationship with His disciples. What is He teaching them here?

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11. (:39-42) What happened to the people of Sychar?

What have you learned from this passage which will help you as you witness to others?

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- The Samaritans had built a temple here in 400 BC, which the Jews destroyed.

1. (:1-3) Why did Jesus leave Judea to go back to Galilee?

(It would be helpful to show a map here, of where Jesus was when He decided to go up to Galilee, and how He went through Samaria) Because the Pharisees were learning that Jesus was becoming more popular than John. This may have been to protect John, whose safety lay in the fact that the crowds of people followed him.

2. (:4) Why did Jesus go through Samaria?

The verse says He "had" to. Geographically He didn't have to. Socially He didn't have to. Politically He didn't have to. Physically He didn't have to. This was a place where most Jews wouldn't even dream of going. They hated the Samaritans, for they were a hybrid-type of Jew. They didn't believe in worshipping in Jerusalem. They were unclean as far as most Jews were concerned. In fact, going there was going to make Jesus look bad to those Jews who were "religious", and tried to keep every aspect of the law. But...it was a spiritual "have to". Jesus had an appointment there with someone who didn't yet know she had an appointment with Him.

3. (:5-6) What town did Jesus and His disciples stop in, and where in that town, and at what time?

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Sychar was the name of the town. Jesus and His disciples stopped at about noon. The hottest part of the day. (the Jewish day began at 6:00 am, thus the 6th hour was 12:00 pm)

- Drawing water was generally done by the women, in the morning or evening (cooler then), and this became a social time for the women.
- This woman came alone, and at noon, perhaps not part of the women's social fabric because she was ashamed
- Jesus went where the outcasts were, instead of making a wide berth around them

4. (:7-9) Why did the Samaritan woman think it was odd that Jesus asked her for a drink?

- She was a woman
- She was a Samaritan
- She was of "ill-repute"

Jesus went where someone would respond to Him – even if that was socially unacceptable

Where would that be today? Would you go?

5. (:10-14) What was the difference between "water" and "living water"?

- Living water – only need one drink
- Water – you will be thirsty again
- Living water – doesn't get used up
- Living water – grows and spills out for others

6. (:15) When the woman said, in vs. 15, that she wanted some of the "living water", do you think she understood what she was asking for?

No. She knew she wanted something, that she had a need...she just didn't understand either what her need really was, or what the solution to her need was. He was going to help her "see"....

7. (:16-18) What did Jesus ask her in order to help her begin to understand what "living water" was? How did that help?

He asked her about her husband – thus pointing out her sin – thus directing her attention to the real "need" in her life – the need which could be met by "living water". She couldn't understand because she hadn't admitted her sin to God. Perhaps she had admitted to everyone else that she wasn't "perfect"...that she hadn't made all the right "choices" – but she hadn't come face to face with God and admitted she wasn't worthy to know Him. (Jeremiah 3:11-14)

8. (:19-26) What 2 "topics" did the woman then bring up...things which she had legitimate questions about, but which also kept her from having to discuss her real problem? What was her real problem?

- Which mountain to worship in? (which church should I go to?)

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- The coming Messiah (let's talk about end times)

Her real problem was that she didn't know God. She couldn't worship God anywhere because she didn't know Him. He and she had a wide gulf separating them – her sin. She needed to begin a relationship with Jesus. How did Jesus handle the "change of topic" problem? He pointed her right back to Himself.

9. (:27-30) When the woman ran back into town she told everyone that she had found a man who might be "the Christ"...what opened her eyes to Who He was? He knew her. This is what will open the eyes of any we witness to. And we can't do it. We can't cause that enlightenment to happen. It's a miracle from God. Pray and Go.

10. (:31-38) A little look at Jesus' growing relationship with His disciples. What is He teaching them here? They thought of His physical needs, their physical world. He was teaching them to "see" the spiritual. To "feed" on food for their souls. To "refresh" with God's idea of fun. To "succeed" in the truly successful way.

11. (:39-42) What happened to the people of Sychar? The ones who were disdained believed much more easily than those privileged to have the truth all along. (the Jews of Jerusalem)

What have you learned from this passage which will help you as you witness to others?

- Divine appointments: Plan for them. Jesus knew He was going to "meet" this woman. Maybe we need to plan to meet people, too.
- Needing a drink: It's a fine thing to have needs. It means someone can come along and help us – and maybe we can get a chance to help them.
- Telling the truth in love, not condemnation. (Jesus had every right to condemn.)
- Just tell them – "Jesus is the answer to your need". This is what we know is true. Why do we wait so long to say it?
- The fields are white to harvest. But maybe not with the people we want to see harvested. Go to those who will listen.
- From the known to the unknown. Find out what they already know....show them something another step along.
- Get their attention. Don't wait for someone to ask you why your life is so different. That only works in a small percentage of people. Do something to stand out.

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- Remove the obstacles. Go ahead – speak up – mention sin. Nobody is going to like the subject, so don't expect any thank-you's for it. But mention it. Then they have something to object to...then you have a chance to remove the objections.
- Respond with truth, not argument
- Wait & see. If they put down their waterpots and run back home, don't assume they will never come back. Wait and see...they may be coming back with friends.

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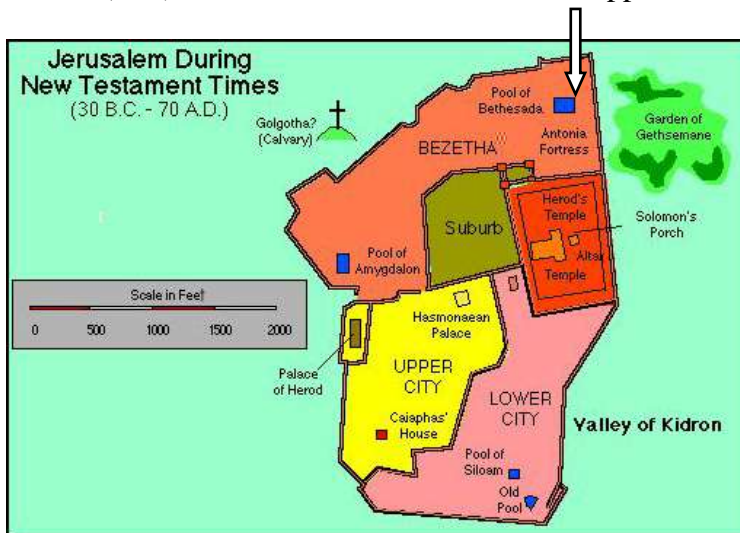
Two Healings
John 4:43 thru 5:18 - Questions

1. (:43-45) Where had He been for those 2 days?
2. (:44-48) Jesus seems to be not too kind in His statement in vs. 48..why?
Anything wrong with signs and wonders?
 - John 2:11
 - Acts 2:43
 - Acts 14:3
 - Romans 15:19
 - II Cor 12:12
 - Hebrews 2:3,4
 - Daniel 4:2,3
3. (:49-54) Why do you think the official inquired about the time?

Now as we enter Chapter 5, we see another healing...another miracle – let's look at this 2nd miracle and then compare the two:

This feast was either the Feast of Tabernacles (in the fall) or Hanukkah (in the winter).

4. (:1-3) Where, in Jerusalem, was the crippled man found by Jesus?



5. (:5-6) What a funny question for Jesus to ask this man...of course he wanted to get well...right?

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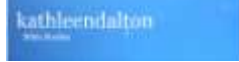


6. (:7-13) Why did Jesus ask him to pick up his bed? Why not just..."walk"?
7. (:14-15) What did the crippled man do when he finally learned Jesus' name?
8. (:16-18) Why was it OK for Jesus to heal on the Sabbath?

Compare the 2 Healings:

	John 4:43-54 Jesus Heals the Official's Son	John 5:1-15 The Healing at the Pool of Bethesda
Where did the healing take place?		
Who saw it?		
Did the one who saw the healing know who Jesus was?		
Who initiated the request for the healing?		
What purpose(s) did Jesus have for the healing?		
What unusual thing did Jesus do? Why?		

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Two Healings

John 4:43 thru 5:18 – Discussion Notes

1. (:43-45) Where had He been for those 2 days?

Samaria

He was welcomed in “Galilee”, but not in Nazareth (Matt 13:57, Luke 4:14)

- His ministry got Him in more and more trouble. He went for feasts in Jerusalem, and then left
- His reputation, however, did open up doors of opportunities
- John the Baptist was killed probably as a result of the Chapter 5 visit

2. (:44-48) Jesus seems to be not too kind in His statement in vs. 48..why?

Because of His past experience – many were “believing” because of the miracles...they needed to get past that...all the way to faith

3. Anything wrong with signs and wonders?

- John 2:11
- Acts 2:43
- Acts 14:3
- Romans 15:19
- II Cor 12:12
- Hebrews 2:3,4
- Daniel 4:2,3

No....not when they are from God. But the “feeling” and “comfort” and “relief” of a sign or wonder is not to be desired above God Himself. Our natural selfishness grabs us like a hook when we experience a miracle. The danger is that we will begin to want more “feel good” instead of more Jesus. This is a warning to us.

4. (:49-54) Why do you think the official inquired about the time?

Checking to see if it was Jesus who had healed his child.

Would you have done that?

What was the first miracle in Cana? (2:11) What was the result of that miracle?

What was the result of this 2nd miracle?

Now as we enter Chapter 5, we see another healing...another miracle – let’s look at this 2nd miracle and then compare the two:

This feast was either the Feast of Tabernacles (in the fall) or Hanukkah (in the winter).

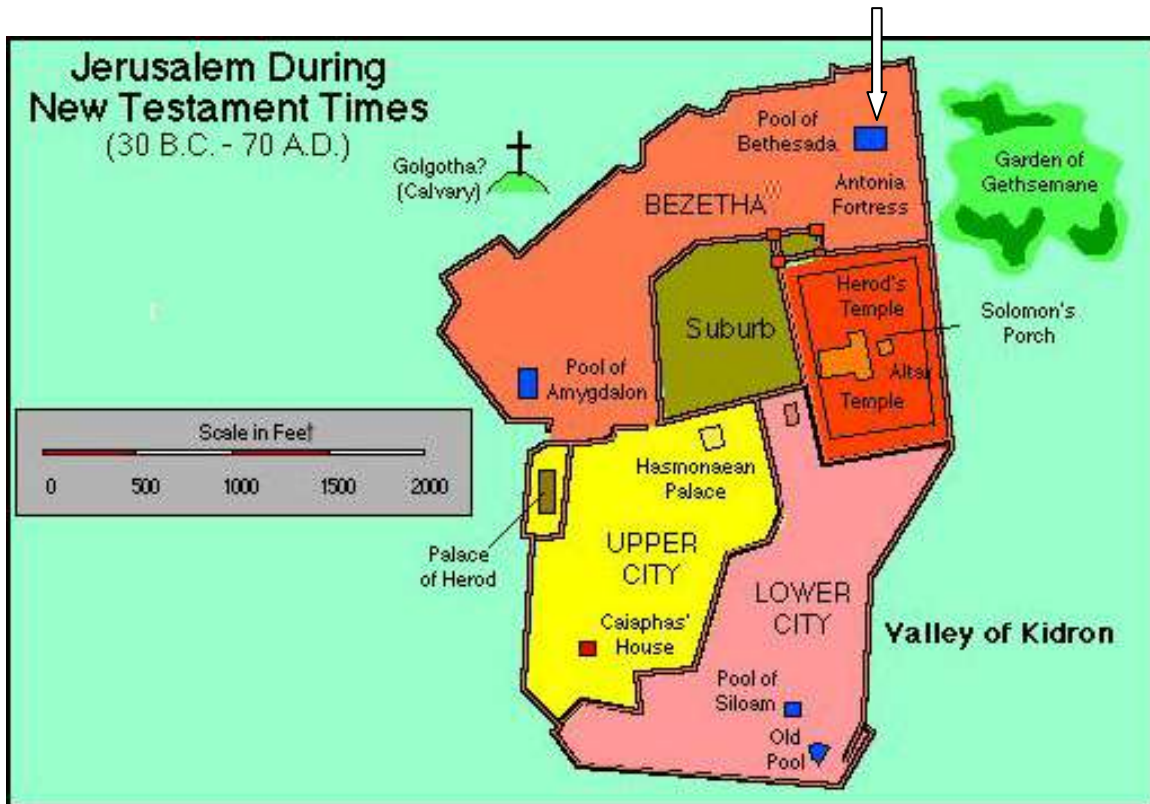
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5. (:1-3) Where, in Jerusalem, was the crippled man found by Jesus?



At the Pool of Bethesda.... Here the blemished of mankind waited, hoping to be healed by God according to a legend – an angel would stir the waters and the first person into the pool would be healed.

6. (:5-6) What a funny question for Jesus to ask this man...of course he wanted to get well...right?

He'd been sick for so long...of course he wanted to be well...but then again, maybe crippled was a way of life for him... he could have been 40-50 years old. This was not going to be an easy life after a miracle.

Did he really want to get well?

There were many sick people there...why this particular man? Why not all of them?

7. (:7-13) Why did Jesus ask him to pick up his bed? Why not just..."walk"?

Because this was not about the crippled man. It was, again, about Jesus. Something He wanted everyone to know about Him. It was against the Jewish law to carry furniture on the Sabbath. The Rabbis had decreed that this supposedly was work. But the true laws of God had been hidden away under the rules of men. Psalms 78:5-8. Jesus was using

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His presence and His power to offer his people a choice: bow before your Messiah, or keep on “earning” your own salvation by following all of your own rules.

8. (:14-15) What did the crippled man do when he finally learned Jesus’ name? He told everyone. An act of faith.

When have you seen rules and regulations get in the way of helping people?

What religious rules today are not found in scripture?

Compare the 2 Healings...Come to Conclusions

	John 4:43-54 Jesus Heals the Official's Son	John 5:1-15 The Healing at the Pool of Bethesda
Where did the healing take place?		
Who saw it?		
Did the one who saw the healing know who Jesus was?		
Who initiated the request for the healing?		
What purpose(s) did Jesus have for the healing?		
What unusual thing did Jesus do? Why?		

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Answering Accusations
John 5:16-47 - Questions

1. (:16-18) Why were the "Jews" unhappy with Jesus?
2. List 9 claims Jesus makes about Himself:
 1. (:19)
 2. (:20)
 3. (:20)
 4. (:21)
 5. (:22)
 6. (:23)
 7. (:24)
 8. (:25)
 9. (:27)
3. Could there have been any doubt that Jesus was saying He was God?
4. (:24 & 25) What is "eternal life"? When does it begin?
5. (:28&29) Who are the "dead" in these verses?
6. (:30-31) Why is Jesus' own testimony about Himself not valid?
7. (:32-47) What are the four "witnesses" of His deity mentioned in this passage?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
- So..Jesus' answer to the accusation that He is claiming to be God is that, yes, He is:
 - :17 – God works on the Sabbath
 - :29-34 He is the Son of God
 - :35-38 He can give eternal life
 - :39-47 There are witnesses to this claim.
8. Is today's problem still one of people not understanding that Jesus is God?

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Answering Accusations
John 5:16-47 - Discussion Notes

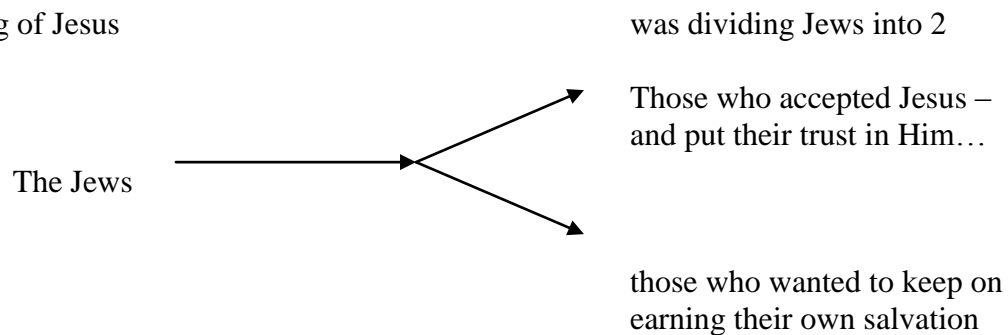
1. (:16-18) Why were the "Jews" unhappy with Jesus?

- Because He was healing on the Sabbath. Working. Breaking Sabbath rules.
- Because He was calling God His own father
- Because He was making Himself equal to God

They understood what He was saying. That He was not just saying God was His "Father", like God is the "Father of everyone". (Deut. 32:6, Isaiah 9:6). They knew God was their "Father" in that sense – but they also knew Jesus meant something different. There was no confusion here...because of verse 17...

- (:17) Because Jesus is giving a reason for it being all right for Him to work on the Sabbath. Everyone knew that God works on the Sabbath. Psalm 92

The coming of Jesus
parts:



2. List 9 claims Jesus makes about Himself:

10. (:19) God is His father
11. (:20) God the father loves Him
12. (:20) God the father shows Him what to do
13. (:21) Jesus can give life just like God does
14. (:22) Jesus has been given authority to judge
15. (:23) Jesus deserves to be honored...and if you don't, you are not honoring God, either.
16. (:24) If anyone believes the words of Jesus they have eternal life
17. (:25) Jesus can give eternal life to the dead!
18. (:27) Jesus is also the Son of Man – therefore the earth belongs to Him

3. Could there have been any doubt that Jesus was saying He was God?

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4. (:24 & 25) What is "eternal life"? When does it begin?

Eternal life is life that never ends. From verse 24 it is obvious that it begins not at death but at the moment of belief. In other words, eternal life isn't something we will receive some day. It is something we do receive the moment we receive Jesus as Lord. 3:16, 6:40, 11:25

Who are the "dead" in these verses?

Not people in graves, but rather people walking around in bodies, but never have received eternal life. They are the "Walking Dead".

5. (:28&29) Who are the "dead" in these verses?

Those who are actually in the grave – whose bodies will some day be resurrected either to eternal life or to eternal death.

6. (:30-31) Why is Jesus' own testimony about Himself not valid?

Deuteronomy 19:15 states that there have to be two or three witnesses for a testimony to be considered legally valid.

8. (:32-47) What are the four "witnesses" of His deity mentioned in this passage?

5. John (1:34)
6. His Work (14:11)
7. The Father Himself (Matt 3:17)
8. The scriptures (:39)

So..Jesus' answer to the accusation that He is claiming to be God is that, yes, He is:

:17 – God works on the Sabbath

:29-24 He is the Son of God

:25-28 He can give eternal life

:33-47 There are witnesses to this claim.

9. Is today's problem still one of people not understanding that Jesus is God?

Yes, there are people in our world who don't know Jesus claimed to be God. But more than that, there are so many people who don't understand how they would need to react if they did know Jesus was God. They don't see that if Jesus is God, was God, then everything He said would be irrefutable. And they don't realize that they have no choice but to react to this truth. People today are not ignorant of Who Jesus is....they are ignorant of Who God is.

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The Turning Point
John 6 - Questions

1. (vs. 1-13) What three (3) things did Jesus do when He was informed of the problem?
2. (:14) What was the crowd's reaction to the feeding of the 5,000?
3. (:16-21) This event happens right after the feeding of the 5,000. This passage and Matthew 14:22-34 describe the same event. What things does Matthew tell that John does not?
4. (:22-25) How was the crowd reacting the next day?
5. (:25-59) Keeping in mind what the crowd wanted, what things did Jesus say which probably burst their bubble?
6. (:60-66) Why did some of those who had been closely and curiously following Jesus decide they no longer could?
7. (:66-69) Why did "the twelve" stay with Him?
8. What is in this account for you? Are you:
 - a. The "crowd" – thinking mainly of myself
 - b. The "disciples" – learning, curious, but not committed?
 - c. The "twelve" – grown past miracles and popularity – committed to Him no matter what the cost?

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The Turning Point
John 6- Discussion Notes

- What is your favorite kind of bread...favorite kind when you were a kid?
- How long can you go during the day without thinking about food?
- How much of your time is spent planning for it?

Jesus declares in this chapter that He is the "Bread of Life". It was such an important truth that He was willing to feed 5,000 people miraculously, and walk on water, in order to bring home the teaching to people's hearts. As we begin this chapter, be asking yourself what it means to you that Jesus is the "Bread of Life".

Leader – as you begin discussion questions, point out that a distinction is about to be made between:

- The "crowd"
 - The "disciples"
 - And The "twelve"
1. (vs. 1-13) What three (3) things did Jesus do when He was informed of the problem?
 - a. Organized them (calm, security – someone is in charge)
 - b. Gave thanks for what they had (brought the LORD's presence into the equation – focused everyone on the source of their help. This was prayer)
 - c. Began to do what needed to be done. (one step at a time)
 2. (:14) What was the crowd's reaction to the feeding of the 5,000?

They would have made Him king.
What did Jesus do when He knew their reaction? He left.
Why? He didn't want to be made king.
Why didn't He want to be made king? - wasn't that what He wanted to happen?
(Revelation 19:11-16) Wrong timing is just as bad as wrong actions.
 3. (:16-21) This event happens right after the feeding of the 5,000. This passage and Matthew 14:22-34 describe the same event. What things does Matthew tell that John does not?

Note what the "twelve's reaction was to the feeding of the 5,000

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(6:16 and Matt. 14:22)

Note what Jesus' reaction was...(Matt. 14:23)

4. (:22-25) How was the crowd reacting the next day?

Still looking for miracles...self-centered

5. (:25-59) Keeping in mind what the crowd wanted, what things did Jesus say which probably burst their bubble?

Make a list here of everything people notice from these verses.

6. (:60-66) Why did some of those who had been closely and curiously following Jesus decide they no longer could?

It was getting too hard. He was not what they had envisioned Him to be, and they didn't want anything else.

7. (:66-69) Why did "the twelve" stay with Him?

They had grown past miracles. They needed *Him*! They needed *truth*.

Did they get discouraged, wondering about this man who feeds 5,000 and then runs away?...who was supposed to join them and then didn't come?. He was not meeting up to their expectations. So what needed to change?
They did.

Are there times when He doesn't meet up to your expectations? He doesn't do the obvious or logical thing? His truth seems too harsh? Do we get discouraged, angry, disappointed, tired? Look for the unexpected. Look for Him in a storm. We will never be bored.

8. What is in this account for you? Are you:
- a. The "crowd" – thinking mainly of myself
 - b. The "disciples" – learning, curious, but not committed?
 - c. The "twelve" – grown past miracles and popularity – committed to Him no matter what the cost?

Are you hungry? Do you believe Jesus is the bread you need?

From this point on in John we will see the last year of Jesus' ministry on earth. It will be spent preparing His followers for their ministries.

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I Am the Living Water
John 7 - Questions

1. (:1-5) Why did Jesus' brothers want Him to go to Jerusalem?
Why after all this time did they not believe in Him?
2. (:6-10) Why didn't He go with them? And then why did He go after all, after they had already gone?
3. (:11-36) List several different ideas people had about Jesus once He showed Himself at the Feast of Tabernacles:
 - :11
 - :12
 - :12
 - :14,15
 - :20
 - :25-26
 - :27
 - :30-31
 - :32
 - :35-36
4. (:17) How were the people to know whether to believe in Him or not?
5. (:25,26) The Jewish leaders were not arresting Him because they feared the crowds...how was this backfiring on them?
6. (:37-44) What did Jesus say which helped many put their trust in Him?
7. (:45-52) What arguments did the Pharisees use to convince people Jesus was not someone to believe in?
8. Why are the followers of Jesus still with Him? What is keeping them going in the face of trial, suffering, and fear?

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Jesus has said that He is:

The Bread of life

The Living Water.

In the next 6 months He will tell the world that He is:

The Light

The Son of God

The I AM

The Resurrection and the Life

The Way, the Truth and the Life

Could there be any doubt in anyone's mind that He is saying "I AM GOD"???

If that is, indeed, true....should your life be any different because of that truth?

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I Am the Living Water
John 7 - Discussion Notes

A little background (from the book of John):

- Year One:
 - Started with His baptism at the Feast of Tabernacles
 - Changed water into wine at Cana
 - Drove moneychangers out of temple at Passover
 - Nicodemus sought Him out secretly at Passover
 - John the Baptist begins to have trouble with Jewish leaders after Passover
 - Talks with Samaritan woman
 - Heals Official's son in Cana/Capernaum
- Year Two:
 - Heals man at the Pool of Bethesda
- Year Three:
 - Shortly before Passover, Jesus feeds the 5,000 up near Capernaum, then walks on water that night in a storm. Many who have been following him begin to fall away...they were attracted to His miracles, but what He is saying is too hard for them.
- Now we are at the time of the Feast of Tabernacles with 6 months to go: Jesus is well-known throughout most of Galilee for His miracles and teaching...but has stayed away from Jerusalem in order to avoid the trouble the official religious people were going to give Him. He has gone to Jerusalem only on feast occasions, when he was required to go as a Jewish man. He has a lot to do in this final 6 months...he needs to prepare his followers for His betrayal, death, resurrection, and for the work they must do when He leaves.

1. (:1-5) Why did Jesus' brothers want Him to go to Jerusalem?
Why after all this time did they not believe in Him?

2. (:6-10) Why didn't He go with them? And then why did He go after all, after they had already gone?

So they could be disappointed in who they thought He was...to open Their eyes to Who He really was. Sometimes a great desire to meet others' needs means stepping back and getting the big picture... disappointing someone in the short term...failing, even...in order to accomplish the larger goal. If you are a parent you can probably think of your own illustration for this truth. No doubt there have been times when your children wanted something, but you said no, because you were able to see the bigger picture – because you knew that by waiting they would experience someday more of the good things in life.

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3. (:11-36) List several different ideas people had about Jesus once He showed Himself at the Feast of Tabernacles:

- :11 He was a man
- :12 He is a good man
- :12 He is a deceiver
- :14,15 He was intelligent, knew a lot
- :20 He was demon-possessed
- :25-26 He was the one the Jews were trying to kill
- :27 He couldn't be the Christ, because we know where he is from
- :30-31 He did many miraculous signs – surely he was the Christ
- :32 He had done things which warranted his arrest
- :35-36 He was hard to understand

4. (:17) How were the people to know whether to believe in Him or not?

Jesus gave them the key to understand Him and His teachings in this little verse. They would know as they obeyed. Do the "little" things you are sure of, and God reveals the "big" things.

5. (:25,26) The Jewish leaders were not arresting Him because they feared the crowds...how was this backfiring on them?

Some people were assuming the Jewish leaders were themselves beginning to believe in Him. You can imagine their level of frustration at their inability to stop Him. Even the temple guards they sent were hesitant to arrest Him. Jesus had not yet said – "OK, it is time – you can take me now". Their authority to control Him was given to them – not of men or governments – but of God Himself.

6. (:37-44) What did Jesus say which helped many put their trust in Him?

(On the last day of the feast the Temple Mount was filled with great celebrations. As part of the last day's festivities the priests made many trips off the temple mount down to the spring of water which fed the city, and back up to the temple mount, pouring this fresh water out up at the temple as a symbol of a cleansed people waiting for their God to dwell with them.

It was a joyous time, and a time which was supposed to teach everyone that this marvelous temple they had was only a building of stones, after all, and that they were to look at it and remember that someday they wouldn't even need a temple. Someday God Himself would dwell with them, and all their troubles would be over. This temple which represented the presence of God was to remind them that God would someday live with them forever. The water which poured out over the altar of the temple was to remind them of the cleansing and power that

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God alone could give them. The water was a symbol of newness...a fresh start....when God would come to dwell with them, all would be washed away and they would start with a clean slate.

Then the voice of Jesus rises over the noise of the celebration! "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink!!!!" " Was He actually saying that the water they were pouring joyously over the altar was a symbol of HIM?

7. (:45-52) What arguments did the Pharisees use to convince people Jesus was not someone to believe in?

1. He was a deceiver (:47)
2. None of the Jewish rulers had believed Him (:48)
3. Only the mob followed him (:49)

8. Why are the followers of Jesus still with Him? What is keeping them going in the face of trial, suffering, and fear?

This is an opinion question. No right or wrong answer. But if someone answers with scripture, that should carry great weight in your discussion. (For instance, John 6: 68&69)

Application: Jesus has said that He is:

The Bread of life
The Living Water.

In the next 6 months He will tell the world that He is:

The Light
The Son of God
The I AM
The Resurrection and the Life
The Way, the Truth and the Life

Could there be any doubt in anyone's mind that He is saying "I AM GOD"???

If that is, indeed, true....should your life be any different because of that truth?

If you have extra time:

The problem many Jewish people were having with believing Jesus was that they really didn't know God at all, even though they were religious. However, not all Jewish people were hindered in this way. Name two religious Jews who very definitely believed in Jesus because they already knew God. (Luke 2:25-38 – Anna and Simeon)

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Was there a time in your life when you realized you were “religious”, but you didn’t know God? For me, it was when I was a senior in High School, in 1965.

I had been raised in a religious home. We went to church fairly regularly. I had heard the story of Jesus...but I didn’t know God. When I realized, for the first time in my life, that He had died for me – not just for everyone – but for me...I suddenly knew I was not the “good” Christian girl I had always thought I was. I was simply a sinner who needed a Savior. I bowed my head and thanked Him for dying for me – and I told Him He could have my life – it wasn’t much in thanks for what He had done for me...but it was all I had.

I changed that day from a religious girl who didn’t know God to a very grateful girl who was just beginning a lifetime of getting to know Him.

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Outrageous Truth
John 8 - Questions

A little background:

- The Old Testament law said that if a man had sexual relations with a woman he was not married to, they were both to be put to death. Leviticus 20:10
- In order to protect innocent people from false accusations, the law also said that there had to be 2 to 3 witnesses to the crime. Deuteronomy 17: 6&7. This passage also says that those who witnessed the crime must be the first to throw the stones.
- And in order to help people understand the spirit of the law, Jesus added, in the sermon on the mount (Matthew 7:1,2) that any person bringing an accusation must be judged by the same law with which he is judging another.
- Generally, the law protected women from being taken advantage of. A woman had a subordinate role in society,...they could not own property, etc., but the law made it clear that they were not inferior, but protected.

1. 8:1 Where did Jesus go before the events of this passage?
2. 8:2-6 What about this was designed to trip Him up?
3. Can you see, from the above introduction, how the Jewish authorities had actually tripped themselves up?
4. 8:6-8 Jesus could have argued with them, pointing out their stupidity about the law, but He didn't. Instead, He did what?
5. What did He accomplish by doing it that way?
6. What did the disciples learn as they watched?
7. 8:9-11 Did Jesus judge her?
8. What is the right way to look at a sinner?

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9. 8:12-58 What are the claims Jesus makes about Himself?
10. 8:12-58 What are the accusations Jesus makes about the Jews?
11. 8:12-58 What are the accusations the Jews make about Him?
12. (:32) What did Jesus say would set the Jewish people free?
13. (33-41) Did they want to be set free?
14. Jesus said "outrageously true things" in this passage....What outrageous things do we know are true, but we avoid saying them out loud?

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Outrageous Truth
John 8 - Discussion Notes

Opening Question: Were you popular in High School? How did this affect you?

Jesus is trying to be unpopular! He is opening people's eyes to Who He Is, and He is teaching His disciples what life is going to be like for them in the future. Giving them tools to handle what is coming.

A little background:

- The Old Testament law said that if a man has sex with a woman he is not married to, they are both to be put to death. Leviticus 20:10
- In order to protect innocent people from false accusations, the law also said that there have to be 2 to 3 witnesses to the crime. Deuteronomy 17: 6&7. This passage also says that those who witnessed the crime must be the first to throw the stones.
- And in order to help people understand the spirit of the law, Jesus added, in the sermon on the mount (Matthew 7:1,2) that any person bringing an accusation must be judged by the same law with which he is judging another.
- Generally, the law protected women from being taken advantage of. A woman had a subordinate role in society,...they could not own property, etc., but the law made it clear that they were not inferior, but protected.

1. 8:1 Where did Jesus go before the events of this passage?
 - Mt. of Olives – for the night – a place to rest, gain perspective, listen to the Father – see what He already had planned for tomorrow.
 - Do you have a Mt of Olives?
2. 8:2-6 What about this was designed to trip Him up?
 - They knew by His reputation that He would not want to stone her – He was a person who had demonstrated loving-kindness and forgiveness, traits which made the rulers of the Jews suspicious of Him, since they had never known of anyone who had those traits and also held to the law.....
 - The Romans did not allow Jews to carry out death sentences. So, this was a trick. If He would say she should be stoned they could say He was trying to incite people against Rome. They could arrest Him. But if He said she should not be

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stoned would prove to the crowd that He did not want to uphold the law, and they would stop following Him.

- Compare this to the question: "Have you stopped beating your wife yet?" If you answer yes, then you are admitting you were beating your wife. If you answer no, then you are saying you are, indeed, beating your wife even now. Trick question.

3. Can you see, from the above introduction, how the Jewish authorities had actually tripped themselves up?

- The law required catching two people in the act, and stoning the man, too. Where was the man?
- The law protected women from being taken advantage of. These men were purposely humiliating this woman in order to get at Jesus. They were going against the very character of the law.

4. 8:6-8 Jesus could have argued with them, pointing out their stupidity about the law, but He didn't. Instead, He did what?

- Wrote on the ground
- Made a comment
- Wrote on the ground again

5. What did He accomplish by doing it that way?

This is an opinion question...there may be many different ideas about What Jesus was accomplishing – and about what He may have been writing on the ground. It is obvious, however, that He was able to turn their agenda upside down – simply by saying little, and when He did say something, speaking the truth.

6. What did the disciples learn as they watched?

- The right way to look at a sinner
- Jesus' words in the NT were the same as, and just as important as, His words in the OT
- Jesus' words are the weapon they (and we) had to fight back with when being attacked.
- Sometimes saying little is the best way to teach.

7. 8:9-11 Did Jesus judge her?

- Yes. What she was doing was definitely sin, and He said so. Honestly saying that someone is doing something wrong is not "judging". Judging is saying someone is doing something wrong and then punishing them for it.
- No. The punishment she deserved was coming...but the mercy she needed was offered first.

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- Teaching freedom from sin. People didn't have to go on sinning...Christ could help them – free them.
8. What is the right way to look at a sinner?
- How do you reconcile the truth of God with the love of God? How you realize someone is sinning, and still offer them love?
 - Lev. 20:10, Deut 22:22..."You must purge the evil from among you..." – The Law said you had to recognize the sin and purge it. Get rid of it. That meant get rid of the sinner sometimes.
 - John 8:11 "Then neither do I condemn you – go now and leave your life of sin." - The Love of God said the sin could be paid for by Someone else, and then the sinner did not have to die.
 - They both are true. It's a matter of timing. Judgment for sin is coming some day. But Jesus is waiting to execute judgment so that He can offer forgiveness first. Each person can either accept the price Jesus paid for their sin, or pay for that sin themselves with their own life
 - How to look at a sinner?
 - The playing field is level – I am a sinner, too
 - Sin does not have to be the sinner's master.
 - When a person accepts Jesus as their master they then have the Holy Spirit living within them, and have the ability to turn away from sin – to live God's Way.
 - A sinner is a person with possibilities, potentiality, for doing the will of God.
9. 8:12-58 What are the claims Jesus makes about Himself?
- :12 I am the light of the world.
 - :14 I know my past and my future
 - :15 I am not passing judgment right now
 - :16 But if I were passing judgment, I would be right, for the Father Himself would approve of what I was saying.
 - :17, 18 The Father who sent me is my witness
 - :19 I am the same as the Father
 - :21 I am going away. You can't come there.
 - :23 I am from above. I am not from this world
 - :24 You will die if you don't believe in me
 - :25 I am Who I have been claiming to be
 - :26-28 I speak only what the Father tells me to speak
 - :29 The Father is with me. I always please Him.
 - :27-47 I am the Son of God...you are the children of the devil
 - :49 I am not possessed by a demon....I honor God

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- :51 If you keep my word you will not die
- :54 I do not need to brag on myself...God the Father brags on me
- :55 I know God and keep His word
- :56 Abraham knew Me
- :58 I AM

10. 8:12-58 What are the accusations Jesus makes about the Jews?

- :14 You have no idea what my past is, what my future is
- :15 You judge by human standards
- :19 You do not know Me...you don't know God
- :21 You will die in your sin
- :23 You are from below. You are of this world
- :26 I have things to say about you which I won't say right now
- :27 When you have put me on the cross, then you will realize Who I am
- :27-47 The devil is your father
- :49 You dishonor Me
- :54-55 You claim to know God, but you are liars

11. 8:12-58 What are the accusations the Jews make about Him?

- :13 You are being Your own character witness...we don't have to believe you
- :48 You are a Samaritan and demon-possessed (name-calling)
- :53-58 You are a braggart, a blasphemer....who do you think you are?

12. (:32) What did Jesus say would set the Jewish people free? Truth.

- How do you share faith in Christ with someone who thinks they believe in Him, but they have never actually placed their faith in Him?

13. (33-41) Did they want to be set free?

No, they didn't.

- Why did the world hate Jesus?
- How does the world respond to you?

14. Jesus said "outrageously true things" in this passage....What outrageous things do we know are true, but we avoid saying them out loud?

- I know I'm going to heaven when I die
- In God's eyes I am not a sinner. He sees a perfect person when He looks at me
- I believe everything in the Bible is true

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- I'm God's child...a member of His family
- I love other Christians...even those who have hurt me

Get the point? Jesus said outrageously true things in order to shine light on people. We keep them to ourselves in order to avoid problems or criticism or misunderstandings. Do we want to be a light or not? Do we want to be well-liked, popular? It won't work. They hated Jesus....they are going to hate us. (John 15:19) Get past it.

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Object Lesson: Jesus is the Light of the World
John 9 -Questions

1. (:1-5) Why was the man born blind?
2. (:6-7) Why did Jesus heal him in such an unusual way?
3. Did the blind man have any idea who Jesus was?
4. (:8-34) How did the different people in this event react to Jesus?
 1. Neighbors and others
 2. Pharisees
 3. Parents
 4. The man born blind
5. (:24-34) Why did the Pharisees get so mad?
6. (:35-38) Why did Jesus seek out the man again?

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Object Lesson: Jesus is the Light of the World

John 9 – Discussion Notes

- ☐ Start out today's lesson by showing everyone an object lesson. You can choose any object lesson...since you are just trying to show them that Jesus, in this chapter, was also using an object lesson.

Here is a suggestion for an object lesson:

Stand behind an ordinary chair and tell your group how great you think that chair is. You like its color. You are sure it was well-made. You know beyond the shadow of a doubt that you can trust that chair to hold you up if you sit on it.

Then tell the group that the chair, no matter how highly you think of it, isn't doing you a bit of good unless you sit on it. Just "knowing" about it isn't the same as sitting on it.

This is an object lesson for understanding what "faith" is. Simply knowing about God, or even believing that God is wonderful is not faith. Faith is actually committing your life to God...believing in Him to the point that you sit down.

- ☐ Jesus has already told them He is the light of the world...now He has an object lesson for them.
- ☐ To set the stage, let's remember the heated argument of Chapter 8:

They brought to him a woman who had been caught in adultery, and he shamed them all into walking away

He told them they needed to be set free, and they replied..."we are Abraham's children....we're not slaves...why would we need to be set free?"

He tells them He is the light of the world, and they say "You can't just say these things about yourself...there has to be proof...witnesses."

He replies that His father was there when He lit up the world – they come back with "and who is your father?"

He says "If you knew my Father, you would know me." And then He tells them their Father is the devil!

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They respond by saying He is possessed of Demons!

He tells them that unless they believe He is God, they will die in their sins...and if someone does believe in His words, **THEY WILL NEVER DIE!**

They scoff – even Abraham died, you fool!

He says “I have been around since before Abraham!”

And they begin to throw stones....he gets away.

- ☐ And now...an object lesson: The Man born blind
- ☐ I suggest you read through as a drama, if you have enough people in your group to take these parts: Quite often I will print out the passage, make copies, then give everyone a copy that has their part highlighted in yellow.

- **Narrator**
- **Disciples**
- **Jesus**
- **Others**
- **Pharisees**
- **Parents**
- **Blind Man**

1. (:1-5) Why was the man born blind?
What are some other examples of people allowed to suffer, and then used for God's glory?
How about someone saved at the end of their life?
2. (:6-7) Why did Jesus heal him in such an unusual way?
We probably won't know that for sure until we can ask Jesus this question in heaven...but....maybe this was the creator, creating again. Genesis 1:1, Colossians 1:16,17. Picking up the clay of the earth and making a new eye?
3. Did the blind man have any idea who Jesus was? None

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4. (:8-34) How did the different people in this event react to Jesus?

Have your group summarize the answers to each of these. Reading the passage through as a drama really helps people "take on" those roles...making this question much easier to answer.

1. Neighbors and others
2. Pharisees
3. Parents
4. The man born blind

5. (:24-34) Why did the Pharisees get so mad?

6. (:35-38) Why did Jesus seek out the man again?

He wanted to give the man the chance now to really "see" the truly important things. He needed to "see" Jesus – and place his faith in Him for eternity, not just for eyesight.

He had told him who He was

He had shown him who He was

Then He disappeared – so that the man might search for Him... and find Him.

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Jesus is the Shepherd
 John 10 - Questions

1. (:1-5) How would Jesus' audience probably have understood this story? Fill out the following table as you look up the following verses in order to understand what people taught in the Old Testament would have understood about the symbolism of a shepherd and sheep.

	Who were the Sheep?	Who was the Shepherd?	Who were the thieves and robbers?
Psalm 80:1			
Psalm 23:1			
Isaiah 40:10-11			
Ezekiel 34:11-16			
Ezekiel 34:23,24,31			
Ezekiel 34:1-4			
Isaiah 56:9-12			

2. (:6-15) How did Jesus explain it his own analogy?

	Who were the Sheep?	Who was the Shepherd?	Who were the thieves and robbers?
John 10			

3. (:16) Who are the "other" sheep?

4. (:17-21) What does Jesus say here that He has not said clearly before?

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5. (:22-30) Find 7 things Jesus says are true about sheep:
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.
 - 6.
 - 7.
6. What do these 7 things tell you about yourself?...about your own relationship with God?
7. (:22-30) They ask Him to tell them plainly that He is the Christ. Why won't He say those words?
8. (:27-30) The Jews were hoping that by open criticism they could lead some away who had believed in Him. Was this possible?
9. What does this tell you about your relationship to Him?
10. (:31-42) Again they try to stone Him in Jerusalem, and again He escapes them. Then He leaves and goes back to the area in Judea where John had been preaching. Why go there? Why not back up to Galilee again? What happens there?

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Jesus is the Shepherd
John 10 – Discussion Notes

- Discuss what a “figure of speech” is. A play on words to teach a lesson.
- Draw a picture of the sheep pen, the gate, and show the fact that there were many groups of sheep in one pen at night, as the shepherds slept outside the pen . Then the shepherds would call their sheep out one group at a time. The sheep came when they recognized their shepherd’s voice.

1. (:1-5) How would Jesus’ audience probably have understood this story? Fill out the following table as you look up the following verses in order to understand what people who knew the Old Testament would have understood about the symbolism of a shepherd and sheep.

	Who were the Sheep?	Who was the Shepherd?	Who were the thieves and robbers?
Psalm 80:1	Joseph (Israel)	God	
Psalm 23:1	David (who wrote the psalm)	God	
Isaiah 40:10-11	The people God is caring for	God	
Ezekiel 34:11-16	Those who have been scattered	God	
Ezekiel 34:23-31	Israel	King David	Other nations
Ezekiel 34:1-4	Israel		The leaders of Israel
Isaiah 56:9-12			Those who are supposed to be watching out for Israel

2. (:6-15) How did Jesus explain His own analogy?

	Who were the Sheep?	Who was the Shepherd?	Who were the thieves and robbers?
John 10	All who would believe in Jesus	Jesus	Anyone who tries to lead the flock of God but doesn’t believe in Jesus.

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3. (:16) Who are the "other" sheep?

The Gentiles. The future believers. You....andme.

4. (:17-21) What does Jesus say here that He has not said this clearly before?

The fact that He must die.

5. (:22-30) Find 7 things Jesus says are true about "sheep":

8. They listen to the shepherd's voice
9. They are known of the shepherd
10. They follow the shepherd
11. They have eternal life
12. They will never perish
13. They can not be snatched out of the Father's hand
14. The Father has given them to Jesus

6. What do these 7 things tell you about yourself?...about your own relationship with God?

7. (:22-30) They ask Him to tell them plainly that He is the Christ. Why won't He say those words?

He is not there to give them information. He wants their hearts to change. Knowing Jesus is not in the head. It is in the heart – repentance must come before knowledge can change.

8. (:27-30) The Jews were hoping that by open criticism they could lead some away who had believed in Him. Was this possible?

Nope.

9. What does this tell you about your relationship to Him?

I am secure in His mighty hands.

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10. (:31-42) Again they try to stone Him in Jerusalem, and again He escapes them. Then He leaves and goes back to the area in Judea where John had been preaching. Why go there? Why not back up to Galilee again? What happens there?

He went far enough away to be out of the Pharisee's grasp...but stayed close enough that people from Jerusalem could still come to Him to get their questions answered – to come to know Him as their Savior. And they did.

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Lazarus
John 11 - Questions

Questions:

1. (vs. 1-3) What do we know about Mary, Martha & Lazarus? And what does their relationship to Jesus seem to be like?
John 12:3
2. (vs. 4-8) When Jesus didn't rush to Bethany to heal Lazarus, what did the disciples assume?
3. (vs. 7-15) Why didn't Jesus just do another "long-distance" healing?
4. (:17-33) Compare the two sisters' reactions to seeing Jesus after their brother's death:
Martha:

Mary:
6. Why were there reactions so different? Was one more spiritual than the other?
7. (vs. 34-44) What do we learn about Jesus?
8. (:41) In this verse Jesus says something in prayer which is really only for the benefit of those listening. What was it? What does this teach us about prayer?
9. (vs. 45-57) What are the Jewish leaders afraid of?

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10. (vs. 49-53) What did Caiaphas actually mean? What did God do with his words, even though he didn't really mean them that way, and why is it important to know that?

Application Questions:

1. What good is "praying out loud?"
2. Why did Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead when he was just going to die some day?
3. How can I be more courageous to tell people about Jesus? How can I know when the time is right to be bold?

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Lazarus
John 11 – Discussion Notes

Can be read in drama format:

Narrator
Jesus
Disciples
Thomas
Martha
Mary
The Jews
Pharisees
Caiaphas

Background info:

- Bethany was a very, very poor village
- It was located within seeing distance of Jerusalem
- Draw a map of where Jesus was when the chapter started (Galilee), compared to where Bethany was.
- It is very close to Passover

Questions:

1. (vs. 1-3) What do we know about Mary, Martha & Lazarus? And what does their relationship to Jesus seem to be like?
 - John 12:3
 - He must have known them well ("The one you love")

2. (vs. 4-8) When Jesus didn't rush to Bethany to heal Lazarus, what did the disciples assume?
 - That he couldn't go near Jerusalem for fear of the Jewish authorities.
 - They may have assumed he was afraid...instead of that He was just waiting for the proper time
 - Did the disciples want to help Lazarus? No...but they may have assumed Jesus could do another long-distance healing.

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3. (vs. 7-15) Why didn't Jesus just do another "long-distance" healing?
 - It was the people who needed to see this who were important
 - The disciples needed to learn to trust His timing
 - The disciples needed to look at the present situation in the light of Jesus, not in the dark of the world.
 - He wanted trouble when it was time for it

4. (:17-33) Compare the two sisters' reactions to seeing Jesus after their brother's death:

Martha: She knew Jesus would have healed him had He been there. She knew His power did not end with death. How did she know that? She knew death wasn't the end of life. She wanted something to be done.

Mary: She, too, knew that Jesus could have healed him. Her grief overwhelmed her desire to speak to Jesus. She was emotionally drained.

6. Why were there reactions so different? Was one more spiritual than the other?
 - They were both natural reactions. They both were faith reactions.

8. (vs. 34-44) What do we learn about Jesus?
 - Encourage people to make a list of the things we notice about Jesus from this passage.
 - He wept. What does that tell us? Why would He cry when He knew He would see Lazarus again...for eternity? What was sad?
 - John 12:10

8. (:41) In this verse Jesus says something in prayer which is really only for the benefit of those listening. What was it? What does this teach us about prayer?
 - a. Sometimes prayer is for the benefit of those listening. Compare to Matthew 6: 5&6

9. (vs. 45-57) What are the Jewish leaders afraid of?
 - a. That they would lose what little they had
 - b. They had no idea how little they had...or how much they were passing on.

11. (vs. 49-53) What did Caiaphas actually mean? What did God do with his words, even though he didn't really mean them that way, and

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why is it important to know that?

- The LORD used his position to give import and new meaning to his words – this was not what he meant – but it was what God meant. God can make even the stones cry out.

Application Questions:

1. What good is “praying out loud?”
 - Other people are encouraged by your faith
 - Where two or three are gathered together....agreement by a group has spiritual power.
 - When is “praying out loud” bad? When it is for show. When it is not honest.
2. Why did Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead when he was just going to die some day?
His life on this earth had value. He had more “work” to do. Ephesians 2:8-10
3. How can I be more courageous to tell people about Jesus? How can I know when the time is right to be bold? How can I have a “faith” reaction, not a “fear” reaction when persecution comes?
 - a. Spend more time with Jesus
 - b. Memorize, review
 - c. Step out in boldness more often (singing a solo isn’t as hard when you are doing it the 20th time)

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6 Days from Passover
John 12 - Questions

Jesus is now 6 days away from His death and resurrection. What more does He want to teach His disciples about Himself before He is gone?

:1-8 _____

:12-19 _____

:20-24 _____

:25 _____

:26 _____

:27 _____

:28-33 _____

:34-36 _____

:42-46 _____

:47-48 _____

:49-50 _____

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6 Days from Passover
John 12 – Discussion Notes

Jesus is now 6 days away from His death and resurrection. What more does He want to teach His disciples about Himself before He is gone? (leader – allow your students the time to meditate on each passage and come up with their own answers to the question for each group of verses.)

:1-8 _____

That His death and burial were imminent
That He had great value
That loving Him was the supreme goal of life

:12-19 _____

That the world was waiting and wanting to welcome their Messiah
That before His glorious someday reign, the Gentiles, too, were about to be included into the family of God (Zechariah 9:9) (see: Why a Donkey? From the "Zechariah – There is a Fountain" series on TheMinorProphet.com)
That He came as a servant
That He came as a king in the line of David (the donkey was the royal mount of choice in King David's day)

:20-24 _____

The time was come for Jesus to die.
Those with more questions should just watch.

:25 _____

Don't love your life. Be willing to lose it, as Christ was

:26 _____

Serving Christ means being willing to follow Him wherever He goes – even unto death

:27 _____

Jesus did not want to sidestep this horrible event. This is why he came.

:28-33 _____

I am going to die, and Satan's power will be forever broken

:34-36 _____

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I am the light you need. Stick close to me. Learn from me. Draw strength from me. I will not be here soon. Believe in me so that you will continue to have light when I am gone.

To those who thought they knew that the Messiah, when He came, would never again leave them, He said, you're right....and you're wrong. I am Messiah. I am leaving. And I am forever.

Here are Old Testament verses which say Messiah will be forever: (Psalms 110:4, Isaiah 9:6,7, Ezekiel 37:25, Daniel 7:14)

Here are Old Testament verse which say He will leave: (Daniel 9:26, Isaiah 53, Psalm 22)

:42-46 _____

When you believe in me, step out in faith and declare it. Don't keep living in the dark. It's much nicer in the light.

:47-48 _____

I have come for mercy. Not judgment. At least not now. But judgment will come soon enough. Don't be there for it. My very words, which you reject now, will be your judge some day.

:49-50 _____

I say what the Father told me to say.

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Do the Same for One Another
John 13 - Questions

Read the whole chapter through, then answer questions:

1. (:1) What was it that Jesus did which showed the disciples the full extent of His love?
2. (:2-5) Traditional good manners said that a servant should wash the feet of the guests as they entered. Why hadn't a servant washed their feet already? Why hadn't they washed each others' feet?
3. (:6) Why was Peter shocked?
4. (:7-9) What is Peter struggling with?
5. (:10-17) What was foot-washing teaching?
6. (:18-30) Jesus tells them that one of them will betray Him. Do you see anything in this passage that indicates Judas had a choice?
7. (:31-38) Jesus tells Peter that he, too, will betray Him. How is Peter's betrayal different than Judas's betrayal?
8. (:34,35) What is the strongest possible proof to the world that our faith in Christ is genuine? (see also Revelation 2:1-7)

9. What can I do, today, to live out the lesson of this chapter?

<u>Friends</u>	<u>Family</u>	<u>Acquaintances</u>

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Do the Same for One Another
John 13 – Discussion Notes

Read the whole chapter through, then answer:

1. (:1) What was it Jesus did which showed the disciples the full extent of His love?
 - Initially, it was the following “foot-washing”. But that was simply pointing to a greater event. A humble/serving/by a friend who is greater than I – type – event. The cross.
 - Why would serving someone in humility be the greatest way to show love?
 - Serving (but not in a humbling way) could be self-serving, too.
 - But humbling yourself to a place you would not ever have to take totally destroys any reward for yourself. The benefit is all for the receiver.
 - Pride is sometimes our greatest enemy in Christian service. Looking for ways to serve in humility is a tool to keep that pride right where it belongs...kneeling in front of a fellow believer.
2. (:2-5) Traditional good manners said that a servant should wash the feet of the guests as they entered. Why hadn't a servant washed their feet already? Why hadn't they washed each others' feet?
 - They had no servant
 - They had no thought yet of being servants to one another. They were still thinking in the world's terms about greatness and friendship. The world says friends are equal. Give 50% and get 50%.
 - Jesus was teaching them the 100% rule. You: 100%, me: 0%.
3. (:6-9) What is Peter struggling with?
 - Love for Jesus – he knew Jesus was His Lord
 - Not enough information. Once he had seen the cross and the resurrection he would understand. For now, he is not willing to react by trusting Jesus to know more than he knew.
 - Pride – he is bossing Jesus around
4. (:10-17) What was foot-washing teaching?
 - There is more you need to know – I will be serving you in a more humiliating way than you could ever imagine. Let me do it.
 - Do the same for each other. – humiliating acts of service.

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(well, OK, maybe humble acts of service sounds better – but don't overlook the word "humiliation" – it truly helps us define what a humble act would look like and feel like. If it feels really good, and you come away quite proud of yourself....it probably wasn't humble)

- Imitate me – not each other
5. (:18-30) Jesus tells them that one of them will betray Him. Do you see anything in this passage that indicates Judas had a choice?
- The very fact that Jesus talked about it....warned them all that it was going to happen....passed a bit of bread to Judas after voicing a warning....all indicates to me that Judas had a chance to say "no" to the temptation he was facing.
6. (:31-38) Jesus tells Peter that he, too, will betray Him. How is Peter's betrayal different than Judas's betrayal?
- Wasn't Peter simply caught up in a moment of fear, and that's why he denied the Lord? Perhaps – but perhaps Judas, also, was afraid...afraid of what the Jewish authorities would do to all of them.
 - Peter didn't have time to think about and plan his denial, Judas did.
 - Judas was inspired by Satan. So was Peter.
 - What makes Peter's denial different than Judas's betrayal? Read about it in Matthew 26:27 and Matthew 27:5.
 - Peter repented. Judas did not.
7. (:34,35) What is the strongest possible proof to the world that our faith in Christ is genuine? (see also Revelation 2:1-7)
- Our acts of love toward one another.
 - Not our feelings. The world cannot judge our feelings. The watching world can only see our actions.
9. What can I do, today, to live out the lesson of this chapter?
- Fill out these three columns with lists. Then make a plan to show humble acts of love to each person on these lists in the coming days, months, or whenever the opportunity presents itself

<u>Friends</u>	<u>Family</u>	<u>Acquaintances</u>

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Don't Let Your Heart be Troubled
John 14 - Questions

Discussion Opener: If you had been on one of the 9-11 planes, and were able to make one call, who would it be to, and what would you want to say?

Chapters 13-17 are Jesus' 9-11 call.

The word "love" is mentioned 31 times in Chapters 13-17 of John, as compared to 8 times in Chapters 1-12.

1. What commands do you see in verses 1-14?
2. What messages of hope do you see in verses 1-14?
3. Jesus said in vs. 4 that they would know the way to the place where he was going? How would they know that?
4. Why did Philip say "Lord, show us the Father..." in vs. 8?
5. What do we learn about the Holy Spirit in verses 15-26?
6. How was the "counselor" going to help them?
7. What "day" is He talking about in vs. 20?
8. What else, besides the "Counselor", was Jesus going to leave behind with His disciples (:27)?
9. Who put Christ on the cross? (:28-31)
10. What does "prince of this world" mean? (:30)
11. What are the reasons the disciples should want Jesus to go to the cross?

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The word "love" is mentioned 31 times in Chapters 13-17 of John, as compared to 8 times in Chapters 1-12.

1. What commands do you see in verses 1-14?
 - a. Do not let your hearts be troubled
 - b. Trust in God
 - c. Trust also in Me
 - d. Believe Me when I say...
2. What messages of hope do you see in verses 1-14?
 - a. Your heart doesn't have to be troubled
 - b. You can trust God
 - c. You can trust Me
 - d. God's dwelling place has lots of room
 - e. I'm going to that place to get things ready for you
 - f. And I will come back to get you
 - g. You will soon be where I am
 - h. You will be able to get there...you know the way
 - i. I am the way...you can get there through Me
 - j. I am the Father...He is Me...you know me
 - k. If you have faith in me, you will be able to do what I've been doing
 - l. In fact, you will do more than I have been doing
 - m. We will be partners. You ask, I will carry it out.
 - n. We will both be bringing glory to God in that way.
 - o. Ask for anything in My name...I will do it.
3. Jesus said in vs. 4 that they would know the way to the place where he was going? How would they know that?

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Jesus Himself was the way. They knew Him, so they could follow Him to where He was going. They could keep their eyes on Him, and end up at their destination.

4. Why did Philip say "Lord, show us the Father..." in vs. 8?
Philip still wasn't understanding that Jesus was the Father.
Jesus says "Anyone who has seen me has seen the father."
So clear. Why is this so hard to "get"?
5. What do we learn about the Holy Spirit in verses 15-26?
 - a. (:16)The Father gives Him
 - b. (:16)Once given, He is there forever
 - c. (:17)He is the Spirit of Truth. When we are not sure something is true, it is He who divides the truth from lies for us
 - d. (:17)He is not given to "the world" – the general population...but only to believers in Jesus.
 - e. (:23)If you love Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes to make His home in you.
 - f. (:26)The Holy Spirit's job is to remind believers of everything Jesus said, and to teach us everything we need to know
6. How was the "counselor" going to help them?
He would be there when Jesus left. They would not be "orphans". They were not left on their own. He would take over and remind them of truth. Keep them going.
7. What "day" is He talking about in vs. 20?
From verses 17-19, it looks like Jesus is referring to the day the Holy Spirit is given...the Day of Pentecost. The coming of the Holy Spirit will be the same as Jesus returning – to live within us. The Holy Spirit in me is the same thing as the Father in me...and Jesus in me. They are all three the same. That is why we say "ask Jesus into your heart". It is the Holy Spirit who comes to live in my heart when I believe in Jesus, but it is also Jesus. They are the same. And different.
8. What else, besides the "Counselor", was Jesus going to leave behind with His disciples (:27)?
Peace. No fear was necessary. Fear is a natural gift from God...to help us to survive. To spur us to movement when danger approaches. Not needed here. Peace is the rule of the day when Jesus is gone...and the Holy Spirit is here.
9. Who put Christ on the cross? (:28-31)

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Satan did. But then again, he didn't. Couldn't He had no hold on Jesus. Satan prompted men to do it. But men could have done nothing unless Jesus acquiesced. The Father and Jesus and the Spirit allowed Satan to move against Christ.

10. What does "prince of this world" mean? (:30)

Satan. Also called the prince of the power of the air (KJV) or the ruler of the kingdom of the air (NIV) –Ephesians 2:2.

Meaning....that for a short time Satan gets to rule over God's created universe.

That's why John is so grief-stricken at the end of his life when he sees the throne room of God in Chapter 4 & 5, and realizes that the scroll in the hand of God the Father (the title deed to planet earth) needs to be claimed by the man who has proved worthy to take it back from Satan. And then, in Revelation 5:1-4, that man can't be found. John must be thinking...Oh, no – where is He? Where is the One who can save us from all this horror which surrounds us? Surely Satan will not be able to rule the earth forever? Read the rest of Revelation 5 to see what happens.

11. What are the reasons the disciples should want Jesus to go to the cross?

a. (:28) He is going to the Father

b. (:31) This is the way the world will learn of Jesus

Jesus wanted to go to the cross. We need to walk with Him and learn of Him, and come to the place where we want what He wants, too.

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Bearing Fruit...Being Hated
 John 15 - Questions

1. Vs. 1-17. Let's get the symbolism straight:
 - Vine =
 - Gardener =
 - Branches =
 - The "cut-off" branch =
 - "Remain in Him" =
 - Fruit =

2. From verses 1-17, what facts do we learn about "fruit"?
 - :2
 - :4
 - :5
 - :7
 - :8
 - :16

3. But...what "fruit" is he talking about? What is fruit?

In order to define "fruit", check out the following verses, and see which one contains which definition of "fruit": (Hosea 14:2, Romans 7:4-6, Hebrews 13:15, Colossians 1:9-11, Proverbs 11:30, Isaiah 32:17, Proverbs 12:14, Hosea 10:12, Matthew 3:8, Galatians 5:22,23, Philippians 1:9-11) (hint: a couple of these verses are interchangeable)

Look up the verses above, and line up each verse with proper use of the word "fruit" in each passage:

Verse	Definition of "fruit"
	Winning souls – witnessing
	The words we speak
	Peace, Quietness, confidence
	Unfailing love
	Words
	Repentance...Changed life and actions
	Living in the Spirit, not the flesh
	Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control
	Righteousness
	Good works
	Praise

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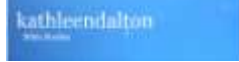


4. So, if we are bearing fruit, but would bear “more fruit”, what needs to happen? (vs. 2)
5. And if we are bearing fruit, but would bear “much fruit”, what needs to happen? (vs. 7,8)
6. What does loving each other have to do with bearing fruit? (vs. 12-17)
7. Why does Jesus call us “friends”, and not “servants”? (vs. 14-15)
8. How does that affect the way we love each other?

Suggestion: John 15: 1-17 would be a terrific passage to memorize!

9. Now...as we begin to obey God, love each other, and bear fruit, What is definitely going to happen? (vs. 18)
10. Why? If we are loving people, why will people hate us? “What the world needs now is love, sweet love...that’s the only thing that there’s just too little of...” (vs. 22)
11. What should we do about being hated?

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Bearing Fruit...Being Hated
John 15 – Discussion Notes

1. Read vs. 1-17...then comment on what you think the symbolism of these words is:
 - Vine = Jesus
 - Gardener = The Father
 - Branches = me (believing people of all ages)
 - The “cut-off” branch = It’s a challenge to know the symbolism of this. Is the “cut-off” branch the religious person who has never known Christ? Or...the true Christian who is not bearing fruit? Keep this question in the back of your mind as you study this passage. I think you will find an answer as you go through the passage. Here’s a question you can ask yourself: If the “cut-off” branch is me – the person who does believe in Christ...
why would I get cut off? (:1,6)
 - “Remain in Him” = Abide in Him...put roots down into Him
How do I “remain”? (:10) Is “remaining”, or “abiding” (as the NIV says it), something I have to try to do...or is it something which automatically happens because I am a believer and I have the Holy Spirit working in my life?
 - Fruit = As you answer the next 2 questions you will see what “fruit” is.
2. From verses 1-17, what facts do we learn about “fruit”?
 - :2 to be fruitful you need pruning. If you are not fruitful you are useless
 - :4 Fruit only comes from abiding in Christ
 - :5 You cannot produce fruit any other way
 - :7 Prayer, and its results, are fruit
 - :8 God wants us to bear much fruit
 - :16 We were saved so that we would bear fruit

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3. But...what "fruit" is he talking about? What is fruit?
 In order to define "fruit", check out the following verses, and see which verse matches up with each definition of "fruit": (Hosea 14:2, Romans 7:4-6, Hebrews 13:15, Colossians 1:9-11, Proverbs 11:30, Isaiah 32:17, Proverbs 12:14, Hosea 10:12, Matthew 3:8, Galatians 5:22,23, Philippians 1:9-11)
 (hint: a couple of these verses are interchangeable)

Where, in the Bible, is each of these definitions of "fruit" found?

Verse	Definition of "fruit"
Proverbs 11:30	Winning souls – witnessing
Hosea 14:2 (or Proverbs 12:14)	The words we speak
Isaiah 32:17	Peace, Quietness, confidence
Hosea 10:12	Unfailing love
Proverbs 12:14 (or Hosea 14:2)	Words
Matthew 3:8	Repentance...Changed life and actions
Romans 7:4-6	Living in the Spirit, not the flesh
Galatians 5:22&23	Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control
Philippians 1:9-11 (also could be Proverbs 11:30)	Righteousness
Colossians 1:9-11	Good works
Hebrews 13:15	Praise

4. So, if we are bearing fruit, but would bear "more fruit", what needs to happen?
 (vs. 2)
 We need to be "pruned". What does that mean? Something which is uncomfortable or even painful that removes uselessness from our lives and opens up room for more fruitful growth. It is a healthy thing. But not always pleasant. How do I get pruned? God does it – you don't do it to yourself.
5. And if we are bearing fruit, but would bear "much fruit", what needs to happen?
 (vs. 7,8)
 We need to "abide" in Christ. Put our roots way down into Him. And pray. Ask for what we need. Our idea of what we need will actually change as we abide and grow and bear much fruit. Soon we will be asking for different things than the things we first asked for.

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6. What does loving each other have to do with bearing fruit? (vs. 12-17)
It is a fruit. The more we love, the more we are like Him.
7. Why does Jesus call us "friends", and not "servants"? (vs. 14-15)
Because we aren't obeying blindly. We are entering into a relationship, a partnership.
8. How does that affect the way we love each other?
I guess when I know I am not a servant, but a friend, then I realize that other Christians are also my partners...friends...and that we are in this together – working together to bear fruit. So my love for others becomes an essential part of getting the job done.

Suggestion: John 15: 1-17 would be a terrific passage to memorize!

9. Now...as we begin to obey God, love each other, and bear fruit,
What is definitely going to happen? (vs. 18)
The unsaved world will hate us.
Maybe it won't happen to me? (:20)
10. Why? If we are loving people, why will people hate us? "What the world needs now is love, sweet love...that's the only thing that there's just too little of..." (vs. 21-25)
The world senses that we are not like them...and if they don't want to change, then they hate us because we remind them that they need to change.
11. What should we do about being hated?
Accept it as part of our service for the LORD. Philippians 1:29
What will the Holy Spirit do? (:26,27)...tell us what to say
Ask yourself: How does the world feel about me? If you are very popular with the unsaved world, you may want to ask yourself if you are acting like your friend, Jesus.

Reading ahead: Chapter 16 will answer the next two questions:
Will people realize they are doing something wrong when they hate me? (16:2)
Why didn't you tell me this before? (16:4)

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Overcoming the World

John 16 - Questions

1. (:1-4) In verses 1-4 Jesus warns the disciples of the persecution they will suffer once He is gone. Why hadn't he told them this before?
2. (:4-8) What does Jesus mention in verse 8 as another job of the Holy Spirit?
3. (:9-12) Did Jesus have things He wanted to tell the disciples that He never told them?
4. (:13-15) In verse 13 Jesus mentions another job of the Holy Spirit. What is it?
5. (:16-24) What did Jesus mean by "a little while"?
6. (:25-30) In verse 29 Jesus' disciples said that "now you are speaking clearly"...what had Jesus said which all of a sudden seemed so clear to them?
7. (:31,32) They said they finally believed in Him. They said they finally understood exactly Who He was...why, then, was there going to be a time when they would desert Him?
8. (:33) In Jesus we will have _____
In the world we will have _____
But don't worry! _____
9. Does that mean Jesus will keep bad things from happening to me?
If it doesn't mean that, then how can I keep from worrying?

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Overcoming the World
John 16 – Discussion Notes

1. (:1-4) In verses 1-4 Jesus warns the disciples of the persecution they will suffer once He is gone. Why hadn't he told them this before?

Before this He was with them. What difference did that make? The temptation would be to run away in fear when persecution came and He was not there. When He was there they had learned not to be afraid. They saw His boldness, they saw the crowds' reactions, but they knew that with Him they were safe. They needed to now know what was coming, so they would not be taken by surprise and run before they thought about what they were doing. His warning would help, but not until after the crucifixion. That was so out of their scope of possibilities that they just ran. But this warning helped them to sort out what their future reactions should be.

2. (:4-8) What does Jesus mention in verse 8 as another job of the Holy Spirit? He will convict the world. Cause their consciences to hurt. What did Jesus mean when He said the Holy Spirit would cause the world to feel guilt about:

Sin: Their sin of not believing in Him

Righteousness What righteousness really is – which can only be truly understood as it is viewed in the life of Jesus.

Judgment: The judgment that each person deserves because of their sin and un-righteousness.

3. (:9-12) Did Jesus have things He wanted to tell the disciples that He never told them?

Yes, He did. But they simply couldn't bear more. They couldn't absorb more.

4. (:13-15) In verse 13 Jesus mentions another job of the Holy Spirit. What is it?

To lead us into all truth. To tell us what is yet to come. To open up their eyes to all that Jesus had said...help them understand and remember.

5. (:16-24) What did Jesus mean by "a little while"?

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In just a matter of hours He would be dead. And then just a couple of days after that He would be alive again.

6. (:25-30) In verse 29 Jesus' disciples said that "now you are speaking clearly"...what had Jesus said which all of a sudden seemed so clear to them?

It seems to me that Jesus had been speaking clearly all along. Why did they suddenly "see"? I don't know. Maybe your Bible Study group can come up with an answer.....

7. (:31,32) They said they finally believed in Him. They said they finally understood exactly Who He was...why, then, was there going to be a time when they would desert Him?

Head knowledge still needed to be translated to feet knowledge. What they "knew" wasn't going to affect their feet until they learned of their own weaknesses, and knew that even being courageous for Him was going to take the Holy Spirit's power. On their own they could not.

8. (:33) In Jesus we will have peace
In the world we will have trouble
But don't worry! Jesus has overcome the world

9. Does that mean Jesus will keep bad things from happening to me?
If it doesn't mean that, then how can I keep from worrying?

No...Jesus won't keep bad things from happening to you. Look at Philippians 1:29. "For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for Him".

So – knowing that, how can I keep from worrying? Because Jesus has overcome the evil in the world, you can actually change the things that matter most to you. Instead of being wholly concerned with your own safety and comfort, Jesus can give you a love for what He is doing in people's lives. And a huge desire to spread the truth about Him, even in the face of persecution. When that change happens inside of you...you are not worried about suffering – you walk bravely into the face of it. The things you are focused on – people learning about Jesus – are suddenly more important than yourself.

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The LORD's Prayer
John 17 - Questions

1. (:1-5) What does Jesus pray for Himself?
2. (:5) What did Jesus give up when He became a man?
Hebrews 2:9
Philippians 2:6,7
Psalms 18:35

How do we know for sure He got it back again?
Acts 7:56
Philippians 2:9-11
3. (:6) Who gave the disciples to Jesus?
4. (:6) Did those disciples have to do anything, after they were "given" to Jesus, in order to be His?
5. (:6-19) Who is Jesus praying for in these verses?
6. (:6-10) How does He describe them?
7. (:11) Why is He praying for them?
8. (:11-19) What are some things Jesus prays for them?
 - a. :11
 - b. :11
 - c. :13
 - d. :15 (not)
 - e. :15
 - f. :17
9. (:9) Why isn't Jesus praying for the whole world in this prayer?
10. (:10) What did He mean when He said "glory has come to me through them"?
11. (:15) Why doesn't Jesus just pray that His disciples would be taken out of the world, as He was going to be?
12. (:20) Who else is Jesus praying for here, besides the disciples?
13. (:20-26) What are some things Jesus prays for us?
14. (:24) Even though Jesus is leaving them in the world, what does He really want to happen? When will that happen?
15. (:23) Why does Jesus want us all to be "one"?
16. The things Jesus prayed for....are they happening?

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The LORD's Prayer
John 17 – Discussion Notes

Thursday night: After giving His disciples his parting thoughts, Jesus prays. He prays for Himself, prays for His disciples, and then...prays for you and me! They...and we are in a battlefield. And the weapons we will be using are not the same weapons the world uses. (II Corinthians 10:3,4) It is a spiritual battle and our weapons are spiritual weapons. Prayer is one of them.

1. (:1-5) What does Jesus pray for Himself?
That He would be glorified. Strange request for the most humble man who ever walked the earth? He asked this so that He could use His position of glory and authority not to get...but to give. (:2) To give eternal life. He had finished the works which the Father had given Him to do. Now it was time for the Father to do His work – glorify the Son.

How was this prayer going to be answered? Death. Then resurrection and return to heaven. Failure. Then a success the world had never seen.

2. (:5) What did Jesus give up when He became a man?
Hebrews 2:9 His position – He was higher than everything,
but came down to be lower than even the angels
Philippians 2:6,7 He was equal with God, the ruler of all, but
came down to be a man...even lower...a servant of man
Psalms 18:35 His right to sit and rest. He stooped down.

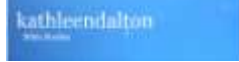
How do we know for sure He got it back again?

Acts 7:56 Stephen saw it.

Philippians 2:9-11 Paul recorded it.

3. (:6) Who gave the disciples to Jesus?
God the Father
4. (:6) Did those disciples have to do anything, after they were
“given” to Jesus, in order to be His?
They had to “obey” by believing in Jesus...following Him
5. (:6-19) Who is Jesus praying for in these verses?
The disciples and other followers who were to be left behind when Jesus left.
6. (:6-10) How does He describe them?
They were given to Him of God the Father. They were in the world.
They have been obedient. They realize who Jesus is. They accepted the words of Jesus as true. They belong to God the Father. They have brought glory to Jesus.

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7. (:11) Why is He praying for them?
Because they are going to be left.
8. (:11-19) What are some things Jesus prays for them?
 - a. :11 protect them by the power of the Father's name
 - b. :11 that they may be one
 - c. :13 Jesus' joy within them
 - d. :15 (not) not take them out of the world...
 - e. :15 but protect them in it
 - f. :17 sanctify them – set them apart – by the Word
9. (:9) Why isn't Jesus praying for the whole world in this prayer?
This is a specific prayer for only those who would be spreading the truth after Jesus left.
10. (:10) What did He mean when He said "glory has come to me through them"?
Because of their belief in Him, He is accorded the glory He rightly deserves
11. (:15) Why doesn't Jesus just pray that His disciples would be taken out of the world, as He was going to be?
They had a job to do...and they must be in the world to accomplish it.
12. (:20) Who else is Jesus praying for here, besides the disciples?
You and I. Every believer since the resurrection.
13. (:20-26) What are some things Jesus prays for us?
That we may be one. Complete unity in Jesus. When we are in unity somehow that lets the world know that the message of Jesus is true.
14. (:24) Even though Jesus is leaving them in the world, what does He really want to happen? When will that happen?
He wants us home in heaven with Him. This little bit of time we have to spend on earth is hard on Him, too. He wants us to see Him as He really is. This will happen either at our death, or at His return.
15. (:23) Why does Jesus want us all to be "one"?
To let the world know the love of Jesus.
16. The things Jesus prayed for....are they happening?

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Keep Your Eyes on the Goal

John 18 - Questions

From the Upper room, after the Passover dinner, Jesus and His disciples walk out of Jerusalem across the Kidron Valley to an olive grove (which we now call the Garden of Gethsemane). There Jesus is arrested and brought back into Jerusalem, to the house of Annas. From there He is taken to the house of Caiaphas. Then from the house of Caiaphas to Pilate's palace....all in Jerusalem.

1. (:1-3) How did Judas know where to find Jesus? He had left the Passover dinner long before Jesus and His disciples walked to the olive garden.
2. (:3) A "detachment" of soldiers would have been a group of 300 – 600 soldiers. Wow! Why so many?
3. (:4) John 6:64 and John 13:1 also say this same thing. Jesus knew what was about to happen. Why did He go through with it? What kept Him going? Hebrews 12:2.
4. (:4-9) Jesus was _____ His disciples.
5. (:10-11) Peter was trying to do things in his own _____

Why didn't they arrest Peter?

6. (:12-24) First they take Jesus to Annas. What does Jesus' attitude seem to be towards him? What two disciples are still with Jesus?
7. (:24-28) Then they take Him to Caiaphas. Why don't we have an account of what happened to Jesus there? What happened to Peter there?
8. If we don't have enough strength in ourselves to be what God wants us to be....they how will we ever be what God wants us to be?
9. (:28-29) Why didn't the Jewish leaders go into Pilate's palace?
10. (:28-38) Then they take Him to Pilate. What does Jesus' attitude seem to be towards Pilate?

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11. (:38) "What is truth?" Is truth what the majority of the people want it to be...or is truth always the same no matter who agrees?
12. (:38-39) Pilate didn't believe Jesus was guilty of anything. But he didn't have the courage to release Him. Under the circumstances releasing Barabbas seemed the only thing to do to protect himself. Was what Pilate did any different than what Peter had done?
13. What goal can I focus on in trying times? Hebrews 12:1,2
14. How can I rest more on God's strength...and less on mine?

Isaiah 40:30,31

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Keep Your Eyes on the Goal

John 18 – Discussion Notes

Background: Six days earlier Jesus had arrived in Jerusalem for what would turn out to be His last visit. He entered the city on the back of a donkey...surrounded by wildly cheering crowds of people...people who were throwing palm branches and their own coats and jackets before His path...to symbolically smooth the way for His entrance. They were heralding Him as the "King of Israel". He had just raised Lazarus from the dead a few days before that and the whole city knew about it. They were ready to rally around a leader who could free them from Roman domination....and surely this Jesus of Nazareth was the Promised One! Sure now they would be released from someone else's domination to become a Jewish independent nation once again...a world power with no one to fear...just as the LORD had promised would someday happen....so they called Him "King".

For six days He taught in the temple, but made no move to exert the authority the people were sure He had. They must have been growing impatient and beginning to wonder if He really was the One they thought He was, or if He was just another disappointing self-proclaimed "Messiah". Even His disciples, who by now understood that He truly was God, truly was the prophesied Messiah, must have wondered when He would make His move. Scripture, after all, had predicted it: *"Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout! Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea..."* (Zechariah 9:9-10)

The Jewish authorities were watching Him closely, becoming more and more afraid that He would begin to challenge their right to be the ones in charge of Judaism...more and more afraid that if Jesus challenged the Roman rule the whole nation of Israel would suffer as the Romans came down hard on all of them. They didn't like Jesus, certainly didn't trust Jesus, and now they were sure that He was going to do something stupid which would cost them their hard-earned positions of importance and rule. So they had only one choice...kill him.

Their problem was that they had no authority to kill anyone. The Romans allowed them to rule themselves to a point....sort of in the spirit of a "small claims court." But they would not allow them to decide to put someone to death. Severe crimes requiring the death sentence must be brought before the Roman rulers. So, the Jewish authorities had

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to figure out a way to convince the Roman rulers that Jesus had done something worthy of death. And they had to talk the Roman rulers into sending their soldiers to arrest Him since a bunch of Jewish Rabbis hauling a Jewish troublemaker before a Roman ruler would most certainly not warrant a hearing for a death sentence.

As the Holiday of Passover begins in Jerusalem, on Thursday at sundown, Jesus meets with His disciples in a room somewhere in the city of Jerusalem to eat together the Passover dinner. As dinner is finished, and Jesus has spoken His last words to His disciples, we arrive at Chapter 18.

From the Upper room, after the Passover dinner, Jesus and His disciples walk out of Jerusalem across the Kidron Valley to an olive grove (which we now call the Garden of Gethsemane). There Jesus is arrested and brought back into Jerusalem, to the house of Annas. From there He is taken to the house of Caiphas. Then from the house of Caiphas to Pilate's palace....all in Jerusalem.

1. (:1-3) How did Judas know where to find Jesus? He had left the Passover dinner long before Jesus and His disciples walked to the olive garden.

Other Gospels go into the Prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane. John doesn't. Isn't it interesting to note the things John doesn't cover in his gospel account? Perhaps some things simply stood out in his memory better than others...and of course, his focus of proving the deity of Christ would have helped him make decisions about what to include.

Judas would have been pretty sure Jesus and His disciples were there in the olive grove because that is where they had often gone when they were in Jerusalem in the last 3 years.

Apparently the Jewish authorities had found their "stooge". Their witness against Jesus. Their legal reason to have the Romans arrest Jesus.

2. (:3) A "detachment" of soldiers would have been a group of 300 – 600 soldiers. Wow! Why so many?

They really thought they might have trouble. The Jewish rulers, perhaps, had done a very thorough job of convincing the Romans that this was a potential uprising. That's how they got their "detachment" of soldiers.

3. (:4) John 6:64 and John 13:1 also say this same thing. Jesus knew what was about to happen. Why did He go through with it? What kept Him going? Hebrews 12:2.

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His eyes were on the goal. The joy that was set before Him. The joy of His total obedience to the Father. The joy of salvation finally being a completed gift to be offered to His beloved creation. The joy of eternity with those He had chosen long before the world ever came into being.

4. (:4-9) Jesus was protecting His disciples.

He stepped out in front and protected them, even though He knew they would just run away. He was protecting them for the future...for what they could accomplish someday...because He loved them, not because they were perfect. Whatever God has for any of us to do in our lives..if we will put our lives in His hands, we will do it...nothing can stop it from happening...even our own inability and failures.

5. (:10-11) Peter was trying to do things in his own strength

Why didn't they arrest Peter?

Peter, full of fire. Full of self-confidence. Full of great desire to do something for God. But not tuned in to what Jesus wanted to be accomplished. He had to learn how little he could do in his own strength....

Why didn't they arrest Peter? Other accounts tell us that Jesus healed the ear that had been cut off. Jesus fixes what Peter goofed up on. Jesus was in charge.

6. (:12-24) First they take Jesus to Annas. (:12&13) Then they take him to Caiaphas (:14-27) What does Jesus' attitude seem to be towards Caiaphas? What two disciples are still with Jesus?

Who is Annas? He was the past High Priest of Israel. Once a High Priest, always a High Priest. His post had been taken away from him by the Romans, who appointed his son-in-law, Caiaphas, to be the High Priest. The Jews, however, still looked first to Annas for leadership.

Peter is one of the disciples still with Him. John is the other. He probably had access to this first hearing, in front of Caiaphas, because of his family connections...John's father, Zebedee, was a Pharisee

7. (:24-28) What happened to Peter there?

It's cold. John was able to slip in to hear what is happening, but Peter, afraid and probably mad, was left outside. Then John remembers him, goes back to get him in, too, and leaves him by the fire. Still afraid. Still knowing only that he will somehow get along by using his wits. The way he always had. He didn't know yet to trust Jesus to

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work things out....to just keep going and trust. He figured he had to trust himself, after all, Jesus wasn't exactly in a position to help now, was he? Peter's experiences during this night would change his life.

Peter didn't fully realize then that Jesus was going to die, and then rise from the dead...proving that there was no power anywhere stronger than Him. From then on Peter would know that he didn't have to depend on himself...he could depend on Jesus in any situation...even those which looked totally impossible.

8. If we don't have enough strength in ourselves to be what God wants us to be....they how will we ever be what God wants us to be?

Can you think of a time when you have trusted yourself...maybe even sinned because it seemed like the only logical thing to do? It seemed like there was no other way? There is another way. Refuse to do the wrong thing...and trust.

9. (:28-29) Why didn't the Jewish leaders go into Pilate's palace?

Passover began the night before and lasted all this day (Friday). They had "cleansed" themselves the day before, and didn't want to defile themselves in the middle of Passover by entering the home of a non-Jew. Their tradition told them they must be "pure" in order to come into the presence of God as they celebrated Passover. Wow. How ironic. They were certainly defiling themselves as they dishonored God Himself.

10. (:28-38) What does Jesus' attitude seem to be towards Pilate?

He seems to want to reach out to Pilate. Jesus' kingdom, even when it finally was someday in this world, would not be built on power of politics. He would not be elected, or granted authority by a group of sovereign nations. His kingdom would be totally built on the fact that He wants it. He is completely in charge. He seems to want to reach out to this weak, politically strangled man called Pilate.

11. (:38) "What is truth?" Is truth what the majority of the people want it to be...or is truth always the same no matter who agrees?

Obvious answer. But we certainly do struggle with this in our culture today.

12. (:38-39) Pilate didn't believe Jesus was guilty of anything. But he didn't have the courage to release Him. Under the circumstances releasing Barabbas seemed the only thing to do to protect himself. Was what Pilate did any different than what Peter had done????????? If Peter got a second chance, could Pilate have gotten one, too?

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13. What goal can I focus on in trying times? Hebrews 12:1,2
14. How can I rest more on God's strength...and less on mine? Isaiah 40:30,31

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Who is in Charge?
John 19 - Questions

1. (:1-3) Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled over 300 Old Testament prophecies which all pointed to the Messiah of Israel. Can you tell how many of those prophecies He fulfilled in just these 3 verses?

Prophecy	Jewish Scripture	New Testament Scripture
He would be a man	Genesis 3:15	Galatians 4:4
He would be a Jew	Genesis 12:3 Genesis 18:18	Luke 3:34 Matt. 1:2 Acts 3:25 Galatians 3:16
He would be of the tribe of Judah	Genesis 49:10	Luke 3:33 Matthew 1:2
He would be a King (of the seed of David)	Psalms 132:11,12 Jeremiah 23:5,6 Psalms 2:6-9	Matthew 1:6 Romans 1:3 Acts 2:30 John 18:37 John 19:3
He would be a prophet like Moses	Deuteronomy 18:15, 19	Matt. 21:11 John 1:45 John 6:14 Acts 3:22-23
He would be the Son of God	Psalms 2:7 Proverbs 30:4	Luke 1:32 Matthew 3:17
Homage would be given Him by great Kings	Psalms 72:10,11	Matt. 2:1-11
He would be born of a virgin	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:18-25 Luke 1:26-35
He would perform miracles	Isaiah 35:5,6	John 11:47 Matthew 11:3-6
He would come before the 2 nd temple in Jerusalem was destroyed (70 A.D.)	Daniel 9:24-26	Historical fact
He would be betrayed by a friend	Psalms 41:9	John 13:18,21

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Prophecy	Jewish Scripture	New Testament Scripture
He would be rejected	Psalms 118:22,23 Isaiah 8:14, 15 Isaiah 28:16	Matt 21:42,43 Acts 4:11 Romans 9:32,33 Ephesians 2:20 I Peter 2:6-8 John 19:7
He would be meek & mild	Isaiah 42:2,3 Isaiah 53:7	Matt. 12:18-20 Matt 26:62,63
He would minister to Gentiles	Isaiah 42:1 Isaiah 49:1,8	Matt. 12:21
He would be smitten, flogged	Isaiah 50:6	Matt. 26:67 Matt 27:26,30 John 19:3 John 19:1
He would suffer & bring salvation	Isaiah 53	The 4 Gospels
He would be pierced	Zechariah 12:10 Psalm 22:16	John 19:34,37
He would be forsaken by His disciples	Zechariah 13:7	Matthew 26:31,56 John 19:25-27
He would be crucified	Psalm 22 Psalm 69:21	Matthew 27:34-50 John 19:28-30
He would have his garments parted & cast lots for	Psalm 22:18&19	Luke 23:34 John 19:23-24
He would ascend to heaven	Psalm 68:18	Luke 24:51 Acts 1:9
He would have victory over death	Isaiah 25:8	John 20:1-10, 19-25
Gentiles shall seek the Messiah of Israel	Isaiah 11:10	Romans 11:25
Died for the sins of the Jewish people and the whole world	Isaiah 53:8	John 3:16 John 19:28-30
He would be punished/ wounds	Isaiah 53:7	John 19:2
He would be God	Jeremiah 23:5,6	John 10:30 John 8:58
Not one of His bones would be broken	Exodus 12:46 Numbers 9:12 Psalm 34:20	John 19:33-36

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2. (:4-8) In John 18:37 Jesus admits that He is, indeed, a King with a Kingdom...why does Pilate not seem afraid of that?
3. (:7) Did the Jews really have such a law? (Leviticus 24:15,16)
4. (:8-11) What kind of power did Pilate have? (Romans 13:1)
5. (:9) Why didn't He answer Pilate?
6. (:11) Who is Jesus referring to who is "guilty of a greater sin"?
The Jews?
Judas?
The High Priest?
God?
7. (:12-22) How do you think Pilate felt about Jesus? Do you see any evidence of faith in Pilate?
8. (:22-24) Why is it significant that people who couldn't possibly have known the Old Testament prophecies were the ones fulfilling them?
9. (:25-27) Why was this necessary? Didn't Jesus have brothers and sisters to whom this responsibility would fall?
10. (:28-33) Was Jesus killed...or did He give His life?
11. (:34 & 35) Why is this so important?
12. (:38-42) What does this tell us about Nicodemus?
13. Who was in charge all along? What impact does that have on your life?

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Who is in Charge?
John 19 - Discussion Notes

Previous to Chapter 19, Jesus has been brought before Annas and Caiaphas, and now Pilate. He has admitted that He is a King with a kingdom, but Pilate seems to sense that this is not a king or kingdom which is threatening to hurt the Roman rule. (Pilate doesn't know that someday that king and his kingdom would indeed threaten Roman rule...but that is for another day...)

It's interesting that Pilate sensed the truth as Jesus spoke it, but did not respond in faith. Simply hearing and believing the truth is not the same as responding in faith to the truth. How many times have I witnessed to someone about faith in Jesus, and just simply gotten nowhere? It has happened over and over again. I always tell myself in those situations that I never know what the LORD will do with His truth – once it settles in the mind and heart of a person it may be months or years before it begins to grow and bear fruit. Perhaps Pilate, later, came to a place of passionate faith in Jesus Christ. That's on my list of "Questions to Ask When I Get to Heaven".

Everything in this chapter takes place in Jerusalem or just outside of it...first at Pilate's palace, then Jesus carrying his cross outside the city to Golgotha, and then in the garden at the tomb.

As we begin, it is amazing to note that Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled over 300 Old Testament prophecies which all pointed to the Messiah of Israel. This chapter would probably win the prize for "chapter of the Bible where we see the most prophecies about Christ fulfilled." It is chock-full!

Check out the following selected prophecies, their Old Testament locations, and their New Testament fulfillments...you will find John 19 in several places.

Prophecy	Jewish Scripture	New Testament Scripture
He would be a man	Genesis 3:15	Galatians 4:4
He would be a Jew	Genesis 12:3 Genesis 18:18	Luke 3:34 Matt. 1:2 Acts 3:25 Galatians 3:16
He would be of the tribe of Judah	Genesis 49:10	Luke 3:33 Matthew 1:2
He would be a King (of the seed of David)	Psalms 132:11,12 Jeremiah 23:5,6	Matthew 1:6 Romans 1:3

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	Psalms 2:6-9	Acts 2:30 John 18:37 John 19:3
Prophecy	Jewish Scripture	New Testament Scripture
He would be a prophet like Moses	Deuteronomy 18:15, 19	Matt. 21:11 John 1:45 John 6:14 Acts 3:22-23
He would be the Son of God	Psalms 2:7 Proverbs 30:4	Luke 1:32 Matthew 3:17
Homage would be given Him by great Kings	Psalms 72:10,11	Matt. 2:1-11
He would be born of a virgin	Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:18-25 Luke 1:26-35
He would perform miracles	Isaiah 35:5,6	John 11:47 Matthew 11:3-6
He would come before the 2 nd temple in Jerusalem was destroyed (70 A.D.)	Daniel 9:24-26	Historical fact
He would be betrayed by a friend	Psalms 41:9	John 13:18,21
He would be rejected	Psalms 118:22,23 Isaiah 8:14, 15 Isaiah 28:16	Matt 21:42,43 Acts 4:11 Romans 9:32,33 Ephesians 2:20 I Peter 2:6-8 John 19:1-3, 7
He would be meek & mild	Isaiah 42:2,3 Isaiah 53:7	Matt. 12:18-20 Matt 26:62,63
He would minister to Gentiles	Isaiah 42:1 Isaiah 49:1,8	Matt. 12:21
He would be smitten, flogged	Isaiah 50:6	Matt. 26:67 Matt 27:26,30 John 19:3 John 19:1
He would suffer & bring salvation	Isaiah 53	The 4 Gospels
He would be pierced	Zechariah 12:10 Psalm 22:16	John 19:34,37

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He would be forsaken by His disciples	Zechariah 13:7	Matthew 26:31,56 John 19:25-27
He would be crucified	Psalms 22 Psalm 69:21	Matthew 27:34-50 John 19:28-30
He would have his garments parted & cast lots for	Psalms 22:18&19	Luke 23:34 John 19:23-24
He would ascend to heaven	Psalms 68:18	Luke 24:51 Acts 1:9
He would have victory over death	Isaiah 25:8	John 20:1-10, 19-25
Gentiles shall seek the Messiah of Israel	Isaiah 11:10	Romans 11:25
Died for the sins of the Jewish people and the whole world	Isaiah 53:8	John 3:16 John 19:28-30
He would be punished/wounds	Isaiah 53:7	John 19:2
He would be God	Jeremiah 23:5,6	John 10:30 John 8:58
Not one of His bones would be broken	Exodus 12:46 Numbers 9:12 Psalm 34:20	John 19:33-36

1. How many of these prophecies did He fulfill in just the first three verses of chapter 19?

I found at least 7. He would be a king. He would be rejected. He would be meek & mild. He would be flogged. He would suffer. He would be punished. He would have wounds.

2. (:4-8) In John 18:37 Jesus admits that He is, indeed, a King with a Kingdom...why does Pilate not seem afraid of that?

He seems to realize Jesus is no threat to him personally...and that, probably, was the main thing on Pilate's mind. He may have been seeking here to appease the Jews by punishing Jesus by flogging...hoping that His suffering would satisfy their hunger to hurt Him. "Here...how much like a "king" does he look now? Are you still threatened by this bleeding, weak man.?" Pilate doesn't want to condemn Him to death.

3. (:7) Did the Jews really have such a law? (Leviticus 24:15,16)

Now they tell Pilate something they had been holding back. It wasn't really that they thought He was a threat to Rome. He was a threat to them. And they had a law which guaranteed they could get rid of Him. He had to die by Jewish standards whether or not

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He was a threat to Rome, and Pilate was the man who had the power to make it happen. The Jews were not given the right by Rome to carry out the death penalty.

"Say to the Israelites: 'If anyone curses his God, he will be held responsible; anyone who blasphemes the name of the LORD must be put to death. The entire assembly must stone him. Whether an alien or native born, when he blasphemes the Name, he must be put to death.'" Leviticus 24:15,16

If He were claiming to be God, but was not God, then He deserved to die. If He claimed to be God, and was God, then He deserved their falling on their knees before Him, overcome with their own sin, and believing all He said.

They certainly weren't going to do that...so He must not be God...He must die. (There will come a day, spoken of by the prophet Zechariah in chapters 12 and 13 of his book, when the Jewish nation will come to that point of repentance...but it wasn't now)

4. (:8-11) What kind of power did Pilate have?

"Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established." Romans 13:1

Pilate did have the authority to send Jesus to His death. But that authority was given to him of God. Jesus was God. Pilate had the power to send Jesus to His death because Jesus had given it to him.

5. (:9) Why didn't He answer Pilate?

Lots of times no answer is the answer. No answer forces you to wait and think. It forces you to push for a solution. Jesus wasn't trying to save Himself. It looks like He was trying to help Pilate think this through...Pilate says: "don't you realize I have power either to free you or to crucify you?" and Jesus, with no answer, is saying: "Don't you realize you don't?"

6. (:11) Who is Jesus referring to who is "guilty of a greater sin"?

The Jews? Judas? The High Priest? God?

Jesus is telling Pilate 2 things here: first, Pilate himself is not as guilty as the one who handed Jesus over to Pilate, and second, it would definitely be a sin to kill Him. Again, He is helping him, even though condemning him. He is acting like He cares for him. He is acting like God. Guess who's in charge here?

I think the one Jesus is referring to in this statement: "guilty of a greater sin", is the High Priest, Caiaphas. The High Priest knew better. He knew the scriptures. Pilate did not.

7. (:12-22) How do you think Pilate felt about Jesus? Do you see any evidence of faith in Pilate?

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Here are the 5 questions Pilate asked of Jesus in chapters 18 & 19:

- a. Are you the King of the Jews? 18:33
- b. What is it you have done? 18:35
- c. What is truth? 18:38
- d. Where do you come from? 19:9
- e. Don't you realize...? 19:10

And then he has a sign made to post on the cross, above Jesus' head: "JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS". And refuses to change that sign.... "What I have written, I have written."

I see a man wondering, afraid, angry at those forcing him to do something he did not want to do. But I don't see faith. The word "King" seems to have stuck in his mind.

8. (:22-24) Why is it significant that people who couldn't possibly have known the Old Testament prophecies were the ones fulfilling them?

It's obvious. This wasn't a conspiracy to prove that a fake was actually a Messiah.

9. (:25-27) Why was this necessary? Didn't Jesus have brothers and sisters to whom this responsibility would fall?

Yes, He did. But they weren't there. They were probably not yet believers in Him. (see John 7:5). And Jesus may have been saying, "Her family is now the family of God." Widows were now the responsibility of the church.

10. (:28-33) Was Jesus killed...or did He give His life?

He wasn't being brave. He was being Himself. He was being God. This was something to be joyous about! Look what He's doing! He has won! He gave His life.

11. (:34 & 35) Why is this so important?

Breaking the legs of a man dying by crucifixion hastened death. The dying person could not then push up on his legs to struggle for breath. Suffocation ensued quickly. The fact that Jesus was already dead showed that He had, indeed, given His life. And the spear in the side, with blood and water flowing out, was again proof of his death. This was no hoax. He was dead. If He was going to be alive again in 3 days it was going to be a resurrection, not a magic act.

12. (:38-42) What does this tell us about Nicodemus?

Like Paul Harvey's "The rest of the story", now we know what must have been happening in Nicodemus's heart in the years since he spoke with Jesus at night.

This had to be done by a person with money and access to power. None of the disciples could have done it. Even if they had wanted to. The body was wrapped in linen, soaked in a spice-paste, which would harden and form a "cocoon" about the body. When John

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first stepped into the tomb after Jesus had risen, He probably saw the hardened cocoon still lying there and didn't realize Jesus was gone! It was only because a thoughtful angel had moved the headcloth away from the body that Peter finally realized something was funny. (John 20:3-8)

13. Who was in charge all along? What impact does that have on your life? Jesus was in charge all along....even in His weakness. There should never be a time in my life when I fear that He is not in charge.

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What Difference Would it Have Made?

John 20 – Questions

A few years ago Ken had a business acquaintance ask him: "What difference would it have made if Jesus had never risen from the dead?" Jack Brubaker and Ken had worked together on many projects, and been friends over the years. When he asked Ken this question it was because he knew he didn't know God at all...and he was wondering how to go about it.

Ken was only too glad to sit down with Jack that day, answer his question, and also tell him how to come to faith in Jesus. By the time Ken did his best to help Jack understand the truth about Jesus, Jack was ready to put his faith in Him for all eternity. Together they prayed as Jack talked for the first time to His Savior and Lord.

I'd like us to read through this chapter, discuss a little along the way, and then put our heads together at the end to answer, from John chapter 20, Jack's question..."What difference would it have made if Jesus had never risen from the dead?"

Here are the four Gospel accounts of Jesus' resurrection:

- Matthew 28:1-20
- Mark 16:1-20
- Luke 24: 1-53
- John 20:1-31

Split up into 4 groups and each read a separate Resurrection account. Then come back together and answer the following questions from the scripture you read:

1. What day of the week was Jesus resurrected?
2. Who was the first to come to the empty tomb on that day?

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3. What time of day did they come?
4. What did they see when they approached the tomb?
5. How had the stone been moved?
6. What else happened at the tomb at that time?
7. What did they do after they realized what had happened?
8. What happened to them on the way to tell others?
9. Which disciples responded by running to the tomb?
10. What did those disciples see on arriving at the tomb?
11. Which disciple believed right away?

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12. Who stayed at the tomb, crying, after the disciples went away?

13. Who did Jesus appear to after His resurrection?

Using anything you have just read, either from John 20 or from the other resurrection accounts, answer the question: "What difference would it have made if Jesus had not risen from the dead?"

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What Difference Would it Have Made?

John 20 – Discussion Notes

Note to leaders: We are using this lesson to teach a "Harmony of the Gospels". You and your group will see, as you go through this exercise, how the four Gospel accounts are different, and yet harmonize. There are no inconsistencies, no contradictions, only gaps in some Gospel accounts which are filled in by the others.

A few years ago Ken had a business acquaintance ask him: "What difference would it have made if Jesus had never risen from the dead?" Jack Brubaker and Ken had worked together on many projects, and been friends over the years. When he asked Ken this question it was because he knew he didn't know God at all...and he was wondering how to go about it.

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- John 20:1-31

Split up into 4 groups and each read a separate Resurrection account. Then come back together and answer the following questions from the scripture you read:

1. What day of the week was Jesus resurrected?

Sunday (Matt. 28:1, Mark 16:1, Luke 24:1, John 20:1)

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2. Who was the first to come to the empty tomb on that day?

At least three women came... Mary Magdalene, Mary mother of James (the other Mary), and Salome. (Matt. 28:1, Mark 16:1, Luke 24:1, John 20:1)

3. What time of day did they come?

Very early in the morning, at dawn, while it was still dark (Matt 28:1, Mark 16:2, Luke 24:1, John 20:1)

4. What did they see when they approached the tomb?

That the stone had been rolled away from the entrance to the tomb. (Mark 16:4, Luke 24:2, John 20:1)

5. How had the stone been moved?

An violent earthquake had shaken the place, and an angel of the LORD rolled back the stone. The guards present at that time were so afraid they shook. (Matt. 28:2-4)

6. What else happened at the tomb at that time?

Mary Magdalene ran to tell Peter and John that something had happened... she didn't yet know what. (John 20:2)

The other women went in the tomb and did not see the body of the LORD Jesus... and saw two angels, one of whom informed them that Jesus was raised from the dead. He told them to go and tell the disciples about this. (Matt 28:5-7. Mark 16:5-7. Luke 24:4-8)

7. What did they do after they realized what had happened?

The other women ran from the tomb to tell the disciples, afraid to speak to anyone else on the way. (Matt 28:8, Mark 16:8)

(In the meantime, Peter and John ran to the tomb, along with Mary Magdalene, and Mary Magdalene saw Jesus outside the tomb. (Mark 16:9, John 20: 10-17)

8. What happened to them on the way to tell others?

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First, they were met by Jesus (Matt. 28:9&10) , then they were joined by Mary Magdalene (who was on her way back from the tomb the 2nd time), and they all together alerted the rest of the disciples. (Mark 16:10, Luke 24:9&10, John 20:18)

9. Which disciples responded by running to the tomb?

After the initial group of women left the tomb, on their way to tell the disciples, apparently Peter & John arrived, having been alerted by Mary Magdalene. Mary Magdalene followed them there. (John 20: 3&4)

9. What did those disciples see on arriving at the tomb?

John reached the tomb first and looked in. Peter went in first and saw the burial strips, but no body. John finally went in, too, and realized Jesus was actually gone. Remember, they had heard from Mary Magdalene that someone had stolen the body of Jesus – they did not yet know He had raised from the dead. (John 20: 3-8)

10. Which disciple believed right away?

John did. But what he believed was that the body of Jesus was gone. He did not yet know He had been raised from the dead. (John 20:8&9)

11. Who stayed at the tomb, crying, after the disciples went away?

Mary Magdalene. Remember, at this time she still did not know Jesus was raised from the dead. She had seen the rolled-away stone, and run to tell Peter & John that someone had stolen the body of Jesus. She had not stuck around to see the angels and get their explanation. Now...as she stayed crying, she saw Jesus. Then she joined the other women on their way to tell the disciples. At that point all the women knew the whole story. None of the disciples did. (John 20:10-18)

12. Who did Jesus appear to after His resurrection?

First, Mary Magdalene (Mark 16:9)

The other women (Matt. 28:9&10)

Two on the road to Emmaus (Mark 16: 12&13, Luke 24:13-35)

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The eleven disciples Sunday night at dinner (Luke 24: 36-49, John 20:19-23)

Thomas (John 20:24-29)

Using anything you have just read, either from John 20 or from the other resurrection accounts, answer the question: "What difference would it have made if Jesus had not risen from the dead?"

Note:

- Even His followers did not at first believe...their incredulity turned to belief after they actually saw Him. If He had not risen from the dead, the disciples themselves would never have believed that He was truly God. His resurrection was final proof that He was God.
- If He was simply a great man He might have died to keep someone else from dying. But only God could raise again from the dead...to keep everyone from dying.
- The resurrection gives us hope that everything Jesus said was true. He said if we would believe in Him we would never die.

When Jack Brubaker realized all that Jesus had done for him, and that Jesus was without a doubt God Himself, and that He had raised from the dead and was alive today, Jack gave his heart and life to Jesus Christ. Two years later Jack died...but didn't. His body is in the grave, but Jack went to be with His Lord, and someday Jack's body will be resurrected, just like Jesus.

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Not the end...the Beginning
John 21 - Questions

1. (:1) Where did this happen?
2. (:2) Why weren't all the disciples still together?
3. (:3) Why would they want to fish?
4. (:4) Why didn't they realize it was Jesus?
5. (:5) If they didn't realize it was Jesus, why did they do what He said?
6. (:6) Why did Jesus care whether or not they caught fish? Wasn't fishing what they were supposed to leave in order to serve Jesus?
7. (:7) Why did Peter have to hear John say it first?
8. (:8&9) Who had prepared the fire, the fish & the bread? What did this teach the disciples?
9. (:10&11) Why did John remember the number of fish after so many years?
10. (:12-14) How did they recognize Jesus?
11. (:15-17) Why did Jesus ask Peter this three times...why seemingly hurt Peter's feelings?
12. (:18-19) How hard is it going to be to follow Jesus?
13. (:20-23) Why did Peter ask about John's future?
14. (:24-25) If the whole world would not have room for the books which could be written about all the things Jesus did on earth, then how many books could be written about all the things His followers have done since then?

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"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father." (John 14:12)

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Not the end...the Beginning
John 21 – Discussion Notes

1. (:1) Where did this happen?
In the Galilee area of Israel, near the Sea of Tiberias, or, the Sea of Galilee.
2. (:2) Why weren't all the disciples still together?
Initially, after His resurrection, they had stayed in Jerusalem. (Luke 24:50-53)
But then they had been told to go to Galilee to wait for Jesus there. (Mark 16:7)
3. (:3) Why would they want to fish?
They probably didn't know what else to do while they were waiting. They had been fishermen in the past. It was a way to eat, or to provide some income for the time being.
4. (:4) Why didn't they realize it was Jesus?
Maybe because He was so far away on the shore. Or, He could have had a different appearance after He had gone to be with the Father (Luke 24:50-53) (John 20:17)
5. (:5) If they didn't realize it was Jesus, why did they do what He said?
Perhaps they began to wonder? They may have remembered another time when this exact same thing happened (Luke 5:4-7)

Or they may have recognized not his appearance, but His voice, or His ways.
Have you ever recognized someone simply by their walk?
6. (:6) Why did Jesus care whether or not they caught fish? Wasn't fishing what they were supposed to leave in order to serve Jesus?
Maybe their success at fishing was meant to prove to them Who He was...or that they could trust Him to provide the basics of life in the days and years to come.
7. (:7) Why did Peter have to hear John say it first?
We don't live in a bubble. We need other believers – for our own growth.

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8. (:8&9) Who had prepared the fire, the fish & the bread? What did this teach the disciples?
He anticipated their needs. Their comfort needs. They could have prepared this themselves. They didn't deserve it. He gave it.
9. (:10&11) Why did John remember the number of fish after so many years?
The story was told again and again through the years...even though John's is the only Gospel account which goes into this detail.
10. (:12-14) How did they recognize Jesus?
Not so much with their physical eyes. They had memories of His ways. His words. And they "knew" Him. He was no stranger to them. You recognize the people you know. That's one very great benefit of spending time with Jesus. You begin to recognize Him, to know His voice. To discern His bidding out of the midst of a whole world full of other confusing voices.
11. (:15-17) Why did Jesus ask Peter this three times...why seemingly hurt Peter's feelings? Something needed to be learned. Pain sometimes accompanies learning. It wasn't so much that Jesus doubted Peter's love. It was that Jesus wanted Peter to see exactly what it was He was agreeing to....to count the cost.
12. (:18-19) How hard is it going to be to follow Jesus?
Impossible. "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him." (Job 13:15)
Peter was beginning now to be a changed person. No more flying off the handle (and cutting off a soldier's ear). And no more getting by with whatever lie you need to tell to survive (as in denying the LORD 3 times). Now it is time to lean on the power of God for everything. Impossible. So Peter...knowing how hard this will be....do you still want to follow me?
"Lord...to whom can we go? Though hast the words of life. And we believe and know that you are the Christ, the son of the living God." (John 6:68-69)
Same answer. Different Peter.
13. (:20-23) Why did Peter ask about John's future?
Could have been concern...or jealousy...or a desire to have company in his suffering. But no matter what his motivation for the question, the answer was the same....follow Me. Everyone else has their own path to walk. You do your part. They will do theirs.
14. (:24-25) If the whole world would not have room for the books which could be written about all the things Jesus did on earth, then how many books could be written about all the things His followers have done since then?

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Rhetorical question. But here's the point: We have no idea the millions of miracles and acts of faith which have transpired since the time of Jesus. The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ was not an end....it was a beginning. And it isn't over yet.

"I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father." (John 14:12)