

The Pilgrim Way Commentary on The Gospel of John



by Dr. John Cereghin
Pastor, Grace Baptist Church of
Smyrna, Delaware

The Pilgrim Way Commentary on John
April 2025

by Dr. John Cereghin
PO Box 66
Smyrna DE 19977
pastor@pilgrimway.org
website- www.pilgrimway.org

Apology for This Work

This commentary on John follows a long line of other works by divines of the past as they have sought to study and expound this gospel.

This work grew out of over 40 years of both preaching through John in three pastorates in Maryland, Delaware and North Carolina as well as teaching through the epistle as an instructor at Maryland Baptist Bible College in Elkton, Maryland. I needed my own notes and outlines as I taught and preached from this gospel, so this fuller commentary flows from those notes and outlines. Thus, the layout of this commentary is a practical one, written by a preacher to be preached from in the pulpit or to be taught in a Sunday School. It was not written from an isolated study of a theologian who had little contact with people or practical ministerial experience. There are many such commentaries on the market, and they tend to be somewhat dull and not very practical in their application. It is written as something of a theological reference manual to me, filled with quotes and outlines from various books in my library. The layout and format are designed to help me in my preaching, teaching and personal study of this book. I figured there may be others out there who may benefit from this work which is why I make it available, but the work is basically laid out in a selfish manner, for my benefit and assistance. That is why I call this as “reference commentary”. You, as the reader, hopefully can find some profit in this!

This commentary cannot be easily classified into any single theological system. I believe that no single theological system is an accurate presentation of Scriptural truth in and of itself. When Charles Spurgeon once wrote “There is no such thing as preaching Christ and Him crucified, unless we preach what nowadays is called Calvinism. It is a nickname to call it Calvinism; Calvinism is the gospel, and nothing else”, he displayed a most unfortunate theological hubris. Calvinism is a human, flawed, limited and uninspired theological system, as any other human theological system. There is some truth there, as there is in any theological system, but it ranks no better than other competing systems, such as Arminianism (which is nothing more than a modified version of Calvin’s teachings), dispensationalism, covenant theology, Lutheranism, Romanism, Orthodox theology, pre-wrath rapture, take your pick. All these systems are flawed as they are all the products of human attempts to understand and systematize Biblical presentations. They can all make contributions to our overall understanding of the truth but none may claim to be the only correct such presentation, at the expense of all others. Knowing the human impossibility for absolute neutrality and the human love for theological systems, I readily admit that I cannot be as dispassionate and uninfluenced by human teachings in these pages as I would like. No man can be. But I have made every attempt not to allow my own personal systems to influence my understanding of what the clear teachings of Scripture are.

I have freely consulted a wide variety of commentaries and sermons for insights and other views of various texts that I might have missed. As the old preacher once remarked “I milked a lot of cows, but I churned my own butter.” Direct quotes are attributed to their proper source to prevent that unpardonable sin of literary theft. But simply because I quoted a writer should not be viewed as an endorsement of all that he wrote or of his theological system. I selected the quote because I found it interesting and useful, not because I am in any degree of agreement

regarding the rest of his teachings. In this sense, I have tried to follow the form of Charles Spurgeon's Treasury of David, where he quoted a wide variety of other writers. I consider his commentary on the Psalms to be the greatest commentary ever in reference to its format.

This commentary is based on the text of our English Received Version, commonly referred to as the King James Version or the Authorized Version. I believe that this is the most preserved English translation available to us and that it is the superior translation in English. I can see no good reason to use or accept any of the modern versions, especially the current "flavor of the month" of the New Evangelicals and apostate fundamentalists, the corrupt and mis-named English Standard Version. When it comes to these modern, critical text versions, I reject them for a variety of reasons. One major reason is that they have not been proven on the field of battle. I have liver spots older than the English Standard Version, but I am expected to toss my English Received Text, over 400 years old, and take up this new translation, whose ink is still barely dry? How many battles has the ESV won? How many missionaries have done great exploits with an NIV? What revivals have been birth and nurtured with an NASV? We will stick with the translations and texts that our fathers have used, and that God has blessed. We are also favorably inclined to the Geneva Bible, Tyndale Bible, Bishops Bible, and other "cousins" of our English text. The Greek text used is the underlying text of our English Received Text and its 1769 revision, which is the text most widely in use today by God's remnant.

I have decided to do some textual studies, mainly comparing the King James readings with the inferior and corrupt English Standard Version and the Legacy Standard Version of John MacArthur, which is really nothing more than an unnecessary revision of the New American Standard. Version.

The presupposition of this commentary is that what the Bible says is so and that we will not change the text to suit our theological fancy. It says what it says and that is what we must accept, else we will be found unfaithful stewards of the Word of God, a judgment we fear. We will not amend our text but will take it as it is the best we can.

This commentary certainly is not perfect, nor is it the final presentation of my understanding and application of the book of John. A commentary over 40 years in the making can never truly be finished. As new insights are granted by the Holy Spirit and as my understanding of the epistle deepens, additional material will be added, and sections will have to be re-written. One is never truly "finished" with any theological book. As one deepens and grows in his relationship with the Lord, so does his theological understandings and that should be reflected in one's writings.

This book was also written as a theological legacy to my four children and four grandchildren. They will need to be mighty for God in their generation for their days will certainly be darker than the generation their father and grandfather grew up in. This book is an expression not only of the heart of a preacher in the early 21st century but also of a Christian father for his children, so they may more fully understand what their father and grandfather believed and preached during his ministry.

It is my sincere prayer that this unpretentious contribution to the body of Christian commentary literature will be a blessing to the remnant of God's saints in the earth as we approach the coming of our Lord.

Introduction to John

John has 21 chapters, 879 verses, 19,094 words in our English Bible.

Quest verses are 13:10; 15:3' 17:11,17.

Authorship

Clearly the author is the Apostle John, the Son of Zebedee. he author had to have been an eyewitness of the ministry of Jesus (1:14; 19:35; 21:24). He would have to be familiar with Israel before the destruction of the temple in AD 70. He was also familiar with the Jewish life. John the Apostle does fit the description.

Early traditions help to identify the author as John. Irenaeus, a disciple of John's disciple Polycarp, is of the earliest extant sources to associate John with the fourth Gospel. Like the other Gospels, the title "According to John" (KATA IWANNHN) is found in the earliest manuscripts.

Date and Location of Composition

John's Gospel is generally considered to be the last of the four Gospels to be written. Liberals have tried to date John in the second century, but that view has decreased in popularity after the discovery of two important manuscripts of John's Gospel that are dated in the early part of the second century (P46 and Egerton Pap. 2). The majority of students date the Gospel around A.D. 90.

The location of the writing of John's Gospel is not settled. The two possibilities that have gained the most acceptance are Syria and Asia Minor. Irenaeus wrote "Then John, the disciple of the Lord, who had even rested on his breast, himself also gave forth the Gospel, while he was living at Ephesus in Asia."

Purpose and Audience

John specifically states his purpose in John 20:31, The purpose of John's Gospel is to confirm and establish his readers in the faith and to establish their faith. John also writes to demonstrate that Jesus is indeed the Son of God, according to the claims He makes for Himself in this gospel.

Observations and Remarks

The Gospel of John is the fourth biography of the earthly life of Jesus Christ by a Christian biographer who was an eyewitness to His ministry from John the Baptist's ministry until His return to Glory. It centers more on selected events and teachings of Christ, unlike the other three gospels that serve as more of a traditional biography. John is much more selective.

Of the four Gospels, it is by far the most hated and rejected account of the life of Jesus Christ. The reason why is clear. No self-righteous, religious sinner, who is working his way to Heaven through his religious rituals and rites, is going to appreciate anyone saying that Christ is the only way to the true God and if you don't believe on Him you will wind up in Hell. Such teachings are considered to be highly insulting and insensitive. In the Gospel of John, Jesus claims to be "THE Son of God" (John 9:35) and this is what offends Liberals, Jews, Moslems, Hindus, Evolutionists and New Age Tree-Huggers. Other offending verses in John would include "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of

the Father, he hath declared him" (John 1:18). "Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he" (John 4:26). "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am" (John 8:58). "I and my Father are one" (John 10:30). "Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?" (John 14:9)."

John is the most evangelistic book in the Bible as it was written for the specific purpose for creating faith in Christ in the reader (John 20:31).

Each of the Four Gospels present Christ differently:
Matthew as the Son of God, the Gospel for the Jew
Mark as the Servant, the Gospel for the Roman
Luke as the Son of Man, the Gospel for the Greek
John as the Son of God, the Gospel for all

There is no genealogy in either Mark or John. As Mark presents Christ as the Servant, no one would care about the family of a servant. John attempts no genealogy as Christ existed before His incarnation. The Son of God would have no human genealogy.

"This fourth Gospel is a complete necessity. Have we not felt this on coming to the end of the first three? In them we have companied with Jesus, learning what He said, what He did, what He felt. We have marveled at those seven peak-events, His supernatural birth, baptism, temptation, transfiguration, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension. We have been impelled to blend our eager hearts with Peter's avowal: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Yet, even so, we have learned what He was rather than who He was. His words and works and ways have compelled identification of Him as somehow God-Man, but that very confession lands us at the brink of utter mystery. We know now what He is: somehow God as well as Man; but is there, then, duality or plurality in God? Now that we know what Jesus is, oh, that someone would interpret who He is!

"That is just where John's Gospel completes the others. The earlier three are a presentation of Jesus; this fourth is an interpretation. The other three show us Jesus outwardly; this fourth interprets Him inwardly. The other three emphasize the human aspects; this fourth unveils the Divine. The other three correspond respectively with the lion and the ox and the man in Ezekiel's vision; this fourth parallels with the eagle. The other three concern themselves mainly with our Lord's public discourses; this fourth gives larger place to His private conversations, His verbal conflicts with the Jews, and His closer teachings in seclusion to His inner disciples. The other three are mainly occupied with His Galilean ministry; this fourth is almost wholly devoted to His Judæan ministry. The other three are purely factual; John is also doctrinal. The other three begin with a human genealogy and a fulfillment of Jewish prophecy; John begins with a direct Divine revelation of that which was altogether pre-mundane and eternal. All these features accord with John's interpretative purpose.

"It is this interpretative emphasis on the inward and Divine which explains the different "feel" about our Gospel according to John. It also creates an interesting problem, for at certain points it is not easy to decide where reporting gives place to John's own comments or explainings. Take, for instance, that best-known text of the Bible, John iii. 16. Did Jesus Himself speak the immortal words to Nicodemus? or has John's reporting of Jesus now given

place to his own reflective commenting? In the final paragraph of that same chapter, does the last testimony of the Baptist finish at verse 30 or 31 or 32, or run right to verse 36? Incidentally, John's own recurrent comments and explainings are a rewarding study all in themselves."¹

John builds his Gospel around seven public miracles, or "signs" that confirm the deity of Christ:

1. Turning the water into wine at the wedding in Cana of Galilee- John 2:9, showing His power over nature.
2. Healing the nobleman's son- John 4:46-54, showing His power over distance.
3. Healing the crippled man at the pool of Bethesda- John 5:2-9, showing His power over time.
4. Feeding the five thousand- John 6:1-14, showing His power over quantity.
5. Jesus' walking on the Sea of Galilee- John 6:16-21, showing His power over natural laws. '
6. Healing the man blind from birth- John 9:1-7, showing His power over helplessness.
7. Raising Lazarus from the dead- John 11:1-44, showing His power over death."²

In addition to these seven performed in public, there is an eighth sign performed only for His disciples after the resurrection—the miraculous catch of fish in John 21:1-14.

"The outstanding thing about John's Gospel is that the writer is familiar with all of Paul's epistles, which were completed at least ten years before John began to write. This means that John has access to the New Testament doctrines of grace, eternal security, and the Body of Christ, with which Matthew and Mark weren't familiar and of which Luke only had a basic knowledge. You will find Pauline theology in John 1:12,13; 3:1-6,36; 5:24; 8:3-11; 10:28,29; 14:16."³

"In connection with the spiritual arithmetic of the Bible we have been deeply impressed with the constantly recurring seven in the Gospel of John, and it is surely not without significance that there are twenty-one chapters or 3×7 , in it. It is true that the chapter divisions are of human origin, and that man does nothing perfectly, yet we believe that in the providence of Him who has "magnified his word above all his name" (Ps. 138:1, 2), He has not only superintended the placing of the different books in the Canon of Scripture, but has also guided, or at least overruled, many or most of its chapter divisions. Obviously is this so, we are fully assured, in connection with the Gospels.

Matthew has twenty-eight chapters, 7×4 . Now, four is the number of the earth and seven of perfection. How appropriate that the Gospel which most directly concerns God's earthly people and the earthly kingdom of Christ, should be thus divided; for no perfection on earth will be witnessed until the Son of Man returns and sets up His throne upon it. Mark has sixteen chapters, 2×8 . Two is the number of witnesses and eight of a new beginning. Most suitably are those numbers here, for in this second Gospel Christ is portrayed as the faithful and true Witness, the perfect Servant of God, laying the foundations of the new creation. Luke has twenty-four chapters, 6×4 , or 2×12 . Whichever way we divide the twenty-four, the result is in

¹ J. Sidlow Baxter, *Explore the Book*, pages 1366-1367.

² H. T. Spence, *The Canon of Scripture*, page 204.

³ Peter Ruckman, *Ruckman Reference Bible*, page 1381.

striking accord with the subject of this third Gospel. In Luke Christ is presented as the Son of man, the last Adam. Thus 6x4 would speak of man connected with the earth; or, 12x2 would tell of that perfect government which awaits the return to this earth of the "second Man" (1 Cor.15:47). John has twenty-one chapters, 7x3. How striking this is! For seven speaks of perfection and three is the number of Deity. Thus, the very number of chapters in this fourth Gospel intimates that here we have revealed the perfections of God! These are what have occupied us as we have gone through it chapter by chapter."⁴

Christ identifies Himself with seven "I AM" statements:

1. "The Bread of Life"- 6:35, 41, 48, 51
2. "The Light of the World"- 8:12; 9:5
3. "The Door"- 10:7, 9
4. "The Good Shepherd"- 10:11,14
5. "The Resurrection and the Life"- 11:25
6. "The Way, the Truth, and the Life" -14:6)
7. "The Vine"- 15:1, 5.

Names and Titles of Christ

1. Word 1:1,14
2. Creator 1:3,10
3. True Light 1:7-9
4. Only Begotten of the Father 1:14
5. Jesus Christ 1:17; 17:3
6. Only begotten Son 1:18; 3:16,18
7. Prophet 1:21; 9:17
8. Lamb of God 1:29,36
9. Son of God 1:34; 20:31
10. Rabbi 1:38; 20:16
11. Messiah 1:41; 4:25,26
12. Jesus of Nazareth 1:45; 19:19
13. King of Israel 1:49; 12:13,15
14. Son of Man 1:51; 3:14
15. His Son 3:17
16. The Gift of God 4:10
17. Christ 4:25; 11:27
18. Savior of the World 4:42
19. Bread of God 6:33
20. Bread of Life 6:35,48
21. Living Bread 6:51
22. Son of the Living God 6:69
23. Light of the World 8:12; 9:5
24. I AM 8:58
25. Jesus 9:11
26. The Door 10:7,9

⁴ A. W. Pink, *Exposition of the Gospel of John*.

27. The Good Shepherd 10:11,14
28. Resurrection and the Life 11:25
29. Master and Lord 13:13; 20:28
30. The Way, The Truth, The Life 14:6
31. The True Vine 15:1,5
32. The Overcomer 16:33
33. Our Keeper 17:12
34. King of the Jews 18:33-39; 19:19
35. The Man 19:5
36. The risen Lord 20:2-18
37. God 20:28

Names and Titles for God

1. Father 1:18
2. Spirit 4:24
3. Holy Father 17:11
4. Righteous Father 17:25

Names and Titles for the Holy Spirit

1. The Spirit 1:32; 3:5,6
2. Holy Ghost 1:33; 14:26
3. Comforter 14:16; 16:7
4. Spirit of Truth 14:17; 15:26

Miracles Only Recorded by John

1. Turning water into wine 2:1-11
2. Healing of the nobleman's son 4:46-54
3. Healing the impotent man at Bethesda 5:1-9
4. Healing of the blind man 9:1-7
5. Raising of Lazarus 11:1-44
6. Draught of fish 21:3-6

Old Testament Prophecies Fulfilled in John

1. The zeal of thine house- 2:17 with Psalm 69:9
2. Bread from heaven- 6:31 with Psalm 78:24
3. Taught of God- 6:45 with Isaiah 54:13
4. "Ye are gods"- 10:34 with Psalm 82:6
5. Who hath believed our report? 12:38 with Isaiah 53:1
6. He hath blinded their eyes- 12:40 with Isaiah 6:9,10
7. He that eateth bread with Me- 13:18 with Psalm 41:9
8. They hated Me without a cause- 15:25 with Psalm 35:19; 69:4

Ground Plan of John's Gospel⁵

Prologue (i. 1-18). "The Word became flesh."

⁵ From J. Sidlow Baxter, *Explore the Book*, page 1385.

1. PUBLIC MINISTRY OF JESUS TO THE JEWS (i. 19-xii.).

First "signs," witness and contacts (i. 19-iv.).

Further "signs," witness and conflicts (v.-x.).

Final "sign," witness and cleavage (xi.-xii.).

2. PRIVATE MINISTRY OF JESUS TO "HIS OWN" (xiii.-xvii.). Presage of His own departure (xiii.-xiv. 15).

Promise of the coming Spirit (xiv. 16-xvi.).

Prayer for them to God the Father (xvii.).

3. PASCHAL CLIMAX: TRAGEDY AND TRIUMPH (xviii.-xx.). Apprehension and prosecution (xviii.-xix. 15).

Crucifixion and entombment (xix. 16-42).

Resurrection and reappearance (xx. 1-31).

Epilogue (xxi.): "Till I come."

Outline of John, from *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption* by W. Graham Scroggie, volume 2, page 110:

Prologue 1:1-18

Revelation of the Word and its inevitable consequences of Faith and Unbelief 1:19-4:54

First manifestations of the Word and the beginnings of Faith and Unbelief 5-12

Development of Unbelief in Israel 13-17

Development of Faith in the disciples 18,19

Consummation of Unbelief in Israel 20

Consummation of Faith in the disciples, Epilogue 21

Manifestation of the Word for the correction of Unbelief and confirmation of Faith

The outline of the Gospel of John can be given in a variety of ways in the light of its theme and subthemes. But the person and glory of Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God are seen in the writing.

1. The pre-existent glory of Jesus with the Father (1:1, 2).

2. His manifest glory in creation, in the Old Testament, and in His incarnation (1:3-14).

3. His glory as witnessed by His friends and early followers (1:15-4:54).

4. His glory manifested in conflict with the unbelief and opposition of His enemies (5:1-12:50).

5. His glory manifested in His closing messages to His own disciples (13:1-17:26).

6. His glory manifested in His trial and crucifixion (chapters 18 and 19).

7. His resurrection glory (chapters 20 and 21).⁶

Throughout the entire Gospel we have a succession of symbols, most of them drawn from the Old Testament.

1. The Tabernacle becomes the type of the incarnate Christ. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt [tabernacled] among us."

2. The lamb of the Passover becomes the figure of "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (1:29).

3. The descending dove represents the Holy Spirit (1:32).

⁶ H. T. Spence, *The Canon of Scripture*, page 206.

4. The ladder of Jacob (Gen. 28:12) comes forth in full Messianic meaning in the words of Jesus to Nathanael (1:51).
5. The marriage scene at Cana points forward to the whole purpose of Christ's coming and suggests the glorious figure which John plainly brings out (3:29) as the anticipation of the marriage of the Lamb.
6. The temple becomes the type of Christ's body and of His people (2:19).
7. The water of Sychar's well suggests the fountain of salvation (4:14).
8. The harvest fields of Samaria call to spiritual work and its glorious recompense (4:35-38).
9. The feeding of the five thousand (6:5-13) suggests the ancient symbol of manna, and both lead on to the higher teaching of Him as our Living Bread (6:35).
10. The waters of Siloam, as they are poured out upon the altar, suggest the smitten Rock of Horeb, and both are applied by the Lord to the living water which they that believe in Him shall receive, as Christ is that belly from which rivers of living water flow (7:37, 38).
11. The temple lamps recall the pillar of cloud and fire (Exod. 13:22) and are used to proclaim the glory of Jesus as the true light of the world (John 8:12).
12. The ancient figure of the shepherd is adopted by the Lord and applied to Himself and His flock (10:11).
13. The kernel of wheat becomes the parable of death and resurrection in relationship to Jesus and His disciples (12:24-26).
14. The washing of the disciples' feet (13:4, 5) may be an allusion to the ancient laver, but, at least, it becomes a symbol of spiritual cleansing.
15. The golden vine carved on the temple gate or perhaps the vineyards around Jerusalem set forth the deep spiritual teachings of the Christ-life (chap. 15).
16. The familiar Old Testament figure of a travailing woman illustrates the birth pains of the coming resurrection of Christ (16:21).
17. And the figure of the shepherd is repeated in the closing chapter and transferred from the chief Shepherd to the apostolic ministry, as the Master commits the care of His little flock to His disciples (21:15-17)."⁷

The "verily verily" verses in John- 1:51; 3:3,5,11; 5:19,24,25; 6:32,47,53; 8:51; 10:1,7; 13:16,20,21,28; 14:12; 16:20,23; 21:18

The deity of Christ is testified to by:

1. The Father- 5:34,2,37; 8:18
2. The Son- 8:14; 18:37
3. The Holy Spirit- 15:26; 16:13-15
4. The Scriptures- 1:45; 5:34-46
5. Christ's works- 5:17,36; 10:25; 14:11; 15:24
6. John the Baptist- 1:7; 5:32-35
7. Disciples- 15:27; 19:35; 21:24

⁷ H. T. Spence, *The Canon of Scripture*, pages 206-207.

The Eight Signs in John

1. Marriage at Cana- 2:1-11
2. Ruler's son 4:46-50
3. Impotent man- 5:1-17
4. Feeding of the 5000- 6:11-14
5. Walking on the sea- 6:15-21
6. Blind man- 9:1-41
7. Raising of Lazarus- 11:1-44
8. Draught of fishes- 21:1-14

Twenty-three times in all we find our Lord's meaningful "I AM" (ego eimi) in the Greek text of this Gospel (4:26; 6:20, 35, 41, 48, 51; 8:12, 18, 24, 28, 58; 10:7, 9, 11, 14; 11:25; 13:19; 14:6; 15:1, 5; 18:5, 6, 8). In several of these He joins His "I AM" with seven tremendous metaphors which are expressive of His saving relationship toward the world.

"I AM the Bread of life" (6:35, 41, 48, 51).

"I AM the Light of the world (8:12).

"I AM the Door of the sheep" (10:7, 9).

"I AM the Good Shepherd" (10:11, 14).

"I AM the Resurrection and the Life" (11:25).

"I AM the Way, the Truth, the Life" (14:6).

"I AM the true Vine" (15:1, 5)."⁸

⁸ H. T. Spence, *The Canon of Scripture*, page 207.

John Chapter 1

“One of the Platonic philosophers, who considered all Christian writers to be but barbarians, nevertheless said of the first chapter of John, “This barbarian hath comprised more stupendous stuff in three lines, than we have done in all our voluminous discourses.” And we will to this day glory in the power of the Holy Spirit, that an unlearned and ignorant man like John, the son of Zebedee the fisherman, should be enabled to write a chapter which excels not only the highest flight of eloquence, but the greatest divines of philosophy.”⁹

1. The Prologue 1:1-5

1:1^a In the beginning^b was the Word,^{cde} and the Worde was^f with God,^g and the Word was God.^{hijklmnopq}

1a Truths seen in verses 1-5:

1. Jesus is eternal. He existed before Genesis 1, as He says also in John 8:58, when He says He was before Abraham.
 - A. Christ existed before the Creation of Genesis 1, thus He is independent of His creation.
 - B. There is no creation narrative as there is in Genesis 1. Jesus was not created but is eternal as God.
2. Jesus the Son is a distinct person from God the Father.
 - A. The Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Father. The United Pentecostals and other “Oneness” groups could never figure that out.
3. Jesus is God
 - A. This is one of the clearest truths ever expressed in Scripture, backed up by countless verses, such as John 8:58 or the “I AM” statements in John.
 - B. He is equal to the Father in power and authority, although He voluntarily subordinated Himself to the Father while on earth.
 - i. John 10:30 **“I and my Father are one”.**
 - ii. Philippians 2:5-8 **“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”**
4. Jesus is Creator and is the Source of all Life- John 1:3,4.
5. Christ is called the “Word”.
 - A. Compare Hebrews 1:1,2, as Christ is the means that the Father speaks to Man, both verbally and in written form.
 - i. Hebrews 1:1,2 **“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;”**
6. The biography of Jesus does not begin at His birth, as all human biographies do, but in eternity past. Jesus is unique in this regard.

⁹ Charles Spurgeon, “The Glory of Christ Beheld” in *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 7, sermon 414.

1b John starts in a similar manner as does Genesis. But this “beginning” is not the same “beginning” of Genesis 1:1 as John goes further back, as far back as we can imagine and then even further, into the infinite era of eternity past. John launches directly into his presentation of Jesus without any explanation or exposition, as if he expected his readers to fully understand and accept how he is starting his gospel. John’s introduction is unique as none of the other gospels start this way. John knew about the beginning as well as the ending (Revelation 22).

1c Why is Jesus called “the Word”? Jesus, as the Spoken Expression of the Godhead. God the Father communicates to man through the Word. John is writing and he is writing a book. Books contain WORDS. Men communicate with words. God communicates to man through words. The Father thus communicates with man through words. The Authorized Version capitalizes the “W” in “Word”, showing that this a clear declaration of deity.

1d “The Greek word used by John is ‘logos’. It was a word familiar to Greek philosophers and a word adopted for his own purposes by the Jewish philosopher Plato. To the Greeks, the word had reference to the abstract conception that lies behind everything concrete- to the ideal, to what we could perhaps call ‘wisdom’. But John did not get his views of Jesus from Greek philosophy or from the speculations of Plato. John borrowed the Greek word but he used it in a new sense, in a more Hebrew sense. The Hebrews left the Greeks far behind when it came to the eternal verities lying behind the world of time and sense. The Hebrew would argue from the thought to the thinker, from ‘wisdom’ to ‘God’. The Greeks did not go that far.”¹⁰

Let us not reduce the concept of “Logos” to a mere expression of Greek philosophy. It has a higher meaning in that “Logos” is the idea that God would reveal Himself through Christ and would do so exclusively. Hebrews 1:1-3 tells us that in these last, the Father will speak, or reveal His thoughts and will, through the Son. This is what Christ is, the agency by which the Father reveals Himself to man. Thus, to know the Father, you must come through the Father (Matthew 11:27; John 6:46, 14:6; 1 John 2:23). It is impossible to know the Father unless you first go through the Son.

1e The Geneva Bible has “that Word”.

1f The use of the imperfect tense shows this action is not completed. Jesus was, is and still is. His existence shall never terminate or be finished, as He will never die but is eternal. The universe was created in time, but the Word is from all eternity.

1g Not “made a God” but was God already. In a oneness and in a level of fellowship that we cannot comprehend or understand. It is not just an organic or mechanical union but something far deeper and unique. This oneness was only broken for a few hours, while Christ was on the cross and the Father turned his face from the Son. That’s when Jesus cried out “My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” Christ became sin on the cross during those final hours, as He bore the sin of the world in His body. When that happened, the Father had to turn His face from the Son as the Father is too holy to gaze upon or fellowship with sin. In all the countless years of eternity, that was the only break in this divine fellowship between the Father and the Son.

This union the Father and Son had before the Incarnation was so deep and strong that we really cannot conceive it, or what was involved for the union to have been severed when Christ came into the world. They both were still in fellowship with each other even during Christ’s time on earth (except for those hours on the cross when the Father had to turn away) but even that level of fellowship was not of the same strength or type that they must have enjoyed before Christ came to earth.

¹⁰ John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, page 16.

1h Jesus has always been God, even in eternity past, even before His incarnation. Jesus had His full deity "in the beginning" and He gained His humanity at His incarnation. His eternal nature is seen here, having existed from eternity past. John does not hesitate to call Jesus "God" or to equate Jesus with the Father.

1i The Jehovah Witness abortion of this phrase in their grossly perverted "New World Translation" is well-known, "and the Word was a god." This reading cannot be supported by any Greek text on the planet and even the worst English critical text translation would never render the verse like this. It is not a translation but a doctrinal statement in the guise of a translation, pure and simple. Even the rankest of liberal translation properly translate this.

1j The Trinity is assumed here, as we have "God" (the Father) and the Word (Jesus), Who is called "God" in John 1:2. "God" and the "Word" are shown to be separate and distinct personalities within the Godhead. Of course, they are also joined by the Holy Spirit.

1k Notice that John simply states these facts. He does not attempt to prove them. He offers no arguments and condescends to no proofs.

1l "There is no variation here in the manuscripts, and critics have observed that the Greek will bear no other construction than what is expressed in our translation- that the Word was God."¹¹

1m The modern version of the Sabellianism heresy would be found in the United Pentecostal and Unitarian movements which refuse to make any distinctions in the Godhead and thus, deny the trinity. This also overthrows the Arian heresy that teaches that Jesus was inferior to the Father, that Jesus was not quite God but was something like a "demigod".

1n "In these first thirteen verses of John 1 we have set forth: —

1. The Relation of Christ to Time—"In the beginning," therefore, Eternal: John 1:1.
2. The Relation of Christ to the Godhead—"With God," therefore, One of the Holy Trinity: John 1:1.
3. The Relation of Christ to the Holy Trinity—"God was the Word"—the Revealer: John 1:1.
4. The Relation of Christ to the Universe—"All things were made by him"—the Creator: John 1:3.
5. The Relation of Christ to Men—Their "Light": John 1:4, 5.
6. The Relation of John the Baptist to Christ—"Witness" of His Deity: John 1:6-9.
7. The Reception which Christ met here: John 1:10-13.
 - (a) "The world knew him not": John 1:10.
 - (b) "His own (Israel) received him not": John 1:11.
 - (c) A company born of God "received him": John 1:12, 13."¹²

1o Christ is also separate and distinct from the Father, as they are separate personalities in the Godhead.

1p John 1:1 refutes

1. Atheism- there is a God
2. Polytheism- there is only one God

¹¹ Albert Barnes, *Barnes' Notes on John*.

¹² A. W. Pink, *Exposition of the Gospel of John*.

3. Evolution- planned, designed creation by God
4. Pantheism- God is separate from His creation
5. Materialism- all things had a beginning
6. Fatalism- there was a plan to the creation

1q There are nine titles given to Christ in John 1:1

1. The Word- John 1:1
2. The Life- John 1:4
3. The True Light- John 1:9
4. The Lamb of God- John 1:29
5. Rabbi/Master- John 1:38
6. Messiah/The Christ- John 1:41
7. The Son of God- John 1:49
8. The King of Israel- John 1:49
9. The Son of Man- John 1:51

1:2 The same^{ab} was in the beginning with God.^c

2a The Word, Jesus, as in John 1:1. Not only was Jesus God, but He was also with the Father in the Beginning. Christ was co-eternal and co-equal with the Father.

AV	ESV	LSV
2 The same was in the beginning with God.	2 He was in the beginning with God.	2 He was in the beginning with God.

2b The ESV and LSV have “He was in the beginning...” The Authorized Version does not use the personal pronoun but it is clear that the same one in John 1:1 is being referred to in John 1:2.

2c Showing the eternality of Christ, something repeated in Micah 5:2. This also shows that Jesus was not created but has existed from the beginning with God the Father.

1:3 All things were made by^a him^{bc} and without him was not any thing made that was made.^d

AV	ESV	LSV
3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.	3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.	3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

3a The ESV and LSV have “through” Him. This reduces the creative role of Christ, making Him an agent of the creation instead of the cause of the creation.

3b Christ as Creator, who is the Creator of everything in this physical universe. In Genesis 1, God the Father “spoke” the universe into existence and words are used in speaking, so the Word was the active force in the creation. God made the worlds by the Word.

Creationism, as recorded in Genesis, is clearly supported here. Any concept of evolution, “theistic evolution” or “scientific” naturalism is totally overthrown.

3c The middle voice indicates that all things were made by Christ for Himself. He made all things for His own self, His own plans, His own pleasure.

3d Jesus had no helper or aide in this creation. He did it all, alone, by His own divine power. He also was not part of His creation but was separate from it and is greater than that which He created. This will overthrow and pantheism is trying to link God to His creation. This is also anti-materialism as it shows, as in Genesis 1:1, that matter is not eternal but had a beginning and was created.

This teaching that Jesus created all things goes contrary to the Gnostic teaching of the time that denied that God could create a material world with evil in it. Christ did create the world perfect and beautiful. It was not God who introduced sin into that creation. Christ is responsible for the existence of the world but not for the corruption of it through sin. But Christ will clean up the mess Satan made in his introduction of sin into the creation in Revelation 20.

AV	ESV	LSV
3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.	3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.	3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

The LSV reading is very clunky.

1:4 In him was life;^a and the life was the light of men.^b

4a Christ as the Source and Giver of all life, both earthly and heavenly. The exposition of this “life” is one of the main themes of John’s writings, as seen in John 10:10. God is the Source of all life, not blind, random chance of evolution. This can be said of no one else.

4b The light of God and the truth of that light has been manifested to man in such a way that no man can claim the excuse of ignorance (Romans 1:20). It’s very hard to miss light, especially when one is in darkness!

AV	ESV	LSV
4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.	4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men.	4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.

The LSV capitalizes “light” where the Authorized Version and the ESV do not.

1:5 And the light^a shineth in darkness;^b and the darkness comprehended^{c-d} it not.

5a Christ and the Light of Truth that He represents. This is the manifestation of Christ as the Light to His creation in various and divers ways- through nature, through miracles, through providence, through the declaration of the prophets and lastly, through the incarnation of Christ.

5b In this dark world of sin and rebellion, controlled by Satan.

5c This would have the idea of the darkness of sin and Satan (brought about to the human race through the fall of Adam) could not grasp or comprehend or overcome the shining of the Light of Divine Truth in Christ. The darkness tries but light always dispels darkness as truth always dispels error and holiness

always dispels sin.

Darkness is always trying to overcome Light, to interfere with it, to block it, or to counterfeit it. Barring that, the darkness will try to co-opt the light, to make it its own, to hijack it to influence those who are following the light to follow the darkness instead. This is how Satan attacks the truth. He can openly attack it and that will work with some men, like self-professed atheists. But the more intelligent of men will not fall for such a frontal attack. Satan then changes tactics and offers a counterfeit light to deceive. He becomes very religious and uses spiritual terminology. Satan establishes counterfeit church, ministers, music and Bibles, all masquerading as being of the light while they are really rooted in darkness. But many take the bait as Satan will make the counterfeit very attractive and will present it as better and easier to accept than that old fashioned and stodgy Christianity that the old-timers and traditionalists offer.

5d **“comprehended”** “From about 1340 A.D., from the Latin “comprehendere”, “com= together or with” and “prehendere = to catch or suddenly take hold of”. “Comprehend” means “the action of suddenly grasping with the mind”. Also used in Ephesians 3:18.”¹³

AV	ESV	LSV
5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.	5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.	5 And the Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overtake it.

“comprehended” The ESV uses “overcome” and the LSV uses “overtake”.

2. The Ministry of John the Baptist 1:6-9

1:6 There was a man^{abc} sent from God,^d whose name was John.^{ef}

6a We now shift abruptly from the Word to a man.

6b God always sends a man when He needs a job done, never a committee. John was one of the toughest and “manliest” men ever- and he was a believer and a follower of Jesus.

6c “Committees do not build churches. Conferences do not produce revivals. Revision committees simply sell books after selling themselves. The trouble in any country is always connected with the loss of godly men (Psa. 12:1). Jeremiah couldn’t find one (Jer. 5:1), and neither could Ezekiel (Ezek. 22:30), so Israel and Judah went into captivity. It was a MAN who started their return (2 Chron. 36:23). It was a man who got them rebuilding the walls (Neh. 2,3). It was a MAN who got the temple rebuilt (Ezra 3:2), and it was two MEN who kept the work going till it was rebuilt (Ezra 5:1)...God sent “a MAN” to get Israel out of Egypt. He sent a MAN before them to sustain them till they got into the Promised Land (Gen. 41–48). The “Apostle to the Gentiles” was a “MAN”; not a synod, presbytery, conference, council, convention, fellowship, coalition, congress, or a committee.”¹⁴

6d John was definitely a prophet.

6e This is John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, sent by God to prepare the Nation of Israel for their Messiah. This would be a fulfillment of Malachi 3:1 **“Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall**

¹³ Steven J. White, *White’s Dictionary of the King James Language*, volume 1, pages 256-257.

¹⁴ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, page 11.

prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts."

"It is a strange fact that in the Fourth Gospel every reference to John the Baptist is a reference of depreciation. There is an explanation of that. John was a prophetic voice; for four hundred years the voice of prophecy had been silent, and in John it spoke again. It seems that certain people were so fascinated by John that they gave him a higher place than he ought to have had. There are, in fact, indications that there was actually a sect who put John the Baptist in the highest place. We find an echo of them in Ac.19:3-4. In Ephesus Paul came upon certain people who knew nothing but the baptism of John. It was not that the Fourth Gospel wished to criticize John or that it under-rated his importance. It was simply that John knew that there were certain people who gave John the Baptist a place that encroached upon the place of Jesus himself.

"So all through the Fourth Gospel John is careful to point out that the place of John the Baptist in the scheme of things was high, but that nonetheless it was still subordinate to the place of Jesus Christ. Here he is careful to say that John was not that light, but only a witness to the light (Jn. 1:8). He shows us John denying that he was the Christ, or even that he was the great prophet whom Moses had promised (Jn. 1:20)."¹⁵

There are always men who seek to elevate other men beyond measure. We wonder about Calvinists with John Calvin or Lutherans with Martin Luther. Even among certain wings of Baptists, men like Charles Spurgeon or Jack Hyles or John R. Rice have been exalted out of measure. Now it is true that John was the greatest prophet of them all (that was the Lord's own testimony in Matthew 11:11) but even John cannot be elevated to the same level of Christ. John himself understood that. It may be some of his followers did not (as in Acts 19).

6f John is never called "the Baptist" in this gospel as he is in Matthew, Mark and Luke.

AV	ESV	LSV
6 There was a man sent from God, whose name <i>was</i> John.	6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.	6 There was a man having been sent from God, whose name was John.

The LSV is very clunky with its reading. The Authorized Version and ESV are better. The LSV has to make a rather simple reading more difficult.

1:7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light,^{abcdef} that all men through him might believe.^{gh}

7a John was to bear witness of Christ, to point all men to Him. A witness is simply someone who tells what he knows. He then lets the attorney (or in a spiritual sense, the Holy Spirit) do the actual convincing of the sinner.

7b This "Light" is obviously Christ. He is also called the Sun of Righteousness in Malachi 4:2.

7c See 1 John 1:5 **"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."**

7d Light has a few interesting properties and how they can relate to Christ:

¹⁵ William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible, The Gospel of John*, Volume 1, pages 49-50..

1. It is constant in speed in a vacuum at over 186,000 miles a second.
 - A. Jesus is also constant as He "changes not". This means that His nature does not change, the essence of what He is does not change.
 - i. Malachi 3:6 **"For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."**
 - ii. Hebrews 13:8 **"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."**
 - B. The speed of light is a fixed, universal constant in physics. The word of God is the fixed, universal constant in matters of truth, religion and morality (John 5:30; 12:48, etc.)
 - C. Christ is the standard of all truth- John 14:6 He is the truth.
2. Light cannot be defiled. It may pass through mud or diamonds, yet it remains pure. But it does reveal the corruption and defilement of the materials that it does pass through.
 - A. Christ is pure, holy, harmless, separate from sinners.
 - i. Hebrews 7:26 **"For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;"**
3. Light cannot be defined. Scientists today still argue whether light is a wave or made up of particles. Christ cannot be defined or understood by human reasoning, but only by divine revelation.
 - A. Christ, as God, can only be understood by faith, not by human reason.
4. Life needs light. Without light, life as we know it on earth would cease. There can be no true life with Christ and the Light of Truth He reveals (John 1:5-9; 3:19; 8:12).
 - A. Christ came to give us life and that more abundantly- John 10:10
5. We can only see a small spectrum of light. Much of the spectrum of light is invisible to us, like ultraviolet and infrared. Yet these frequencies of light exist even if we can't see them. Light is likened to truth. Simply because we "may not see it that way" doesn't mean that truth does not exist. Only a fool would deny that which he cannot see.
 - A. There is an enormous spectrum of truth we cannot see, perceive or understand.
 - B. There is much we do not and cannot understand about Christ, His incarnation, His hypostatic union (how He is both God and man), His virgin birth...
6. Light can be jammed or interfered with or even blocked.
 - A. Truth can also be treated in the same way. It can be interfered with and "jammed up" by the interference of error. "Jamming" was often done by communist governments to keep Western broadcasts away from their people by broadcasting noise on the same frequency as the Western broadcast, making it difficult and unpleasant to listen to.
 - B. Many false prophets and systems try to corrupt the truth.
 - i. 2 Corinthians 2:17 **"For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ."**
7. Light provides illumination, both physically and spiritually
 - A. Psalm 119:105 **"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."**
8. Light moves so quickly that we cannot perceive its actions or movements.
 - A. I saw a YouTube video of the world's fastest camera that could shoot over a billion frames a second. It was fast enough to actually see the progress of light through a container of liquid. But otherwise, light moves so quickly that we cannot see it do its work. The movements of God are the same way. We cannot perceive them, track them or understand them but we can certainly see the results.

7e **"God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."** Here is a positive statement followed by a corresponding negative one. This is spoken of in an absolute sense, not in a descriptive sense of God. A rule of Greek grammar is that the absence of the definite article shows quality, nature and essence and there is no definite article before "phôs". God is not the light or a light or made of light, but He is light. John deals with this thought more at length in John 1:5,7-9. Light here is a symbol for the truth,

holiness, glory, purity and of godliness. God is all these in His essence and nature. Light is the only visible manifestation of God. The darkness is everything that is the opposite of this- sin, unholiness, etc. Darkness is a horrifying thing and breeds fear. God is absolutely perfect and flawless in all His attributes. There is none of this darkness in the Father, as He is wholly and entirely pure and holy. This is why we believe that Jesus, as a man in His earthly ministry, could not have sinned, because there was no darkness in Him. Christ, during the days of His flesh, was both God and man, but His human nature was an unfallen, sinless nature. He could not have sinned. It is not a question of that He simply chose not to sin, but Jesus could not have sinned because He was God and because there is no darkness at all in Him. John often expresses truth in this manner, presenting it in both a positive and then a negative manner. This mode of speaking is commonly used by John, to amplify what he has affirmed by a contrary negation.

7f Light also has moral qualities, as in Psalm 119:130 **“The entrance of thy words giveth light”**. There are those who are in darkness, both morally and spiritually who reject the words and witness of God.

7g That all men would believe in Christ, not in John the Baptist. He pointed men to Christ, not to himself.

7h **“through him”** Through who? John’s witness and ministry?

AV	ESV	LSV
7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light , that all <i>men</i> through him might believe.	7 He came as a witness, to bear witness about the light, that all might believe through him.	7 He came as a witness, to bear witness about the Light, so that all might believe through him.

“Light” This time, the Authorized Version and the LSV capitalize the word but the ESV does not.

1:8 He^a was not that Light,^{b-c} but was sent to bear witnessd of that Light.^e

8a Emphatic.

8b John was not the Messiah and he made no claims for himself. John would be the moon to Jesus’ sun. The sun far outshines the moon and the only light the moon provides is reflected by the sun, for the moon has no light of its own.

“Light is a thing which witnesses for itself and carries its own evidence along with it; but to those who shut their eyes against the light it is necessary there should be those that bear witness to it. Christ’s light needs not man’s testimony, but the world’s darkness does. John was like the night watchman that goes round the town, proclaiming the approach of the morning light to those that have closed their eyes, and are not willing themselves to observe it; or like that watchman that was set to tell those who asked him what of the night that the morning comes, and, if you will enquire, enquire ye, Isa. xxi. 11, 12. He was sent of God to tell the world that the long-looked-for Messiah was now come, who should be a light to enlighten the Gentiles and the glory of his people Israel; and to proclaim that dispensation at hand which would bring life and immortality to light.”¹⁶

8c The ESV has “the light” and it does not capitalize “Light”. The Geneva and Bishop’s Bibles don’t capitalize it, either. The Bishop’s Bible is the immediate predecessor to the Authorized Version the

¹⁶ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*.

Authorized Version was to be a revision and improvement upon the Bishop's Bible, so here is an example of the Authorized Version improving upon a reading from the Bishop's Bible.

8d This is the same Greek word where we get our word "martyr". This is a suffering witness, one who offers a witness even at a great personal price. It could be a living martyr (who suffers for the faith. The Apostle John would be a good example of this) and a dead martyr (one who lives his life for the faith).

8e John's ministry was to bear witness of Christ (the Light) and to testify of Him. This should also be the burden of all Christians in their witnesses of Christ and of every preacher as he preaches of Christ.

There are a lot of false lights out there, all claiming to be the "true light", It will take discernment to distinguish between the true and the false lights. John pointed Israel to the True Light to distinguish Christ from the multitude of false lights (prophets and teachers). We need the same ministry today.

1:9 That^a was the true Light,^b which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.^{cdefgh}

9a The ESV omits "**that**", reading "The true light..."

9b Christ, the Only Light and the True Light. If Christ is called the "true" Light, that implies there must be a counterfeit light. Satan can transform himself into an angel of light in 2 Corinthians 1:14.

9c This is anti-Calvinist. If the True Light (Christ) shines on every man then that means that every man has the opportunity to be saved. Christ does not only shine on "the elect" but on so-called "reprobates" as well. Most will reject the light, but it (the truth) is available to all.

9d "When Jesus came into this world he came like a light in the dark.

1. His coming dissipated the shadows of doubt. Until he came men could only guess about God.

A. "It is difficult to find out about God," said one of the Greeks, "and when you have found out about him it is impossible to tell anyone else about him." To the pagan, God either dwelt in the shadows that no man can penetrate or in the light that no man can approach. But when Jesus came men saw fully displayed what God is like. The shadows and the mists were gone; the days of guessing were at an end; there was no more need for a wistful agnosticism. The light had come.

2. His coming dissipated the shadows of despair. Jesus came to a world that was in despair.

"Men," as Seneca said, "are conscious of their helplessness in necessary things." They were longing for a hand let down to help them up. "They hate their sins but cannot leave them." Men despaired of ever making themselves or the world any better. But with the coming of Jesus a new power came into life. He came not only with knowledge but with power. He came not only to show them the right way but to enable them to walk in it. He gave them not only instruction but a presence in which all the impossible things had become possible. The darkness of pessimism and despair was gone for ever.

3. His coming dissipated the darkness of death. The ancient world feared death. At the best, death was annihilation and the soul of man shuddered at the thought. At the worst, it was torture by whatever gods there be and the soul of man was afraid. But Jesus by his coming, by his life, his death, his Resurrection showed that death was only the way to a larger life. The darkness was dispelled.

Stevenson has a scene in one of his stories in which he draws the picture of a young man who has almost miraculously escaped in a duel in which he was certain he would be killed. As he walks away his heart is singing: "The bitterness of death is past." Because of Jesus the bitterness of death is past for

every man.”¹⁷

9e “Hank Williams’ phony Christian song, “I Saw The Light,” was based on these verses. However, one of the last things that poor sot-drunk alcoholic, pill-popping hillbilly said before kicking the bucket—the one with “the hole in it,” I guess—was “THERE IS NO LIGHT! THERE IS NO LIGHT!” He drugged himself into eternity before he was thirty-one years old. He had a black light that led him into a “black hole.”¹⁸

9f Christ the Light

1. Psalm 27:1 **“The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? the Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”**
2. Psalm 119:105 **“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”**
3. Luke 2:32 **“A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.”**
4. John 3:19,20 **“And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.”**
5. John 8:12 **“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”**
6. Ephesians 5:14 **“Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.”**
7. Revelation 21:23 **“And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.”**
8. This light is often rejected as in John 3:19. Light rejected becomes lightning. This light was rejected by Israel in John 1:11. The religious leaders rejected Christ even at His birth as seen in Matthew 2.

9g **“He lighteth every man”** so they are without excuse (Romans 1:20). All men have a witness of the Light to varying degrees. A man will be judged by how he responded to the Light he had, but none will escape, and none can claim ignorance.

9h If Christ is “the Light”, there must be a multitude of false lights out there to beware of.

1. False lights promise (spiritual) illumination yet can only provide (spiritual) darkness. They are blacklights.
 - A. Freemasonry is like this. They claim that you can only obtain illumination that is denied to other groups as you continue to progress through their levels.
 - i. 2 Peter 2:19 **“While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.”**
2. False lights can be:
 - A. False prophets
 - i. Too many to list!
 - B. False religious systems
 - i. Too many to list!
 - C. False philosophies
 - i. Anything besides a Biblical philosophy
 - D. Any political system

¹⁷ William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible, The Gospel of John*, Volume 1, pages 54-55.

¹⁸ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, pages 9-10.

3. The Rejection of Christ 1:10,11

1:10 He was in the world,^a and the world was made by him,^{bcd} and the world knew him not.^{ef}

10a Christ was in the world physically for 33 years through the incarnation. Christ was “in the world” before His incarnation in that He was God and was active in the affairs of men in the 4,000 years before this, But when He came into the world in human form after the incarnation, He was still rejected by the world.

10b Christ as creator. No professing Christian could ever take evolution or “scientific” naturalism seriously.

AV	ESV	LSV
10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.	10 He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.	10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

10c The ESV and LSV have “through”. This reduces the creative role of Christ, making Him an agent of the creation instead of the cause of the creation.

10d This is because they rejected the witness of the prophets of Christ and the testimony of Christ Himself during His earthly ministry. Israel did not know Him. His disciples had a hard time really figuring out who He was. Rome did not know Him, as did the rest of the Gentile world. Today, the majority of the world’s population still do not really “know Him” unto salvation. Much of this modern ignorance is deliberate. They could know Him if they wanted to as the knowledge of Christ is widespread and easy to come across today. But fallen man wants nothing to do with such knowledge so they deliberately reject it and willingly wallow in their darkness.

The ignorance of fallen man! We know science. We can peer to the edge of the universe and send probes to the outer reaches of the solar system. We can look at atoms and the microscopic world around us. We can build great machines and computers and write great literature and compose great music. We know philosophy and the arts. But fallen man is ignorant of the one thing we cannot afford to be ignorant of- God our Creator.

10e Many profess to “know not” Christ. This is either deliberate (they want no knowledge of Christ) or because they are deceived by a false gospel. Christ will return that lack of recognition in Matthew 7:23 (**“And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”**)

1:11 He came unto his own,^{ab} and his own received him not.^{cd}

11a To the Jews, as Jesus was a Jew Who came first to Israel. It can also apply to His earthly family, as His brothers and sisters (at least 4 half-brothers and 2 half-sisters) did not know Him or accept the claims Jesus was making about Himself (John 7:5 **“For neither did his brethren believe in him.”**).

11b Christ created the world but then did not leave the world, never to visit it again. Christ was no sort of God as pictured by the deists.

11c Some Jews did receive the claims of Christ but most did reject Him and still do today. His abandonment to Rome by the Jewish religious leadership is the evidence of this rejection. One would think Christ would expect a more cordial welcome among men as He was their Creator and God but the fall and the corruption influence of sin made that attitude impossible as fallen man now hated his Creator.

“What cold entertainment he met with, notwithstanding: The world knew him not. The great Maker, Ruler, and Redeemer of the world was in it, and few or none of the inhabitants of the world were aware of it. The ox knows his owner, but the more brutish world did not (Isaiah 1:3- The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider). They did not own him, did not bid him welcome, because they did not know him; and they did not know him because he did not make himself known in the way that they expected – in external glory and majesty. His kingdom came not with observation, because it was to be a kingdom of trial and probation. When he shall come as a Judge the world shall know him.”¹⁹

11d Why did Israel not receive Christ?

1. They were looking for a different kind of Messiah. They wanted a military leader who would overthrow the Roman occupation. Instead, they got a carpenter who was also a preacher.
2. Christ's background was wrong. He came from Nazareth in Galilee and there was a prejudice against that area.

A. John 1:46 **“And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.”**

3. His message was too difficult for the Jews to receive. See the reaction His message got in John 6:60 (**“Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?”**) and again in John 8

4. This may also have an idea of neglect. Many Jews never really formed any sort of opinion about Christ. They neglected Him. They did not outright reject Him but they also did not accept him. The book of Hebrews is full of such warning concerning the neglect of spiritual things and of Christ.

A. Hebrews 2:1-3 **“Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;”**

4. The Acceptance of Christ 1:12,13

1:12 But as many as received him,^a to them gave he power^{bcd} to become the sons of God,^e even to them that believe on his name:^{fghi}

12a **“as many”**, not “as many of the elect”. Salvation is not restricted to a select few as in a Calvinistic system but it is available to any who “receive Him” through faith and repentance. “Whosoever will!”

This shows that despite the rejection in 1:10,11, there was a remnant that did receive Christ, as there are in every generation. But it is only a remnant as few truly will receive Christ.

12b **“received”** is the key to salvation, receiving and believing on Christ. To “receive” Christ is to:

1. Believe on Him

¹⁹ Matthew Henry. *Commentary on the Bible*.

2. Believe in Him
3. To accept Him as the only Savior from sin
4. To accept everything that the Bible reveals about Him.

“Believing” is an act of the will but “receiving” puts that belief into tangible action.

12c The power or ability to become sons of God in salvation. This privilege to become “sons of God” is limited only to those who receive Christ as their Savior. This eliminates any “universal Fatherhood of God” that would include Moslems, unbelieving Jews, Hindus, Buddhists, New Agers, and the like who refuse to acknowledge Jesus as the Son of God and who also refuse to receive Him as their Savior. This is what makes Biblical Christianity so repulsive to fallen man, as the Gospel makes these exclusive claims to be the only truth unto salvation and that Jesus is the only way, truth and life (John 14:6). No alternatives are accepted by the Gospel.

AV	ESV	LSV
12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, <i>even</i> to them that believe on his name:	12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,	12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, <i>even</i> to those who believe in His name,

“**power**” The ESV and LSV reduce this to having the “right” be become “children” of God.

12d The Geneva Bible has “prerogative”.

12e Where once we were aliens and rebels from God, we are now made sons.

1. God's children have the provision of sons. God promises all they need. "All things work together for good." Rom. viii. 28. Their "hairs are all numbered." Matt. x. 30. In adversity they enjoy heavenly peace, in prosperity sunshine of God's favour.
2. They have education of sons, " led by the Spirit," purified from stains. Rom. viii. 14; 1 Thess. v. 23. Disciplined gently or severely, "God dealeth with them as sons." Heb. xii. 7.
3. Their inheritance is that of sons. "Heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ." Rom. viii. 17.

"It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Luke xii. 32. "An inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." 1 Pet. i. 4."²⁰

12f The only requirement of salvation. Nothing is said of water baptism, church membership, speaking in tongues, “enduring to the end”, taking sacraments, doing good works or being a “good moral person”. We must believe on His name and believe to the saving of the soul. We are not just to believe things about Him but to put the entirety of our trust in Christ and on Christ.

We believe on the name of Christ to distinguish Him from all false saviors. To simply “believe” is not enough. You must believe in the right thing or person. Believing in the name of Allah will not save you, nor will believing in the name of the pope of Joseph Smith. Your faith must be directed to and placed in Christ in order to be saved, as **there is no other name whereby we must be saved** (Acts 4:12)."

12g “John 1:12 is the razor’s edge for all sinners. It states that no man is God’s “child” until he receives a PERSON: not a wafer, sacrament, cookie, robe, scapular, ring, kiss, “faith,” religion, philosophy, belief, ritual, or a state of Prajna, Samadhi, Nirvana, etc., etc.”²¹

²⁰ W. H. Van Doren, *A Suggestive Commentary on St. John*, page 37.

²¹ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believers Commentary on John*, page 22.”

- 12h
1. You do not get sprinkled with water to become a son of God.
 2. You do not get “confirmed” with any ritual to become a son of God.
 3. You do not contact any preacher or priest to become a son of God.
 4. You do not keep the Golden Rule or the Ten Commandments to become a son of God.
 5. You certainly do not tithe, give alms, observe Ramadan, pray five times a day, or give up liquor and pork to become a son of God.”²²

12i **“believe on his name”** There is a difference between believing “on Christ” and “in Christ”. The difference is in the prepositions “in” and “on” as they mean different things. We often use the terms interchangeably but there are differences.

1. A “preposition” is a relational word that expresses the relation between two things.
 - A. “A preposition is a word—and almost always a very small, very common word—that shows direction (to in “a letter to you”), location (at in “at the door”), or time (by in “by noon”), or that introduces an object (of in “a basket of apples”). Prepositions are typically followed by an object, which can be a noun (noon), a noun phrase (the door), or a pronoun (you). (Merriam Webster dictionary).”
2. Think of the difference between putting a cup “on” cabinet and putting a cup “in” a cabinet.
 - A. “in”- the cup rests on the cabinet but it is not a part of the cabinet. They are separate but the cup depends on the cabinet to uphold it.
 - B. “on”- the cup is in the cabinet. The cabinet protects and surrounds the cup. The cup is within the cabinet, so there is more of an organic relationship although the cup and the cabinet may still be separate.
3. “on him”
 - A. John 1:12; 6:29; 7:39; 9:35,36; 11:48
 - B. We rest on Christ and depend upon Him for our safekeeping.
 - C. We would first tell the sinner that he needs to believe “on Christ” for his salvation, to depend solely and totally on Christ to save him and keep him. This is the evangelistic relationship.
4. “in him”
 - A. John 7:5; 12:36; 14:1
 - B. This expresses our relationship with Christ as being part of His body.
 - C. This expresses our relationship with Christ after our salvation, in our sanctification.
 - D. John 14:1 is a good example where Christ tells those with troubled hearts to believe “in Him”.
 - E. Also see the verses where Christ urges His followers to “abide in Him” in John 15:4,7.
 - i. This involves being an organic part of Christ’s body, a relationship that goes very deep and even beyond the “on” Christ believing.
 - ii. To abide in Christ signifies the constant occupation of the heart with Him, a daily active faith in Him.
 - a. Acts 17:28 **“For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.”**
 - iii. The words of Christ must abide in us if we are to abide in Him (John 15:7).
 - a. We get His words into us by reading, studying, applying them in our hearts.
 - iv. The abiding life is to become the abounding life, a life that brings glory to the Father by being a reflection of the life of Christ. How does a branch abide? How

²² Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, page 21.

does it keep its place in the vine? What does it have to do? Nothing. It just abides. It remains where it finds itself, a part of the vine, placed there by God, content to fulfill the law of its being by receiving in fair weather and foul the life of the vine flowing up from the root.

1:13 Which were born,^a not of blood,^b nor of the will of the flesh,^c nor of the will of man,^d but of God.^{e-f}

13a Born again, spiritually born the second time. This is a reference to the New Birth of John 3.

13b **“blood”** Not of human genealogy. No one becomes a Christian because their parents were Christian. God has no grandchildren. Simply because your parents were Christians doesn’t make the children Christians.

13c **“will of the flesh”** Not by human effort or religion. No one becomes a Christian simply by an act of the will. The will of man is involved but the power of the Holy Spirit is required, starting in the initial act of conversion, leading all the way up to the moment of conversion. Conversion is the work of God and is started by the convicting call and power of God.

13d **“will of man”** The new birth is not through any human agency, either philosophical, religious, moral, political or scientific. No human religion, church or philosophy can bring salvation.

13e Salvation is all of God, from start to finish- and beyond.

13f John leaves out “born of water”, not allowing the “saved by water baptism” crowd to get a foothold or a proof text. Water and water baptism cannot impart any sort of spiritual life.

5. The Incarnation 1:14

1:14 And the Word^a was made flesh,^{bcdef} and dwelt among us,^{gh} (and we beheldⁱ his glory,^j the glory as of the only begotten^k of the Father,)^l full of grace and truth.^{mn}

14a This is the last time John uses this term for Jesus.

14b This is a good “Christmas” text. God visits earth as a man and walks and dwells among His creation! Not just for a visit but to dwell among us for 33 years. God had often visited mankind in the Old Testament but never as a man in this fashion. And He came as a man, a real man, a carpenter! Not as a military warrior or a Greek philosopher or a man of wealth or as a king, but in a very humble and obscure manner, with humility.

This is called the incarnation, or the “enfleshment” of God, where God, Who is a spirit (John 4:24) took upon Himself a literal, real human body with an unfallen human nature. This was done in the “old fashioned” way as Jesus came into the world as a man through a woman’s womb, starting off as a single cell and developing as everyone else did. The only difference was that Jesus had no human father, so He did not inherit the fallen Adamic nature that He would have received if Joseph had been His father. This was one of the most important events in human history (the cross and resurrection also ranking right up there) as this is the event that got salvation started and paved the way for our salvation to be completed on the cross.

John does not recount the birth of Christ as Matthew and Luke do since the Son of God has no human birth. John goes right to the divine elements of the incarnation. John summarizes in 4 words

what Luke described in 2,500 words.

Even when Christ became flesh, He still did not ever cease being God. But we must always maintain the full humanity and deity of Christ in balance through the hypostatic union. Christ was not 50% God and 50% man, but was a unique God-Man. His nature was unique in that regard.

14c Who can even attempt to try to “**declare His generation**” (Isaiah 53:8). John does not, as this is a very great mystery (1 Timothy 3:16- And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory).

14d Why “flesh” and not “man?” “Flesh” reminds us that Christ had all the physical weaknesses and limitations that the rest of us had. There was nothing remarkable about Him physically. But He also came in the “likeness” of sinful flesh (Romans 8:3) in that He did not have the sin nature that is usually associated with the flesh. This would also strike a blow against the Gnostic heresy that taught God could not associate with human flesh or any kind of matter, as Spirit and Matter/Flesh could not co-exist. But they did in Christ as a result of the incarnation.

Christ, as God, was a “Spirit” (John 4:24) before the incarnation. He then was made a man with an unfallen human nature, and He will remain a man for all eternity. God became a man with all of the physical limitations and frailties that we all suffer from.

14e Jesus was “**made of a woman**” (Genesis 3:15, Isaiah 7:14), conceived by God (Matthew. 1:20, Luke 1:26-32) and then born in the flesh (Matthew 1:25, Luke 2:7). The fall of man was so radical and powerful that it would take the incarnation and all of its associated doctrines for God to recover him. The Virgin Birth is implied in all of this.

AV	ESV	LSV
14 And the Word was made flesh , and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.	14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.	14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

14f The ESV and LSV have “became flesh”. How did the Word become flesh? The traditional English translations all have “was made”, implying a divine act was involved in the incarnation. The modern translations leave it an open question.

14k “**only begotten**” is also omitted by the ESV but is retained in the LSV

14g In human form, as a man among men, for 33 years here on Earth. Jesus “came ashore” among men through the Virgin Birth. “Dwelt” here infers a temporary dwelling. Christ would not spend a full, normal human lifespan of 70 years among us, but only stayed for 33 years, three of them in a public ministry. The “dwelt” here is usually seen as the idea of “striking a tent”, “tabernacled”, a pilgrim term, used for one just passing through.

1. The tabernacle was a temporary place. It was different from Solomon’s temple, which was much more permanent, and not designed to be moved. Tabernacles are for pilgrims. Temples are for a settled people.
2. Outwardly the tabernacle was mean, humble, and unattractive in appearance, in stark contrast to Solomon’s temple. There was nothing in the outward appearance of the tabernacle to please the eye. So it was with Christ in His incarnation. His glory was hidden beneath a veil of ordinary flesh.

3. The tabernacle was God's dwelling place on earth. During the 33 years on earth, God had His dwelling place on earth through Christ.
4. The tabernacle was, therefore, the place where God met with men. It was called "the tent of meeting." If an Israelite desired to draw near unto Jehovah He had to come to the door of the tabernacle. Christ is the meeting place between God and men. No man cometh unto the Father but by Him (John 14:16). There is only one Mediator between God and men—the Man Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 2:5). He is the One who spans the gulf between deity and humanity, because He is both God and Man.
5. The tabernacle was the place where sacrifice was made. In its outer court stood the brazen altar, to which the animals were brought, and on which they were slain. There it was that blood was shed and atonement was made for sin. So it was with Christ. He fulfilled the typical significance of the brazen altar, as of every piece of the tabernacle furniture. The body in which He tabernacled on earth was nailed to the cross. The Cross was the altar upon which God's Lamb was slain, where His blood was shed, and where the atonement was made for sin. "That tabernacle was "all glorious within," but its glory was a hidden glory. There was no great beauty about the tabernacle's outward appearance. All the furniture of the outer court was made of ordinary brass (copper). The curtains of the outer court were of unadorned linen bleached white by the sun. The only flash of color was at the gate, which gave access to the brazen altar and hinted at the hidden beauties within. From without, there was nothing particularly glorious about the tabernacle. To the eye of the casual beholder, it was just another tent, spaced off from the tents of the common people and more imposing in its dimensions, but just a tent. Even when the tabernacle was moved from place to place, every piece of golden furniture used within the tabernacle itself was carefully covered from the eyes of the curious.
6. "Thus, too, the glory of the Lord Jesus was a hidden glory. When he came to "pitch his tent" among us he did not lay aside his deity, but he veiled his glory. The inside of the tabernacle, seen only by the priests, was glorious. The inner hangings were of blue, purple, and scarlet, and were fine linen. All the inner furniture was of gold or overlaid with gold. That mysterious shekinah cloud, which overshadowed the camp of Israel, came to rest on the mercy seat in the holy of holies where it bathed all with the light and glory of another world."²³

14h "He appeals to living witnesses who saw and heard Him. Exposed to all temptations, yet remaining perfectly SINLESS. David mourned because he was compelled to dwell in Mesech. Psa. cxx. 5. Ezekiel afraid because he" dwelt among scorpions." Ezek. ii. 6. Church of Pergamos grieved that it dwelt" where Satan's seat is." Rev. ii. 13."²⁴

14i Emphatic. We gazed on Him intensely.

14j This means our faith has EVIDENCE (Acts 1:3) and SUBSTANCE (Heb. 11:1-2), both of which are entirely missing in everything the Hadith says about Mohammed as a "prophet" or a miracle worker or even a slightly spiritual pagan. Five hundred people did not see a 600-winged angel dictating the Koran to Mohammed. Five hundred people saw (and heard) Jesus Christ dictating large portions of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; and 500 of them had "infallible proofs" that He didn't stay buried—like Mohammed did."²⁵

Our faith is not a blind faith, but it is a reasoned and logical faith, more than atheism could ever hope to be, as it is the most illogical and unreasoned "faith" there is.

²³ John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, page 27. Also see A. W. Pink's similar comments on this verse in his *Exposition of the Gospel of John*.

²⁴ W. H. Van Doren, *A Suggestive Commentary on St. John*, page 43.

²⁵ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, page 27.

The same glory that Moses beheld in the tabernacle in Exodus 40:34-38 and that the priests saw in the temple in 1 Kings 8:10,11 was revealed in the person of Jesus Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration. Peter testified to this in 2 Peter 1:16-18 (**For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.**”).

14l Not everyone as most did not recognize Him as God in human form. Some did but they were a remnant. But even in His human form, His deity would not have been apparent. Jesus had no halo around His head as in Roman Catholic artwork. Physically, He was unremarkable. He looked like anyone else. But in hearing Him preach and teach and observing His many miracles, His glory would have been manifested to all.

14m Because He was God. He is full of grace and He is Truth. Also see John 1:17

14n “For want of a clear understanding of this union of two natures in Christ’s Person, the here-sies which arose in the early Church were many and great. And yet Arrowsmith points out that no less than four of these heresies are at once confuted by a right interpretation of the sentence now before us.

“The Arians hold that Jesus Christ was not true God. This text calleth Him the Word, and maketh Him a Person in the Trinity.

“The Apollinarians acknowledge Christ to be God, yea, and man too; but they hold that He took only the body of a man, not the soul of a man, while His divinity supplied the room of a soul. We interpret the word “flesh” for the whole human nature, both soul and body.

“The Nestorians grant Christ to be both God and man; but then they say the Godhead made one person, and the manhood another person. We interpret the words ‘was made’ as implying an union, in which Christ assumed not the person of man, but the nature of man.

“The Eutychians held but one person in Christ; but then they confounded the natures. They say the Godhead and manhood made such a mixture as to produce a third thing. Here they also are confuted by the right understanding of the union between the Word and flesh.”

He then goes on to show how the ancient Church met all these heretics with four adverbs, which briefly and conveniently defined the union of two natures in Christ’s person. They said that the divine and human natures when “the Word was made flesh,” were united truly, to oppose the Arians,—perfectly, to oppose the Apollinarians,—undividedly, to oppose the Nestorians,—and unmixedly, to oppose the Eutychians.”²⁶

Add to this that the Sabellians claimed it was the Father Who became incarnate.

This would be an attack against the Gnostic heresies of John’s day who taught that God and Flesh were exclusive and could not co-exist. John declares that they did in the hypostatic union of Christ.

6. The Witness of John 1:15-28

1:15 John bare witness of him, and cried,^a saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me:^{bc} for he was before me.^d

15a The Greek word here has the idea of a crow cawing in the field, which is a call that is hard to ignore!

²⁶ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on John*, page 31.

15b John spoke of the Messiah before Jesus presented Himself to John for baptism. John did not know who the Messiah was until his Jesus showed up at his riverside, but John knew He was soon to appear. John's ministry was to prepare Israel for the Messiah's unveiling.

AV	ESV	LSV
15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.	15 (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'")	15 John *bore witness about Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has been ahead of me, for He existed before me.'"

15c The ESV has "ranks before me". The LSV is a jumbled mess.

15d John was about 6 months older than Jesus yet Jesus was "before" John since Jesus was eternal, from everlasting, and never had a beginning as John had. Jesus came before John, but John started his earthly ministry before Jesus.

1:16 And of his fullness have all we received,^a and grace for grace.^{b-c}

16a We have all seen it but very few have acknowledged it or accepted it. Those who have received it have done so unto salvation.

16b Grace upon grace, grace multiplied and heaped upon itself.

AV	ESV	LSV
16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace .	16 For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.	16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

16c The ESV and LSV have "grace upon grace".

1:17 For the law was given by Moses,^a but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.^{b-c}

17a On Mount Sinai in Exodus 20.

17b Moses could deliver the law but only Jesus Christ could give grace and truth. Only God could do that and Jesus was greater than Moses (Hebrews 3:2-6). Also see 1:14.

AV	ESV	LSV
17 For the law was given by Moses, <i>but</i> grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.	17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.	17 For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

17c The ESV and LSV can't get their prepositions correct. Both translations have "through" instead of "by". This means "through Jesus Christ", makes Christ simply the channel for grace instead of the

active agent as the giver of grace.

1:18 No man hath seen God at any time;^{ab} the only begotten^c Son,^d which is in the bosom of the Father^e he^f hath declared him.^g

18a Not in the same way that we see other men, face to face. No man can see God face to face and live (Exodus 33:20). This is because the glory of God, if left unfiltered, would overwhelm and consume any sinner, even a saved man. Some men saw God in a filtered form, or saw His back parts (as Moses did in Exodus 32:23). But no man has gazed full into the very face of the Father. When Moses prayed 'show me thy glory', that prayer was only partially answered.

AV	ESV	LSV
18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared <i>him</i> .	18 No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.	18 No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained <i>Him</i> .

18b The ESV omits "at any time".

18c "**begotten**" is omitted in most modern Bibles, usually replaced with "One and only" or something similar. The ESV has "the only God", omitting "only begotten Son". The LSV has "only begotten God". The LSV makes another mistake in changing "he hath declared him" to "he had explained Him". "Explaining" is not the same thing as "declaring".

18d God has many sons (through the New Birth) but He has only one Son, that is Jesus Christ. This is one of many differences between Jehovah and "Allah:". The Moslem god has no son. But the God of Israel has one. How then can some people say that Christians and Moslems worship the same God?

18e This is a place of great intimacy, see John 13:23.

18f Emphatic.

18g If we cannot see the Father, the next best thing is to see Christ, as He is God but in a human form and this we can look upon, as John says they did for the years of His flesh while on earth.

1:19^a And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him,^b Who art thou?^{cd}

19a See also Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:2-7 and Luke 3:3-16.

19b The religious "powers that be" in Jerusalem, hearing reports of an unlicensed, unlettered and unauthorized preacher stirring things up by the Jordan River, decided to send a committee out to report of what John was up to. They are proud, arrogant, self-sufficient and would not hesitate for 5 minutes to murder any Bible believer who posed even the slightest threat to their power, position or prestige.

The fact that the Forerunner confined his ministry to the wilderness and did not set up shop in Jerusalem was a direct rebuke to the cold, dead formalism of the Jewish religion that was headquartered in Jerusalem and that was under the iron heel of the Sanhedrin. God bypassed them and sent His man into the wilderness, where he still drew crowds, got the attention of the religious bigwigs and was visited by the Messiah.

19c “Who do you think you are? Who ordained you? Where did you go to school? Who approved you? What authority do you profess to have to be out here doing this?” Thankfully, John had no need of their approval or authority. No God-called preacher does. But one of the jobs of the Pharisees was to check on and validate all religious teachers, so this was just routine for them.

19d John’s witness:

1. He was not the Christ.
A. John 1:20 **“And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.”**
2. He was not Elijah nor that prophet spoken of by Moses.
A. John 1:21 **“And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.”**
3. He was the voice crying in the wilderness.
A. Matthew 3:3 **“For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.”**
B. John 1:23 **“He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.”**
4. He was unworthy to unloose the shoe latchet of the Messiah.
A. John 1:27 **“He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.”**
5. He was the friend of the Bridegroom.
A. John 3:29 **“He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.”**
6. All flesh would see the salvation of God.
A. Luke 3:6 **“And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”**
7. The Messiah would have the Holy Spirit and the favor of the Father.
A. John 3:34,35 **“For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.”**
8. The Savior would baptize men with the Holy Spirit at His first coming but with fire at His second coming.
A. Luke 3:16 **“John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:”**
9. Christ would increase but John would decrease.
A. John 3:30 **“He must increase, but I must decrease.”**

1:20 And he confessed, and denied not;^a but confessed,^b I^c am not the Christ.^{de}

20a A very strong assertion, worded for emphasis.

20b Most pre-Authorized Version translations add “plainly”.

20c Emphatic

20d There was a popular feeling and much speculation that John might have been the Messiah. He

shot down that speculation in a hurry and in no uncertain terms.

20e John was NOT Elijah (John 1:21), but he WAS (Matthew 17:12 **“But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.”**); but he WASN'T (John 1:25), but he WAS (Mark 9:13 **“But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.”**). How to reconcile all of this? See verse 21.

1:21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou^a Elijah?^{bc} And he saith, I am not. Art thou^a that Prophet?^d And he answered, No.

21a Emphatic.

21b They were aware of Malachi 4:5,6 **“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.”**

21c John could have been Elijah! In Matthew 11:9-14, the Lord clearly identifies John with Elijah and says that if Israel would have received and accepted John's witness of Jesus, then John would have fulfilled the prophecy of Elijah (as John did come in the spirit and power of Elijah). Also see Matthew 17:9-13. The implications of this are staggering. If Israel had accepted John's witness of Jesus (and by Israel, we mean the religious leaders), then John would have fulfilled Elijah's prophecy, the Kingdom would have been set up in the Gospels and there would have been no Church Age. But this did not happen, so Elijah himself would have to return physically and personally in the tribulation (Revelation 11) as one of the Two Witnesses. But since Israel did not accept John's witness, John was not able to fulfill Elijah's ministry.

“The ghastly truth is that all of the Scriptures to be fulfilled for the Second Coming of Christ (over 500) were contingent on Acts 7. When Christ refused to give you “the times and seasons” of His advent (Acts 1:7), He was warning you it was FLEXIBLE. In spite of John Calvin's bungling theology, “the times and seasons” depended upon the free will of the men who tried Stephen (Acts 7). If they had accepted the Messiah that he offered them (Acts 7), the rapture of Job 37, Psalm 50, and Isaiah 26 would have taken place; the “body” (it had Jew and Gentile in it by Acts 6:1; see Acts 2:10) would have gone up; Judas would have come up from the pit (Rev. 17:8); and the Tribulation would have begun. In forty- two months, it would have been over. This explains every verse in both Testaments that deal with either advent...This is why the expression “is at hand” belongs to both Christ's earthly ministry and to His future RULE of the United Nations (Zeph. 3:8; Isa. 24, 34, 63; Jer. 25; Joel 3).”²⁷

21d The Prophet Like Unto Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15).

1:22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us.^a What sayest thou of thyself?

22a They couldn't go back to Jerusalem empty handed. They had to have some report, some testimony from John. What do you have to say about yourself?

²⁷ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, pages 41-42.

1:23 He said, I^a am the voice of one crying in the wilderness,^b Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah.^{cd}

23a Emphatic.

23b John was the voice of the Word. Words need a voice and John was fulfilling that role.

23c John's ministry was to smooth out the way for the King. Travelling royal processions would often send for people before the way to inspect the road, certify it safe from traps and ditches and to remove all rocks and impediments so as not to cause any problems or discomforts for the King. This was John's ministry- to prepare the hearts of the nation of Israel to receive their King.

23d See Isaiah 40:3 **"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."**

1:24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.^a

24a Along with the Sadducees, one of the Jewish religious groups that gave the Lord so many problems during his earthly ministry. They would have been hostile to John as well.

1:25^a And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest^b thou then, if thou^c be not that Christ, nor Elijah, neither that prophet?^{de}

25a They again demand the source of John's authority as they did in John 1:19. Since, by his own confession, John was not the Messiah, Elijah or "That Prophet", what was the authority for his ministry? The Jews expected that Elijah or the Messiah would baptize, so why was John doing it?

25b They seemed to be more concerned about John's baptizing than his preaching. His baptism had definite messianic overtones.

Where did the practice of water baptism begin? Why was John baptizing? What was the significance of it? We don't see it in the Old Testament. We don't see Elijah water-baptizing anyone. So why the expectation of it here and why was John doing it? The Jews were not questioning the act of water baptism. They wanted to know why John was doing it if he was not Elijah or the Messiah.

Peter Ruckman, in his commentary on Genesis, lays out some observations, which is probably as good a possibility as any: "Why baptizest thou then...?" (vs. 25). Here again a question is raised that stumped the same bunch who got stumped on verses 17 and 21. The inquirers expected Elijah and Messiah to baptize people in water, or they would not have asked the question. Why would they expect it? No orthodox Jewish rabbi in Christ's day could quote a verse for baptizing anybody... There isn't a case in the Old Testament where any orthodox Jew put anybody under water for any reason. Naaman baptized himself to "put away the filth of the flesh" (see 1 Kings 5 and compare with 1 Pet. 3:21). Israel was "baptized unto Moses" (1 Cor. 10:1-4) so a prophet "like unto Moses" (Acts 3:22) might follow suit. But where Elijah would come in at no one could guess.

"The first water baptism took place in Genesis 1:1. The earth was IMMERSED in water.

Genesis 6 is the second baptism of water; both are "immersions," neither one is "sprinkling."

The third baptism is the drowning of Hebrew males in the Nile River (Exod. 1-2).

Observe, in all three cases, that water baptism has to do with KILLING and DEATH as in Psalm 42:7 and 69:2, 14. In the New Testament it is a figure of death, burial, and resurrection (1 Cor. 15; Rom. 6; 1 Pet. 3:21); never regeneration or a new birth.

Well, Elijah told Naaman to get baptized (2 Kings 5). If a forerunner of the Messiah showed up—and Elijah was said to be the forerunner (Mal. 4:5)—he would be getting sinners to go down into the water—especially if the mark of the beast (Rev. 13) was followed with a “grievous sore” like LEPROSY (Rev. 16:2).

“But there is more. Israel was baptized by “aspersion” instead of immersion, for the water didn’t touch them (1 Cor. 10:1–2). Noah was “saved by water” that did not touch him (1 Pet. 3:21)!

“So here is Elijah going through water (2 Kings 2) and Elisha going through water (2 Kings 2) and Moses going through water (Exod. 15) and Joshua going through water (Josh. 3), and (God have mercy upon the poor scholars!) Jesus Christ comes down through water when He returns (Hab. 3:10,15; Psa. 18:11,15–16; Isa. 63:11–12). Evidently the Pharisees were not as dumb as they looked, at least not about some things.

“They understood that whatever John was doing, it had something to do with prefiguring someone drowning and coming back up through the same element the Law had given them for PURIFICATION (see John 2:6, 3:25–26; Heb. 10:22; Acts 22:16).

“This is why the Lord Jesus Christ likens His death to (see comments under Titus 1:2 in that commentary) a man drowning under ocean billows, like Jonah, and claiming the Father’s promise (Titus 1:2) that He would not remain in the “deeps.” Jonah’s immersion, like the immersion of Noah’s day, was a picture of God’s judgment on SIN, exactly as Christ took the sinner’s place to bear his judgment (2 Cor. 5:21).

“It is at this point that “the doctrine of the great deeps” enters, which also explains why Christ’s first four disciples were FISHERMEN. It would take eight pages to explain it.

“Evidently Nicodemus’ crowd back in the first century knew about things in the Old Testament that a modern Hebrew scholar knows nothing about at all. For the GREAT DEEPS see the comments on Genesis 1:6 and Psalm 148:4 in those commentaries.

1. Satan is in a body of water (Job 41:31–32).
2. This body of water is a “sea” (Job 41:31).
3. Christ comes through this “sea” at the Advent (Hab. 3:8-10; 2 Sam. 22:8-17).
4. This “sea” disappears after the explosion of “heaven and earth” (Rev. 20:11, 21:1–2).
5. Jesus comes down through this water to get to earth (Matt. 12:40; John 2).
6. This is the symbology of John the Baptist’s ministry (Matt. 3).
7. Christians go up through it at the Rapture.
8. This is typified by the Exodus through the Red “Sea” (Exod. 12–15).
9. This sea was colorless; it is now RED (Heb. 8:2, 5; 9:7–10, 12, 20–22,24).
10. It became dyed through a transaction which involved a universal eternal fluid (Acts 20:28; Heb. 9:14).
11. This watery separation from God puts all sinners “under the wrath of God” in type (Jer. 5:22; Psa. 88:7, 18:16, 66:12, 69:14, 124:4).
12. It enables the sinner who accepts a substitute “receiver of God’s wrath” to become part of the substitute’s body and flesh (Eph. 5).
13. This “sea” has opened twice in the past and will open twice in the future.
14. These openings are typified by the crossings of Moses, Joshua, Elijah, and Elisha (Exod. 14, Josh. 2–4, 2 Kings 2).
15. Men under this water are likened to “fish” (Ecc. 9:12; Hab. 1:14).
16. Hence, the first four disciples called to minister are commercial fishermen (Matt. 4:19; Mark 1:17),
17. Where man has rejected the truth of this revelation, Paul prays that he will understand it (Eph. 3:18–19). (And notice that the verse says nothing about comprehending the “love of Christ,” as you have heard it preached since Chrysostom, A.D. 450.)
18. The truth is preserved in Christian hymnology (unwittingly) by various writers—“Crossing the bar,” “On Jordan’s stormy banks I stand,” “I won’t have to cross Jordan alone,” “Echo back ye

ocean waves,” “We shall sing on that beautiful shore,” “While the nearer waters roll,” “Pilot me, over life’s tempestuous sea,” “Amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing” (note in the last case, Martin Luther aborted the verse, Psa. 29:10, 24:2, so it would not have to be taken literally), “Unknown waves around me roll,” “I’ll sail the wide seas no more,” etc.

19. Twice in 3,000 years, the earth has been submerged under literal water (see 1:2 and 7:1–15) to enforce the scientific truth that the solar system, geographically, is under a body of water that is at least 100,000,000,000 times larger than the Atlantic and Pacific combined.

25c Emphatic.

25d Why was John baptizing? As the son of a priest, he knew how important baptism was and that it should only be done under certain situations and only to certain people, certainly not to such a crowd of rabble as this! “The Pharisees who had sent them felt very deeply offended by the baptism of John, which they considered to be an invasion of their exclusive ceremonial domain and privileges. To the Sadducees themselves this baptism was of little concern. But to the Pharisees, John had no right to baptize. The proselytes were baptized by the Pharisees because they were considered unclean. But these Jews thought it a great presumption in John to impose his baptism of repentance and confession on all the people alike. The Pharisees were not unclean and needed no such baptism!”²⁸

25e “It is evident that John’s baptism had a serious import in men’s minds, since, without a single miracle or other sign, it awakened the question whether the Baptist were the Christ. It intimated the close of the old state of things and a new position, instead of being the familiar practice which traditionaries would make it. On the other hand, scripture is equally plain that it is quite distinct from Christian baptism: so much so, that disciples previously baptized with John’s baptism had to be baptized to Christ when they received the full truth of the gospel. (Acts 19) The Reformers and others are singularly unintelligent in denying this difference, which is not only important but plain and certain. Think of Calvin’s calling it a foolish mistake, into which some had been led, of supposing that John’s baptism was different from ours! The confession of a coming Messiah widely differs from that of His death and resurrection, and this is the root of differences which involve weighty consequences.”²⁹

1:26 John answered them, saying, I^a baptize with water:^{bc} but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;^d

26a Emphatic.

26b John was getting some converts to his message and they would be water baptized, by full immersion, confessing their sins, to make a public testimony of their expectation of the Messiah.

26c This baptism was by full immersion in the Jordan (Matthew 3:6). There is no justification for any idea that John sprinkled or poured. The fact that he baptized where there was a large amount of available water is proof that he was immersing his converts.

26d Even John really didn’t know who the Messiah was until Jesus showed up and revealed Himself.

1:27 He^a it is, who coming after me is preferred before me,^b whose shoe’s latchet I^a am not worthy to unloose.^c

²⁸ J. W. Shepard, *The Christ of the Gospels*, page 82.

²⁹ William Kelly, *Notes on John*, pages 34-35.

27a Emphatic.

AV	ESV	LSV
27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me , whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.	27 even he who comes after me, the strap of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie."	27 " <i>This One is</i> He who comes after me, of whom I am not worthy to untie the strap of His sandal."

27b The ESV and LSV omit "is preferred before me".

The LSV again reverts to its New Age influences by using "This One" instead of "He".

27c This was the job of a slave. In relation to the Messiah, the "great man born of woman" (Matthew 11:11) did not believe himself worthy to do a slave's task.

1:28 These things were done in Bethabara^{ab} beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.^c

AV	ESV	LSV
28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.	28 These things took place in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing.	28 These things took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

28a The ESV and LSV have "Bethany" instead of "Bethabara". The New King James Version also has "Bethabara". The pre-King James translations all read "Bethabara". The Rheims-Douay Version has "Bethania".

28b This is where Israel crossed the Jordan River in Joshua 3:16.

28c In the wilderness, far from Jerusalem, "without the camp" (Hebrews 13:13).

7. The Baptism of Jesus 1:29-31, see also Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21,22

1:29^a The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.^{bcdefg}

29a About six weeks before this, Jesus had been baptized by John in the Jordan. Right afterward, he had gone into the wilderness where his temptations took place. John makes no mention of that.

29b This was the first time John realized that Jesus was the Messiah. Up to this point, he did not know who he was forerunning for. Also see John 1:36.

29c "**Lamb of God**"- as lambs were used for sin offerings in the Old Testament, Jesus would be the Last and Final Lamb that would take care of the sin question and problem of man once and for all. The lambs sacrificed in the Old Testament were temporary fixes for the sin problem. Jesus' sacrifice took care of that once and for all.

The expression "**the Lamb**" with Lamb capitalized occurs 28 times in scripture, exclusively in the New Testament and mainly in the Book of Revelation. John 1:29, 35 are the first and second

occurrences of the expression “the Lamb” and the only occurrences outside of the Book of Revelation, where the expression “the Lamb” occurs in Revelation 5:8, 12, 13, 6:1, 16, 7:9, 10, 14, 17, 12:11, 13:8, 14:4 twice, 10, 15:3, 17:14 twice, 19:7, 9, 21:9, 14, 22, 23, 27, 22:1, 3.

29d “This was an extraordinary truth to John. It took a miracle of grace to make a Jew see, “The Lamb, which taketh away the sin of the world.” The Jew thought that the sacrifice of God must be for his chosen people only; but John saw beyond all bounds of nationality and restrictions of race, and clearly perceived in Jesus “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” Remember that John was of priestly race; he was familiar with lambs for sacrifice. But as a priest he never saw a lamb for sacrifice in a place far off from the consecrated shrine. There was only one altar, and that was at Jerusalem, and there the lamb of sacrifice must be, and not by Jordan’s lonely stream. Yet John saw, in a place never dedicated in any peculiar manner to the service of God, the one great sacrifice standing in the midst of the people. “Behold,” says he, “this is the Lamb of God.” See how well the Lord had taught him, and how fully he had broken away from natural prejudices!”³⁰

29e The Lamb is also referred to as:

1. The bread of life
2. The water of life
3. The great “I AM”
4. God “manifest in the flesh
5. The light of the world
6. The Good Shepherd
7. Alpha and Omega, “the beginning and the end”
8. The anointed “Messiah
9. The Christ, the Lord’s Christ
10. God’s “chosen one”
11. Immanuel
12. The Lord
13. The Lord God
14. The angel of the Lord
15. The King of Kings
16. The Lord of Lords
17. The Word
18. The way, the truth and the life

That is about one-fifth of the titles laid on the Lamb!

This “Lamb”:

1. Typified in Genesis 4:4-11
2. Prophesied in Genesis 22:1-14
3. Applied in Exodus 12:1-23
4. Identified in John 1:29
5. Crucified at Calvary
6. Glorified in Revelation 6:6-13

29f “John did not introduce Jesus to the nation as the Son of God, nor as the holy one of God, nor as the Christ of God, nor as the word of God. He went right to the heart of Israel’s need, of the whole world’s need. He proclaimed him to be the lamb of God. Although John’s baptism had confronted people with the need for repentance, they needed much more than repentance. They needed

³⁰ Charles Spurgeon, “Behold the Lamb of God” *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 33, sermon 1987.

redemption. No amount of water could remove the stain of sin; that required blood. And not the blood of bulls and goats, which could never take away sin (Hebrews 10:1-4), not the blood of an ordinary lamb. It called for the shedding of "precious blood," for redemption made possible by the lamb of God... The great question in the Old Testament was voiced by Isaac on his way to Mount Moriah: "Where is the lamb?" (Genesis 22:7). Abraham's answer was equally great: "God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering." Now that great Old Testament question is matched by an even greater New Testament answer: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." As John spoke, it is likely that the bleating of sheep could be heard and that people could see flocks being driven toward Jerusalem in preparation for the Passover feast. John drew attention away from them to Jesus, the true Passover lamb whose sacrifice would procure eternal redemption for all humankind and make obsolete the annual Passover of the Jews."³¹

29g Only the Lamb of God (in His person and work on the cross) can take away the "sin of the world". Other things and people cannot take away the sin of the world, and these false saviors would include:

1. Water baptism.
 - A. This also means that Acts 2:38 cannot save anyone, since it is not a salvation verse.
2. Church membership
3. Completing any sort of catechism course
4. Fulfilling some religious rite or ritual
5. Peddling *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines door-to-door
6. Doing a pilgrimage to Mecca or Salt Lake City
7. Wearing scapulars or holy underwear
8. Being a preacher, missionary, evangelist or Sunday School teacher
9. Subscribing to the Westminster Confession or the "Baptist Distinctives"
10. Following the teachings of any man
11. Being "King James Only"
 - A. And we believe the King James Bible is the preserved word of God in English!
12. Holding to a certain doctrinal statement, theological system or creed

In other words, NOTHING but the shed and applied blood of the Lamb can take away sins. To try to add to that is idolatry and will end horribly. To try to add human works to the work of the Lamb of God is to attack and undermine the power and extent of the atonement of Christ, in saying that is not powerful enough on its own and that man must assist God in the salvation of mankind. Such an idea attacks the power of God in salvation.

Biblical revelation of the "Lamb"

1. First mention of a lamb
 - A. Genesis 22:7 **"And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?"**
2. Lambs used for a burnt offering
 - A. Genesis 22:8 **"And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together."**
 - B. 1 Samuel 7:9 **"And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto the LORD: and Samuel cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD heard him."**
3. Used in the Passover
 - A. Exodus 12:3-5,21 **"Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the**

³¹ John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, pages 39-40.

tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house. And if the household be too little for the lamb, let him and his neighbour next unto his house take it according to the number of the souls; every man according to his eating shall make your count for the lamb. Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out from the sheep, or from the goats:..Then Moses called for all the elders of Israel, and said unto them, Draw out and take you a lamb according to your families, and kill the passover."

B. Numbers 28:21 **"A several tenth deal shalt thou offer for every lamb, throughout the seven lambs:"**

4. The firstling of the ass redeemed with a lamb

A. Exodus 13:13 **"And every firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb; and if thou wilt not redeem it, then thou shalt break his neck: and all the firstborn of man among thy children shalt thou redeem."**

B. Exodus 34:20 **"But the firstling of an ass thou shalt redeem with a lamb: and if thou redeem him not, then shalt thou break his neck. All the firstborn of thy sons thou shalt redeem. And none shall appear before me empty."**

5. Lambs used in the consecration of the altar

A. Exodus 29:39-41 **"The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning; and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even: And with the one lamb a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of beaten oil; and the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink offering. And the other lamb thou shalt offer at even, and shalt do thereto according to the meat offering of the morning, and according to the drink offering thereof, for a sweet savour, an offering made by fire unto the LORD."**

6. Lambs used in the peace offering

A. Leviticus 3:7 **"If he offer a lamb for his offering, then shall he offer it before the LORD."**

7. Lambs used in the sin offering

A. Leviticus 4:32-35 **"And if he bring a lamb for a sin offering, he shall bring it a female without blemish. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering, and slay it for a sin offering in the place where they kill the burnt offering. And the priest shall take of the blood of the sin offering with his finger, and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar: And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat of the lamb is taken away from the sacrifice of the peace offerings; and the priest shall burn them upon the altar, according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD: and the priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him."**

B. Leviticus 9:3 **"And unto the children of Israel thou shalt speak, saying, Take ye a kid of the goats for a sin offering; and a calf and a lamb, both of the first year, without blemish, for a burnt offering;"**

8. Lambs used in the trespass offering

A. Leviticus 5:6,7 **"And he shall bring his trespass offering unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned, a female from the flock, a lamb or a kid of the goats, for a sin offering; and the priest shall make an atonement for him concerning his sin. And if he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass, which he hath committed, two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, unto the LORD; one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering."**

9. Lambs used in purifications.

A. Leviticus 12:6-8 **"And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for**

a daughter, she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest: Who shall offer it before the LORD, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This is the law for her that hath born a male or a female. And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean."

10. Lambs used in the cleansing of a leper
A. Leviticus 14:10-25
11. Lambs used in the Nazarite Vow
A. Numbers 6:12-14 **"And he shall consecrate unto the LORD the days of his separation, and shall bring a lamb of the first year for a trespass offering: but the days that were before shall be lost, because his separation was defiled. And this is the law of the Nazarite, when the days of his separation are fulfilled: he shall be brought unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation: And he shall offer his offering unto the LORD, one he lamb of the first year without blemish for a burnt offering, and one ewe lamb of the first year without blemish for a sin offering, and one ram without blemish for peace offerings,"**
12. Lambs used in the dedication of the altar
A. Numbers 7:15-81
13. Lambs used for either a burnt offering, freewill offering or a sacrifice
A. Numbers 15:4
14. Lambs used in daily offerings
A. Numbers 28:4-8
15. Lambs used in monthly offerings
A. Numbers 28:13,14
16. Lambs used in the offering in the feast of weeks
A. Numbers 28:29
17. Lambs used in the feast of trumpets
A. Numbers 29:4
18. Lambs used on the day of atonement
A. Numbers 29:10
19. Lambs used in the feast of booths
A. Numbers 29:15
20. Keeping sheep was not considered to be a major or important task. It was often given to a youngest son
A. 1 Samuel 17:34 **"And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock:"**
21. Shepherds were an abomination to the Egyptians.
A. Genesis 46:34 **"That ye shall say, Thy servants' trade hath been about cattle from our youth even until now, both we, and also our fathers: that ye may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination unto the Egyptians."**
22. Christ a type of a lamb in His sufferings
A. Isaiah 53:7 **"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth."**
B. Acts 8:32 **"The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth:"**

23. Christ as the Lamb of God.

A. John 1:29 **"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."**

B. John 1:36 **"And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!"**

C. He was without blemish or spot

i. 1 Peter 1:19 **"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:"**

D. Revelation 5:6,8,12,13; 6:16; 7:19,10,14,17; 13:8; 14:1,4,10; 15:3; 17:4;19:7,9; 21:9,14,22,23,27; 22:1,3

24. The blood of the Lamb

A. Revelation 12:11 **"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."**

25. The False Prophet has outward characteristics of a lamb

A. Revelation 13:11 **"And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon."**

1:30 This is he of whom I^a said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me:^b for he was before me.^c

30a Emphatic.

30b Since Jesus was God. This makes Him preferred before all.

AV	ESV	LSV
30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.	30 This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks before me, because he was before me.'	30 "This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who has been ahead of me, for He existed before me.'

"preferred before me" The LSV has a very weak reading.

30c As Jesus was eternal, even if He was physically younger than John. John began his ministry before Jesus.

1:31 And I^a knew him not:^b but that he should be made manifest to Israel,^c therefore am I^a come baptizing with water.

31a Emphatic.

31b See note 29a.

31c This was John's ministry, to "introduce" Jesus as Messiah to Israel. And John was to manifest Jesus to Israel, not the Gentiles. That would come later.

8. John's Testimony of Jesus Part I 1:32-34

1:32 And John bare record,^a saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove,^b and it abode upon him.

32a Seven witnesses of Christ in John's gospel. These are witnesses and testimonies of His deity, His messiahship and Him being the fulfillment of prophecy:

1. The Father

A. John 5:31,37 **"If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true....And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape."**

2. The Son bearing witness of Himself. He is allowed to do that since He was God.

A. John 8:14 **"Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go."**

3. The Holy Spirit

A. John 15:26 **"But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:"**

4. The Scripture

A. John 1:45 **"Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."**

B. John 5:46 **"For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me."**

5. Divine works and miracles

A. John 5:36 **"But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me."**

B. John 10:25 **"Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me."**

6. John the Baptist

A. John 1:7 **"The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe."**

B. John 1:32,34 **"And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him...And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."**

C. John 5:33,35 **"Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth...He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light."**

7. The disciples

A. John 15:27 **"And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning."**

B. John 19:35 **"And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe."**

C. John 21:24 **"This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true."**

8. Abraham

A. John 8:56 **“Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.”**

i. Abraham saw Christ’s day in Genesis 22.

32b Not a literal dove but there was some sort of physical manifestation of the Holy Spirit present at the baptism of Jesus that He appeared to hover as a dove over Jesus.

1:33 And I^a knew him not:^b but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.^c

33a Emphatic.

33b Note 29a.

33c It must have been God the Father Who spoke to John concerning this.

AV	ESV	LSV
33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.	33 I myself did not know him, but he who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’	33 “And I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, ‘The One upon whom you see the Spirit descending and abiding on Him, this is the One who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’

The LSV uses the New Age term “the One”: for “Upon whom...”. Even the ESV doesn’t go that far into New Age apostasy.

1:34 And I^a saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.^{bc}

34a Emphatic.

34b John’s ministry- to testify and to bear witness of what he saw and what he heard concerning Jesus. A witness simply tells what he knows. It is up to the lawyer to convince the jury.

34c There are nine titles given to Jesus Christ in this chapter:

1. The Word

A. John 1:1 **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”**

2. The life

A. John 1:4 **“In him was life; and the life was the light of men.”**

B. John 10:10 **“I am come that they might have life...”**

C. John 14:6 **“I am the way, the truth and the life.”**

3. The true Light

A. John 1:9 **“That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.”**

4. The Lamb of God

- A. John 1:29 **"Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."**
5. Rabbi/Master
A. John 1:38 **"Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?"**
6. The Messiah/the Christ
A. John 1:41 **"He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ."**
7. The Son of God
A. John 1:49 **"Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."**
8. The King of Israel
A. John 1:49 **"Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel."**
9. The Son of man
A. John 1:51 **"And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."**

9. John's Testimony of Jesus Part II 1:35-37

1:35 Again the next day after John stood, and two of his disciples;^a

35a John had some followers and disciples.

1:36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked,^a he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!^{bc}

36a There is apparently some controversy as whether this should be "walked" or "walking".

"The 1611, 2011+ AV1611s have "walked."

Of the pre-1611 Bibles 1385, 1395 Wycliffe, Coverdale have "walking," Tyndale, Matthew, Great, Bishops' "walked by," Geneva "walking by"

Of the post-1611 Versions 1582 JR NT and DRB, 1984, 2011 NWT, Ricker Berry's 1897 Stephanus 1550, Nestle's 21st, Farstad-Hodges 'Majority' Greek-English Interlinear Editions have "walking," CEV, GN, NCV "walking by," ESV, LB, NET, NLT "walked by," HCSB, 1984, 2011 NIVs "pass-ing by," JB "passed," NJB "went past," NRSV "walk by," RV, ASV, RSV, 1977, 1995 NASV, NKJV "walked"

In sum, of the 8 pre-1611 Bibles and the 25 post-1611 Versions, 33 Versions in all, 28 essentially agree with the AV1611 reading "walked" John 1:36, implying that the Lord was not by-passing the disciples. At most 5, HCSB, 1984, 2011 NIVs, JB, NJB, imply –wrongly, see Question 2 - that He was. NIV supporters therefore appear to be in a minority with respect to John 1:36, even amongst their fellow apostates, though, typically, they are with present-day Rome.

The Lord was not by-passing the others in John 1:36 as the NIVs imply. He was open to unconstrained enquirers as John 1:37-38 show in contrast to when the disciples had to show commitment for the Lord to reside with them. Where the scripture must indicate passed by it does so."³²

36b John is saying "My ministry is winding down (as he would say in John 3:30). The Messiah has been revealed so stop following me and follow Him instead!" What a man John must have been, to willingly

³² Alan O'Reilly.

dismantle his own church to help build a church of a better and greater man! Are we sure John really was “the Baptist?” Baptists don’t usually do that! We believe that our ministries are going to go on forever and that it is some sign of failure if our ministry ends, if we shut down our church or come off the “revival road” or come home from the mission field. But this is not always the case. Some ministries may be temporary. They fulfill a certain ministry for a certain period of time and then they end, and God would have it so.

Ministries may end but they may also change. Your pastorate may end at one church only to have God call you to another. God may shift you from one mission field to another. Or God may take you from an evangelistic ministry to a Bible teaching ministry. These are also valid if they come from God.

Change is the only constant in life. Change is opposed to stagnation. Everything changes and goes through transitions. My father was in the Air Force and he retired when I was 11 years old. During those years, we moved every year, from Maryland to Ohio to Virginia to Alabama to Texas to Idaho. That doesn’t include deployments to Newfoundland, Greenland and Vietnam. Military personnel understand this. But ministers sometimes expect to be in the same ministry for the rest of their lives and think it a failure on their part if they are not. We must always be open to will of God in our lives and the changes that it brings. We must be ready to embrace such changes if they are of God instead of fighting them or thinking badly of them.

Ministers must also know when to step down. Many pastors keep pastoring long past the time they should have retired. They do not want to give up their ministries. But when they past the “prime vision” of their ministries and enter into the “past vision”, it is time for them to step aside and turn the ministry over to a younger man whom they can mentor. My former pastor served in his church for 55 years and he probably should have stepped down ten years earlier than he did. There were enough younger men in the church and associated with the church whom they could have called who were familiar with the ministry and the transition would have been seamless. (That church called a man from outside the ministry who was a complete disaster, but that is another story!) This pastor wound up simply preaching sermons he recycled from years past and had no new fresh messages or insights. It was a sad thing to notice. Blessed is the preacher who knows when it is time for him to step down and does it. But pride prevents us from doing this because we want to keep preaching and it may be all we know how to do and if we stepped down, we wouldn’t know what to do with ourselves. We also fight this because it is an acknowledgement that we are growing old. John R. Rice and Bob Jones Sr were the same way. They wanted to keep having “city wide evangelistic crusades” when their time was long past and when they were in no physical or mental condition to continue them. It is hard to “retire” but even then, the preacher can move into a new ministry that he might be better suited to do. May God help me to realize when it is time for me to step down from my pastorate and may He help me not to be so stubborn, arrogant or proud to keep preaching and pastoring when I should be accepting the will of God and the reality of my situation and move onto a new ministry. I’ve been in my current ministry for 26 ½ years. I do not know how much longer God will keep me here. Until I die? I must be ready for either to move or to stay.

My testimony is probably similar to that of other preachers:

1. Church planting in Centreville, Maryland, 1989-1990.
2. Serving in various capacities at Maryland Baptist Bible College, Elkton, Maryland, 1989-1998.
3. Working at radio station WOEL-FM in Elkton, Maryland, 1986-1998.
4. Pastor at Charity Baptist Church, Mebane, North Carolina, 1993-1994. I think this church no longer exists.
5. Working on staff, Maranatha Baptist Church, Elkton, Maryland, 1994-1998. This included serving as Academic Dean at Maryland Baptist Bible College and Theological Seminary.
6. Pastor at Grace Baptist Church, Smyrna, Delaware, 1998-present.
7. What is next, when are where? I do not know as of 2025.

36c Also see John 1:29.

1:37 And the two disciples^a heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

37a This would be Andrew (John 1:40). We are not told who the second disciple was. Maybe it was John? He never identifies himself by name in his gospel.

10. Andrew and Peter 1:38-42

1:38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye?^a They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,)^b where dwellest thou?^c

38a “Why did Jesus ask ‘what’ not ‘who’ are you seeking (John 1:38)?

Individuals in Jesus’ day and immediately afterwards were interested in “eternal life” Matthew 19:16, Mark 10:17, 30, Luke 10:25, 18:18, John 3:15, 5:39, 6:54, 68, 10:28, 17:2, Acts 13:48, 12 references in all.

Men asked Jesus about “eternal life.” “And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?” Matthew 19:16.

Jesus commanded men to search the scriptures for “eternal life” in Him. “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me” John 5:39.

Jesus spoke “the words of eternal life” John 6:68 to the multitudes. “Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day” John 6:54.

The apostles preached “eternal life” to Gentiles, many of whom gladly received it. “And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed” Acts 13:48.

“Eternal life” is still the real big issue. It is only in the Lord Jesus Christ. Keep preaching it!

“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life” John 6:47.

“And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” 1 John 5:11-12.”³³

38b They recognized Jesus as a teacher.

38c They were very interested in Jesus as per John’s testimony of Him and wanted to spend more time with Him.

1:39 He saith unto them, Come and see.^a They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day:^b for it was about the tenth hour.^c

39a A great invitation! Don’t take my word for it, come and see for yourself! “Come and see” and “Follow me” (John 1:43) sum up New Testament salvation.

Sometimes we do more harm than good in our evangelism with our memorized verses, our planned presentations and our clever arguments. Just invite the sinner to “come and see”. Study it out for yourself. If a sinner is saved, you want him saved because he came, he saw and he believed in Christ, not because you managed to wrangle some sort of profession out of him after a ten-minute “cold call” presentation on his front porch. The problem with “come and see” is that it takes time to do its work in the heart of the sinner and modern evangelism is extremely impatient.

³³ Alan O’Reilly.

39b We're not told where this was or what kind of a dwelling Jesus was staying in at this time.

39c 10:00 AM in Roman time.

1:40 One of the two which heard John speak,^a and followed him, was Andrew,^b Simon Peter's brother.

40a Not "saw John do any miracles" as John did no miracle (John 10:41). They heard John speak and they responded. Spoken words, full of the power of the Holy Spirit, are more powerful than miracles.

40b "Andrew was characteristically the man who was prepared to take the second place. Again and again, he is identified as Simon Peter's brother. It is clear that he lived under the shadow of Peter. People might not know who Andrew was, but everyone knew Peter; and when men spoke of Andrew they described him as Peter's brother. Andrew was not one of the "inner circle" of the disciples. When Jesus healed Jairus' daughter, when he went up to the Mount of Transfiguration, when he underwent his temptation in Gethsemane, it was Peter, James and John whom he took with him. It would have been so easy for Andrew to resent this. Was he not one of the first two disciples who ever followed Jesus? Did Peter not owe his meeting with Jesus to him? Might he not reasonably have expected a foremost place in the apostolic band? But all that never even occurred to Andrew. He was quite content to stand back and let his brother have the limelight; he was quite content to play a humble part in the company of the Twelve. To Andrew matters of precedence and place and honour mattered nothing at all. All that mattered was to be with Jesus and to serve him as well as he could. Andrew is the patron saint of all who humbly and loyally and ungrudgingly take the second place.

"Andrew is characteristically the man who was always introducing others to Jesus. There are only three times in the gospel story when Andrew is brought into the centre of the stage. There is this incident here, in which he brings Peter to Jesus. There is the incident in Jn. 6:8-9 when he brings to Jesus the boy with the five loaves and two small fishes. And there is the incident in Jn. 12:22 when he brings the enquiring Greeks into the presence of Jesus. It was Andrew's great joy to bring others to Jesus. He stands out as the man whose one desire was to share the glory. He is the man with the missionary heart. Having himself found the friendship of Jesus, he spent all his life in introducing others to that friendship. Andrew is our great example in that he could not keep Jesus to himself."³⁴

It's important to be willing to be "second fiddle" for they can have vital ministries in support roles. Everyone needs to "learn his place", either in the ministry or on a sports team or in business. Problems arise when we get ambitious and try to do things we are not called to do or are not ready to do or are not equipped to do. Andrew understood his role. He was invaluable to the disciples, he realized that he was never going to be "top dog" and he was willing to accept that.

1:41 He^a first findeth his own brother^b Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ.^{c-d}

41a Emphatic.

41b The first "brother and brother" incident in the New Testament is contrary to the first "brother and brother" incident in the Old Testament, where Cain murdered Abel. Here, one brother takes to himself the responsibility of being his "brother's keeper". He goes and finds him, not to kill him as Cain did, but to introduce him to Jesus Christ. We have no record of Andrew preaching or doing any miracles or

³⁴ William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible: The Gospel of John*, volume 1, pages 89-90.

writing any great books or inspired Scripture, but he did lead his brother Peter to Christ, and we all know how that turned out!

41c Compare with John 1:45. This is another act of evangelism, which is one man simply telling another man what he knows, had seen and heard regarding Christ. That is all that is required- nothing fancy or more elaborate than this. Here, Jesus is referred to as “the Messiah”. In Verse 45, He is called “him of whom Moses...did write”. Andrew did not have to go to a “soul-winning seminar” and spend \$250 for a stack of notebooks on “how to lead someone to Christ”. He simply went and told someone and that is all that is really required. Many churches have turned witnessing into a formula, with memorized scripts and responses. The cults (such as the Jehovah Witnesses” and telemarketers do the same thing.

Andrew did a small thing. All he did was tell his brother about Christ. But even these simple things are of great importance in the Kingdom. Many people can’t do much but everyone can do something. Not everyone can go to the missionary field or pastor a church or travel as an evangelist or write commentaries. Those are “great” things. But everyone can pray. Anyone can tell a brother or a friend about Christ. We should never despise the “small things” (Zechariah 4:10). All the Jewish maid did in 2 Kings 5 was to tell Naaman that there was a prophet in Israel who could cure him of his leprosy. That led to his healing and salvation. All Andrew did was tell his bother Peter about the gospel and Peter got saved, would be a leader in the early church and would write two books of Scripture. All Philip did was to tell Nathaniel that they had found the Messiah (John 1:45) and he got saved.

All Edward Kimball did was to go into a shoe store and witness to one of the clerks, but D. L. Moody got saved and he may have been responsible for a million others to be saved. Never despise a small ministry, a small church or an obscure task. You never know what impact one man passing out tracts on the street may have.

Robert Murray McCheyne’s brother was instrumental to him getting saved. Brothers and sisters can be a powerful witness in the salvation of siblings.

Every time we see Andrew, he is bringing someone to Christ

1. John 1:41 Peter, personal work
2. John 6:8 A child, children's ministry
3. John 12:20-22 Greeks, foreign missions

41d The Bishop’s Bible has “the anointed”.

1:42 And he brought him to Jesus.^a And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou^b art Simon the son of Jona: thoub shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone.^{cde}

42a Simon brought Peter to Jesus. This is a great example of personal evangelism- one man simply telling another man about Jesus. This is how it is done- no fancy programs or memorized scripts- just telling what you know and letting the Holy Spirit do the rest.

42b Emphatic.

42c A re-naming, as Peter is also given the name of Cephas, although he was generally known as Peter. Peter was not quite the spiritual “rock” in his leadership abilities at this point, but he would grow and develop into the kind of leader the early church would need later. Peter’s personality was hard, firm and unyielding. Yet this stony personality had to be refined by the Master Stonemason.

“In the ancient world nearly everyone had two names. Greek was the universal language and

nearly everyone had a name in his own native tongue, by which he was known to his friends. Thomas was the Aramaic and Didymus the Greek for a twin; Tabitha was the Aramaic and Dorcas the Greek for a gazelle. Sometimes the Greek name was chosen because it sounded like the Aramaic name. A Jew who was called Eliakim or Abel in his own tongue might become Alcimus or Apelles to his Greek circle of acquaintances. So then Peter and Cephas are not different names; they are the same name in different languages...But the great thing about this story is that it tells us how Jesus looks at men. He does not only see what a man is; he also sees what a man can become. He sees not only the actualities in a man; he also sees the possibilities. Jesus looked at Peter and saw in him not only a Galilean fisherman but one who had it in him to become the rock on which his church would be built. Jesus sees us not only as we are, but as we can be; and he says: "Give your life to me, and I will make you what you have it in you to be." Once someone came on Michelangelo chipping away with his chisel at a huge shapeless piece of rock. He asked the sculptor what he was doing. "I am releasing the angel imprisoned in this marble," he answered. Jesus is the one who sees and can release the hidden hero in every man."³⁵

42d Names often reflect the character of the person in Scripture. When someone is given a new name, it often shows they have been saved and a new nature and character has been planted and will be developed. If any man in Christ is a new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17), then he would also receive a new name. The Roman Catholic church does this in "Confirmation", where the person being confirmed is supposed to give themselves a new name as they supposedly receive the Holy Spirit when they are confirmed.

The Lord changes the name of a number of people in Scripture:

1. Abram to Abraham
2. Sarai to Sarah
3. Jacob to Israel

AV	ESV	LSV
42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas , which is by interpretation, A stone .	42 He brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, "You are Simon the son of John. You shall be called Cephas" (which means Peter).	42 He brought him to Jesus. When Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of John; you shall be called Cephas" (which is translated Peter).

42d The ESV and LSV has "Peter", but what does "Peter" mean? They don't say.

11. Philip and Nathanel 1:43-51

1:43 The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.^{ab}

43a This is a very simple but powerful call. No promises of wealth, honor, fame or success. Just a simple "follow me". But there was something so compelling in the personality of Christ that these two words was all that was required.

The **"Come and see"** of John 1:39 and the **"Follow me"** of John 1:43 are good summations of the gospel invitations of Christ.

³⁵ William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible: The Gospel of John*, volume 1, page 90.

43b The problem with evangelism is what do you do with the converts? You hope they attend a good church and start to grow spiritually but that is not always the case. Sometimes you get just a verbal profession with no real change of heart. People may make a profession in the heat of an emotional moment that quickly wears off. Some may have no good church to attend or may start going to a weak or compromised church where they will end up servicing the apostasy. The cults may pick off some of the converts. They have a true gift of spotting a young convert who is not able to defend themselves against their errors. Only a handful will truly go on with God. Look at all the multitudes that followed Jesus at various times in His ministry. Yet there were only a handful of people at the cross. The Parable of the Sower describes all this in more detail (Matthew 13:1-23).

1:44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida,^a the city of Andrew and Peter.

44a The “house of vision.” He certainly was a man who had a vision for others.

1:45 Philip findeth Nathanael,^a and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.^b

45a May be the same as Bartholomew (Matthew 10:3).

45b Compare with John 1:41. This is another act of evangelism, one man simply telling another man what he knows, had seen and heard regarding Christ. That is all that is required- nothing fancy or more elaborate than this. Here, Jesus is referred to as him of whom Moses...did write”. In verse 41, He is called “the Messiah”.

1:46 And Nathanael said unto him. Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?^a Philip saith unto him, Come and see.^b

46a There was regional prejudices in Israel, just like anywhere else. The “cultured” Judean south had a prejudice against the hicks who lived up north in Galilee. If this had taken place in America today, we would say “Can any good thing come out of West Virginia (insert any other region).” As one preacher said, “The only good thing that came out of the state of Georgia was Interstate 85!” To this day, the Yankees and the Southerners still have trouble getting along. Jesus grew up in the “backwaters” of Israel, in a region that did not have a good reputation. Jesus had to struggle against the prejudice that He was illegitimate and that He came from a backwater, despised region of Israel. The Father saw to it that His Son, while on earth, had no pride of place as a man. Nathanael is saying “Can this Jesus be any good if He comes out of Nazareth?”

46b This is how you deal with objections. Don’t argue. Just tell the skeptic “come and see for yourself!”

1:47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!^{ab}

47a Jesus was throwing back Nathaniel’s remark about Jesus coming from Nazareth in verse 46. But how did Jesus know that Nathanael said that, as Jesus was not there, and no one could have told Him? This is what Nathanael asks in the next verse.

AV

ESV

LSV

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

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward him and said of him, **"Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!"**

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and *said about him, **"Behold, truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!"**

47b The ESV and LSV have "deceit".

1:48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree,^a I saw thee.^b

48a Nathaniel was sitting under the only tree Jesus ever cursed. That tree was a symbol of unconverted national Israel (Matthew 24:32,33 **"Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors."**). It was the original universal symbol for a sinner trying to hide his sins behind self-righteousness, a sin both Nathanael and Israel suffered from.

48b This is a declaration of the omniscience and omnipresence of Jesus, attributes He retained while on earth.

1:49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.^a

49a It didn't take much to convince Nathanael! But more should have been required. Nathanael is like so many today. They see one sign and they declare themselves believers. But it would be better if he would have given such a testimony as a result of having heard Jesus preach. Converts who become Christians because of some experience or some sign generally does not make very strong followers.

1:50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.^a

50a No doubt he would- and did!

1:51 And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open,^a and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.^{bc}

51a Twelve times the heavens were opened:

1. Genesis 7:11, the rains of the Flood begin
2. Isaiah 24:18 associated with tribulation judgments
3. Ezekiel 1:1, with his first vision
4. Malachi 3:10, God pouring out a blessing
5. Matthew 3:16, the baptism of Jesus
6. Mark 1:10, the baptism of Jesus
7. Luke 3:21, the baptism of Jesus
8. John 1:51, the baptism of Jesus
9. Acts 7:56 at the death of Stephen

- 10. Acts 10:11 at Peter's vision of the Gentiles and the Church
- 11. Revelation 4:1, associated with the rapture
- 12. Revelation 19:11, associated with the second coming

51b Not sure what event Jesus is referring to here unless it is a reference to the Second Coming or the Millennial reign of Christ. This is also similar to Jacob's vision in Genesis 28:12 **"And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it."**

51c "Son of man" is used 197 times in Scripture. It was used by the Lord to Ezekiel 92 times. It is used 33 times in Matthew, 15 times in Mark, 26 times in Luke and 11 times in John.

John Chapter 2

12. The Wedding At Cana 2:1-11

2:1 And the third day^a there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee;^b and the mother of Jesus was there:^{c-d}

1a This must be the third day after the events that closed out chapter 1.

1b Christ's first miracle does not take place in Jerusalem or in Rome before Caesar or the grand religious leaders but in a backwater little town at a wedding. Cana was about 12 miles north of Nazareth.

1c Mary. She may have been a friend of the couple or maybe related to them. It is interesting that John does call her by name here.

1d There is no mention of Joseph. He must have been dead at this time, leaving Mary a widow with at least seven children. Jesus, as the oldest, would have had the responsibility in taking care of Mary and making sure His younger siblings were taken care of.

2:2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.^{abcd}

2a If Mary was invited, it would make sense that her eldest son would also be invited, or "called", almost as if it was expected that He would be there and that it would be considered an insult and a breach of decorum if He did not attend.

2b We see the high value Jesus put on marriage by the fact that He did His public miracle at one. What a great start to a marriage when Jesus is called to it!

2c We can be absolutely certain that this was a traditional, "real" wedding, between a man and a woman. The current politically-correct fad of so-called "same sex marriage" and "alternative forms of marriage" is totally foreign to Scripture and Jesus never would have supported it during His earthly ministry.

2d Not an actual marriage ceremony as we have today for the Jews did not practice that. This was the wedding feast, which could last as long as 7 days. The modern idea of the "marriage ceremony" that made the marriage "official" was not known in Israel. There was no "ceremony" in the Jewish wedding. The marriage was "official" when the couple came together as husband and wife in the marriage bed.

2:3 And when they wanted wine,^a the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.^b

3a They ran out of wine, which would have turned this happy occasion into a disaster. Someone did not plan ahead very well or they had more guests arrive than they expected. Nothing is worse than a wedding where everything, including the catering, goes wrong.

3b It was almost as if she expected Jesus to do something. What did she expect, or hope, that Jesus would do?

2:4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman,^a what have I to do with thee?^b mine hour is not yet come.^c

4a This was not disrespectful, but it was actually quite respectful. It was common to refer to women, even your mother, with this term, even in a public setting. But Jesus never calls Mary “Mother” in the Gospels, as if not to encourage the Roman Catholic idolatry of her and her elevation to demigod status.

4b “What do you expect me to do?” or “What do you want me to do about it?”

4c The hour for His manifestation to the world as the Messiah? Jesus was not planning on using a wedding to make that kind of announcement.

2:5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.^a

5a This is Mary’s only recorded command in Scripture and her last recorded words. Jesus never told anyone to do any of the following:

1. Worship Mary or pray to her. Every Roman Catholic violated this command!
2. Obey any pope. Every Roman Catholic violated this command!
3. Pray the rosary or do any religious devotion to Mary. The Bible knows nothing of rosaries and novenas.
4. Persecute people who don’t agree with you. Every Roman Catholic and many Protestants violated this command!
5. For Christians to get involved in politics. How many Baptists have stumbled here?
- 6.. Baptize babies. Every Catholic and Protestant violated this.
7. Go to church on Saturday. Out go the Judaizers, the Messianic Christian groups and Seventh-Day Adventists.
8. Treat Sunday as the Sabbath. Many Protestants and Baptists have fallen into this error for failing to make the proper distinctions between Israel and the Church Since they say that the Church is Israel today, they assume the Jewish Sabbath is also transferred over to the Church. Yet they do not practice the penalties for Sabbath violations, such as stonings (Numbers 15). Yet we are told to treat Sunday in the same way the Jews treat the Sabbath.

That is about 1/50th of the list.

2:6 And there were set there six waterpots of stone,^a after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins^b apiece.

6a A lot of ink and paper have been wasted over trying to figure out some meaning behind the “six waterpots”. The significance is that there were six waterpots, not five or seven. A lot of people were present, so a lot of water was needed for the ceremonial washings. The emphasis on typology can go too far sometimes. They were used for the ceremonial washings, as the Jews eat not except that they wash often (Mark 7:3 “**For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.**”).

6b This is anywhere from 7-9 gallons.

2:7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

**2:8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast.^{a-b}
And they bare it.**

8a Don't sit there and gawk at it, put the miracle to a good and practical use!

8b The "governor" was the one in charge of the feast, to make sure there was enough food and drink and that everything went smoothly.

2:9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine,^{a-b} and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

9a This was a quiet miracle. There was no public demonstration, and Jesus did nothing over the water, such as waving His hands over it or anything. There was no ceremony. He did not do as Naaman though Elisha should have done, to come out, and stand, and call on the name of God, (2 Kings 5:11 **"But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leper."**). No, Christ stands in his place, says not a word, but wills the thing, and so works it.

9b Moses turned water to blood in Exodus 7:17-25. The "Prophet Like Unto Moses" does it by turning water into wine, which is a type of the blood of Christ. But that was not the first public miracle of Moses. That came earlier in Exodus 7 when he threw down his staff and it turned into a serpent. But where Moses' first miracle was before Pharaoh, Christ's first miracle was done quietly in a back-room area at a wedding.

2:10 And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.^{ab}

10a The devil and his world system always lure you in with the good stuff first, that which is attractive, seductive, desirable. Satan knows how to bait the hook. But once the sinner is hooked, Satan begins to water down the wine until it is straight vinegar served in hell. God does it just in the reverse. He gives us great stuff at first, but then He keeps adding to it and giving us better and better, until we get to heaven. Then He really starts giving us better and better!

10b This had to be either non-alcoholic or very low alcohol content wine. With all the Old Testament prohibitions against drunkenness, it would be hard to image Jesus serving up fermented hooch that would have resulted in people becoming drunk (see Habakkuk 2:15 for just one example! **"Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!"**)

Every drunk and "sneaky pete" in town knows where this passage is as well as 1 Timothy 5:23 (**"Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities."**), even if they can't locate any other verse of Scripture.

Bitter, self-righteous ex-Fundamentalists who are forever railing against the "IFB Movement" (social media is full of such people) mock those of us who maintain that this was non-alcoholic wine. There is no reason why Jesus would create alcoholic wine in the light of all the warnings against

alcoholic beverages that He gave, such as in Proverbs 20:1 (“**Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise.**”); Proverbs 23:29-35 (“**Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine. Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder. Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast. They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.**”); Proverbs 31:4 (“**It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink:**”); Hosea 4:11 (“**Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart.**”); 1 Corinthians 6:10 (“**Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.**”); Ephesians 5:18 (“**And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;**”). I think many of these believers who fell away from stronger, previous stands against alcohol now are looking for an excuse or a justification to drink alcoholic wine or beer or whiskey. They accuse us of legalism for insisting on non-alcoholic wine, as they want some Biblical justification to drink alcohol.

This is a basis for why we insist on non-alcoholic in the Lord’s Supper as fermentation is a breaking down of the chemical elements of grape juice and is a type of decay and corruption. New wine typifies the sinlessness of the blood of Christ where churches who use alcoholic wine show they believe that the blood of Christ was corrupted by sin.

Why would Jesus make alcoholic wine for a wedding feast? The last thing anyone wants is a bunch of drunken louts ruining a wedding feast.

Children and young people were also in attendance at the feast. Would Jesus provide alcoholic wine to them? Would He do it with anyone in the light of Habakkuk 2:15 (“**Woe unto him that giveth his neighbour drink, that puttest thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!**”)

The pro-alcohol crowd still cannot prove that Jesus would provide alcoholic wine instead of new wine and still cannot explain why Jesus would do so in the first place. Many of them are looking for an excuse to drink alcoholic beverages and still remain a “good Christian” so they invent the teaching that Jesus created alcoholic wine here. That gives them their justification to drink alcoholic beverages.

2:11 This beginning of miracles^a did Jesus in Cana of Galilee,^b and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.^{cde}

AV	ESV	LSV
11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.	11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.	11 Jesus did this in Cana of Galilee as the beginning of <i>His</i> signs, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

11a The ESV and LSV use “signs” instead of “miracles”. Also in 2:23.

1

1d The ESV and LSV has “in him”.

11b There were no childhood miracles of Jesus. This was His first and that means He did none before this.

11c The miracle was more for the benefit of the disciples, to generate faith in them. Although they “believed”, they obviously still had a long way to go.

11e “Since this was Jesus’ first recorded miracle, it is interesting to note that no less than six Greek words were used in the New Testament concerning miracles.

1. Teras. In this word the miracle is regarded as a startling, imposing, amazement-waking event. This word never occurs alone in the New Testament, for our attention is not primarily directed to the result of the miracle or that which the miracle produces. Compare John 4:48 and Acts 2:19 where teras is “wonders.”

2. Semeion. When applied to a miracle, this word implies that the miracle is an indication of some power or meaning behind it to which the miracle is secondary in importance. It is used seventeen times in John’s Gospel (2:11, 18, 23; 3:2; 4:48, 54; 6:2, 14, 26, 30; 7:31; 9:16; 10:41; 11:47; 12:18, 37; 20:30).

3. Dynamis. This word emphasizes the power revealed in the performance of the miracle and implies the spiritual energy that produced it. Compare Matthew 7:22; 11:20, where this word occurs as “miracles.”

4. Endoxos. This term emphasizes miracles as being works in which the glory of God and of the Son of God shines manifestly forth. Compare Luke 13:17, where this word is “glorious things.”

5. Paradoxos. This word is used only in Luke 5:26, where it is translated “strange things.” It refers to that which is contrary to the order of the natural world and to that which is strange to the usual current of thought.

6. Thaumastos. This word is used of something that provokes wonder. It occurs only in Matthew 21:15, where it is rendered “wonderful things.”³⁶

13. The First Cleansing of the Temple 2:12-17

2:12 After this he went down to Capernaum,^a he,^b and his mother,^c and his brethren,^d and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.

12a “Capernaum was a city of some considerable importance. It was there that Matthew sat at the “tax office” collecting taxes, possibly on the fish caught in the lake, among other things (Matt 9:9). It was the home of a high-ranking government official (John 4:46). A Roman centurion with his detachment of soldiers also lived there. Their residence was long and significant enough for the centurion to have provided a synagogue for the local Jewish congregation. The question our Lord asked of Capernaum, “Will you be exalted to heaven?” seemingly refers to the city’s attitude of pride and his severe condemnation of the place seems to have been fulfilled in the most literal sense as evidenced by the difficulty of discovering and identifying the site now (Matt 11:23; Luke 10:15).

“Jesus seems to have made Capernaum His headquarters in Galilee after leaving Nazareth, possibly because it was a larger population center, possibly because several of His disciples had their homes there (Matt 4:13). It was near this place that he called the fishermen (Matt 4:18; Mark 1:16; Luke 5:1) and the tax-collector (Matt 9:9ff.; Mark 2:13ff.; Luke 5:27ff.) into His service. Many “mighty works” were done in Capernaum including the healing of the centurion’s servant (Matt 8:5–13; Luke 7:1–10), the nobleman’s son (John 4:46–54), Peter’s mother-in-law (Matt 8:14, 15; Mark 1:29–31; Luke 4:38, 39) and the paralytic (Matt 9:2–8; Mark 2:1–12; Luke 5:17–26). It was prob. also in Capernaum that He raised the daughter of Jairus (Matt 9:18–26; Mark 5:21–43; Luke 8:40–56). Here he also cast out the unclean spirit (Mark 1:21–34; Luke 4:31–41) and used the little child to teach humility (Matt 18:1–5;

³⁶ J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Christ*, page 117.

Mark 9:33–37; Luke 9:46–50).³⁷

12b Emphatic.

12c Again, Mary is not mentioned by name.

12d Not “cousins” as the Catholics insist to maintain their fiction of the “perpetual virginity of Mary” but literal additional children of Mary and Joseph.

1. Matthew 13:55 **“Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?”**

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

2:13 And the Jews' passover^{ab} was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,^c

13a John uses the term “The Jews’ Passover” to indicate that it was not God’s Passover. What started as the “Lord’s Passover” in Exodus 12:11 had degenerated and been corrupted into the “Jew’s Passover”. The decline of the national worship of Israel in Jesus’ time had left the observance of the Passover an empty shell of its former glory. The activity and the conditions around the temple during the Passover observance shows the decline and apostasy of Israel during this time.

13b This is the first of four Passovers mentioned in John (2:23, 5:1, 6:4, 13:1).

13c Literally, as Jerusalem was on a plateau. You would always go “up” when you went to Jerusalem.

2:14 And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:^a

14a A lot of “cottage industries” had developed around the temple. Since animal sacrifices were required and since many Jews came from a distance, bringing their sacrifices with them was impractical, so vendors sent up to sell the necessary animals. But to buy them, the proper temple currency had to be used. This temple currency was not in general circulation in Israel, as it was only used around the temple. Money-changers set up booths in and around the temple to convert the currency in general use to temple currency, with a “cut on the side” to the money changer. Many of the visiting Jews came from outside Israel and only carried heathen money which could not be used in the temple, so it had to be converted to temple currency. When one walked into the temple, it resembled a Persian Market, with vendors, stalls and hawkers all in abundance. Any spiritual activity was drowned out by all of the commercial activity.

If you have ever travelled into a foreign country, you will experience this to a lesser degree when you go to a duty-free store to convert your American money into the local currency. I have done this many times while travelling to Canada.

2:15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;^{ab}

³⁷ Gleason L. Archer, “Capernaum,” *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, volume 2, pages 747-748.

15a And no one stopped Him! One man, greatly outnumbered, cleared out the whole mess. This shows the power of Christ's righteous indignation and that none could withstand Him. Naturally speaking, He could have been easily overpowered but no one had the power to do it. No doubt many of the pilgrims there who were not part of the temple industry supported what Jesus did here as well, so He would have had some supporters. Jesus was angry but His anger was a righteous anger as the glory of His Father was being trampled upon by the Almighty Drachma (or whatever unit of currency you care to name).

15b This cleansing would be repeated at the end of Christ's ministry in Matthew 21. As soon as Jesus left town, the religious businessmen went right back to their trade. Nothing had improved in the three years separating these cleansings. Revival is designed to recover churches and nations that have gone cold, formalistic or apostate. If works, but the problem with revival is that it must be continually repeated because the next generation forgets the workings of God in the generation of their fathers (the "Second Generation Syndrome" of Judges 2). God visited the temple here and cleansed it but it didn't last long. As soon as the Lord left Jerusalem, the situation reversed back. God visited America in numerous occasions (First Great Awakening, Second Great Awakening, Third Great Awakening/revivals in the armies during the Civil War, the Fundamentalist revivals of the 1870s-1890s) yet they were all forgotten, and the lessons neglected. America (as of this writing in 2025) is now in the longest period of her national history without a revival or a visitation of God. He already gave us at least four chances in history. Why offer us another chance if we are only going to squander it again?

2:16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.^{ab}

16a Many "churches" are nothing more than markets, selling all manner of books, tapes, videos, instead of freely giving that which they have freely received. The "house of God" was nothing more than a "house of merchandise" instead of a "house of prayer and worship".

16b Even with the apostasy and the deadness of the Jewish religion, God would still own this temple, at least until He allowed it to be destroyed in A.D. 70. Jesus was still jealous enough over it to defend it and purify it.

2:17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.^a

17a This is quoted from Psalm 69:9. Christ did angry when there was a good reason to be. Anger is not a sin, but it is dangerous for us because our anger is often based on the fact that we were hurt, offended, rejected, inconvenienced, something that offended our pride. When Christ got angry, Self and pride did not enter into it, but rather His holy jealousy over the things that pertained to the Father.

14. "Destroy This Temple" 2:18-22

2:18 Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?^a

18a "Just who do you think you are that you can wander into the temple and disrupt everything? What is the basis of your authority for doing this?" The Jews do require a sign (1 Corinthians 1:22) and so they had a right to ask for one, especially from this person who had dared to take on the entire religious

establishment of His day, armed only with a whip.

2:19 Jesus answered and said unto them,^a Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.^{bc}

19a Jesus gives no sign or miracle as His authorization. He only gives a prophecy of the resurrection, which is the only sign Israel would get (Matthew 12:39, 40).

19b Not the temple, as it was commonly misunderstood and misreported during His trial (Mark 14:58 **"We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands."**). He was referring to the temple of his physical body, which, when destroyed by the death of His crucifixion (John 2:21), would be raised up, or resurrected, three days later. His resurrection would be the sign He would give them to demonstrate His authority for cleansing the temple. After all, it was dedicated to the worship of His Father, so Jesus would have every right as the Son of God to make sure it was fulfilling its intended purpose.

19c This is a clear prophecy of His resurrection after they would kill Him.

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

"temple" The LSV does not like temples, usually translating it as "sanctuary".

2:20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?^b

20a Emphatic.

20b Again, the misunderstanding, as they thought He was referring to that physical temple. But He made no attempt to clear up any of the confusion and misunderstanding- He let it stand.

2:21 But he^a spake of the temple of his body.^b

21a Emphatic. John gives the correct interpretation that the "learned doctors" all missed. Jesus was clearly talking about His resurrection three days after His death.

21b Paul will use the same idea of the body being God's temple:

1. 1 Corinthians 3:16,17 **"Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are."**
2. 1 Corinthians 6:19 **"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?"**
3. 2 Corinthians 6:16 **"And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and**

I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

2:22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.^a

22a They did not understand His words at the time. It would take three years and His death for them to finally understand. Even after His resurrection, they would still slow to believe (Luke 24:25).

15. The Results of The Cleansing 2:23-25

2:23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles^a which he did.^b

23a The ESV uses “signs”.

23b Another purpose of His miracles- to stimulate faith in the claims of Christ. But you know that none of the religious hypocrites who asked for a sign in 2:18 believed even when they saw all the signs and miracles He did. Christ gave them more signs than they could tote home in a wheelbarrow, and they still murdered Him.

2:24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men.

2:25 And needed not that any should testify of man: for he^a knew what was in man.^{bc}

25a Emphatic.

25b Christ knew the crowds were fickle. He put no trust or confidence in the masses. Just see how many abandoned in at the end of John 6 because His teachings were too hard. The crowds followed Him and praised him? Where were these same people when He was standing before Pilate? Calling for His blood and demanding that Barabbas be released instead of Jesus. Jesus understood fallen human nature better than anyone else. Jesus knows the hearts of men and knows He cannot trust them or put Himself into their care.

Also see:

1. Psalm 146:3, **“Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help.”**
2. Isaiah 30:2 **“That walk to go down into Egypt and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!”**
3. Isaiah 31:1 **“Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD!”**

Also consider that the same crowds that were crying “Hosanna!” when Christ made His entry into Jerusalem was the same crows that said “We have no king but Caesar” less than a week later. Where were the crowds who saw His miracles and heard His teachings when He needed them the most?

25c What was “in” man? Sin, pride, love of place, race, face and grace and a million other heart sins, nothing that Jesus would use for the spread of His kingdom. Galatians 5:19-21 (**“Now the works of the**

flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”) also gives a pretty good list of what is “in” man as does Romans 3:9-20. How about 1 Corinthians 6:9,10 (“**Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.**”)? No wonder men hate the Bible as the Bible is quite rough on them!

John Chapter 3

16. The New Birth 3:1-12

3:1^a, There was a man of the Pharisees,^b named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:^c

1a "Note the remarkable expansion of the text from John 2:25 to this verse. The Holy Spirit, knowing what was 'in man', is going to show you what it is in this chapter. He picks out a 'man' for examination. He picks out the best type of 'a man' who has the highest form of morals of any man at that time (Matthew 5:20). The prime example of men (see Psalm 39:5) is born wrong and cannot get right no matter what he does. He has to be born again."³⁸

1b The Pharisees were a religious party among the Jews at the time of Christ. The word comes from "perishin", the Aramaic form of the Hebrew word "perushim" meaning "separated". The chief sects among the Jews were the Pharisees, the Sadducees and the Essenes, who may be described respectively as the Formalists, the Freethinkers and the Puritans. Christ faced continual opposition from the Pharisees during His ministry and He denounced them in no uncertain terms in Matthew 15:7,8; 23:5,13-15,23; Mark 7:6; Luke 11:42-44 among other places.

The basic teaching of the Pharisees was that in addition to the written law, there was an oral law (or oral tradition) to complete, and to explain the written law, given to Moses on Mount Sinai. The first portion of the Talmud, called the Mishna or "second law", contains this oral law. It is a digest of the Jewish traditions and a compendium of the whole ritual law, and it came at length to be esteemed far above the sacred text. The Pharisees, upon the pretense of maintaining it intact, multiplied minute precepts and distinctions, to such an extent that the whole life of the Israelite was hemmed in, and burdened on every side, by instructions so numerous and trifling, that the law was almost if not wholly lost sight of. These "traditions" had long been gradually accumulating.

Of the trifling character of these regulations, innumerable instances are to be found in the Mishna. Such were their washings before they could eat bread, and the special minuteness with which the forms of this washing were prescribed; their bathing when they returned from the market; their washing of cups, pots, brazen vessels, their fastings twice in the week, and so on. Their minute and vexatious extensions of the Sabbath laws converted God's gracious ordinance of the Sabbath's rest, into a burden and a pain that was impossible to keep.

It was a major burden of Christ to teach men that true godliness consisted, not in forms, but in substance, not in outward observances, but in an inward spirit. The whole system of Pharisaic piety led to exactly opposite conclusions. The whole spirit of their religion was summed up, not in confession of sin and in humility, but in a proud self-righteousness, and religious ritual.

With all their pretenses to piety, they were avaricious, sensual, dissolute and bigoted. They devoted their energies to making converts to their own narrow views.

The Pharisees had secured the popular favor, and acquired considerable political influence. This influence was greatly increased, by the extension of the Pharisees, over the whole land, and the majority which they obtained in the Sanhedrin. Their number reached more than six thousand under the Herods. In the time of Christ, they were divided, doctrinally, into several schools, among which those of Hillel and Shammai were most important.

They appear to have believed in a resurrection of the dead, very much in the same sense as the early Christians but in opposition to the Sadducees.

³⁸ Peter Ruckman, *Ruckman Reference Bible*, page 1386.

1c Nicodemus:

1. He was one of the chief leaders of the Pharisees.
A. Only John mentions him. Matthew, Mark and Luke do not. Maybe John knew Nicodemus personally? The High Priest knew John (John 18:15 **"And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest."**) so John may have had some connections in the Sanhedrin. Some commentators think John's family may have had connections to the priesthood,
2. He was a well-known teacher.
A. John 3:10 **"Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?"**
3. Tradition says Nicodemus was the brother of Josephus and was one of the three richest men in Jerusalem.
4. He defended Jesus.
A. John 7:50-52 **"Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet."**
5. He helped Joseph with the burial of Jesus.
A. John 19:39 **"And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight."**
6. Paul was probably a lot like Nicodemus spiritually before his conversion, except we have no record of Nicodemus persecuting the church.
7. Nicodemus probably ended up as a believer although we read nothing of him in the Book of Acts.
8. Even the best of men, like Nicodemus, was "less than vanity" when it came to understanding spiritual truth. He was the best kind of man that education, culture and religion could produce, yet he would still go to hell without the new birth.
9. His name means "victor over the people".

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

2a Various reasons are given for this- we can't be sure which one is the true explanation:

1. Both were very busy men and this was the only time they could arrange a meeting.
2. Nicodemus met Christ at night because he could not afford to be seen with Him during the day due to "political considerations". This is more likely. Jesus was gaining a rather notorious reputation among the Sanhedrin, so avoid trouble, Nicodemus sought a nighttime meeting.

2b "Teacher", recognizing Him as a religious teacher and a prophet. Nicodemus had a theological question and he called Jesus "Rabbi" in that context.

2c The Sanhedrin, although they would never admit it in public.

2d Even the rankest liberal, or a Moslem (!) will admit to this, but THEY WILL NOT CALL HIM GOD! That is the "acid" test. The question is not "Is Jesus a great teacher?" but "Is He God?"

2e The miracles were doing their job- witnessing to the fact that Jesus was of God. Jesus was beginning to attract the attention of the religious leaders. They hoped that Jesus' fame would not increase to the point that the Romans would begin to take notice of Him, too (John 11:48).

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

3a The Lord cuts right to the chase. Nicodemus was trying to work up to asking Jesus questions regarding His teachings. Jesus, knowing that, anticipates what was on Nicodemus' heart. Jesus wastes no time "buttering up Nicodemus" and patting him on the back on what a nice fellow he was. Jesus hits him right between the eyes with "You must be born again!"

Jesus shows no respect regarding Nicodemus' education, training, spirituality or morality. Spiritually, Nicodemus was no better than any gutter bum and the local rescue mission.

3b Whenever the doubly "verily" appears, a great important truth is coming.

3c A spiritual rebirth. Why is it necessary? Because we were spiritually stillborn at our physical birth. We may have been born fine physically but we were born spiritually dead. Examples of this "spiritual deadness" include:

1. Psalm 51:5 **"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."**
2. Psalm 53:3 **"Every one of them is gone back: they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."**
3. Psalm 58:3 **"The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies."**
4. Romans 3:10-18 **"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes."**

Because the first birth resulted in this fatal spiritual birth defect, God requires a second birth that will give us spiritual life. Our spiritual condition is so bad that it cannot be repaired or remedied by religion, politics, education or morality. Man is beyond hope in that case. So God says that the natural man must die and be buried (the picture of water baptism) so God can start all over with him through a new birth. All you can do with the old man is crucify him. There is no reform or reformation possible with the old nature apart from the power of God (Romans 6:6 **Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.**).

3d The spiritual elements of God's kingdom, as opposed to the political Kingdom of Heaven. The Kingdom of God entails salvation and eternal life in heaven, which no man can enter into or enjoy without a new birth.

3:4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?^{ab}

4a Nicodemus, like the other religious leaders of his day, was totally ignorant of this. This truth was not being taught and was generally unknown. Even today, it is remarkable to realize how few preachers

and pastors preach on the new birth or how few believe it is necessary for salvation. He actually thought Jesus was speaking physically, that a grown man had to crawl back into his mother's womb and be physically born again! His question was asked in a good spirit, not out of mockery or unbelief. Questions asked in such a spirit will receive answers from God.

4b The teaching about a new birth should not have been strange to him. Ezekiel had spoken repeatedly about the new heart that must be created.

1. Ezekiel 18:31 **"Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"**
2. Ezekiel 36:26 **"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."**

3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily,^a I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water^b and of the Spirit,^c he cannot enter^d into the kingdom of God.^e

5a The second double verily as another great spiritual truth is coming, which is an expansion upon John 3:3.

5b Jesus adds "the water" since Nicodemus tried to tie the new birth with the physical birth. We are born of "water" physically the first time (really the womb sac fluid but it looks like water!). Before a woman goes into labor, we say her "water breaks". Since the second birth parallels the first birth, we would expect water to be present the second time. Nicodemus is thinking physically with the "water" present at that birth, so Jesus keeps that parallel. It is not water baptism as baptism pictures DEATH (Romans 6) not BIRTH! This is why in baptism the person is buried (under the water) after he confesses his faith. You bury the dead. This also shows why baptism must be by immersion upon a profession of faith.

There is no mention of water baptism anywhere in John 3. The water is a reference to the "washing of water by the word" from Ephesians 5:26. First Peter 1:23 and James 1:18 also mention that the new birth takes place through the word of God.

The water refers to the purification of the repentant sinner at the new birth through the application of the word. Water baptism has NOTHING to do with the new birth! Anyone who tries to link water baptism to the new birth is a heretic. Our first (physical) birth is a water birth, since all animal life on this earth began in water (Genesis 1:20).

Christ's blood and water bears witness (1 John 5:8) to His two natures. The "water" of the first birth then would refer to the old, carnal, Adamic nature we received at the first birth (which is the cause of all of our problems) where the Spirit of the second birth refers to the new, divine nature we receive at the new birth. The Christian then must possess "two natures" to enter the Kingdom of God! If he possesses only one nature (his old sinful nature he received from Adam through his earthly father at his physical birth), he will not be able to enter God's kingdom but will go to hell instead. But if he was two natures (the addition of the divine nature imparted by the Spirit of God at the new birth), then he was born of both "water" and of the "Spirit", is saved and will enter God's kingdom.

"Your first birth is a water birth, since all animal life on this earth began in water (Gen. 1:20). Your wife is a "fountain" (Prov. 5:16–18), and your genealogy involves "rivers" (Isa. 48:1). Your blood is 80 percent water because it came from WATER (see pp. 72). Christ's BLOOD and WATER bears witness (1 John 5:8) to His TWO natures."³⁹

³⁹ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, page 100.

5c The Holy Spirit. The New Birth is a spiritual operation, not brought about by carnal, physical or religious (ritual) means.

5d Jesus goes from “see” in John 3:3 to “enter” the kingdom in John 3:5. The unsaved man cannot either “see” (understand or comprehend) the kingdom, nor will he enter it.

5e The spiritual elements of God’s kingdom, as opposed to the political Kingdom of Heaven. The Kingdom of God entails salvation and eternal life in heaven, which no man can enter into or enjoy without a new birth.

3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh;^a and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.^{bc}

6a The first birth, where no spiritual operation is involved as it is a totally physical event

6b The new birth, by contrast, is a totally spiritual operation that does not involve any physical activity. The two births are similar in type but are not identical.

6c Like thing beget like things. Flesh cannot beget spirit nor does spirit beget flesh. A sinner can only give birth to a sinner, which would disqualify any Roman Catholic notion of any “Immaculate Conception” where Mary was supposed to have been born sinless.

3:7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.^{abc}

7a No doubt Nicodemus sat there with his mouth open, with a puzzled look on his face. He had no clue what Jesus was talking about.

7b Ye “**must**” be born again”. There is nothing optional about it if a man wants to go into God’s kingdom.

7c Every Christian ought to be able to remember his conversion experience. You may not remember the date but you should remember everything else, where you were saved and the circumstances behind it. I knew I had been born again but I could not remember the exact date. I knew it was in February, 1978, on a Tuesday evening about 9:30 pm. We had a big snowstorm that week. After some research, I was able to set the date at February 9, 1978. I was in my bedroom, listening to missionary shortwave station HCJB in Quito, Ecuador. They broadcast to North America each night in English. A preacher came on. I do not remember his name, the name of his program, or his text. I just know that at the end of his program, I repented of my sins and put my faith in Jesus Christ and was born again in my bedroom, at 103 Clearview Avenue in Charlestown Manor, Maryland.

It is troubling that there are many professing Christians who cannot remember their new birth. I have met people who cannot remember when they asked Christ to save them yet believe themselves to be saved because someone told them they were saved at a young age, usually in a Sunday School. A well-meaning teacher may have “led them to the Lord” when the student was five or six years old, yet they cannot remember it. But everyone tells them they are saved so they believe it, although they have no walk with God and no deep desire for the things of God. Yet when you witness to them, they will insist they are saved because their parents or pastor or Sunday School teach told them they are saved. Have you ever tried to deal with someone who insists they are a Christian but who show no fruit? All they have is someone’s else’s testimony! That is why we never nagged our children to get saved. When

they were ready, they would let us know.

The date of your second birth ought to be a high day in your life, marked with the same care as your physical birthday. Your physical birthday got you into the world. Your second birthday gets you into heaven. Mark both birthdays with reverence and thanksgiving.

Remember as well, a new birth means a new life. Old things are passed away and all things become new as in 2 Corinthians 5:17. Act like it! A new way of life reflects a new birth. This is another modern problem. Too many professing Christians can mark no definite difference in their lives from before they were saved to after. Here is a simple way to determine if you are truly saved; if you have changed, then you are saved. If you haven't changed, then you haven't been saved!

3:8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.^a

8a The new birth is a mysterious operation that cannot really be explained. It is better "felt than told!" If one can explain wind currents and weather patterns, where the wind starts and where it ends up as it blows in its circuit, then one may be able to explain the operation of the Spirit in the new birth. Like the wind, you can see its effects even if you cannot explain how it works.

3:9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?^a

9a At least he is asking! He is not rejecting the new birth simply because he does not understand it or because it offended him or because it was not being taught by his denomination. That is how many professing Christians react. If they don't understand it, they reject it. Or they think the verse is mistranslated in the Authorized Version and run to another version to understand it. After all, they have a Bible College education or a doctorate in theology, so if they can't understand a Bible doctrine, they, in their pride, reject it! Or if John Calvin didn't teach it or if John R. Rice didn't teach it or if Martin Luther didn't teach it or if the school they attended didn't teach it, then they reject it as well. These people are followers of man and are not taught of the Spirit. For all his faults here, at least Nicodemus is asking questions and has a teachable spirit.

3:10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?^a

10a Now it is Jesus' turn to marvel. Here is a master in Israel, a man with a doctorate and a leading religious authority in Israel and he had no idea about any of these truths regarding salvation! How was he supposed to lead anyone to the Lord in salvation if he knew not these doctrines of salvation?

3:11 Verily, verily,^a I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

11a The third double verily in John 3, relating this time to the certainty of the witness of the truth and the need of the new birth.

3:12 If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things?^a

12a This is because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God as that man is carnal and these truths are spiritual (1 Corinthians 2:14 "**But the natural man receiveth not the things of**

the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.)”. If a man cannot get past simple arithmetic, how can he ever hope to learn algebra and calculus? Spiritually speaking, Nicodemus was a baby despite his education and reputation. If he kept stumbling over a simple and basic truth like the new birth, how could Jesus lead him into any deeper truths? Nicodemus is like the person described in Hebrews 5:11-14 (**“Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”**). He should have been a master in Israel and have a good knowledge of these truths, but he was still at the “milk” stage of his understanding (1 Peter 2:2 **“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:”**).

17.The Lifting Up Of The Son of Man 3:13,14

3:13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven,^{ab} but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.^c

13a Yet! Christ would in Acts.

13b Thus the Roman Catholic fable of the “ascension of Mary” is just another one of Rome’s lies.

13c It is not necessary for anyone to have to ascend to heaven to be saved or to get to know God, as the Son of God has taken on human form through the incarnation and has dwelt among us. Now the word is nigh us and is available to all.

AV

ESV

LSV

13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven.	13 No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.	13 “And no one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.
--	---	--

The ESV and LSV omit the final four words of this verse.

3:14 And as Moses lifted up^a the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:^b

14a This refers to Numbers 21 and the serpent on the pole. In their journey through the wilderness the people of Israel murmured and complained and regretted that they had ever left Egypt. To punish them God sent a plague of deadly, fiery serpents to bite the people. The people repented and cried for mercy. God instructed Moses to make an image of a serpent and to hold it up in the midst of the camp; and those who looked upon the serpent were healed. But later, that brazen serpent became an idol and in the days of Hezekiah had to be destroyed because people were worshipping it (2 Kings 18:4 **“He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan.”**).

After the people had another gripe session against the Lord, How God hates complaining and grumbling! It is annoying enough for man to tolerate, how much more does God despise this attitude? In response and judgment, He sent fiery (poisonous) serpents among the people, that bit many of them. After they repented and cried for relief, God told Moses to set up a serpent with a brazen serpent fixed high upon it that all could see.

14b Several lessons are shown here about salvation:

1. The cure for this disease was in the form of its cause. Moses made a brazen serpent to cure snakebite. For us, our “disease” is sin and our sinful human nature. The cure for fallen human nature was a man, the man Christ Jesus. He looked like a sinful man but He had none of the poison of sin in Him, just as the brazen serpent had no poison in it.
2. The serpent was made of brass, Brass is the metal of judgment, so there must have been a judgment involved to bring about the cure. Jesus undertook our judgment in His own body on the cross, which secured our salvation.
3. All the afflicted Jew had to do was to look at the brazen serpent to be healed of his snakebite. That was it- simply look and live! What a simple thing is this- look (in faith) and live! But that is too easy for most people. No works? No religion? No ritual? No baptism? No, for salvation, you only look to Christ and believe that He and He alone is able to remove the poison of sin from our systems that would normally kill us. This would offend too many people as being too simple. If you are bitten by a snake, you would expect a medic or a doctor to rush to you, do a lot of medical things and make a big deal over your condition. But if he just tells you to “look and live”, the natural man would reject that as not being “medical” or “scientific”. This attitude would remind us of Naaman's attitude in 2 Kings 5. He was highly upset that Elisha's servant told him to simply wash in the Jordan River to be cleansed of his leprosy. He was expecting the prophet himself to come out and make a big deal over him as he healed him. Naaman was highly offended that a servant told him to do a very simple thing. Many sinners would be similarly offended if a simple, uneducated preacher (or exhorter!) told them to skip all the religious sideshow and simply look on the cross and be healed!
4. The lookers on Moses' serpent got healing. Those who look on the cross get eternal life, which is far better!
5. Faith was involved. How silly it must have seemed to be cured of deadly snakebite by simply looking at a brazen serpent on a pole. No, you have to go to the emergency room and see a doctor and get medicine and treatment. But here, a simply look in faith and obedience brought the cure.

So as Moses lifted up that brazen serpent in the wilderness, the Father lifted up Jesus on a pole (on the cross), made in the likeness of sinful flesh, in the wilderness (this wilderness world of sin) that whosoever will look in faith would be saved.

14c Also see John 12:32; **“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”** This does not mean that all men will be saved as that is clearly not the case. All will be drawn but not all will be saved. There is no “irresistible grace” in play here, but rather that the salvation in Christ is visible to all and is available to all who will believe. Christ draws all men, not just the elect, but not all men will be saved.

18. Belief and Salvation 3:15-18

3:15 That whosoever^a believeth^b in him^c should not perish,^d but have eternal life.^e

15a This is one of the many “Whosoever's” regarding salvation. Whosoever will may come. All may believe and be saved. There is no room for any Calvinistic teaching of “unconditional election” for the

extent of the invitation and the atonement is universal.

15b Simple heart belief is required. No works, religion or ritual. Certainly not needed are water baptism or church membership or any so-called “sacraments”.

15c In Christ, His person and His work. Not in any denomination, church, preacher/teacher or theological system.

15d Perish in hell, in condemnation of one’s own sins.

AV	ESV	LSV
15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish , but have eternal life.	15 that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.	15 so that whoever believes will in Him have eternal life.

“**should not perish**” The ESV and LSV omit this phrase.

15e This is deliverance from hell, the opposite of the condemnation of eternal death. This is the result of forgiveness of sin and a removal of its condemnation through the work of Christ on the cross.

3:16^a For God^b so loved^c the world,^d that he gave^e his only^f begotten^g Son,^h that ^{whosoever} believeth in him^j **should not perish, but have everlasting life.^{klm}**

16a This is not the “gospel in a nutshell” for nothing is said of repentance from sin, which is a requirement for salvation. It summarizes the basic plan of the gospel without going into the offensive details of the nails, thorns, thirst, flogging, shame, ridicule, death, and burial.

16b The Greatest Person, the One Who starts the whole process of salvation and Who makes it possible for sinful man to be saved.

16c God’s holiness is His greatest attribute but His divine love is not far behind. But even His love is love toward His Son first, then His love toward the world of mankind.

16d The Greatest Number, the whole world. This is the entire world of sinners. The coverage of God’s love and salvation is universal. Calvinists are forced to re-interpret this as “the whole world of the elect” to force this verse to agree with their idea of limited atonement, but such a re-interpretation makes no sense at all. The Jews were guilty of a similar error and conceit. They believed that the Messiah should be sent only in love to their nation, and to advance them upon the ruins of their neighbors. But Christ tells them that he came in love to the whole world, Gentiles as well as Jews,

16e The Greatest Act. You can never do anything greater than to give, especially to give the most important and valuable possession you have. In the father’s case, he gave His only begotten Son, the greatest thing (person) to His heart.

16f God has many sons through the New Birth but He has only One Son from eternity, and that is Jesus Christ.

AV**ESV****LSV**

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

16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

16g "**begotten**" Omitted in the ESV but retained in the LSV.

16l Is there a difference between "eternal" and "everlasting" life? Defining the words:

1. Eternal- lasting or existing forever; without end or beginning.
2. Everlasting- lasting forever or a very long time.

Since the same Greek word is used, any differing shade of meaning would like in the two similar, but not identical English words. Our new life in Christ is everlasting in duration and is eternal in its nature.

16h Obviously this is Jesus Christ, the only Son of God. Here is where the Islamic "god" Allah and the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The God of the Bible has a Son and His name is Jesus. "Allah: has no son the Moslems tell us (Sura 18:4-6)." How then say so many people that Christians, Jews and Moslems worship the same God?

16i Again, there is no limit to extent of the atonement or to the offer of the gospel.

16j The Greatest Stumblingblock. Believe only in Christ, His person and His work. Not in any denomination, church, preacher/teacher or theological system. No other alternative is given for salvation besides Christ, for there is no other name given whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12). This will offend the religious person who tries to earn his salvation, as he will reject such a "believe-only" gospel as too simplistic.

16k The Greatest Benefit- salvation and eternal life through believing,

16m "The Father's Ministry in the Life of Christ

1. The Father sent His Son

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

B. John 6:57 **"As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me."**

C. John 8:16-18 **"And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me."**

D. John 12:49 **"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak."**

E. Galatians 4:4 **"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,"**

2. The Father sealed the Son

A. John 6:27 **"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."**

3. The Father taught the Son

- A. John 8:28 **"Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things."**
4. The Father anointed the Son
- A. Isaiah 61:1 **"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;"**
- B. Luke 4:18 **"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,"**
- C. Acts 10:38 **"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."**
5. The Father honored the Son
- A. John 8:54 **"Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God:"**
6. The Father commanded the Son
- A. John 10:18 **"No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."**
7. The Father bore witness to the Son
- A. John 8:18 **"I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me."**
8. The Father loves the Son
- A. John 10:17 **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again."**
9. The Father delights in the Son
- A. Isaiah 42:1 **"Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles."**
- B. Matthew 3:17 **"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."**
- C. Matthew 17:5 **"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."**
- D. 2 Peter 1:17 **"For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."**
10. The Father heard the Son
- A. Matthew 26:53 **"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?"**
- B. John 11:41,42 **"Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me."**
- C. John 12:27,28 **"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will**

glorify it again.”

11. The Father offered up the Son

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

B. John 18:11 **“Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?”**

C. Romans 8:32 **“He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?”**

D. 1 John 4:9,10 **“In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.”**

12. The Father raised the Son

A. Ephesians 1:20 **“Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,”**

13. The Father exalted the Son

A. Ephesians 1:20 **“Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,”**

B. Philippians 2:9-11 **“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”**

14. The Father glorified the Son

A. John 17:1 **“These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:”**

15. The Father made the Son the Head of the Church

A. Ephesians 1:22 **“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,”**

16. The Father has committed judgment to the Son

A. John 5:22,27 **“For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son...And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.”⁴⁰**

3:17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.^a

17a The first time Jesus came was not for judgment or condemnation but for salvation. The second time He comes, He will come as judge.

AV

ESV

LSV

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to **condemn** the world; but that the world through him might be saved.

17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

17 “For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.

⁴⁰ Harold Wilmington, *Wilmington’s Guide to the Bible*, page 222.

“condemn” The LSV has “judge”.

3:18 He that believeth on him is not condemned:^a but he that believeth not is condemned already,^b because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten^c Son of God.^{de}

18a Greek present tense. Salvation provides instant deliverance from the judgment of God upon sin.

18b He was born in condemnation and will remain under condemnation until he accepts Christ as Savior and repents of his sin.

AV	ESV	LSV
18 He that believeth on him is not condemned : but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.	18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.	18 “He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

“condemned” The LSV again waters this down to “judged”

18c **“begotten”** is omitted in the ESV.

18d This is the crime of the sinner- unbelief, and failure to believe on the Messiah that God has provided and failure to accept the only remedy of the sin problem that God has provided.

18e You either believe or you don’t. You are either saved or condemned. You are a Christian or you are not a Christian. There are no “gray areas” with John. He sees things in black and white. This is one reason why so many people have a problem with John’s writings (especially 1 John)- he leaves no “wiggle room”. He is intolerant and judgment when it comes to spiritual truths!

19. The Condemnation of Light 3:19-21

3:19 And this is the condemnation,^a that light is come into the world,^b and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.^{cd}

AV	ESV	LSV
19 And this is the condemnation , that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.	19 And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.	19 “And this is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil.

19a **“condemnation”** Both the ESV and LSV water this down to “judgment”

19b Through Christ and the illumination of the Gospel that He brought. And the fact that the Father had to send His Son to deal with the sin of mankind was a condemnation in and of itself of the sin of man and the futile attempts of man to deal with his sin problem. Man and his religion could not deal with the

sin problem so the Father had to send His Son to do it.

19c Fallen man hates goodness and the things of God but he loves sin and the things of darkness. This is the ongoing result of the Fall. You would think that fallen man would be grateful that an infinitely holy and compassionate God thought enough of man and his plight to send His Son to deal with it and make salvation possible, but such was not the case. Man hated and resented God's interference and condemnation in his sin. Man wants his sin, and he must have his sin and he will react violently against anyone, even God, who either interferes with his sin or condemns him for it or who would judge him for it.

19d John's "either-or" mentality is on display here, with "light OR darkness". It can't be both. A man is either saved and is in the light or he is lost and in the darkness. There are no other options. He furthers this in his first epistle.

3:20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light,^a neither cometh to the light,^b lest his deeds should be reproved.^{cd}

20a This includes all men for all have sinned.

20b They run from it! They flee in terror. This is why men commit most of their sins at night, not under the noonday sun. The red-light districts in every city flourish at night but are deserted at night. The adulterer hides his face and goes out at night, thinking no eye will see him. Sin is always at its height in the night season, and we certainly are in such a time in this generation. But we are deepening in sin so much in this day that man is becoming very bold in his sin against God and is now doing things in the light that he once only did in the dark. Sinners have lost and vestige of shame in sin today and it will only get worse as we get closer to the end of the age.

20c The sinner is under the vain assumption that just because he commits his sin at night and behind closed doors, that God will not see or punish. As much as he loves his sin, he still does not want to be reproved or exposed for it.

AV	ESV	LSV
20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved .	20 For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.	20 "For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light lest his deeds be exposed.

20e "**reproved**" The ESV has "exposed". You can expose something without reproofing it.

3:21, But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.^a

21a The godly man has nothing to hide and thus he has no need to fear the light. He embraces that which the sinner despises. One good sign of salvation is that a person seeks out good, hard, Biblical preaching and will not run from it.

20. John's Endorsement of Jesus 3:22-36

3:22 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.^a

22a Jesus Himself did not baptize but His disciples did (John 4:2). This is still not a New Testament baptism as the Church is not yet in existence, but it is probably either the same or very similar to John's baptism.

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

23a John was in the same area but probably just down the road, as he carried out his ministry. We do not know the exact location of this area.

23b This shows that John (and the disciples of Jesus) were baptizing by immersion. Neither was pouring, sprinkling or dipping. If they were, then why the need for "much water?" Biblical baptism always involves total immersion in water upon a profession of faith. I have actually seen Roman Catholic pictures of John and Jesus standing hip-deep in water, with John pouring a small amount of water on the head of Jesus with a clam shell! Nothing could be further from the truth.

3:24 For John was not yet cast into prison.^a

24a See Matthew 14, where John was arrested by Herod.

3:25 Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.^{abcdef}

25a Controversies are inevitable, no matter who is the pastor or what kind of church it is. While generally undesirable, they can help to advance truth by forcing its defenders to sharpen their theological thinking. But since we are still in an Old Testament dispensation, this "questioning" is still legitimate. It would not be so in a New Testament context. This question may have been in reference to John's baptizing, as to exactly what it was to signify. It has nothing to do with any New Testament doctrine as we are not in the New Testament yet and John was not a New Testament figure, nor was his baptism a New Testament baptism (Acts 18:24-19:7). It would have to do with ceremonial purification and washings.

25b The question between the Jews and the disciples of John regarding purifying resulted in different answers. The Jews would have said purity came from obedience to the laws as laid down by the Pharisees. The disciples of John would have gravitated more toward the inner man and heart purity. The Jews would have focused on the externals and ritualism, the disciples of John the internals.

How little we hear of heart purity in our age. Few are asking any questions about it at all. There is little interest in it and even less striving for it. Preachers ask many questions about church growth, running busses, politics and so on. Get a group of preachers together in a "pastor's fellowship" and they will talk about everything except purity. This accounts for so much of the carnality and apostasy in our today.

25c Quotes from O. Talmadge Spence on sanctification from *The Quest For Christian Purity*:

"Perfection in the Bible is simply the maturation of the Christian. There is no sinless perfection,

which is a false definition of perfection. Purity begins with a crisis but ends through a process...the crisis deals with purity; the process deals with maturity."⁴¹

"This age, however, is neglecting this doctrine for the saints as overemphasis of evangelism is made for sinners. Even Fundamentalists, in most quarters, are ignoring the teachings of sanctification and revival for their people, and I believe this explains why there is so much worldliness and immorality and trouble in the churches, to say nothing of the lack of separation from the apostasy. The twentieth-century institutional church is not only apostate but deeply carnal. Much worship is sensual; charismatism has made religion sexy."⁴²

"The wonderful story of Christian Purity arises from a question within the human heart of man that is as old as sin. All of the longings in the breast of mankind and the never-ending line of inquisitions from the alienated heart of man, reveals that we were at one time pure and free from all questions that separated us from our Creator. Questions of any consequence arise only from men of sin, who through disobedience to God's Word, have separated themselves from the union and communion of the "great God and Saviour Jesus Christ." If there were no sin, there would be no question concerning purifying. The six millenniums since the fall of man have brought an innumerable host of questions and so-called answers to this great subject- PURIFYING. The profit of it all is marred by the great tragedy that when man goes to any source, other than the Bible, for a true answer to the question, he walks away deeper in his confusion and sin. A perusal of the multiplicity of philosophies and resolutions of man through these years is not wanted in this unpretentious writing, but we begin our study of the question and the answer from the One, Infallible, and Complete source of all revealed truth-THE HOLY BIBLE! We shall speak of this again, but be it known to all who read that we believe the greatest doctrine in all the world lies in the faith that appropriates the Bible to be God's One and Complete source of all redemptive truth. We gladly express with confidence our own personal acceptance of this treasure which can be opened by the precious Holy Spirit through a sincere heart, there to find the gems concerning the question of purifying... The Bible plea and command is "that you sin not." That is the boundary! "And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, THAT YE SIN NOT!" (Ex. 20: 20) "Nevertheless, if thou warn the righteous man, THAT THE RIGHTEOUS SIN NOT ... "(Ezek. 3: 2 1) "Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: SIN No MORE..." (John 5:14) And, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye SIN NOT..." (1 John 2:1a) Just because many carnal Christians are living beyond the boundary today, does not change the command. "Come unto me," saith Christ to the sinner. "Abide in me," saith Christ to the believer-THAT YE SIN NOT!"⁴³

This is the burden of the human heart, "How shall a man be just with God? (Job 25:4)." To be saved is one thing, to walk before God and be perfect is something else (Genesis 17:1). To have a pure heart, to have victory over sin and to walk with and before God should be the burden for every child of God.

25d There is just as much of a controversy today regarding purifying and sanctification, when the doctrine is emphasized at all. Many shy away from it, as the language sounds too "Pentecostal". Preachers may be criticized for stressing sanctification at the supposed expense of more practical doctrines. The controversy would be:

1. Is it necessary?
2. How is it accomplished?
3. Is perfection possible in this life?

⁴¹ Page xxiv.

⁴² Pages xxiv, xxv.

⁴³ Pages xxiv, xxvii, xxxviii.

A summation of some of the various views would be:

1. Fundamentalists

A. Sanctification is not an important issue. It is a secondary issue. The most important issues for a Christian are soulwinning and church-building.

i. Most neo/pseudo-Fundamentalists and Independent Fundamental Baptists would fall into this category.

B. The early historic Fundamentalist movement of the 19th century (after 1870) emphasized sanctification in the light of the spiritual decline in America after the revivals of the Civil War. This was also spurred on by a renewed focus on the doctrines of the second coming. If Christ could return at any time, how then should we live?

C. Fundamentalism after 1910 lost this emphasis when it developed into a militant movement to fight liberalism and modernism.

2. Charismatics

A. Sanctification comes by a second blessing after some sort of crises experience and the results is usually speaking in tongues.

B. These groups tend to be very weak on their understanding of sanctification and tend to make it emotion-based and subjective.

3. The Keswick position, sometimes called the Higher Life Movement

A. The normal Christian life should be one of progress and victory over sin.

Unfortunately, the average Christian experience is far from normal. Church-goers are adept at moving through the routines of the Christian life, yet they show no excitement or evidence that anything supernatural is going on.

B. What can Christians do to break out of this spiritual malaise? The Keswick view offers a message of hope to defeated and backslidden Christians. Proponents of this view have offered four-and five-day conferences focusing on the spiritual renewal of those who attend. These conferences expose those attending to the depth of their sin, teach them a way to live a victorious life, and challenge them to fully commit their lives to God and to His service.

C. Keswick theology teaches that the Christian life consists of two primary crises (or major turning points): justification and sanctification, both of which happen at different times in the life of the believer. After salvation one must have another encounter with the Spirit; otherwise, he or she will not progress into holiness or the "deeper" things of God. This second encounter with the Spirit, in Keswick terminology, is called "entire sanctification," "the second blessing," or "the second touch." This emphasis on a second, post-salvation experience corresponds with the Pentecostal idea of the "baptism" of the Spirit. Some Keswick teachers would even say that sinless perfection is possible after one receives the "second blessing." This creates two kinds of Christian, the sanctified and the non-sanctified.

D. Many notable figures in recent church history adopted a Keswick view, both in America and England, such as Andrew Murray, Hudson Taylor, A. W. Tozer and Oswald Chambers.

4. The Wesleyan View, developed by John Wesley.

A. The ultimate goal of sanctification was to renew men's and women's hearts in God's image. Wesley worked out this definition of sanctification in a practical way. He believed that true Christian maturity was primarily evidenced by "a faith that works by divine love in the crucible of everyday life." Love is the true measure of sanctification and is the true test of holiness.

B. Wesley taught that sanctification begins at conversion. Sanctification is "faith working by love": not merited but appropriated by faith. When a Christian appeals to God in faith for the power to live a life of Godly love, the Holy Spirit takes away his or her "bent to sin"

and replaces it with a "bent to loving obedience."

C. Can a Christian lead a sinless life? Wesley taught that mature Christians will always be capable of falling into sin but they need not necessarily do so. Christians are free from the dominion of sin and can choose against it. Because we live in a fallen world dominated by sin and its effects, we will have to wait for total delivery from the presence of sin until the life to come. Wesley admitted there is always room for a Christian to develop in maturity. But he believed that Christians can enjoy greater degree of freedom from sin than Reformed theologians thought possible. He went as far as to assert that Christians can be delivered from willful sin and that this level of sanctification can occur before death. Entire sanctification can occur at the moment of salvation but typically occurs during a crisis point in the life of a Christian sometime after conversion. Those who have experienced entire sanctification are characterized by:

- i. A wholehearted love for God and neighbor
- ii. Having the mind of Christ
- iii. Bearing the fruit of the Spirit
- iv. Both inward and outward righteousness and true holiness in life complete devotion to God
- v. Giving thoughts, words, and actions as a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God salvation from all sin

D. Entire sanctification involves freedom from willful sin, but it is not the final destination of Christian growth.

E. Wesley believed that a Christian who has experienced entire sanctification enjoys freedom from deliberate sins. Slip-ups in behavior can still occur, but these result from living in a fallen world. Wesley called these lapses "mistakes." He said, "because we are imperfect persons in an imperfect world, perfection 'in love' is consistent with a 'thousand mistakes.' But limited as we are by our own and the world's imperfections, we may still enjoy a relationship in which, through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can fulfill the great and final commandment of loving God with our whole heart..."

5. Reformed View

A. Sanctification is the process of removing the corruption caused by sin polluting our lives. This is consistent with the meaning of the Greek word for sanctify, "hagiazō". "Hagiazō" literally means to make holy: to be set apart for service to God and to abandon practices that displease Him.

B. Sanctification can only occur in the context of a growing union with Christ. We will not grow unless we are identified with Christ. The Bible is one of the chief means whereby God sanctifies His people. Faith is the means by which we appropriate our sanctification. Faith helps us to live in union with Christ, accept the fact that we are no longer mastered by sin, and results in the production of fruit in the life of the Christian. Like justification, sanctification comes by faith.

C. J. C. Ryle wrote his book *Holiness* to present the Reformed view of sanctification in contrast to the Keswick view.⁴⁴

There are differing interpretations and applications, but I respect the desire of the people who try to develop these understandings and out-workings of the doctrines and applications of sanctification. The desire to delve into these doctrines and to try to understand them and apply them to their own hearts and walk with God is noble.

25e Seven types of sanctification presented in the Bible:

⁴⁴ I'm not necessarily opposed to the Keswick view as I have not studied it extensively, but I don't understand the hostility against it.

1. Potential Sanctification. Christ died, potentially, for the sanctification of all believers in the Lord's Sacrifice, by the grace of God.
2. Positional Sanctification. At the very moment of the historical event of regeneration (the new birth) in the life of the believer, and only at the moment, the divine depositum of holiness is placed in access for that believer, and the burden for all transgression is relieved, forgiven, and blotted out.
3. Experiential Sanctification. After the genuine fact of the justification by faith of the believer, that believer is given the liberty, by the grace of God, to draw upon sanctification into his experience and Christian life on earth.
4. Expansional Sanctification. The experiential, crisis, the definite drawing upon the access of that divine depositum, will then expand into the larger process of the sanctifying work of the grace of God, leading the believer into a living quest for holiness of the entire life in all of the compartments of that life throughout all the years of that life.
5. Perfectional Sanctification. Across the years, in the entire life of the believer, there should culminate through both the crisis and growth, the maturation of that believer into godly character. The end of the Christian life on earth should be rich in grace and communion with God. But it must be remembered: there is a sense in which the believer must realize, "I am not perfect," which is a part of the very perfection that the Bible pleads for in the final resolve of the Christian life on earth.
6. Glorificational Sanctification. There is a final aspect of the biblical teachings of sanctification in which only the glorification of the Body will occasion. Since there is a difference between sin and self, there can only be the final work of sanctification in heaven, in the glorification of the body--the place of blessing divorced from the nature, environment, and power of sin.
7. Eternal Sanctification. Although there is little light on this subject, yet we must remember that the two distances between time and eternity, and the creature and God, demands that even in eternity there will be more to know and enjoy in the eternal sanctification of the glorified saint. There is so much of God in God, and so much in the creature less than God, not only because of sin, that we are given all of an unending eternity in which to realize the holiness of God. At the point of our death, undoubtedly, our person of character culminates, and that will remain in its identity forever. However, within that fixed and completed Christian character, there will be the furthering work of the glories of Christ and the riches of His grace being brought to its work in that eternal sanctification of the saint of God."⁴⁵

"O The Bitter Shame and Sorrow" by Theodore Monod (tune of St. Jude). Monod wrote this hymn while attending a Keswick meeting.

Oh, the bitter shame and sorrow,
That a time could ever be,
When I let the Savior's pity
Plead in vain, and proudly answered,
All of self, and none of Thee,

Day by day His tender mercy,
Healing, helping, full and free,
Sweet and strong, and ah! so patient,
Brought me lower while I whispered,
Less of self, and more of Thee,

Yet He found me; I beheld Him
Bleeding on the cursed tree;
Heard Him pray, Forgive them, Father,
And my wistful heart said faintly,
Some of self, and some of Thee,

Higher than the highest heavens,
Deeper than the deepest sea,
Lord, Thy love at last hath conquered;
Grant me now my heart's petition,
None of self, and all of Thee,

⁴⁵ O. Talmadge Spence, *The Quest For Christian Purity*, pages xxv-xxvi.

25f If you boil all of this down, sanctification, like salvation, is seen in one of two ways:

1. By works. The Neo/Pseudo-Fundamentalists and most Independent, "Fundamental" Baptists see sanctification by works, if they deal with the doctrine at all. To them, you are right with God if you are busy "soul-winning", running busses, building churches and Sunday Schools numerically. As long as you are busy and have the right kind of standards, then that is good enough. There is no real need to pray or study or preach with any sort of depth on sanctification or purifying.
2. By God. Almost every one of the above positions on sanctification have a more advanced and Biblical understanding that sanctification is a work of God in the heart that is not so much dependent on human merit or works. Your relationship with God, your spiritual desires and heart for God is the basis on how God works out purity in the heart of the believer. Sanctification is more about what God does in you than what you do for God.

AV	ESV	LSV
25 Then there arose a question between <i>some</i> of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.	25 Now a discussion arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew over purification.	25 Therefore there arose a debate between John's disciples and a Jew about purification.

"the Jews" The ESV and LSV have an odd reason with "a Jew". John's disciples had this discussion with only one man?

3:26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.^a

26a Now the Jews (probably some religious leaders) come to John in the midst of this "controversy" of John 3:25 and try to drive a wedge between him and Jesus by appealing to John's pride. It went something like "That fella Jesus who you baptized, His church is bigger than yours, He has more busses on the road and He was asked to preach at the Sword of the Lord Conference instead of you! What do you think of that?" This was a cheap attempt to work of John's pride and ego and to stoke resentment against Jesus.

3:27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.^a

27a It didn't work. John understood his role and place in God's plan. His job was to introduce Jesus to Israel and with that accomplished, John would pull a "Douglas MacArthur" and just "fade away". There was no resentment whatsoever by John against the success and popularity Jesus was starting to enjoy. John was not about to fall into the pit the Corinthian church did in 1 Corinthians 1:12,13 ("**Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?**"). John was not going to encourage any sort of schism or sect-building between him and Jesus and between his disciples and Jesus' disciples.

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

28a "Don't you remember me saying that I'm not the Christ but that Jesus is? And that I only sent

before Him to prepare His way?"

3:29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom,^a which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

29a This shows that John was not a New Testament figure, nor was his baptism a New Testament baptism. John also wasn't a modern "Baptist" and his baptism was not a New Testament baptism (Acts 19:1-5). He said he was the "friend of the Bridegroom". He was not the Bridegroom- that is Christ. He is not the bride nor in the bride- that is the Church. But he is the "friend" of the Bridegroom, like the "best man". The Bridegroom gets the bride, not the best man. If this all works out, the John is satisfied that his ministry was a success- which it was.

3:30 He must increase, but I must decrease.^a

30a When is the last time you heard any preacher, especially a Baptist preacher, say this? John knew his ministry was just about over so he points everyone to Christ. He says "leave my church and join His. Let Christ be your new pastor. He was the One I was getting you ready for and now that He is here, I'll be stepping aside and resigning and shutting my ministry down". What a man of God John was to have such a humble attitude!

3:31 He that cometh from above is above all:^a he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.

31a Christ came from above and was God, so He is "above all". He is above all churches, religions, theological systems, popes, preachers, philosophies, philosophers, scientists and scientific theories, political systems, economic systems, celebrities, and the next ten thousand things you'd care to name.

3:32 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.^a

32a The job of a witness is to testify, but there will be many who will reject such a testimony. Ask and Old Testament prophet or New Testament preacher.

3:33 He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.^a

33a A divine certification that these verses are true.

3:34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him.^{ab}

34a The Holy Spirit filled Jesus without measure, or limit. Everything He did on earth was through the power of the Holy Spirit and not through His own power. We are also to rely totally on the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit for our ministry and life. But we are not "filled without measure" since we are sinners and we "leak" the Spirit when we sin, which is why we need to be continually filled and re-filled. Jesus, as God, did not have this problem.

34b The Holy Spirit's Ministry in the Life of Christ

1. He was begotten by the Spirit.
A. Luke 1:35 **"And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."**
2. He was anointed by the Spirit.
A. Matthew 3:16 **"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:"**
B. Hebrews 1:9 **"Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows."**
3. He preached in the power of the Spirit.
A. Luke 4:18 **"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,"**
4. He was sealed by the Spirit.
A. John 6:27 **"Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."**
5. He was led by the Spirit.
A. Matthew 4:1 **"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil."**
6. He worked miracles through the Spirit.
A. Matthew 12:28 **"But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you."**
B. Acts 10:38 **"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."**
7. He was filled with the Spirit and by the Spirit.
A. Luke 4:1 **"And Jesus being full of the Holy Ghost returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,"**
B. John 3:34 **"For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him."**
8. He sorrowed in the Spirit.
A. John 11:33 **"When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,"**
9. He rejoiced in the Spirit.
A. Luke 10:21 **"In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight"**
10. He offered Himself up through the Spirit.
A. Hebrews 9:14 **"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"**
11. He was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit.
A. Romans 1:4 **"And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:"**
B. 1 Peter 3:18 **"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust,**

that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:"

12. He commanded His apostles through the Holy Spirit.

A. Acts 1:2 **"Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:"**⁴⁶

AV	ESV	LSV
34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God : for God giveth not the Spirit by measure <i>unto him</i> .	34 For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure.	34 "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure.

"God" The ESV and LSV need to be more specific as both only have "he". Who is the "he" who gives the spirit without measure?

"unto him" Missing in both the ESV and LSV. To whom is the Spirit given without measure? Both the ESV and LSV are too vague in this verse.

3:35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.^a

35a An ultimate reference to the millennial kingdom, which that Father will give the Son (Psalm 2).

3:36 He that believeth^a on the Son^b hath^c everlasting life:^d and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath^e of God abideth on him.^f

36a Not 'worketh" or "belongs to the One True Church That Jesus Founded" or "passes out Watchtower from door-to-door" or "who runs the most busses in his state", but he who simply believes the truths of the gospel.

36b Jesus Christ and Him alone- not Joseph Smith, the Virgin Mary, Mohammad, Ellen G. White or anyone else, for there is no other name given among men whereby we must be saved.

1. Acts 4:12 **"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."**

36c Right now, present tense, as a present possession. You do not have to wait until you die to see whether you have eternal life. As soon as you believe and repent, you have eternal life.

36d As opposed to the eternal death of hell and the lake of fire.

36e God is a God of Wrath upon sin and the lost. That necessitates a hell and a lake of fire where the wrath of God upon sin can be manifested and carried out. This wrath is on the sinner now, in this life. He does not need to wait until he ends up in hell to experience the wrath of God on his sins.

36f This is completely the opposite as the first half of the verse. You either are saved or you are lost. You either believe or you do not. You either have eternal life now or you are under the sentence of eternal death. That's it. Those are the only choices. There is no gray area, and everyone falls into one of those two categories. John is always like this in his writings. Things with are "either-or", black or white. You either are condemned or you are not condemned.

⁴⁶ Harold Wilmington, *Wilmington's Guide to the Bible*, page 222.

AV

36 He that believeth on the Son hath **everlasting** life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

ESV

36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

LSV

36 “He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

“**everlasting**” Both the ESV and LSV have “eternal”.

John Chapter 4

In this chapter, we see the Master Soulwinner at work. Forget the “how to do it” seminars. Here is the divine example of how to win a soul. We’ll outline how the Lord led this woman to Christ.

In John 3, Jesus deals with a cultured, religious man. In John 4, Jesus deals with a notorious sinner with a rough background. You will have to learn to deal with both types of people. Religious Nicodemus was just as lost as this woman.

1. There are no miracles in this chapter. Some believe that signs, wonders and miracles are necessary to see people saved but that is obviously not the case.
2. A woman needed to be saved. Jesus did not allow prejudices or the hatred between the Jews and Samaritans to prevent a witnessing opportunity (4:4). If you are going to be a witness, you are going to have to go after all sinners and overcome any prejudices you may have.
3. Jesus used a common, everyday occurrence to open up a witnessing opportunity- 4:7.
4. There was no “plan” or “procedure” involved, no “how to do it course” with memorized dialogue and answers. Jesus simply took a situation and used to initiate a conversation regarding spiritual things.
5. The Lord did not allow Himself to be sidetracked by “religious talk” - 4:21.
6. The Lord did not nag or pressure her for a decision. He simply told her what she needed to hear and let the Holy Spirit take it from there. There was no high- pressure tactics, no “confrontational soul-winning” methods used.
 - A. Sometimes the fruit takes time to manifest itself. Very few people are saved after an 8-minute gospel presentation, presented “cold” on their doorstep.
7. After her profession, there was no bragging or reporting to the “With the Evangelists” column in the “Sword of the Lord” by the Lord. Nor did He have a selfie taken with the woman to post on social media.
8. She produced instant fruit and gave a strong public testimony of her faith- 4:39.

21. The Salvation of the Samaritan Woman 4:1-42

4:1 When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,

4:2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not,^a but his disciples,)

2a If baptism is necessary for salvation, then why didn’t Jesus do any baptizing?

4:3^a He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee.

3a The Lord did this to put distance between him and John, to reduce friction and to stop giving the people who were trying to drive a wedge between Him and John any justification.

4:4 And he must needs go through Samaria.^{abc}

4a Because there was a woman there who was ready to be saved. Jesus knew this in His omnipotence. And it didn't matter to Him regarding the hatred and prejudices between the Jews and the Samaritans. If you are going to win souls, you are going to have to after all of them, and overcome any prejudices you may have. The Samaritans were descendants of the people brought in by the Assyrian Empire during the conquest of the northern kingdom in 722 B.C. The Assyrians deported the ten tribes and brought in these foreigners to occupy the land. They were Jews, so they were especially despised and both Gentiles and "squatters" on Jewish land. No doubt the disciples questioned Him as to why He had to travel through the most unpopular and despised piece of real estate and they were probably very uncomfortable with this. The Jews would usually go around this area and avoid it all together. The Jews had not forgiven the Samaritans for their opposition in Ezra 4. There was no worse insult among the Jews than to call someone a Samaritan (see John 8:48, where the Jewish religious leaders put this insult on the Lord).

4b In Matthew 10:5, the Lord told the Seventy that they were not to enter into any of the cities of the Samaritans. But here, He goes out of His way to go into the heart of their territory, to lead one woman to salvation. But even here in John 4, He did no miracle and did not preach publicly. John 4 is a prelude to Acts 8:5ff, when Philip goes into this same area to work.

4c "Samaritans were Israelites who lived in the northern kingdom, but there is only one mention of them in the Old Testament (2 Kings 17:29). The word "Samaritan" as used in the New Testament referred to an Israelite sect whose central sanctuary was on Mount Gerizim during intertestamental times.

"Their history began after the Assyrian capture of the city of Samaria in 721 B.C., and the deportation of 27,290 of Israel's population.

"Samaritans believed that Joshua built a sanctuary on Mt. Gerizim, which was the center for all early Israelite worship. They dated the religious break with the Jews to the time of Eli, whom they accused of erecting a rival sanctuary at Shiloh. For a brief time, there were two sanctuaries and two priesthoods. The Philistines soon destroyed the Shiloh sanctuary, and Saul persecuted the Joseph tribes, depriving them of their sanctuary on Mt. Gerizim.

"Their history as recorded by Jewish sources describes Samaritans as descendants of the colonists whom the Assyrians planted in the northern kingdom, who intermarried with the Israelite population that the Assyrians had left in the land. More likely they were the pure descendants of the Israelites left in the land, for Samaritan theology shows no sign of the influence of paganism among the colonists sent by the Assyrians. If there was intermarriage, the children became true Israelites.

"When Zerubbabel was building a new temple, the descendants of the foreigners brought in by Esar-haddon asked to take part, claiming that they were true Yahweh worshipers (Ezra 4:2), but they were refused. When Nehemiah came to Jerusalem as a special representative of the Persian crown, he was opposed by Sanballat, the governor of the Persian subprovince of Samaria (Nehemiah 2:10–6:14; 13:28). When Jerusalem was captured by Nebuchadnezzar, apparently he added it to the province of Samaria. Sanballat recognized that Nehemiah was creating a new political unity around the city of Jerusalem and this territory would, of course, be taken from Sanballat. Both Sanballat and his partner Tobiah of Rabbath-ammon were Yahweh worshipers. This, therefore, was primarily a political struggle, not a religious issue. It may, however, have ended as a religious schism. The actual split between the descendants of the religious groups that had constituted the kingdoms of Israel and Judah came when the "Samaritans" built their own temple on Mount Gerizim. There is no exact date for this event. Josephus (Jos. Antiq. XI. viii. 1–4) tells of the building of this temple, but the account is so confused that different scholars, on the basis of the evidence, date the building of this temple anywhere from the time of Nehemiah to the time of Alexander the Great.

"The Samaritans were in general rejected by the Jews in the intertestamental period. Ecclesiasticus 50:25, 26 speaks of them as "no nation" and as "the foolish people that dwell in

Shechem.” The Testament of Levi also calls Shechem “a city of fools.” This derogation is relevant to the reading of John 8:48, for the Jews called Jesus a Samaritan.”⁴⁷

4:5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

4:6, Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey,^a sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour.

6a Jesus was human enough to be tired from a long walk on a hot day.

4:7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water:^a Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

7a Most of the women drew their water earlier in the day, when it was cooler. This woman came at midday when no one else was around since she had a bad reputation and was a social pariah. No doubt she was a common theme for the town gossips. She was also poor, as the drawing of water was usually relegated to a servant, but she had to do it herself.

4:8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)^{ab}

8a Often it is best to wait until your “subject” is alone before you start witnessing to him. Embarrassment or “peer pressure” may make him less than willing to discuss spiritual matters with a stranger. Soulwinning in a crowd or with a lot of onlookers tends to be difficult. Whenever I give a tract to someone, I usually try to find someone who is alone, as they may be more apt to take a tract than if their friends are with them.

8b This could have been an interesting experience for the disciples- buying meat in “enemy territory!” No doubt they saw all manner of unclean meats and items that they never would have seen in a Jewish area.

4:9, Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.^{abcdef}

9a The very fact that Jesus would talk to her, in public, certainly got her attention! The average Jew would have had nothing to say to her and probably would have ignored her.

9b She throws up old prejudices and bigotries between the Jews and the Samaritans. Jesus did not allow Himself to get sidetracked by these questions and issues. He stayed focused on HER. Jesus was a good Jew but He was not a bigoted one.

9c “The racial issue went back a very long time. When the northern ten tribes were led into captivity by the Assyrians, the conquerors (following their usual policy of population redistribution) brought foreign settlers into the territory. Before long, these newcomers adopted a bastard form of Judaism. The Jews of Judea rejected the colonists and their clumsy attempts to imitate the Hebrew religion, refusing to

⁴⁷ J. Kelso, “Samaria,” *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*, volume 5, pages 240-241.

have anything to do with them. Later, after the Jews themselves had suffered through the Babylonian captivity and returned to repossess their ancestral homeland, they found the Samaritans still entrenched in the land.

"When the Jews began to rebuild their temple in Jerusalem, although the Samaritans wanted to help, their overtures were rejected out of hand. The resulting enmity was fostered on both sides and grew increasingly bitter as years went by (2 Kings 17:24-29; Ezra 4:1-5; Nehemiah 2:10, 19; 4:1-3).

"The Samaritan answer to the Jewish temple was to build a rival temple on Mount Gerizim for themselves. The destruction of this temple by the Hasmonean ruler John Hyrcanus (about 108 B.C.) only increased Samaritan hostility. Most Jews would not think of asking a favor from a Samaritan for fear of becoming ceremonially defiled; indeed, many Jews assumed that all Samaritan women were in a perpetual state of ceremonial uncleanness. By asking the woman of Samaria for a drink, Jesus swept aside such racial and gender-based prejudices."⁴⁸

9d "The quarrel between the Jews and the Samaritans was an old, old story. Away back about 720 B.C. the Assyrians had invaded the northern kingdom of Samaria and had captured and subjugated it. They did what conquerors often did in those days--they transported practically the whole population to Media (2 Kgs.17:6). Into the district the Assyrians brought other people--from Babylon, from Cuthah, from Ava, from Hamath and from Sepharvaim (2 Kgs.17:24). Now it is not possible to transport a whole people. Some of the people of the northern kingdom were left. Almost inevitably they began to intermarry with the incoming foreigners; and thereby they committed what to the Jew was an unforgivable crime. They lost their racial purity. In a strict Jewish household even to this day if a son or a daughter marries a Gentile, his or her funeral service is carried out. Such a person is dead in the eyes of orthodox Judaism. So then the great majority of the inhabitants of Samaria were carried away to Media. They never came back but were assimilated into the country into which they were taken. They are the lost ten tribes. Those who remained in the country inter-married with the incoming strangers and lost their right to be called Jews at all.

"In course of time a like invasion and a like defeat happened to the southern kingdom, whose capital was Jerusalem. Its inhabitants also were carried off to Babylon; but they did not lose their identity; they remained stubbornly and unalterably Jewish. In time there came the days of Ezra and Nehemiah and the exiles returned to Jerusalem by the grace of the Persian king. Their immediate task was to repair and rebuild the shattered Temple. The Samaritans came and offered their help in this sacred task. They were contemptuously told that their help was not wanted. They had lost their Jewish heritage and they had no right to share in the rebuilding of the house of God. Smarting under this repulse, they turned bitterly against the Jews of Jerusalem. It was about 450 B.C. when that quarrel took place, and it was as bitter as ever in the days of Jesus.

It had further been embittered when the renegade Jew, Manasseh, married a daughter of the Samaritan Sanballat (Neh.13:28) and proceeded to found a rival temple on Mount Gerizim which was in the centre of the Samaritan territory. Still later in the Maccabean days, in 129 B.C., John Hyrcanus, the Jewish general and leader, led an attack against Samaria and sacked and destroyed the temple on Mount Gerizim. Between Jews and Samaritans there was an embittered hatred. The Jews contemptuously called them Chuthites or Cuthaeans after one of the peoples whom the Assyrians had settled there. The Jewish Rabbis said: "Let no man eat of the bread of the Cuthaeans, for he who eats their bread is as he who eats swine's flesh." Ecclesiasticus depicts God as saying: "With two nations is my soul vexed, and the third is no nation; they that sit upon the mountain of Samaria, and the Philistines, and that foolish people that dwell in Sichem" (Ecc.50:25-26). Sichem or Shechem was one of the most famous of Samaritan cities. The hatred was returned with interest. It is told that Rabbi Jochanan was passing through Samaria on his way to Jerusalem to pray. He passed by Mount Gerizim. A Samaritan saw him, and asked him: "Where are you going?" "I am going to Jerusalem," he

⁴⁸ John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, page 86.

said, "to pray." The Samaritan answered: "Would it not be better for you to pray in this holy mountain (Mount Gerizim) than in that accursed house?" Pilgrims from Galilee to Jerusalem had to pass through Samaria, if, as we have seen, they travelled by the quickest way; and the Samaritans delighted to hinder them."⁴⁹

9e "Note, that in order to duck the issue, she tried:

1. The social argument (4:9)
2. The skeptic's argument (4:11)
3. The denominational argument (4:12)
4. The doctrinal argument (4:20)
5. The postponement argument (4:25)."⁵⁰

AV	ESV	LSV
9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.	9 The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)	9 Therefore the Samaritan woman *said to Him, "How do You, being a Jew, ask for a drink from me, being a Samaritan woman?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.)

9f "**for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans**" The ESV and LSV puts this in parentheses, as if to have John commenting instead of the woman saying this.

4:10, Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.^{ab}

10a Jesus does not immediately hit her with "Are you saved?" or "If you died tonight do you know you'd go to heaven?" He instead appeals to her curiosity by saying something spiritual and seeing if He got a reaction. It's like the fisherman with the bait on the hook. Sometimes the fish will respond, sometimes it won't. Notice His tact in dealing with this woman.

10b Jesus here identifies Himself as:

1. The "gift of God"
2. Living water

4:11 The woman saith unto him, Sir,^a thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?^b

11a She called him "Sir". She was beginning to develop some respect for this Jew.

11b She is thinking physically. Why shouldn't she? But she does "bite" at the "living water" reference. She expresses some interest, so the Lord keeps probing.

⁴⁹ William Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible: The Gospel of John*.

⁵⁰ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, page 141.

4:12, Art thou greater than our father Jacob,^a which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children,^b and his cattle?^c

12a Yes, He is, but again, He does not take the bait and He does not allow Himself to be sidetracked. The Jews would have disagreed strongly that Jacob was their father but Jesus had more important issues to talk about.

12b The English Standard Version usually goes “gender neutral” with most pronouns, using “people” for “mankind” and similar substitutions. Here, the Authorized Version is “gender neutral” in using “children” while the ESV uses “sons”.

12c They were really not descended from Jacob and Jacob did no such thing. He did so for the Jews but these Samaritans were not Jews. Jacob was the father of the twelve tribes of Israel, not of Samaria. The Samaritans shared a geography with Jacob but nothing else. But patriotic traditionalism runs deep and is not easily uprooted. We Americans suffer from it, with our popular myth that America was founded as a “Christian nation”.

4:13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again:^a

13a Satisfaction! Only Jesus can give such satisfaction. Once you have Him you need nothing else, certainly not “Mary”, the saints, the Koran, water baptism,..nothing. How unlike the things of this earth, none of which can satisfy. I remember seeing ads for a certain brand of cigarette that boasted “They Satisfy!” That’s a lie. If it did, there would be one “smoke” in the pack. You’d smoke it and then you wouldn’t need another one. The same is true with liquor. If booze satisfied, it would come in a 3-ounce size. You’d take one “shot” and that would be it.

4:14, But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give^a him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give^a him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.^c

14a Given as a free gift, as salvation is the gift of God.

14b The Lord now makes the spiritual application.

4:15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.^{ab}

15a Oh, this would be a great thing! She’d never have to lug heavy water jars to and from this well again! Too many people have this idea about Christianity, fed to them by the “health and wealth” false preachers. If you “accept Jesus”, then He’ll pay your credit cards off, you’ll get a promotion and a new car and He’ll heal you of your cancer. They only think about the “things” they can get from God instead of healing their relationship with God.

She made the same mistake that Nicodemus made- both were thinking physically and carnally when the Lord was trying to make a spiritual point.

15b There are only two times in the Bible where Jesus asks for a drink of water: here and in John 19:28. He doesn’t get water either time.

4:16 Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.^a

16a Why bring him into the conversation? Jesus has the fish on the hook. All He has to do is reel her in, get a profession out of her, baptize her and then move on to the next prospect. But Jesus needs to deal with the heart of her problem- sin. He must bring her to a realization of her sin and convince her that she needs to do something about her sin, such as confess, repent and forsake, before He can bring her to a place of true salvation.

4:17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband.^a Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

17a She tells the truth and she currently was not currently married.

4:18 For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.^a

18a So she really had 6 husbands, five divorces and a “shack-up” situation. She sounds like the typical modern American woman. We are not sure as what the Samaritan customs regarding marriage was but Jesus judged her situation according to the Biblical presentation of the matter, not taking into account her cultural or national customs on the matter. Her previous husbands from divorces (?) were still considered to be her husbands, so she was guilty of polygamy. The courts might grant you a divorce and declare you are no longer married, but the Lord would disagree.

4:19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.^{ab}

19a She doesn't want to talk about it. She's been “had” and she knows it. This Jew knew all about her although they had never met. Something was very special about this man. She recognizes Him as a prophet. No longer does she want to talk about her dirty, rotten lifestyle. She wants to dodge that bullet and talk religion. This is the “master dodge” of every sinner. When backed-up against the wall, they will immediately assume a defensive position and will throw out every diversionary tactic they can think of. What about the heathen who've never heard? What about babies who die? What about homosexuals? Are you a Republican or a Democrat? Anything but face the condemnation of their sins. The sinner under conviction will often try to change the subject and talk about religion instead of salvation.

19b That's a good profession but it is not enough. Every Muslim believes Jesus was a prophet but not that He was God or the Son of God. Most sinners will acknowledge that Jesus was a great man, a great teacher, a great healer, a great moral example, but that doesn't mean that they believe that He is also God.

4:20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain;^a and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.^{bc}

20a An appeal to tradition. Roman Catholics do this all the time. Reformed Christians try this with appeals to Calvin, Luther or some Reformation confession of faith. Even Baptists may give it a try. But claiming that you can trace your ancestry back to Noah or that your church building is 300 years old means nothing spiritually.

20b How people fight over silly little ideas of religion! One issue between the Jews and Samaritans was where should they worship, as if the worship of God can be confined to one location or building or geography.

20c “If Jesus Christ had truly come from God as a Prophet, He should be able to settle the issue that had divided the Jews from the Samaritans for generations. The Samaritans insisted that God was to be worshiped in the Samaritan temple on Mt. Gerizim. The Jews insisted that God was to be worshiped in the temple in Jerusalem. This was an unresolved conflict and the woman asked Christ about the proper approach to God. He replied that the conflict existed in part because of a misunderstanding of the nature of God. If God is corporeal, then He is confined to one place; and the place in which He dwells would be the only acceptable place of worship. If God is noncorporeal, then God may be worshiped anywhere. Jesus conveyed this truth to the woman when He said, “God is a spirit” (John 4:24). As a consequence, He is to be worshiped not through external forms in a physical building but from the heart and in conformity to the truth of His person.”⁵¹

4:21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.^{ab}

21a This would be especially true in the Church Age, where location is not important in the act of worship. But Jesus would also say that it was true right now in verse 23. After A.D. 70, Jerusalem would be destroyed by the Romans, so even this “center of worship” would cease. Later, in the tribulation, Jerusalem would be called “Egypt” and “Sodom” (Revelation 11:8 “**And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.**”), which might serve as a center for the worship of the Antichrist, but not the true God.

21b Jesus spent more time talking about “religion” with this half-breed woman than He spent with the religious man Nicodemus.

4:22 Ye worship ye know not what:^a we know what we worship:^b for salvation is of the Jews.^{cdef}

22a What a slam! How intolerant and insensitive! Jesus called her “theologically ignorant” in that while they did “worship”, her and her people were worshipping in ignorance. Try that today to a Moslem or a Hindu and you would be charged with a hate crime.

22b The Jews had the truth and they knew what, and WHO, they were worshipping, even if their current brand of worship was “dead orthodox”.

22c This is a further insult to the Samaritans. They thought their religion was either better than or at least equal to what was going on down in Jerusalem. But to say that in order to find salvation, you had to go through Israel was a slap against the Samaritans and their hatred of Israel. Any Gentile nation would be offended by this as there is no love for Israel among the Gentiles. It was like telling a Jew that he had to go to a Nazi to be saved! But if any Gentile wishes to be saved, He must come through a Jewish Savior, revealed by a Jewish book and expounded upon by Jewish New Testament writers. No anti-Semite can be saved in that case. And anyone who tries to tell you that Jesus wasn’t really a Jew (like some followers of the “Lost Ten Tribes” teachings) also have no Savior.

⁵¹ J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, page 133.

22d Salvation is NOT of:

1. Any Gentile
2. The Church of Rome or its pope
3. John Calvin's philosophical system and its so-called "doctrines of grace"
4. Any theological system and that includes yours and mine. This includes the "Baptist Distinctives", Calvin's "Five Points" or the "Westminster Standards".
5. Any Christian university
6. Any local church or denomination
7. Islam, Mohammad, "Allah" or any other "world religion"
8. The United Nations, or any political party (including both Democrats and Republicans)

22e "(i) A false worship is a selective worship. It chooses what it wishes to know about God and omits the rest. The Samaritans took as much of scripture as they wished and paid no attention to the rest. One of the most dangerous things in the world is a one-sided religion. It is very easy for a man to accept and hold such parts of God's truth as suit him and to disregard the remainder. We have seen, for instance, how certain thinkers and churchmen and politicians justify apartheid and racial segregation by appeal to certain parts of scripture, while they conveniently forget the far greater parts which forbid it.

"A minister in a great city organized a petition to help a man who had been condemned for a certain crime. It seemed to him that this was a case where Christian mercy ought to operate. His telephone bell rang, and a woman's voice said to him: "I am astonished that you, a minister, should be lending your weight to this petition for mercy." "Why should you be surprised?" he asked. The voice said: "I suppose you know your Bible." I hope so," he said. "Then," said the voice, "are you not aware that the Bible says, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth'?" Here was a woman who took the part of the Bible which suited her argument and forgot the great merciful teaching of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.

"We would do well to remember that, although no man will ever grasp the whole orb of truth, it is total truth that we should aim at, not the snatching at fragments which happen to suit ourselves and our own position.

"(ii) A false worship is an ignorant worship. Worship ought to be the approach to God of the whole man. A man has a mind and he has a duty to exercise it. Religion may begin with an emotional response; but the time comes when that emotional response has to be thought out...To fail to think things out is in itself a sin. In the last analysis, religion is never safe until a man can tell, not only what he believes, but why he believes it. Religion is hope, but it is hope with reason behind it (1 Pet.3:15).

"(iii) A false worship is a superstitious worship. It is a worship given, not out of a sense of need nor out of any real desire, but basically because a man feels that it might be dangerous not to give it. Many a person will refuse to walk beneath a ladder; many a person will have a pleased feeling when a black cat crosses his path; many a person will pick up a pin with the idea that good luck will follow; many a person will have an uncomfortable feeling when he is one of thirteen sitting at a table. He does not believe in these superstitions, but he has the feeling that there might be something in them and he had better play safe. There are many people whose religion is founded on a kind of vague fear of what might happen if they leave God out of the reckoning. But real religion is founded not on fear but on the love of God and gratitude for what God has done. Too much religion is a kind of superstitious ritual to avert the possible wrath of the unpredictable gods."⁵²

22f "**salvation is of the Jews**" There is no verse written before or after this in the New Testament that amends or changes this truth. This shows that "Replacement Theology" is a heresy. That error teaches

⁵² William Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible: The Gospel of John*.

that since Israel rejected Christ, God took the kingdom promises away from Israel and gave them to the Church. This means that the Church is Israel now. This leads to a whole host of problems. Here, the Lord says that salvation for the Gentiles comes through Israel. If there are no Jews in the Gospels and beyond, then there is no provision for salvation for the Gentiles.

4:23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers^a shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth:^{bc} for the Father seeketh such to worship him.^d

23a There are true worshipers and false worshipers. Many worship God according to their own heart but that worship is not in spirit or in truth and is thus rejected by God. Many a contemporary church has “praise and worship” services with a “worship leader” and rock music, smoke and a laser show and they call it worship, but that spirit is foreign to the Biblical idea of worship.

Then there are the true worshipers who focus on prayer, scripture and godly music. Their worship is not flashy or fleshly but it is accepted by God.

23b This will not be bound by geography or have to be done in a certain building. The true worshiper can worship any time, anywhere, in any circumstance. This is because the believer’s body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, so the believer carries his “church building” around with him constantly!

23c There is only one Truth and it is found preserved for us in English within the pages of an Authorized Version. Most of this “truth” is in corrupted modern English versions but due to their many mistranslations, you will still lose much of this truth, so why bother? You also will not find this truth in an edition of the Koran, or any philosophical book out there. But it is in a dime-store Bible and thanks to the internet, it can be downloaded for free.

23d People who love God and who want to know God will also want to worship Him and will seek out Biblical ways to do it. And the Lord will guide them as they seek to worship Him. There will always be a remnant of saints looking for churches (regardless of size) and are engaged in Biblical worship.

“Worship” of God in Biblical Theology

Definition- giving God the honor, glory, respect, fear, praise and reverence that is due to Him

1. First mention is in Genesis 22:5 **“And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.”**
 - A. It involved obedience, faith and a willingness to sacrifice
2. Worship in the Old Testament was “afar off”
 - A. Exodus 24:1 **“And he said unto Moses, Come up unto the LORD, thou, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel; and worship ye afar off.”**
3. Worship “before” God
 - A. Deuteronomy 26:10 **“And now, behold, I have brought the firstfruits of the land, which thou, O LORD, hast given me. And thou shalt set it before the LORD thy God, and worship before the LORD.”**
4. Sin must be dealt with before there can be worship.
 - A. 1 Samuel 15:25 **“Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the LORD.”**
5. Worship involves fear of God
 - A. 2 Kings 17:36 **“But the LORD, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power and a stretched out arm, him shall ye fear, and him shall ye worship, and to him shall ye do sacrifice.”**

- B. Psalm 5:7 **"But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple."**
- C. Psalm 96:9 **"O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth."**
6. Worship involves sacrifice
- A. 2 Kings 17:36 **"But the LORD, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power and a stretched out arm, him shall ye fear, and him shall ye worship, and to him shall ye do sacrifice."**
7. Worship in the beauty of holiness
- A. 1 Chronicles 16:29 **"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness."**
- B. Psalm 29:2 **"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness."**
- C. Psalm 96:9 **"O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth."**
8. Worship toward the temple
- A. Psalm 5:7 **"But as for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple."**
- B. Psalm 138:2 **"I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."**
9. Worship in the Millennium
- A. Psalm 66:4 **"All the earth shall worship thee, and shall sing unto thee; they shall sing to thy name. Selah."**
- B. Psalm 86:9 **"All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord; and shall glorify thy name."**
- C. Isaiah 27:13 **"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the holy mount at Jerusalem."**
- D. Isaiah 49:7 **"Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee."**
- E. Isaiah 66:23 **"And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD."**
- F. Ezekiel 46:2,3,9 **"And the prince shall enter by the way of the porch of that gate without, and shall stand by the post of the gate, and the priests shall prepare his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he shall worship at the threshold of the gate: then he shall go forth; but the gate shall not be shut until the evening. Likewise the people of the land shall worship at the door of this gate before the LORD in the sabbaths and in the new moons.,,But when the people of the land shall come before the LORD in the solemn feasts, he that entereth in by the way of the north gate to worship shall go out by the way of the south gate; and he that entereth by the way of the south gate shall go forth by the way of the north gate: he shall not return by the way of the gate whereby he came in, but shall go forth over against it."**
- G. Zephaniah 2:11 **"The LORD will be terrible unto them: for he will famish all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all**

the isles of the heathen.”

H. Zechariah 14:16,17 **“And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.”**

I. John 4:21 **“Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.”**

J. Revelation 15:4 **“Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest.”**

10. Bowing down and kneeling in worship

A. Psalm 95:6 **“O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.”**

11. Worship at His footstool

A. Psalm 99:5 **“Exalt ye the LORD our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy.”**

B. Psalm 132:7 **“We will go into his tabernacles: we will worship at his footstool.”**

12. Worship at His holy hill

A. Psalm 99:9 **“Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy.”**

13. Jesus Christ is worshiped

A. Matthew 2:2 **“Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.”**

B. Hebrews 1:6 **“And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him.”**

14. Vain worship- involves the commandments of men

A. Matthew 15:9 **“But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”**

B. Mark 7:7 **“Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.”**

15. Worship in spirit and in truth

A. John 4:23,24 **“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”**

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

16. The Father desires true worshippers

A. John 4:23 **“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.”**

17. Worship in heaven

A. Revelation 4:10 **“The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,”**

4:24 God is a Spirit:^a and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.^{bcdef}

24a This applies to God the Father and to the Holy Spirit. When Jesus spoke this, He was a man and He will remain a glorified man for eternity. But before His incarnation, Jesus was also a spirit. This does not prevent the Father or the Son from taking human form as they both apparently did during the Old Testament days on occasion. We have no record of the Holy Spirit ever taking a physical form in either testament.

AV	ESV	LSV
24 God <i>is</i> a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship <i>him</i> in spirit and in truth.	24 God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”	24 “God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

The ESV and LSV omit the article before “Spirit”.

24b Not according to the flesh or rites and rituals. Having grown up in the Church of Rome, I saw a lot of this “non-scriptural” worship. It all appealed to the flesh- the statues, the candles, the processions and recessions, the robed priests, the ornate sanctuaries. It all covered up a bankrupt worship. The more ornate, complex and “impressive” a church’s “worship” is, the less Biblical it is. True and genuine worship is not concerned with forms, rituals and the eye-gate. This is not to say that our worship is to be chaotic and haphazard, for it, like all things, should be done “decently and in order”. But we put the emphasis on the spiritual, not on the carnal. We are not out to impress anyone but God and we do that with our spirits in worship.

Judaism in the Lord’s day was mainly outward observance to ritual and the law, with little room for the things of the Spirit.

24c Worship in Spirit

1. It does not depend on buildings
2. It does not depend on liturgy or ritual
3. It is an action of the heart, to praise Him, glorify Him and submit to His will
4. Since God is a spirit, His worship will be spiritual, not physical or carnal. The more physical and carnal your worship is, the less Biblical it is.

24d Worship in Truth

1. There is a true worship and a false worship, and you had better figure out which is which!
2. False doctrines and false churches worship in error.
 - A. You can’t believe wrong and worship right.
 - B. You can’t live wrong and worship right.
3. Worship must be according to Biblical revelation and example
4. This kind of worship is straightforward, simple, and direct. It is not complex.
 - A. The more complex worship is, the farther from Biblical worship it is.
 - B. There is an apostolic simplicity in worship. It is very simple and direct in the Book of Acts. It becomes corrupted after the apostolic age and is hopelessly corrupted by the Church of Rome. The Protestant Reformation did little to simplify corporate worship.
 - C. The Baptists and the Plymouth Brethren led the way in simplifying corporate worship.

24e There are three kinds of worship:

1. Corporate, usually in the worship of a local church
2. Personal, through personal devotions and “closet work”
3. Family or household worship

24f Worship and the “Altar of Earth” from Exodus 20:24-26: **“An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.”**

After the tabernacle was constructed, there would be no need for such private altars. They were frequent before the establishment of the tabernacle. Regarding private altars, several commands were to be followed:

1. It was to be made of earth. This would show worship without pretense. How can you get fancy with dirt? This shows that the worship of God’s people should be natural, without pretense.
2. If it was made of stone, it had to be rough stone and not cut or carved stone. Human innovation in the worship of God was not allowed. No human works allowed. If you try to improve on what God has revealed or commanded in His worship, you have polluted it. There should be no human works added to our worship.
3. No steps, but it is assumed that a ramp would be used to ascend the altar. This would prevent any nakedness. No immodesties would be allowed in the worship of God. Canaanite altars had steps. It also speaks that our worship should be without pride (in the ascending of the steps) and without any immoralities (which are increasing in modern worship). Steps can also refer to man’s way, which promotes achievement by natural ability and creates different levels of attainment among God’s people, which can create artificial distinction among the saints where none should exist.
4. God had very specific rules as to how He would be worshipped, and man was not at liberty to design his own ways of worship or approach to God. Some of the Covenanter/Presbyterian groups refer to this as the “regulated Principle of Worship”, as saying that the only form of worship God will accept are forms expressly mentioned and regulated by Him in the Scripture. If it is not expressly regulated, then it would not be acceptable by God.

4:25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ:^a when he is come, he will tell us all things.^b

25a The heathen aren’t as ignorant or as backward as you may think. This woman was far ahead the average college professor today in her (limited) understanding of the doctrine of Christ and His coming. This adulteress was also far above Mohammad in her understanding of prophecy and the truth. She was looking for a messiah like Jesus, not some polygamist like Mohammad who shackled up with 9-year old girls.

25b I am not sure where she got this from.

AV	ESV	LSV
25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.	25 The woman said to him, “I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things.”	25 The woman *said to Him, “I know that Messiah is coming (He who is called Christ); when He comes, He will declare all things to us.”

“which is called Christ” The ESV and LSV puts this in parentheses, as if to have John commenting instead of the woman actually saying this.

4:26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.^a

26a Jesus finally ends the suspense and comes right out and claims that He is the Messiah that they

are looking for.

4:27 And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman:^a yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?^b

27a “But there was still another way in which Jesus was taking down the barriers. The Samaritan was a woman. The strict Rabbis forbade a Rabbi to greet a woman in public. A Rabbi might not even speak to his own wife or daughter or sister in public. There were even Pharisees who were called “the bruised and bleeding Pharisees” because they shut their eyes when they saw a woman on the street and so walked into walls and houses! For a Rabbi to be seen speaking to a woman in public was the end of his reputation--and yet Jesus spoke to this woman. Not only was she a woman; she was also a woman of notorious character. No decent man, let alone a Rabbi, would have been seen in her company, or even exchanging a word with her--and yet Jesus spoke to her.”⁵³

27b They got back from their “food run” and they were surprised that Jesus talking to this Samaritan, as they certainly would not have, and in their bigotry, they would have lost a golden opportunity to not only see this woman saved but to see a whole village saved.

4:28 The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

4:29 Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?^{ab}

29a After the profession, we then start looking for fruit. We are sick and tired of seeing cheap, quickie little “professions” that produce no fruit. Salvation WILL produce some visible signs that will testify that a heart transaction and change has taken place. How many times do we see in the Jack Hyles type of hyper-evangelism that the “soulwinners” will report 500 saved and 150 baptized and three join the church. If you followed up on the 497 people that did not join the church, you will find many of them “cooperated” with the “soulwinner” just to get rid of him but they never really were saved. Or they “prayed this prayer on the back of this tract” or they squeezed someone’s hand to signify they “prayed that prayer” but nothing really happened because the witness rushed through everything and was too impatient to really follow up. We’ve seen bus kids and kids in our Sunday School that were told that they prayed some prayer when they were 5 years old and were then baptized. They are then told that they are “saved” but they can’t remember anything about it. They then grow into teenagers and are just as carnal as any unsaved person. If you were to deal with them about their carnality, they will respond with “I got saved when I was 5 years old because Mrs. So-and-So said I was!” Good luck trying to deal with such people!

The fruit this woman manifested was that she quickly ran into town to tell everyone what she did and Who she met. She was so excited that she forgot the reason she was at the well in the first place!

AV	ESV	LSV
29 Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?	29 “Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?”	29 “Come, see a man who told me all the things that I <i>have</i> done; is this not the Christ?”

29b The ESV has “Can this be the Christ?” This weakens her declaration as rendered in the traditional manuscripts.

⁵³ William Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible; The Gospel of John*.

4:30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

4:31 In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

4:32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.^a

32a The Lord defines this in verse 34.

4:33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat?^a

33a One of John's themes is the misunderstandings that result when Jesus speaks spiritually, and His hearers translate what they hear carnally. The Lord is speaking of spiritual food and the disciples are thinking someone slipped Him some food while they were at the market. They did not think Jesus would have accepted and eaten food since they were in Samaritan country. Any food prepared in a Samaritan home and offered to Him would have been deemed unclean.

4:34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.^{ab}

34a This is what is truly important for the Christian. Eating is vital to everyone. Without food, you will starve. Without being able to both know and do the will of God, the Christian will lose his spiritual nourishment. A Christian who makes no effort to discern the will of God for his life or one who refuses to do it also cuts himself off from spiritual nourishment and he will shrivel up and die spiritually.

34b Christ finished the work on the cross in John 19:30.

4:35, Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.^{abc}

35a Now, today, is the accepted time to do the will and the work of God. Delay may be costly as we do not know when the harvest will end. The night is coming when no man shall be able to work, when persecutions and tribulations will shut the door (John 9:4).

35b The Lord compares soulwinning to farming.

1. You plant a seed. This is the initial contact with the sinner. We sow the good seed of the word of God.

A. Matthew 13:3,24 **"And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow...Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:"**

B. 1 Peter 1:25 **"But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you."**

2. You water it. This involves prayer and "follow-up".

3. You wait for it to grow. You must be patient to allow the law and the Holy Spirit to do their work in bringing conviction to the heart of the sinner. Many a convert has been lost due to the impatience of the witnesses, who wanted instant results.

4. The harvest. This is the salvation of the sinner.
5. The reward. You then take your crops to the market for payment. The Lord will reward His harvesters at the Judgment Seat.
6. One man will plant, another will water and one will harvest and it may involve multiple people over years of time until this harvest comes in. One man seldom does it all in soulwinning.
 - A. 1 Corinthians 3:7,8 **"So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour."**

35c "That is not to say there are no fields out there for us today. But it cannot be ignored that much mission work, in particular "pioneer" mission work is that of sowing the seed more than reaping. Paul mentioned that some sow, some water, some reap. This truth is made plain by the statements Jesus makes in verse 36-38. You may be one of the sowers. You may spend a great deal of time witnessing and putting forth the word without a great visible sign of success. (Please don't use this statement to justify your own personal laziness that results in your fruitlessness.) Or you may be one who comes by as the "second witness" to water the seed already sown. Still others may be great reapers. Unfortunately, we tend to exalt the "reapers" above those who sow or water. This leads to everybody wanting the "glory" of being a reaper.

"So we now have many people being "saved" before the seed can even take root. This truth has almost been lost on today's fundamentalists. Rather than "great" reapers they become "Grim Reapers" who sow, water and reap the harvest all in about five minutes! No one wants to give the seed time to grow to fruition. Could you imagine a farmer mounting his tractor in preparation to harvest a field just a day or two after sowing it!? Or if he ran out as soon as the young sprouts broke through the surface? This is done all too often by those whose only gauge of success is the number they had "saved" each week. Is it any wonder they can't find the very people they supposedly led to Christ in church anywhere? Someone will demand, "But what if they die before we get to win them?" Do you think a soul that God is dealing with could unexpectedly die before He was finished dealing with him?." ⁵⁴

4:36, And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.^a

36a The Lord pays His workers well. He is no tight-fisted cheapskate in dealing with His servants. Crowns will be awarded as well as rewards at the Bema Seat judgment. It will not be so much the results that will be examined as it will the motivations and the faithfulness of such service.

4:37, And herein is that saying true, One soweth, and another reapeth.^a

37a "Every minister is to SOW, and he is sow good seed (Matt. 13:3,24), which is the word of God (1 Pet. 1:25). He cannot let troubles, trials, testings, problems, or opposition stop him from SOWING (Ecc. 11:4). A true witness will sow the word when he is twelve to twenty years old, thirty to sixty years old, and seventy to eighty years old (Ecc. 11:6). If he wants a fruitful harvest, he must WEEP over souls (Psa. 126:5-6; Luke 19:41; 1 Cor. 2:3; Phil. 3:18). He will spend more time plowing, tilling, and hoeing than he will planting. Sometimes he must pick up rocks or "blast" (or "stump") to prepare a field for crops. He will reap sometimes where he did not sow, and sometimes he will sow without reaping (1 Cor. 3:7-8). Reaping comes at the Judgment Seat of Christ (Gal. 6:8) as well as down here (John 4:36), and it is called "laying HOLD on eternal life" (1 Tim. 6:19).

⁵⁴ Samuel Gipp, *A Practical and Theological Study on the Gospel of John*, page 150.

"There will be bugs and animals trying to mess up your vegetable garden (or fruit trees: Song of Sol. 2:15). You are entirely dependent upon the weather for a good crop (see Joel 2; Amos 4:6–11; 1 Kings 17–18), and God controls the weather (Job 37–38; Psa. 147). You have to "lift up your eyes" and look at the field (vs. 35), for "where there is no vision, the people perish."

"You are working a field with other workers (vss. 37–38), and you will be paid for your work according to what you do (Matt. 20), not what someone else did (see 2 Cor. 10:12–16). You enter into "their labours," and they enter into yours: hence, "fellow laborer" (Luke 10:2; Matt. 9:37–38; 1 Cor. 3:9; Phil. 4:3; 1 Thess.3:2).

"Sometimes you have to "thin out" the plants so others can grow. Sometimes you have to "snap" off blossoms so other fruit on the same plant will grow bigger; sometimes you have to keep the top of an underground plant covered (carrots and potatoes) so they don't get poisonous; but sometimes you have to pull dirt away from them off the top so the plant will grow bigger (onions); sometimes..."⁵⁵

4:38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labour: other men laboured,^a and ye are entered into their labours.

38a You enter into other men's labors. Some sow, some water and others reap but all share in the reward.

4:39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

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

40a This is another evidence of their conversion- they wanted to know more about Jesus and His doctrine. Anyone who makes a "profession" and then expresses no desire to attend church, associate with other Christians, hear the Bible preached and taught or to increase his knowledge of spiritual things probably did not get truly saved. After I was saved in 1978, the first thing I wanted was a Bible. Then I wanted books to help me learn about spiritual things. I hit every Christian bookstore I could, even going into Christian Science Reading Rooms (I didn't know any better in those days!) and contacting Seventh Day Adventists for their books! I also listened to as much Christian radio as I could. But then it would still take me 5 years to finally come to the conclusion that I needed to leave the Church of Rome, where I attended in those days. One reason (among several) why I knew I needed to leave Rome was that they were not teaching the Bible and I was learning very little Bible during the mass. For a hungry young Christian, that would never do!

40b You have to wonder if the Samaritans had an ulterior motive in asking Christ to stay with them. If He really was the Messiah, they would use Him against the Jews and their religious claims and get the "upper hand". Jesus was willing to spend two days with them but not long enough to give them any hope or encouragement that He would side with them in their quarrel with Jerusalem.

4:41 And many more believed because of his own word;^a

41a Not because of any miracles or signs, but they believed based on His "word"- the preached and taught word. Hearing- and word-based conversions are always superior to "professions" based on

⁵⁵ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, pages 144-145.

signs, miracles or wonders, or sight-based “conversions”.

4:42 And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.^a

42a Second-hand “conversions” are not that desirable. A person should be converted based on what he heard personally and his own faith, not based on what someone else told him or what happened to someone else. The witness and testimony of this woman was good and God used it, but the people came to their own conclusion about Christ.

22. The Healing of the Nobleman’s Son 4:43-54

4:43 Now after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee.

4:44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country.^{abc}

44a This is true, as Jesus would also say in Mark 6:4,5. He would go back to Nazareth but everyone would say “You think you’re the Messiah? I remember you when you were in third grade when you poured milk down my shorts at lunch one day! Yeah, we know all about you! Some Messiah!” The hardest place to preach or minister is in your hometown, where everyone knows you and how you were before you were saved. My former pastor, Al Dickerson, pastored in his hometown of Elkton, Maryland for 58 years. That would have been difficult as most of the locals knew him before he was saved. It would be easier to go to a strange town where no one knows you. I have pastored in Centreville, Maryland, Mebane, North Carolina and Smyrna, Delaware, where no one knew me, so I had an “advantage” that I had to reputation (for good or bad) among those people.

44b All is clear except to a biographer of Billy Graham, somewhere around 2001, who claimed that Billy got plenty of honor “in his own country.”

44c “This is one of the sadder truths of Scripture. You can accomplish great things for the Lord and never have it acknowledged close to home. You may start and build a great church, preach all around the world, write books, do radio and television programs and be heralded everywhere you go as a great servant of God. Yet to the folks back home you’re still known as “Junior.” All they remember is some argument they had with when you were twelve and they simply cannot see you as a “Great man of God.”⁵⁶

4:45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galilaeans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.^a

45a Jesus tended to have good results and reception in Galilee, more so than He had in Judea. These people remembered his boldness in the cleansing of the temple in John 2 and appreciated Him for that.

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

46a See John 2.

⁵⁶ Samuel Gipp, *A Practical and Theological Study of the Gospel of John*, page 169.

46b This is not recorded by Matthew, Mark or Luke.

4:47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.^a

47a Jesus had the established reputation as a healer and a miracle worker by this point in His ministry.

4:48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.^a

48a Who was this directed to- the nobleman or the accompanying crowd around Jesus? Either way, this is a rebuke for those who insisted on having something to see or of having some experience before they would believe on Him. For these people, His word was not enough. Beware of those who maintain that it is necessary to have signs, wonders and miracles in order to believe. If they will not accept Christ based on the word, they will not accept Christ (Biblically) if they saw a thousand miracles.

4:49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir,^a come down ere my child die.^b

49a The nobleman did not call Jesus "Lord", showing he was not believing that Jesus was God at this point. You can be a healer and a miracle worker, yet not be the Messiah or God. He may have been putting Jesus to the test- if you can heal my son, I'll believe. If you don't, then I won't. If he had this attitude, then the rebuke of John 4:48 would be directed at him.

49b He is starting to get desperate, as he thought the Lord might refuse his request. Desperation and fear can do more to generate faith in God than intellectualism, religion or education ever could.

4:50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth.^a And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him,^b and he went his way.

50a Nothing to see here! No gyrations, no hocus-pocus, no slayings in the spirit, no organ grinding in the background to set the mood, no faith healer in a Good Humor suit (hello, Benny Hinn!), just a word- go and your son will live.

50b This was what Jesus was looking for and he got the faith in the word out of this man.

4:51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth.

4:52 Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.^a

52a The word of John 4:50 is confirmed.

4:53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.^a

53a Belief in the word of God now spreads to the whole house based on the testimony of the nobleman. Faith is spread by word of mouth, which is always the best way to do it.

4:54 This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when he was come out of Judaea into Galilee.^a

54a The first miracle was the turning of the water into wine at Cana in John 2.

John Chapter 5

23. The Healing at the Pool of Bethesda 5:1-9

5:1 After this there was a feast of the Jews;^a and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

1a It may have been the Passover but we can't be sure.

5:2, Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market^a a pool, which is called in the Hebrew^b tongue Bethesda, having five porches.^{cd}

AV	ESV	LSV
2 Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches .	2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, in Aramaic called Bethesda, which has five roofed colonnades.	2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the sheep <i>gate</i> a pool, which is called in Hebrew Bethesda, having five porticoes.

2a The ESV and LSV have "sheep gate".

2b The ESV has "Aramaic".

2d The ESV has "colonnades" and the LSV has "porticoes". How is that an improvement on "porches"?

2c "Five" is the Biblical number of death (not grace) but I see no significance to the number "five" here. There just happened to be 5 porches here.

5:3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.^a

AV	ESV	LSV
3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.	3 In these lay a multitude of invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed.	3 In these lay a multitude of those who were sick, blind, lame, and withered, [waiting for the moving of the waters;
4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.	(omitted)	4 for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool and stirred up the water; whoever then first, after the stirring up of the water, stepped in was made well from whatever sickness with which he was afflicted.]

3a "John 5:3b–4. Everything from "waiting for the moving of the water" (verse 3) to "whole of whatsoever disease he had" (verse 4) has been omitted in the "new" Bibles. The Alexandrian scribes (or scribe) deleted these verses, and their adulterations are visible in Aleph, B, and C manuscripts, plus the Sahidic, the Curetonian Syriac (corrupted by Origen during his stay in Caesarea), and a few Old

Latin manuscripts.

In spite of scholarship's opposition to the passage, R. Steck (1893), Henstsenberg (1875), and Hilgenfeld (1875) insist that the AV reading is correct. The reading is cited by Tertullian (A.D. 200) and Didymus (379) and Chrysostom (390), and is included in Tatian's Diatessaron, which was written 200 years before the Vatican manuscript was written. It is plain that the Alexandrian scribes, according to their usual habit, messed with the text, for "A" (as well as "L") has omitted half of verse 3 but did not omit verse 4. "D" and "W" omitted verse 4 but left the last part of verse 3 as it is found in the Receptus! In spite of this obvious meddling, the passage has been preserved intact in the AV 1611, and virtually intact in the vast majority of Greek manuscripts."⁵⁷

5:4^a For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.^b

4a John is simply relating the "tradition" but is not endorsing it. Neither did Jesus in 5:8. Religious traditions like this abound, especially in Roman Catholicism, such as Lourdes or Fatima. Such traditionalism would have been easily acceptable by a dead-orthodox nation that relied heavily on religious traditionalism (see the Babylonian Talmud for an example). Such traditions are common. How many people go to Lourdes to "get a healing" or who go to a Binny Hinn "healing crusade" in a desperate attempt to get a healing?

4b How this tradition got started is not known, but it simply does not correspond to how God really works in such cases. This makes it sound like God is playing some cruel game with these people, to see which one could roll or drag himself into the pool when the angel stirred the water. God simply does not operate in such a fashion, but it makes sense to man, who likes works-based religions and works-based healings. This is how modern faith-healers operate, that you have to "do" something to merit God's favor in healing you of some physical condition or answering your prayer. This work usually involves a large donation to the ministry of the faith-healer (usually styled as a "seed faith gift"), to show that you have faith in God. No money usually would result in no answer or healing from God. The bigger your gift, the better chance you had that God would respond. Where this leaves a poor man is rather hard to say.

5:5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity^a thirty and eight years.^b

5a This infirmity apparently made him lame.

5b This doesn't necessarily mean he was at the pool every day for 38 years, but that he suffered from this condition for 38 years.

5:6 When Jesus saw him lie,^a and knew that he had been now a long time in that case, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?^b

6a Jesus picked the man in the worst condition and healed him. That way, no one could deny the miracle if the "hardest case" was the one who was healed.

6b It seemed like a rather silly question. After all, the man was there, on the edge of the pool, and probably was a regular fixture there, every day, hoping for a miracle, that today might be the day that

⁵⁷ Peter Ruckman, *The Christian's Handbook of Manuscript Evidence*.

he would be the first one in the pool.

5:7 The impotent^a man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.^{bcd}

7a Not sexually impotent, but powerless in his legs, unable to do anything to improve his condition. This speaks to the situation of the sinner. Even if he is on the “brink” of salvation, he cannot take that final step without help, as he is spiritually impotent.

7b This man, in his desperation, had faith in the legend. Desperate people will do anything to find the relief they need, even to the extent of sending money to Benny Hinn or Oral Roberts or peddling Watchtower magazines door to door or putting on “holy underwear” and genuflecting toward Salt Lake City or going to mass.

7c Had he no friends or family? Someone may have helped him to get the pool daily. Would no one stay with him, to assist him when the waters stirred? Or was he alone, with no friends or family to take pity on him? Such is often the plight of the sinner, living in this “dog-eat-dog” world, where it is every man for himself and no one cares if a man lives alone, in poverty, crippled, or goes to hell. But this man was about to meet One Who did care!

“He complains for want of friends to help him in: “I have no man, no friend to do me that kindness.” One would think that some of those who had been themselves healed should have lent him a hand; but it is common for the poor to be destitute of friends; no man careth for their soul. To the sick and impotent it is as true a piece of charity to work for them as to relieve them; and thus the poor are capable of being charitable to one another, and ought to be so, though we seldom find that they are so; I speak it to their shame. (3.) He bewails his infelicity, that very often when he was coming another stepped in before him. But a step between him and a cure, and yet he continues impotent. None had the charity to say, “Your case is worse than mine, do you go in now, and I will stay till the next time;” for there is no getting over the old maxim, Every one for himself. Having been so often disappointed, he begins to despair, and now is Christ’s time to come to his relief; he delights to help in desperate cases.”⁵⁸

7d This is a picture of salvation.

1. The man is sick and he knows it.
2. He is helpless to do anything about his condition.
3. He is looking for help but has none.
 - A. Psalm 142:4 **“No man cared for my soul.”**
4. He is trusting in a traditional system for deliverance by trying to go into the waters.
 - A. So many people look toward “traditional” ways to be saved, baptism, morality, church membership. Others seek fake faith healers.
 - B. He would be saved without any of it and in spite of it.
5. He is healed by the word of God.
6. There are things he must do after his salvation, such as baptism and confessing Christ.
7. The cure was a long time coming but when it came, it was in a moment.
 - A. Most “soulwinners” are impatient. They want immediate results and press for an immediate decision. Yet the inner work of the Holy Spirit in the heart can take a long time. You are asking a sinner to die to his old life and take up a totally and radically new life. You can’t expect a man to make such a decision after giving him an 8-minute “cold

⁵⁸ Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*.

call" presentation on his front porch.

8. Not everyone (or anyone else for that matter) was healed on that day. You can preach to a thousand sinners but God will sometimes only save one of them.

5:8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.^{abc}

8a Jesus completely ignored the tradition and did an end-run around it. He healed the man with a simple word, not by helping him into the water. The Lord has no time for baseless religious traditions that detract from the genuine gospel message and way of salvation. By telling this man to carry a burden on the Sabbath, the Lord was deliberately starting a controversy, and the healed man was willing to go along with it.

8b We naturally believe in divine healing because the Bible is full of examples. But we do not believe the following:

1. It is always God's will to heal.
2. If you are sick that you are under the judgment of God.
3. If you don't get a healing then it must be because you lack faith.

We do believe:

1. That suffering and sickness are part of God's plan.
 - A. Sin causes a lot of this.
2. Suffering and sickness can bring glory to God if we handle the situations well.
 - A. One of my seminary teachers, O. Talmadge Spence, died of "Lou Gehrig's Disease" (Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis or ALS) in 2000. God never healed him. He was able to demonstrate that a Christian can die well, even under a very difficult death.
 - B. This is something faith-healers hate, as they can see no spiritual benefits to sufferings.
3. Suffering and sickness are part of the Fall.
4. Seasons of suffering and strengthen one's walk with God.
5. Going through sufferings can bring new avenues for ministries.
6. It is no sin to be sick, nor does it demonstrate a "lack of faith".

8c Jesus told a lame man who rise and walk, but the Lord did not take him by the hand to help him up. God did the healing, but often have to put forth our efforts in utilizing and applying the works of God in our lives.

5:9 And immediately the man was made whole,^a and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the sabbath.

9a Jesus healed no one else on this day although He certainly could have healed them all. Why didn't Jesus heal everyone? Why did he only heal this one man?

24. The Reaction to the Healing at the Pool of Bethesda 5:10-16

5:10, The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.^a

10a Did they recognize the lame man who had been healed? If they did, were they not shocked the was now walking? No, the first thing that came to their minds was that here was a man who was

violating their traditions regarding the Sabbath.

5:11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.^a

11a The man was familiar with the regulations regarding the Sabbath, but he may have reasoned “any man who can heal me would have the authority to tell me to violate the Sabbath!”

5:12 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?^a

12a Never mind about the miracle or the healing. They did not ask “Who made you whole?” They did not inquire about the obvious miracle. All they were interested in was who told this man to carry his bed on the Sabbath, thus violating their rules and challenging their authority.

5:13 And he that was healed wist not who it was:^a for Jesus had conveyed himself away,^b a multitude being in that place.

13a Jesus did not identify Himself to the man whom He healed. How different from the so-called healers today. If they did have a genuine healing, they would trumpet it all over the media, use it to raise money and write a book and to prove that this healer was a “true man of God”.

13b AV	ESV	LSV
13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in <i>that</i> place.	13 Now the man who had been healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, as there was a crowd in the place.	13 But the man who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had slipped away while there was a crowd in <i>that</i> place.

The ESV has “withdrawn”, a rare instance where the ESV uses a simpler word than the Authorized Version. “Convey” is a word that probably needs some explanation but neither Laurence Vance’s *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version* nor Steven J. White’s *White’s Dictionary of the King James Language* deal with the word. Its definition is “to bear from one place to another especially: to move in a continuous stream or mass, to impart or communicate by statement, suggestion, gesture, or appearance struggling to convey his feelings.”

5:14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.^{ab}

14a “To sum it up: the Son and the Father are one in SERVICE (vs. 17), one in WILL (vss. 14, 19), one in ESSENCE (vs. 17), one in INTELLIGENCE (vss. 19–20), one in AUTHORITY (vs 17), one in DIVINE HONOR (vs. 22), one in SOVEREIGN RIGHTS (vs. 21), and one in IMPARTING LIFE (vs. 24). That is the Scripture’s eight-fold witness to the Deity of Jesus Christ.”⁵⁹

14b Was his condition a judgment of some sin he committed? That can happen and the Lord’s admonition to “sin no more” would lend itself to that conclusion. “Sin no more” is impossible for us as

⁵⁹ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, page 162.

there is no sinless perfection here, so the Lord might have meant “Go and no longer sin that sin that got you into your predicament”. If God healed you of lung cancer, don’t go back to smoking. If God delivered you from drugs and booze and you lost marriage to them, God may give you a new wife, so don’t revert back to the sins that destroyed your first marriage.

It could also have been an admonition for the man to fear God. God has bestowed a great miracle upon you. Don’t forget it! And like so as to demonstrate your thankfulness to Him.

Sin does bring consequences and the best way to have a happy and productive life is to avoid sin wherever possible.

5:15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.^a

15a Now he was able to tell the religious leaders the name of the man who had healed him, and, more importantly to them, had given him authority to carry his bed on the Sabbath.

5:16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day.^a

16a Never mind this man could heal the sick and do miracles. He had to die because He challenged their (mis)interpretation and (mis)application of the Sabbath. The Lord never attacked the Sabbath or disrespected it. Jesus attacked the misuse and misunderstanding of it, and how the religious leaders made something that was supposed to be a joy and a delight into a great burden.

25. The Lord’s Sermon and Defense of His Healing 5:17-47

5:17 But Jesus answered them, My Father^a worketh hitherto,^b and I work.^c

17a This is what kept getting Jesus into trouble, asserting that God was His Father, thus making Himself equal to the Father.

17b Jesus was no deist. He said the Father was working in the affairs of men now, at that very time. He is always active in our generation, even if we have difficulty in seeing Him work.

17c They knew little about the work of God and doing the works of God.

5:18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.^{ab}

18a There was no misunderstanding here. They fully understood that Jesus was equating Himself with the Father and was thus claiming to be God. Yet there are ignorant liberals today who claim that Jesus never claimed to be God. If that was the case, then why did the Jews seek to kill Him for blasphemy?

Any Tom, Dick and Harry can claim to be God or to be equal with God, but do these false teachers really understand the gravity of their claims? To claim to be God or equal with God or at least to be a favorite of God? The Jews took such claims very seriously and were ready to stone anyone who made such claims. Yet modern false religious leaders throw such claims around with impunity, as if they don’t realize the seriousness of such sins. Lucifer wanted to be “like God” and the universe still hasn’t recovered from the damage that desire caused.

18b The religious leaders now had two charges against Jesus:

1. He violated the sabbath.
2. He blasphemed in making Himself to be equal with God.

5:19 Then answered Jesus and said unto them, Verily, verily,^a I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.^{bc}

19a An important spiritual truth always followed a “verily, verily”.

19b The truth is that the Son does nothing on His own but always works within the will of the Father. He did not work on His own volition, but only did what the Father wanted Him to do. Jesus did not work out His own agenda but only the will of the Father.

19c This is also because Jesus was filled with the Spirit without measure (John 3:34). He did not rely on His own power or strength or will to do anything on Earth. Every miracle was done through the power of the Spirit and everything He did was to fulfill the will of the Father. There was a perfect agreement and alignment in all these things within the Godhead.

Since Jesus did nothing in His own will or in His own power, why do we try these things (John 15:5-**“Without me, ye can do nothing”**)?

5:20 For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these,^a that ye may marvel.

20a The Lord never defines what these “greater works” are unless it is a reference to His resurrection.

5:21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.^a

21a There will be a resurrection from the dead, you can be sure of that. The Father raises the dead and gives them life. This is both physically and spiritually. The physical part is a prophecy of the resurrection of Christ. Spiritually, it can refer to the Lord giving spiritual life to the sinner who is dead in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1 **“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;”**) through the New Birth.

As the Father has power to raise the dead and give them life (both physically and spiritually), so does the Son, again proving His deity.

5:22 For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:^a

22a Jesus will do the judging at the upcoming judgments, such as the Judgment of the Nations in Matthew 25, the Bema Judgment and the Great White Throne Judgment. Jesus has an absolute monopoly on these judgments, and no one will assist Him nor judge with Him.

5:23 That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him.^a

23a Those who disrespect Jesus show no honor to the Father. Anyone who attacks the person, work or deity of Christ dishonors the Father. The cults who attack the deity of Christ attack God. The so-called

“Jehovah Witnesses” dishonor Jehovah when they claim that Jesus was “a god” as their New World Translation mistranslates John 1:1. Christ is worthy of the same honor as we would give the Father since both are God.

Muslims also do this. They reduce Jesus to a mere “prophet” who is inferior to Mohammad. In so doing, they dishonor “Allah” (if “Allah” was the same as the God of Israel, which he isn’t). This “prophet” Jesus claimed to be God and greater than any man, including Mohammad. The Koran claims otherwise. Someone is lying and we don’t have to give it two seconds of thought to figure it out!

Anyone or any group that attacks the full deity of Christ and the full equality of the Son with the Father is guilty of dishonoring the Father.

5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word,^a and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation;^c but is passed from death unto life.^{bc}

24a This is not the word of any mere man. No word of any man or church or theological system can give everlasting life. Jesus must be God for His word to have this power of salvation.

24b This is a great salvation verse:

1. This is another “verily verily” which indicates an important spiritual truth will follow.
2. The man who hears and obeys the word of God and believes on the Father has everlasting life.
 - A. To “hear” implies obeying. To hear is one thing but to hear and not obey gives no profit to hearing that word.
 - i. James 1:22,23. **“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass.”**
 - a. To hear and not do implies disobedience.
3. God will bestow salvation life unto the man who believes.
 - A. This again shows that salvation is by faith and belief, not by works.
4. We must believe on Him who sent Christ, which would be the Father.
 - A. We must believe “on” Christ. Almost everyone believes “in” Christ but that does not necessarily result in salvation. To believe “on” Christ is to rely completely and totally on Christ alone for salvation, to the exclusion of all else and everyone else.
5. This eternal life comes instantly and one can know he is saved right now. Notice the “hath”, used in the present tense.
 - A. First John 5:13 also says we can “know” right now whether or not we have eternal life. You don’t have to wait until you die to find out. It’s too late then!
6. This man who believes will not come into condemnation.
 - A. John 3:36- If you believe, you have everlasting life. If you do not believe, the wrath of God abides on you.
7. He passes from death unto life, unto eternal life and salvation.

24e This is referring to is the first resurrection of the Jews and the tribulation saints in Revelation 20:4,5 (**“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.”**), followed by the resurrection of the unsaved dead at the Great White Throne in

Revelation 20:12,13 (“**And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.**”) These two resurrections are separated by 1,000 years.

AV	ESV	LSV
24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.	24 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.	24 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

The ESV and LSV have “eternal life” instead of “everlasting life”. The differences may be subtle, but we wonder what the difference is between “everlasting life” and “eternal life”.

5:25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.^a

25a This “verily verily” deals with the resurrection of the just who will be raised in the first resurrection unto eternal life. This is what happened to Lazarus in John 11. If Jesus was a mere man, His voice would be powerless to do anything like this. He must be God for His voice to have such power. Psalm 29 is a commentary on the power of the voice of God.

5:26 For as the Father hath life in himself;^a so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;^b

26a God is self-sustaining and self-existent. We depend upon God for even our next breath, and we cannot determine when we are born or when we will die. But God has life within Himself and is not dependent upon anyone else or any outside force for His being and continued existence. As God, Jesus is also self-sustaining.

26b This shows Jesus is God as He has life in Himself as the Father does. No man, or any other created being, like angels or Satan, can say this.

5:27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also,^a because he is the Son of man.^b

27a Christ’s authority to judge and to pass judgment is given to Him by the Father. He does not take this authority of Himself. The God-Man will be the One who will judge mankind as He was a man Himself, so that makes Him uniquely qualified to judge mankind.

There will be a judgment (Hebrews 9:27 “**And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:**”). That is a fact that cannot be denied or avoided.

27b It is interesting that Jesus called Himself the Son of God in John 5:25 and two verses later, shifts to Son of Man. Only in John's gospel does Jesus use this title for Himself. "Son of God" refers to His deity and "Son of Man" references His humanity.

5:28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,^a

28a The resurrection is coming. That is a fact! If there is going to be a resurrection, there will also be a judgment that will follow.

5:29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.^{abc}

29a There are two resurrections, separated by about 1,000 years:

1. The resurrection of the just at the rapture.
2. The resurrection of the unjust just before the Great White Throne in Revelation 20.

There is no "general resurrection" where all the dead are raised and judged at the same time. This error usually comes from a misinterpretation and misapplication of the "Judgment of the Nations" in Matthew 25.

29b This again shows the fact of a resurrection. Your body will die and the spirit will go back to God but your soul is immortal. It will be raised "on that day" and you will receive a glorified body if you are saved and live forever or you will receive an unglorified body if you are lost and will exist in an eternal state of living death (Mark 9:46,48 **"Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched....Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched."**). But death does not end all. It is really the beginning of eternity. You do not go into unconsciousness or soul-sleep at death. You will be just as alert and aware as you were when you were alive. The atheist believes that "death ends all" but the hope in and belief in a resurrection and life beyond death is universal among all mankind.

The hope of a resurrection is universal among mankind. Even back in Job's day (Job 14:7-9 **"For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant."**) there was the hope that death did not end all. Man has always had a hope that there was something beyond the grave. Even in atheistic Soviet Russia, family members would throw an evergreen sprig into the grave of a dead loved one in the hope of the resurrection, despite the teachings of the state that death was the end. You simply cannot take this hope out of the human heart, no matter how hard men may try to legislate it away or to debate it away.

29c "There are two resurrections. The first resurrection is "unto life." It is made up of saved people. It is in three stages. First came the firstfruits (Matthew 27:52-58). The full harvest comes next (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). In due course will come the gleanings, the resurrection of various people who trust Christ after the rapture of the church in the period of the great tribulation, possibly including as well as Old Testament believers not included in the firstfruits. There will be a judgment for believers. Paul says, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ" (2 Corinthians 5:10). The question of personal salvation will not arise at this assize— this is "a resurrection of life": those appearing there have long since settled the matter of eternal life by their faith in Christ. What is at issue at this judgment seat is that of rebuke or reward, gain or loss, based on one's works since entering into new life (1 Corinthians 3:10-15).

The second resurrection is "unto damnation." It takes place at the end of the millennial reign of

Christ. Those raised at that time will be the wicked dead of all ages. They will be summoned to the great white throne and will have no hope. Their names are not written in the lamb's book of life. For them there awaits "the lake of fire" (Revelation 20:11-15)."⁶⁰

AV	ESV	LSV
29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation .	29 and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.	29 and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

"resurrection of damnation" Both the ESV and LSV water this down to "resurrection of judgment", removing the damnation.

5:30 I can of mine own self do nothing:^a as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just;^b because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father^c which hath sent me.

30a Christ acts only according to the will of the Father, not of His own, independent will.

30b This is because He is God. As God, He cannot judge unrighteously. You will never have to worry about getting a "raw deal" from Jesus.

AV	ESV	LSV
30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.	30 "I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.	30 "I can do nothing from Myself. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

30c The ESV and LSV have "will of him...", omitting the reference to the Father.

5:31 If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.^a

31a As God, Jesus could bear witness of Himself, but as a man, He deferred to the Father bearing witness of Him instead in John 5:31.

5:32 There is another that beareth witness of me;^a and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

32a There are many other witnesses of Christ (see notes under John 5:36):

1. The Father
2. The Scriptures
3. The testimony of John the Baptist.

⁶⁰ John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, page 110.

5:33 Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.^a

33a Back in John 1:19-34 and 3:28.

5:34 But I receive not testimony from man:^a but these things I say, that ye might be saved.

34a Christ will accept testimony from man but He does not need it, as He has the greater testimony of the Father.

5:35 He was a burning and a shining light:^a and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

35a Back to John the Baptist. He was like a torch. He shone brightly but only for a short time.

5:36 But I have greater witness than that of John:^{ab} for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

36a We are all called to be witnesses (Acts 1:8). This simply means to publicly testify to the truth whenever we get the chance. The witnesses of the deity of Christ in Scripture:

1. John the Baptist

A. John 1:19-23 **"And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias."**

2. The works of Christ

A. Matthew 12:33 **"By their fruits ye shall know them"**

B. John 5:36 **"But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me."**

i. One way you can tell a true preacher from a false prophet is by examining their works and ministries.

ii. Look at the works of Christ- miracles, healings...

3. God the Father

A. Matthew 3:17 at His baptism, **"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."**

B. John 5:37 **"And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape."**

4. The Scripture

A. John 5:39 **"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."**

i. Either the Bible is true in its witness or it is not. There is no middle ground.

5. Christ Himself

A. John 8:18 **"I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me"**

beareth witness of me.”

i. Jesus is allowed to bear witness of Himself since He is God,

B. Jesus claimed He was God. Thus, He was either Lord (He told the truth), lunatic (He thought He was God) or liar. Take your pick and you must pick one!

6. Devils

A. Mark 5:7 **“And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.”**

7. The Jews

A. John 19:7 **“And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha.”**

8. Moses

A. John 5:46 **“For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.”**

Two witnesses are necessary to testify to a thing, so we have four times that above to witness of Christ.

36b Jesus accepts the witness of man but He is not dependent on it (John 2:25 **“And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.”**). He appreciates it and will use it but since He has the witness of the Father, that trumps anything man may say about Him. Man may lie and bear a false witness of Christ but the Father never would. What are some false witnesses of man regarding Christ?

1. That He is not God or that He is “a god” as per Jehovah Witness errors.
2. Jesus and Lucifer were brothers, per Mormon errors.
3. Mary bossed Him around in His ministry, per Roman Catholic errors.
4. He was nothing more than a healer or a financial advisor, per Charismatic errors.

5:37 And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.^{ab}

37a The Jews bragged about their special and unique relationship with the Father yet Jesus said they had no real relationship with God due to their formality, pride and apostasy.

37b The Jews had heard His voice and had seen His shape in history, but it hadn't done them much good. What is the point of hearing the word of God if you aren't going to respond to it? This again goes back to James 1:23-25 (**“For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”**) and his admonition about the dangers of hearing and not obeying the word. That is hearing without profit if you are not intending to obey.

1. The word must be heard.

A. They need a preacher for this (Romans 10:14 **“How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”**). And you need to listen to your preachers!

2. It must be heard with the intention to obey it, regardless of what you think about it.
3. A blessing comes from hearing and obeying.
4. Disobedience comes from failure to hear or refusing to obey.
5. No blessing for failure to hear and obey and it can lead to apostasy and judgment

5:38 And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.^a

38a This is why the Jews were having such an issue with their relationship with the Father because of their refusal to accept the words of the prophets and the other revelations that the Father has given them. There can be no relationship with God if there is no relationship with His word.

5:39 Search the scriptures;^{abc} for in them ye think ye have eternal life:^d and they are they which testify of me.^e

39a “**Search the Scriptures**” is a command for all believers. The Berean believers were known for this in Acts 17:11 (“**These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.**”). They took NOTHING for granted and checked out every single Paul said and they asked him questions on everything. A genuine Bible teacher welcomes that as it shows his audience is thinking. Too many people believe something because some preacher (or “great man” of Jeremiah 5:5) said it or because their church or theological system teaches it, without searching it out. And beware of any preacher who discourages you from checking their doctrines and asking questions. False preachers get highly offended if you challenge them. They imagine themselves to be the “final authority” and they demand you treat them as such.

AV	ESV	LSV
39 Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.	39 You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me,	39 “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that bear witness about Me;

“**Search the scriptures**” The ESV and LSV reword this so that it is not a command or a challenge but so that it is a simple statement of fact.

39b To “**search**” implies effort. This is not a casual, superficial reading the Lord commands here but an intent searching and studying. You search for something because it has value if you find it, so you get diligent about it. We should approach the Scriptures with the expectation that if we put some prayer and effort into our readings, we will discover precious truths. The casual reader has no such hope because he won’t put the necessary effort into it.

39c “**Search the Scriptures**” Do you have them? Do you know which English translation would qualify as “Scripture?” I believe that the Authorized Version is the preserved Scriptures in English so when I read it and study it, I know I am reading something authoritative and that it is the very Word of God.

39d “**ye think ye have eternal life**” The Jews did have a high regard for the Scripture, even if they were having trouble obeying them. They knew that the only place they could find revelation and information on eternal life was only to be found in the Scriptures. We also believe that we “think” (and believe) that the only place to find “eternal life” is in the Scriptures and nowhere else.

39e “**they are they which testify of me**” One of the many witnesses of Christ, as the list under John 5:36.

5:40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.^a

40a These Jews simply refused. They heard the claims of Christ and saw His miracles yet they rejected the claims of Jesus. In so doing, they cut themselves off from the eternal life they thought they had in John 5:39. There is no eternal life with Christ and His word. If you don't come to Christ for it, you won't get it.

5:41 I receive not honour from men.^a

41a Some men who are believers honor Christ, but the large percentage of mankind will not honor or recognize Christ.

AV	ESV	LSV
41 I receive not honour from men.	41 I do not receive glory from people.	41 "I do not receive glory from men;

Both the ESV and LSV mangle the verse. Both have "glory" for "honour". The ESV goes gender-neutral with "people" for men.

5:42 But I know you,^a that ye have not the love of God in you.

42a He knew them better than they knew themselves. No matter their own public profession, Jesus knew their hearts, which is why He would never trust or commit Himself to such men for He knew what was in them and in fallen human nature (John 2:24,25 "**But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.**").

AV	ESV	LSV
42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.	42 But I know that you do not have the love of God within you.	42 but I know you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves.

The LSV rendering is simply poor grammar with the "...in yourselves". The AV and ESV are much better.

5:43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.^a

43a False teachers always come in their own names and work in their own authority. Ultimately, the Antichrist will also come in his own name as he will refuse to acknowledge or submit to God.

5:44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?^a

44a Men are always honoring and receiving honor from others. They give awards and honorary doctorates to each other all the time and revel in such honors. Yet think of the honors God would give us at the Bema seat if we worked as hard for eternal heavenly honors as we do for temporary earthly

honors.

AV	ESV	LSV
44 How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that <i>cometh</i> from God only?	44 How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that comes from the only God?	44 “How can you believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the only God?

“**honour**” Both the ESV and LSV use “glory”.

5:45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father:^a there is one that accuseth you, even Moses,^b in whom ye trust.^c

45a Not in this life for in His first coming, Christ did not come to judge. He will do that after the Second Coming.

45b Moses would be a witness against these Jews. They claimed to be such loyal and faithful disciples of the Law yet broke it at every turn, and Moses will be there to drive this point home,

45c In the Jewish mind, there was no greater man than Moses, even excelling Abraham. You’ll notice how the Jews would boast on Moses more than they did in Abraham in the gospels.

5:46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.^a

46a You can’t claim to believe Moses and then deny Christ. They are a package deal. Moses wrote of Christ, especially in Deuteronomy 18:15 (“**The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken;**”). To deny or to reject Christ would be the same as disbelieving Moses.

5:47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?^{ab}

47a Moses and Christ agree and are in perfect harmony. To believe and accept Moses means you must do the same with Christ.

47b Christ clearly testifies that Moses wrote a book and that is the Pentateuch.

John Chapter 6

30. The Feeding of the Five Thousand 6:1-14, see also Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:32-44; Luke 9:10-17

6:1 After these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is [the sea] of Tiberias.^{ab}

1a These things take place around the time of the third Passover, which would be two and one-half years into Jesus' ministry.

1b A secondary name for the Sea of Galilee. John is the only Gospel writer who uses the later Roman name for the Sea, the other writers calling it "Galilee". This would also show that John wrote his Gospel much later than did Matthew, Mark and Luke.

6:2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.^a

2a The crowd was not following Jesus because of His teachings or the gospel He preached or the salvation He offered, but for the miracles, which was good entertainment in that day. The miracles certainly put Jesus "on the map" and made Him a popular figure. But eventually, He would do what He could to thin out this crowd by preaching hard truths to them, as He will do at the end of this chapter. Anyone could attract a crowd if he is sensational enough or if he can provide entertainment or some excitement, but can the crowd be kept when it is time to start preaching? It is better to build a crowd through solid preaching and teaching than through signs and wonders. When the miracles and excitement dry up, so will the numbers. But if you keep preaching and teaching, the crowd built on that will last. What you win with them is what you win them too. Today, it is rock music and pizza parties that are taking the place of these "miracles" that are attracting the crowds in the modern mega-church. You will have a smaller crowd if you use Biblical methods but they will be a crowd that you can do something with!

6:3 And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

6:4 And the passover, a feast of the Jews,^a was nigh.^b

4a This addition has a hint of disapproval, in that the Passover that was observed by this generation may have indeed been a "Passover of the Jews" but was not the Passover the Lord has instituted. It has been corrupted by the formalism and the dead-orthodoxy of that generation. It was still being observed but the heart was missing in that observance.

4b Jesus did not go to Jerusalem to keep this Passover, but He observed it in Galilee. The enmity of the religious leaders in Jerusalem may have been a primary reason for this.

6:5 When Jesus then lifted up [his] eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?^{abcd}

5a Why did the Lord pick out Philip to ask this question?

5b “And as surely as there is a supernatural hand guiding the Apostle John, his account occurs right after a statement on the unbelief of Bible scholars and religious leaders. You see “the feeding of the 5,000” is mentioned more times in the gospels than the Virgin Birth or the Ascension of Christ back to Glory. Luke omits the wise men from the East; Matthew omits the shepherds in the fields; Mark omits Gabriel talking with Mary; John omits the prodigal son and the rich man and Lazarus; Mark says nothing about the marriage supper or the wise and foolish virgins (nor does John). Only one account of the New Birth is recorded (Matthew, Mark, and Luke omit it); only one account contains the real “Lord’s Prayer” (John 17)—Matthew, Mark, and Luke omit it. Neither Matthew nor Luke give you the details of the healing of the maniac of Gadara (Mark 5) and so forth; but...!

“But ALL FOUR EVANGELISTS record a one-time feeding of 5,000 Jews in the wilderness (see comments on John 21:15).

“Is that a “just balance”? Doesn’t that look like one more of those “tricky things” the Lord delights in? Like, say for example, devoting twelve chapters to the construction of an old gray tent (Exod. 25–31, 35–40) and allotting only ONE chapter to the creation of the universe? How is that for a “false balance”?

“What is so important about feeding some people in “a desert place” (Luke 9:12) that makes it more important than the New Birth, the Virgin Birth of Christ, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Ascension of our Lord?

1. The most important thing in the Book where the major emphasis is always found to be, is never on the New Birth, the Deity of Christ, the Virgin Birth, the Crucifixion, the plan of salvation, the sacraments, the Church, or anything any Christian scholar might suggest. It is on THE SECOND COMING OF JESUS CHRIST. For every verse on the seven things listed above (combined) there are TEN on the Second Advent.

2. Being totally off balance, spiritually, and being completely lopsided, mentally, every corrector of the King James’ text (for 390 years) simply rejected thirty verses that explain why “the feeding of the 5,000” is mentioned four times.

3. The verses are as follows: Psalm 78:19–25; Hosea 2:14–18; Luke 4:4; Revelation 12:6, 14; Exodus 16:14–31; Psalm 74:14; and Micah 6:14. The occurrence prefigures what will take place in the Tribulation, up beyond A.D. 2004.”⁶¹

5c John 6 is dominated by bread, from buying bread to the manna in the wilderness to providing and multiplying bread to Christ’s revelation of Himself as the Bread of Life.

5d “We have, for another thing, in this miracle, a lesson about the office of ministers. We see the apostles receiving the bread from our Lord’s hands, after He had blessed it, and distributing it to the multitude. It was not their hands that made it increase and multiply, but their Master’s. It was His almighty power that provided an unfailing supply. It was their work to receive humbly and to distribute faithfully.

“Now here is a lively emblem of the work which a true minister of the New Testament is meant to do. He is not a mediator between God and man. He has no power to put away sin or impart grace. His whole business is to receive the bread of life which his Master provides, and to distribute it among the souls among whom he labors. He cannot make men value the bread or receive it. He cannot make it soul-saving, or life-giving, to anyone. This is not his work. For this he is not responsible. His whole business is to be a faithful distributor of the food which his Divine Master has provided; and that done, his office is discharged.

“We have, lastly, in this miracle, a lesson about the sufficiency of the Gospel for the needs of all mankind. We see the Lord Jesus supplying the hunger of a huge multitude of five thousand men. The provision seemed, at first sight, utterly inadequate for the occasion. To satisfy so many craving mouths

⁶¹ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, page 189.

with such scanty fare, in such a wilderness, seemed impossible. But the event showed that there was enough and to spare. There was not one who could complain that he was not filled.

"There can be no doubt that this was meant to teach the adequacy of Christ's Gospel to supply the necessities of the whole world. Weak, and feeble, and foolish as it may seem to man, the simple story of the Cross is enough for all the children of Adam in every part of the globe. The tidings of Christ's death for sinners, and the atonement made by that death, is able to meet the hearts and satisfy the consciences of all nations, and peoples, and kindreds, and tongues. Carried by faithful messengers, it feeds and supplies all ranks and classes. "The preaching of the cross is to those who perish foolishness, but to us who are saved it is the power of God." (1 Cor. 1:18.) Five barley loaves and two small fishes seemed scanty provision for a hungry crowd. But blessed by Christ, and distributed by His disciples, they were more than sufficient.

"Let us never doubt for a moment, that the preaching of Christ crucified—the old story of His blood, and righteousness, and substitution—is enough for all the spiritual necessities of all mankind. It is not worn out. It is not obsolete. It has not lost its power. We need nothing new--nothing more broad and kind--nothing more intellectual--nothing more effectual. We need nothing but the true bread of life, distributed faithfully among starving souls. Let men sneer or ridicule as they will. Nothing else can do good in this sinful world. No other teaching can fill hungry consciences, and give them peace. We are all in a wilderness. We must feed on Christ crucified, and the atonement made by His death, or we shall die in our sins."⁶²

6:6 And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.^a

6a Philip would respond naturally, as we all would- "we don't have enough money or provisions to feed such a crowd. We barely have enough just to provide for us!" But the Lord would use this situation for, as they say, a "teachable moment".

6:7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth^{abc} of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.^d

AV	ESV	LSV
7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.	7 Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread would not be enough for each of them to get a little."	7 Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little."

7a "**penny**" The ESV and LSV use "denarii". How is that any clearer or easier to understand (or even more accurate) than the "pennyworth" of the King James?

7b A "penny" was the wages of a laboring man so Philip is saying that 200 day's wages wouldn't buy even bare provisions for a crowd this size.

7c The number two hundred is of great significance in the Bible. As indicated here, it is the number of insufficiency. Trace it out in the story of Achan (Joshua 7:20-21) and Absalom (2 Samuel 14:26-27; 15:11), in the story of the apostate Micah of Mount Ephraim (Judges 17:1-5), and in the prophecy of the armies that will engage in battle in the end times (Revelation 9:16)."⁶³

⁶² J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospel of John*, volume 1, pages 228-230.

⁶³ John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, page 119.

7d But everyone took "as much as they would" in John 6:11. There are no limitations to the provisions of God, even when the resources appear to be meager.

6:8 One of his disciples, Andrew,^a Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

8a The last time we saw Andrew was back in John 1.

6:9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves,^a and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?^{bcd}

9a Barley was very coarse bread, lightly regarded by the Jews, who considered it fit only to feed horses and asses.

9b It would be more than enough for the Lord? The Lord can use the meagerest of provisions. As long as you have something and as long as you offer that to the Lord, it can be used and multiplied for great things. **"Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?"** (Psalm 78:10).

9c Both Philip and Andrew were guilty of calculating without Christ, something we are have been guilty of.

9d "'And Jesus took the loaves" (John 6:11). He did not scorn the loaves because they were few in number, nor the fish either because they were "small." How this tells us that God is pleased to use small and weak things! He used the tear of a babe to move the heart of Pharaoh's daughter. He used the shepherd-rod of Moses to work mighty miracles in Egypt. He used David's sling and stone to overthrow the Philistine giant. He used a "little maid" to bring the "mighty" Naaman to Elisha. He used a widow with a handful of meal to sustain His prophet. He used a "little child" to teach His disciples a much-needed lesson in humility. So here, He used the five loaves and two small fishes to feed this great multitude. And, dear reader, perhaps He is ready to use you—weak, insignificant, and ignorant though you be—and make you "mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds" (2 Cor. 10:4). But mark it carefully, it was only as these loaves and fishes were placed in the hands of Christ that they were made efficient and sufficient!"⁶⁴

6:10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down.^a Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.^{bc}

10a "'Make the men sit down." Why? May we not see in this word the illustration of an important principle pertaining to the spiritual life, namely, that we must sit down if we would be fed—true alike for sinner and saint. The activities of the flesh must come to an end if the Bread of life is to be received by us. How much all of us need to ask God to teach us to be quiet and sit still. Turn to and ponder Psalm 107:30; Isaiah 30:15; 1 Thessalonians 4:11; 1 Peter 3:4. In this crazy age, when almost everybody is rushing hither and thither, when the standard of excellence is not how well a thing is done, but how quickly, when the Lord's people are thoroughly infected by the same spirit of haste, this is indeed a timely word. And let not the reader imagine that he has power of himself to comply. We have to be "made" to "sit down"—frequently by sickness. Note the same word in Psalm 23:2— "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures."⁶⁵

⁶⁴ A. W. Pink, *Exposition of the Gospel of John*.

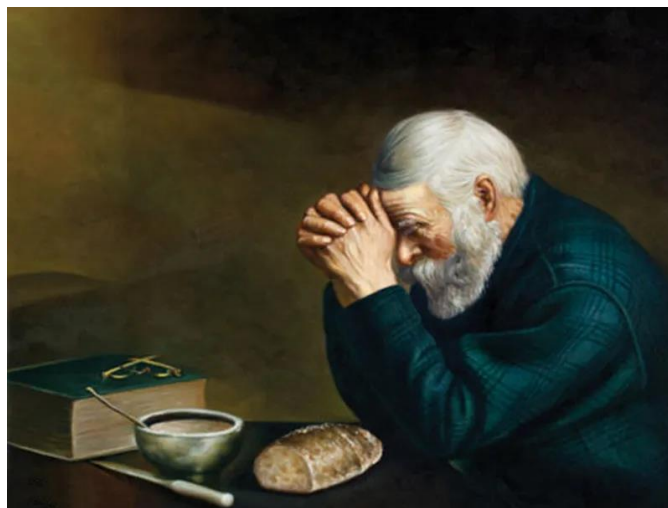
⁶⁵ Ibid.

10b Not including the women and children. There could have been as many as 20,000 in attendance.

10c Mark 6:39 says the Lord had the men sit down in companies, probably in groups of 50, in an orderly manner. The Lord always does such things with law, order and design, never in a haphazard and chaotic manner.

6:11 And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks,^a he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down;^b and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.^{cde}

11a Always an important part! Be sure to thank God for anything and everything you have. Below is one of my favorite paintings:



It is the classic picture of an old man, no doubt poor by his tattered flannel shirt, thanking God for his loaf of bread. A picture is worth a thousand words and this one can preach quite a sermon.

11b The Lord did not distribute the food Himself but had the disciples do it. This is what preachers and Bible teachers do. They receive the spiritual bread from the Lord, and we are to distribute it to the waiting people through preaching, teaching and writing.

11c There is no indication that they flew upon the provision as the Jews did in Numbers 11:33 (**“And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague.”**) and Psalm 78:31 (**“The wrath of God came upon them, and slew the fattest of them, and smote down the chosen men of Israel.”**). They ate orderly and well.

11d Of all the miracles which the Lord did, none was quite so public as this, and none other was performed before so many witnesses. Also, in healing the sick and in raising the dead, something was amended or restored which already existed; but here was an absolute creation. Only one other miracle that resembles it was His first, when He made wine out of the water. These two miracles belong to a class by themselves.

11e ““And likewise of the fishes as much as they would” (John 6:11). The supply stopped only with the demand. So, when Abraham went up to intercede with God on behalf of the righteous in Sodom, the Lord never ceased granting till Abraham had ceased asking. Thus, also in the case of Elisha’s oil; so long as there were empty vessels to be found in the land, it ceased not its abundant supply (2 Kings 4:6). Likewise, also here, so long as there was a single one to supply, that supply came forth from the treasuries of the Lord Jesus. The stream flowed on in rich abundance till all were filled. This is grace. This is what Jesus does to all His people. He comes to the poor bankrupt believer, and, placing in His hand a draft on the resources of heaven, says to him, ‘Write on it what thou wilt.’ Such is our precious Lord still. If we are straitened, it is not in Him, but in ourselves. If we are poor and weak, or tried and tempted, it is not that we cannot help ourselves—it is because we do not (‘All things are yours’, in Christ, 1 Corinthians 3:22 A.W.P.). We have so little faith in things unseen and eternal. We draw so little on the resources of Christ. We come not to Him with our spiritual wants—our empty vessels—and draw from the ocean fulness of His grace.”⁶⁶

6:12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.^a

12a There is to be no waste in the Lord’s work. What the Lord gives He expects to be used in its entirety, not saved or hoarded up. The use of money is a good example. Don’t be stingy with it. Use it as it was intended by the Lord and use it all.

6:13 Therefore they gathered [them] together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.^{ab}

13a The leftovers were greater than what they started with!

13b It is also the job of the preacher to take a meager provision, allow God to bless it and multiply it, and satisfy all who hear us (whether it be a handful or thousands) through the preaching and teaching of the Scriptures. This is a miracle of God as the preacher, in his own self, has little to offer to a hungry multitude. But if we bring what we have to Jesus, He can do miraculous things with it, even to the saving of lost souls and the feeding of hungry believers.

6:14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle^a that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.^{bc}

14a Another sign to generate belief in the nation and to demonstrate that He was the prophesied Messiah.

14b This was their profession now, but what would they be saying by the end of the chapter? And what would these same people be saying when Jesus was hanging on the cross, rejected by the nation?

14c A miracle like this would be very difficult to disprove as there could have been as many as 15,000 witnesses who could testify that they were well-fed by the agency of a few men and very meager provisions.

⁶⁶ A. W. Pink, *Exposition of the Gospel of John*.

31. Christ's Rejection of the "Kingdom" 6:15

6:15 When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king,^a he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

15a Now was not the time, the place or the circumstances to be crowned king. The people responded to one miracle and were ready to crown Jesus as king. But by the end of this chapter, this same crowd will have walked away as His preaching would be too hard. Look at the Triumphal Entry. That crowd was crying out "Hosanna to the Son of David!" and were also ready to make Jesus king. It wasn't a week later that they were calling for His blood and demanding Barabbas be released to them. The crowd is fickle and unstable. Jesus will be crowned king, but it will be in the Father's time and it will be the Father who will do it. There is a Kingdom to be offered, later, but it will not be accepted until the end of the Tribulation. Any attempt to "bring in the Kingdom" at any other time or by any other means will result in death and blood, as in the "Dark Ages" of the Roman Catholic Church, Calvin's bloody theocracy in Geneva or the Massachusetts Puritan Commonwealth that persecuted Jews, Quakers and Baptists. As has been well said, "Kingdom Builders and Bloody Killers".

People are looking for a king, a ruler, a Messiah, and Israel was no different. They had been without a king for centuries and Caesar was no option for them. Today, people want a ruler. Few people desire to govern themselves and to take responsibility for themselves. They want the government to rule over them, to protect them, to provide for them. The Antichrist will exploit this human desire in the Tribulation period.

32. Jesus Walking on the Sea 6:16-21, see also Matthew 14:22-34; Mark 6:45-53

6:16 And when even was [now] come, his disciples went down unto the sea,^a

16a Sea of Galilee.

6:17 And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.

6:18 And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew.^a

18a Sudden storms like this were not uncommon on the Sea. The disciples who were fishermen would have had a lot of experience in dealing with these kinds of storms.

6:19 So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs,^a they see Jesus walking on the sea,^b and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.

AV

ESV

LSV

19 So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty **furlongs**, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.

19 When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were frightened.

19 Then, when they had rowed about twenty-five or thirty stadia, they *saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat; and they were frightened.

19a "**furlongs**" Everyone translates it differently. The ESV uses "miles" and the LSV uses "stadia". It is

probably 3-4 miles if a furlong was about 1/8th of a mile.

19b An obvious miracle, even more so since He was not walking on calm water but during the waves of a storm.

6:20 But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid.^a

20a They obviously thought this was some sort of a ghost or spirit. Fishermen and other sailors can be very superstitious. You won't find many atheists among these hard-working men. What would you think if you saw a man walking on water during a storm at night?

6:21 Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.^{ab}

21a A miracle? At one moment, the ship was in the middle of the sea in a storm. The next, it was at the shore and safe.

21b Spiritual applications:

1. We all have to go down to the sea and row across as part of our common, ordinary duties of life (John 6:17).
2. Storms do arise, even without warning. They simply cannot be avoided, and it is no sin to find yourself caught in one (John 6:18).
3. We all do what we can to navigate through such storms in our own strength and skills (John 6:19).
4. When we are at wits end, then the Lord shows up in a miraculous way and things happen that we often cannot understand or explain (John 6:19).
5. We often are afraid in our trials and the Lord's workings in the storms may even frighten us (John 6:19).
6. Christ always seeks to comfort us in our trials (John 6:20).
7. Once Christ is received into our ship, the trials are resolved (John 6:21).

33. The Bread of Life 6:22-35

6:22 The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but [that] his disciples were gone away alone;

6:23 (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:)

6:24 When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping,^a and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.

24a They got in a boat to sail to the other side of the lake.

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

25a They called Him "rabbi" or teacher, not "Lord". Anyone can call Jesus "teacher"; even unsaved liberals will do that. But it takes spiritual insight and faith to call Him "Lord".

25b The Lord does not answer this question.

6:26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily,^a I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles,^b but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.^{cd}

26a Whenever you see a "verily, verily", you know that a deep spiritual truth is about to follow.

26b A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign. By contrast, a spiritual generation rests on faith and revelation. This crowd did not seek Jesus for the same reason Nicodemus did back in John 3. Nicodemus had good, spiritual questions. This crowd had been fed and wanted more and wanted to see a greater miracle.

26c Why was the crowd searching for Jesus? Because of His teachings? Because of the salvation that He offered? Because of His holy life? Because He was God? No! It was because they saw a sign and were curious. They also ate and were filled and wondered of Jesus could give them more to satisfy their appetites. Many are like this. They are interested in Jesus but not because of any spiritual thing He can do for them. They care little for the spirit or eternity or holiness or developing a relationship with God or a Christian walk. They look to Jesus as One Who can fill their bellies, pay their bills, heal them or solve all of their problems. We have had many people call our church looking for money or material help, but we have received very few calls from people wanting to know how to be saved. They look at the church as nothing but a food bank or a bank. They would gladly take our money, but they can never be bothered to actually visit one of our services to hear the Scripture preached.

26d Our Lord put no trust in the crowds or in the masses as He knew what was in Man and it was not good. This was a very blunt and even an insulting statement, but it was true and it needed to be said, regardless of the reaction it might generate.

6:27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth,^a but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life,^b which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.^c

27a The carnal things of life- promotions, cars, houses, lands, any earthly thing that the carnal professor places the emphasis upon.

27b The spiritual things would include salvation, prayer, Bible study, witnessing, developing a Christian life and walk. These are eternal, serve one's salvation and will endure when the world is on fire.

27c We are told no more about this sealing.

Sealing

1. Seals were used to authenticate documents.

A. 1 Kings 21:8 **"So she wrote letters in Ahab's name, and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the elders and to the nobles that were in his city, dwelling with Naboth."**

B. Nehemiah 9:38 **"And because of all this we make a sure covenant, and write it; and our**

princes, Levites, and priests, seal unto it."

C. Esther 3:12 "Then were the king's scribes called on the thirteenth day of the first month, and there was written according to all that Haman had commanded unto the king's lieutenants, and to the governors that were over every province, and to the rulers of every people of every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language; in the name of king Ahasuerus was it written, and sealed with the king's ring."

D. Esther 8:8,10 "Write ye also for the Jews, as it liketh you, in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring: for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse...And he wrote in the king Ahasuerus' name, and sealed it with the king's ring, and sent letters by posts on horseback, and riders on mules, camels, and young dromedaries:"

E. Job 38:14 "It is turned as clay to the seal; and they stand as a garment."

F. Jeremiah 32:10,11,14,44 "And I subscribed the evidence, and sealed it, and took witnesses, and weighed him the money in the balances. So I took the evidence of the purchase, both that which was sealed according to the law and custom, and that which was open...Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel; Take these evidences, this evidence of the purchase, both which is sealed, and this evidence which is open; and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may continue many days...Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal them, and take witnesses in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the south: for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the LORD."

2. Covenants were sealed

A. Nehemiah 10:1 "Now those that sealed were, Nehemiah, the Tirshatha, the son of Hachaliah, and Zidkijah,"

3. Books are sealed, usually with the idea that their meanings are hidden.

A. Isaiah 29:11 "And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which men deliver to one that is learned, saying, Read this, I pray thee: and he saith, I cannot; for it is sealed:"

B. Daniel 12:4,9 "But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased...And he said, Go thy way, Daniel: for the words are closed up and sealed till the time of the end."

C. Revelation 5:1 "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals."

4. Dens, pits and tombs were sealed

A. Daniel 6:17 "And a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel."

B. Matthew 27:66 "So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch."

C. Revelation 20:3 "And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season."

5. Jesus was sealed by the Father

A. John 6:27 "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."

6. Sealed to fruit

A. Romans 15:28 "When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this

fruit, I will come by you into Spain."

7. The Holy Spirit seals believers

A. 2 Corinthians 1:22 **"Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."**

B. Ephesians 1:13 **"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,"**

C. Ephesians 4:30 **"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption."**

D. Revelation 9:4 **"And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads."**

8. Angels sealing the 144,000 in the tribulation

A. Revelation 7:3-8 **"Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephtalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand."**

9. Seal upon the heart

A. Song 8:6 **"Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame."**

10. The law sealed

A. Isaiah 8:16 **"Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples."**

11. Visions are sealed up, meaning their meanings are hidden.

A. Daniel 9:24 **"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy."**

12. Set to his seal that God is true

A. John 3:33 **"He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true."**

13. A seal of righteousness

A. Romans 4:11 **"And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also:"**

14. A seal of apostleship

A. 1 Corinthians 9:2 **"If I be not an apostle unto others, yet doubtless I am to you: for the seal of mine apostleship are ye in the Lord."**

15. The foundation of God has a seal

A. 2 Timothy 2:19 **"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."**

16. Seals of a book opened

A. Revelation 6:3,5,7,9,12 **"And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see....And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand...And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see...And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held...And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;"**

B. Revelation 8:1 **"And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour."**

17. Seal of the Living God

A. Revelation 7:2 **"And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,"**

18. Sayings sealed up, or the meanings withheld

A. Revelation 10:4 **"And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not."**

19. Some things are not to be sealed up

A. Revelation 22:10 **"And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand."**

6:28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do,^{ab} that we might work the works of God?

28a This is a natural question. They wanted to know what they could "do" to do the works of God. This is the works-based attitude for salvation that every natural man has as they all believe in salvation by works.

28b "Human beings crave to do something for their salvation. Until we are born again, we feel a repugnance, born of our fallen nature, to accept salvation solely as a gift. So the Jews demanded, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" (John 6:28). A similar spirit animated Naaman the leper. He was furious when Elisha sent word to him that all that was required was a simple act of faith: he was to dip himself in the Jordan. He was well served by his attendants, who were able to talk sense into him: "If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?" (2 Kings 5:13). The unregenerate want salvation on their terms, not God's, and in some way that ministers to human pride. All false religion has its answer to the question, "What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?" "Fast!" says Islam, as it sets apart the month of Ramadan for that purpose. "Do penance," Roman Catholicism said for centuries, "earn indulgences, say masses." "Torture your body, perform prodigies of physical endurance," says Hinduism. "Keep the law according to the tradition of the elders," said the rabbis."⁶⁷

6:29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.^{ab}

29a There is only one real "work of God" and that is to believe on Jesus. All real spiritual works flow

⁶⁷ John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, page 126.

from that. To do “works of God” while one is unsaved amounts to nothing, which negates 99% of the religious work today.

Belief is equated with the “work” of God. There is only one “work” and that is believing on Christ. Salvation is not by works in the Church Age. But belief itself is not a work (Romans 4:5 “**But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.**”). We are to believe the work of God and what He has done more than what we have done or are doing.

29b “Did the Jews want something to do in religion? Let them know that the greatest thing they had to do was to cast aside their pride, confess their guilt and need, and humbly believe.”⁶⁸

6:30 They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?^{ab}

30a Since the Jews require a sign (1 Corinthians 1:22) and since their nation started with signs (given to Moses), the Jews had a right to expect their Messiah would have signs to validate His claims. But Gentiles have no business seeking after them as we are to walk by faith, not by sight. Some of these signs would include:

1. “The sign of the prophet Jonas” (Matthew 12:40): which was death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.
2. “Destroy this temple and I will raise it up again in three days” (John 2:18,19).
3. The virgin birth.
4. The feeding of the 5,000, earlier in this chapter.
5. The resurrection- the greatest sign of them all!
6. The healings and raisings from the dead
7. And every other miracle and sign given in the gospels! The Jews had already seen some of

these signs and had not accepted them. What more would the Lord have to do to prove His credentials? Christ would show then sign after sign after sign and they still would not believe. Miracles and signs are not very good at generating faith. Hearing the word of God is much more effective in generating saving faith.

“Jesus Christ had showed Israel more “signs” than you could find on Interstate 10 between Mobile and Pensacola.”⁶⁹

30b Other religions place all the focus on your work, obeying rules and making yourself fit for your god to accept you. Only Biblical Christianity places all the emphasis on the work of God. Man always wants God to accept his works but these same men do not want to accept the work that God has done for them.

6:31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.^a

31a “Can you top that? You’ve done some mighty amazing things. Can you top the manna that Moses gave our fathers?”

6:32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily,^a I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

⁶⁸ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on John*, volume 1, page 251.

⁶⁹ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, page 197.

32a Another great spiritual truth follows- Moses did not give the True Bread that gives eternal life. God gave that bread. Moses really had nothing to do with that daily provision. Only the bread that Jesus gives leads to eternal life.

6:33 For the bread of God is he^a which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.^b

33a This “bread” is a person, not literal bread. You’ll get into a lot of trouble if you interpret the rest of John 6 literally, instead of interpreting it spiritually, which is the obvious way to do it here.

33b Can literal bread do that?

6:34 Then said they unto him, Lord,^a evermore give us this bread.^{bc}

AV	ESV	LSV
34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.	34 They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.”	34 Then they said to Him, “Lord, always give us this bread.”

34a They call Him “**Lord**” here, unlike in John 6:25.

The ESV has “Sir”, attacking the deity and Lordship of Christ. The LSV has the correct reading.

34b They’ll ask for it but they won’t like it when they get it! It will end up being the “bread of offence”.

34c They were thinking of literal, physical bread while Jesus was speaking in spiritual terms.

6:35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life:^{abcd} he that cometh to me^e shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.^{fg}

35a Also see John 6:33, 48-51. This is one of the “I AM” sayings of Christ, as in John 8:12; 10:7, 11; 11:25; 14:6; 15:1.

35b They wanted this bread in verse 34 and Jesus tells them that He is the Bread they should be seeking if they want eternal satisfaction to the need and hunger of their souls. Christ is the necessary source of spiritual nourishment that we need. Bread is a staple food. Christ is our spiritual “staple” food as if we allow Him to nourish us with His word, we will live and grow.

35c He Who was the Bread of Life was born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), which means the House of Bread.

35d John is the only gospel writer who records this doctrine.

35e You have to come to Christ in order to get this bread and be fed. He who will not come to Christ shall not be fed and shall not be satisfied. Christ is set before us in the simplest form possible under the emblem of bread. No man could possibly misunderstand the type or the offer. Think of His calling Himself bread! How condescending, that the most common article upon the table should be the fullest type of Christ!... The longer I live the more I bless God that we have not received a classical Gospel, or a mathematical Gospel, or a metaphysical Gospel! It is not a Gospel confined to scholars and men of

genius, but a poor man's Gospel, a plowman's Gospel—and that is the kind of Gospel which we can live upon and die upon.

35f Bread and water- the two essentials for life, both physical and spiritual. The satisfaction that Christ gives! No church, ritual, sacrament or religion can grant the satisfaction of the soul than can the simple act of coming to Christ and partaking of Him by faith as one would literally partake of a loaf of bread. The law cannot bring satisfaction for it is not designed for that, but the gospel alone can do that. Moses, by the agency of God, gave Israel bread from heaven daily for 40 years, but that had to be repeated daily. You need only to come to Christ once to receive the satisfaction He alone gives. Once you have Christ, what else do you need?

35g There is no way you can read the Roman Catholic “wafer” into this or try to equate Christ as the Bread of Life to the paganism of the mass.

AV	ESV	LSV
35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.	35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.	35 Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me will never hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.

The Authorized Version uses different prepositions than the ESV and LSV. The Authorized Version has “believeth on me” and the other versions have “believes in me”. There is a difference. Believing “on” Jesus means absolutely trusting in Him. Believing “in” Jesus means trusting the revelation concerning Him. Also see in John 6:40.

34. The Sin of Unbelief 6:36

6:36 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.^a

36a Their Master Sin- unbelief. Even though they SAW the Lord, SAW His signs and HEARD His teachings, they would not believe.

35. The Sure Reception of Believers 6:37-40

6:37 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me;^{ab} and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.^{cd}

37a The Father does indeed “give” souls to the Son and we do believe in election, but we are not told what the basis of this “giving” is. The problems arise when one tries to read things into the text that are not there. Every Christian holds to election. Even so-called “Arminians” believe in election, just not in the same way the Calvinists do. The Calvinist view on election is not the only view and it’s not “their way or the highway”.

Election is clearly based on the foreknowledge of God as Peter says in 1 Peter 1:2. There is a paradox that election involves both the sovereignty and foreknowledge of God and the free will of man. Both sides of this truth are true, even if they seem to contract, but in the mind of God, there is no contradiction.

Don’t worry if you are one of the “elect” or not. If you want to be saved, come to Christ and He will

receive you and will not reject you or cast you out.

37b Coming to Christ involves a voluntary acceptance of the claims and person of Christ, coming in faith, believing what the Scriptures say about Christ and the salvation He provides.

37c This is speaking of the security of the believer and the acceptance of all who do come to Christ. If the sinner responds to the wooing of the Holy Spirit and does come to Christ, he will be accepted by Christ and will not be turned away or rejected. If you come to Christ for salvation in faith and with repentance, He WILL receive you and none have ever been turned away. The Greek construction is a strong double negative, which is allowed in Greek grammar.

37c **"cast out"** like the Jews casting people out of the synagogue (John 9:34) as a form of excommunication.

Verses on the security of the believer in the New Testament age::

1. John 5:24 - **Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.**
2. John 6:37 - **All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.**
3. John 10:28 - **And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any [man] pluck them out of my hand.**
4. Romans 8:38-39 - **For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**
5. Romans 11:29 - **For the gifts and calling of God [are] without repentance.**
6. 2 Corinthians 1:22 - **Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.**
7. Philippians 1:6 - **Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform [it] until the day of Jesus Christ:**
8. Jude 24 - **Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present [you] faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,**

6:38 For I came down from heaven,^a not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.^b

38a In the Incarnation.

38b Illustrating the submission of the Son to the Father while on earth, as He came to fulfill the Father's will regarding the redemption of fallen man.

6:39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing,^a but should raise it up again at the last day.^b

39a Christ has never lost a soul that has come to Him for salvation and He never will. This is another reference to the security of the genuine believer.

Some may wonder about Judas, but he never came to Christ to begin with and was never saved.

39b The resurrection but this does refer to any sort of “general resurrection”. The “last day” can mean any number of things, as the last day of this dispensation (with the resurrection of the just at the rapture) to the last day of the tribulation. The Lord is being somewhat vague here and is not fully developing the doctrine or the timing of the various resurrections.

6:40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.^a

40a The day of resurrection, which for the believer, is at the rapture.

36. The Murmuring of the Jews 6:41-43

6:41 The Jews then murmured^a at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.^{bc}

AV	ESV	LSV
41 The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.	41 So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, “ I am the bread that came down from heaven. ”	41 Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, “ I am the bread that came down from heaven. ”

41a “**murmured**” The ESV and LSV use the inferior “grumbled”. Murmuring is more accurate as it also includes the idea of “muttering under one’s breath”. Also see in John 6:43.

41b This was hard doctrine that the Jews couldn’t grasp in their blindness. Instead of praying about it and studying it out, they just murmured about it. They were too lazy to study out the “strong meat of the word”, just like 95% of professing Christians today. And whenever someone does put in the time, prayer and effort to crack a tough passage, the lazy professors attack his interpretations as “extreme” or “cultish”. I respect a true Bible student who is willing to work like this and even “go out on a limb” theologically, even if I don’t agree with his interpretations. These men are far more interesting to read than the “mainline, evangelical, plain-vanilla” commentators.

41c Coming down from heaven implied that Jesus was God, so this would have offended the Pharisees yet again.

6:42 And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph,^a whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?^b

42a Joseph was the legal father of Jesus, not the biological one.

42b They were offended as they knew about Jesus, His family, His upbringing, and they thought “who does He think He is? I’ve known Mary and Joseph for years! I went to school with Jesus!” Familiarity does indeed breed contempt- and offense.

6:43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur^a not among yourselves.^b

43a See notes under John 6:41 about “murmur”.

43b How God hates murmuring! Just read through the Exodus/wilderness wandering accounts to see how many times Israel murmured during those 40 years and how God reacted after each murmuring incident.

Verses on murmuring

1. You can murmur against people

A. Exodus 15:24 **"And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?"**

B. Exodus 16:2 **"And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness:"**

C. Exodus 17:3 **"And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?"**

D. Numbers 14:2 **"And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!"**

E. Numbers 16:11 **"For which cause both thou and all thy company are gathered together against the LORD: and what is Aaron, that ye murmur against him?"**

F. Numbers 16:41 **"But on the morrow all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron, saying, Ye have killed the people of the LORD."**

G. Numbers 17:5 **"And it shall come to pass, that the man's rod, whom I shall choose, shall blossom: and I will make to cease from me the murmurings of the children of Israel, whereby they murmur against you."**

H. Matthew 20:11 **"And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house,"**

I. Mark 14:5 **"For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her."**

J. Luke 5:30 **"But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?"**

2. You can murmur against the Lord

A. Exodus 16:7,8 **"And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the LORD; for that he heareth your murmurings against the LORD: and what are we, that ye murmur against us? And Moses said, This shall be, when the LORD shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that the LORD heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him: and what are we? your murmurings are not against us, but against the LORD."**

B. Numbers 14:27,29 **"How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me..Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me,"**

C. Joshua 9:18 **"And the children of Israel smote them not, because the princes of the congregation had sworn unto them by the LORD God of Israel. And all the congregation murmured against the princes."**

D. John 6:41 **"The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven."**

3. Murmur is associated with slander.

- A. Numbers 14:36 **"And the men, which Moses sent to search the land, who returned, and made all the congregation to murmur against him, by bringing up a slander upon the land,"**
- 4. Destruction is associated with murmuring.
 - A. 1 Corinthians 10:10 **"Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer."**
- 5. You can murmur at doctrine.
 - A. John 6:61 **"When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?"**
- 6. Murmuring causes disunity
 - A. Acts 6:1 **"And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration."**

37. Being Drawn to God 6:44-46

6:44^a No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him:^b and I will raise him up at the last day.^c

44a See remarks under John 6:39,40. Jesus repeats there remarks for emphasis.

44b Salvation is the work of God and it starts with God. No man initiates the salvation process in his own life but he must accept and follow God's dealings in his life. No man rolls out of bed in the morning thinking "I think I'll get saved today". God must start the work and see it through to the actual new birth. If God is not working in the heart of a sinner, then he is not going to get saved.

44c The promise of the resurrection of the just as the "last day". This "last day" would be at the rapture for the Christian and probably between the Second Coming and the start of the Millennium for every other believer. Of course, the sinner gets resurrected too, but for him, it is more of a threat and a warning than a promise. He will be resurrected at the Great White Throne and then condemned to the lake of fire, where he will exist in a state of death for eternity.

6:45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God.^a Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.^b

45a See Isaiah 54:13, **"And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children."** This is a millennial passage.

45b Characteristics of those who have come to Christ:

1. They have heard (the word)
2. They have learned of the Father

There is no sort of "unconditional election" here as two conditions are placed on this election, just as Peter does in 1 Peter 1:2, where he adds divine foreknowledge. As presented in Scripture, election is based on something. The problem is that God does not always tell us what that basis is!

6:46 Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.^a

46a This would naturally include Jesus but it would also those who have seen Jesus in John 14:9 (“**Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?**”- they were looking at the Father as they were looking at Jesus right here!), 1 John 1:3 (“**That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.**”) and 1 John 4:14 (“**And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.**”) . Only Jesus has the relationship where He can see the Father in His full glory and essence.

38. Belief on Jesus Required 6:47

6:47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me^a hath everlasting life.

AV	ESV	LSV
47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.	47 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life.	47 “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life.

47a The ESV and LSV omit “**on me**”. It just has “whosoever believes has eternal life.” Believes on what? Who? Believe on Mohammad or the pope? Who? The critical text versions omit the object of this saving belief. Faith and belief must ALWAYS have an object. The object here is clearly believing on Jesus Christ. Not believe in the Church, not in a pope, prelate preacher, not in a theological system, but on Jesus Christ and Him alone if you want eternal life.

39. The Bread of Life Revisited 6:48-59

6:48 I am that bread of life.^a

48a “That” bread goes back to John 6:32-35. Christ is that Bread of Life that gives eternal life, something regular bread cannot do. Regular bread will keep you alive spiritually, for a while, but the Bread of Life will keep you alive for eternity.

6:49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.^a

49a The manna couldn’t keep anyone alive beyond their normal lifespan. The manna was given supernaturally but other than that, there was nothing special about it.

6:50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.^a

50a Again distinguishing Christ, the Bread of Life, from the manna.

6:51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh,^a which I will give for the life of the world.^b

51a Here is where it starts getting touchy, when Christ says that this Bread is His flesh. This is where

Roman Catholics start interpreting the Bible literally (for once!) and try to find some basis for the Mass, where they believe they are eating the literal flesh of Christ and are drinking His literal blood. They use this passage of John 6 as a proof text for the mass, but in reality, it is the greatest passage of Scripture to destroy that doctrine.

51b Christ's "flesh" is given for "the world" in salvation, not just the "elect". The "world" means exactly that and its definition is not limited to a select number.

6:52 The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us [his] flesh to eat?^a

52a Would that Roman Catholics would ask this question and think long and hard about the answer!

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

53a Another important spiritual truth is to follow- unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Naturally, the Roman Catholic seizes on this like a dying man to a life raft in a desperate attempt to justify the mass. While Jesus did utter these words, there is absolutely no justification to assume that He anticipated the Roman Catholic mass! He says absolutely nothing about turning bread into His flesh nor about turning grape juice into His literal blood! Even a cursory reading of the verse shows that Jesus must be speaking figuratively, else He would be endorsing cannibalism and violating Leviticus 7:26 ("**Moreover ye shall eat no manner of blood, whether it be of fowl or of beast, in any of your dwellings.**") and Leviticus 17:10 ("**And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people.**"). Eating blood is condemned in the Bible before the Law (Genesis 9), under the Law (Leviticus 17), and after the Law, under grace (Acts 15:20 "**But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.**").

There is a difference between eating blood (that is undrained from meat) and drinking blood. Both are forbidden in Scripture.

53b The passage was not addressed to any Christian as there are no Christians present yet, since the Church would not be founded until Acts 2. This is not Christian or church doctrine. Christ, a Jew, spoke it to other Jews, so the Roman church has no business trying to apply it to any Christian.

6:54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life;^{ab} and I will raise him up at the last day.^c

54a Can the Romanist mass give eternal life? No Roman Catholic has any assurance of salvation, even if he took mass (even a Latin mass) ten times a day for the rest of his life. He is taught that he dies and goes to purgatory, probably for millennia, despite the fact that he "ate" Christ's flesh in the mass daily. Is that a reason why the priests keep the cup away from the "laity" so they can't get the second part of this spiritual necessity for salvation? But it does not help the priests either as they get both the bread(flesh) and the wine (blood) as they also have no assurance of salvation! If the Romanists were really serious about having the mass fulfill verses like these, then the resulting doctrine would be "take the mass once, eat the bread and drink the wine, and you'll have eternal life!" But that will never do. How then will Rome continue to exert control over her followers if they would only have to go to mass once to get eternal life? No, by the very fact that no Roman Catholic believes in any form of

eternal security, it shows that Christ does not have the Romanist mass in view here at all. If you could eat the literal flesh of Jesus Christ and drink His literal blood, then you would have absolute assurance of eternal salvation NOW, long before you died. See verses 51 and 54. The fact that not one Roman Catholic on earth was taught that he could know this. He would be condemned as a heretic if he did process this kind of assurance.

54b This cannot be taken literally as eating human flesh and drinking human blood are forbidden, as discussed above. Also see:

1. Genesis 9:4, **But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.**

A. Before the law.

2. Leviticus 17:10-14, **And whatsoever man there be of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, that eateth any manner of blood; I will even set my face against that soul that eateth blood, and will cut him off from among his people. For the life of the flesh is in the blood: and I have given it to you upon the altar to make an atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul. Therefore I said unto the children of Israel, No soul of you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger that sojourneth among you eat blood. And whatsoever man there be of the children of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn among you, which hunteth and catcheth any beast or fowl that may be eaten; he shall even pour out the blood thereof, and cover it with dust. For it is the life of all flesh; the blood of it is for the life thereof: therefore I said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall eat the blood of no manner of flesh: for the life of all flesh is the blood thereof: whosoever eateth it shall be cut off.**

A. Under the law.

3. Acts 15:20, **But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood.**

A. After the law, in the Church Age.

54c In the first resurrection, which is the resurrection of the just.

6:55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

6:56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

6:57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.^a

57a Even if this did refer to eating the wafer in the Roman Catholic mass (which it does not), the Romanist has a serious problem. This "eating me" is a one-time act which does not need to be repeated. Why does the Church of Rome insist that their followers "eat" Christ daily, or at least weekly? Why isn't it a one-time act? Isn't that sufficient? Why does it need to be constantly repeated? "Eateth" is a present active participle, showing that it is done now but has no need to be repeated. Besides, you would have to believe that the Romanist priest has the power to turn a piece of bread into the actual flesh of Jesus Christ, and there is not a single scripture that would support such a heresy.

Also, Jesus would say in John 6:63 that the **"flesh profiteth nothing"**. Even if you could eat the literal flesh of Jesus in a Roman Catholic mass, it wouldn't do you any good. This shows that eating the "flesh of Jesus" in a Romanist mass gives no spiritual profit.

Something also to consider; what happens to the Wafer-Christ 24 hours after you eat it? Is He "expelled" from the body through natural processes of bodily elimination? Same with "drinking Christ". What happens to the Wine-Christ an hour after you drink Him? It might be crude to consider these

questions, but they must be answered.

Can an unsaved person “receive” Christ if he goes to mass and takes the elements? Practically anyone can go to mass and “take the eucharist”. But if that person is unsaved, does it do him any good? He has “received Christ” in Romanist theology. What, if anything, does that do for him?

The Roman Church does not believe in the security of the believer as they teach that salvation, if it can be earned by works, can certainly be lost. The Church teaches that no one can really say they are “saved” as that is presumption. You are expected to go to purgatory for at least a few centuries to have your love “purified” and to be made fit to go to heaven. Even popes go to purgatory. So what is the point of “receiving Christ” through the wafer? Does it save you? Apparently not as you still have to go to purgatory, assuming you “endure to the end” by staying in communion with “Holy Mother Church”. If I am a Romanist, I am going to purgatory whether I take the cookie or not and taking it does not guarantee my salvation. So what is the point?

6:58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.^a

58a This is why Christ, as the Bread of Life, is superior to the manna Moses gave. A man would eat manna and not necessarily be changed for the better spiritually. But a man who partakes of Christ unto salvation may die physically but not spiritually and not eternally. The manna-eater could still die and go to hell and countless Jews did. But no partaker of Christ will have to worry about that.

6:59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

40. The Reaction 6:60-69

6:60 Many therefore of his disciples,^a when they had heard [this], said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?^b

60a Probably not the “original twelve” as there were other followers of Jesus at this time (like the Seventy He also sent out).

60b This sermon provoked a very strong reaction among the disciples and the other hearers. It is as if the Lord deliberately tried to offend as many of His hearers as He could, to “separate the men from the boys” theologically. Who could He offend yet would still be mature enough and dedicated enough to follow Him? Who can understand it? Who can figure it out? Why can’t Jesus make it simple and easy to understand? Why is He going out of His way to be offensive? If you can’t “get rid of him” or “offend him”, then this person will be a follower you can do something with!

6:61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?^a

61a Strong meat doctrine tends to offend weaker believers. Such churches tend to be small that have a preacher who truly preaches the whole counsel of God in a Biblical manner. Churches that focus on social issues, politics or entertainment tend to be larger.

6:62 [What] and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?^a

62a If you are offended now, what will you do when the really hard doctrine is presented? A better

question is “What would it take to offend you, to make you quit on God, to throw away your Bible and to renounce everything you believe? Whatever it takes to make you quit is that which defeats you and that which is stronger than you. What would offend you- sufferings, standards, the saints?

Offences must come (Matthew 18:7 **“Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!”**). They are unavoidable, either in the Church or in secular life. You will be exposed to things you do not like continually. You simply have to learn to deal with it and you will have to grow a thicker skin. Mature people can handle offences. Immature ones cannot. Just be sure that you are not the cause of offences! Make sure that no one has quit on God because you did something stupid or because of your bad attitude!

There are two examples in the New Testament of men who were offended- John Mark and Demas. Something happened to John Mark and he left Paul and Barnabas in Acts 13:13 (**“Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.”**). Maybe he was scared at some of the demonic activity he saw or he was offended that Paul was taking the lead on the missions team from his uncle Barnabas. Whatever the reason, he quit. But he later was restored and went back to the work. Demas is the second example. He simply quit on Paul and never returned (2 Timothy 4:10 **“For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.”**). The world appealed to him more than the gospel so there must have been something in the gospel or the Christian life that he did not like and that offended him. Jeremiah was offended by the suffering and rejection he endured in his ministry so much that he wanted to quit in his despair, but he couldn’t.

6:63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing:^a the words that I speak unto you, [they] are spirit, and [they] are life.^b

63a Even if you could eat Christ’s literal flesh, it would profit you nothing as the flesh profits nothing. “Eating” the “flesh of Christ” in the Roman Catholic mass via the “wafer” wouldn’t do you any spiritual good, even if it was true. Salvation is a spiritual transaction, not facilitated by physical means.

63b Now the Lord changes it up and says that it is His words that give life, not the bread and wine! Yet how many Roman Catholic priests could preach a sermon that could keep anyone awake for five minutes?

AV	ESV	LSV
63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, <i>they</i> are spirit, and <i>they</i> are life.	63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life.	63 “The Spirit is the One who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.

The LSV adds “is the One” to “The Spirit” and the addition is unnecessary and occultic, as it uses the New Age term “the One” in referring to the Holy Spirit.

6:64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.^{ab}

64a Omniscience and foreknowledge.

64b Judas. Jesus selected him as a disciple, fully knowing that he would betray Him. But how else would the Scripture be fulfilled?

6:65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.^a

65a A divine “drawing” is necessary for salvation as no man naturally seeks God on his own volition or initiative. This is not Calvinist doctrine, it is Bible doctrine, and how do not need to subscribe to any so-called “doctrines of grace” to believe it. The Calvinists do not have any sort of monopoly on this doctrine as all Bible-believers hold to it.

God draws all men (John 12:32 **“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.”**) and gives them opportunity to repent and believe (Acts 11:18 **“When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.”**). This is explained in Romans 10:8-21.

6:66 From that [time] many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.^a

66a Jesus suffers a church split as He loses most of His followers. They complained that He preached too long, too deep and wasn't “caring and sharing enough” with the other churches in town. It is a good thing to occasionally “thin the herd” and drive away the mixed multitude and the “hangers-on”.

6:67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve,^a Will ye also go away?^b

67a The original twelve. They were still there.

67b To their credit, none did. They had their faults and weaknesses but give them credit here. Even Judas didn't leave- yet. Even he stuck it out for a while, although someone like him would probably have been one of the first ones to be offended.

6:68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.^a

68a There is nowhere else to go and no one else to go to if you want the “words of eternal life”. If you leave Christ, you cut yourself off from any hope of salvation. No pope has them. Mohammad nor his moon god have them. No Buddhist or Hindu or New Age Tree Hugger has them. If you want these words, you must come to Christ and Christ alone and seek out those words in the Scripture.

We tend to use the phrase “Word of God” in referring to the Bible, but it would be more accurate to refer to the scripture as the “words of God”.

6:69 And we believe and are sure^a that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.^{bcd}

69a Blessed is the man who can say this about spiritual things. The majority of professing Christians cannot say that since they can't even say of they are going to heaven when they did. True religion gives faith and assurance. False religion gives doubt and uncertainty.

69b Peter was good at making these kinds of public professions!

69c Was Peter also speaking on behalf of Judas?

AV**ESV****LSV**

69 And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

69 and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”

69 “And we have believed and have come to know that You are the Holy One of God.”

69d The ESV and LSV totally mangle the verse to “the Holy One of God”, ignoring Jesus as “Christ” and the “Son of the living God”. It also misses the “living God”. **“The Holy One”** is a New Age/esoteric description of Christ which is to be immediately rejected by any Christian.

41. The Traitor Identified 6:70,71

6:70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?^{ab}

70a Peter said “we believe and are sure” in John 6:69. Jesus comes back and says “Is that so? Are you positive about that? Don’t you know that one of you twelve is a devil?” Jesus does not identify Judas at this point and the disciples are all left to try to figure out who Jesus is talking about. Judas certainly did not believe as the other eleven would.

70b The Lord chose Judas with full knowledge of who he was and what he would do. It was no surprise to the Lord that Judas betrayed Him. Judas was deliberately chosen by Christ for a reason, with full knowledge of why Judas was and what he would do.

6:71 He spake of Judas Iscariot [the son] of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

John Chapter 7

42. Jesus' Relationship With His Family 7:1-9

7:1 After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry,^a because the Jews sought to kill him.^b

1a "Jewry, or Judea, as distinguished from Galilee and Samaria, contained the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, Simeon, and Dan, being bounded on the north by the village Annach or Dorceus, on the borders of Samaria; on the south by a village called Jarda in Arabia; and extending in breadth from the river Jordan to Joppa and the Mediterranean, having Jerusalem in its centre."⁷⁰

1b The Lord had to be careful and circumspect in His movements because the Jewish religious leaders were intent of killing Him, so He avoided the area around Jerusalem and spent most of His time in Galilee, which was safer. There is no cowardice in this, just the Lord following His own teachings (Matthew 10:23 **"But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come."**) Jesus was not afraid of dying. But He would not allow His death to be a mere random act by a few irate Jews.

The Jewish leaders could not answer Christ, nor silence Him, nor prevent the common people listening to Him. Jesus did not fear them and was not intimidated by them. The only thing the Jews could do was to kill Jesus.

The common people were not of the same mind as their leaders as the common people heard Him gladly in Mark 12:37 **"David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he then his son? And the common people heard him gladly."**

7:2 Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles^a was at hand.^{bc}

2a The Festival of Tabernacles fell at the end of September and the beginning of October. It was one of the obligatory festivals and every adult male Jew who lived within fifteen miles of Jerusalem was legally bound to attend it. But devout Jews from far outside the fifteen-mile radius delighted to go to it.

AV	ESV	LSV
2 Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.	2 Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand.	2 Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Booths, was near.

The ESV and LSV have "Feast of Booths".

2b "There are several things peculiar to the feast of tabernacles which ought to be remembered in reading this chapter, because some of them throw light on it. (1) It was an occasion of special mirth and rejoicing with the Jews. They were ordered to dwell in booths, or tabernacles made of branches, for seven days in remembrance of their dwelling in temporary booths when they came out of Egypt, and to "rejoice before the Lord." (Lev. xxiii.39-43.) (2) It was a feast at which more sacrifices were offered up than at any of the Jewish feasts. (Num. xxix.12-34.) (3) It was a feast at which, once every seven years, the law was publicly read to the whole people. (4) It was a feast at which water was drawn from the pool of Siloam every day, with great solemnity, and poured upon the altar while the people sung the 12th chapter of Isaiah. (5) It was a feast which followed close on the great day of atonement, when the peculiarly typical ordinances of the scapegoat and the High Priest going once in the year into the holy

⁷⁰ A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*.

of holies, were fresh in the minds of the people. These things should be carefully noted and remembered as we read through the chapter. Josephus calls the feast of tabernacles "the holiest and greatest feast of the Jews." It was a Rabbinical saying, "The man who has not seen these festivities does not know what a jubilee is."⁷¹

2c "This feast was celebrated on the fifteenth day of the month Tisri, answering to the last half of our September, and the first half of October. This month was the seventh of the ecclesiastical, and first of the civil, year. The feast took its name from the tents which were erected about the temple, in public places, in courts, and on the flat roofs of their houses, and in gardens; in which the Jews dwelt for eight days, in commemoration of the forty years during which their fathers dwelt in the wilderness. It was one of the three solemn annual feasts in which all the males were obliged, by the law, to appear at Jerusalem.

"This feast was celebrated in the following manner. All the people cut down branches of palm trees, willows, and myrtles, (and tied them together with gold and silver cords, or with ribbons), which they carried with them all day, took them into their synagogues, and kept them by them while at prayers. On the other days of the feast, they carried them with them into the temple and walked round the altar with them in their hands, singing, Hosanna! i.e. Save, we beseech thee! - the trumpets sounding on all sides. To this feast St. John seems to refer, Rev 7:9-10, where he represents the saints standing before the throne, with palm branches in their hands, singing, Salvation to God, etc. On the seventh day of the feast, they went seven times round the altar, and this was called Hosanna rabba, the great Hosanna. See the notes on Matt 21:9. But the ceremony at which the Jews testified most joy was that of pouring out the water, which was done on the eighth day of the feast. A priest drew some water out of the pool Siloam, in a golden vessel, and brought it into the temple; and at the time of the morning sacrifice, while the members of the sacrifice were on the altar, he went up and poured this water mingled with wine upon it, the people all the while singing, with transports of joy, Isa 12:1-6, especially 6: With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. To this part of the ceremony, our Lord appears to allude in John 7:37, of this chapter.

During this feast many sacrifices were offered. On the first day, besides the ordinary sacrifices, they offered, as a burnt-offering, thirteen calves, two rams, and fourteen lambs with the offerings of flour and the libations of wine that were to accompany them. They offered also a goat for a sin-offering. On all the succeeding days they offered the same sacrifices, only abating one of the calves each day, so that when the seventh day came, they had but seven calves to offer. On the eighth day, which was kept with greater solemnity than the rest, they offered but one calf, one ram, and seven lambs, for a burnt-offering, and one goat for a sin-offering, with the usual offerings and libations. On this day, they also offered in the temple the first fruits of their latter crops, or of those things which come latest to maturity. During the feast, the 113th, 114th, 115th, 116th, 117th, 118th, and 119th Psalms were sung. Leo of Modena says that, though Moses appointed but eight days, yet custom and the devotion of the people have added a ninth to it, which is called the joy of the law, because that on it they complete the reading of the Pentateuch. See Calmet's Com. and Dict., and father Lamy. For the law relative to this institution, see Lev 23:39-40, (note), etc., and the notes there; and Num 29:16, etc."⁷²

7:3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.

7:4 For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world.^a

⁷¹ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels*.

⁷² Adam Clarke.

4a This was no ordinary man. Another would have taken every opportunity of exhibiting himself before the public that he might become famous, but not so with Christ. False teachers do this as their ministries exist to promote themselves.

7:5 For neither did his brethren believe in him.^{abc}

3-5a The Lord's brethren (half-brothers and half-sisters) gave the Lord this advice not because they believed in Him, but they wanted to take some pressure off of themselves. Imagine their situation. Their big brother ("Mr. Perfect Who Never Got In Any Trouble When He Was Growing Up") is going around the countryside claiming that He is the Son of God. He is popular and He has great crowds following Him. They must have been mortified because everyone back home would whisper behind their backs about their crazy older brother. They must have seen the same miracles everyone else did but they still did not believe. Family prejudices can be the strongest ones to overcome. The Lord's ministry and reputation embarrassed them. In order to take the heat off of themselves, they wanted Jesus to go to Jerusalem and just resolve everything at once. If He really was the Son of God, just come out and say it and stop the gossip and rumors. This explains why those who knew Christ best were still unbelievers at this point, because a Prophet has no honor in his own country or in his own family (John 4:44). "If you really are the Messiah, why are you hiding out here in Galilee? Go on up to Jerusalem where you belong!"

5b Following the birth of Jesus, Joseph and Mary had six children; four boys and two girls. The boys' names were: James, Joses, Juda and Simon. His sisters' names are never given in Scripture (Mark 6:3). Mary was no kind of a "Perpetual Virgin" after then birth of Jesus.

5c Familiarity with Jesus did not and does not guarantee faith in Him.

7:6 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready.^a

6a The Lord was not going to allow Himself to be rushed into anything. He would do what they asked but when the time was right, not just to suit them. They were not as severely constrained by the will of God as He was,

7:7 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth,^a because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.^{bc}

7a The world does hate Christians but not because of the Christians themselves, but because of the God we serve. The hate Jesus, they hate us by extension. The world cannot hate unsaved people because that is the same as hating oneself, and a house divided against itself cannot stand.

7b This is why the world hates Christ- He exposes their sin and the thoughts and intents of their hearts (Hebrews 4:12). Men may try to hide and bury these sins and thoughts deep in their hearts where other men can't find them but nothing can be hidden from Omniscience.

7c "If your minister doesn't spend time exposing SIN in your life and the life of your friends, family, city, and country, he is no follower of Jesus Christ, nor is he any kin to the "prophets" (Acts 24:14; Luke 24:25). The "Prince of Prophets" in the Old Testament (Isaiah) was told: "Lift up thy voice like a TRUMPET, and shew my people their transgressions" (Isa. 58:1). The ministers in America (1901–2000) have done such a rotten job of this that back in 2003, one of them actually shook up the whole

nation, while praying for a political gathering in Topeka, Kansas, simply by listing a few of their transgressions. The commandment in Isaiah 58:1 is so strong that the blowing of a trumpet was given by the Holy Spirit as THE STANDARD for a God-called preacher to go by. Look at the references: Jeremiah 4:19, 6:17, 51:27; Ezekiel 33:3–6; Amos 3:6; 1 Corinthians 14:8; Revelation 4:1; Exodus 19:16.”⁷³

7:8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet^a unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come.

8a The Lord DID go up later in John 7:10 not “not yet”, so He was not lying as some unbelievers and apostates charge. He simply wanted to up to Jerusalem by Himself and unannounced, alone and at the proper time. This would have protected His brethren from any attacks He may have suffered when He did go to Jerusalem.

“up yet” Jerusalem was on a plateau so you literally went “up” to Jerusalem when you went there, like going “up” to Denver (elevation 5280 feet) if you were travelling there from Kansas.

7:9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee.^a

9a It was safer for Christ in Galilee than it was in Judea.

43. Christ at the Feast of Tabernacles 7:10-43

7:10 But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.^a

10a There was no reason to spark a confrontation by going up openly. The confrontation with the religious leaders was unavoidable but there was no reason to “poke the bear”.

7:11 Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?^a

11a Jesus went up in secret in John 7:1,10 because the religious leaders were looking for Him and may have tried to arrest Him. Jesus was supposed to beat the Feast as a male Jew, but He was walking about in secret, not drawing any attention to Himself...yet.

7:12 And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.^{ab}

12a Christ is a divider, not a unifier. He splits public opinion right down the middle. The Lord makes this clear in Matthew 10:35, where He said “**For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother-in-law.**”

Beware of any man or ministry that wants to “unify” people or who want to “bring people together”. This warning also applies to politicians.

12b There was a lot of gossip and whisperings about Jesus during this stage of His ministry.

7:13 Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.^a

⁷³ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, pages 230-231.

13a People who supported Jesus could have been thrown out of the synagogue like what happened to the blind man who was healed by Jesus in John 9:34. Public opinion and fear of arrest can silence many a Christian witness. Matthew 10:32 applies in these situations; **“Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.”**

7:14 Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.^a

14a Now Jesus began to minister publicly at the feast. His ministry here was a teaching ministry.

7:15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?^{abcde}

15a Jesus had no formal education beyond that which all Jewish boys received. Most people in Jesus' day could read and write, so He was not unique in that regard. He never went to college or seminary. You can be self-educated and know more than any college graduate if you apply yourself. Many great preachers were self-taught, like Charles Spurgeon. A formal education can often do more harm than good while leaving you deeply in debt from “student loans”. There is a “cult of education” and education is one of the three “gods” of America, the other two being money and sex.

The “unlettered” Jesus was able to “hold the crowd” better than the over- educated dead-orthodox teachers. Education does not equal knowledge or spirituality. Many times (certainly not always), the more education a man has, the worse preacher he is.

This does NOT mean I am anti-education. I have an earned doctorate in Biblical Studies which I earned in 1995. But education does NOT equal intelligence, wisdom or spirituality. The best education is always self-education, like what George Washington or Bob Jones Sr. had to do. My pastor, Allen Dickerson, was an 8th-grade dropout (he ran away to exercise race horses before World War II) and then got drafted. After the way, he got married, had a son and started working at General Motors. There were not too many Bible Colleges in the 1950 and he could attend one if he wanted. His mother gave him a Scofield Bible and a set of Matthew Henry commentaries. That was his theological education. With that, he pastored his church for 55 years and lead hundreds (thousands?) to the Lord.

Jesus needed no human education as He was the Source of all wisdom and knowledge and since He was the One Who gave these doctrines to men in the first place. It would be like trying to teach Bill Gates about the Windows operating system.

15b The “letters” would be the letters of a degree, like a B.A. or Ph.D. The question really means ““How come this man knows all we know about the Bible, and yet he didn’t attend our rabbinical schools?” Some preachers will look down on you if you didn’t attend their schools. I attended Maryland Baptist Bible College in Elkton, Maryland and Foundations Theological Seminary in Dunn, North Carolina. Both schools didn’t have more than 30 students. But I received a very good theological education from both. Once, while in Detroit, a pastor asked me “The Question” of where I went to school. I told him. He was not impressed and turned and walked away, never to speak to me again. I think he was a Regular Baptist preacher affiliated with the General Association of Regular Baptists, a group I have never been affiliated with as an Independent Baptist.

15c Self-education is always the best education and anyone can do it. It takes:

1. A desire to learn. You won’t do it if you have no real desire to. You will not go further into your Bible study if you have no real desire to dig deeper into the Scripture.
2. The discipline to learn. If you are self-educating, no one will force you to set the time to study.

3. The devices to learn. These are your tools. Every craftsman has his tools. His work would be impossible without them. Are you willing to invest the necessary money to build a library of books and other tools to help you learn? Everything we know, we know by books.

15d "Jesus had not attended either of the rabbinical theological schools in Jerusalem (Hillel, Shammai). He was not a rabbi in the technical sense, only a carpenter, and yet he surpassed the professional rabbis in the use of their own methods of debate. It is sometimes true today that unschooled men in various walks of life forge ahead of men of lesser gifts with school training. See the like puzzle of the Sanhedrin concerning Peter and John (Acts 4:13). This is not an argument against education, but it takes more than education to make a real man. Probably this sneer at Jesus came from some of the teachers in the Jerusalem seminaries. "Christ was in the eyes of the Jews a merely self-taught enthusiast" (Westcott)."⁷⁴

15e "That kind of intellectual snobbery is with us still. It flourishes in religious circles. Most Bible institutes, colleges, and universities would not dream of putting anyone on the faculty who was not a product of the academic system. He may be a Spirit-taught, God-anointed Bible teacher with vast knowledge of the Scriptures and skill in expounding them that is evident to those who hear him. He may have written a score of books that are blessed of God, avidly used by thousands, even as required texts in those schools. No matter. He is not qualified to be on the faculty—he does not have any degrees. Accrediting associations will not recognize a person taught of God who has not met their criteria. Here we see worldliness in a particularly outrageous garb."⁷⁵

7:16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.^a

16a Jesus wasn't preaching some doctrine that He hatched on His own, like false teachers do. His doctrines came straight from the Father. He says "My doctrine is not mine", as an ambassador might say, "I speak not my own words, but his who sent me".

7:17 If any man will do his will,^a he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.^{bc}

17a The will of God for every Christian includes:

1. The burnt offering of the life- Romans 12:1,2 **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."**
2. Our sanctification- 1 Thessalonians 4:3 **"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:"**

17b Skeptics are forever asking "How can I know the Bible is true? How can it be proven?" The only way you can really verify the Bible is to get saved and believe it. Put Him and His word to the test! Study it! Examine it! Get your life aligned with the will of God and then He will start teaching you about the truth of the Bible. There is really no other way. You will not accept the truths about doctrines like creationism, the virgin birth or the resurrection is some classroom or from some book. The spiritual truths really cannot be "proven". They can only be experienced. Christians who are living for God are

⁷⁴ A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*.

⁷⁵ John Phillips, *Exploring John*, page 144.

convinced of these truths because it has been revealed to them by the Holy Spirit. There is room for scholarship in investigating the doctrines of Christ, but it must be accompanied by faith, submission and obedience.

But Jesus is also inviting His hearers to put His teachings to the test and compare the resulting fruit with the dead orthodoxy of the Jewish leaders. Look at the transformed lives and the hope that the teachings of Jesus produce compared to the smug arrogance and pride the legalism of the day was producing.

“This is the key verse in the Bible for an educated, intellectual skeptic who is unwilling to test a hypothesis (Proverbs 14:6; 8.8.9; Jeremiah 9:6; 2 Corinthians 8:12. His basic problem is heart trouble, not head trouble (John 3:19,20).”⁷⁶

17c Simply put:

1. A man can find God if he wants to.
2. A man can find the will of God if he wants to.
 - A. Paul says he can find the “perfect will” of God in Romans 12:2 and Colossians 14:12.
3. Any man can reject the will of God or do it.
4. If he does the will of God it, his “doctrines” will be Scriptural and sound (see John 3:3).
5. If he doesn’t do the will of God, he will never find out what the will of God is, about anything. He will have no spiritual discernment and will only be capable of a very limited knowledge of God.
6. Obedience to God and His words brings knowledge and understanding

Other relevant verses:

1. John 9:31 **“Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and DOETH HIS WILL, him he heareth.”**
2. 1 Thessalonians 4:3 **“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication.”**

7:18 He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory:^a but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness^b is in him.^c

18a This includes all false teachers. They create their own doctrines, and they promote their own ministries and their own selves. False teachers are all arrogant and proud people.

AV	ESV	LSV
18 He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.	18 The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood.	18 “He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

18b **“unrighteousness”** The ESV has “falsehood”.

18c The world will not think much of a man who teachers what God taught him and seeks no earthly glory of his own. This is how you can spot a true teacher as opposed to the false teacher. Who is he promoting- himself of God?

⁷⁶ Peter Ruckman, *Ruckman Reference Bible*, page 1397.

7:19 Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law?^a Why go ye about to kill me?^{bc}

19a Acts 15:10 Romans 3 and 8:3 make this clear. The Jew, especially the religious leaders, believed they did keep the law and were thus perfect but the Lord shoots that down.

19b The Lord now throws a tactical nuke into the crowd. "You bunch of hypocrites! You claim that you honor Moses so much yet none of you keep the Law of Moses. If you were such spiritual men as you claim to be, why are you trying to kill me for preaching the truth?" This is directed toward the religious leaders and not the people.

19c They wanted to kill Christ because they hated Him and Christ knew that.

7:20 The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil:^{ab} who goeth about to kill thee?^c

20a "You're crazy! You're nuts!"

20b All the post-Authorized Version translations use "demon". "Devil" is the accurate term to use.

20c "The People" may not have known about the plans of the religious leaders to kill Jesus. The religious leaders would deny this while at the very same time plotting His death.

7:21 Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work,^a and ye all marvel.

21a What "one work" is Jesus referring to? He had done many miracles by this point in His ministry.

7:22 Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;)^a and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.

22a Circumcision goes back before Moses, to Genesis 17, but Moses made it a part of the law.

7:23 If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?^{ab}

23a This could refer to the Lord's healing of the impotent man on the sabbath in John 5. There was still apparently a lot of commotion over the healing and the fact that the Lord went out of His way to do it on the sabbath to spark a confrontation with the religious leaders. This healing had taken place anywhere from six months earlier, during the Passover. It is now the Feast of Tabernacles in October and the Jews are still fuming over it.

23b The Jews would circumcise on the sabbath and that was a "work". So why get so upset that the Lord did a good "work" by healing a man on the sabbath?

7:24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.^{abc}

24a A basis of judgment. Judgment is allowed as long as:

1. It is not based on human appearance. God doesn't judge that way in 1 Samuel 16:7 ("**But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.**"). We cannot judge as God judges since we cannot see the heart of the other person.
2. It is done righteously, based on divine principles.

24b The Lord invites the crowd to judge His healing on the sabbath day, as long as that judgment is not based on human tradition but on scriptural principles.

24c Summary of Christian Judgment:

1. Matthew 7:1-5 "**Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.**"
 - A. The Lord is not condemning judging but hypocritical judging. Don't condemn someone while we are doing the same activity for which we are condemning the other for.
 - B. Romans 14:4 ("**I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.**") has a similar theme about judging others when we don't have all the facts or when we truly have no reason or authority.
2. John 7:24 "**Judge righteous judgment**".
3. 1 Corinthians 2:15,16 "**But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.**"
 - A. We are to judge all things.
4. 1 Corinthians 4:3-5 "**But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.**"
 - A. Do not be hasty in your judgments, or judge things before the time. It is wise to have all the facts before you render a judgment.
5. 1 Corinthians 5:3,12 "**For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed, ... For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?**"
 - A. We are to judge sin in the local church.,
6. 1 Corinthians 6:5 "**I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?**"
 - A. We are to judge issues among believers,
7. 1 Corinthians 14:29 "**Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.**"
 - A. We are to judge preaching.
8. 1 John 4:1 "**Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.**"
 - A. We are to judge the spirits.

7:25 Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill?

7:26 But, lo, he speaketh boldly,^a and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?^b

26a Christ spoke clearly and with authority. He did not peep and mutter like the false prophets (Isaiah 8:19 **“And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?”**). God’s men have always preached clearly, forcefully and without apology.

26b They may have known it but there was no way they would admit it, for then the people would ask why they did not follow Him or obey Him.

7:27 Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.^a

27a “The Rabbis taught from Isa 53:8 that when the Messiah would be born He would hide Himself and that when He appeared no man would know from whence He had come. They had a proverb, “Three things come unexpectedly: a thing found by chance, the sting of a scorpion, and the Messiah.”⁷⁷ Naturally, there was no Biblical support for such an idea.

7:28 Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying,^a Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself,^b but he that sent me is true,^c whom ye know not.^d

28a The ignorance of the Jews, their persistence in blindness to all evidence, and the great opportunity afforded by the crowds around Him in the temple courts were probably reasons why Jesus “cried.”

28b Christ did not come in His own authority or in His own name.

28c The Father.

28d They thought they knew the Father but they had no real relationship with Him and were not following His law

7:29 But I know him:^a for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

29a I know the Father even if you don’t, although you imagine that you know Him. These kinds of attacks would only serve to heighten the tension, as is what happened in John 7:30.

7:30 Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.^a

30a The Jewish leaders would have if they could have but were restrained from doing so by God as it was not yet time for Christ to be arrested. No one can do anything against Jesus unless allowed to by

⁷⁷ J. Finis Dake, *Dake Reference Bible*.

the Father and not until the time was right.

7:31 And many of the people believed on him,^a and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?^b

31a Because of these words and sayings, not for any miracles they might have seen.

31b The miracles and the signs did factor into these professions but the strongest and best professions are based on what the people HEARD, not by what they SAW. One reason why so many were believing on Christ was because of the miracles He was doing. With these signs and miracles, Jesus was fulfilling one of the requirements of the Messiah.

7:32 The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.^a

32a Multiple attempts were made to arrest Christ because the Pharisees were hearing the public opinion was shifting toward Jesus and they believed they needed to arrest Jesus as quickly as they could to prevent Him from getting even more popular. They figured that the more popular Jesus became, the less influential they would be. Jesus' popularity was a direct threat to their authority.

7:33 Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you,^a and then I go unto him that sent me.^b

33a Only about 42 months in a public ministry and that time was drawing to a close.

33b Through His death, resurrection and ascension.

7:34 Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me:^a and where I am, thither ye cannot come.^b

34a I wonder what this would mean. After His death, the Jews thought or hoped that Jesus was done. The Jewish leaders never really "sought" Christ after His death except for those Jews and Pharisees that would get saved during the book of Acts. When the eventual day of their visitation came, as in A.D. 70, there would be no divine relief. They rejected God's Messiah and Son, so He would reject them in their hour of need when the Romans would invade.

34b In heaven, which these Jewish leaders could not go as they were not saved and did not and would not believe in Him.

7:35 Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?^a

35a Not Christ personally but the early Church would. If Jesus were to have personally go to the Gentiles, the Jews would not have found Him as that would have been the last place they would have gone. The Jews would have trouble even contemplating any Jew, including a rabbi, going among the Gentile dogs and even to teach them.

The "**dispersed**" would be the Jews living in Gentile lands.

7:36 What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?

7:37 In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.^{abc}

37a An open invitation for any man to come and refresh his soul. "Whoever will may come". This invitation is universal. Who is invited? "Any man" who "thirsts".

37b Have you ever been thirsty? In 1983, I contracted a stomach virus that laid me up for a month, including five days in the hospital where I had my stomach pumped out. I threw up every day for two weeks and became very dehydrated. I couldn't even keep water down and I hadn't had a good drink of water in two weeks. I learned something about being thirsty!

This world is a spiritual Lodebar with a burning sun that will leave you parched and thirsty. The only place for spiritual refreshment is in the person of Christ.

37c It is possible It is probable that the Lord chose this figure and imagery because of the Jewish custom of drawing water from the pool of Siloam during the feast of tabernacles and carrying it in solemn procession to the temple.

7:38 He that believeth on me,^a as the scripture hath said, out of his belly^b shall flow rivers of living water.^{cd}

38a The qualification for the blessing. You believe on Christ, not on church tradition, Mary, the saints, the Baptist distinctives, Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, the Westminster Confession or anything else. The blessing is bound up in a person, not in a thing or in a theological system.

38b The very source of a person's being.

38c This is not a direct quote from any single Old Testament verse, Several verses could be referenced:

1. Isaiah 12:3 **"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation."**
2. Isaiah 55:1 **"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."**
3. Zechariah 13:1 **"In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness."**

38d Not only will the believer be blessed, he will also become a source of blessing to others in his Christian witness and testimony.

7:39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)^a

39a The Holy Spirit would not be given in Acts 2, after His resurrection and ascension. All who believe on Christ would receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has always been in the world, but not in the same capacity and not with the same actions and ministries as He undertakes during the Church Age.

Some "hyper-Baptists", who desperately try to make John the Baptist a Baptist, say that the Church began in the gospels, yet how can you have a church without the Holy Spirit? The Church did

not start in the gospels as the Holy Spirit was not given until Acts 2.

7:40 Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying,^a said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.

40a “Heard the saying” not “saw the miracle” as no miracles were done in John 7.

7:41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?^a

41a Jesus was raised in Galilee but was from Bethlehem. There seemed to be a general misunderstanding or ignorance about where Jesus was born.

7:42 Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?^a

42a See Micah 5:2, **“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”**. And the records would show that Jesus had a double claim to be of the seed of David, from both legally through Joseph and biologically through Mary.

7:43 So there was a division^a among the people because of him.^{bcd}

43a A schism. The same Greek word is also used in John 9:16; 10:19.

43b This is what Jesus does, He divides. He does not unite. Beware of any politician or religious person who wants to “bring people together”. The Antichrist will do that in the Tribulation. God’s eternal purpose with man since the tower of Babel is to keep men segregated, divided and separated contrary to the dreams, plans, wishes, aspirations, and attempts of every major political leader since Babel. This is why the world hates the Bible. Mankind wants unity and Satan is doing his best to bring that about. But the Bible keeps throwing a monkey wrench into this unity through fallen human nature, which simply cannot bring unification. Man is united against God (Psalm 2) but even that is a flimsy unity as man still cannot unify himself over anything else but that hatred of God and His Christ. The League of Nations and the United Nations have been trying to unify men under the Antichrist but are never able to do it.

43c Other verses where Christ “divides”:

1. Matthew 10:35 **“For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother-in-law.”**

A. The gospel even splits even the closest of earthly bonds- family ties. The ultimate fulfillment of this will be among Jewish households during the tribulation period where they will turn on each other in their attempt to stay alive in the face of the assaults of the Antichrist against all believers and Jews.

2. Luke 12:51 **“Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:”**

3. John 7:12 **“And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.”**

4. John 9:16 **“Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such**

miracles? And there was a division among them.”

5. John 10:19 **“There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings,”**

43d It seems, then, that even when Christ was the Preacher, there was a division among the hearers, so we must not be surprised if the same result follows from our preaching if we are preaching as Christ preached. The division were not necessarily over His doctrines but over Him. When we say Christ is Lord, King and God, divisions and setting up in parties will follow.

The divisions were:

1. Some rejected Him outright
2. Some accepted His teachings but not the claims about Himself
3. Some accepted his teachings and claims
 - A. But divisions still come among believers. We have all the denominations, Calvinist versus Arminians, pre-millennial verses post-millennial, pro-Authorized Version verses supporters of modern versions, traditional hymns verses Southern Gospel music verses Christian “Rock”, etc.

44. The Attempt to Arrest Christ 7:44-49

7:44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.^a

44a Officers were sent to arrest Jesus, but they more they heard Him and watched Him, the more convinced they were of His innocence and of His claims.

7:45 Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

7:46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.^{abc}

46a Also compare the reaction of the crowds in Luke 4:22, **“And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?”**

The officers were impressed and overwhelmed by Jesus' ministry and preaching. They could not obey their orders to arrest Him. Jesus had a “presence” and a “gravitas” that impressed everyone who heard Him, friend a foe. Christ spoke clearly and with authority. He did not peep and mutter like the false prophets (Isaiah 8:19 **“And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead?”**). Christ spoke with authority, unlike the scribes (Matthew 7:29 **“For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.”**). God's men have always preached clearly, forcefully and without apology.

Jesus spake not like Moses, the lawgiver; nor David, the sweet Psalmist of Israel; nor Solomon, the wisest man ever; nor any of the prophets; nor John Baptist his forerunner, the voice of one crying in the wilderness. Christ excelled them all.

There have been men who use their oratorical gifts for evil (like Adolph Hitler, who was a very excellent speaker) but Christ used His gifts to only glorify His Father and to promote His will.

46b “1. He spoke with Majestic Authority: see John 5 and 8.

- A. He didn't hesitate to claim equality (Phil. 2) with the Creator who made the nebulae, star clusters, galaxies, and living creatures. Mohammed didn't dare, although he claimed

an equal authority with Jesus as a prophet and a superior place as a “Messenger” or “Apostle.”

2. He spoke with Complete Originality.

A. His “golden rule” did not come from Brahmanism or Hinduism; their “golden rule” was NEGATIVE. He borrowed nothing from the “wisdom of ancients” in India or Egypt or anywhere else, and He no more bothered to quote Thales or Anaximander or Socrates or Plato or Aristotle or Pythagoras than if they had never been born.

B. Everything you, or anyone else, read in pagan folklore or Greek, Roman, or Egyptian mythology that looked like something Christ is recorded to have said came right out of Genesis–Malachi, with 80 percent of that being written before 1000 B.C. (Solomon, David, Moses, Samuel, et al.).

3. He spoke with Infinite Compassion: look at His utterances in Matthew 11:28–30; Luke 15:18–22; and John 10:11–15.

A. No Pharisee, Sadducee, or scribe spoke that way anywhere in four gospels. This is a GOOD shepherd who cares for the sheep (John 10). He is not at all like the Roman Catholic Pope in Zechariah 11:17, whose sins were covered up by Elmer Towns, Jerry Falwell, Truman Dollar, and Curtis Hutson in their New King James Version (Zech. 11:17). That “IDOL shepherd” was a “hireling” (John 10:13).

4. He spoke with Childlike Simplicity: there are no “great swelling words of vanity” (2 Pet. 2:18; Jude 16), since the speaker had no “respect of persons” in any audience (Luke 10:21; 1 Cor. 2:4) to whom He spoke. Jesus talked about dogs and wolves, pigs and sheep. He talked about birds and lilies and farmers and crops. He spoke of children and servants, maidens and widows, death and sin, Hell and judgment, faith and God, etc. No one has to have a high school education to follow any discourse Jesus Christ ever preached. How unlike modern twentieth and twenty-first century “ministers”!

5. The greatest preachers all modeled themselves after Him. Luther, Whitefield, and J. Frank Norris spoke with majestic authority. Sam Jones, Billy Sunday, and Lester Roloff were completely original. Phillips Brooks, John Knox, and William Booth spoke with infinite compassion, and the childlike simplicity of Bob Jones Sr.’s sermons (and Dallas Billington’s sermons) were legendary. Dwight Moody was a pleading father. Jonathan Edwards was a severe debater. R. A. Torrey was a legalist lawyer with a “brief.” John Bunyan was a sublime allegorist. DeWitt Talmage was a fabulous, orating poet. George Whitefield was an overwhelming actor. Billy Sunday riveted red hot texts. Luther was a cannonade of theology. But! “Never man spake like THIS man” (vs. 46)!⁷⁸

46c “Of the matter of our Lord’s public speaking we may form some conception from the discourses which are recorded in the four Gospels. The leading features of these discourses are plain and unmistakable. The world has never seen anything like them since the gift of speech was given to man. They often contain deep truths, which we have no line to fathom; but they often contain simple things, which even a child can understand. They are bold and outspoken in denouncing national and ecclesiastical sins, and yet they are wise and discreet in never giving needless offense. They are faithful and direct in their warnings, and yet loving and tender, in their invitations. For a combination of power and simplicity, of courage and prudence, of faithfulness and tenderness, we may well say, “Never man spake like this Man”!

It would be well for the Church of Christ if ministers and teachers of religion would strive more to speak after their Lord’s pattern. Let them remember that fine bombastic language, and a sensational, theatrical style of address, are utterly unlike their Master. Let them realize, that an eloquent simplicity is the highest attainment of public speaking. Of this their Master left them a glorious example. Surely they

⁷⁸ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, pages 250-252.

need never be ashamed of walking in His steps.”⁷⁹

7:47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?^a

47a The officers were not deceived but the religious leaders were.

7:48 Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?^a

48a Nicodemus did, as we will see at the end of this chapter. But it mattered not if any of the powerful leaders believed on Christ. They were usually wrong anyway.

Their idea was “You have no business believing on Jesus as the Messiah unless we give you license to do so. We will tell you how to think!” They believed they had a right to control the conscience of the people. “If the educated, spiritual class don’t believe on Him, then you simple, uneducated people have no business believing on Him! You shouldn’t believe on Him unless WE tell you to!” Oh the arrogance!

7:49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.^a

1. What a low opinion they had of the people they were supposed to love and minister unto! You cannot be a minister unless you love the people you minister unto. These men were hirelings, not shepherds. The Lord would expand of this in John 10.
2. If they did not know the law, whose fault was that? It was the job of the leaders to be teachers of the law. They may have thought that the “common people” were too stupid to understand the law like they did. Many pastors have this mistaken idea about their congregations, so they preach “simple sermons for Sunday morning: and they never challenge their hearers, hence they never grow and deepen in the truth. O. Talmadge Spence, was once confronted with this attitude that many preachers were preaching “too high”. Spence responded that the people were instead living “too low”.
3. They had a sense of superiority bred by arrogance. They actually thought they were better and superior to the people they were supposed to be service. Humility is a trait in a spiritual leader that he must have. There is no option.

45. Nicodemus’ Defense of Christ 7:50-53

7:50 Nicodemus^a saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,)

50a This is the same Nicodemus of John 3.

7:51 Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?^a

51a Nicodemus was defending Jesus as He had come to faith in Jesus, although it appears he did not make this belief public. Jesus had been condemned by the council without hearing Him or giving Jesus any opportunity to defend Himself. Nicodemus was probably calling to mind Exodus 23:1 and Deuteronomy 1:16.

⁷⁹ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on John*.

7:52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee?^a Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.^b

52a This was an insult as Galilee was not highly regarded by those in Jerusalem and Judea and especially by these religious leaders. They considered Galilee as “hick country”.

52b They were incorrect. Jonah was of Gathheper, in Galilee: see 2 Kings 14:25, compared with Joshua 19:13. The Prophet Nahum was also a Galilean, for he was of the tribe of Simeon; and some suppose that Malachi was of the same place. But their bigotry against Galilee was so strong that they were unwilling to consider the fact that anyone or anything good could have come from Galilee.

7:53 And every man went unto his own house.^a

53a This conference broke up without the Council being able to decide on any course of action at this time. But Jesus had nowhere to lay His head. Every man went home, Jesus went to the Mount of Olives in Romans 8:1.

John 7:53-8:11 is one of those passages of Scripture that is attacked by apostates and modern Bible versions. One reason was some imagined that Jesus was condoning adultery. J. C. Ryle states in his *Expository Thoughts on John* “It is held by many learned Christian writers—who have an undoubted right to be heard on such matters—that the passage was not written by St. John, that it was written by an uninspired hand and probably at a later day...” Ryle was wrong and was too forgiving of these apostates. No man who questions the inspired Scriptures deserves to be heard. We will not acknowledge any “scholar” no matter his learning or spirituality who attacks Scripture like this,

“John 7:53–8:11. The entire passage is knocked out of Nestle’s text and Westcott and Hort rejected it as inspired literature. The RV and ASV put it in brackets; the RSV puts it in footnotes, and the New English Bible tacks it on the end of John’s gospel like a postscript.

“Augustine did not like the passage, although he quotes it. Augustine chose the text of Origen’s Hexapla, which excluded it. Here, Jerome and Augustine had a falling-out; but this was due (as we have said before) to the fact that Augustine thought that “LXX” of A.D. 200 was the inspired product of someone, somewhere, around 250 B.C. Jerome (although he swallowed the legend of the mythological LXX) was leery of an “inspired” Greek Old Testament since he knew—as anyone should know—that the Old Testament was written in Hebrew. For this reason, Jerome used the Hebrew text extensively in translating the canonical books. In Augustine’s “Bible” there was a blank space between John 7:53 and John 8:11. True, it did make ridiculous reading; “...art thou also of Galilee? Search and look; for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet. Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying.”

“That is, John must have been misled by the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Spirit got lost in the writing somewhere because in John 7:52 the scene is a discussion between Nicodemus and the Pharisees with the officers, and Jesus is nowhere in the vicinity (note 7:32, 45). In John 8:12, Jesus is discoursing to the multitude in the presence of the Pharisees in the treasury (8:20).

“Origen’s “Bible” reads rather stupidly, but it will not offend anyone who is worried about religious leaders committing adultery (!), for notice John 8:4—where was the man? The Levitical law does not require the adulteress to be stoned it requires the adulteress and the adulterer to be stoned (Lev. 20:10)! If the man in this case (John 8:7) was “caught in the act” (8:4), who could he have been but a Pharisee? (See Luke 16:14–18, and notice the context.)

“I am afraid the passage is “doctrinally suspect.’ Jerome says the reading was in many Greek and Latin manuscripts before 415, and in the “Didache” (third century) and the Apostolic Constitutions (fourth century) are found quotations from the AV 1611 passage. Eusebius (324), in his Ecclesiastical

History, gives extracts from a treatise by Papias (150) and notes that Papias recognized the story of the woman “accused before the Lord of many sins” as part of the Bible. Pacian (370) cites the passage, and the Montanists (second century) were aware of the passage and used John 7:53 in making additions to Acts 5:18.

“The RSV and the New English Bible have some very misleading notes in regard to this passage of Scripture, and they are well refuted by the work of Von Soden (1902). The misleading notes are based on the shallow and defunct observations of Westcott and Hort (Introduction, 1881) and Metzger (1964), which as usual, ignore the facts of church history. Dr. Edward Hills goes into great length on the background of this verse and why it is missing from B, Aleph, L, W, P66, and P75. No decision made about John 7:53–8:11 could be an objective or “neutral” decision unless Dr. Hills’ evidence is given consideration; his findings are a considerable advancement over the hundred-year old theory of Westcott and Hort.”⁸⁰

“This is the famous (infamous?) “Pericope de Adultera,” the story of the adulteress. The idea here is that “the best Greek texts” that are behind the “most accurate English translations” (Nestle, Aland, Hort, and Metzger behind the Revised Version, the American Standard Version, the New American Standard Version, and the New International Version) should read “out of Galilee ariseth no prophet. Then spake Jesus AGAIN unto THEM.” (You eliminate everything from John 7:53 to John 8:11.)

“This ridiculous abortion is still recommended by Nestle in 1983 and the United Bible Societies in 1987. Nestle encloses all the verses in double brackets, and the United Bible Societies abomination says, “OMIT 7:53–8:11.” If we obeyed these sanctified dumbbells, we would have Christ suddenly addressing (for the SECOND TIME(!): “Then spake Jesus AGAIN...” a group of Pharisees who weren’t even there! (“Then spake Jesus again unto THEM ...”) When did He speak to them BEFORE? When they were assembled in John 7:32–34, trying to get His head?

“But such are the ways of sin, death, and madness, when emaciated egomaniacs take on the Lion of the English Reformation. Tertullian, Cyprian, and Origen are the first three Africans to dump the passage. We don’t have to guess about their celibate, holy opinions on “wicked sinners” who sin in the flesh. Cyprian and Origen are as tainted with Gnostic teaching on salvation by purity of flesh as a Trappist monk in Madison, Georgia. Naturally, the old spades? and B omit the passage, although Alexandrinus (“A”) and C only “apparently” omit it (United Bible Societies, p. 355).

“However, the verses are found in whole, or in part, in manuscript D (Western), uncial manuscripts... they are also found in cursives 118, 209, 1071, 28, 700, 1010, 264, 13, 69, 124, 174, 230, 346, 543, 788, 826, 828, 983, 1689, and 1709, plus fifteen copies of the Bohairic versions, and the Old Latin codices b, c, e, ff, g, h, and j, and the Harclean Syriac. Furthermore, the passage is cited by Jerome (A.D. 385), Ambrose (A.D. 374), Augustine (A.D. 396), Pacian (A.D. 370), and Faustus (A.D. 400).

“You either choose sides with the Authorized Version and the evidence given above or with Origen and Vaticanus and the evidence given above. Considering Burgon’s criteria on determining “THE RESPECTABILITY OF WITNESSES,” we don’t flip any coins on such matters. We correct Hort, Nestle, and Metzger with the King James.”⁸¹

Most modern English translations put 7:53-8:11 in brackets. They may include the text but cast doubt on it in the footnotes or by the use of brackets. Almost all modern English translations attack the passage. Most commentators will also attack it or at least question it. We will not. We see no good reason to question or attack this portion of Scripture. It is as inspired as any other portion of Scripture and is just as genuine.

⁸⁰ Peter Ruckman, *The Christian’s Handbook of Manuscript Evidence*.

⁸¹ Peter Ruckman, *The Christian’s Handbook of Biblical Scholarship*.

John Chapter 8

46. The Woman Taken in Adultery 8:1-11

8:1 Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.^a

1a Jesus was still in the Jerusalem area.

8:2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them.^a

2a His teaching ministry was still popular, and Jesus is still maintaining His ministry in the heart of “enemy territory”.

8:3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst,

8:4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.^{ab}

4a How did they catch her? Were they spying on her? Did someone “walk in” and catch them in the act? And where was the man? It takes “two to tango”. Both parties should have been stoned according to Leviticus 20:10 and Deuteronomy 22:22. The fact that they did not bring the man shows they really weren’t interested in the adultery, but they were using the woman to try to entangle Jesus. It is possible that the man may have been one of the Council. It makes you wonder how they discovered this. Was there a sort of a moralistic “gestapo” squad going from house to house, looking for such transgressions?

4b Adultery was one of the “big three” sins of the Jews, along with murder and idolatry. It is a serious sin, but interestingly, neither adultery nor fornication is listed as one of the seven sins God especially hates in Proverbs 6:16-19. The sins that man makes a big deal over are usually not the same sins that especially bother God. Men usually harp on sexual sins as if they were worse than other sins, but all sin is transgression (1 John 3:4 “**Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.**”). Lying, greed, slander, setting up idols in the heart are as bad as adultery in the eyes of God. Adultery was very common in this day which is why the Jews weren’t stoning for it. If they did, there would have been continual stonings and many of them would have involved high, power and prominent men.

8:5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?^{ab}

5a It was a trap.

1. If Jesus says stone her, He could have been accused of not having any compassion for this woman.
2. If Jesus says to let her go, then the Jews would have accused Him of ignoring what Moses said in the law. They could have accused Jesus of being a “lawbreaker”, which in the eyes of these Jews, was worse than being an adulterer.

5b The Jews were not stoning for adultery in this day, simply granting letters of divorcement. Now all of

a sudden, they all became fundamentalists and chose to interpret and apply the Law of Moses literally if they could somehow embarrass Jesus.

8:6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him.^a But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not.^b

6a Again showing they were not interested in justice but in trying to trap Jesus with a hard question. It is very possible that these leaders didn't even know the woman's name. She was just a useful tool for their use.

6b There are a million guesses as to what Jesus was writing in verse 6 and 8 and all such guesses are futile.

8:7 So when they continued asking him,^a he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.^b

7a Continually pestering Him for an answer RIGHT NOW. These kinds of people will pepper you with four or five questions, and while you are answering their first question, will immediately interrupt, preventing you from answering any question.

7b Here was Jesus' judgment. He did not exonerate her or condemn her. He simply stated that no one was really qualified to judge her as these men probably were adulterers in their heart (Matthew 5:28 **"But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."**). Jesus could have judged her as God as He was sinless but He chose not to at this time (as in John 8:11).

8:8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

8:9 And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last:^a and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

9a Conscience is the most effective preacher there is, where a man has not seared his conscience. It never shuts up and it can't be reasoned with. Most men are eager to condemn the sins of others but are slow to condemn their own sins or to allow themselves to be judged by the same sins by which they judge and condemn others (Matthew 7:1,2 **"Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again."**). All normal, red-blooded men are guilty of mental adultery (Matthew 5:28 **"But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."**) so one must be very careful about engaging in these kinds of judgments. After all, haven't we all committed the same sins that we condemn in others? You say "Well, at least I've never killed anyone" but then you forget about 1 John 3:15 **"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."**

Conscience is from two Latin words "con", with and "science", knowledge. It is the build-in, internal knowledge or right and wrong that all people have. It is leftover from the Fall. It is the internal witness of our hearts and of the Holy Spirit that lets us know if we have sinned or are living poorly or are in the wrong concerning an issue.

The word "conscience" only appears in the New Testament and is used 31 times. Below is a

presentation of "conscience" using Biblical theology:

1. Older people seem to be affected by it more than younger people
 - A. John 8:9 **"And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst."**
2. You can live in good conscience and have a good conscience.
 - A. Acts 23:1 **"And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."**
 - B. 1 Timothy 1:5 **"Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:"**
 - C. 1 Timothy 1:19 **"Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck:"**
 - D. Hebrews 13:18 **"Pray for us: for we trust we have a good conscience, in all things willing to live honestly."**
 - E. 1 Peter 3:16 **"Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ."**
 - F. 1 Peter 3:21 **"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:"**
3. You can have a conscience "void of offence"
 - A. Acts 24:16 **"And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men."**
4. Conscience bears witness, either good or bad.
 - A. Romans 2:15 **"Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)"**
5. The Holy Spirit is associated with the conscience.
 - A. Romans 9:1 **"I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost,"**
6. We are to do certain things for the sake of our conscience.
 - A. Romans 13:5 **"Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake."**
7. Weak consciences can be defiled
 - A. 1 Corinthians 8:7,10,12 **"Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ."**
 - B. Titus 1:15 **"Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled."**
8. Should we be judged according to another man's conscience?
 - A. 1 Corinthians 10:25, 27-29 **"Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that eat, asking no question for conscience sake...If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake. But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof: Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?"**

9. We commend ourselves to every man's conscience.
A. 2 Corinthians 4:2 **"But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."**
10. You can have a pure conscience.
A. 1 Timothy 3:9 **"Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience."**
B. 2 Timothy 1:3 **"I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;"**
11. The conscience can be seared.
A. 1 Timothy 4:2 **"Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;"**
12. A perfect conscience
A. Hebrews 9:9 **"Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;"**
13. The conscience can be purged from dead works.
A. Hebrews 9:14 **"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"**
B. Hebrews 10:2 **"For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins."**
14. An evil conscience
A. Hebrews 10:22 **"Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."**
15. Conscience toward God
A. 1 Peter 2:19 **"For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully."**

8:10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?^a

10a They could not have condemned her without condemning themselves as they were all guilty of exactly the same sin. The only difference was that they never got caught.

AV	ESV	LSV
10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?	10 Jesus stood up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?"	10 Straightening up, Jesus said to her, "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?"

"accusers" The ESV and LSV omit.

8:11 She said, No man, Lord.^a And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.^b

11a She could not be punished if there were no accusers. And for this crime to be punished, there must be two witnesses. Christ "threw the case out".

11b The Lord never exonerated her but He seemed to know that she was guilty of adultery. But since her accusers had left, there was no legal basis to do anything to her and Jesus had no legal, human authority to do anything to her. She was shown grace with the hope that this “close call” would motivate her to get her life cleaned up and leave off these sins of the flesh. Christ did not condemn her...yet. But He would in the judgment if she did not repent of and forsake these sins.

47. Christ the Light of the World 8:12

8:12^a Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world:^{bcde} he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness,^f but shall have the light of life.^g

12a After the interruption of the woman taken in adultery, Jesus went back to teaching.

12b It was the candlestick in the Tabernacle, that gave the only light on the “word” that a Levitical priest could see (Exodus 25:31-40).

12c Also see John 9:5 where the Lord repeats this. Christ is also called “the Light” in John 1:4-9.

12d “In this passage Jesus makes the great claim: “I am the Light of the World.” It is very likely that the background against which he made it made it doubly vivid and impressive. The festival with which John connects these discourses is the Festival of Tabernacles (John 7:2). We have already seen (John 7:37) how its ceremonies lent drama to Jesus’ claim to give to men the living water. But there was another ceremony connected with this festival.

“On the evening of its first day there was a ceremony called The Illumination of the Temple. It took place in the Court of the Women. The court was surrounded with deep galleries, erected to hold the spectators. In the centre four great candelabra were prepared. When the dark came the four great candelabra were lit and, it was said, they sent such a blaze of light throughout Jerusalem that every courtyard was lit up with their brilliance. Then all night long, until cock-crow the next morning, the greatest and the wisest and the holiest men in Israel danced before the Lord and sang psalms of joy and praise while the people watched. Jesus is saying: “You have seen the blaze of the Temple illuminations piercing the darkness of the night. I am the Light of the World, and, for the man who follows me there will be light, not only for one exciting night, but for all the pathway of his life. The light in the Temple is a brilliant light, but in the end it flickers and dies. I am the Light which lasts for ever.”⁸²

12e Believers are also called the “**light of the world**” in Matthew 5:14 (“**Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.**”) and Philippians 2:15 (“**That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;**”). The believer is like the moon, that gives off light but only a reflected light as the moon (and the believer) have no light of their own (Song 6:10 “**Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?**”).

As “the light of the world”:

1. We reflect Christ’s light, for He is “the light of the world”.

A. John 8:12 “**He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.**”

B. John 9:5 “**As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.**”

⁸² William Barclay, *John* in The Daily Study Bible.

2. As the moon has no light of its own but reflects the light of the sun, so the Church has no light of its own but reflects the glory of God.
- A. Song 6:10 **"Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?"**
 - B. Job 25:5 **"Behold even to the moon, and it shineth not."**
 - C. The believer is dead in Christ, since the moon is a dead planet.
 - i. Galatians 2:2 **"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."**
 - D. The moon is bound to the earth by gravity. The Church is bound to Christ as His bride and by His power and grace.
 - E. The believer still bears the marks of sin as the moon shows craters spots (the "seas").
 - F. Occasionally, he suffers a total eclipse when the world comes between him and his "Sun."
 - i. 1 John 2:15 **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."**
 - ii. The light of the moon waxes and wanes, so does the light of the Christian. Sometimes the Body of Christ gives off a bright, shining light, and sometimes it doesn't. The testimony of the Church ought to be strong and powerful so that it guides and moves things in the world like the moon moves the tides. But the sad fact is that the testimony of the Church today is so sorry, so lukewarm, so weak, and so worldly that it has little influence on the community around it.
3. The Christian can be compared to the golden candlesticks in the Tabernacle in Exodus 27:20,21 (**"And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always. In the tabernacle of the congregation without the vail, which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the LORD: it shall be a statute for ever unto their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel."**). They were fueled by "pure olive oil, beaten for the light". The oil had to be purified in order for it to shine the brightest and purest that it possibly could. The same goes for Christians and especially ministers.

12f Sin blinds one to spiritual things (John 3:3,5 **"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God...Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."** and 1 Corinthians 2:14 **"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."**). Only the Holy Spirit can give illumination to spiritual things and that only comes through the new birth and faith in Christ. If you attack or reject the Bible, it will result in a spiritual blindness that will be so severe, you may actually start believing that you evolved from monkeys.

12g Light enough to be able to see and comprehend the truths that lead to salvation and eternal life. It is very dark in the world spiritually, but he who believes on Christ and follows Him will have light enough to be able to navigate through this dark world and avoid wandering off of the pathway into snares, pits and other dangers.

48. Confrontation With The Religious Leaders 8:13-59

8:13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.^{abc}

13a This is generally true, except for two things:

1. The Father bore witness to Christ.
 - A. Matthew 3:17 **"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."**
 - B. Matthew 17:5 **"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."**
2. Christ, as God, was allowed to bear witness of Himself. See John 8:18.

13b **"Thou bearest record of thyself;"** True, as He could do so since He was God. However, there were many other witnesses that bore witness that Jesus was the Son of God:

1. John the Baptist
 - A. John 1:26,27,29 **"John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not; He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose...The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."**
2. The Bible
 - A. John 5:39 **"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."**
3. His works
 - A. John 5:36 **"But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me."**
 - B. John 10:38 **"But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him."**
4. The devils
 - A. Mark 5:7 **"And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not."**
5. His disciples
 - A. Matthew 16:16 **"And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."**
6. The Roman soldiers
 - A. Matthew 27:54 **"Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God."**
7. God the Father
 - A. Matthew 3:17 **"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."**
 - B. Matthew 17:5 **"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."**
 - A. John 8:18 **"I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me."**

13c They are saying "you need two external, independent witness to verify your claims and you don't have them. And you are not allowed to bear witness of yourself."

8:14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go;^a but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.^b

14a None of the Pharisees could say that. They had no idea where they came from, and some may not have even had the assurance of where they were going when they died.

14b They may have known that Christ was born in Bethlehem, but in reality, His goings forth were from everlasting (Micah 5:2 **“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”**). He ascended to heaven in Acts 1:8 but they still would have been unable to figure out where He went, even if they believed that He did truly ascend.

8:15 Ye judge after the flesh;^a I judge no man.^b

15a Since they could not see the heart. These Pharisees were judging Jesus, but the basis of their judgment was very weak.

15b By context, this meant that Jesus judged no man after the flesh, or on a fleshly, human basis. Jesus's judgments were based on divine positions and on the heart of the individual. Jesus did judge and He will yet judge, but not on any earthly basis.

8:16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true:^a for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

16a Because He was God and would not judge unrighteous judgment.

8:17 It is also written in your law,^a that the testimony of two men is true.^b

17a “Your law”, not “the law” or “My law”. The way these Pharisees had damaged the law through their mishandling and misinterpretation of it, Jesus did not want to identify with it, since the law He gave was not the same law these Pharisees claimed they believed or taught.

17b It would take two witnesses to verify a thing in a court of law.

8:18 I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.^a

18a Here are the two witnesses to testify of Jesus.

8:19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father?^a Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father:^b if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.^c

19a This was an insult. It was commonly known that there was something that was “not quite right” about Jesus' birth. Everyone realized that Joseph was not the biological father of Jesus. This led to one obvious conclusion; that Jesus was a bastard and that Mary was immoral.

19b Despite their pretense to religion, they did not really know the Father and were ignorant of the one true God.

19c Since they rejected Jesus and His ministry, they also ended up rejecting any knowledge or relation with God that they might have had.

8:20 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.^a

20a The Pharisees would have arrested Jesus if they could have but were prevented in doing so by God. Their time to arrest Jesus would come later, at God's appointed time and circumstance.

8:21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way,^a and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins:^b whither I go, ye cannot come.^{cd}

21a Back to heaven in the ascension.

21b Because they were lost.

21c Fallen man has been trying to get where God is since the Tower of Babel. The modern space program and sending probes to Pluto is just another attempt to conquer the heavens, the domain of God. When the Soviets were sending men into orbit at the beginning of the Space race, one moronic cosmonaut said that when he was in orbit around earth, he looked around and didn't see God or angels, thus proving religion was a myth. One modern scientist (it may have been Carl Sagan) said that if Jesus ascended back to heaven, travelling at the speed of light, He would only be about 1,900 light years from earth by now. Yet these are supposedly "educated" and "intelligent" people! The humble Christian can sit in his recliner and access dimensions unknown to science through prayer and common, and he can go to places the unsaved man will never be able to go or to comprehend.

21d They will seek God and His salvation but will not be able to find it, as Esau sought repentance for despising his birthright with many tears but never found it (Hebrews 12:17 **"For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears."**)

8:22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.^a

22a You can see the limitations in their thinking as it was purely carnal.

8:23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath;^a I am from above:^b ye are of this world;^a I am not of this world.^b

23a They were of the world, from the world, as Satan was their father (John 8:41,44 **"Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God... Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."**).

23b Jesus was from heaven, from God and not a product of this fallen world system.

8:24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.^{abc}

24a There goes Mohammad, Allah, every pope and every other world leader and false teacher. Jesus is dogmatic, narrow-minded and intolerant when He insisted that the only way to be saved was to believe in Him (John 14:6 **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."**).

24b Jesus uses the "I am" here. He says "If you don't believe that 'I AM' ye shall die in your sins." If you are going to believe on Christ, you must believe that He is God. It is not enough to believe that He existed and that He was crucified or that He was a great teacher or healer or anything else. You must believe that He is God, else you will die in your sins. There is no other way. To fail to believe in Jesus results in condemnation, judgment, dying in sin and hell.

24c "Let us never forget that unbelief is the special sin that ruins men's souls. Had the Jews believed on our Lord, all manner of sin and blasphemy might have been forgiven them. But unbelief bars the door in mercy's face, and cuts off hope. Let us watch and pray hard against it. Immorality slays its thousands, but unbelief its tens of thousands. One of the strongest sayings ever used by our Lord was this--"He that believes not shall be damned." (Mark 16:16)."⁸³

8:25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou?^a And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.

25a "Who do you think you are in making such claims for yourself?"

8:26 I have many things to say and to judge of you:^a but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

26a Jesus would not hesitate to judge them and they had already judged Him. Here is a good principle. Would you like Jesus to judge you on the same basis in which you judge Him?

This verse also has an ultimate fulfillment at the Great White Throne judgment of Revelation 20.

8:27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.^a

27a This is a constant theme of John, the inability of the Jews to understand spiritual things.

8:28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man,^a then shall ye know that I am he,^b and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

28a In the crucifixion.

28b Christ's claims would be verified at His crucifixion and in His resurrection. If you doubted His deity

⁸³ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels*.

before, there would be no doubt after His resurrection. He says that these same leaders will “lift Him up” or crucify Him.

8:29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.^a

29a No other man in history could ever make such a claim! Only the most blinded and arrogant self-righteous religionist would even contemplate making such a claim. All men are sinners but since Jesus had no sin and did no sin, He could always please the Father in every word, thought and deed. And the Father was pleased with the Son in all things.

8:30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.^a

30a It is always better to base your believe on what you hear rather than on what you see in a sign or a miracle.

8:31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him,^a If^b ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;^c

31a The people mentioned in John 8:30.

31b Notice the “Ifs” of John 8:

1. The “If” of Discipleship

A. John 8:31 **“If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed”.**

i. True discipleship is the result of abiding in the truth.

ii. Persecution is sure to arise because of this word, and many do get offended, and forsake it in theory or in practice.

a. 2 Timothy 3:12 **“Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.”**

iii. To continue not in His Word is to become false-witnesses, and so to forfeit our fellowship with Him, for the soul of Jesus Christ can have no pleasure in the man that draws back from the clear light of His Word.

a. Hebrews 10:38 **“Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.”**

2. The “If” of Freedom

A. John 8:36 **“If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.”**

i. Freedom from the curse of the law.

a. Galatians 3:10 **“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”**

ii. Freedom from the guilt of sin.

a. Romans 8:33 **“Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.”**

iii. Freedom from the power of sin.

a. Romans 6:14 **“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”**

iv. Freedom the fear of death

a. Hebrews 2:15 **“And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.”**

v. Freedom the fear of man

a. Acts 4:18-20 **"And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."**

3. The "If" of Fruit

A. John 8:39 **"If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham".**

B. Galatians 3:7 **"They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham".**

i. It is fruit, not family that determines this.

ii. The spiritual children of Abraham show their faith by their works, as he did. Abraham believed God, and his faith was evidenced by his works when he "went out not knowing whither he went," and when he offered up his son Isaac. Those who are the true children of the "Father of the faithful" will do works worthy of their Father.

iii. Works of faith are the infallible proofs of a true spiritual descent.

4. The "If" of Sonship.

A. John 8:42 **"If God were your Father ye would love Me".**

i. To call God Father, and ignore the Son is to insult both Father and Son. The evidence of our sonship with God is love to His Son. If God is our Father in a true, practical sense, we will not only supremely love the Lord Jesus Christ, but we will also love every child of God.

a. 1 John 5:1 **"Every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth Him also that is begotten of Him".**

5. The "If" of Responsibility

A. John 8:46 **"If I say the truth, why do ye not believe Me".**

i. Christ did speak the truth, and lived it, for no one was able to "convince Him of sin."

ii. He spoke the truth about Himself, about His Father, and about the needs and responsibilities of the people.

a. John 8:12-24.

iii. They could not deny the truthfulness of His character, or the spirituality of His mission, yet they did not believe in Him, they did not commit themselves to Him. "Why do ye not believe Me?" The infinite madness of refusing to believe Him who is the living embodiment of the Eternal Truth.

6. The "If" of Assurance

A. John 8:51 **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death."**

i. Death can have no power over that man whose life is hid with Christ in God.

a. Colossians 3:3 **"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."**

ii. To keep His Word is to keep the message of Christ, and to appropriate its offers to our own personal needs; it is to wrap ourselves in it as a garment, and to abide in it, and so keeping it, are kept by the power of God through faith.

B. The promise is, **"He shall never see death."** He shall not only "never die" (John 11:26 **"And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this?"**), but never see death, the second death, the true death.

i. Revelation 2:11 **"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."**

ii. Revelation 20:6,14 **"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first**

resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years... And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.”
iii. Revelation 21:8 **“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.”**

31c The conditions of disciple is to continue in the words of Christ; continue believing and continue doing. To “continue” implies you “started” and are still going on to perfection (Hebrews 6:1 **“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,”**).

8:32 And ye shall know the truth,^a and the truth shall make you free.^{bcd}

32a The truth CAN be known and you CAN know it if you believe in Christ. This discernment has nothing to do with religion, adherence to creeds and confessions or what level of education you have. It comes from BELIEVING in the words of Christ and then CONTINUING in that believe. Agnosticism is simply the lazy or dishonest man’s way to try to beg off any responsibility he has to the truth once he has encountered it. He imagines that if pleads ignorance or neutrality then that will somehow exonerate him from the judgment.

You shall know the truth, but you will also have the discernment to identify the error. You will know the difference between truth and error and will have enough understanding to accept the truth and to reject the error.

32b Free from sin, judgment and the entanglements of this world system. This is only possible by the New Birth, which is based by an acceptance of the truth that is revealed in the Bible. Accept that truth (about salvation, sin, Christ...) and believe it and that will free you from the bondage that comes from sin.

32c This is not necessarily physical freedom. Many a slave became a Christian, yet they never regained their physical freedom from their masters. Yet they were freer than their masters. Many a convict became a Christian yet still had to go to the “big house” to “do his time” and many of them were freer than their guards.

32d This presupposes that the listener is in bondage if he needs to be made free. You can’t free a free man but you can free servants and slaves.

8:33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man:^{ab} how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?^{cd}

33a Then what were all these Roman soldiers doing in your country? “How about Pharaoh? How about Shalmanesser and Tiglath-Pileser? Wanna try Sennacherib or Nebuchadnezzar? Esar-haddon? Ahasuerus? Sisera? Artaxerxes? Darius? Herod? “ANY MAN,” was it? How about Archelaus, Caesar Augustus, Cladius Caesar, Nero, Domitian, Arafat, the UN, Adolph Hitler, et al. “NO MAN,” huh?”⁸⁴).

There are at least 23 different times in Biblical history where the Jews were in bondage. That doesn’t count their bondages and exile after A.D. 70. The nation was born in Egyptian bondage! Just

⁸⁴ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, pages 273-274.

how ignorant were these religious leaders of their own history?

33b “Why, their whole history had been one of bondage. They had been slaves in Egypt when Moses came to set them free. For the greater part of the time of the judges they had been in bondage to one or the other of the petty Palestinian principalities they had never driven out of the land. The northern tribes had been carried away into captivity by the Assyrians. The tribe of Judah had been exiled to Babylon. Their return to the promised land had been under the sufferance of a Persian king. They had writhed under the heel of Greek, Syrian, and Egyptian for centuries until at last the Romans had taken over. Their boast, therefore, was one of obvious self-deception. They shrugged those servitudes off as temporary chastisements. Because they had rarely submitted tamely to the periods of servitude, they imagined themselves free. The covenant promise to Abraham guaranteed him the lordship of the earth. How then could they regard themselves as in bondage, all the facts to the contrary notwithstanding? It was a foolish boast, the essence of deluded national and spiritual pride.”⁸⁵

33c There is a stronger bondage than simply suffering from a foreign occupation. There was the spiritual blindness and bondage to Satan, which the nation was suffering from but that no one could see or would acknowledge.

33d They were slaves who imagined themselves to be free. Pity the slave who is so blinded or deceived as to imagine himself to be free. Simply because the leash may be long does not mean you are free to come and go as you please. The unsaved man imagines himself to be free to do as he pleases, yet he is not aware that the devil is really holding his leash. Salvation is changing masters, from a bitter and evil master in the world, the flesh and the devil to a good and godly one in Jesus Christ. But we are never really totally free and sovereign. Only God is totally autonomous. We have liberty under law and freedom in Christ.

8:34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin.^{abcd}

34a All men serve something, or someone, either holiness or sin, or either God or Satan. Take your pick for you must serve one and you are serving one, but you cannot serve both (Matthew 6:24). This is the master of every unsaved man- sin. No man is his own master for he serves (willingly or unwillingly) God or Satan.

34b “Here is one thing which distinguishes the Christian from the non-Christian. The Christian sins, and sins daily; but the non-Christian does nothing but sin. The Christian sins, but he also repents; moreover, he does good works, and brings forth the fruit of the Spirit. But the life of the unregenerate man is one unbroken course of sin. Sin, we say, not crime. Water cannot rise above its own level. Being a sinner by nature, man is a sinner by practice, and cannot be anything else. A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit. A poisoned fountain cannot send forth sweet waters.”⁸⁶

34c The unsaved man imagines that to become a Christian is to give up all of his liberty and means to live in a miserable bondage to some puritanical slavery. The sinner imagines himself to be his own master, to be able to come and go as he pleases and to live his life as he desires. But he will realize that his imaginary freedom is really bondage to the world, the flesh and the devil, and that genuine freedom is found only through the new birth.

⁸⁵ John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, page 170.

⁸⁶ A. W. Pink, *The Gospel of John*.

34d "Most people like to defend their sinful ways with lame excuses such as; "I can take it or leave it.", "I can quit any time I want to." or, "I control it. It doesn't control me." "Not so!" says the Lord in verse thirty-five. "Not so!" echoes the Apostle Paul in Romans 6:14-16. Whether it is booze, drugs, pornography, smoking or any other common sin of the flesh, you are a slave to that sin. You are its servant and no amount of excusing or accusing is going to "make" you free. Whether or not the prison walls are still standing you are a prisoner of your own making and will not be made free until you submit yourself to the will of Christ and "continue in His word" as He stated in verse thirty-one.

"No. Your problem is not a "money-hungry preacher" who is just trying to make a profit off of you. It is not an unreasonable Christian who is asking more of you than you are capable of doing. It is you! It is your own lack of will-power to do right no matter what the cost. You fear the new life because of its uncertainties and possible consequences so you choose to remain safe within the confines of your former prison and steadfastly resist any attempt to "make" you free.

"It is almost humorous; the great number of people in our society who are bound by their sin who boldly claim their freedom. They follow every new style slavishly. Whether it was the "porkchop" sideburns of the 70's or the "manly earring" of the 90's. They cannot resist the call of their master. They cannot withstand the pressure placed on them by their friends and cohorts. They are slaves! They must serve their master. (Job 41:34)."⁸⁷

8:35 And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.^{abc}

35a A sinner is a servant of sin, a slave, not a son. Slaves have no rights, no benefits, no rewards. To serve sin for your whole life will profit you nothing. The master of that house, Satan, has no love or concern for you and he will cast you out and abandon you when your usefulness to him is at an end. But if you become a son of God, then He will never cast you out, but you will abide with Him forever in His house.

35b "Nor does a slave have any permanent standing in the master's house (8:35a). At any time he can be sold and hauled away to a worse captivity. This was the haunting horror of every slave in the south before emancipation. A change in the master's fortunes, a dislike taken to a slave, or an attractive offer from another slave owner could lead to a slave's sale. Marriage, children, personal preference, prayers, and supplications made no difference. A slave was a slave and had no rights, no status, no say in his fate. Such are all who are slaves of sin. In contrast with their slavery, Jesus set his sonship. He is the eternal one.

"**But the Son abideth ever**" (8:35b). We think of Isaac and Ishmael in the house of Abraham. Ishmael was the son of the bond woman, slave-born, with no lasting standing in Abraham's house. Isaac, by contrast, remained in the house and was his father's heir. A much greater than Isaac, Son of a much greater Father than Abraham, was now speaking. He would remain in the house forever. As for the Jews and their boast of freedom, even at that moment God was preparing to cast them out of the house into a bondage that would last for millennia."⁸⁸

35c "Then Jesus makes a veiled threat, but one which the listening Jews would well understand. The word slave reminds him that in any household there is a difference between the slave and the son. The son is a permanent dweller in the household, but the slave can be ejected at any time. In effect Jesus is saying to the Jews: "You think that you are sons in God's house and that nothing, therefore, can ever banish you from God. Have a care; by your conduct you are making yourselves slaves, and the slave can be ejected from the master's presence at any time." Here is a threat. It is a terrible thing to trade on

⁸⁷ Samuel Gipp, *A Practical and Theological Study of John*.

⁸⁸ John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, page 171.

the mercy of God--and that is what the Jews were doing. There is warning here for more than the Jews."⁸⁹

8:36 If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.^{abc}

36a The Son, not Allah (Moslems believe "Allah has no son"), any pope, any religion, any theological system or any other man- Jesus only. If you religion has no "son of God" then you cannot be free.

36b This freedom is liberty from the bondage of sin, the world, the flesh and the devil, and the freedom of liberty to live within the law and will of God (Romans 8:2 **"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death."**).

But this is not a liberty to live in sin. Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid! (Romans 6:1,15). Yet there are those who preach that you can live in sin as a Christian as you are not under law but under grace (Romans 6:14). One of the great promoters of this mentality was Gene Scott, who pastored the "University Cathedral" in Los Angeles. He was all over television and shortwave radio, preaching his twisted version of "grace". He had the mistaken idea that grace saved you and kept you but also allowed to you "live in sin" so that you could make that grace to abound. This is what allowed him to frolic with Playboy bunnies at his mansion while he gave his million-dollar horse show exhibitions. Scott would chomp on a cigar and cuss while he preached, while demanding that his followers "get on the telephone!" and check in, while sending him an offering. I actually heard one of Scott's disciples, E. C. Fulcher of Abingdon, Maryland, claim on the radio that now that he was saved by grace, he was going to "live it up" and get even more grace. Such attitudes are a blatant rejection of Pauline teachings, since neither Scott nor Fulcher could claim ignorance. Such men preach liberty while they themselves are in bondage (2 Peter 2:19 **"While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage."**).

36c It is freedom from the curse of the law (Galatians 3:10 **"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."**); from the guilt of sin (Romans 8:33 **"Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth."**); from the power of sin (Romans 6:14 **"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."**); from the fear of death (Hebrews 2:15 **"And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."**); and the fear of man (Acts 4:18-20 **"And they called them, and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."**).

8:37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me,^a because my word hath no place in you.

37a Would Abraham try to kill a man who spoke truth (John 8:40)?

8:38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.^a

⁸⁹ William Barclay, *John* in The Daily Study Bible.

38a We will speak of those things that we hear of our fathers. Sinners speak of Satan, Christians speak of God.

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

39a Biologically, yes. Spiritually, no. You can be a "seed of Abraham" and still murder the Son of God, all in Abraham's name! And many who are of the "seed of Abraham" will end up in the lake of fire if they do not believe in Christ.

"They which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham" (Galatians 3:7). It is fruit, not family that determines this. The spiritual children of Abraham show their faith by their works, as he did. Abraham believed God, and his faith was evidenced by his works when he "went out not knowing whither he went," and when he offered up his son Isaac. Those who are the true children of the "Father of the faithful" will do works worthy of their Father. Works of faith are the infallible proofs of a true spiritual descent.

39b "Abraham is our father Exactly what all Moslems profess—as did Mohammed. So what? You can be one of "Abraham's children" and believe in and practice fornication, idolatry, assassinations, polygamy, slavery, and covenant breaking (1 Kings—2 Kings). Further—Mohammed and his 600-winged angel missed this one!—you can be cast into "outer darkness" (see Matt. 8:11–12) even when you come from ISAAC! If you come from ISHMAEL (as Mohammed did), you are not even called a "child of Abraham" (John 8:53, 56)."⁹⁰

39c "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham." Here was and still is the decisive test. Natural descent counts for nothing, it is a spiritual relationship with God which is the test. **"By their fruits ye shall know them** (Matthew 7:16-20)." The profession of our lips amounts to nothing at all if it be not confirmed by the character of our lives. Talk is cheap; it is our works, what we do, which evidences what we really are. A tree is known by its fruits. The "works of Abraham" were works of faith and obedience—faith in God and submission to His Word. But His Word had "no place in them."

39d They claimed to know Abraham but would Abraham claim to know them?

8:40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.^a

40a Did Abraham try to kill someone who told him the truth? Of course not. If these Pharisees were truly of Abraham, they would have sat and listened humbly to the things Jesus was telling them. They claimed to be the seed of Abraham, yet they were doing things that Abraham would never do and they were not doing the things that he would have done.

8:41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication;^a we have one Father, even God.^b

41a This is another insult, where they were calling Jesus a bastard.

41b ""We have one Father, even God." How this same claim is being made on every side today! Those in far-distant lands may be heathen; but America is a Christian country. Such is the view which is held

⁹⁰ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, page 277.

by the great majority of church members. The universal Fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man are the favorite dogmas of Christendom: "We have one Father, even God" is the belief and boast of the great religious masses. How this justifies our opening remark, that the passage before us is not to be limited to a conversation which took place nineteen hundred years ago, but also contains a representation of human nature as it exists today, manifesting the same spirit of self-righteousness, appealing to the same false ground of confidence, and displaying the same enmity against the Christ of God."⁹¹

8:42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me:^a for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.^b

42a This is a test of salvation. No one who attacks Christ, blasphemes Him or slanders Him is saved.

42b If you loved the Father, then you would love Christ, who was sent by the Father. To hate Christ is to also hate Him who sent Christ. To call God Father, and ignore the Son is to insult both Father and Son. The evidence of our sonship with God is love to His Son. If God is our Father in a true, practical sense, we will not only supremely love the Lord Jesus Christ, but we will also love every child of God, for "**Every one that loveth Him that begat, loveth Him also that is begotten of Him**" (1 John 5:1).

8:43 Why do ye not understand my speech?^a even because ye cannot hear my word.^b

43a "Why do ye not understand my speech?"

1. "Well, you see, Lord, it is too archaic. It isn't clear, and we need a better, clearer translation" (Isa. 29:11–12).⁹²

2. "Well, you see, Lord, I never studied Greek, so I cannot find the real "intent" of the "original author."

3. "Because your speech pictured the 'social milieu' in which you moved and you often 'accommodated' your language to the myths and superstitions of that time."

4. "We can always understand, as long as it is not 'counter-productive' and offensive. What we cannot understand is why you talk so viciously (Matt. 23:24–25) and rudely (Matt. 23:33) and are so denunciatory (John 8:40–45) and "judgmental" (John 9:41) in your discriminatory tirades (Matt. 25:41) against US!"⁹³

5. Also, because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God as they are spiritual and these unsaved men care carnal (1 Corinthians 2:14). Regardless of your spirituality, IQ, education or morality, you cannot understand the things of God as revealed and preserved in the Bible without the indwelling and enlightenment of the Holy Spirit. You can know certain basic truths, like Noah built an ark, but your level of spiritual understanding will not be able to progress and further or deeper. Since they could not hear and understand, they would not be able to obey.

A. The natural man thinks it is foolish.

B. They are in a different language. The truth of God is spiritual, the natural man thinks naturally.

C. God and fallen man are on different frequencies that are not compatible.

D. Education and intelligence and human wisdom are of no help in understanding and

⁹¹ A. W. Pink, *The Gospel of John*.

⁹² The problem with modern translations is that are often wordier than the Authorized Version and use more difficult language.

⁹³ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, page 279.

accepting divine truth.

- i. The Lord was speaking in simple terms to express simple truths, yet they still could not understand, as in John 3 with Nicodemus and in John 6.

E. God closed their minds in judgment.

- i. Isaiah 44:18 **"They have not known nor understood: for he hath shut their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts, that they cannot understand."**
- ii. John 12:39,40 **"Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them."**

F. Their ears were uncircumcised.

- i. Jeremiah 6:10 **"To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it."**

6. Spiritual truth is only received and understood by:

A. Faith

B. Humility, which includes having a teachable spirit

C. Obedience

- i. John 7:17 **"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."**

D. Willingness to learn and accept the truth.

43b These religious leaders understood Christ's talk enough to be angered by it, but they could understand the truths Christ was trying to describe. See the end of John 6 for an example of this. This is a main theme of John's gospel, in that His teachings were mainly misunderstood.

8:44^a Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

44a The Lord gives a summary of Satanology here, a description of the **"God of this World"** (2 Corinthians 4:4).

1. **"Ye are of your father the devil"** Every man has a spiritual father, either God or Satan. No man is a spiritual orphan. Every unsaved man (no matter how spiritual or moral) has Satan as his father. Every Christian has God as his father.

A. Satan has children as God has children.

B. You have the temper, disposition, or spirit of the devil. You are influenced by him, you imitate him, and ought therefore to be called his children.

C. These religious leaders claimed to be children of Abraham, but Christ accused them of being just the opposite.

- i. John 8:39,53 **"They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.... Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?"**

D. Under those conditions, wouldn't you prefer to be an orphan?

2. **"the lusts of your father ye will do"** You will act as your father as like begets like. Children of Satan inherit the fallen nature of their father. Those born of God inherit the new, divine nature of God at the new birth.

A. An evil tree cannot bring forth good fruit.

i. Matthew 7:17,18 **“Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.”**

B. Satan and his children lust for the things of sin, the word and the flesh.

3. **“He was a murderer from the beginning”** There was always sin to be found in Satan. One of these sins was murder. He is not only a murderer of bodies (such as Cain) but also a murderer of souls in damning them.

A. Death came through sin and sin came by Satan.

B. By enabling the fall of Adam and Eve, they became subject to death.

C. A man with murder in his heart is of his father the devil. These religious leaders wanted to murder Christ, hence showing they were of Satan.

4. **“abode not in the truth...there is no truth in him”** Since truth is of God, Satan has no use for truth. He has his own truth but they are all built on lies and falsehoods.

A. Satan knows the truth as he was exposed to it, but he simply rejects it and will have nothing to do with it.

5. **He is a liar and the father of lies.** He cannot tell the truth but can only lie and deceive. Everything he tells a fallen man or a Christian through a temptation is a lie. Even if he does tell a truth, he twists it around so much that it becomes unrecognizable as truth. You can see how Satan operates in this in his temptations of the Lord in Matthew 4.

6. Satan is the “God” who runs and controls the United Nations, along with every government on earth, all the major news and media outlets and all political parties plus entertainment outlets and art and music forms and the vast majority of education outlets and not a few churches.

8:45 And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not.^a

45a Liars believe that everyone else is a liar, too. They would not believe Christ as they believed Him to be lying.

8:46 Which of you convinceth me of sin?^{ab} And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

46a Christ lays down the challenge. These men had been watching Him like a hawk for three years and had a spy network to record everything He said and everything He did. Yet when challenged, they came up with absolutely nothing. Even at His trial, they had to buy off false witnesses to even make their thin charge of blasphemy stick.

This then speaks of the absolute sinless of Christ. If He is God, then He must be sinless else He could not be God.

46b To present evidence that was beyond any shadow of doubt that Christ was a sinner. It would take no effort at all to convince an honest witness that we are sinners, but no man was able to prove or provide evidence that Jesus sinned even once,

8:47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.^a

47a Believers hear, receive, understand and accept the words of Christ because they are of God and are able to hear and understand His words. The unsaved man is exactly the opposite.

8:48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan,^a and hast a devil?^{bc}

48a This was worse than being called a Gentile dog.

48b “You’re crazy, insane and possessed by Satan”. They accused Him of being deranged or insane.

48c The Authorized Version never uses “demon” but always “a devil” for an unclean spirit. Even the English Revised Version of 1881 has “devil” as do all the pre-Authorized Version translations. Then modern translations use “demon” and most commentaries use “demon”. Using “devil” apparently fell out of favor and usage around the turn of the 20th century, being replaced with a less-accurate word “demon”. “Demon” is now almost universally used for “devil” and I even have to catch myself as I sometimes use “demon” for “devil” out of habit.

8:49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil;^a but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.^b

49a But His critics clearly did! Jesus ignores the “Samaritan” slur but He does react against the slander that He was possessed or control by Satan.

49b You cannot honor the Father if you dishonor the Son.

8:50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

8:51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.^{ab}

51a The second death, spiritual death. A man who believes will obviously die physically but he will still live forever. The Lord deliberately threw this curveball at them, knowing they would whiff at it and not understand it. He was deliberately “stirring the pot” as He did in John 6. The Lord is not going to back off from declaring spiritual truths simply because many won’t understand it or a few would be offended by it.

51b Notice the wording, “never SEE death” not “never die”. We will all die physically because we are all sinners. But to “see” death (not to “experience” death) is something else. The Christian will never see death in its full ugliness and horror as he will never experience the second death. David said that he is only going to see the “shadow” of death in Psalm 23:4 (“**Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.**”), although he may “taste it” (Hebrews 2:9 “**But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.**”).

8:52 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know^a that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.^{bc}

52a This is in the Greek perfect tense. They were now convinced beyond any doubt in their own mind that Jesus was a blasphemer and was crazy.

52b They took the bait. On the surface, their response seemed logical. Jesus was comparing himself to Abraham, yet Abraham died, so Christ just contradicted Himself, or so it seemed. Luke 16:23 shows that Abraham was very much alive in the Paradise side of Hades, but we don't know if Christ's use of Abraham was widely known at this time.

52c They misquoted Jesus. He said nothing about not "tasting" death in 8:51 but not "seeing" death. Beware for the enemies of the gospel will always twist and misquote your words, to try to tangle you in your talk.

8:53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead:^a whom makest thou thyself?^b

53a Yes, to both questions. But they expected Jesus to back down and not to make such a bold claim. Instead, He doubles down on his claim in John 8:58.

53b The very Son of God.

8:54 Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me;^a of whom ye say, that he is your God:

54a This is the only honor that really counts for anything or that has any real value.

8:55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you:^a but I know him, and keep his saying.

55a They were lying because they claimed to know God (and that He knew, or acknowledged them) when in reality, they really had no knowledge of God on a personal level. They had no communion or walk with God.

8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day:^a and he saw it, and was glad.

56a Abraham saw Christ's day in in type in Genesis 22:13,14 ("**And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovahjireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen.**"). Abraham believed in a resurrection (see his words in Genesis 22:5 "**And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you.**"), and we see his joy when "God provided himself" a lamb (Genesis 22:8 "**And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.**") so he didn't have to actually kill Isaac. Abraham saw the substitutionary atonement there.

8:57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?^a

57a Oh yes He did. Christ talked to him numerous times and "saw" him continually and may have even had dinner with Abraham in Genesis 18.

8:58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily,^a I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.^{bcdefg}

58a The notice that a great spiritual truth was to follow. What could be greater than for Christ to declare His deity? He does it here, asserts in no uncertain terms that He was God and thus sets the die. The Jews must do one of two things: believe Him or kill Him for blasphemy. There is no neutrality. The Lord forces us to choose. To claim that you are agnostic or if you refuse to choose, you reject Christ by default.

58b The "I AM" of Exodus 3:14, a clear and unmistakable declaration of deity and the Jews knew it, which is why they wanted to kill Him in the next verse. Everyone present knew EXACTLY what Jesus was claiming. These stupid liberals who say that Jesus never claimed to be God are ignorant fools and are lost. If He was not claiming to be God, then why did they try to stone Him in verse 59 and why was the charge that got Him killed blasphemy?

This shows the pre-existence of Christ as well as His goings forth were from "everlasting" in Micah 2. John would say that Christ existed even before Genesis 1:1 (John 1:1).

58c Other uses of "I AM" to show deity:

1. Exodus 3:14 **"And God said to Moses, I AM THAT I AM. And he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel: I AM hath sent me unto you."**
2. Isaiah 44:6 **"Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, Jehovah of hosts: I am the first, and I am the last, and beside me there is no God."**
3. Luke 21:8 **"Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them."**
 - A. "Christ" is italicized, which means these false teachers are claiming to be "I AM" or claiming to be God.
4. John 8:24 **"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."**
5. John 18:5,6 **"They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground."**

58d God is:

1. By Himself
2. In Himself
3. Through Himself
4. For Himself
5. This reveals the self-sufficiency of God. He is the only Being in the universe who is totally self-sufficient and self-sustaining, who needs no one else and nothing else for His existence and needs. When Jesus says "I am," His persecutors fall backward (John 18:6 **"As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground."**) under the power of that name. When the Pharisees heard Him say "I am" (John 8:58 **"Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am."**), they knew what He was claiming.

58e In the face of this claim, you can either:

1. Accept it and be saved
2. Reject it and be lost
3. Ignore it, which is the same as rejecting Christ's claim, with the same result.

58f In the light of this claim, you must conclude that:

1. Jesus is Lord. His claim to be God is true,
2. Jesus is a lunatic. He was crazy and He did indeed have a devil.
3. He is a liar. Nothing He said true, which means all of the Bible is a lie.

Pick one. You must pick one of these three options. There are no other options.

58g "I AM" is the English rendering of the Tetragrammaton. It is the four Hebrew letters JHVH that represent the name of God. It is so revered that a Jew will not speak it. Hebrew scribes are known to have stopped when they came to it while copying a manuscript, taken a bath, changed clothes and then returned to reproduce this one sacred word, only to throw away the pen they used following the procedure.

8:59 Then took they up stones to cast at him:^a but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.^{bc}

59a "It is significant that this section begins with Jesus defending a woman with the words, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her" (John 8:7) and ends with the enraged Jewish leaders actually picking up stones to hurl at him, to give him the death from which he had saved the woman."⁹⁴

59b A supernatural escape.

59c "They had asked question after question, not wanting answers, but only to argue: "Where is thy Father?" (8:19), "Who art thou?" (8:25), "Will he kill himself?" (8:22), "Whom makest thou thyself?" (8:53). They had called him a liar (8:13), an illegitimate son (8:41), a Samaritan (8:48), a demoniac (8:48, 52). Finally, they had taken up stones to make an end of him (8:59). And who were they? The world has forgotten their names; not a single one is recorded."⁹⁵

⁹⁴ John Phillips, *Exploring John*, page 181.

⁹⁵ John Phillips, *Exploring John*, page 182.

John Chapter 9

This chapter is one of the most unusual chapters in the Bible when one considers the Lord's sense of "balance" (Prov. 11:1, 20:23). It is a peculiarity of God's nature, if one is a "modern man" trying to analyze God, because He seems to be "off balance" if weighed in the scales of science, religion, philosophy, and intellectuality. The Lord, here, takes time out to devote forty-one verses to His Son's dealing with one sinner back in A.D. 33. He does this after allotting thirty-one verses to the creation of the universe (Gen. 1)... God took more time to tell you about an adulteress woman (John 4—twenty-eight verses) than He did to describe a New Birth that would keep you out of Hell.⁹⁶

Fallen man is trapped in his spiritual blindness than no man, nor the world, can remedy. Blindness is a terrible thing as it means you are helpless as you cannot see where you are going and are unaware of your surroundings. But Christ, in His infinite love and mercy, is ready, willing and able to cure any blind sinner.

Jesus healed other blind people in His ministry (Matthew 9:30 **"And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it."**; Mark 10:52 **"And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way."**; Luke 7:21,22 **"And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many that were blind he gave sight. Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached."**) so this wasn't a unique miracle, but John uses this incident as an object lesson about the blindness of the dead Jewish religion of the day.

49. The Healing of the Blind Man 9:1-41

9:1 And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth.^a

1a This blind man is a good type of an unsaved man:

1. The sinner is blind spiritually from his birth as he is born in sin. He cannot see or understand any spiritual truth.
2. His understanding is darkened and his heart is blinded.
 - A. Ephesians 4:18 **"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:"**
3. He cannot "see" the kingdom of heaven. The natural man is spiritually blind and cannot see spiritual truth.
 - A. John 3:3 **"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."**
4. Because of his spiritual blindness, the sinner cannot see the awfulness of his condition: he cannot see his imminent danger: he cannot see his need of a Savior.
 - A. This is why many sinners have no interest in spiritual things.

⁹⁶ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, page 296.

- B. You would think that a blind man would jump at any chance to regain his sight but that is not the case spiritually.
5. The natural man is a transgressor from the womb, shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin. He is in darkness and needs light, but he cannot cure himself of his blindness.
- A. Isaiah 48:8 **"Yea, thou heardest not; yea, thou knewest not; yea, from that time that thine ear was not opened: for I knew that thou wouldest deal very treacherously, and wast called a transgressor from the womb."**
- B. Psalm 51:5 **"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."**
6. He needs a saviour who can do the miracle in opening his eyes through the new birth.
- A. Psalm 146:8 **"The LORD openeth the eyes of the blind:"**
7. It takes a miracle to open blind eyes. The new birth is the greatest miracle of them all, to change the hardest thing in the universe, the human heart, and to turn it from darkness to light. This is why the power of God is required in conversion.
8. This man paid a heavy price for confessing Christ. His parents gave him little support. He ended up being excommunicated from the synagogue and was forced to go "outside the camp".
- A. Hebrews 13:13 **"Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach."**

9:2 And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?^{abc}

2a This was a rather cruel question. Being blind from birth was bad enough but now this question heaped coals of fire on the head on this man. He had been told all of his life that he was a sinner, a vile sinner, who sinned a sin so bad that God was punishing him with blindness. But how could that be? He was born that way, so what sin could he have committed? A sin he committed before he was born? Some rabbis thought an unborn child could sin in the womb. They took the Greek idea and adopted the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul.

There is a hint of a belief in some sort of reincarnation here. Maybe this man sinned in a previous life and is being punished for it in this life. The Buddhist would agree with this and those who would hold to some belief in "karma", that sins done in a previous life would be punished in the next.

Or did his parents sin? It was bad enough that their son had been blind all of their life, and they probably blamed themselves for his condition.

It was a common idea that situations like this was a result of the judgment of God instead of the providence of God. We always assume that when someone is suffering that it must be because they have unconfessed or unrepented sin or that God is angry with them for some reason. The reason is usually something else, something deeper. Was God angry at Job when he allowed Satan to kill his children and destroy his health, wealth and marriage? Job's three friends assumed it. Was God angry at Paul in Acts 9:16 when He said to Ananias "I will show him what great things he must suffer FOR MY NAME'S SAKE?" "Bad things happen to good people" in the providence of God so that His glory can be manifested in that situation, either by a healing or by God giving grace to the sufferer who is magnifying God in their crucible.

Everyone had forgotten these words from Ezekiel 18:19,20, **"Yet say ye, Why? doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father? When the son hath done that which is lawful and right, and hath kept all my statutes, and hath done them, he shall surely live. The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."** Every man suffers for and is judged for his own sin, not the sin of his parents. I will be judged for my own sins, not the sins of my parents, and my children will be judged for their own sins,

not for my sins.

9b After leprosy, nothing was as bad a blindness to the Jewish mind, as the medical science of that day had no treatment or cure for either condition.

9c “Doubtless many people questioned the goodness of God in the face of this man’s congenital disability. On the surface of things, he seemed condemned to a life of blindness and beggary, robbed of much that adds ease and pleasure to life. Arguing from his blindness they could build a case for agnosticism, atheism, even for those blasphemous tirades against God heard at times on university campuses and among people who consider themselves to be intellectuals. The answer to all such bitter philosophies is to be found in the book of Job, and is further illustrated by the case of this blind man. In the book of Job, we find Job, his wife, and his friends debating the calamities that had overtaken Job—and all of them were wrong because all were arguing from incomplete data. This man’s blindness was the touch of God in his life—not punitive, not arbitrary. It was part of a plan unknown to anyone but God and his Christ, a plan intended to bring Christ into this man’s life and ultimate praise and glory to God.”⁹⁷

9:3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.^{ab}

3a This was not the result of a judgment but part of the providence of God that He might be glorified in this man. Many faith-healers claim that God isn’t glorified in sickness and suffering but Jesus proves them all wrong here.

3b Of course both the man and his parents were sinners and did sin, but Christ said that condition of the blind man was not caused by any specific sin committed either by him or his parents.

9:4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.^{ab}

4a When night falls, work ends. We are to work for Christ in our day as long as we are able to and as long as we have liberty to. The day of liberty is fast fading. Soon, we will not be able to witness, plant churches, send missionaries or keep them on the field, or even have public services. What will you do in that day? Do all you can today. **“Today if ye will hear his voice harden not your hearts”** (Hebrews 3:15). **“Behold now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation”** (2 Corinthians 6:2). Take advantage of all opportunities that you have now. Work now while you have the time, strength and liberty to do so.

There was a time when China was open to missionaries, until the Communists took over in 1949. Japan was wide open after World War II and Douglas MacArthur pled for ten thousand missionaries, saying the Japanese people were disillusioned in their nation religion of Shinto after their defeat, but the Western church lingered too long, and the door eventually closed. We stand in a similar position now, with the cultural pressures, political pressures and apostasies of the institutional church combining to shut out genuine gospel preaching. How much longer do we have until the rapture ends our ministries? We must redeem what little time we have left because the days are evil...and short.

1. Ephesians 5:16 **“Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”**

2. Colossians 4:5 **“Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time.”**

⁹⁷ John Phillips, *Exploring John*, page 183.

4b Jesus knew His time was running short before His arrest and crucifixion and He still had much to do and teach to His disciples. The material He gave in John 13- 17 may have been given in a sense of urgency as those would be His last words and teachings to His disciples.

9:5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.^a

5a This is discussed under John 8:12. Even after He left the world, Christ is the Light, but now He shines through the Church and individual Christians.

9:6^a When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,^{bcd}

6a There is no mention of the man asking to be healed, but why would he have to ask? He was brought to Jesus and so now Jesus must heal him to prove His point about why he was born blind.

6b "Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown (commentators), just as blind as a bat backing up in broad daylight, remarks, "It is absurd to IMAGINE" that the clay and spit had anything to do with "the effect that followed." Like all 300 blind, Bible-correcting scholars before them, they forgot that when God made man out of the "dust of the ground" it was covered with water ("a mist...watered the whole face of the ground," Gen. 2:6-7). Adam's name was "mud." He came from a CLAY mud ball made UNDERGROUND (Psa. 139:15) where "gold...dust" (Job 22:24) was found (Gen. 2:11-12)."⁹⁸

6c Why did Christ do this? He could have just spoke the word and healed this man. Instead, He used process. He did certain things to bring about the healing. He can use crises (heal in an instant) and He can use process, as He does here.

6d "This is one of two miracles in which Jesus is said to have used spittle to effect a cure. The other is the miracle of the deaf stammerer (Mk.7:33). The use of spittle seems to us strange and repulsive and unhygienic; but in the ancient world it was quite common. Spittle, and especially the spittle of some distinguished person, was believed to possess certain curative qualities. Tacitus tells how, when Vespasian visited Alexandria, there came to him two men, one with diseased eyes and one with a diseased hand, who said that they had been advised by their god to come to him. The man with the diseased eyes wished Vespasian "to moisten his eye-balls with spittle"; the man with the diseased hand wished Vespasian "to trample on his hand with the sole of his foot." Vespasian was very unwilling to do so but was finally persuaded to do as the men asked. "The hand immediately recovered its power; the blind man saw once more. Both facts are attested to this day, when falsehood can bring no reward, by those who were present on the occasion" (Tacitus, *Histories* 4: 8 1). Pliny, the famous Roman collector of what was then called scientific information, has a whole chapter on the use of spittle. He says that it is a sovereign preservative against the poison of serpents; a protection against epilepsy; that lichens and leprous spots can be cured by the application of fasting spittle; that ophthalmia can be cured by anointing the eyes every morning with fasting spittle; that carcinomata and crick in the neck can be cured by the use of spittle. Spittle was held to be very effective in averting the evil eye. Perseus tells how the aunt or the grandmother, who fears the gods and is skilled in averting the evil eye, will lift the baby from his cradle and "with her middle finger apply the lustrous spittle to his forehead and slobbering lips."

"The use of spittle was very common in the ancient world. To this day, if we burn a finger our first instinct is to put it into our mouth; and there are many who believe that warts can be cured by licking

⁹⁸ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, page 298.

them with fasting spittle. The fact is that Jesus took the methods and customs of his time and used them. He was a wise physician; he had to gain the confidence of his patient. It was not that he believed in these things, but he kindled expectation by doing what the patient would expect a doctor to do. After all, to this day the efficacy of any medicine or treatment depends at least as much on the patient's faith in it as in the treatment or the drug itself."⁹⁹

9:7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.)^a He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

7a This pool is found in Isaiah 8:6 (spelled "Shiloah").

9:8 The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?^a

8a When a man receives his sight through the new birth, there is no way it can be hidden and everyone will notice it.

9:9 Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he.^a

9a He does not try to hide His identity. He has nothing to be ashamed or embarrassed of.

"Ashamed of Jesus" by Charles Gabriel

Ashamed of Jesus! Can it be?
A mortal man ashamed of thee!
Scorned be the thought, by rich and poor,
Oh, may I scorn it more and more.

Ashamed of Jesus! sooner far
May morning blush to own its star;
The glow-worm scorn the cloudless moon,
Or midnight be ashamed of noon.

Ashamed of Jesus! of that Friend
On whom my hopes of heaven depend

No, when I blush, be this my shame
That I no more revere his name.

Ashamed of Jesus! Yes, I may
When I've no sins to wash away;
No tears to wipe, no joys to crave,
And no immortal soul to save.

Till then — nor is the boasting vain —
Till then, I'll boast a Saviour slain;
And Oh! may this my glory be,
That he is not ashamed of me.

9:10 Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

9:11 He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.^a

11a "The blind man's testimony is so straight forward and simple no one could possibly misunderstand it or misinterpret it. "Go...wash...I went...washed...I received sight" (vs. 11). Thus any real Christian's testimony is easily understood by anyone with an IQ of 80. "I was a sinner. I accepted Jesus Christ as my Saviour. I trusted His death on the cross to take away my sins. I asked Him for salvation and He

⁹⁹ William Barclay, *John* in The Daily Study Bible.

saved me. I now have eternal life as a gift from Him.”¹⁰⁰

9:12 Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.^a

12a If an unsaved person were to ask this question of a Christian, he should never answer “I don’t know”. Part of being a witness of Christ is being able to point people to Christ, which involves that we know where He is.

9:13 They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.^a

13a I’m not sure why they brought the man to the Pharisees unless it was because Jesus was involved, and He was on their “most wanted list”.

9:14 And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.^a

14a This would be the major issue. The Lord went out of His way to violate their misguided and legalistic views of the Sabbath every chance He got.

9:15 Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight.^a He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

15a The reason why they keep asking the man what happened was in the hopes that he would eventually contradict himself, this invalidating his testimony. But he remains as steady as a rock through his interrogation.

9:16 Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day.^a Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.^b

16a Jesus DID keep the Sabbath correctly. He had a greater understanding of it than all of these religious leaders combined. It was them that violated it weekly with their extreme legalism. The Lord had put the Pharisees into an impossible position. He healed the blind man while deliberately violating the sabbath restricts created by the Pharisees. How could the Pharisees deny that Jesus was of God despite His opposition to Him?

16b Jesus is always causing division. He is a divider, not a uniter.

9:17 They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.^{ab}

17a “‘Mohammed” was Allah’s prophet (the Koran). Poor ol’ Allah got dealt a “short hand” when it came to picking “prophets.” He must have been pretty stupid to pick an epileptic, fornicating polygamist who was unable (in more than fifty years) to make one historical prophecy to anyone that he didn’t borrow from the Old Testament. Jesus Christ makes more than fifty historical prophecies in ten chapters. The Koran was unable to record one in 114 chapters.”¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, page 299.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., page 302.

17a This man was far ahead in his understanding of who Christ was than were the “learned Reverend doctors” in John 8. They never grasped this and never acknowledged Christ, but this simple, uneducated man did not hesitate for a minute to confess Christ, although it cost him.

9:18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.

9:19 And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind?^a how then doth he now see?

19a The Jews may have been trying to get the parents to admit that their son had not been born blind, as he had claimed, but that tactic failed in John 9:20.

9:20 His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

9:21 But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not:^a he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.^a

21a The testimony of the agnostic, “we don’t know and we can’t know!” They also don’t want to know because they then become responsible for that knowledge. They imagine that ignorance will save them from being judged on that knowledge. They are afraid to know because they would hit unpleasant truth and as a result, they would become accountable to it. They imagine that if they stay willingly ignorant of what God said, then they can’t be held accountable to that truth. But as the state trooper will tell you when you are pulled over for speeding, “Ignorance is no excuse of the law!”

9:22 These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.^{ab}

22a His parents couldn’t have added anything to the narrative as they weren’t there when Jesus healed their son. All they could do was verify his identity.

22b This would happen to their son in John 9:34. Organized religion and its leaders can be very intimidating.

9:23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.^a

23a Every man must stand on his own and confess Christ personally. Your parents cannot help you in this duty.

9:24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise:^a we know that this man is a sinner.

24a Giving God the praise was the last thing on their minds!

9:25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.^{ab}

25a You can debate until the cows come home but you cannot deny the results- a blind man was standing before you and now he can see, because of Jesus.

25b This is the salvation testimony of countless Christians. We were spiritually blind from our birth but now we see through our new birth.

9:26 Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

9:27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will ye also be his disciples?

9:28 Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.^a

28a Moses would disagree with that statement. You can be both a disciple of Moses and Jesus since Moses, in the grand scheme of things, was a disciple of Jesus.

9:29 We know that God spake unto Moses: as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is.^a

29a Jesus came from God, of course, although they would never acknowledge that.

9:30 The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.^a

30a He is mocking their spirituality and education. They had all this learning and were supposedly so spiritual, yet they couldn't handle the obvious truth that was right before their eyes. But this uneducated "hick" could see it and understand it. He had lost all fear and respect for these religious leaders as he got closer to Jesus.

9:31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.^a

31a This "young convert" is already light years ahead of the "learned reverend doctors" when it comes to basic doctrine:

1. If a man worships God correctly, God hears him and will use him.
2. If any man "doeth his will" (see John 7:17), He hears him.
3. If Jesus Christ was not a prophet of God, then He couldn't heal anybody.
 - A. We know Mohammad was a fraud because he couldn't save a sick horse.
4. How does any "sinner" open the eyes of a man born blind if a "sinner" is a real wicked person?
5. "If this man were not of God, he could do nothing" (John 9:33).

9:32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.^a

32a There is no recorded healing of a blind person in the Old Testament. There are records of people being stricken with blindness in the Old Testament.

1. Genesis 19:11 **"And they smote the men that were at the door of the house with blindness, both small and great: so that they wearied themselves to find the door."**

2. 2 Kings 6:18 **"And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness according to the word of Elisha."**

9:33 If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.

9:34 They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins,^a and dost thou teach us?^b And they cast him out.^{cde}

34a By implication, they meant "...and we weren't!" This man was a sinner because he had been born blind, so he had no authority lecturing the Pharisees.

34b Oh how arrogant hypocrites HATE to be lectured to or be shown-up. They hate to be corrected or publicly challenged.

34c He was thrown out of the synagogue. He was forced to **"outside the camp"** (Hebrews 13:13) by his confession of Christ. He may have lost his religion, but he gained eternal life and Christ. That is a good deal.

34d "In their rage "they cast him out." They excommunicated him from the synagogue, cut him off from the religious life of the nation, made him a pariah, a spiritual leper, to be avoided by one and all who did not want to share his fate. What that would mean to the man socially as well as spiritually can be appreciated only by those brought up in a tight religious community from earliest days, used to the comfort of religion, the compassion of the faithful, and the sense of community, of belonging, that such an association brings. Excommunication meant that no one would employ him. His family would disown him. He could have no part in the religious services of the synagogue or in the ritual worship of the temple. Anyone caught helping him would be exposing himself to a similar fate."¹⁰²

34e "There were two kinds of excommunication. There was the ban, the cherem, by which a man was banished from the synagogue for life. In such a case he was publicly anathematized. He was cursed in the presence of the people, and he was cut off from God and from man. There was sentence of temporary excommunication which might last for a month, or for some other fixed period. The terror of such a situation was that a Jew would regard it as shutting him out, not only from the synagogue but from God. That is why the man's parents answered that their son was quite old enough to be a legal witness and to answer his own questions."¹⁰³

9:35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?^{ab}

¹⁰² John Phillips, *Exploring John*.

¹⁰³ William Barclay, *John* in The Daily Study Bible.

AV

ESV

LSV

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, **Dost thou believe on the Son of God?**

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out, and having found him he said, **"Do you believe in the Son of Man?"**

35 Jesus heard that they had put him out, and after finding him, He said, **"Do you believe in the Son of Man?"**

35a **"on the Son of God"** is missing from modern translations. They translated it as "Son of Man." Modern translations demote Jesus in this verse. Jesus here is directly claiming to be God.

35b "Dost thou believe...?" In what? Or on whom? This becomes an open- ended question without an object. Faith must always have an object. You cannot have faith "in faith" but this is exactly how many weak religionists believe today.

9:36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord,^a that I might believe on him?

36a Note the use of "Lord". He at least recognized Jesus as a prophet at this point, and as God in John 9:38.

9:37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.^a

37a Jesus identifies Himself as the Son of God and the object of the question in John 9:35. Remove the phrase in John 9:35 and you have the man believing on Jesus but not on Jesus as the Son of God.

9:38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.^a

38a The man now takes the final step in recognizing the deity of Christ by worshipping Him, and Christ accepts this worship.

9:39 And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind.

9:40 And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?

9:41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.^a

9:41 They claimed to be sinless in John 9:34 but Jesus accuses them of sin. But they were unable to accuse Him of sin in John 8:46. Those who imagined themselves to be enlightened were really blind. These religious leaders thought they were so holy, so noble and sinless, showing they were spiritually blind.

John Chapter 10

50. The Good Shepherd 10:1-18

10:1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He^a that entereth not by the door^b into the sheepfold,^c but climbeth up some other way,^{de} the same is a thief^f and a robber.^g

1a This is a thief, a robber, a false teacher, a deceiver, and Satan.

1b Jesus identifies Himself as the "door" in John 10:9. Christ is the way to truth, eternal life, salvation and heaven. Satan offers many other doors that all lead to perdition and these false teachers will try and offer any and every other way except the Right Door.

1c The Church, where the saints abide. Doctrinally it refers to saved Jews in the tribulation but devotionally, it can refer to Christians.

1d Satan tried this in Isaiah 14 and in Ezekiel 28.

1e "Climbing up" reveals a lot of unnecessary effort to enter an area. It is always easier to walk through a door than to climb in a window, Salvation is clear and easy. Isaiah 35:8 says "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Yet false teachers make it so hard. They expend so much energy to lead souls astray and make salvation for their followers so difficult.

1f He steals truth and souls. The Greek word is "kleptes" (Strong's #2813), where we get our word "kleptomaniac".

1g He robs these souls of truth and any possibility of salvation.

10:2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.^{abc}

2a This person does all things lawfully by the law and truth of God. He is a true preacher and is a genuine shepherd of God's flock.

2b "Under the Mosaic economy a sheep was one of the few clean animals: as such it suitably represents God's people, each of which has been cleansed from all sin. A sheep is a harmless animal: even children will approach them without fear. So God's people are exhorted to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves" (Matthew 10:16). Sheep are helpless: nature has endowed them neither with weapons of attack nor defense. Equally helpless is the believer in himself: "without me, says Christ, ye can do nothing. Sheep are gentle: what so tame and tractable as a lamb! This is ever a grace which ought to distinguish the followers of Christ: "gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits" (James 3:17). The sheep are entirely dependent upon the shepherd This is noticeably the case in the Orient. Not only must the sheep look to the shepherd for protection against wild animals, but he must lead them to the pastures. May we be cast back more and more upon God. Sheep are preeminently characterized by a proneness to wander. Even when placed in a field with a fence all around it, yet if there be a gap anywhere, they will quickly get out and stray. Alas, that this is so true of us. Urgently do we all need to heed that admonition, "Watch and pray lest ye enter into temptation." A sheep is a useful animal. Each year it supplies a crop of wool. In this too it prefigures the Christian. The daily attitude of

the believer should be, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do?"¹⁰⁴

2c Marks of a good pastor:

1. Personal knowledge: no stranger to God or gospel experiences (John 10:5; 2 Cor 5:17; John 3:5; Gal 5:16-26; 1 Cor. 12)
2. Divine call: not from avarice, personal ambition, respect, honor, self-interests, or love of ease (John 10:2; Acts 13:3; 1 Cor 12:28; Eph 4:11; Rom 11:29)
3. Consecrated motives: God's will and glory, salvation of lost souls, and the best interests of the church and all men (John 10:9-13; Luke 19:10; Acts 10:28; 2 Cor 5:14-21; Eph 4:12)
4. Divine anointing: not human education, wisdom, polish, and effort only, but divine leading and help (Luke 11:13; 24:49; John 7:37-39; 14:12-17; 14:26; 15:26; Acts 1:4-8; 5:32; 1 Cor 2:1-10; 12:1-11; 2 Cor. 3)
5. Personal interest: acquaintance with his flock, private and public instruction, and helpfulness in all problems (John 10:3; 10:9; Acts 20:26-35; Eph 1:15-19; 3:13-21; 1 Thes 2:4-13; 2 Tim 4:1-5; Heb 13:7; 13:17)
6. Good example: lead, not drive; feed, not destroy; and live what is preached (John 10:3-4; 1 Cor 4:9-13; 2 Cor 4:8-18; 6:1-10; 1 Tim 3:1-13; 4:11-16; 2 Tim. 2; Titus 1)
7. Divine success: be zealous and fearless to protect, heal, preserve, increase, visit, and sacrifice for the flock (John 10:9-18; Mark 16:17-18; James 5:14-16; Luke 19:10; Jer 23:1-8; Ezek 13:1-9; Ezekiel 34)¹⁰⁵

10:3 To him the porter^a openeth; and the sheep^b hear his voice:^c and he calleth his own sheep^d by name,^e and leadeth them out.^f

3a He is a door-keeper, who watches the entrances to guide against any unauthorized entries. Would this be the Holy Spirit?

3b Believers.

3c The voice of God and, by extension, the truth.

3d Christ has his own sheep whom He has chosen and whom He died for.

3e Comforting thought! He knows us personally, by name! There are millions and millions of Christians on the earth at any given time and He knows each of us personally, by name. There are seven billion people on the planet but He knows each of us individually! We give names to our animals and so do shepherds to their sheep.

3f Out of where? The world system? They are led out from where to where? Heaven? Remember, "church" is "ekklesia", meaning "a called-out assembly". The Church is called out of the world and is to be separate and distinctive.

10:4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them,^a and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.^b

4a Our Leader is a **Captain** (Hebrews 2:10) Who goes before His sheep (or troops) and leads them to

¹⁰⁴ A. W. Pink, *Exposition on the Gospel of John*.

¹⁰⁵ J. F. Dake, *Dake Reference Bible*.

pasture (or goes with them into combat on the battlefield).

4b Sheep only follow a shepherd they trust. Many professing Christians follow false shepherds for any number of reasons. This shows that they are really not part of the true flock since they are not in tune with the voice of the True Shepherd. The Pope can blather all day long but I won't listen to him because I don't recognize his voice as genuine,

10:5 And a stranger^a will they not follow,^b but will flee from him:^c for they know not the voice of strangers.

5a The false teacher, the apostate, Satan himself. He is the false teacher, the false pastor, whom Paul warns about in Acts 20:28-31: **"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears,"**

5b Something is very wrong if a Christian does willingly and voluntarily follows a false teacher!

5c By practicing scriptural separation (2 Corinthians 6:14-17 **"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,"**).

10:6 This parable^a spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.^b

6a Verses 1-5 is a parable. The lessons in this chapter would include:

1. Christ is the only the door of the sheep
 - A. John 10:7-9 **"Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."**
 - i. Notice again the exclusive claims of Christ.
2. All previously announced messiahs (and later ones) were and are false.
 - A. John 10:8 **"All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them."**
3. Christ is the only the way to salvation
 - A. John 3:15-20,36 **"That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come**

into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved... He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

B. John 5:24 "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

C. John 10:9 "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

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

4. Anyone can go in and out

A. John 10:9 "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

5. The devil's work is to:

A. Steal

i. Luke 8:12 "Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved."

B. Kill

i. Hebrews 2:14 "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;"

C. Destroy

i. Job 2:7 "So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown."

ii. Mark 9:22 "And oftentimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters, to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us."

iii. Luke 13:16 "And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the sabbath day?"

iv. John 10:10 "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

v. Acts 10:38 "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."

6. Christ is come that men might have abundant life

A. Luke 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,"

B. John 10:10 "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

C. 1 Peter 2:24 "Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed."

7. Christ alone is the good shepherd: the chief shepherd, and great shepherd

- A. John 10:11,14 **"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep...I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine."**
- B. Hebrews 13:20 **"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,"**
- C. 1 Peter 5:4 **"And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away."**
8. Christ redeems the sheep by dying for them
- A. Isaiah 53:5-10,12 **"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand... Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."**
- B. John 10:18 **"No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."**
9. Hireling shepherds flee from danger and leave the sheep to death, destruction, and division
- A. John 10:12,13 **"But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep."**
10. Christ knows His sheep and they know Him
- A. John 10:14,27 **"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine...My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:"**
11. Christ knows the Father and He knows Him
- A. John 10:15 **"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep."**
12. Christ has other sheep (Gentiles) which are not of this (Jewish) fold. They will hear My voice and come into the fold, having one shepherd.
- A. John 10:16 **"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd."**
- i. The popes love to try to apply this to themselves, with them being the "one shepherd", this stealing this title from Christ.
13. The Father loves Christ because He will sacrifice His life for the sheep
- A. John 10:17 **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again."**
14. No man can kill Christ. He volunteers to die for the sheep.

A. John 10:18 **"No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."**

15. He will be, and was, resurrected

A. John 10:17,18 **"Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father."**

16. All who hear His voice and do not obey are not His sheep; all who hear His voice and obey are His sheep. He knows His sheep, and they follow Him. To all who obey and follow Him have eternal life. They shall never perish, nor be plucked from His hand

A. John 10:27-29 **"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."**

AV	ESV	LSV
6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.	6 This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.	6 This figure of speech Jesus spoke to them, but they did not understand what those things were which He had been saying to them.

"parable" There is absolutely no good reason to change "parable" to "figure of speech".

6b This is the common theme of John, the inability for the religious leaders to understand simple spiritual truths. The reason they could understand what Jesus was saying was because these people were not part of His flock and thus could not hear what He was saying.

10:7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.^{ab}

7a "The "door" to a Bedouin sheepfold was sometimes a makeshift thing if the flock were traveling across pastures (see Gen. 30:36, 37:12–16; 1 Sam. 25:6–7, 15). The shepherd usually built a circle out of large boulders and left an opening in the circle about six feet across. Once he had the sheep in the "sheepfold" he would lay down across the opening with his rod and his staff. In David's case, a sling also. The idea was simple: a beast couldn't get into the fold without dealing with him. An animal large enough to jump over the rocks or tear them down (see 1 Sam. 17:34–35) would make enough racket to wake the shepherd up. All "home base" sheepfolds had walls around them. Both at home and abroad, they had "sticker bushes" on them (see Hos. 2:6; Prov. 22:5; Isa. 27:4). This was the ancient "barbed wire."¹⁰⁶

7b Christ is "the door" not "a door". There is only one door to eternal life and that is Jesus Christ. All other doors lead to perdition.

10:8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers:^{ab} but the sheep did not hear them.^{cde}

¹⁰⁶ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, pages 319- 320.

8a That includes every other religious “messiah”- every pope, Buddha, every philosopher, Pharaoh, every political leader, Brahma, Krishna, Siva, Kali, Allah, Mohammad, Joseph Smith, Russell and Rutherford, Ellen G. White...ALL OF THEM without except if they contradicted Christ.

8b They are called “thieves and robbers” as they have no honor, no compassion and no regard for their victims. They are only interested in material gain and goods, not the welfare of the souls of men. Thief” implies secret fraud and dishonesty. “Robber” implies more open violence.

“Jesus said that those who came before him were thieves and robbers. He was of course not referring to the great succession of the prophets and the heroes, but to these adventurers who were continually arising in Palestine and promising that, if people would follow them, they would bring in the golden age. All these claimants were insurrectionists. They believed that men would have to wade through blood to the golden age. At this very time Josephus speaks of there being ten thousand disorders in Judaea, tumults caused by men of war. He speaks of men like the Zealots who did not mind dying themselves and who did not mind slaughtering their own loved ones, if their hopes of conquest could be achieved. Jesus is saying: “There have been men who claimed that they were leaders sent to you from God. They believed in war, murder, assassination. Their way only leads for ever farther and farther away from God. My way is the way of peace and love and life; and if you will only take it, it leads ever closer and closer to God.” There have been, and still are, those who believe that the golden age must be brought in with violence, class warfare, bitterness, destruction.”¹⁰⁷

8c These false teachers and hirelings have no effect on genuine believers as we can discern between the voice of the True Shepherd and all these false shepherds.

8d “They know the Shepherd’s voice when they hear it. An Arabic shepherd said, “The only time they will follow a stranger is when they are SICK.” This explains what happened to the Body of Christ in America, between 1900 and 2000. They followed the counsel, advice, recommendations, and fellowship of highly- educated PROFESSIONAL LIARS within their own ranks; see Acts 20:30 for Paul’s comment. (See also 2 Tim. 3:7 and 4:3–4.)

I knew of a missionary to Israel who said that he tried to imitate the call of a shepherd to his flock while they were grazing. The Arab (1920) told him what was the word to use and demonstrated it once or twice. So the “Yankee” tried it. He stood on a raised portion of ground and called out (in his best “Arabic!”) “Meen- ahhh!” About thirty sheep out of forty stopped grazing, looked up at him, blinked, and lowered their heads and went right on feeding. After three unsuccessful “calls” the “owner,” smiling, got up and called out the same words—“Menn-ahhh!” The males quit eating and assembled on the “rise.” The females came with them and little lambs followed.”¹⁰⁸

8e A Christian should not listen to or give and credence or any acknowledgement to false teacher. To do so lends him credibility among the other sheep and makes him all the more dangerous. He is to be marked and avoided.

A. Romans 16:17,18 **“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”**

10:9 I am the door:^{abcd} by me^e if^f any man^g enter in,^h he shall be saved,ⁱ and shall go in and out, and find pasture.^{jk}

¹⁰⁷ William Barclay, *John in The Daily Study Bible*.

¹⁰⁸ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, pages 320-321.

9a Another “I AM” statement by the Lord, which expresses His deity.

9b A “door” is a portal or an entry from one room to another. Christ is the portal from earth to heaven, from this life to the next. We must go through Him to pass from this life into salvation and eternal life.

9c Christ is “THE” Door, not “A” Door or “ONE OF THE” Doors. There is only door and that is Christ. He is the only door into life and heaven. Every other religion and religious leader is a false door that only leads to condemnation and hell. You must enter through Christ if you’d would find eternal life. Go through any other door and you will wind up in hell.

The Church of Rome claims they have the “keys” to the kingdom (held by the current pope through Peter”.) We Bible believers have something better than the keys- we have the door!

- 9d
1. The true shepherd saves (John 10:9). **"I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."**
 - A. It is through the Lord Jesus that we are saved and enter into new freedom and sure enjoyment of life.
 2. The true shepherd secures (John 10:10a). **"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life."**
 - A. The thief is a threat to the sheep. The Lord throws the mantle of his protection around them.
 - B. He protects the sheep.
 - C. He grants to His sheep eternal life and the security that comes with it.
 3. The true shepherd satisfies (John 10:10b). **"I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."**
 - A. A classic Old Testament example is found in the contrast with the descendants of Cain and the descendants of Seth (Genesis 4:1- 5:32) (John Phillips, *Exploring John*)."

9e “me” Christ identifies Himself as the door, and no one else.

9f “if” This is a conditional promise. You must enter through Christ if you want to be saved. If you don’t, you cannot be saved.

9g “any man” Any man who hears the gospel and desires to be saved will be saved if he comes by Christ. “Any man” is the same idea of “whosoever will”, not “any of the elect who were foreordained from the beginning of the world.” The responsibility lies with the “any man”.

You must go into the sheep fold by Christ if you wish to be saved. No one else can go in for you and you cannot go in for someone else. The Mormons have an odd practice of being baptized on behalf of their dead relatives, thinking that will get them into the “celestial kingdom”. The Book of Mormon or “Doctrines and Covenants” may teach that but the inspired Scripture does not.

9h You must “enter in” because the sinner is “outside” of the sheep fold, outside of salvation. He must go “into” the sheep fold by the One Door, Christ.

9i Here is the promise of salvation. IF you will enter by Christ, you WILL be saved and find pasture.

9j The Psalmist is certain that God will keep him in his going out and in his coming in (Psalm 121:8). The pasture is the area of provision, nourishment and safety. Psalm 23 also speaks to this.

9k The sheep can come in and out of the sheepfold and pasture as they please. We may also go “in and out” of our Lord’s presence anytime we please. This is the promise that if we come to Christ and enter through Him, we will have life, and that more abundantly (John 10:10) now and after death with eternal life.

10:10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy:^a I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more^b abundantly.^c

10a False teachers can provide no joy, no hope, nothing of any spiritual value. They leave nothing but misery and woe in their wake.

AV	ESV	LSV
10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have <i>it</i> more abundantly.	10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.	10 “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have <i>it</i> abundantly.

10b The ESV and LSV leave out “more”.

10c This is the genuine Christian life. Everyone has life but they are not really living. They exist but don’t live. Only Christ gives a real life to living, a purpose, a function, with the answers about where you came from, why you’re here and where you’re going when you die. Sinners gamble, drink, fornicate, lie, cheat, steal and call it “living”. But they are really dying, slowly.

“A Roman soldier came to Julius Caesar with a request for permission to commit suicide. He was a wretched dispirited creature with no vitality. Caesar looked at him. “Man,” he said, “were you ever really alive?” When we try to live our own lives, life is a dull, dispirited thing. When we walk with Jesus, there comes a new vitality, a superabundance of life. It is only when we live with Christ that life becomes really worth living and we begin to live in the real sense of the word.”¹⁰⁹

10:11 I am the good^a shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.^b

11a If Christ is the Good Shepherd, that supposes there is a bad shepherd.

11b Christ did this at Calvary. He gives His life for His sheep. Yes, He died for the whole world potentially but only for His sheep practically.

10:12 But he that is an hireling,^a and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf^b coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf^b catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.^c

12a This is the “idol shepherd” of Zechariah 11:17 “**Woe to the idol shepherd that leaveth the flock! the sword shall be upon his arm, and upon his right eye: his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkened.**”

¹⁰⁹ William Barclay, *John in The Daily Study Bible*.

12b The false teacher. The hireling has no belly for this kind of confrontation that might actually put him in danger and cost him his life.

12c The Lord gives an excellent picture of the professional minister here. There are many in the ministry who found out that preaching beats getting their hands dirty or straining their backs in a secular job. These are the young men who leave Bible college and think that success in the ministry is defined by car allowances, house allowances, special gifts and top billing at some Bible conference. These men don't care about the welfare of their flocks. They use these churches and members as nothing more than stepping stones to the next larger ministry. Their only concern is for what they can gain from them. Ezekiel 34:2-6 not only describes them perfectly but informs us of God's opinion of them ("**Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto the shepherds; Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves! should not the shepherds feed the flocks? Ye eat the fat, and ye clothe you with the wool, ye kill them that are fed: but ye feed not the flock. The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force and with cruelty have ye ruled them. And they were scattered, because there is no shepherd: and they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered. My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill: yea, my flock was scattered upon all the face of the earth, and none did search or seek after them.**")

The hireling will run at the first sign of trouble. He has no heart for ministry, only for the money. A true shepherd will stick it out in periods of growth and shrinkage. He will stay when the money is down, when the attendance is down, after the church split, after being falsely accused, during periods of intense discouragement.

10:13 The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

10:14 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.^a

14a These Jews were not of Christ's flock as they would not and could not hear what He was saying.

10:15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

10:16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold:^a them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.^b

16a Gentiles. The Jews would have a lot of trouble accepting that Jesus would bring Gentiles into a Jewish sheepfold. Peter was still struggling with this as late as Acts 10.

16b The Pope loves to claim this to justify this to back up his claim that the Church of Rome is the one true church and that the Pope is the one true shepherd but no pope could pastor ten people for an hour.

10:17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life,^a that I might take it again.^b

17a At the cross.

17b In the resurrection.

10:18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.^a This commandment have I received of my Father.

18a No one could have killed Christ at any time without the father's permission. His death was pre-appointed at the exact time and place of the Father's choosing.

51. Further Division and Debate 10:19-21

10:19 There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.

10:20 And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?^a

20a The old charge repeated. He was a lunatic, a liar...or He is Lord. Only one is correct.

(i) The words of Jesus are not the words of a madman. We could cite witness after witness to prove that the teaching of Jesus is the supreme sanity. Thinking men and women in every generation have judged the teaching of Jesus the one hope of sanity for a mad world. His is the one voice which speaks God's sense in the midst of man's delusions.

(ii) The deeds of Jesus are not the deeds of a madman. He healed the sick and fed the hungry and comforted the sorrowing. The madness of megalomania is essentially selfish. It seeks for nothing but its own glory and prestige. But Jesus' life was spent in doing things for others. As the Jews themselves said, a man who was mad would not be able to open the eyes of the blind.

(iii) The effect of Jesus is not the effect of a madman. The undeniable fact is that millions upon millions of lives have been changed by the power of Jesus Christ. The weak have become strong, the selfish have become selfless, the defeated have become victorious, the worried have become serene, the bad have become good. It is not madness which produces such a change, but wisdom and sanity."¹¹⁰

10:21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil.^a Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

21a "Some claim the 1611 should have used the word 'demon' instead of 'devil' in certain places, as in Matthew 11:18. However, 'demon' was used very little in early modern English and, of the times it was used, it often meant a 'supernatural being' or 'an indwelling spirit' or a 'cruel animal or person', and only on rare occasions 'an evil spirit'. This last meaning only took hold in English literature starting in the 1700s. Until then, 'devil' was the common word for Satan himself and any of the fallen angels who joined with him."¹¹¹

52. "I And My Father Are One" 10:22-42

10:22^a And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication,^b and it was winter.

22a This happened about two months later.

¹¹⁰ William Barclay, *John in The Daily Study Bible*.

¹¹¹ Stephen J. White, *White's Dictionary of the King James Language*, volume 1, pages 331-332.

22b The feast was appointed by Judas Maccabaeus to commemorate the purification of the temple after it had been defiled by Antiochus Epiphanes on the 25th of Chisleu (December), 164 B.C. He offered a sow on the altar and polluted the temple by sprinkling its broth all around (1 Maccabees 4:52-59). It lasted 2 days (later 8 days) and could be celebrated elsewhere.

10:23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.^{ab}

23a The outer court of the temple or court of the Gentiles was surrounded by cloisters supported upon ranges of marble columns. They were called porches and were used by the Jews and strangers as public promenades. The eastern side of the court was called Solomon's porch, built by him and left standing, when Nebuchadnezzar took the city, probably because of its grandeur and beauty. It was over 800 feet long.

AV

ESV

LSV

23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.	23 and Jesus was walking in the temple, in the colonnade of Solomon.	23 it was winter, and Jesus was walking in the temple in the Portico of Solomon.
---	--	--

23b The ESV has “the colonnade of Solomon” and the LSV has “Portico of Solomon”. How are these a clearer translation than “Solomon’s Porch?”

10:24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.^a

24a Did they not hear what Christ told them back in John 8:58? He would tell them plainly again in John 10:30.

10:25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not:^a the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

25a Christ had made His claims clear earlier, but they did not listen or receive them.

10:26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

10:28 And I give unto them eternal life;^a and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.^{bc}

28a Adherents of the supposed “one true church” of Rome with the supposed “one true shepherd” of the pope don’t know if they are going to heaven when they die. How can that be if these people are in a true church with a genuine pastor? If your religion can’t tell you where you are going when you die, your religion is worthless.

28b Verses on the security of the genuine believer:

1. He who hears the word and believes on the Father has everlasting life and will not come into condemnation

- A. John 3:16 **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."**
- B. John 5:24 **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."**
2. Christ will cast out no one who comes to Him
- A. John 6:37 **"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."**
3. Jesus promised it to His sheep
- A. John 10:27-29 **"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."**
1. Eternal life is given to us by Christ.
 2. As weak and as feeble as we are, we are secure in Christ (not in ourselves or in our church or in our theological system...)
4. No man can pluck out of His hand
- A. John 10:28, 29 **"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."**
5. Nothing can separate us from the love of God
- A. Romans 8:38,39 **"For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."**
6. We have been sealed
- A. 2 Corinthians 1:22 **"Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."**
1. The "seal" is the mark of divine ownership upon us.
 2. Sealing is the placing a mark of ownership on personal property. What does sealing do in the life of the believer?
 - a. The Holy Spirit identifies us as belonging to God (through the redemptive work of Christ) through the application of this seal.
 - b. It is also a warning to Satan and his devils that we are beyond their power and authority. What is this seal? We are not told but it cannot be seen with physical eyes. It is clearly a spiritual mark upon believers that only spiritual beings can see, probably placed on the forehead or right hand of the Christian. Some documents, like a loan document, are also sealed to make them legal, usually by impressing a seal in wax. This is where we get the phrase "sign, sealed and delivered". This is what God does with the "agreement" He makes with the individual for salvation. He promises that if we believe, He will save us. He then "seals" the agreement by giving us the Holy Spirit.
 3. God has purchased us and sealed us as His property. He has signed a written contract with us in the New Testament.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 6:20 **"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."**
- B. Ephesians 1:13 **"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,"**
- C. Ephesians 4:30 **"And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the**

day of redemption.”

D. Revelation 7:3 **“Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.”**

7. Christ will complete that good work He started in us

A. Philippians 1:6 **“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:”**

i. This will be completed at the Bema Seat judgment.

B. 1 Thessalonians 5:23,24 **“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.”**

8. We may know that we have eternal life

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

i. Salvation is a thing that can be known once you have it. This involves assurance of salvation.

9. God can keep us from falling

A. Jude 24 **“Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.”**

i. It must be remembered that all elements of salvation are the work of God- salvation, sanctification and safe-keeping.

ii. I have security not because of what I have done but based on what He has done.

iii. God is the only one who can keep us from falling away from the faith and forsaking the faith. Many professing Christians (who were probably never truly saved) will come back years later and totally renounce the faith that they once confessed. They may have been deceived regarding their salvation, either by themselves or by someone else. They go through the motions, living a (hopeful) lie but then come to the realization that they were never truly saved. In their frustration and/or discouragement, they will renounce the faith they may once confessed. The grace and power of God can keep us from falling into this spiritual trap that claims so many victims. Ultimately, if you make it from your new birth to your death bed and are still professing Christ and have gone all the way with Him, it will not be because of your spirituality but only by the grace and power of God. So many “better” and “stronger” Christians before you didn’t make it to the end. Their faith and profession lapsed. They backslid or denied the faith. They did not die well. May we rely on Christ and Christ alone to help us make to the end well and strong. It will not be your doctrinal statement or your theological system or the fact that you graduated from some Christian School that will preserve you, but Christ alone. Christ and Christ alone is more than a match for the world, the flesh and the devil as they seek to destroy our testimony and our soul.

28c Who can snatch us out of the hand of God? Can we ‘jump’ out of God’s hand? No saved individual can either be plucked out of or ‘jump’ out of God’s hand since the Christian is in effect part of God’s hand.

1. 1 Corinthians 6:15,19 **“Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?...What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”**

2 1 Corinthians 12:27 **“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”**

Also consider the size of God’s hand in Isaiah 40:12 **“Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance?”** If God’s hand

“measured the (heavenly) waters, then His hand must be of a tremendous size. You would have to travel to the far end of the universe to jump out of a hand that size.

Why would a genuinely saved Christian want to “jump out of His hand?” What is the motivation to attack the truth of the security of the genuine believer? Why is it so hated? One would think that such divine promises would be cherished by all true saints, but it is not. Many hate it. There are a number of possible reasons why, but I think a major reason is that if a saint is truly secure, then it lessens any domination of a church or a theological system to keep a believer under their control. When I was in the Church of Rome, this doctrine of security was rejected. We were told we had to come to mass every week, keep coming back to the sacraments, pray our rosaries, do our novenas, and then, maybe, we might shave a few centuries off of our stay in purgatory. We were told that we continually needed the Church and the sacraments. But when I became a Baptist, I was taught that my salvation was completed and I was secure, so I did not need to rely on any church or system to stay saved. Thus, no church could control me or keep me in bondage.

I know there is the question of the “carnal” Christian or the Christian who renounces his salvation. Were they ever truly saved? Even if a man is carnal, can he be a Christian? At the end of the day, only God knows who is saved and lost. And a lot of the failings of a true saint will be hashed out at the bema seat judgment.

I also realize that many believers abuse this doctrine. I actually heard a “preacher” who had a program on shortwave radio, say “Now that I’m saved by grace, I’m going to live it up!” Or someone may say “If I am secure, then it doesn’t matter how I live”. Such attitudes show a highly flawed and defective understanding of salvation and the Christian life. Simply because some theological knuckleheads abuse the doctrine is no reason for me to abandon it!

10:29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all;^a and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.^b

29a The power of the Father is greater than all forces that would seek to destroy or steal the salvation from Christ’s sheep.

29b We are organically part of the Body of Christ, so how can anyone pluck us out of God’s hand?

10:30 I and my Father are one.^{abc}

30a Jesus pokes the bear again as He makes another clear, unmistakable declaration of His deity. If you see the Father, you see Jesus and vice-versa.

30b No Jehovah Witnesses can handle this verse as they do not believe the Son is equal to the Father. They believe Jesus to be a demigod, greater than man but inferior to the Father.

30c This is given in response to the question in John 10:24.

10:31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

10:32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

10:33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.^a

33a The Jews had no problem understanding what Jesus was claiming.

10:34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?^a

34a This is quoted from Psalm 82:6 “**I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High.**”. If ordinary judges were called gods, why should it be blasphemy for Christ to claim deity when He is the Son of God and one with God?

10:35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken;

10:36 Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified,^a and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

36a Set apart.

10:37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.^a

37a This is a fair challenge.

10:38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works:^a that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in me, and I in him.

38a No one could argue with or deny the works and miracles offered as proof of His claims.

10:39 Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand,^a

39a Another supernatural escape?

10:40 And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.^a

40a This was a remote area of relative safety. Jesus went back to the place of the start of His ministry and of His baptism. It was a “Back to Bethel” moment, as He knew His time was short before His arrest and His passion. There is everything to be said for a man returning every now and then to the place where he had the supreme experience of his life. When Jacob was in trouble, he went back to Bethel (Genesis 35:1,3 “**And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there: and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother. And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went.**”). When he needed God, he went back to the place where he had first found him. It would often do our souls a world of good to make a pilgrimage to the place where we first found God.

Jesus now found it necessary to leave Jerusalem and Judea. The campaign in Judea had profoundly stirred the people. But the antagonism of His enemies had also grown more bitter, culminating in an attempt to stone Him in the Feast of the Dedication. All doors to His ministry were now closed in Judea. Galilee also had rejected His ministry. There was only one place left to His choice for the work of the remaining months before His death, the half-heathen province of Perea across the

Jordan. He had success here, away from the prejudiced religious atmosphere of Jerusalem. Many poured in from the surrounding places to attend His ministry. They were saying in comparing the ministry of Jesus with that of John, that “John did no miracle” but all the things he had said concerning Jesus were true.

While He was in Perea, Jesus would carry on a public ministry. It was largely designed to prepare the disciples for the ministry that would be entrusted to them following His death and resurrection. With Galilee hostile to Jesus and Judea and Jerusalem attempting to stone Him, there was no expectation that He would be publicly acclaimed as Messiah so that He could begin His reign. Christ continued a ministry to teach the disciples concerning their ministry on His behalf after His death.

10:41 And many resorted unto him,^a and said, John did no miracle:^b but all things that John spake of this man were true.^c

41a John preached in the middle of nowhere and still had crowds. Even though Jesus withdrew to this same remote location, He still attracted crowds. Unlike around Jerusalem, this crowd was friendlier and not nearly as confrontational.

41b John did not need miracles. He was a preacher with the power of God and who had something to say. Preachers like that don’t need tricks and gimmicks, unlike false preachers. The supporters of John came out to hear him preach and teach and to be instructed by him, not to be entertained. John was remembered as a preacher and for what he preached, not for religious excitement.

John did no miracle to divert people from Christ, but he said a great deal to direct them to Christ. This can be done without miracles. Miracles tend to draw attention to the one doing the miracles. Many Biblical characters did miracles, but many did not (Isaiah, Jeremiah...).

41c Consider the times in the gospels when people believed based on what they heard, not on what they saw:

1. John 4:39 **“And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.”**
2. John 4:41 **“And many more believed because of his own word;”**
3. John 8:30 **“As he spake these words, many believed on him.”**

10:42 And many believed on him there.^a

42a They believed on then preached word, not on anything they saw. These conversions are always stronger than those who saved off some gimmick, trick, personality or miracle.

John Chapter 11

This chapter is one of the most comforting in Scripture when it comes to death and the resurrection. Every pastor has based a funeral text on John 11 at least once.

Christ had raised the dead before, but even here the climax is again to be seen. Mark records the raising of Jairus' daughter, but she had only just died. Luke tells of the raising of the widow's son of Nain, but he had not been buried. But in the case of Lazarus, not only had the dead man been placed in the sepulcher, but corruption had already begun to consume his body. Christ will show His power over death in this raising.

We have no problems believing that everything John recorded in this chapter happened in history and exactly as John recorded. No true child of God would have any issues with Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. Unbelievers and atheists will struggle with it as they believe "death ends all". But John 11 reminds us that death is just the beginning of an eternity in heaven or in the Lake of Fire and that will be a resurrection from the dead. If there is a resurrection, there will be a judgment. This is why cremation is popular, as people have the very mistaken idea that if God can't put their body back together, then He can't raise them from the dead and thus, can't judge them.

53. The Raising of Lazarus 11:1-45

11:1^a Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus,^b of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.^c

1a The raising of Lazarus was such a great miracle, we wonder why Matthew, Mark and Luke do not mention it. They could not have included all of the Lord's teachings or miracles in their works, so for whatever reason, they decided to omit this. Thankfully, John included it.

1b I do not know if this is the same Lazarus as the Lord mentioned in Luke 16. Nothing is said of this Lazarus being a beggar as he is described in Luke 16. "At once our minds revert back to Luke 16, where another "Lazarus" is seen. But how striking the contrast, a contrast most evidently designed by the Holy Spirit. There are only two mentioned in the New Testament which bear this name. Here again the 'law of comparison and contrast' helps us. The Lazarus of Luke 16 was a beggar, whereas everything goes to show that the Lazarus of John 11 (cf. John 12:2, 3) was a man of means. The Lazarus of Luke 16 was uncared for, for we read of how the dogs came and licked his sores; but the one in John 11 enjoyed the loving ministrations of his sisters. The Lazarus of Luke 16 was dependent upon the "crumbs" which fell from another's table; whereas in John 12, after his resurrection, the Lazarus of Bethany is seen at "the table" where the Lord Jesus was. The one in Luke 16 died and remained in the grave, the one in John 11 was brought again from the dead."¹¹²

Also, the Lazarus of John 11 was buried in a tomb and wrapped in grave clothes. There is no indication that the Lazarus of Luke 16 was buried as the Lazarus in John 11 was.

1c This is probably the same Mary and Martha whom Luke mentions in Luke 10:38-42, although Lazarus is not mentioned.

¹¹² A. W. Pink, *Exposition of the Gospel of John*.

11:2 (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)^a

2a You can be saved, service and spiritual and still get sick. Sickness is a result of sin and the fall so we will all suffer from it. It is not sin to be sick, despite the lies of the faith-healing quacks, Sickness is not (always) caused by sin and it is not (always) a judgment of God, nor is it a sign of a lack of faith. Some of the greatest Christians in history suffered much from sickness, like Robert Murray McCheyne.

11:3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest^a is sick.^b

3a That language for Lazarus was probably a very strong plea for Jesus to come as soon as possible.

3b The Lord knew and He cared. He was criticized for not reacting faster and immediately leaving to see Lazarus. The Lord has a plan for all He does and does not do. He allowed Lazarus to linger and die. No doubt it was very difficult for the Lord to do this, knowing what Lazarus and his sisters were going through during this very difficult time. The Lord could have healed Lazarus and didn't, thus showing it is not always God's will to heal. More spiritual good can be done and God can be better glorified through sickness at times.

11:4 When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death,^a but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.^b

4a Lazarus would die but would only stay dead for four days. He would die a natural death later. Death would intervene, but not interfere with the Lord's plans.

4b Despite what faith-healers claim, God can get glory out of physical sickness.

11:5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.^a

5a They were all good friends.

11:6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.^a

6a Instead of leaving immediately, the Lord allowed Lazarus to die. This had to puzzle everyone. Why did the Lord tarry two days instead of setting out immediately to heal Lazarus? The Lord's ways and timings are usually puzzling, even to His disciples. But we see that it is not always the Lord's will to heal. The Lord at that time was at Bethabara beyond the Jordan in Perea, about twenty-five miles from Jerusalem. He could have been at Lazarus' house in about two days.

Whenever there is a delay by God in answering a prayer, there is a very good reason behind it, although He will not always tell us what it is. Here, we are told that it involved the "glory of God" in John 11:40. The delay was also designed to test and strengthen our faith in John 11:15.

11:7 Then after that saith he to his disciples, Let us go into Judaea again.

11:8 His disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and

goest thou thither again?^a

8a What the Lord had to do regarding Lazarus was more important than any threat He may have faced from the Jews.

11:9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.^a

9a Christ is saying that you have to do what you can when you can because the time is coming when you will not be able to do it. You work while it is day because the night is coming when no man can work.

11:10 But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

11:11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth;^a but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.^{bcd}

11a He was dead, but death for the believer is referred to as sleep as it is temporary. We awake from sleep in the resurrection as Lazarus would do.

11b Some cultists base their false teachings of soul-sleep on language like this. They teach that when you die, you sleep (and are unconscious) until the resurrection. There are too many verses to list that refute this and no orthodox theological system teaches it. The body sleeps until the resurrection, but the soul is very much awake and conscious after death, either in heaven or hell.

11c "First, sleep is perfectly harmless. In sleep there is nothing to fear, but, much to be thankful for. It is a friend and not a foe. So, for the Christian, is it with death. Said David, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil." Such ought to be the triumphant language of every child of God. The "sting" has gone from death (1 Cor. 15:56, 57), and has no more power to hurt one of Christ's redeemed, than a hornet has after its sting has been extracted.

Second, sleep comes as a welcome relief after the sorrows and toils of the day. As the wise man declared, "The sleep of a laboring man is sweet" (Ecclesiastes 5:12). Death, for the believer, is simply the portal through which he passes from this scene of sin and turmoil to the paradise of bliss. As 1 Corinthians 3:22 tells us, "death" is ours. Sleep is a merciful provision, not appreciated nearly as much as it should be. The writer learned this lesson some years ago when he witnessed a close friend, who was suffering severely, seeking sleep in vain for over a week. Equally merciful is death for one who is prepared. Try to imagine David still alive on earth after three thousand years! Such a protracted existence in this world of sin and suffering would probably have driven him hopelessly crazy long ago. How thankful we ought to be that we have not the longevity of the antediluvians!

Third, in sleep we lie down to rise again. It is of but brief duration; a few hours snatched from our working time, then to awaken and rise to a new day. In like manner, death is but a sleep and resurrection, an awakening. "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12:2). On the glorious resurrection mourn the dead in Christ shall be awakened, to sleep no more, but live forever throughout the perfect Day of God.

Fourth, sleep is a time of rest. The work of the day is exchanged for sweet repose. This is what death means for the Christian: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors" (Rev. 14:13). This applies only to the "intermediate state," between death and resurrection. When we receive our glorified bodies there will be new ministries for us to engage in, for it is written, "His servants shall serve him" (Rev. 22:3).

Fifth, sleep shuts out the sorrows of life. In sleep we are mercifully unconscious of the things which exercise us throughout the day. The repose of night affords us welcome relief from that which troubles us by day. It is so in death. Not that the believer is unconscious, but that those in paradise know nothing of the tears which are shed on earth. Scripture seems to indicate that there is one exception in their knowledge of what is transpiring down here: the salvation of sinners is heralded on high (Luke 15:7, 10).

Sixth, one reason perhaps why death is likened to a sleep is to emphasize the ease with which the Lord will quicken us. To raise the dead (impossible as it appears to the skeptic) will be simpler to Him than arousing a sleeper. It is a singular thing that nothing so quickly awakens one as being addressed by the voice. So we are told "the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice" (John 5:28).

Seventh, sleep is a time when the body is fitted for the duties of the morrow. When the awakened sleeper arises he is refreshed and invigorated, and ready for what lies before him. In like manner, the resurrected believer will be endued with a new power. The limitations of his mortal body will no longer exist. That which was sown in weakness shall be raised in power."¹¹³

11d Death for the believer is often referred to as "sleep" as also in Acts 7:60; 1 Corinthians 11:30; 15:18,20; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17.

11:12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.^a

12a They thought Lazarus was literally asleep, which would have been good if he was sick, as he would have needed his rest.

11:13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

11:14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.^a

14a This shows the omniscience of Christ. He knew this from a distance.

11:15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe;^a nevertheless let us go unto him.

15a When Jesus would raise Lazarus from the dead.

11:16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him.^a

16a Noble thoughts, and probably genuine, if not morbid and not based on faith. This same Thomas would be the one who would doubt the Lord's resurrection after witnessing the resurrection of Lazarus. Thomas seemed to be a man who was always looking at the dark side of life and who assumed the worst.

11:17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the grave four days already.^a

¹¹³ A. W. Pink, *Exposition of the Gospel of John*.

17a Lazarus did not “swoon” nor was he in some sort of a trance. He was certified as dead and had been for four days and had been buried.

11:18 Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:^a

18a About 1.9 miles.

11:19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

11:20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat still in the house.^a

20a “As many as possible attended a funeral. Everyone who could was supposed, in courtesy and respect, to join the procession on its way. One curious custom was that the woman walked first, for it was held that since woman by her first sin brought death into the world, she ought to lead the mourners to the tomb. At the tomb memorial speeches were sometimes made. Everyone was expected to express the deepest sympathy, and, on leaving the tomb, the others stood in two long lines while the principal mourners passed between them. But there was this very wise rule--the mourners were not to be tormented by idle and uninvited talk. They were to be left, at that moment, alone with their sorrow.

“In the house of mourning there were set customs. So long as the body was in the house it was forbidden to eat meat or to drink wine, to wear phylacteries or to engage in any kind of study. No food was to be prepared in the house, and such food as was eaten must not be eaten in the presence of the dead. As soon as the body was carried out all furniture was reversed, and the mourners sat on the ground or on low stools.

“On the return from the tomb a meal was served, which had been prepared by the friends of the family. It consisted of bread, hard-boiled eggs and lentils; the round eggs and lentils symbolized life which was always rolling to death.

“Deep mourning lasted for seven days, of which the first three were days of weeping. During these seven days it was forbidden to anoint oneself, to put on shoes, to engage in any kind of study or business, and even to wash. The week of deep mourning was followed by thirty days of lighter mourning.

“So when Jesus found a crowd in the house at Bethany, he found what anyone would expect to find in a Jewish house of mourning. It was a sacred duty to come to express loving sympathy with the sorrowing friends and relations of one who had died. The Talmud says that whoever visits the sick shall deliver his soul from Gehenna; and Maimonides, the great medieval Jewish scholar, declared that to visit the sick takes precedence of all other good works. Visits of sympathy to the sick, and to the sorrowing, were an essential part of Jewish religion.”¹¹⁴

11:21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.^a

21a This is true, but the Lord had something greater in mind than a simple physical healing. It sounded like an accusation, as if Martha was saying “We sent word to you a few days ago. Where were you? What took you so long? Didn’t you care that Lazarus was dying?”

¹¹⁴ William Barclay, *John*, in *The Daily Study Bible*.

11:22 But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.^a

22a A combination of resignation and acceptance of the will of God as well as hope and faith. Could the Lord still do something for them even four days after the death of Lazarus?

11:23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

11:24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.^a

24a This was true. Martha's understanding was light-years ahead of atheists, humanists and other unbelievers who believed that death ends all. This was common knowledge among the Jews. Martha had a basic understanding of the resurrection but not a deep, personal understanding of the doctrine. In reality, Lazarus, and the rest of the believers, would raise at the rapture, long before "the last day".

11:25 Jesus said unto her, I am^a the resurrection, and the life:^b he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:^{cdef}

25a Christ as the Resurrection and the Life.

1. He identifies Himself as God by use of the "I AM".
 - A. A title of deity, going back to Exodus 3:14, where the Lord identified Himself as "I AM THAT I AM".
2. He identifies Himself as the Resurrection
 - A. Not "a" resurrection. Other "world religions" do not have this doctrine. They may have reincarnation but not resurrection.
 - B. The resurrection and its promise of life is in a person, not in a church or a denomination or a system.
 - C. The resurrection and its promise of life is in one person, only Jesus. He needs no help, not from Mohammad, Mary, any pope or anyone else. He needs no helper.
3. He identifies Himself as the Life
 - A. John 1:4 **"In him was life; and the life was the light of men."**
 - B. John 5:26 **"For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;"**
 - i. Jesus has life in Himself. He is not dependent on anyone for His existence. We are totally and completely dependent on God for our moment-ny-moment existence.
 - C. John 14:6 **"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."**
 - D. He can give life, both physical and spiritual, to whomever He will.
 - i. John 17:2 **"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him."**
 - a. This spiritual life is granted through the new birth.
 - E. The resurrection Jesus promises is the real life. We think we are alive in our physical bodies, but we are sleepwalking through a fog, in a stupor, only vaguely aware of our situation and surroundings. When we receive our resurrection bodies, we will be truly alive for the first time, with full access to all of our senses and additional ones we do not have now. We will see, know and experience things that are impossible for us in this physical body. This is one reason why the Lord said He came to give life, and that more abundantly in John 10:10.
 - i. First comes the spiritual resurrection of the soul in the new birth, then comes spiritual life.

- ii. First comes the resurrection of the body, then life.
4. He gives a great promise if we believe in Him: Even though we may die physically, we will never suffer the Second Death.
- A. Revelation 2:11 **"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death."**
- B. Revelation 20:6,14,15 **"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years....And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."**
- C. Revelation 21:8 **"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."**
- D. Why fear death when our Master is Lord over it?
5. Death has no power over Him if He is the Resurrection and the Life
- A. Romans 6:9 **"Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him."**

25b Christ was the Lord of life, death and the resurrection. Death was nothing to Him and He could raise whom He would from the dead. The resurrection and the eternal life that is a result of it is from Jesus alone, not from a church or a theological system. The Lord was Master of life, death and the resurrection. In Him was life in John 1:4. There is no genuine life outside of Christ. He is also "the life" in John 14:6. In Revelation 1:18, the resurrected Christ said "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." If you have the keys to something, it implies ownership. Christ is the Master of Life, Death and Resurrection.

25c We all must physically die but death did not end all and there was a greater life after our physical death that we could know before our death.

25d Put your faith in Christ for deliverance from the fear of death, for the resurrection and the eternal life that comes from it.

25e We see this in salvation. The sinner is dead in his trespasses and sins, as in Ephesians 2:1 **"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;"**. He comes in contact with then gospel and he is saved and dies to his old life. He then is resurrected through the new birth unto a new life.

25f John 6:39 **"And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."**

Also see John 6:44 **"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."**

11:26 And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.^a Believest thou this?

26a We will die physically (unless we are in that generation that goes up in the rapture) but we will never face the second death, which is existing in an eternal state of death in the lake of fire. We will die physically but there will be a resurrection of the just unto a glorified body and eternal life.

11:27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.^a

27a A very good testimony.

11:28 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

11:29 As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

11:30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.

11:31 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.^a

31a Not all tears are evil. There is nothing wrong with weeping over the death of a loved one even when you know they were saved and are now in the presence of the Lord. You will miss them and now there is a void in your life that you are going to have to deal with for the rest of your life. You will miss your loved one daily and some Christians never get over the death of a child or a spouse.

11:32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.^a

32a Mary was bitter that the Lord could have saved her brother but didn't. The bitterness of death can turn the sweetest believer sour.

11:33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,

11:34 And said, Where have ye laid him?^a They said unto him, Lord, come and see.

34a Earlier in this chapter, Jesus knew from a distance that Lazarus had died. Here, He is asking where his tomb was. Sometimes He flashes His omniscience but at other times, He veils it.

11:35 Jesus wept.^{abc}

35a Our Lord was human and was moved over the grief He saw and that He also felt over the death of a close friend. He Who had the keys of death and Who would conquer death was still moved by and touched by the wreckage and sorrow that death brought into the world. He wept because he was **a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief** (Isaiah 53:3).

35b This is the shortest verse in the English Bible, but it is packed with the Lord's humanity.

35c **"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints"** (Psalm 116:15).

11:36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

11:37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?^a

37a It was an obvious and natural question- why didn't Jesus heal Lazarus?

11:38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.^a

38a These graves were caves, not holes in the ground that we have today.

11:39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.^a

39a "It's too late to do anything and his body has begun to decay after four days!"

11:40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

11:41^a Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

41a Jesus made this public prayer for the benefit of those at the grave.

11:42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

11:43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.^{abc}

43a Jesus had to mention Lazarus by name because if He didn't, every dead man in the country would have gotten up. His sheep knew His voice (John 10:4 "**And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.**") and the Shepherd called him by his name (John 10:3 "**To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.**"). The Voice of the Son of God penetrated even into Abraham's Bosom, across dimensions, to call Lazarus back across that chasm into this world. Psalm 19 also has things to say about the power of the Voice of the Lord.

43b We shall hear a voice like a trumpet at the rapture, calling us to come out of our graves.

1. 1 Corinthians 15:52 "**In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.**"

2. Revelation 4:1 "**After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.**"

43c There was no eloquence in these three words, but they were full of power. The worth and effectiveness of a preacher is not determined by his homiletics but by his relationship to the Holy Spirit and his walk with God.

11:44 And he that was dead came forth,^a bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.^{bc}

44a The difference between the raisings of Lazarus and Jesus was that Lazarus was raised but Jesus was resurrection. Lazarus would die again, but Jesus never died again after His resurrection.

44b The Graveclothes:

1. Graveclothes are the rags of our old life.

A. When we are saved, we are to put off the old man and change our garments by putting on the new man. Lazarus' grave-clothes smelled of four days of death. Why would he want to remain in them any longer?

i. Ephesians 4:22-24 **"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."**

2. These are clothes of death and they stink and reek of death.

A. Song of Solomon 1:3, **"Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee."**

i. The ointments would be like perfume or cologne which would be very fragrant.

Solomon's name is poured out as one pours out this type of ointment. The result would be filling the room with a fragrant odor. The name of Christ, when it is poured out in preaching, witnessing or public prayer, likewise fills a room with a sweet-smelling savour. All of Christ is savory- every act, word, deed and office that He possesses. We cannot say too much about the name of Christ.

ii. As a perfume, Christ must fill the room (or a believer's heart) continually. A room freshener that is not powerful enough to last a long period of time or to completely overpower the offensive odors of a room is not worth its weight. But Christ is an eternal fragrance and His sweet- smelling savor is powerful enough to mask the offensive stench of the world.

iii. The name of Christ is to be considered as ointment- it is sweet, fragrant, costly. It makes those who don't smell so good spiritually to smell better. Nothing else can make a sinner stinking from his constant contacts from the world smell better than a good application of Christ upon his soul. Christ turns that stinking sinner into a sweet-smelling saint- nothing else can.

iv. Since most sinners do not enter church buildings, they would not be able to partake of the fragrance that is Christ's name unless someone took the bottle out to where the sinner was. This is called evangelism- giving sinners an opportunity to enjoy Christ.

a. What kind of a fragrance is our local church putting out? What do we smell like spiritually?

(i). Some smell like hyper-evangelism, bus routes, evangelistic Sunday Schools (instead of teaching Sunday Schools), numbers and growth.

These churches will do just anything to attract a crowd, including compromise and watering-down the preaching of the Word of God.

(ii). Some smell like liberalism, modernism, or other shades of formalism.

(iii). Some smell like a Charismatic freak show, complete with “Christian” rock music, “worship leaders”, emotional “preaching” and other contemporary nonsense.

(iv). Some smell like a personality cult, where the pastor is trying to build his own little empire.

(v). Some smell like nothing more than denominational carbon-copies of what their District Superintendents or Bishop or some other “big name” preacher is telling them to say.

b. To be frank, these churches “stink”. The churches that “smell good” to the Lord are churches that:

(i). Emphasize the preaching and teaching of the Word of God above all else

(ii). Reject the contemporary Christianity of our day and deliberately seek out “the old paths” and “the good way”. Or they re-interpret the “old paths” in a new definition. Modern neo-Fundamentalists (modern “Independent Fundamental Baptists”) who affiliate themselves with the Sword of the Lord do this. They style themselves as “Fundamentalists” but know little about the movement. They deny repentance, think preaching volume equals spirituality, leave off Biblical scholarship and are hyper-evangelistic, bowing at the altar of church growth and cheap evangelism.

(iii.) Practice separation from the world, both personal and ecclesiastical.

(iv.). Have spiritual and humble leadership.

(v.). Have the right attitude and heart about them.

3. When God calls us out of our graves and into a new life, the old grave clothes of our past life try to hinder us. We are bound to them and by then and they hinder any progress we may try to make from our tombs. Thankfully, God calls on others (preachers, saints...) to help the new believer to be freed from the sins of his old life.

A. Lazarus was bound, like in a straitjacket, so it was difficult for him to arise from the tomb. He needed help!

4. The Lord raised Lazarus but did not loose Lazarus. There are some things in the Christian life we must do for ourselves. One is to free ourselves from the grave-clothes from our past life. Many want to come out of their tombs but they want to bring their grave-clothes with them through their worldly music, carnal clothing and worldly philosophies.

5. Some people would rather stay in the tomb, bound in their grave clothes, after Jesus calls them forth. Jesus called but Lazarus had to come out on his own. Christ calls many but few will respond. They would rather stay dead, wrapped in the grave clothes of their sins, living with other corpses.

44c This does not violate Hebrews 9:27 “**And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:**”. Enoch will never die, nor will that generation that goes up in the rapture. Hebrews 9:2 (“**For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary.**”) is just a general observation about the universality of death and the judgment that follows.

11:45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.^{ab}

45a How could you deny this? How could you explain it away?

45b The resurrection of Christ was the greatest sign given to Israel. This would be the second greatest

sign. If these Jews and disciples witnessed the resurrection of Lazarus, how could they doubt the resurrection of Jesus? How could Thomas witness it here and then doubt the Lord's resurrection in John 20?

54. The Reaction to the Raising of Lazarus 11:46-53

11:46 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

11:47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we^a for this man doeth many miracles.

47a You could believe on Him!

11:48 If we let him thus alone, all men will believe on him: and the Romans shall come and take away both our place^a and nation.^b

48a Here was their real fear. If Jesus' activities remained unchecked, He could start a rebellion which would draw a Roman military response. The Sanhedrin would be blamed for failing to keep the peace and they would be removed from power by Rome. They would lose their power, their prestige, their cushy job and pension, and maybe their life.

The alternative was no better. Even if the Romans did not act, the threat of a rebellion let by Jesus was a very real danger and the threat to them was just as real, whether they would be overthrown by the people or by the Romans.

48b The Romans would do this in A.D. 70. It happened anyway. They were afraid that if they continued to allow Jesus to minister, the Romans would show up and put a stop to it, by force. So they killed Jesus, and the Romans still came, forty years later.

11:49 And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year,^a said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

49a "Caiaphas was appointed high priest in A.D. 18 by the Roman prefect Valerius Gratus and he continued in office until A.D. 36. He was son-in-law to Annas, who had been high priest from A.D. 6 to A.D. 15, but continued to exert much power over what went on in the nation. John's statement about Caiaphas means that he was steering the affairs of the nation when Christ was crucified. Like most members of the chief priest segment of the Sanhedrin, Caiaphas was a Sadducee. Since the Sadducees denied the possibility of resurrection, this miracle struck a particularly sour note."¹¹⁵

11:50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

11:51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;^a

51a Sometimes, even a blind squirrel finds a nut. Caiaphas stumbled into this great truth without

¹¹⁵ John Philipps, *Exploring the Gospel of John*.

realizing it.

11:52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.^a

52a Is this a remark inserted by John, expanding the remarks of verses 50 and 51 to include not just the Jews but by extension, all true believers in God. Christ would die not only for His own people Israel but for all that will believe on Him, including the Gentiles.

11:53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.^a

53a Their love of power and hatred of truth is unbelievable. Here is a man raising people from the dead, healing the sick and preaching the truth of God, and for that, He must die!

55. Withdrawl of Jesus 11:54-57

11:54 Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.^a

54a Jesus was aware what the Council had decided and removed Himself from their geographical sphere of influence. Jesus saw no reason to “poke the bear” any more than was necessary.

11:55 And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.

11:56 Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?

11:57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take him.^a

57a The people ordered to be an informant and “snitch” on Jesus if anyone knew where He was.

John Chapter 12

It will be helpful at this point to summarize the main sequence of events.

1. The Sixth Day before the Passover. The 9th day of Nisan, our Thursday Sunset to Friday Sunset
 - A. The Lord approaches Jerusalem from Jericho (Luke 19:1-10)
 - B. He spends Thursday night with Zacchaeus (Luke 19:11-27)
 - C. He enters Jerusalem and cleanses the temple (Matthew 21:1-16)
 - D. He goes to Bethany (John 12:1)
2. The Fifth Day before the Passover. The 10th day of Nisan, our Friday Sunset to Saturday Sunset
 - A. The Lord spends the sabbath at Bethany. After sunset the first of three suppers was given, probably at the house of Lazarus (John 12:2)
 - B. Mary of Bethany anointed Jesus (John 12:3-11)
3. The Fourth Day before the Passover. The 11th day of Nisan, our Saturday Sunset to Sunday Sunset
 - A. The triumphal entry into Jerusalem (Mark 11:1-7; Luke 19:29-35; John 12:12)
 - B. He returns to Bethany (Mark 11:11)
4. The Third Day before the Passover. The 12th day of Nisan, our Sunday Sunset to Monday Sunset
 - A. The Lord returns to Jerusalem and curses the fig tree (Matthew 21:18-22)
 - B. The coming of the Greeks (John 12:20-50)
 - C. Opposition from the rulers (Mark 11:12-18)
 - D. The Lord leaves Jerusalem, probably for Bethany (Luke 11:19)
5. The Second Day before the Passover. The 13th day of Nisan, our Monday Sunset to Tuesday Sunset
 - A. The Lord returns to Jerusalem (Matthew 21:23-23:39; Mark 11:20-12:44; Luke 20:1-21:38)
 - B. The Lord gives his Olivet discourse (Matthew 24:1-25:46)
 - C. The time note: "After two days is the Passover" (Matthew 26:1-5; Mark 14:1,2)
 - D. The Lord returns to Bethany. The second supper, in the house of Simon the leper. The second anointing (Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9)
6. The Day before the Passover. The 14th day of Nisan, our Tuesday Sunset to Wednesday Sunset The Day of the Crucifixion
 - A. The plot of Judas (Matthew 26:14-16)
 - B. The "preparation" for the last supper (Matthew 26:17-19). The words in Mark 14:12 and Luke 22:7 refer to "the first day of unleavened bread" (the 14th day of Nisan, "the preparation day")
 - C. In the evening the Lord goes to the upper room and washes the disciples' feet (Matthew 26:21-25; John 13:1-20)
 - D. The Lord reveals the traitor (John 13:21-30)
 - E. The Lord eats the Passover and makes the New Covenant (Matthew 26:26-29)
 - F. The Lord foretells Peter's denials (John 13:31-38)
 - G. The Lord talks to his disciples and prays for them (John 14:1-17:26)
 - H. They go to Gethsemane (Matthew 26:30-35; John 18:1)
 - I. The Lord is arrested (Matthew 26:47-56; John 18:2-11)

- J. The trials (Matthew 26:57-27:31; John 18:12-19:13)
- K. The crucifixion (the "third hour"—9 a.m. Wednesday) (Mark 15:25-26)
- L. The Lord's mother commended to John's care (John 19:25-27)
- M. The Lord dies at "the ninth hour" (3 p.m. Wednesday) (John 19:31-37)
- N. The Lord's hasty burial (John 19:38-42)

Thus, the Lord was already in the tomb on the first day of the feast, the 15th day of Nisan (Wednesday sunset to Thursday sunset). This day was called "the high day" or "the high sabbath." He remained in the tomb through the second and third days of the feast (Thursday sunset through Saturday sunset). Saturday was the regular Jewish sabbath, the 17th day of Nisan. He rose from the dead on "the first day of the week," the 18th day of Nisan: "Very early in the morning," the "third day" as foretold by Jesus (Matthew 16:21)¹¹⁶ No "Good Friday!" That is a Roman Catholic tradition and there is no way you can squeeze "three days and nights" from Friday through Sunday.

"Every intelligent reader of the Gospel will see that John purposely omits at this point certain events which are recorded by Matthew, Mark, and Luke. He passes at once from our Lord's retirement to the city called Ephraim, to His return to Bethany for the last time. In this interval will be found the things related in Matthew 10:17-34; Mark 10:32-52; Luke 18:31-19:28. In whatever part of Palestine this city Ephraim was, it is almost certain that between it and Bethany Jesus passed through Jericho, healed two blind men there, converted the publican Zaccheus, and spoke the parable of the nobleman who went into a far country, after giving to his ten servants ten pounds. Why St. John did not record these facts we do not know, and it is mere waste of time to inquire. A reverent mind will be content to remember that John wrote by inspiration of God and was guided by infallible direction, both as to what he recorded and what he did not record. Reason and common sense, moreover, tell us that if the four Evangelists had all narrated exactly the same things, their value as independent witnesses would have been greatly damaged. Their variations and diversities are a strong direct proof of their credibility. Too close an agreement would raise a suspicion of collusion and look like an attempt to deceive."¹¹⁷

56. The Anointing of Jesus 12:1-8, see also Matthew 26:1-13; Mark 14:3-9

12:1 Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

12:2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served:^{ab} but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.^{cd}

2a Always a blessed ministry, no matter how menial. Martha would have made a good deacon.

2b In the church, there are different functions. There are three kinds of functions in the service of the church represented by the three persons in this chapter.

1. There is the serving function represented by Martha (John 12:2). Throughout church history,

¹¹⁶ John Philips, *Exploring John*.

¹¹⁷ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on John*.

Martha has been treated unfairly. Christians have looked down on her. Do not condemn Martha. It is unfair to condemn her. The more "menial" affairs of the church must be taken care of. How could we have the food taken care of without Martha? We need her to prepare the food. Someone has to mow the grass. Someone has to keep the books. Someone has to clean the chapel. We must have some Marthas who are diligent, capable, active, living, and practical. Although we are spiritual, we must still serve practically. Martha's service was needed in that house.

A. Martha had a problem doing too much serving, to the point where she criticized Mary for not helping her (Luke 10:40). The workers sometimes complain they are doing most of the "grunt" work while other people are doing other things, like "wasting their time" in devotions or prayer. These are people who tend to believe that you need to work to keep your favor with God, so you have to go "soulwinning" three hours a day or work on the bus routes all day every Saturday. But other people are working too. The theologian is at work in his study and Solomon assures us that much study is a weariness to the flesh (Ecclesiastes 12:12). The spiritual pilgrim is busy in prayer and if you don't that prayer isn't work, then you've never prayed.

2. There is the testifying ministry of Lazarus. It appears as if Lazarus did nothing. He just sat there at the table with the Lord, enjoying the feast with Him. But we must remember that Lazarus was the living testimony of the resurrection power of Jesus. He did not testify by doing but by living in the resurrection life. He was a witness to the power of the Lord's resurrection life. Wherever he was, the testimony of resurrection life was there. Martha's service was good, but it did not attract people. It was the testimony of Lazarus that attracted them. People believed because of what happened to Lazarus, not by Martha's service. This does not mean that Martha's service was not good and was not needed, for certain things had to be taken care of. Even Lazarus had to be served by Martha. Therefore, we must realize that even when we have a good testimony of life, we still need the service of Martha. The second kind of function in the church is the testimony of life. It is not by doing but by living. It is not a kind of work; it is a kind of life. It is not by laboring; it is by enjoying the Lord. It gives people the feeling of resurrection power, the manifestation of resurrection life, and the enjoyment of the Lord as life. Martha's service is necessary, but Lazarus's ministry is even more necessary.

3. Mary represents the third kind of function (John 12:2,3). She represents the believers who worship the Lord very much and who pour out what they hold most precious upon the Lord. They love the Lord so much that they give the best to the Lord. This is what Mary did. She poured the costly ointment upon the feet of the Lord and wiped His feet with her hair. In her heart nothing was so dear, so precious, and so costly as the Lord. She, along with many others like her, loved the Lord with the best she had. Her estimate of the Lord was that He was more valuable and lovable than anything else. For her, the Lord was the most precious and the most costly One. The main characteristic of the church life is anointing the Lord with our best love. The main expression, aspect, and characteristic of the church life is that we pour out our love and worship like ointment upon Him. The church here is likened to a house that is filled with the preciousness, the sweetness, and the pleasantness of the aroma of the ointment poured out upon the Lord Jesus (Song of Solomon 1:3). This ought to be the main expression of a local church. When you come into a local church, the first thing that you should smell is the loving ointment poured out upon the Lord Jesus. It is not simply that Mary loved the Lord, but that she poured out her best upon the Lord, and this becomes a sign of the proper church life. We all must love and worship the Lord to such an extent.

We then have three kinds of functions: serving, testifying, and worship. These three items must be found in the church. Whenever people come to us, they must realize that among us are the service for the Lord, the testimony of the Lord, and the love and worship poured out upon the Lord. These three items are a must. We all must be a triangular member of the church.

These three people represent the three types of pilgrims in the church. We would classify them as the theological pilgrim, the mystical pilgrim, and the practical pilgrim.

1. The theological pilgrim is that particular pilgrim or group of pilgrims whom God raises up when Satan's attack is hard-hit against biblical doctrine.

A. This would be represented by Lazarus, who typified the necessary doctrine of the resurrection, which the Sanhedrin denied. But he was living proof of it.

B. In church history, think of the times of the creeds and the councils and the Puritans.

2. The mystical pilgrim is raised up of the Lord in a time when Satan's attack is aimed against biblical spirituality.

A. This is typified by Mary, who was attacked by Judas for her act of devotion to the Lord.

B. In church history, think of Robert Murray McCheyne.

3. The practical pilgrim is raised up by God in a time when Satan's attack is against biblical practice.

A. This is typified by Martha, the worker, who has also been criticized through church history.

B. In church history, think of D. L. Moody.

The Godly pilgrim of any time is one who walks with the Lord God according to true doctrine, true spirituality, and true practice. Nothing in the modern Christian life and church is needed more than a balanced relationship between doctrine, spirit, and practice.¹¹⁸

2c Don't you know that Lazarus was the star attraction at this supper! We wonder if everyone was asking him about the afterlife, but any answer Lazarus would have given is not recorded by John. We wonder if Lazarus could describe anything he saw in Abraham's Bosom. In 2 Corinthians 12:2-4, Paul describes a man he knew (probably himself) who was caught up to heaven. Paul couldn't describe what he saw as what he saw was "unspeakable" and "not lawful" (not permitted by God?) to describe it. Lazarus nor Paul could describe what they saw and heard and if they could, it appears the Lord would not permit them to describe it. If Lazarus would have been risen today, he would be a guest on a TV talk show or signed up by some enterprising publicist to write a book and travel the continent giving his testimony and boosting sales. Instead, we see Lazarus quietly and inconspicuously taking his seat at the table with Jesus.

2d This appears to be purposely mentioned in order to show the reality of Lazarus' resurrection. He was not a ghost or a spirit. He had really been raised to life with a real body, and flesh and bones, and all the needs and conditions of a body. Did Lazarus take material food before the eyes of his friends? No one in his sober senses, who saw Jesus take "broiled fish and a honeycomb," and eat it before several witnesses, would doubt that He had a real body.

A. Luke 24:42 **"And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb."**

12:3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly,^a and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair:^b and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.^{cde}

3a Mary offers her greatest possession to Christ. It is said that such a possession was part of a woman's dowry and this was quite valuable.

3b "In Palestine no respectable woman would ever appear in public with her hair unbound. On the day

¹¹⁸ See O. Talmadge Spence, *The Quest For Christian Purity*, pages 362-364.

a girl was married her hair was bound up, and never again would she be seen in public with her long tresses flowing loose. That was the sign of an immoral woman. But Mary never even thought of that. When two people really love each other, they live in a world of their own. They will wander slowly down a crowded street hand in hand heedless of what other people think. Many are self-conscious about showing their Christianity, concerned always about what others are thinking about them. Mary loved Jesus so much that it was nothing to her what others thought."¹¹⁹

3c In preparation for His death, as corpses were usually anointed before burial.

3d Martha was the server, Mary was the giver. Both kinds are needed in the church.

3e The name of Christ is as ointment poured out, much like the drink offering was poured out upon a thirsty earth by the priest. "Yes, Jesus is viewed at Calvary, where He poured out His soul unto death. We think here of another woman in the Bible, the wise woman of Tekoa, when she was concerned before King David over his son Absalom. Joab orchestrated the occasion somewhat (2 Samuel 14:1-3). Her extended plea resolved in her longing heart that the King would 'fetch home again his banished' - his son Absalom (v. 13b). But the classical statement that contains the preciousness of her argument is reached: 'For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person: yet doth he devise means, that his banished be not expelled from him (2 Samuel 14:14).' It takes a poured-out life through the Savior to 'devise' a 'means' to recover and save life 'spilt on the ground'."¹²⁰

As a perfume, Christ must fill the room (or a believer's heart) continually. A room freshener that is not powerful enough to last a long period of time or to completely overpower the offensive odors of a room is not worth its weight. But Christ is an eternal fragrance and His sweet-smelling savor is powerful enough to mask the offensive stench of the world.

The name of Christ is to be considered as ointment- it is sweet, fragrant, costly. It makes those who don't smell so good spiritually to smell better. Nothing else can make a sinner stinking from his constant contacts from the world smell better than a good application of Christ upon his soul. Christ turns that stinking sinner into a sweet-smelling saint- nothing else can. Christ's name, as that ointment, must be poured out in order to have any effect. Perfume in the container cannot make a room or a person smell better. It must be taken out of the bottle and be applied before it can have any effect. Likewise, Christ must be taken out of the church building and poured out into the streets and the world of sinners in order for sinner to be able to enjoy His fragrance.

Since most sinners do not enter church buildings, they would not be able to partake of the fragrance that is Christ's name unless someone took the bottle out to where the sinner was. This is called evangelism- giving sinners an opportunity to enjoy Christ.

"The custom of anointing the body is usual in hot climates and contributes greatly to comfort. Even the Greeks, Romans, and others, whose limbs were mostly protected by clothes from the dryness of the air, found the advantage of its use. In going to entertainments, it is probable, that like the Greeks, the Egyptians anointed themselves before they left home; but still it was customary for a servant to attend every guest, as he seated himself, and to anoint his head; and this was one of the principal tokens of welcome. The ointment was contained sometimes in an alabaster, sometimes in an elegant porcelain vase; and so strong was the odour, and so perfectly were the different component substances amalgamated, that some of this ancient ointment in one of the alabaster vases in the museum at Alnwick Castle, yet retains its scent, though between two and three thousand years old." (Wilkinson's *Ancient Egyptians*, vol. iii. 379.)

"To what extent the luxury of using fragrant oils and the like was carried on, may be inferred

¹¹⁹ William Barclay, *John in The Daily Study Bible*.

¹²⁰ O. Talmadge Spence, *The Song of Solomon*, page 24.

from Seneca, Epist. m, who says, that people anointed themselves twice or even three times a day, in order that the delicious fragrance might never diminish. The wealthy Greeks and Romans carried their ointments and perfumes with them, in small boxes of costly materials and beautiful workmanship."—Smith's Dictionary of Antiquities."¹²¹

AV	ESV	LSV
3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment.	3 Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.	3 Mary then took a litra of perfume of very costly pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair; and the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

“pound” The LSV has “litra”. What is that?

12:4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him,^a

4a John writes this in retrospect, as only Jesus knew about Judas’s betrayal at this time.

12:5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence,^a and given to the poor?

5a Judas valued the ointment at 300 pence, or the wages for a working man for a year. Today, it would be worth about \$50,000 or so. Judas made a great ado about 300 pence and a little ointment, when he was about to sell the Son of God for 30 pieces of silver. He valued the ointment more than he did Christ. Judas is one of those men who know the price of everything and the value of nothing.

AV	ESV	LSV
5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?	5 “Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?”	5 “Why was this perfume not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?”

The ESV and LSV has “denarii”, which isn’t an improvement on “pence”.

12:6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.^{abcd}

6a You can always spot a thief because he is always talking about the money. He is also always talking about “helping the poor” while not doing anything himself to “help the poor”, Judas was a thief and “borrowed” from the bag regularly. He would get away with it because Judas put on a great show of outward piety and trustworthiness that fooled the other disciples. Truly, “the love of money is the root of all evil” (1 Timothy 6:10). Whenever you hear a politician talking about “the poor” or an “anti-poverty”

¹²¹ George Burrowes, *Commentary on the Song of Solomon*, pages 132-133.

program, hold on to your wallet.

6b John did not hesitate for two seconds to judge Judas as a thief, and you may make a similar judgment, too. It is no sin to make such an obvious and clear (and true) judgment like this. John did not realize that Judas was a thief at the time for he had been fooled by Judas's false piety along with the other disciples. But he knew better in retrospect!

6c Judas cared nothing for Martha's service and devotion nor for the great monetary sacrifice of the ointment. He saw things in a purely horizontal manner. It was all about the money and the lost opportunity he would have to skim his take from it. But he sounded so spiritual as he complained about the "waste" of the money.

6d Why did Jesus trust Judas with the bag if Jesus knew who he really was (John 6:70,71)? We don't know. Was Jesus expressing His faith in Judas up to the end when he crossed the line in his betrayal by allowing him the important position of treasurer? Was Jesus saying how much He wanted Judas to know that He thought he was important? If so, this kind of outreach to Judas did not bear the fruit Jesus hoped it would. If apostleship did not make Judas a saint, neither will position, office, or dress make a man a saint.

12:7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone:^a against the day of my burying hath she kept this.^b

7a Christ defends those who serve Him in such a manner. Mary may have heard Judas and was hurt by it and her supposed lack of compassion to the "poor" but the Lord saw it quite differently.

7b Jesus rebuked Judas here. A man like Judas would not have taken such a rebuke well and this may have bred resentment in his heart which would eventually lead to his betrayal.

12:8 For the poor always ye have with you;^a but me ye have not always.^b

8a There go all governmental welfare programs. They cannot eliminate poverty. Only the millennial kingdom will do that.

A. Deuteronomy 15:11 **"For the poor shall never cease out of the land: therefore I command thee, saying, Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto thy brother, to thy poor, and to thy needy, in thy land."**

8b It is better to give your money to Jesus and the things of God than to give it to "poverty programs". Most charities keep at least half for salaries and "administrative expenses" and what's left usually gets "lost" and is never accounted for. It's much worse than that in government programs.

57. The Plot to Kill Lazarus 12:9-11

12:9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.^{ab}

9a Lazarus had become quite the celebrity. No doubt there were many people who asked him what was on "the other side" and what he could remember from being dead. If he gave any response, it is not recorded. It is possible that he had nothing to say. He may not have remembered. He may have not been able to describe it. Or he may have been forbidden by God to say anything.

We have to go to 2 Corinthians 12:1-4 for help with this (**"It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter."**) If Paul is talking about himself in this text, it may have occurred after his stoning outside of Lystra in Acts 14:19,20. If this is the case, Paul was dead and did go to heaven, only to be sent back to earth. Of anything he saw in heaven, Paul said that he heard **"unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter"** in 2 Corinthians 12:4. The words were "unspeakable". He could not put anything he saw into words. And this was "not lawful", He may have been forbidden by God to describe what he saw. We are simply going to have to wait by faith until that faith becomes sight. Lazarus was in the same situation.

If neither Paul nor Lazarus could describe what they saw in heaven, then I certainly do not trust these rash of books put out by people who claim they died and went to heaven or hell for 30 minutes, only to be resuscitated. Then they wrote a 300-page book about what they saw and heard after death. They pocketed a nice signing advance and made the rounds to all the Christian "talk shows" and became celebrities, at least for a while. But why were they allowed or able to remember the events after death when neither Paul or Lazarus were allowed or able?

Lazarus, the Lazarus and rich man of Luke 16 and Paul were all conscious after death. That is obvious from Luke 16 and what Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 12:4. They were no asleep or unconscious. The doctrine of "soul sleep" is not Scriptural. This is taught mainly by the Seventh Day Adventist cult and this, as well as many other of their doctrines, is not supported by Scripture. Death is referred to as "sleep" but that refers to the body, not the soul.

9b The resurrect saint is seated with Christ at a supper. What a great picture of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. But Martha was serving here, so whom does she represent? Who will be serving at the Marriage Supper?

12:10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;^a

10a They felt they needed to kill a dead man whom Jesus raised from the dead who would die again one day anyway. They had to get rid of the evidence of the power of Jesus, but how could they? Word of Lazarus' raising had already spread far and wide and there was no way the religious leaders could get that genie back into the bottle.

The Sadducees may have spearheaded the campaign to kill Lazarus. They did not believe in any resurrection, yet there was Lazarus sitting there, in plain sight, much to their embarrassment.

These types of religious leaders were always looking to put righteous men to death. Look what they did to Stephen in Acts 7. Paul would have understood this mentality in the days before his conversion.

12:11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.^a

11a Jesus was too popular and was having too much influence that the Sanhedrin could not control. What they could not control, they endeavored to destroy. They were losing too much influence to Jesus.

58. The Triumphal Entry 12:12-19, see also Matthew 21:4-9; Mark 11:7-10; Luke 19:35,36

12:12 On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

12:13 Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.^a

13a Jesus offers the Kingdom and Himself as King. He accepts the praise and adoration offered. But who knew that He would be dead in a week?

12:14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written,^a

14a Greek perfect tense- it has been written and remains written, not to be changed or altered. It is a completed action with continuous results or the continuance of an act completed in the past. The components are always a past action and continuous results. References to the Scriptures like this are often presented in the perfect tense. This perfect tense in reference to New Testament references to Old Testament texts is used 62 times in the New Testament, 16 times in Romans (1:17; 2:24; 3:4,10; 4:17; 8:36; 9:13,33; 10:15; 11:8,26; 12:19; 14:11; 15:3,9,21). This usage of the perfect is a strong argument for the verbal and plenary preservation of the Scripture, as the written Old Testament word stands forever and continues to stand.

12:15 Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.^a

15a This is quoted from Zechariah 9:9. Everyone who witnessed this understood what was involved. The Lord was riding an ass' colt. Had he wanted to encourage the kingdom aspirations of the Jews, he would have ridden into Jerusalem on a war horse. No doubt the fact that this "messiah" was riding in triumph on such a lowly animal would have helped disarm Roman suspicions. We can be sure that this populist movement was being closely watched by the Romans. But a king riding on an ass' colt would pose no threat. They would see that as amusing, even something to ridicule.

12:16 These things understood not his disciples at the first:^a but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.^b

16a John confesses his own ignorance at the time as he did not understand everything going on, but he does as he wrote his gospel.

16b Seldom has there been such a display of courage as the Triumphal Entry. Jesus was a wanted man and the authorities were determined to kill him. All prudence would have warned Him to turn back and make for Galilee or the desert places. If He was to enter Jerusalem at all, caution would have demanded that He enter secretly and go into hiding; but He came in such a way as to focus every eye upon Himself. He defied the Sanhedrin and challenged them (and Satan) to do their worst, which they would soon do.

12:17 The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.^a

17a John is always eager to make sure that other “bare record” of the things he wrote about.

12:18 For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.^a

18a The miracle of the raising of Lazarus.

12:19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.^a

19a They were at their wit's end. Nothing they tried worked and Jesus just kept getting more and more popular. It just seemed to them that the entire world was going after Jesus. Would to God it were true!

59. Greeks Seek Jesus 12:20-22

12:20 And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast:

12:21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.^{abcd}

21a Too many people today would rather see the president, some actor, some athlete, some singer or some YouTube “influencer”. But very few would rather see Jesus.

“Who wouldn’t if they had the sense of a ground hog? Who wouldn’t like to see what Simeon saw (Luke 2:29–30)? Would YOU like to see a man who had more power than Paul Anderson, Bill Gates, Adolph Hitler, Joe Stalin, Alan Greenspan, Baron Rothschild, Pope John XXIII, Charles Atlas, Caesar, Mr. Universe, Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 5:18–19), and Napoleon COMBINED? Wouldn’t you like to see a man who was purer than the purest man who ever lived, braver than Chesty Puller, Irwin Rommel, or Audie Murphy, wiser than any 5,000 scholars or philosophers who ever lived, and had the ability to pull Himself up by His own “bootstraps” out of the grave after being dead three days and nights? Who wouldn’t travel 5,000 miles to see someone like that? People have traveled farther than that to see where some silly pagan religious nut thought they saw “Mary” (Fatima, Lourdes, Rome, New York, etc.).”¹²²

But few people really want to “see Jesus” today. They want to “see” the preacher, the actor, the singer, the politician, the YouTube “influencer”, anyone except the most important person of them all. When come to church, they want to “see” an impressive building, an entertaining preacher, a well-developed musical ministry, an active youth group and a sizeable congregation. But what if that church as none of this? You can still “see” Jesus even if there are 8 people sitting on folding chairs in a rented storefront.

And what kind of Jesus do you want to see? A political Jesus who tells you to vote for half-worthless Republican politicians during every election? A socialistic Jesus? A Jesus Who is nothing but a faith-healer or a financial consultant? A weak-kneed theologically liberal Jesus Who believes nothing and condemns no one? A “fun” Jesus promoted by the youth pastor? There are many “false” Jesuses to compete with the Biblical Jesus.

21b Mary-worshippers must be distressed to realize that not a single person in the New Testament said “Sir, we would see Mary” and no one walked 40 feet out of the way to see her.

¹²² Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, pages 372-373.

21c "It need not seem strange to find Greeks in Jerusalem at the Passover time. They need not even have been proselytes. The Greek was an inveterate wanderer, driven by wanderlust and by the desire to find out new things. "You Athenians," said one of the ancients, "will never rest yourselves, nor will you ever let anyone else rest." "You Greeks," said another, "are like children, always young in your souls." More than five hundred years before this Herodotus had traveled the world, as he said himself, to find things out. Far up the Nile to this day there stands a great Egyptian statue on which a Greek tourist, even as modern tourists do, had scratched his name. The Greek voyaged for trade and for commerce of course; but he was the first man to wander for the sake of wandering in the ancient world. There is no need to be surprised to find a detachment of sightseeing Greeks even in Jerusalem.

"But the Greek was more than that. He was characteristically a seeker after truth. It was no unusual thing to find a Greek who had passed through philosophy after philosophy, and religion after religion, and gone from teacher to teacher in the search for truth. The Greek was the man with the seeking mind."¹²³

21d It seems these Greeks wanted a private audience for some reason, which the Lord did not grant.

12:22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.^a

22a John does not indicate any response by Jesus to their request. It is probable that He ignored the request. The time for these Greeks would come after His resurrection and ascension. Right now, the Lord was focused on Israel. The outreach to the Greeks would come later.

60. Christ Speaks of His Death 12:23-50

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

23a Glorified not in His kingship but through His death on the cross and the resulting resurrection and ascension.

12:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.^a

24a Christ's death would be multiplied into infinite fruit through the Church and the salvation of countless souls. In that case, He did more in His death than He did in His life. Many people accomplish more after their death (through their earthly works, reputation and legacy, for good and bad) than they ever did in their life. Many can be saved through the life and good death by others and others can be inspired to go on with God through the lives and testimonies of others.

12:25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.^{ab}

25a This is one of the many paradoxes of Scripture. This earthly life is okay but there is a greater life that follows it. That is what we should be working for and anticipating. To love this life more than the life to follow shows and ignorance of the quality of both lives.

¹²³ William Barclay, *John* in The Daily Study Bible.

25b The closer you get to the Lord the less you will care about this life. You get tired of the overemphasis on sports figures and movie stars. You get tired of the fraudulent compassion of one-worlders and politicians. You grow weary of a people too ungrateful to bow their head and thank God for their food yet quick to demand that He rescue them from whatever problems they experience. You cannot serve the Lord for life without ending up hating this world. To do the opposite, to be a friend of the world is equated to be an enemy of God according to James 4:4 (**"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."**). If you love this life and the things of this life, you probably aren't that interested in the next life.

12:26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.^a

26a The world would rather kill a Christian rather than honor him. How many monuments are in Washington D.C. or preachers, Bible teachers or missionaries? Yet that old communist fornicator and plagiarizer Martin Luther King has one. So does Franklin Roosevelt, who dragged us into World War II and turned American fascist in the 1930s. John Kennedy has an "eternal flame" at Arlington National Cemetery, but you will be looking for a long time to find a monument to John Patton or the translators of the Authorized Version. That's okay as heaven is full of such monuments but you'll find none to Abraham Lincoln "up there". Better to be honored at the Bema Seat than at the Kennedy Center.

If God honors you, then man won't and vice versa. You cannot serve God and mammon (Matthew 6:24) and you can't be honored by both. Men like the pope and Billy Graham are honored by the news media but that means nothing in heaven.

Many Christians whom God was said to honor perished in misery, poverty, and pain (Hebrews 11:36–38). Paul said he and others like him were the "offscouring of this world" (1 Corinthians 4:9-13). Do NOT expect and honor or recognition from this world if you are doing right and living right. If the world is honoring you, you had better run to your prayer closet as quickly as you can and "take inventory".

12:27 Now is my soul troubled;^a and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

27a His upcoming passion and struggles on the cross "troubled" Christ but He did not shirk from them, nor did He pray deliverance from them but rather the help of the Father through them. He contemplated the hours which were ahead of Him and the awfulness of what lie did shake Him, but not fatally. His upcoming sufferings were one of the few things that "troubled" the Lord during His earthly ministry.

12:28 Father, glorify thy name.^a Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.^b

28a This is all that mattered. The Scriptures must be fulfilled and the Father must be glorified.

28b In the resurrection, ascension, throughout the church age, at the second coming and in the millennium.

12:29 The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.

12:30 Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.^a

30a Christ already knew He had the Father's support and approval and He did not need this voice from heaven, but the Father provided it for the benefit of the faith of those present here.

12:31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world^a be cast out.^b

31a Satan.

31b Started at the cross, accomplished and finalized at the judgment in Revelation 20.

12:32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth,^a will draw all men unto me.^{bcd}

32a Lifted up on the cross in full view of all, as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness for all to see (Numbers 21:8,9).

32b Do not limit this just to salvation. The drawing also applies to sanctification and the Christian life. We must be drawn to Christ to be saved, and then there is a second drawing to sanctification. Not all sinners respond to the first call and not all Christians respond to the second call.

All men are drawn but so few respond to the call. You can be drawn to the cross, look at it, consider it and still walk away unsaved.

32c Also see Song of Solomon 1:4, **"Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee."**

1. The Shulamite desires not only a "general call" unto salvation that all men receive, but also a special, specific drawing to Christ Himself. How many Christians respond to the call of salvation but never respond to the call to the Christian life and close, intimate fellowship with Christ! There is a call to salvation and a call to sanctification. One gets us saved, the other makes us a saint. We must hear both calls and we need divine help to respond to both calls.

2. **"Draw me"** If the Lord does not draw the sinner, then the sinner cannot be saved (John 6:44). If God does not draw us, we cannot be saved,

3. "To be saved, we must be drawn; but there remains the drawn life."¹²⁴

4. Who is the "we"? We know the "me" is the Shulamite, but who is the "we"? Her company, her friends, those who share her heart and desire toward Solomon, will follow her as she runs after Solomon. One godly example is powerful to others, for one godly example and heart may influence uncounted multitudes toward righteousness. They follow Solomon as the Shulamite follows him. This reminds us of the 144,000 who follow the Lamb wherever He goes in Revelation 14:4 **"These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb."**

5. The Shulamite says draw me and we will run after Solomon. If the Shulamite gets any hints of encouragement from Solomon concerning her desire toward him, then she will respond by running after him. "Draw me" is the highest expression from the Shulamite heart as directed toward Christ. They want nothing more than to be in fellowship with Christ and to have that personal relationship

¹²⁴ O. Talmadge Spence, *The Song of Solomon*, page 28.

with Him. Nothing else matters. The believer has a personal, individual and unique relationship with Christ. Wherever the Shulamite goes, the virgins follow. She is going to be with Solomon and the virgins certainly want to be there too. She desires the drawing and she receives it but more than she expected.”¹²⁵

32d Christ will draw all men and give all men opportunity to repent, but that certainly does not mean that all will do so.

12:33 This he said, signifying what death he should die.^a

33a His death by crucifixion.

12:34 The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth for ever:^a and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up?^b who is this Son of man?^c

34a They “heard” but there is no verse in the Law that says this. It is inferred but not directly stated in the writings of Moses. You have to go to post-Mosaic writings to see some of these verses. Psalm 89:29 is probably the best verse, here, “**His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven.**”

34b Lifted up on the cross.

34c They were looking at Him and listening to Him, but they could still not see Him! They had eyes but could not see and ears but they could not hear.

12:35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.^a

35a The “Light” would be taken at the death of Christ and things would get darker and darker leading up to the rapture and the second coming.

12:36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light.^a These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

36a Only Christians can be children of light as they are the only ones who believe in the light.

12:37 But though he had done so many miracles before them,^a yet they believed not on him:^b

37a The gospel writers record 36 miracles but there were many more than that.

37b Some men are so blinded by their sin and hardened heart that they simply cannot believe, even with God standing right in front of them, performing miracles.

¹²⁵ John Cereghin, Pilgrim Way Commentary on the Song of Solomon, pages 26,27.

12:38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?^a

38a This is quoted from Isaiah 53:1 **“Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed?”**. The answer is “not many”.

12:39 Therefore they could not believe,^a because that Esaias said again,

39a We get frustrated and think ourselves failure when we witness to many but few, if any, get saved. Few will be truly saved. But you may be witnessing to those who cannot believe, for many possible reasons. The fault is not in you, but in the conditions of the hearts you are trying to deal with.

12:40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.^{ab}

40a As in John 12:34. This is also quoted from Isaiah 6:9,10 (**“And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.”**); Isaiah 29:10 (**“For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered.”**) and Isaiah 42:20 (**“Seeing many things, but thou observest not; opening the ears, but he heareth not.”**). The Jews did not believe, so God hardened their hearts and blinded their spiritual eyes.

40b “Well so much for Jesus “wringing His hands and pleading to the hard hearted to be saved.” Some soul winners, in their blind desire to make what they do seem preeminent in importance would have us think that God is crying rivers of tears when a lost person rejects Christ. Wrong! In allowing His Son to live, suffer, die and rise again God has done enough. He is not sitting up in Heaven with tears in His eyes, pleading with some Christ rejecter to repent. He straight forwardly makes the lost individual an offer of eternal salvation. After that He has no more obligation to him. Some soul winners will berate you if you’re not “crying daily for lost souls.” But God isn’t doing that! The lost man has all the choices that the Japanese had after the detonation of the second atomic bomb; “Surrender Now! Or prepare for the consequences.” Verse 40 tells us that sometimes God has had enough of the haughty attitude of the lost and will even harden their heart against salvation. Men like Larry Flynt, Dennis Rodman, Ted Turner and Howard Stern may literally be “God damned.”¹²⁶

12:41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.^a

41a Referring to Isaiah’s vision of Isaiah 6. John equates Isaiah seeing the Lord in that vision as Isaiah seeing Christ. This shows the pre-existence of Christ.

12:42 Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:^a

42a This included Nicodemus and Joseph. They saw what happened to the man healed of blindness in John 9 and that made them very careful in the next steps they considered taking, lest they suffer the

¹²⁶ Samuel Gipp, *A Practical and Theological Study of John*, pages 293-294.

same fate, or worse. Men have often failed to support some great cause, like the gospel, because it interfered with some lesser interest.

12:43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.^{ab}

43a This is the mark of an apostate. If you do what you do for the praise of men, that will be your reward, whatever that is worth. They will praise you and demand your death a week later. Public opinion is fickle. You cannot please both God and man since you cannot serve both (Matthew 6:24). This is also the root of compromise and apostasy, the desire to gain favor with the world.

43b John names no names but you know He had a lot of people in mind, even as he wrote this gospel decades after these events.

12:44 Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me.^a

44a If you believe on the Father, you should believe on the Son. They simply cannot be separated or isolated from each other. By this, Jesus claimed both deity and equality with the Father. This is also furthered in verse 45.

12:45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.^a

45a You see the Son, you also see the Father, and vice versa.

AV	ESV	LSV
45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.	45 And whoever sees me sees him who sent me.	45 “And he who sees Me sees the One who sent Me.

The LSV uses the New Age/occultic term “the One” to describe the Father.

12:46 I am come a light into the world,^a that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.^b

46a Jesus repeats His claims from John 9:5.

46b Salvation opens the eyes, cures the blindness and leads us into the light of truth.

12:47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not:^a for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.^b

47a Jesus does not judge that man at that time, but He will judge him later.

47b The first time Christ came, He came as a Messiah. The second time He comes, He will come as a judge.

12:48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.^a

48a There is a judgment coming for those who will not believe and it is the Great White Throne judgment of Revelation 20.

12:49 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

12:50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

John Chapter 13

John is the only gospel writer who devotes five chapters to events that took place in less than six hours: chapters 13-17 all take place in the “upper room” of Mark 14:14-16 and the path from there to Gethsemane. Timewise, this would be late Tuesday afternoon of the so-called “Passion Week”. Jesus was crucified on Wednesday, not on any sort of “Good Friday”.

1. The Passover, John 13:1
2. The Plot, John 13:2
3. The Profession, John 13:3-5
4. The Protest, John 13:6-8
5. The Plea, John 13:9
6. The Pattern, John 13:12-17

61. An Example Footwashing 13:1-17

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

1a He naturally knew the exact time, place and circumstances of His death since it was all prophesied beforehand.

1b Those who believe on Him. Christ claims them as His own.

1c In this context, to the end of His earthly life, but in the larger theological context, to the end of eternity, which has no end, meaning He will never stop loving His own!

1d As the dreadful hour for his passion was approaching, Jesus made it a point to spend His last hours on earth with the men He chose and loved, instead of dwelling on the pains and sufferings He would soon endure. They were confused, uncertain and afraid. Jesus would take this time to comfort them, instruct them and mold them for the ministry they would soon undertake.

13:2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;^a

2a A case of Satan possessing a man, probably the most classic case, as this was Satan himself doing the possessing, not a devil.

13:3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;^a

3a Jesus had full knowledge of Who He was and where He was going. Jesus fully knew He was God, so there was never any doubt in His mind about any aspect of His deity, even if the liberals, modernists and apostates had their doubts, for whatever it was worth!

13:4 He riseth from supper,^a and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.^b

4a The Passover meal.

4b These are the actions of a slave. Jesus also girded Himself after His resurrection in John 21:7.

13:5 After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.^{abcde}

5a This was a very menial task, one usually done by a slave. No other act was as “low” or “common” as this. Remember, Jesus took upon Him the form of a servant (Philippians 2:7 **“But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:”**) and He came not to be ministered unto but to minister (Matthew 20:28). Why shouldn’t He wash feet then? The larger question is why don’t we? Jesus was demonstrating the truth of Philippians 2:5-8 **“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”**

Can you imagine any other religious leader of deity doing this? Can you imagine Allah or Mohammad or the Buddha or any of the gods of Hinduism condescending to this level? Any of the gods of the Roman, Greek or Norse pantheons? I know the pope apes this yearly but no one takes him seriously. No Charismatic television preacher has this kind of humility nor do 99% in Independent Baptist preachers. I couldn’t see Jack Hyles or any of his clones doing this. But this is the mark of greatness, being willing to stoop. Jesus condescended all the way from the eternal glories of heaven to an upper room somewhere in Jerusalem, washing dirty feet of a devil and of eleven other men who would fail Him in His hour of greatest need.

5b “Ahhh! How fortunate for YOU and ME! Ahhh, what God Almighty did when He did that! (See Heb. 2:9,14–15, 5:7–9!) Ohhh, that day when Allah—you did say that “Allah” was just another name for the God of Abraham, did you not?—All you humanists and Moslems? You did, did you not?—the day that “Allah” became like His creatures, which He created, so He could sympathize with them and put up with what they had to put up with and then (glory to God!) die like they died: blood running out, heart stopping, lungs ceasing to breathe, and then a corpse going into a tomb. “Oh happy day that fixed my choice on THEE my Saviour and my God!”¹²⁷

5c Some commentators suggest He may have done Judas’ feet first. How would Judas have reacted?

5d This demonstrated:

1. Christ’s love for the disciples. See an illustration of this in Luke 7:38 (**“And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.”**) where the woman washed Jesus’ feet with her tears and her hair as a demonstration of her love toward Him.
2. His concern for their welfare
3. A demonstration of His willingness to serve. What a contrast to the ambition and self-seeking of the disciples.

A. Luke 22:24-27 **“And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be**

¹²⁷ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, page 396.

accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth."

5e Christ began to wash the disciples' feet. The reason for this was their argument about who would be "the greatest" among them (Luke 22:24 **"And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest."**). Christ had rebuked this kind of spirit by setting a little child in their midst and stating that they had to become as little children and not seek to lord it over each other (Matthew 18:1-10). He had also rebuked this spirit on other occasions (Mark 10:35-45). Apparently, the disciples still had not yet learned this lesson. He was seeking to get rid of this passion for worldly honor and dignity. And we still suffer from it today. Too many preachers scramble for honor, recognition and promotion. They desire honorary doctorates and for invitations to speak at some national church growth conference. Humility is a virtue not easy to be found in the church.

13:6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?^a

6a Peter's reaction was what you would expect. Here is his Master, Lord, Messiah, King and God, doing the task of a slave and washing his feet? Kings nor masters ever do anything like that! If anything, Peter should have been washing the Lord's feet.

13:7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.^{ab}

7a "You won't understand it now but you will understand it later".

7b There is no reason to make foot washing a church ordinance. The only time we see it is in the gospels, before the Church started in Acts 2. Paul makes no mention of it in his epistles either. It is an example, not an ordinance alongside water baptism and the Lord's Supper.

13:8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet.^a Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.^b

8a Never, never, ever! This sounds pious but in reality, Peter is denying the Lord an opportunity to minister to him. God wants to do everything for us in our lives, even those tasks that we think are mundane, commonplace and degrading.

"This was an immoderate modesty, a proud humility; so is it in them that refuse gospel comforts, because they are unworthy...Thou hast too much humility, said Luther to Staupicius. So the Baptist was as much to blame in refusing to baptize Christ {Mat 3:14} as Peter here to be washed by him."¹²⁸

8b If you won't allow the Lord to minister to all your needs and to every part of your being, then you can't expect Him to minister to you at all. The Lord was as dogmatic with Peter as Peter was being with him. To his credit, Peter knew when to back down!

¹²⁸ John Trappe

13:9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.^a

9a “Well, in that case, give me the full treatment and wash everything!” Peter was quick to change his beliefs when he discovered his error or a change in doctrine (Acts 11). Honest students change their beliefs to match the Bible, but dishonest people change the words of God to match their beliefs.

1. Romans 1:25 **“Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.”**

2. 2 Corinthians 2:17 **“For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.”**

13:10^a Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.^b

10a This is a verse listed by O. Talmadge Spence in his *Quest For Christian Purity* that he lists as a “guiding verse” for that quest. This is a verse that deals with some aspect of the Christian’s growth and pursuit of God.

10b Jesus is obviously speaking of Judas, who was all unclean, no matter how many times the Lord would have washed his feet. Washing feet might clean the feet but it would do nothing for the heart. He was a son of perdition, a devil, and never was saved, no matter how good and how convincing a show he put on (John 6:70 **“Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?”**). This declaration should have put a chill down Judas’ spine, in that he realized that Jesus knew!

13:11 For he knew who should betray him;^a therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

11a It was never any surprise to the Lord what Judas did or who he was. The Lord chose him for a disciple in spite of that so that the Scripture might be fulfilled. But you still have to wonder how the Lord’s relation with Judas was in the three years leading up to this. How was their relationship? How did Jesus treat Judas? Did Judas have any idea about his role in prophecy, about what he would do? We know he was a thief so he probably had little moral character to begin with and his years with Jesus did nothing to improve him morally or spiritually. It must have been difficult for the Lord to wash the feet of a devil, a son of perdition, who was already in league with the priests to betray Him. Judas had everyone fooled except the Lord, Who knew who he was from the beginning.

13:12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again,^a he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

12a The participants at such meals reclined on couches, lying on the left side and leaning on the left hand. The table was in the hollow square or oblong formed on three sides by the couches, the fourth side being open, and the table extending beyond the ends of the couches.

13:13 Ye call me Master^a and Lord:^b and ye say well; for so I am.^c

AV**ESV****LSV**

13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.	13 You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am.	13 "You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am.
---	--	---

13a "**Master**" The ESV and LSV have "Teacher", which is another long-running error in both translations.

13b But we have no record of Judas calling Him "Lord". Judas only called Him "Master". By this phrase, Jesus singled out Judas as the other disciples called Him "Lord". "Master" means "teacher" or "doctor". Anyone could call Jesus "Master" without recognizing His deity. Liberals do it every day. But to call Him "Lord" is a recognition of His deity and His authority and most people are not willing to do that.

13c Christ's acknowledgement of His deity. He was Master and Lord (God).

13:14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.^{ab}

14a This shows that footwashing is an example (also in John 13:15), not an ordinance like baptism or the Lord's Supper. We do not practice it as we do water baptism or the Lord's Supper. We should show the same attitude of humility and service as the Lord did. And we need to be genuine and sincere about it. The pope likes to style himself as a "servant of the servants of Christ" but no one believes him, as he lives in luxury and demands others bow before him, kiss his toe and recognize him as the "vicar of Christ".

14c This is an example for us to serve each other, even in menial tasks. If Christ washed feet, why do I think myself too good to do likewise? What Christ has done Christians should not disdain to do. We should always be ready to minister to each other, and that includes the church leadership.

13:15 For I have given you an example,^a that ye should do as I have done to you.

15a Consider the case of Samuel Brendel. He was a Methodist evangelist who had a lot of success in his evangelistic activities. He received offers to pastor some of the largest Methodist churches in the United States. He turned them down as he became interested in the work of The Salvation Army. He had heard William Booth speak at an open-air service and was drawn to his ministry and mission and he desired to travel to England to meet and volunteer his services to The Salvation Army. He had also met a young Salvationist by the name of Elizabeth Swift and had asked for her hand in marriage. When he did arrive in England to meet Booth, the meeting was far from cordial, Booth viewed Brendel with some skepticism calling him a dangerous man in that he had been his own boss and Booth was not sure Brendel would adhere to the discipline of The Salvation Army. Nonetheless he was accepted for training and made his home at the Salvation Army Training Barracks in London. One of his first duties was to blacken and shine the boots of his fellow cadets in a coal cellar, a job that was considered menial. He initially complained and was angry that Booth was treating him in such a manner, but then came to realize that His Savior did not consider it beneath Himself to wash the feet of the disciples. He took on all tasks, from selling the *War Cry* to preaching on the streets with equal humility and zeal. He was appointed to work in a rough section of Boston, where he was injured when a drunk threw a brick at him. During the time of his recuperation, he wrote his best-known book *Helps to Holiness*, which is worth reading.

13:16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.^a

16a If the Lord was a servant Who washed feet in humility, how much more should His servants do the same? If we want to be like our Master, we will, and in the same attitude.

AV	ESV	LSV
16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.	16 Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.	16 “Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor <i>is</i> one who is sent greater than the one who sent him.

“**servant**” Another problem with the LSV is always using “slave” for “servant” in its misunderstanding of the use and application of the Greek word “doulos” and the relationship Christians have to the Father as sons, not slaves (Galatians 4:6,7 “**And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.**”)

13:17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.^a

17a Knowing and doing the will of God is the key to happiness- not money, fame, sex, drugs, etc.

62. Jesus Speaks of His Betrayal 13:18-33

13:18 I speak not of you all:^a I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled,^b He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me.^c

18a Not speaking of Judas, as he never believed.

18b Always the overriding burden of the Lord, to make sure that the Scripture, which cannot be broken, be fulfilled in its entirety. This shows the amount of respect the Lord had for the Old Testament.

18c Psalm 41:9 (“**Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.**”). Judas was a “friend” (and the Lord called him “Friend” when He was arrested (Matthew 26:50 “**And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus, and took him.**”). Jesus broke bread with Judas and they did enjoy some fellowship with each other.

13:19 Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass,^a ye may believe that I am he.^b

19a Jesus was a prophet and was able to tell you what was going to happen before they did.

19b “**I am**”, a clear declaration of deity.

13:20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me;^a and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.^b

20a Receive someone who was sent out by the Lord and you receive the Lord Himself.

20b He who receives the Lord Jesus Christ receives the Father Himself.

13:21 When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily,^a I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.^b

21a A double verily, showing that a great spiritual truth is about to follow, which is that one of the disciples (Judas) would betray Him.

21b This was Judas. It came as no surprise what Judas would do, as it was prophesied centuries before, and Jesus naturally believed the prophets and took what they said seriously, as He was the One Who gave them those prophecies.

13:22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake.^a

22a No one suspected Judas, but they all suspected themselves! A spiritual man will always distrust himself but a wretched man like Judas will suspect others and not himself. Judas had put on a very good show to deceive everyone- except the Lord. It can be very difficult to tell who is saved and who is lost, as we cannot read the hearts. Many we are sure are saved may not be and we may see people in heaven we never expected to be there. We do not keep the Lamb's Book of Life so we must also be careful who we classify as "saved" and "lost".

Judas was a counterfeit believer and disciple. He was a "tare" (Matthew 13:25-40). Counterfeits are always difficult to spot, like tares among the wheat or like error from truth, or true churches from false churches. The differences may be subtle, but they will be there and you had better pray from spiritual discernment to be able to spot the differences.

13:23 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom^a one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.^b

23a They were reclining on their sides as they ate, as was the Jewish custom. DaVinci couldn't get that right in his painting of the Last Supper, as he has everyone sitting bolt upright, according to the modern custom. His painting may be a great piece of art but it was grossly inaccurate.

23b This would be John, the Lord's best friend while He was on the earth.

13:24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.^a

24a "Ask him!" Peter was silently urging John to get the Lord to identify the betrayer as Peter did not suspect Judas either.

13:25 He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it?^a

25a You never know- it could be you! The man who insists that he would never betray the Lord (like

Peter did in Matthew 26:35 **“Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples”**) are usually the fastest and the first to fall. Men who put no trust in their own goodness or spirituality will allow the possibility that it could be them “standing in the need of prayer”. A man who thinks he cannot fall is a fool. Every man has a weak spot and the devil knows where it is. If he can get Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and Peter to fall, he’ll have no trouble with you!

Every single Christian had better make sure that he truly is saved and is not acting the hypocrite or is not guilty of deceiving himself. But! “Observe that when John asks Jesus who the guilty party is, John does NOT ask, “Lord is it I?” (Matt.26:22). John asks, “LORD, WHO IS IT?” The “beloved apostle” had a conscience as clear as a soap-washed plate glass window.”¹²⁹

Everyone else except John wondered if they would be the one betraying the Lord. John wasn’t suffering from any sort of spiritual arrogance that made him think that it was impossible for him to fall, but his love for the Lord was strong enough so that John may have worried about other things in his communion with God but being the betrayer was not one of them.

13:26 Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop,^a when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop,a he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.^b

26a Like a piece of bread that is dipped in sauce. It was a portion of the paschal supper, collected in the fingers, dipped in the sauce, and handed to one of the guests. It was a mark of honor for the guest who received it.

26b How much plainer could the Lord have been? The only way He could have made it plainer was to stand on the table, point at Judas a yell “This is the one!” But again, the disciples, in their spiritual dullness, missed it.

13:27 And after the sop Satan entered into him.^a Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.^b

27a Not just possessed by any common devil, but by Satan himself.

27b Jesus knew exactly what Judas would do under the control of Satan. Jesus is in reality talking to Satan more than He is Judas. The Scriptures must be fulfilled, and He must go to the cross, so let us waste no more time but let’s get the ball rolling.

13:28 Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him.

13:29 For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.^a

29a Their dullness is incredible. The Lord identified the betrayer and none of them caught it.

13:30 He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.^a

30a **“The night cometh, when no man can work”** (John 9:4). “The light of the world” is about to be

¹²⁹ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, page 404.

extinguished. The Christian, in this age, is a child of "light" (see 1 Thess. 5:5). He is "of the day." The lost people are said to be "of the NIGHT," and they "are drunken in the NIGHT" (1 Thess. 5:7). That second "night" will be the Tribulation."¹³⁰

13:31 Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.^a

31a The glorification comes when the Son of Perdition leaves.

13:32 If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

13:33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.

63. The New Commandment 13:34,35

13:34 A new commandment I give unto you,^a That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

1. Jesus, as God, has the authority to give new commandments that are of equal authority as the Ten Commandments.

A. The Great Commandment is in Matthew 22:36-38, to love God with all of our heart, and the next one is that we should love our neighbor.

i. Mark 12:30 calls it the First Commandment

B. The New Commandment is to love each other in John 13:34.

i. Also called My Commandment by the Lord in John 15:12 **"This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you."**

C. This New Commandment sums up the old "Ten" according to Paul.

i. **"for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law...Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."** (Romans 13:8-10)

II. Paul says that the Law is summed up by the commandment of love.

D. John deals with it in his first epistle (1 John 2:7,8; 3:10,11,22,23, 4:7,11,20,21, 5:2,3).

i. **"For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should love one another."** (1 John 3:11)

ii. **"And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also."** (1 John 4:21)

a. What does it mean to love our neighbor?

(i). To esteem them more highly than ourselves.

(a). Philippians 2:3 **"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."**

(ii). We do not bear false witness against them.

(a). Exodus 20:16 **"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."**

(iii). We do not defraud them.

¹³⁰ Peter Ruckman, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, page 405.

- (a). Leviticus 19:13 **“Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.”**
- (iv). Love them as we love ourselves
 - (a). Matthew 19:19 **“Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”**
- (v). Consider anyone who needs your help to be your neighbor.
 - (a). Luke 10:29-37, the parable of the Good Samaritan.
- b. This is the test and public demonstration of true love.
 - (i), John 13:35 **“By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”**

13:35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.^a

35a Love for the brethren is the distinguishing mark of the Christian. What this says about Christians who curse each other, won't forgive each other, won't admit or confess their sins to each other and about churches that split is not good. It makes for a horrible public testimony among the heathen and makes Christians look like hypocrites. This is the New Testament application of Leviticus 19:18 (**“Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.”**).

64. Peter's Denial Foretold 13:36-38

13:36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards.^a

36a Peter would follow the Lord in his martyrdom later.

13:37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.^a

37a Peter meant well and he was honest and sincere when he said this, but the Lord knew him better than he knew himself. The same applies to the rest of the disciples. But his confidence was a fleshly one. Self can be very bold and self-confident.

13:38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.^a

38a Peter's fleshly self-confidence, no matter how sincere, would fail him when he would need it the most.

John Chapter 14

There are no breaks from John 13 through 17. It is one continuous narrative.

65. The Promise of Many Mansions 14:1-4

14:1 Let not your heart^a be troubled:^b ye believe in God,^c believe also in me.^{def}

1a Not the physical organ but the soul, the innermost part of their being, their soul, the seat of emotion. Jesus would soon be taken from them soon but here would follow words of comfort to encourage them in that upcoming difficult hour.

1b They were "troubled" that the Master was going to leave them. How would they go on without Him? What would become of them? What would they do next? They were troubled at hearing that one of their number should betray Him (John 13:21). They were troubled at seeing their Master "**troubled in spirit**" (John 13:21) and that He said He would only be with them for a "**little while**" (John 13:33); troubled over the warning He had given to Peter, that he would deny the Lord three times.

It is possible that they were also "troubled" in that it seemed obvious that Jesus was going to set up no kingdom at this time. If no kingdom was coming, then what was the purpose of the last 3½ years? What about all of His prophecies about Him being king? And what did the future hold for the disciples?

1c This is always a good start but more is required, as the devils also believe and tremble (James 2:19). Faith is the foundation of salvation, but we must believe in Christ and all of His person and work.

1d We must believe in Christ, not the Baptist Distinctives, not the Five Points of Calvinism, not your theological system, not in some manmade creed or confession, but believe in He Who is Greater than all of them.

1e Since Jesus was also God and was co-equal with the Father, there was no reason why they should believe in Him in the same way that they believed in the Father. They should put the same faith and trust in Christ as they do the Father. Christ, and Christ alone, was worthy of that belief Jesus equates Himself with the Father by saying that if you believe and trust in the Father, you should do the same with Him.

1f Even up to this point, it seems that the faith of the apostles was still not firmly fixed on Him. There was still doubts and uncertainties. Jesus is telling them "If you can believe in the Father, you can and should also believe in Me".

14:2 In my Father's house are many mansions:^{abc} if it were not so, I would have told you.^d I go to prepare a place for you.^{ef}

AV	ESV	LSV
2 In my Father's house are many mansions : if <i>it were</i> not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.	2 In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you?	2 "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

2a Most of the modern versions have “rooms” instead of “mansions”, diminishing the promise. How the versions translate it

1. “dwelling places” Bishop’s Bible, Geneva, NASV (1977, 1995), LSV, Amplified Version, New American Version (Roman Catholic), Coverdale
2. “dwellings” Coverdale
3. “abodes” Darby
4. “many rooms” NIV, ESV, ISV, CEV, Good News Version, Christian Standard Version
5. “mansions” Authorized Version, Tyndale, ERV, ASV, Rheims Douay, New King James Version
6. “more than enough room” New Living Translation

How the commentaries handle it:

1. “mansions” Peter Ruckman, Matthew Henry, Adam Clarke, John Gill (he mentions both the “abiding or dwelling places”), J. C. Ryle (in his exposition on John), Gerorge Hutchinson, William Kelly (he doesnot seem to attack the reading in his commentary on John), Lenski (although he mentions “abiding places”)
2. “abiding places” A.T. Robertson, William Barclay, Ethelbert Bullinger, J. C. Ryle (in his critical notes, playing both sides of the street), A. W., Pink (also uses “dwelling place”), John Phillips, G. Campbell Morgan, Matthew Poole (accepts both “mansion” and “abiding place”)
3. “apartments, resting places” Harry Ironside
4. “abodes” Numerical Bible, Hamilton Smith in *The Last Words* (probably copied it from the Darby version, which is just another critical text translation)
5. “resting place” B. F. Westcott
6. Samuel Gipp imagines this refers to our resurrected bodies!¹³¹, John Calvin, Albert Barnes
7. “dwelling place” Dake Reference Bible

I cannot understand this desire to retranslate “mansion” to something weaker. Do these men not believe their Bibles literally? Jesus said “mansion” as related in our Authorized Version, which means a large, stately dwelling. Was He lying? If He meant “apartment” or a mere “dwelling place”, then why didn’t He say so? We see no good reason to attack the traditional reading of “mansions”. Why attack such a precious promise?

2b “The word mansion has a similar etymology and follows the same course of development, being derived from manere, to remain. Mansion is thus, first, a staying, and then a dwelling - place... “The image is derived from those vast oriental palaces, in which there is an abode not only for the sovereign and the heir to the throne, but also for all the sons of the king, however numerous they may be.”¹³² Vincent was a liberal but he was honest enough to see how “mansion” was the best reading.

2c There will be many mansions. The numbers referring to the New Jerusalem are staggering yet there will be room for all. The area of New Jerusalem, where these mansions will be located There may be 12 levels of New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:14 “**And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.**”). You can think of it like a spiral staircase kind of a setup. There is one level than another level and at another level, up to all twelve. The city itself is 1500 miles long and 1500 miles high and 1500 miles wide, cubic in shape. If one level is 1500 miles-by-1500 miles, then you could multiply that by 12 and you would get a surface area of the city that would almost be astronomical. One level of this city stretches from Boston, Massachusetts, to Miami, Florida; from Miami, Florida, to Denver, Colorado; and from Denver, Colorado, to Buffalo, New York. The city would cover the land area of Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana,

¹³¹ *A Practical and Theological Study of the Gospel of John*, page 320.

¹³² M. R. Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*.

Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware, part of Pennsylvania, Maryland, part of New York, and all the Gulf of Mexico from Miami to Mexico City. One level of the city has 2,250,000 square miles. Multiply that by 12 levels and you get 27 million square miles of area. Russia, the largest country on earth, has an area of just over 6.5 million square miles so New Jerusalem is almost four times larger than Russia. New Jerusalem is still larger than Russia, Canada and the United States combined. The total land surface of the earth is 57.1 million square miles. And that is just the city! It doesn't include heaven itself. You have to worry about crowding here. I don't know how many people had been saved over the years I don't know how many people are in the bride of Christ. It could be in the billions or hundreds of billions. But don't worry. You'll have plenty of room to spread out even in the city. You could even probably get at least a couple of acres of land all of your own in this city, which is more than many saints ever owned on earth. It is not going to be like living in an apartment building.

2d "Mansion" is the best reading here because of 1 Corinthians 2:9 **"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."** Mansions are impressive, "dwelling places" are not. Mansions are fit for sons and daughters of the King. "Dwelling places" are not. And "rooms" is even worse. You get saved, live for god, preach the gospel, sacrifice for the cause of Christ and even get martyred, and all you get is a "room" or a mere "dwelling place"?

2e Christ was honest enough to say "If there was nothing waiting for you in glory, I'd say so. But there are places in those mansions awaiting you, and if I said so, it must be true!" as God cannot lie (Titus 1:2) and Jesus is God. Christ will not feed His people false hopes of heaven and future bliss. But He does not say He is going to prepare a mansion for us but a place in those "many" mansions. He is preparing a place for us that simply cannot be imagined within the Father's many mansions.

New Jerusalem is a prepared city for a prepared people just as Hell is a prepared place (Matthew 25:41 **"Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:"**) for a prepared people.

2f "The "Father's house" has been the favourite term for Heaven with most Christians. It speaks of Home, the Home of God and His people. Sad it is that in this present evil age one of the most precious words in the English language has lost much of its fragrance. Our fathers used to sing, "There is no place like home." To-day the average "home" is little more than a boarding-house—a place to eat and sleep in. But "home" used to mean, and still means to a few, the place where we are loved for our own sakes; the place where we are always welcome; the place whither we can retire from the strife of the world and enjoy rest and peace, the place where loved ones are together. Such will Heaven be. Believers are now in a strange country, yea, in an enemy's land; in the life to come, they will be at Home!. God never has, and never will, take His people into a place unprepared for them. In Eden God first "planted a garden," and then placed Adam in it. It was the same with Israel when they entered Canaan: "And it shall be, when the Lord thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he swear unto thy father, to Abraham, to Isaac, and Jacob, to give them great and goodly cities, which thou buildest not, and houses full of all good things, which thou filledst not, and wells digged which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees which thou plantedst not" (Deut. 6:10, 11). And what can we say of the grace manifested by the Lord of glory going to prepare a place for us? He will not entrust such a task to the angels. Proof, indeed, is this that He loves us "unto the end." ¹³³

¹³³ A. W. Pink, *Exposition of the Gospel of John*.

14:3 And if I go^a and prepare^b a place for you, I will come again,^{cd} and receive you unto myself;^e that where I am, there ye may be also.^f

3a And He did- Acts 1:11 **"Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."**

"This same Jesus" will return in like manner as He went. Christ had to leave, else the Spirit could not be given (John 16:7 **"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."**) which was necessary of the Church was to be established, as it was in Acts 2.

3b Christ has been gone (in our reckoning) for almost 2000 years. Since He has yet to return, we must assume that the mansions are not get ready. And think of that! He spent only 6 days in creating the heavens and the earth, with all of its beauty and wonder. Yet He has been preparing this place for us for 2000 years! How glorious must this be!

3c Those who do not believe in a literal, physical coming of Jesus Christ back to this Earth are calling Christ a liar, as He said He would. Christians hang their hope on this promise. The governments of the world (Psalm 2) do all they can to try to frustrate this. These four words may be the greatest words and promise in the Bible.

3d The two-stages of Christ's coming:

1. Rapture
2. Second Coming seven years later

3e Christ does this at the death of the believer, as He comes to take that saint from this footstool of sin and sorrow to be with Him forever. The same thing happens on a much larger scale at the rapture. The only ways we get to be where He is will be by death or rapture.

3f That we would be in His Father's House with Him forever. This is one of the blessings of heaven- to be with Christ forever and to have a home forever. We will never move again. We will be content forever and that mansion will be ours forever than none will ever take away. He also wants us to be with Him! He desires our company much more than we could ever desire His! Jesus is going through all the effort to prepare a mansion for us, so He must come and get us, either through death or the rapture, so we may receive our mansions. Cities and mansions are both designed to be inhabited.

14:4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.^a

4a The world knows not the way to Jesus. When confronted by the gospel, they reject it. Having done so, they must construct another way, so they create ways of religion, politics, social justice, sex, philosophy, environmentalism, politics...any way but the One True Way. But Christians know The Way, or at least should! Acceptance and toleration of these false ways leads to confusion.

66. Christ the Way, the Truth and the Life 14:5-7

14:5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?^{abc}

5a Christ assumed they knew where He was going and that they knew the way to follow Him but

Thomas indicated that wasn't the case.

5b The Bible has much to say about the various ways of both God and man. There may be thousands of religions but there are only two ways- the way of God and the way of man. And they lead to only two places- heaven or hell. Most men walk in a self-destructive way as all the ways of sin are ultimately self-destructive.

We were all born "out of the way" in sin. This is our fallen sin nature that we were all born with. It is the new birth that gets us "back in the way" with God and it is sanctification that keeps us "in the way" in our Christian life. God lays out the way in which we ought to walk very plainly, telling us "**this is the way, walk ye in it**" (Isaiah 30:21).

An undefiled man will walk in an undefiled way while a defiled man will walk in a defiled way. You will walk in the way according to as your heart is. A holy man will walk in a holy way as it will come natural to his new nature. Let us be continually be asking ourselves if our way is an undefiled way before the Lord.

The only way to happiness is to walk in God's ways, not in the ways of the world or in our own ways.

5c The "ways" of Scripture:

1. Way of the Lord- Genesis 18:19; Judges 2:22; 2 Kings 21:22; Job 23:11; Psalm 27:11; 44:18; 86:11; 119:37; Proverbs 10:29; Jeremiah 5:4,5; Ezekiel 18:25,29; Matthew 22:16; Luke 20:21; Acts 18:25,26
2. A perverse/perverted way- Numbers 22:32; Jeremiah 3:21
3. A prosperous way- Joshua 1:8; Isaiah 48:15
4. A stubborn way- Judges 2:19
5. The good and right way- 1 Samuel 12:23; Jeremiah 6:16
6. A perfect way- 2 Samuel 22:31,33; Psalm 18:30; 101:2,6
7. The good way- 1 Kings 8:36; 2 Chronicles 6:27
8. An evil way- 1 Kings 13:33; Psalm 119:101; Proverbs 2:12; 4:14; 8:13; 28:10; Jeremiah 18:11; 23:22; 25:5; 26:3; 35:15; 36:3,7; Jonah 3:8,10
9. Way of Jeroboam- 1 Kings 15:34; 16:2,19,26; 22:52
10. Way of the kings of Israel- 2 Kings 8:18; 2 Chronicles 21:6,13
11. Way of the house of Ahab- 2 Kings 8:27; 16:3
12. Way of David- 2 Kings 22:2
13. Way of the law of God- 2 Chronicles 6:16
14. Way of David and Solomon- 2 Chronicles 11:17
15. Way of Asa- 2 Chronicles 20:32
16. A right way- Ezra 8:21; Psalm 107:7; 2 Peter 2:15
17. A hidden way- Job 3:23
18. Way of the righteous- Job 17:9; Psalm 1:6
19. The old way- Job 22:15
20. Way of sinners- Psalm 1:1
21. Way of the ungodly- Psalm 1:6
22. A solitary way- Psalm 107:4
23. Way of God's testimonies- Psalm 119:14
24. Way of God's precepts- Psalm 119:27
25. Way of lying- Psalm 119:29
26. Way of truth- Psalm 119:30; 2 Peter 2:2
27. Way of God's commandments- Psalm 119:32
28. Way of God's statutes- Psalm 119:33
29. A false way- Psalm 119:104,128

30. A wicked way- Psalm 139:24; 146:9; Proverbs 4:19; 12:26; 15:9; Isaiah 55:7; Jeremiah 12:1; Ezekiel 3:18,19; 13:22; 33:8,9,11
31. Way of good men- Proverbs 2:20
32. Way of wisdom- Proverbs 4:11
33. Way of life- Proverbs 6:23; 10:17; 15:24; Jeremiah 21:8; Matthew 7:14
34. Way to hell- Proverbs 7:27
35. Way of righteousness- Proverbs 8:20; 12:28; 16:31; Matthew 21:32; 2 Peter 21
36. Way of understanding- Proverbs 9:6; 21:16; Isaiah 40:14
37. Way of a fool- Proverbs 12:15
38. Way of transgressors- Proverbs 13:15
39. Ways of death- Proverbs 14:12; 16:25; Jeremiah 21:8
40. Way of the slothful man- Proverbs 15:19
41. Way of man- Proverbs 21:2,8; Jeremiah 10:23
42. Way of the fraudulent- Proverbs 22:5
43. Way of an eagle in the air- Proverbs 30:19
44. Way of a serpent on a rock- Proverbs 30:19
45. Way of a ship in the middle of the sea- Proverbs 30:19
46. Way of a man with a maid- Proverbs 30:19
47. Way of an adulterous woman- Proverbs 30:20
48. Way of the spirit- Ecclesiastes 11:5
49. Way of the just- Isaiah 26:7
50. Way of God's judgments- Isaiah 26:8
51. Way of holiness- Isaiah 35:8
52. Way of the heart- Isaiah 57:17
53. Way of peace- Isaiah 59:8; Romans 3:17
54. Way of Egypt- Jeremiah 2:18
55. A trimmed way- Jeremiah 2:33
56. Way of the heathen- Jeremiah 10:2
57. A lewd way- Ezekiel 16:27
58. An equal way- Ezekiel 18:25,29; 33:17
59. An unequal way- Ezekiel 18:25,29; 33:17,20
60. Way of your sister- Ezekiel 23:31
61. A defiled way- Ezekiel 36:17
61. Way of the meek- Amos 2:7
62. Way that leads to destruction- Matthew 7:13
63. Jesus as the way- John 14:6
64. Way of salvation- Acts 16:17
65. Christianity as "the way"- Acts 19:9,23; 22:4,14; 24:22
66. A more excellent way- 1 Corinthians 12:31
67. A new and living way- Hebrews 10:20
68. Way of Balaam- 2 Peter 2:15
69. Way of Cain- Jude 11

These are the various "ways" that a man can choose to follow. Although 69 are identified, there are only two basic ones: the way of the flesh or the way of the Spirit.

1. God's ways, which lead to life and health and peace.
2. Man's ways, which seem right but which end in death
 - A. Proverbs 14:12 and 16:25 read the same way: **"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."**
 - i. The way which seems right is usually attractive in appearance: that is, it looks

good on paper. It promises good: that is, the ends will justify the means. It flatters man: that is, it is always a way that runs contrary to Revelation. It is followed by others, and no evil is apparent. Illustrations and examples are numerous. A man takes arsenic, thinking it is Pepto Bismol. A nurse gives a transfusion thinking the blood type matched. A man buys a ticket to New York and thinks it will take him to Boston. A man is cleaning an "unloaded gun" when he is taught that "the end thereof are the ways of death." The classic example was the loading ramp at Auschwitz. It would seem that the deportees are about to receive a shower, get a change of clothing, and get employed in a new "community." They are encouraged, through loudspeakers, to get the "shower" over with and get on into their new homes. (At Treblinka a fake terminal was erected, complete with a wooden clock, ticket window, porters, etc.) Everyone undresses, goes into the "shower room." The doors slam shut; the lights go out. There are screams. In comes a gas pellet through the ceiling. Lungs begin to burst; people climb on top of each other trying to get air: men on women, women on children. Excretion befouls the bodies as the inner muscles of the victims go into spasms, and in fifteen minutes everyone is dead. Open the door, haul the corpses out with hooks, spray them with a hose, knock the gold teeth out of those mouths that have them, cut off the hair for stuffing, and then melt the bodies into soap. "There is a way which seemeth right...but the end thereof...!" Matthew 7:21 states the case exactly. The quickest way to Hell is religion, and the next best is education, then "science" Most religious people and most educated people (95 percent in either group) simply ignore or reject Jesus Christ; that is the shortest road to Hell that men ever built. Its "end" is "the ways of death" (vs. 12).¹³⁴

14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way,^a the truth, and the life:^{bc} no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.^{defg}

6a "A pioneer missionary in Africa tells how he was taking the gospel to a new tribe, far to the north. With his bearers, he arrived at a village, a point beyond which his porters refused to go. The missionary appealed to the local chief. Was there someone in his village who could act as his guide to the distant northern tribe? The chief summoned a man, tall, battle scarred, carrying a large axe. A bargain was made and the next morning the missionary set off through the bush, following his new guide. The way became increasingly rough and the path had all but disappeared. There was an occasional mark blazed on a tree, occasionally a narrow path. Finally the missionary called a halt. He asked the guide if he was sure he knew the way. The man pulled himself up to his full height. "White man," he said, "you see this axe in my hand? You see these scars on my body? With this axe I blazed the trail to the tribal village to which we go. I came from there. These scars I received when I made the way. You ask me if I know the way? Before I came, there was no way. I am the way."¹³⁵

6b These are three absolute statements, which is why the world hates Jesus, Christianity and the Gospel of John. No room for compromise or debate. This shows the exclusiveness and dogmatism of Christ. There are no other ways, truths or lives except through Him.

1. What Christ is:
 - A. I am

¹³⁴ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on Proverbs*.

¹³⁵ John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, page 265.

- i. Used to declare the deity of Christ
 - a. I AM THAT I AM- Exodus 3:14
- B. The way
 - i. There is only one way to truth and that is through Jesus Christ as revealed in the Bible
 - ii. There is no
 - a. Baptist Way
 - b. Methodist Way
 - c. Catholic Way
 - d. Calvinistic or Arminian Way
 - e. Islamic Way
 - f. Buddhist Way
 - g. Atheist/Freethinker/Secular Way
 - h. There is only the Bible way!
 - iii. The way is a Person
 - iv. There are not many ways to heaven- there is only one way
 - a. Proverbs 16:25 **"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."**
 - v. In our sins, we have all **"gone out of the way"** (Romans 3:12), Christ came to show us the Way and to put us on that Way.
- C. The truth
 - i. Only the Bible contains the truth
 - ii. No other "holy book" contains the truth of God
 - iii. John 1:17 **"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."**
 - iv. Jesus is the last and full revelation of God. Mohammad and his Koran were never in the running and never can be.
- D. The life
 - i. Christ came to give life and that more abundantly- John 10:10
 - ii. A life in Christ is the only true life there is. Unsavd people are alive but they are not truly living.
 - iii. There is existence outside of Christ but no life

2. Take away Jesus, and the way, the truth, and the life are gone; no way, no truth, no life are left. There is only death, ignorance and despair, which is all that the unsaved person has and can ever hope to have. Without Christ, it is impossible for that unsaved person to make any progress or to improve his life. It is also impossible for that person to come to any spiritual truth or understanding.

- 6c "How can I be saved?" Christ answers "I am the way".
 "How can I be sure?" Christ answers "I am the truth".
 "How should I live?" Christ answers "I am the life".

6d Who else could- or would- say this? Mary? Mohammad? Any pope? The Buddah? Mary wouldn't dare say that. Mohammed wouldn't dare say that. Buddha wouldn't dare say that. No one in the United Nations would dare say that. Not even Idi Amin, Jim Jones, Pastor Russell, Joe Smith, Judge Russell, Madam Blavatsky, Adolph Hitler, or any Catholic Pope, cardinal, or archbishop would dare say that. And if any of them did, no one but a half-crazy nut would believe them. Jesus Christ said it, and more than 900,000,000 people believed Him (A.D. 90–A.D.1990) and found it to be TRUE. ¹³⁶

¹³⁶ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, page 414.

AV**ESV****LSV**

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

6 Jesus said to him, **"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.**

6 Jesus *said to him, **"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father but through Me.**

6e The ESV and LSV have "through me".

6f The three stages of the Christian life are listed her:

First, you find the way at salvation.

Second, you learn the truth of God.

Third, you live the life that God intended for you to live (John 10:10).

6g The Geneva Bible weakens the force of the verse by translating it as "I am that Way, and that Trueth, and that Life."

14:7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

67. "Show Us The Father" 14:8-11

14:8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.^a

8a I suppose it would! At least it should.

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

14:10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

14:11 Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.^a

11a Verses 9-11 again reinforce the teaching that the Father and the Son are One. You see the Father, you see the Son, and vice-versa. When you hear the Son, you hear the Father, and vice-versa. The two are not to be separated. Jesus is also equal with the Father and is God as much as the Father is.

68. Greater Works 14:12

14:12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.^a

12a The Lord does not specify what these greater works are but consider the works He did- changing water into wine, healing the blind, raising the dead, controlling weather, etc. We are not doing these

works today (despite what all the Charismatics claim) so where are they? They could be done in the Tribulation period by the 144,000 Jewish preachers in their ministry. You are going to see these signs and wonders return in the first half of the Tribulation, done by Jews for other Jews and Gentiles who did not get saved in the Church Age.

69. Prayer in Jesus' Name 14:13,14

14:13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.^a

13a The ultimate goal of prayer is the glorification of the Father. We get the benefits of that in our answered prayers.

14:14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.^{ab}

14a Anyone who has prayed for ten years for a lost loved one and then seen them die without Christ; anyone who has prayed to be healed of terminal cancer and then died while praying; any Bible-believing evangelist who has prayed for a soul to be saved every time he preached and has seen twenty services where no one was saved, experiences this "dispensational" problem. Those who pretend they are healed (and then get buried), pretend their loved one got saved when he didn't, or "pad" their revival reports by giving "mixed invitations" do not really BELIEVE verse 13.

"Whatsoever ye ask," in this age, is limited and curtailed by four items.

1. It cannot be asked for selfish purposes (James 4:3).
2. It must be asked for more than once (Luke 18:1-7; James 1:6).
3. It must be according to the will of God (1 John 5:14).
4. It can be blocked by grudges (James 5:9), an unforgiving spirit (Matt. 6:14), or by bitterness (1 Pet. 3:7).

Those are the "hard facts" of John 14:13 in the Church Age. After the Apostolic Age is over, you will have a hard time applying John 14:13 to many wishes, desires, and even what you would call "needs." If you don't believe me, "try it for size." Try asking for "ANY THING" (vs. 14), in "His name," and see how quickly you get it."¹³⁷

14b These men were going to be sent into a hostile world with the all-powerful Roman Empire and the bigotry and hatred of the Jews. They would go without arms, money or influence. Many of them and their followers would suffer persecution and die a martyr's death. They also had no template or example to work from when it came to starting and running local churches. They were going to need the wisdom and leading of God like no generation before them. Jesus encourages them in this, promising them that whatever they needed materially or in terms of wisdom or even in courage in facing persecution, all they needed to do was pray and these needs would be provided.

70. Obedience as the Test of Love 14:15

14:15 If ye love me, keep my commandments.^{ab}

15a This includes the Ten Commandments and the Great Commandment but there are more

¹³⁷ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, pages 421-422.

commandments that the Lord has in mind. These are listed in Romans 11:25-28; 12:6-21; 13:1-10; 14:1,10-13; 1 Corinthians 3, 6, 7, 14, etc. These other “commandments” expand into the New Testament writings.

15b This is the test of love and discipleship. Obedience and acceptance of His law are these touchstones.

71. The Holy Spirit- Another Comforter 14:16-18

14:16^a And I will pray the Father,^b and he shall give you another Comforter,^{cdef} that he may abide with you for ever;^g

16a The parallel passages are John 14:26; 15:26 John 16:7-15. For the Lord to give these kinds of discussions in private to His disciples, five times in three chapters, shows us that these doctrines relating to the Holy Spirit are very important. In referencing our notes under John 14:14b, we see that these men were going to need the Holy Spirit in a very great way. He would guide them into all truth, as they would lack a completed, written Bible. He would guide, lead and comfort them in their upcoming times of great distress uncertainty and confusion. They would have to deal with false teachers, jealous Jews and Roman officials, none of which would have any sympathy for their ministry.

16b Greek future tense. Christ did not pray this yet but He would, probably between His resurrection and His ascension.

AV	ESV	LSV
16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter , that he may abide with you for ever;	16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever,	16 “And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate, that He may be with you forever;

16c “**Comforter**” The ESV, the New King James Version, the New American Standard and the Amplified Bible have “Helper”. This is much weaker than “Comforter”. A man can help you without comforting you, but the Holy Spirit does both. Most other English translations use “Advocate”. “Counsellor” is used by the American Standard Version and the Christian Standard Version. The Rheims Douay does not translate the term and just uses “Paraclete”, The Contemporary English Version makes total hash out of the passage and just uses “Holy Spirit”.

The LSV uses “Advocate” which is the wrong word for this context, although it is the right word to use in 1 John 2:1. “Comforter” The same Greek word is used for “Advocate” in 1 John 2:1, again referring to the Holy Spirit.

16d The Comforter is the Holy Ghost (John 14:26 “**But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.**”). He would comfort the disciples in the difficult hours ahead during Christ’s passion and death and after, during those difficult times of ministry and living the Christian life.

16e Christ was the first Comforter, the Holy Spirit is the second Comforter. Christ gives that ministry over to the Holy Spirit today.

16f “**Comforter**” is capitalized, showing that the Holy Spirit is God. We have the Trinity in this context.

You cannot be an orthodox Christian if you deny the deity and personality of the Trinity, as the Holy Spirit is called God and He is equal to the Father and the Son.

16g Not “in you”. We know the Holy Spirit indwells the body of the believer in the Church Age, but this goes beyond that. The Holy Ghost is in the world, in the Church, in our homes and our church services. He is not only in us but He is also with us for this dispensation and beyond. Jesus will not leave us to struggle with our ministry and the Christian life alone. He will give us the Holy Spirit to lead, guide, direct, teach and comfort us. The disciples had long, hard and dangerous work ahead of them and they were not going to have to do it alone, in their own strength.

14:17 Even the Spirit of truth;^a whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him;^b for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.^c

17a The Holy Spirit is also called the Spirit of Truth as He guides us into all truth (John 16:13 “**Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.**”).

17b The world cannot receive the gift and the ministry of the Holy Ghost because they reject Him. They don’t want Him and are not interested in Him. Reject the Father and the Son and you also reject the Holy Ghost. Only those who receive the Father and the Son may also receive the Holy Ghost. The world cannot receive the things of God because they are spiritually discerned (1 Corinthians 2:14 “**But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.**”).

17c Notice the future tense. The Holy Ghost would come into the world on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2 to start the church and to indwell believers. But we are still in an Old Testament dispensation here so He is not infilling anyone yet but Christ. He was “with them” now and would be “in them” in the future, after Acts 2 and the Day of Pentecost.

14:18 I will not leave you comfortless:^a I will come to you.^b

18a Or “bereaved”, without the benefit of the comfort of either the Father, Son or Spirit. We will not be left destitute or abandoned and left to our own devices.

AV	ESV	LSV
18 I will not leave you comfortless : I will come to you.	18 “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.	18 “I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

“**comfortless**” The ESV and LSV have “as orphans”, as do almost all the modern versions. The American Standard Version used “desolate”. The Geneva Bible uses “fatherless”. But by context, if the Lord is talking about the Comforter, wouldn’t “comfortless” be the best translation? “Orphans” is an alternate reading in the margin of the Authorized Version and the translators were aware of the Greek word. but they decided “comfortless” was the better word while putting “orphans” in the margin. Orphans have no comfort of a mother or father and the Lord was going to make sure that we would not be left in such a situation.

18b This does not only refer to the literal Second Coming of Revelation 20 but also to the “coming” in spirit (through the Comforting ministry of the Holy Spirit) to troubled hearts of His people. Eventually, He

will return in the Second Coming, which would be the ultimate fulfillment of this promise.

To summarize these three passages in John concerning the Holy Ghost in 14:16- 18,26; 15:26 and 16:7-15:

1. He is called the Comforter- 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7
 - A. He is the Holy Ghost- 14:26
 - i. Third person of the Trinity. You must believe in the doctrine of the trinity to be orthodox in your beliefs regarding the Holy Spirit.
 - B. The Holy Spirit is a person, not an influence or a thing. We see this by use of the masculine pronoun.
 - i. What about Romans 8:15,26 where Paul refers to the Holy Spirit as "itself"? "The Spirit Itself" does not destroy the personality of the Holy Spirit by calling Him "it" but is simply a literal rendering of the neuter Greek word here. Enemies of the Trinity and the personality of the Spirit jump at this and declare that since the Spirit is referred to as "it", then He is not a person. Well, what about the dozens of other passages where the Spirit is referred to as "he"? Why do they ignore those verses? We often call unborn and newly- born babies "it", don't we? Yet that is not an attack against his personality, is it? Since Paul is talking about the work of the Holy Spirit and not the personality of the Holy Spirit in this verse, there is nothing wrong with using the neuter pronoun here.
2. He is "another Comforter" – 14:16
 - A. Jesus was the First comforter
3. He will abide with us forever- 14:16
4. He is the Spirit of Truth- 14:17; 16:13
 - A. This presupposes there is a Spirit of Error
 - B. All truth comes from Him.
5. The world cannot receive Him- 14:17
 - A. Only Christians can receive the indwelling of the Holy Spirit
6. He will dwell with us- 14:17
 - A. The indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit in all believers
7. He shall be in us- 14:17
8. Christ sends Him from the Father- 14:26; 15:26
 - A. He is sent in Jesus' name- 14:26
9. He will teach us all things- 14:26
10. He will bring to our remembrance the things Jesus said- 14:26
11. He proceeds from the Father- 15:26
12. He testifies of Christ- 15:26
 - A. He shall not speak of Himself- 16:13
 - B. What He shall hear, that will He speak- 16:13
13. The Holy Spirit would not come unless Jesus left- 16:7
14. When Christ departed, He would send the Holy Spirit- 16:7
15. He will reprove the world of sin- 16:8
 - A. Because they do not believe on Christ- 16:9
16. He will reprove the world of righteousness- 16:8
 - A. Because Christ would go to my Father, and they would see Him no more- 16:10
17. He will reprove the world of judgment- 16:8
 - A. Because the prince of this world is judged- 16:11
18. He will guide into all truth- 16:13
 - A. He will not guide or lead us into error, compromise or apostasy.
19. He will show us things to come- 16:13

A. The Holy Spirit is also very involved in giving and explaining prophetic truths.

20. He shall glorify Christ- 16:14

A. He does not speak of Himself, therefore He does not glorify Himself. The Holy Spirit certainly is worthy of getting this glory but He voluntarily stands back and allows all this glory to go to Christ.

21. He shall show "it" to us- 16:14,15

A. I do not know what this "it" is. It may be something yet unrevealed. In this (possible) last generation before the rapture, the remnant saints are going through things that no other generation has ever had to deal with. We are dealing with unique sins and situations that are going to require a special ministry and revelation from the Holy Spirit.

72. Seeing and Knowing Christ 14:19-21

14:19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more;a but ye see me:b because I live, ye shall live also.c

19a After His crucifixion.

19b After His resurrection and even after His ascension. Although Christ is not physically on earth, we can still "see" Him through faith, communion with Him and talk to Him in prayer.

19c Christ lives even after His death through the resurrection. And His resurrection guarantees ours. We will be more alive after our physical death than we ever were before.

14:20 At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.^a

20a The disciples knew this in a sense right there, but they still didn't completely understand it and they still struggled with these truths. But after His resurrection, all doubts were gone and they finally "knew" it and understood these truths.

14:21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me:^a and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

21a A love of His commandments and a desire to keep them is one of the tests of salvation and true discipleship.

AV	ESV	LSV
21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.	21 Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him."	21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."

"**manifest**" The LSV is weaker with "disclose". Same in John 14:22,

73. Christ Manifesting Himself to Believers 14:22-24

14:22 Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot,^a Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?^b

22a John wanted to make it clear that it was not Judas Iscariot asking this question.

22b Christ could manifest Himself unto the world but why waste it on a world that would reject it?

14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him,^a and make our abode with him.

23a Same idea as in John 14:21.

14:24 He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings:^a and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

24a The "flip side" of John 14:21 and 23 is that a man who is not saved will not love Christ because that person will not love His law or try to keep it.

14:25 These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

74. The Teaching Ministry of the Holy Spirit 14:26

14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things,^a and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.^b

26a He won't teach us calculus or how to speak Urdu, but He will teach us all things pertaining to the truth of God.

26c Because we tend to forget, even though they are recorded in the Bible. But this also involves the Holy Spirit reminding us of verses when we are writing or talking with someone or witnessing for our lives before going to martyrdom (Matthew 10:19).

75. The Peace of God 14:27-31

14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you:^a not as the world giveth,^b give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

27a The Lord's "last will and testament" involves peace to His followers.

27b The world can't give peace. It can give you drugs and booze for a temporary respite, but they do not last and are a cheap imitation to the peace only Christ can give. The world has its peace plans and popes "praying for peace" and every time he does that, two more wars break out. Only Christ gives peace of heart.

Years ago, I was facing some minor surgery but I still had to go under the knife. Before the

operation, the nurse took my “vitals” and marked them on my chart. A few minutes later, the doctor came and checked my chart, He then asked me if I was an athlete. I weighed about 210 pounds and am very out of shape. I said “do I look like an athlete?” He responded “you have the resting heart rate of a well- trained athlete”. That was the peace that only the Holy Spirit can give.

I had a man in my church who was facing life-or-death brain surgery as he had a brain tumor. I visited him the day before the operation and he acted like he was getting a splinter taken out. That dear brother had the peace that only God could give him. If he survived the operation (which he did and lived another 12 years after), great. If he died on the table, “absent from the body was preset with the Lord”.

Consider the ultimate demonstration of the peace of God- the deathbed of the Christian and them compare that with the deathbed of a sinner. Where does the saint get such peace in that hour? Not from the world, science, politics, philosophy, economics, “comparative religions” or the news media, but only from God.

God gives the Christian peace despite of the trials and tribulations of his life. We live in a world of constant turmoil. Yet the Christian can sail these storms in peace because He is saved, knows God, knows that God will provide for and protect him. The Christian is sure that despite what is happening, it is part of the plan of God and that He is in control of it. Remember the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001? We were all upset and unsure but the Christian had the assurance that God was in control of that situation and no matter what resulted from the attacks, we could sleep knowing that God was in control.

It is this peace that the world tries to counterfeit. The world can offer a temporary and inferior “peace” through drugs, alcohol, amusements, religion, a million different varieties, but they all fail in the end and they are nowhere to be found when you need them the most. This worldly peace will keep you content long enough in this life until it is time to die. By then, it will be too late to seek the true peace of God that He imparts through the new birth.

We mention about the peace of the dying Christian already. The dying sinner has no peace. He boasted loud and long about how he did not need God or the gospel, but when he is on the verge of eternity, the boasts of his false peace fail him and his true condition comes out. One recommended book is *Last Words of Saints and Sinners* by Herbert Lockyer. He recounts the terrifying death scenes of sinners, how they have no peace on their death beds. The peace the world gave them in their life utterly failed them when they needed it most, as that peace did not come from Jesus.

14:28 Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.^a

28A “So in the book of Hebrews, up pops the statement that shows WHY “the Father is greater” than His Son. It all has to do with His EARTHLY life as a man. The Father does not get tired; His Son did. The Father never gets thirsty; His Son did. You could no more nail the “Father” to a cross than you could play golf on the top of Mt. Everest. Notice: “You would rejoice at my leaving to return to the Father.” Why? Because that was His original position (John 1:1–3). Wasn’t that a GREATER position than the position He was now in when He said “My Father is greater than I”?”¹³⁸

14:29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

14:30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world^a cometh, and hath nothing in me.^b

¹³⁸ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, page 437.

30a "The prince of this world" is "the prince that shall come" (Daniel 9:26) and he is addressed as the "prince of Tyrus" (Ezekiel 28). He is clearly Satan.

30b Second Corinthians 6:15 **"And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?"** The Ecumenical Movement is always trying to force a shotgun wedding between Satan and Christ, but such attempts will always end in failure as there can be no union or fellowship between them.

14:31 But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.^a

31a Did they leave for the Garden of Gethsemane at this point?

John Chapter 15

76. Christ the True Vine 15:1-8

15:1 I am^a the true vine,^{bcd} and my Father is the husbandman.^e

1a Another "I Am" of Christ.

1b There are many false vines (teachers) and wild vines (unsaved people) out there (Isaiah 5). Deuteronomy 32:32,33 ("**For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps.**") refers to this "false vine of a religious system" as "For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps." Can you discern between a true vine and a false vine? A true church and a false church? True doctrine and false doctrine? A genuine preacher and an apostate? This "true vine" is certainly NOT the pope of his Church of Rome. That is a false vine if you ever saw one.

Israel was called an "empty vine" in Hosea 10:1 ("**Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself: according to the multitude of his fruit he hath increased the altars; according to the goodness of his land they have made goodly images.**") that only brought forth fruit unto himself. Too many professors work to glorify themselves, their ministry, their theological system or their denomination instead of bring forth fruit to glorify God.

The purpose of a vine is to bear fruit and it does through its branches. A fruitless tree can be cut down and be used for wood or to fuel a fire, but there is nothing that can be done with a fruitless vine.

1c "Ministers are not to preach themselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord (2 Corinthians 4:5). But he was his own subject; He preached himself. How could he have done otherwise, concerned as he was to be useful?"¹³⁹

1d Christ the True Vine, John 15:1¹⁴⁰

1. There is no other vine
2. All other "vines" are wild vines, false vines.
3. Christ is several "true" things in John:
 - A. He is the True Light in 1:9
 - B. He is the True Bread in 6:32
 - C. He is the True Vine in 15:1
4. A vine is not so remarkable in its appearance as many other trees. In loftiness, it yields to the cedar; in strength, to the oak; in beauty to the palm-tree and the fir. The greatness of Jesus was spiritual. He had no earthly pomp and riches. Like his kingdom. He was not of this world. Therefore, it was said, "**He shall grow up before him as a tender plant and as a root out of a dry ground: He has no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him** (Isaiah 53:2)."
 - A. Christ is referred to as an apple tree.
 - i. Song 2:3 "**As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste**"

¹³⁹ William Jay, *Morning Exercises* for June 1.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

5. The vine is renowned for its fertility. One single vine, planted by the empress Lavinia, yielded one hundred and eight gallons of wine in one year. Many grapes grow on one cluster, many clusters on one branch, and many branches on one tree. How many have been saved by the Lord Jesus! In him all fullness dwells. In him we are blessed with all spiritual blessings.

6. The nature of the produce of the vine is delightful and profitable. The fruit is sweet to the taste. The juice it yields cheers and makes glad the heart of man. Give wine to those that be of heavy hearts. It was sometimes used medicinally. The good Samaritan poured oil and wine into the wounds of the bleeding traveler.

A. The fruit of the vine, if taken too largely, will injure the partaker; but there is no danger here: while we are forbidden to be drunk with wine, in which is excess, we are commanded to be filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18). The produce of the vine is only for the body, and for time; but his benefits are for the soul and eternity. Many cannot obtain the advantages of the vine; but none, however poor and mean, are excluded from the participations of Christ. The image, therefore, is but a humble one, and falls far short of his glory.

7. The vine also yields shade, and it was valued for this purpose in the East (see Jonah 4). Thus, we so often read in the Scripture of sitting under the vine and the fig-tree. They had walks and bowers made of these; and while the fruit refreshed them, the shelter screened them from the sun. And he is a shadow from the heat and rescues us from the evil of every annoyance to which we are exposed. I sat, says the church, under his shadow with delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

1d The Father only cultivates the true vines. He is the One Who tends, manages and prunes the vines so they can give fruit. He exerts no effort on dead vines or wild vines.

15:2 Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away:^a and every branch that beareth fruit,^b he purgeth it,^{cd} that it may bring forth more fruit.^{efgh}

2a How God "takes away" these unfruitful branches is not mentioned but it may involve various types of judgment and even death. It could be the removal of a Christian from anymore cultivating by the Husbandman. If a branch is not producing, why bother with it? If a Christian is refusing to bear fruit, he will have his spiritual privileges for service taken away and he will eventually stand at the Bema Seat, with no fruit and will be judged to be a fruitless Christian and will receive no rewards.

This is a professing Christian who claims to be saved but has no vital link to Christ. This kind of "Christian" may have prayed a prayer on the back of a tract or got "saved" after an 8-minute presentation of the Romans Road on their front porch. They "prayed a prayer" but salvation does not come by praying a prayer or by going forward during an invitation, but by life-changing, whole-hearted belief on the Lord Jesus Christ. These fruitless professors were given a false gospel or a watered-town gospel which they accepted, and we can see the lack of results. We, as preachers and witnesses, had better make sure we are giving the whole, complete gospel, not a watered down one that is designed to multiply converts.

Fellowship and communion will also be taken away from that fruitless Christian. He will get nothing when he reads his Bible or when he hears it preached. He will have few, if any, answers to prayer. He is "put on the shelf" and is labeled as a "castaway" that Paul was so fearful of in 1 Corinthians 9:19-27.

2b "He that would know what the word "fruit" means, need not wait long for an answer. Repentance toward God, faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, holiness of life and conduct, these are what the New Testament calls "fruit." These are the distinguishing marks of the man who is a living branch of the true

Vine.”¹⁴¹

2c You “purge” a vine by cleaning it of bugs, diseases and dead spots. The main way you do this is by hard, with close pruning. It involves visual inspection of the vine. If a vine or part of a vine is not producing fruit, it will affect the rest of the vine for ill and it has to be removed. Pruning, then, is for fruit-bearers. If the branch were dead, there would be no need to prune it.

Pruning is accomplished by the cleansing of the Word applied to the life of the believer.

1. It is the reading and memorizing of the word (John 15:7) that keeps a Christian clean
 - A. Psalm 119:9 **“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed [thereto] according to thy word.”**
2. The Unfruitful Branch
 - A. The believer who bears no fruit
 - i. Happens in the secular world with unproductive employees, team members...they get fired.
 - ii. Unfruitful believers don’t get “fired” in terms of losing their salvation but rather are “set aside” or “put on the shelf” as unprofitable, of no use or service to the Kingdom.
 - B. God can destroy a Christian who does not bear fruit;
 - i. 1 Corinthians 3:17 **“If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.”**
 - a. “Destroy” in the sense of “render useless”, not annihilate
 - ii. Paul’s fear of being disapproved as a “castaway” in 1 Corinthians 9:19-27
 - C. There are not only “sick” Christians, “weak” Christians, and “dead” Christians, but “withered” Christians (John 15:6) who are cut out of the vine. They are like “salt” that has lost its seasoning. Men (Matthew 5:13)- not angels (Matthew 13:39,41)- cast them out “to be trodden under foot of men (not God).”
3. The Fruitful Branch, John 15:2
 - A. The believer that does bear spiritual fruit.
 - B. He is pruned so that he may bear more fruit
 - i. God’s inward dealing with the believer to prune away his carnality, fleshly nature and self through trials, tribulations and circumstances, so that he may become more spiritual.
4. Doctrinal Applications of the Vine
 - A. Much of this revelation about being “in” Christ and abiding “in” Christ was still future to this as no one would be “in” Christ until after the Church started at the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2.
 - B. Men do not gather lost people to be burned in hell. (John 15:6) This has to be some sort of human-based punishment or judgment of the unfruitful Christian.
 - C. This passage cannot be used to justify any teaching about anyone “losing their salvation” in John 15:6. One can certainly lose effectiveness and fellowship, yes, but not salvation in the Church Age.
 - D. Christians are not branches in the body of Christ but are an organic part of His Body (Ephesians 5). You can break a branch off of a tree but how do you remove something that is organically part of your body without doing harm to the body? Trees don’t die when a dead branch is cut off.

2d Vines, like churches, can get too big. Many pastors lust after numbers and attendance and will do nothing to prune their churches of diseased Christians, dead Christians, unfruitful Christians and wild vines (mere professors). To them, the bigger the vine, the better, regardless of its health. But if you want your church to really produce good spiritual fruit, an occasional pruning of the membership is

¹⁴¹ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospel of John*.

needed. This may result in a very small church numerically, but it will be a much healthier church.

2e According to the parable of the sower (Matthew 13:23), there are four levels of fruit bearing:

1. Thirty-fold
2. Sixty-fold
3. An hundredfold-fold
4. By implication, some bring forth no fruit

Good fruit comes in three sizes:

1. "Fruit" (John 15:2)
2. "More fruit" (John 15:2)
3. "Much fruit" (John 15:5).

These three classes of Christians will be found again in Revelation 12:11 and 17:14. They are also illustrated in the lives of the twelve apostles (fruit); Peter, James, Andrew, and Phillip (more fruit); and John the "Beloved" (much fruit). One might say that there are "Apprentice" Christians, "Journeymen" Christians, and "Master" Christians; coincidentally, one finds the Bachelor's degree, the Master's Degree, and the Doctor's Degree. (Or in Judaism, Rab, Rabbi, and Rabbak.)¹⁴²

There are three kinds of branches found in the vine and each has a different fate:

1. The fruitless branch - John 15:2 - God takes it away.
2. The fruitful branch - John 15:2 - It is pruned to bear more fruit.
3. The branch that doesn't abide in Christ - John 15:6 - Men burn them.

The Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25:14-30 and the Parable of the Pounds in Luke 19:11-27 both show that God rewards even a little fruit. He condemns the believer who bears no fruit at all.

2f We know what is the fruit of the Spirit, as listed in Galatians 5:22,23: **Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.**

2g "The confusion is due to your unreasonably narrow definition of "fruit." Ask any modern "Fundamentalist" what "fruit" is and they'll answer, "Soul winning! Soul winning! Soul winning!" The fallacy here is that winning souls is the only valid definition for "fruit." Therefore, anyone not winning souls is not "fruit bearing." Fine! Then why hasn't God "taken them away?" Faced with this contradiction to their dogma the hyper soul winner is forced to spiritualize the "taken away" of verse two. Shoddy! Very shoddy! Bearing "fruit" goes far beyond just soul winning. Let's consider a few things a Christian can do for Christ that is just as much "fruit bearing" as soul winning.

1. Getting a new convert to follow the Lord in baptism.
2. Teaching the Bible and thus strengthening Christians.
3. Showing a youth Christian the importance of tithing.
4. Keeping a discouraged Christian from quitting on the Lord.
5. Getting a backslidden Christian back into church.
6. Helping to keep a church from splitting or closing.
7. Keeping someone from killing themselves.
8. Keeping a marriage from breaking up.
9. Turning a Christian away from sin.
10. Encouraging a minister in his ministry.

All of these things produce good fruit for the Lord. Mind you, there may be a Christian who

¹⁴² Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, page 444.

produces little fruit, yet that would still keep them from being qualified as “fruitless.” “Little” fruit is not “no” fruit. We have no evidence in Scripture that Barnabas ever led anyone to Christ. We do have several things that he did record in the Bible:

1. He gave a large sum of money to the young church.
 - A. Acts 4:36, 37 **“And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus, Having land, sold it, and brought the money, and laid it at the apostles' feet.”**
2. He got Paul into the church in Jerusalem when some would have turned him out.
 - A. Acts 9:26-28 **“And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. And he was with them coming in and going out at Jerusalem.”**
3. He helped the fledgling church in Antioch and it became the center of New Testament Christianity.
 - A. Acts 11:22-24 **“Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth Barnabas, that he should go as far as Antioch. Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a good man, and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much people was added unto the Lord.”**
4. He taught Paul in Antioch. Paul later wrote 14 inspired books and opened the world to missions.
5. He coached John Mark after his debacle of Acts 13. John later wrote the Gospel of Mark.

If soul winning is the only form of fruit bearing acceptable, I want to be there when one of our hyper soul-winners tells that to Barnabas in Heaven!”¹⁴³

2h The Qualifications For Bearing Fruit

1. The Branch Must Be Attached To The Vine (John 15:2)
 - A. If you are not in the Vine, then there is no way for you to share in the Vine's life. This is all about a vital union between the believer and the Lord.
 - B. This is the only way the branch can get its nourishment.
2. The Branch Must Abide In The Vine (John 15:4,5)
 - A. We must maintain a close fellowship with the Vine.
 - B. How do we abide?
 - i. Prayer and communion
 - ii. Reading and studying the Scripture
 - iii. Self-denial
 - C. Developing a walk with God and communion with God.
 - D. Walking with Him, as Noah (Genesis 6) and Enoch (Genesis 5) did
 - E. Walking before Him as Abraham.
 - i. Genesis 17:1 **“And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect.”**
3. The Branch Must Be Available To The Vine (John 15:5)
 - A. Fruit bearing is a passive activity on the part of the branch. If the branch will simply abide in the Vine, then the Vine will most certainly produce its fruit. We need to only abide, and we will produce fruit. One who is not producing fruit is not abiding.

15:3^a Now ye are clean^b through the word which I have spoken unto you.^{cd}

¹⁴³ Sam Gipp, *A Doctrinal and Theological Study of the Gospel of John*.

3a This is a verse listed by O. Talmadge Spence in his *Quest For Christian Purity* that he lists as a “guiding verse” for that quest. This is a verse that deals with some aspect of the Christian’s growth and pursuit of God.

“Clean” does not mean sinless or even perfect, but that we are in a right relation with God and are in a position where God can use us and reveal things to us. No one uses a dirty vessel. It is cleaned first, then used. **“If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me (Psalm 66:18).”** That is because iniquity is sin and sin is uncleanness and brings defilement. The Lord washing the disciple’s feet in John 13 is an example of this need for a continual cleaning. Walking either barefoot or in sandals on dusty roads will result in dirty feet that would need to be washed frequently. As we walk through this filthy and apostate generation, we continually pick up spiritual defilement that needs to be cleansed daily. Much of this defilement may be unintentional but it still must be cleansed. You may be driving in a car and see an immoral billboard. You did not mean to defile yourself but you couldn’t help it in that instance, but even unintentional sins need to be dealt with (such as in Leviticus 4:2,3 **“Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a soul shall sin through ignorance against any of the commandments of the LORD concerning things which ought not to be done, and shall do against any of them: If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; then let him bring for his sin, which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the LORD for a sin offering.”**).

3b You can get clean one of two ways:

1. A rough and painful way, through pruning with the knife, to forcibly remove whatever is causing you to stumble and offend.
2. The more gentle way, as exposing yourself to the word.

They were “now” clean as Judas had left them, so everyone now in that room was a believer. Their separation from Judas was a contributing factor in them being “clean”.

3c Hearing, acceptance and application of the word brings spiritual cleansing to the life (Psalm 119:9 **“Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.”** and Ephesians 5:26 **“That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,”**). The more we are exposed to the word, the cleaner we are. This involves hearing the word preached and taught, studying it, reading it and meditating on it. The backslider is one who has left off of these things. They have lessened their exposure to the word and have suffered spiritually for it.

This spiritual cleansing does not come from ordinances, rituals or church traditions, It is no sort of reference to baptism as that does not signify washing but rather death, burial and resurrection of the believer. It is only achieved through exposure to the word of God.

3d Biblical theology about spiritual cleanness:

1. Put away the strange gods

A. Genesis 35:2 **“Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments:”**

2. Change your garments

A. Genesis 35:2 **“Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments:”**

- i. These are not clean or dirty garments but that style of garment that was being worn, whether it was contemporary and was identified with the world system or whether it spoke of a godly and separated life.

3. Discernment needed to discern between clean and unclean

A. Leviticus 10:10 **“And that ye may put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean.”**

- B. Leviticus 11:47 **"To make a difference between the unclean and the clean, and between the beast that may be eaten and the beast that may not be eaten."**
- C. Ezekiel 44:23 **"And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean."**
4. We are born unclean
 - A. Job 15:14 **"What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?"**
 - B. Job 25:4 **"How then can man be justified with God? or how can he be clean that is born of a woman?"**
 5. Being clean promotes spiritual advance
 - A. Job 17:9 **"The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger."**
 6. It involves fearing God
 - A. Psalm 19:9 **"The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether."**
 7. Necessary to dwell on God's holy hill
 - A. Psalm 24:4 **"He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully."**
 8. A purging is required, a purging of dirt and other uncleanness
 - A. Psalm 51:7 **"Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."**
 9. Only God can create a clean heart
 - A. Psalm 51:10 **"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."**
 - B. Proverbs 20:9 **"Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?"**
 10. God is good to those who have a clean heart
 - A. Psalm 73:1 **"Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart."**
 11. Everyone thinks his ways are clean
 - A. Proverbs 16:2 **"All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits."**
 12. We must wash ourselves
 - A. Isaiah 1:16 **"Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil;"**
 13. Separation is required
 - A. Isaiah 52:11 **"Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD."**
 14. Sprinkling clean water
 - A. Ezekiel 36:25 **"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you."**
 15. Jesus can make us clean
 - A. Matthew 8:2,3 **"And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed."** (Mark 1:40,41; Luke 5:13)
 16. The word of God makes us clean
 - A. Psalm 119:9 **"Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word."**
 - B. John 15:3 **"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you."**
 - C. Ephesians 5:26 **"That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,"**
 17. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin

A. 1 John 1:7 **"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."**

18. Obedience to the word brings a cleansing

A. 1 Peter 1:22 **"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit..."**

15:4 Abide in me,^a and I in you.^b As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself,^c except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.^d

4a What really does it mean to abide in Christ? We do not abide "with": Him but "in" Him and He in us. To "abide" means several things:

1. It is a permanent dwelling, not a temporary sojourning place.

A. Christianity is a permanent thing, something you follow until your death.

2. It is where you live your life

A. Acts 17:28 **"For in him we live, and move, and have our being;"**

3. It is where you spent most of your time

A. We spend more time with Christ in communion, prayer, Bible reading and study, walking with Him and spending time in Church than we do anything else or with anyone else.

4. It is where most of your stuff is

A. Psalm 87:7 **"All my springs are in thee."**

5. It is the place of family and friends

A. If He is the **Altogether Lovely One** (Song 5:16), wouldn't I desire His company more than anything? And would I desire the company of other who also love Him as I do.

i. Song 1:7 **"Tell me, O thou whom my soul loveth, where thou feedest, where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon..."**

6. It is the place you love to be more than anywhere else

A. To be with Christ is better than to be anywhere else in the world.

7. It is the place you are the most familiar with

A. I know my wife better than any other person. I should know Christ even better.

i. I was saved in 1978 and married in 1996, so no matter how old I get. I will have spent more time with Christ than I have my wife, so I should know Him better than my wife.

B. I know my home better than any place on earth as this where I abide, the place I love and where I spend most of my time.

8. It is the place where you are the most comfortable

All of these descriptions should apply to our abiding in Christ. We should be more comfortable around Him than we are with anyone else.

"Abide" (John 15:4)

1. Fruit-bearing is impossible without this kind of relationship with Christ

2. If we abide in Him, we ought to walk (live) as Christ did.

A. 1 John 2:6 **"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked."**

i. Our walk is to match up to our profession. If we claim to be a Christian, then our public walk, ministry and lifestyle had better match up to that profession, else we will reveal ourselves to be a liar and a false professor. We are to walk as Christ walked. He is our guide and pattern. A true Christian will do as much as he can to order his life after the example left to us by Jesus in the days of His flesh. Indeed, this is something that we "ought" to do, since Jesus did it. We "ought" to as well!

B. 1 John 2:17 **"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the**

will of God abideth for ever."

C. 1 John 2:28 **"And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming."**

i. We will be judged at the bema judgment immediately after the rapture. We will be judged for our lives and ministries since the time we were saved. Many will be ashamed in this day when they are judged for carnality and coldness. They will have to explain to the Lord all about their sin, disobedience and rebellion. They will see rewards burned up before them due to their unfaithfulness. That will cause shame for it will be done publicly. But those who love the Lord and are faithful and obedient in their lives and ministries will have confidence at the bema and will receive both rewards and commendation from the Lord. They love the Lord and have tried their best to honor and obey Him. So when that time comes for the bema judgment, they have confidence that the Lord will give His stamp of approval on their lives and ministries.

3. Whoever abides in Him does not sin.

A. 1 John 3:6 **"Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him."**

B. This is because when we are abiding in Christ, we are walking as He does and He did not sin. We are filled with the Spirit and walking in the Spirit. As long as we are doing that, we do not sin.

4. To be "in Christ" and "to abide" in Him are two different things which must not be confounded. One must first be "in him" before he can "abide in him." To be "in Christ" is to be saved. To be "abiding in Him" is to be sanctified.

5. Christians are never exhorted to be "in Christ". They are in Him by new creation. It is something that should be natural for a Christian.

A. 2 Corinthians 5:17 **"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."**

B. Ephesians 2:10 **"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them"**

6. Christians are frequently exhorted to "abide in Christ", because this privilege and experience may be interrupted.

7. To abide in Christ, is to have sustained conscious communion with Him.

A. To abide in Christ signifies the constant occupation of the heart with Him, a daily active faith in Him.

B. Acts 17:28 **"For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."**

8. **"Abide in me, and I in you"** (John 15:4).

A. The two things are quite distinct, though closely connected. Just as it is one thing to be "in Christ," and another to "abide in him," so there is a real difference between His being in us, and His abiding in us. The one is a matter of His grace; the other of our responsibility. The one is perpetual, the other may be interrupted.

B. Notice that the word "abide" here is one who stays permanently, not just someone who "comes and goes."

i. John 1:14, Christ came to "dwell" or "tabernacle" with us on earth in the incarnation- temporarily.

C. The words of Christ must abide in us if we are to abide in Him (John 15:7).

i. We get His words into us by reading, studying, applying them in our hearts.

ii. We had better know where His words are and what they are. They are in an Authorized Version, so we know what they are and where to find them.

D. The abiding life is to become the abounding life, a life that brings glory to the Father by being a reflection of the life of Christ. How does a branch abide? How does it keep its place in the

vine? What does it have to do? Nothing. It just abides. It remains where it finds itself, a part of the vine, placed there by God, content to fulfill the law of its being by receiving in fair weather and foul the life of the vine flowing up from the root.

4b Christ abides in us too as it is His desire and delight to abide in His children. Do not merely seek a temporary shelter in Christ, as a ship runs into harbor in stormy weather, and then comes out again when the storm is over; but cast anchor in Christ, as the vessel does when it reaches its desired haven. So many professors only seek Christ when they are in trouble or have a serious crisis in their life, only to abandon Him when the storm is past. Some people only reach for their Bible when there is a death in the family and even then, they struggle to find Psalm 23. These professors are not abiding in Christ.

4c We do not have the ability to bear fruit in and of ourselves. We must be grafted into the True Vine and abide in Christ to receive the power to produce spiritual fruit. The old, fallen nature cannot bear fruit, only the divine nature can as long as it is in the Vine and abiding in Christ.

4d "There are myriads of professing Christians in every Church whose union with Christ is only outward and formal. Some of them are joined to Christ by baptism and Church-membership. Some of them go even further than this, and are regular communicants and loud talkers about religion. But they all lack the one thing needful. Notwithstanding services, and sermons, and sacrament, they have no grace in their hearts, no faith, no inward work of the Holy Spirit. They are not one with Christ, and Christ in them. Their union with Him is only nominal, and not real. They have "a name to live," but in the sight of God they are dead."¹⁴⁴

15:5 I am the vine, ye are the branches:^{abc} He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit:^d for without me ye can do nothing.^{ef}

5a This is an organic union, so you can't get much closer than this. This is the whole secret of the branch's life, strength, vigor, beauty, and fertility. Separate from the stem, it has no life of its own. The sap and juice that flow from the stem are the origin and maintaining power of all its leaves, buds, blossoms, and fruit. Cut off from the stem, it will soon wither and die.

5B "Believers have no cause to despair of their own salvation, and to think they will never reach heaven. Let them consider that they are not left to themselves and their own strength. Their root is Christ, and all that there is in the root is for the benefit of the branches. Because He lives, they shall live also. Worldly people have no cause to wonder at the continuance and perseverance of believers. Weak as they are in themselves, their Root is in heaven, and never dies. "When I am weak," said Paul, "then am I strong." (2 Cor. 12:10.)."¹⁴⁵

5c Thoughts on the believers as branches, from William Jay, *Morning Exercises* for June 2:

A. This gives them a character of likeness. The branches are the very same kind of wood as the vine, and the very same sap pervades them both. And they that are joined to the Lord are of one spirit. The same mind is in them which was also in Christ Jesus.

B. This shows their dependence. "The righteous shall flourish as a branch;" but the branch does not bear the tree, but the tree the branch. Whatever likeness there may be, in all things he has preeminence. He is our life and strength. "Abide," he says, "in me: as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can you, except you abide in me; for without me you can do

¹⁴⁴ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on John*.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

nothing."

C. This proclaims their usefulness. The branches are the beauty and excellence of the vine, and by these its vigor and fertility are displayed. He is glorified in his people. He makes them blossom and yield fruit. He diffuses his goodness through their prayers and lives. In him is their fruit found, as to its Source and Support; but they bear it -- they are the branches -- they are filled with all the fruit of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.

5d Not just "fruit" but "much fruit" is produced by this union. This is the ultimate test of Christian profession, "Do you bear fruit? Any fruit at all? Even a little? Even thirty-fold?"

5e We must be in communion with God and in fellowship with Him and walking with (and before, Genesis 17:1) Him in order to accomplish anything of any spiritual value with God. Working in our own spirituality and through our own devices results in no fruit, or at least no sort of fruit that the Lord will accept. The Lord is saying "Without me, you can't live like you ought to live, do what you ought to do, and bear the fruit you ought to bear"

5f **"without me ye can do nothing"** (John 15:5)

1. Our total and absolute dependence on Christ for all things spiritual and secular.
 - A. I can't produce fruit without Christ
 - B. I can't walk with God without help
 - C. I can't have communion and fellowship without Christ
 - D. I can't get forgiveness of sin without Him
 - E. I can't get victory over sin without Christ
2. The idea here is "Without me you can't live like you ought to live, do what you ought to do, and bear the fruit you ought to bear."
3. A branch separated from the tree with wither and die.
 - A. Christians must have communion with Christ
 - B. Christians must have a connection with Christ
4. Jesus added, re-enforcing the lesson. There is no such thing as a freelance Christian. To be a Christian in the biblical sense of the word involves an organic spiritual relationship with Christ. In the Bible there is no such thing as a denominational church being ruled from some headquarters, or an independent church ignoring all other gatherings of believers. All are united to Christ and through him to one another, in a many-branched whole. Christ is the head of the church. Christ is the vine. Severed from him there is no life at all, individual or corporate, and what passes for life is a wretched imitation, lifeless and sowing death. Denominational-ism, tradition, programs, or money might keep a dead church going through the motions for a time. But all it produces is wordliness, carnality, legalism, death."¹⁴⁶

15:6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch,^a and is withered;^b and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.^c

6a Not having lost salvation as that cannot happen to the Christian, but being "set aside" and not used by the Lord for anything. There are many useless Christians whom the Lord cannot and will not use for anything because of their carnality and lack of communion.

6b Withered as they are not nourished through communion with God. Left on their own, they wither away spiritually. This is what lack of communion and fellowship results in.

¹⁴⁶ John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, pages 287-288.

6c Men do this, not God or the angels. They are not cast into hell as men do not cast other men into hell. God does that.

15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you,^a ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.^b

7a Not only must Christ abide in us but His words must as well. Do you have His words? Do you know where they are in the English language? They are in the Authorized Version. Hide those words in your heart and you will have His words abiding in you.

7b Do not take this as a promise of unlimited answers to prayer, for it is nothing of the kind. Remember the "if" that qualifies it: "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you," for a man who is truly in Christ, as the branch is in the vine, and who is feeding upon Christ's words, will be so influenced by the Holy Spirit that he will not ask anything which is contrary to the mind of God. There are some Christians who do not get their prayers answered, and who never will as long as they do not comply with this condition. If you do not take notice of Christ's words, He will not take notice of your words. He is not going to open His door to every stranger who chooses to give a runaway knock at it, but he will pay attention to His own children who pay attention to him. When He says "ye shall ask what ye will," we understand that this promise only includes things according to God's will and for God's glory. Paul asked for the "thorn in the flesh" to depart; but his prayer was not granted.

15:8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit;^a so shall ye be my disciples.^b

8a A Christian does not produce fruit; he BEARS the fruit the vine produces (Galatians 5:22 "**But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,**"). We bear fruit because of the nourishment we receive from the vine. The only way we can bear genuine fruit is to receive our nourishment from the Lord. "Much fruit" is often the result of "much doing" and "much abiding".

Fruit bearing is one sign that a person truly is a disciple of Christ.

8b "Would we know why so many professing Christians have little comfort in their religion, and go fearing and doubting along the road to heaven? The question receives a solution in the saying of our Lord we are now considering. Men are content with a little Christianity, and a little fruit of the Spirit, and do not labor to be holy in all manner of conversation. They must not wonder if they enjoy little peace, feel little hope, and leave behind them little evidence. The fault lies with themselves. God has linked together holiness and happiness; and what God has joined together we must not think to put asunder."¹⁴⁷

77. Keep His Commandments 15:9-11

15:9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.^a

9a You "start" in his love at salvation, and then continue in it.

15:10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love;^a even as I have kept my

¹⁴⁷ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on John*.

Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

10a Loving the Father and keeping His commandments are closely related. If you do one, you will do the other. If you truly love someone, you will do what they ask you and you will do it with joy and not grudgingly. One test of love is obedience. If you love the Father, you will do what He says. Rebellion is a mark of hate.

15:11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.^a

11a The believer's joy is to:

1. Remain in us. Happiness is a temporal thing while joy should be more of a permanent attitude of life.
2. Be full, complete, totally satisfying, not merely a partial joy or a temporary joy

78. The Lord's Commandment of Love 15:12,13

15:12 This is my commandment,^a That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

12a This is not called a "new" commandment but simply His "commandment". All the commandments can be summed up by:

1. Loving God
2. Loving our neighbor

This is also a commandment, not a suggestion. There may be saints we have trouble getting along with, but there should be no other Christian that we hate.

15:13 Greater love hath no man than this,^a that a man lay down his life^b for his friends.^c

13a The cross was the greatest act of love ever recorded in human history,

13b The most precious thing a man has is his life, so when he lays it down for others, it is the greatest sacrifice he can make.

13c How many people did Mohammed give his life for? The pope? Any "religious leader?" If not, can it be said that they really loved their followers?

79. Friends, not Servants 15:14,15

15:14 Ye are my friends,^a if ye do whatsoever I command you.^b

14a Friends of God! It is not just that we are His friend, but He also takes us as His friend! Where is this concept in any other "world religion?" Is Allah friends with anyone? Any of the gods of Hinduism? Can you be a friend and not just a mere worshipper to these "gods"? Man is made to be friends with God.

"This is indeed a glorious privilege. To know Christ, serve Christ, follow Christ, obey Christ, work in Christ's vineyard, fight Christ's battles, all this is no small matter. But for sinful men and women like ourselves to be called "friends of Christ," is something that our weak minds can hardly grasp and take in. The King of kings and Lord of lords not only pities and saves all them that believe in Him, but actually calls them His "friends." We need not wonder, in the face of such language as this, that Paul

should say, the "love of Christ passeth knowledge." (Eph 3:19)."¹⁴⁸

This is another reason why Christians should not be considered to be "slaves" as some men like John MacArthur and his highly flawed Legacy "Standard" Version insists. They take almost every usage of the Greek word "doulos" or every appearance of "servant" in our English text and force it to read "slave". If you are a friend then you certainly are not a slave!

A friend is:

1. A person whom one knows, likes, and trusts.
2. A person whom one knows; an acquaintance.
3. A person with whom one is allied in a struggle or cause; a comrade.
4. One who supports, sympathizes with, or patronizes a group, cause, or movement
5. One who supports and encourages you in times of trouble
6. One whose company you enjoy

1. God talked to Moses as a man talked with his friend.

A. Exodus 33:11 **"And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle."**

2. Abraham was a friend of God

A. 2 Chronicles 20:7 **"Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever?"**

B. Isaiah 41:8 **"But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend."**

C. James 2:23 **"And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God."**

3. Jesus was a friend of publicans and sinners

A. The saint has a friend that sticketh closer than a brother (Proverbs 18:24).

B. An example of this friendship is seen in Matthew 9:10, where the Lord sat down to eat and fellowship with the publicans and sinners, and the Pharisees couldn't understand why He was so friendly with them.

C. Matthew 11:19 **"The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children".** (Luke 7:34).

D. Consider Romans 5:7, **"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die."** Men might die for a friend or for some great cause, but it is a rare brand of man who would die for his mortal enemy. In contrast to the selfishness of the natural man, Christ died for His enemies, so they might be His friends. Who would die for an enemy? Who would give his life knowing that the person would not appreciate the sacrifice and would vilify the memory of the man who died for him? Christ did! He died for the sin of the world, knowing full well (ahead of time- foreknowledge) that the majority of men would reject that sacrifice and would remain His enemy. Yet Christ died for His enemies as well as for those who would become His friends. This is called "divine love". Human love will not suffer for an enemy but divine love does so gladly in the hopes that he who was once an enemy may become a friend.

6. Christ died for sinners not saints. He died for all men and not just the "elect". The elect would certainly be the righteous and there is no question that Christ died for them. But Christ also died for sinners and for His enemies! Get this down- Christ died for "reprobates!" Christ died for all men- "elect" and "non-elect."

¹⁴⁸ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on John*.

4, The world is no friend to sinners, and neither is Satan.

A. There is no true love in the world. You see some occasional examples of compassion and pity but no true divine love. You may save a man from a burning house, but there is no love of God unless you attempt to save him from the fires of hell.

B. Satan has no care for those in his thrall. They are going to hell and it bothers him not in the least. Sinners may serve Satan and he may give them some favors for a season, but eventually, once their usefulness is at an end, Satan will abandon them on earth, after he has secured the damnation of their souls.

C. Sinners are forever telling each other to "go to hell" or they mock and jest at the idea of eternal punishment. A man may live and die in this world alone and have none but the gravedigger as his pallbearer. But if a man knows Christ in a saving way, he is never alone, even if his mother and father forsake him. He also has the brotherhood of millions of Christians in the world.

14b This divine friendship is qualified if we do whatever He commands us. This is the only way divine friendship is possible. You cannot be a friend to someone if you are disobedient to his commands and desires. An act of disobedience is unfriendliness.

15:15 Henceforth I call you not servants;^{abc} for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth:^d but I have called you friends;^e for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.

15a Being a "servant" of God is honor enough, but He offers so much more than just a servant-master relationship through communion and abiding. He offers us intimate friendship. In most religions, people serve their gods as a servant, with little love or devotion being exchanged between them. But the relationship in Christian between God and His followers is based on friendship.

15b Most English versions (like John MacArthur's Legacy Standard Version or the Christian Standard Version) like to translate this as "slave" but that misses even this relationship. Even if we were to serve God as a servant, we would expect some benefits from the Master. Slaves receive hardly any benefits for their work beyond room and board,

Servants or Slaves? See *New Age Bible Versions*, by Gail Riplinger, pages 221-223

Billy Graham called attention to the sharp distinction between servants and slaves during his 1988 Denver Crusade, pronouncing, "You are either servants of God or slaves of Satan."

Webster presents the disparate imagery of 'servants' and 'slaves'.

Slave: . . .a person held in bondage, a thrall. One who has lost control of himself, freedom of action. A drudge.

Servant: . . .one who exerts himself for the benefit of another master. . .as a public servant, an official of a government.

The images of cruel bondage, generated by the word 'slave', are alien to our 'sonship' motivation expressed in Ephesians 6:6. ". . .but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart."

The prevailing term among New Agers to describe Christians is 'slave'. Scanning the examples to follow reveals the broad range of strange philosophies which have embraced this deprecating term regarding Christians. Confiscated and turned over to the police in Orange, California as part of an investigation into Satanic group crime and ritual killing, this bizarre note calls Christians the "Slaves of Christ" just like the new versions.

The book of Revelation corrects the erring conclusions of this bitter harangue and shows Christians as Webster's "servants...public servants, officials of government."

"...and we shall reign on the earth." Revelation 5:10

"...and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." Revelation 20:4

"...and they shall reign for ever and ever." Revelation 22:5

New Age leaders say Adam was a "slave" before he ate from the Tree of Life. He was then "emancipated" just like Lucifer, who preferred free will to passive slavery."

15c **"servant"** means a willing servant to Christ. It does not mean "a slave" in our common definition, for that is not the understanding of the relationship that a Christian has with the Lord. Christians are not slaves for slaves receive no compensation for their work besides basic room and board. But servants receive a full reward for their labors of love. And slaves do not love their masters but serve out of compulsion. Servants love their masters and serve because they desire to and their labor is voluntary. Don't ever degrade a Christian by calling him a mere "slave" of Christ when "servant" would be a higher and more noble title. The Christian may wrongly consider himself a slave, but God sees him as a servant and a son. God employs no slaves, but He does employ many willing and loving servants.

"Servant" is the more noble term and it was a favorite of Paul's. Strong's # 1401 *doulos*; a bondservant. From *deō deō*, "to bind". It also denotes absolute dependence. The emphasis of the word is on the service of the servant and of the dependence of the slave upon his lord. It is never used in a disparaging or contemptuous fashion in the New Testament. Although Christians were not hesitant to consider themselves the "*doulos*" of God, the Rabbis and Pharisees would never apply it to themselves. The term was applied however to those who performed menial service for the rabbis.

To translate "*doulos*" as slave is not consistent with the New Testament concept of service to God. Christians are servants, not slaves. A slave works out of compulsion as he does not desire such service. He does not love his master. He receives bare minimum wages, if any. But a servant serves from love and because he loves his master (Exodus 21:2-6 **"If thou buy an Hebrew servant, six years he shall serve: and in the seventh he shall go out free for nothing. If he came in by himself, he shall go out by himself: if he were married, then his wife shall go out with him. If his master have given him a wife, and she have born him sons or daughters; the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself. And if the servant shall plainly say, I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free: Then his master shall bring him unto the judges; he shall also bring him to the door, or unto the door post; and his master shall bore his ear through with an aul; and he shall serve him for ever."**). He receives good wages and even may be adopted by his master. Thus, there is a world of difference between a "servant" and "slave".

In a society where slavery was widespread and freedom was cherished, it was quite something for a man to willingly consider himself as a bondservant or a slave. The concept was not a popular one in Roman culture. Paul willingly adopts such an offensive concept to express his relationship to Christ. While the concept of being a slave was abhorrent to the Greek and Roman mind, Asians saw it as a title of honor as a subject of kings, emperors and God.

The books of Romans, Philippians, Titus, James, 2 Peter, Jude and Revelation also start off with the authors identifying themselves as "servants". The apostles were not such much leaders or "bishops" in the modern denominational sense of the word, but servants. The pope likes to style himself "a servant of the servants of Christ", which would be pathetic if it wasn't so laughable. The pope is too proud and arrogant to serve anyone, judging by the titles and offices he claims for himself. But a true man of God is humble, does not promote himself, does not attempt to build a personality cult around himself. Beware of any man who tries to do these things or has a proud and haughty attitude, and that goes for in and out of the church.

Paul also makes it clear that Christians are sons and not servants in Galatians 4:1-7, **"Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when**

we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

Differences between servants and slaves:

1. Slaves are bought, sons are born (through the new birth) or adopted (in a Roman sense of the word).
2. Slaves serve out of compulsion, servants out of love
3. Slaves receive no wages but servants do
4. Slaves are usually bound for life, servants may go out free (Exodus 21:2-6)
5. Servants tend to love their masters, slaves not so much.¹⁴⁹

15d Servants are told what to do but the master is under no obligation to explain why he is giving those orders. But God tells us what He is going to do, as He did with Abraham in Genesis 18:17ff. He was going to destroy Sodom and the cities of the plain and He told Abraham WHY He was going to do it.

The Lord also calls us "friends", not "slaves". Christians have a much higher relationship with God than any slave had with his master.

15e Friends of God:

1. What is a "friend"?

A. One attached to another by affection or esteem, a favored companion, one you can trust and whose company you enjoy.

2. God spoke to Moses as a man would speak to his friend.

A. Exodus 33:11 **And the LORD spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. And he turned again into the camp: but his servant Joshua, the son of Nun, a young man, departed not out of the tabernacle.**

3. Abraham was a friend of God.

A. 2 Chronicles 20:7 **Art not thou our God, who didst drive out the inhabitants of this land before thy people Israel, and gavest it to the seed of Abraham thy friend for ever?**

B. Isaiah 41:8 **But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham my friend.**

C. James 2:23 **And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.**

4. Characteristics of a friend

A. They love at all times.

i. Proverbs 17:17 **A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.**

B. They stick closer than a brother.

i. Proverbs 18:24 **A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.**

C. Their wounds are faithful.

i. Proverbs 27:6 **Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.**

D. A friend "sharpens" another friend.

i. Proverbs 27:17 **Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend.**

5. Solomon was a friend to the Shulamite.

A. Song 5:16 **His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved,**

¹⁴⁹ John Cereghin, *Pilgrim Way Commentary on Romans*.

and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.

6. Jesus was a friend of publicans and sinners.

A. Matthew 11:19 **The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.**

i. The world is no friend to sinners, and neither is Satan. There is no true love in the world. You see some occasional examples of compassion and pity but no true divine love. Satan has no care for those in his thrall. A man may live and die in this world alone and have none but the gravedigger as his pallbearer. But if a man knows Christ in a saving way, he is never alone, even if his mother and father forsake him. He also has the brotherhood of millions of Christians in the world.

a. The saint has a friend that sticketh closer than a brother (Proverbs 18:24).

ii. An example of this friendship is seen in Matthew 9:10, where the Lord sat down to eat and fellowship with the publicans and sinners, and the Pharisees couldn't understand why He was so friendly with them.

iii. Consider Romans 5:7 **"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die."** Men might die for a friend or for some great cause, but it is a rare brand of man who would die for his mortal enemy. In contrast to the selfishness of the natural man, Christ died for His enemies, so they might be His friends. Who would die for an enemy? Who would give his life knowing that the person would not appreciate the sacrifice and would vilify the memory of the man who died for him? Christ did! He died for the sin of the world, knowing full well (ahead of time in His foreknowledge) that the majority of men would reject that sacrifice and would remain His enemy. This is called "divine love". Human love will not suffer for an enemy but divine love does so gladly in the hopes that he who was once an enemy may become a friend.

iv. Christ died for sinners not saints. He died for all men and not just the "elect". The elect would certainly be the righteous and there is no question that Christ died for them. But Christ also died for sinners, reprobates and for His enemies! Get this down- Christ died for "reprobates!" Christ died for all men- "elect" and "non-elect." Limited atonement, as presented by orthodox Calvinism, is a heresy and the universal extent of the atonement is a theological fact.

B. Luke 7:34 **The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!**

7. John the Baptist was the Friend of the Bridegroom.

A. John 3:29 **He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.**

8. Jesus refers to Israel as His friends.

A. Zechariah 13:6 **And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.**

9. Jesus called His disciples friends.

A. Luke 12:4 **And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.**

B. John 15:14,15 **Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you.**

10. The greatest demonstration of love is laying down your life for your friends.

A. John 15:13 **Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his**

friends.

11. Summary

A. Christ calls us “friends”, not “slaves” or “servants”.

i. Paul makes it clear that Christians are sons and not servants in Galatians 4:1-7, **“Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”**

B. New Testament presentation of believers is that we are friends, sons and friends more than servants and certainly not as slaves.

C. Christ will share things with us that He will share with no one else and we should be doing the same thing in prayer, as friends can tell each other anything.

D. Friends enjoy each other’s company. Do we enjoy His company in church and private fellowship?

80. Election for Service 15:16-25

15:16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit,^{ab} and that your fruit should remain:^c that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

16a This “election” (although the word is not used here) is for service, that we may bear fruit. We must be elected to salvation first, then for service. Although we do not identify with a Calvinistic theological system (as Calvinism is just another uninspired, human theological system), we do not shy away from the doctrine of election. It is there, but we do not necessarily interpret it in an “unconditional” context that Calvinists do. But the use of “election” or “chosen” here is not for salvation but for fruit bearing.

16b We have been:

1. Chosen, selected

2. Ordained, something ordered or decreed by virtue of superior authority. From the Old French “ordener” and Latin word “ordinere” meaning “to order, arrange, appoint.”

16c The fruit should remain. These hyper-evangelicals and Sword/Hyles-type of “Independent Fundamental Baptists” who maintain that the “fruit” is nothing more than the results of “soul-winning” face a real problem. They often report (or brag) figures like “We had 1,500 people saved last year, 543 baptized and 12 to join the church”. Where is the fruit that should have remained? You claimed 1,500 saved, so why didn’t all of these 1,500 get baptized and then join the church? Did you lose some your “fruit”? Did you harvest wild grapes? If a man is truly saved, he will be baptized, join the church and then go on with God to the end. That “fruit” will remain. This is why we cannot believe these wildly-inflated numbers we see all the time.

Even those churches that practice a more Biblical evangelism may have this problem. The last five professions of faith we have had in our church might be classified as “duds”. None of them have ever come out to church since their profession after a follow-up, although one “convert” said he was reading his Bible. Until we start seeing spiritual fruit, it might be better to refer to these people as

“professors” or “hopeful converts” instead of assuming they really got saved. This seems to be a widespread problem in western churches for some reason, as we have many professions but few genuine converts.

True fruit remains and continues. Spiritual works that fizzle out after a short time cannot be said to be true fruit.

81. Love and Hate 15:17-25

15:17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.^a

17a The Lord repeated the command, for He knew how prone even His disciples would be to disobey it. If you have no love to one another, you are breaking the King's commandment.

15:18 If the world hate you,^a ye know that it hated me before it hated you.^b

18a And they will, since they hated our Master first. Why should we expect praise from the world? And if the world is praising us, we must be doing something wrong. This is why I wonder so much about the spiritual legacy of Billy Graham, Even the wicked had some respect for him. But why wasn't he hated for his message and stand, unless he had compromised both, which he did at the end when he basically became a Universalist. We are to love each other as Christians while the world hates all of us.

18b Mere churchianity and outward profession are a cheap religion and cost a man nothing. Genuine Christianity will always bring with it a cross. The world hated Christ, the Church, the Bible, the martyrs, the truth. Are we then to expect or hope that it will love us if we walk in these same steps? No, the Lord tells us in Matthew 5:11,12 **“Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven.”**

15:19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own:^a but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.^b

19a This condemns worldly preachers who have sold-out for the favor and endorsement of the world. If you are popular with the world, you have compromised and are an enemy of God (James 4:4, **“Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”**). But make sure that the world hates us for our faithfulness to Christ and not because of our attitude or some stupid thing we said or did (1 Peter 2:20 **“For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable.”**).

19b Through the New Birth, we have been removed from the influences and philosophies of this world. The worldling stayed behind in Egypt and refused the deliverance and salvation that Christ offered. We left for the Promised Land, they stayed in Egypt, and they hate us for that choice. By leaving Egypt, we condemned the world and those in the world and the world system itself does not appreciate that.

We see in John 15:18,19:

1. The world system hated Christ

A. This is because He exposed their sin and removed their excuse to sin- John 15:22,24.

B. The world did not know Christ as they did not know the Father- John 8:19;55; 15:21

2. The world system hates us because we are of God and they hate God

3. The word hates us because we are not one of them but are called out of the world

A. We are a peculiar people.

i. Titus 2:14 **"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."**

ii. 1 Peter 2:9 **"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light."**

15:20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you;^{ab} if they have kept my saying, they will keep your's also.

20a If you are not being persecuted for your stand, testimony and message, are you even a Christian?

20b "1. The "kosmos" (the world) hated Jesus Christ because He took away their fig leaf "cloke" (vs. 22) where they were hiding their sins (Job 31:33).

2. They hated Jesus Christ because they knew nothing about "God" at all, although 90 percent of them professed to be Deists and Theists—like Mohammed and the Pharisees.

3. They hated Jesus Christ because if He had not showed up and spoken to them they could have gone on alibiing for their sins (vs. 22).

4. They hated Jesus Christ because they hated the God in whom they professed to believe (vs. 23: see this illustrated in John 8:41–42).

5. They hated Jesus Christ because He had demonstrated, openly, before the world, that He had spiritual powers and supernatural powers none of them had (vs. 24). Mohammed and Buddha couldn't heal a sick cat or raise a muskrat from the dead.

6. After forty centuries of pagan blabber about "The Fatherhood of God," the world SAW HIM (vs. 24) and HATED His guts. He didn't "measure up" to their religious beliefs!

Now you see why 90 percent of the truth that is propagated today, anywhere, by anyone, is called "HATE" literature by all unregenerate, Bible- rejecting pagans (those with IQs above 150 "in the lead"). THEY are the haters. What they hate is the truth (see John 17:17 and comments). It is the AUTHOR of truth whom they hate, according to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The name of Jesus Christ does not appear in a single American government document. It was omitted from all prayers in the Hollywood movies but about two out of 5,000. The world hates His NAME.

In the movies, the name of Jesus is purposely omitted from ministers presiding at weddings and funerals, the prayers of dying people, prayers in church buildings, and even the prayers of CHILDREN and Catholic priests."¹⁵⁰

15:21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.^a

21a They do not know the Father so they do not know the Son and they do not know followers of Christ.

15:22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.^a

¹⁵⁰ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, page 453.

22a This is a main reason why the world hates Christ and His gospel- it exposes their sin and doom. They cannot hide or cover their sins any longer as Christ brings everything out into the open. No one like being told he is under the condemnation of God and is going to hell. They have no excuse, and they cannot claim any ignorance for their sin.

AV	ESV	LSV
22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.	22 If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.	22 "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin.

“**cloak**” The ESV and LSV have “excuse”.

15:23 He that hateth me hateth my Father also.^a

23a Since the Father and the Son are one, you cannot love One and hate the Other. You either love them both or hate them both. If you hate the Father and the Son, you will hate His law as well.

15:24 If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin:^a but now have they both seen^b and hated both me and my Father.

24a Sinners would wallow in ignorance if no one ever told them of their sin or showed them their sin. If I don't think I am doing anything wrong, I am fine. But if a man comes along and tells me that what I like to do is sin, then I become aware of my sin and I would probably resent the man who ruined my fun. This is why people don't go to church. They are afraid that the preacher will uncover their sin and confront them with their sin and would thus become accountable to that sin. They think ignorance of sin or the law of God will somehow protect them in the judgment, but as the police officer says, “Ignorance is no excuse of the law”.

24b In this case, “seeing” was not “believing.”.

15:25 But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.^{ab}

25a Why should men hate Jesus Christ? See notes under 15:20. The world hates the name of Christ but they love their own. They exalt men like Van Gogh, Edgar Allan Poe, Elvis, John Lennon, John Wayne, Steve Jobs, Frank Sinatra, John Lennon, John F. Kennedy, etc. The more sinful, rebellious and wicked, the better the world likes it. Christ is “altogether lovely” in Song 5:16 yet the world hates Him. Some of these people listed above lived degenerate lifestyles yet the world loves them. How could any sane, rational person hate such a man as Christ whole loving filthy, hateful, degenerate sinners?

25b This is quoted from Psalm 69:4, “**They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away**”. Psalm 35:19 also comes in here, “**Let not them that are mine enemies wrongfully rejoice over me: neither let them wink with the eye that hate me without a cause.**” The world doesn't really need a reason to hate Jesus although we suggested several motives. They hate Him because it is the nature of fallen man to hate beauty and holiness. That is good enough

reason for them.

81. The Coming of the Comforter 15:26

15:26 But when the Comforter^a is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father,^{bc} he shall testify of me:^{de}

16a “The Comforter” is the Third Person in the Godhead, the Holy Ghost. He “proceeds from the Father”.

16b “The added phrase “from the Father” does not indicate a subordination of Jesus to the Father. The same is true in 14:16 with regard to the request of Jesus to the Father. There is an assumption that because he does not act independently of the Father then Christ must be lower and less than the Father. Applying this assumption to the Spirit, he would be still lower and less than the Son, for he, too, does not act independently but comes only at the Son’s sending. This stressing of the acts of the Persons in relation to each other in order to make one lower than the other is unwarranted. Against this procedure stands every Scripture passage which places the Persons on an equality. Where equals are a unit in a purpose and a work, the equality remains undisturbed when one of these equals requests another, sends another, allows himself to be sent by another, to perform one or the other great part of that work. All these acts reveal only the perfect harmony of these equals in carrying out their one work, each acting with the other, each with the other’s consent. A reconstruction of the Trinity which would make each Person act independently in order to conserve the equality of the three is infeasible. The alternative, either such independence or subordination presupposes a full comprehension of what the Trinity must be when no human mind is capable of comprehending even the little this Trinity has revealed of itself, due to making known to us what God has done and still does for our salvation. As regards the phrase “from the Father,” why disregard what Jesus so often repeats, that he is now going to the Father and that, therefore, when he sends the Spirit, this will naturally be from the Father? As far as subordination is concerned, the human nature of Jesus always was and always will be subordinate; everything it has even in its exaltation it has as a gift. The incarnation of one of the three Persons in no way affects the relation of the three Persons as such.”¹⁵¹

16c In church history, we read of the “Filioque Controversy”. It involved the question as to whether the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father or from both the Father and the Son. The controversy took place between the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox churches. It mostly involved the addition of “and the Son” in The Nicene Creed. It was one of the more worthless controversies in the Church history but it was enough to be one of the reasons for the split between the Western and Eastern churches.

16d He testifies of Jesus, not to Himself or any other person. Trust no “preacher”, “teacher” or “religious leader” who does not testify of Jesus.

16e Also see John 14:16,17 and John 16:7-11

82. We Shall Bear Witness 15:27

15:27 And ye also shall bear witness,^a because ye have been with me from the beginning

¹⁵¹ R.C.H. Lenski, *Commentary on the New Testament*.

27a They would give their witness through their life, love, testimony, suffering and eventual martyrdom.

John Chapter 16

83. The Disciples Forewarned 16:1-6

16:1 These things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.^a

1a “I am warning you ahead of time about the opposition you are going to get if you faithfully witness for me. You are going to get it hard, so don’t be surprised if you do. Don’t get ‘offended.’ Take it for granted and expect more to come.” Jesus is preparing them for the worst and is not sugar-coating anything.

16:2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.^a

2a The source of this persecution is religious. This may also be tribulational as the Lord uses “synagogues”. There will be many believers in the tribulation who are saved under the ministry of the 144,000 (Revelation 7) and they will face immense persecution. This persecution may come initially from unbelieving Jews but will be taken up and intensified by the Antichrist later.

16:3 And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.^a

3a The world has no knowledge of God and no appreciation for His love, mercy, compassion, grace, etc. Thus they believe the lies told of him by Satan and end up hating Him and His followers, even to the point of persecuting and killing us.

16:4 But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them.^a And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

4a The day of persecution and martyrdom will come, when the disciples would need to recall these words for comfort, strength and even instruction about how to act in that day.

16:5 But now I go my way to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

16:6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.^a

6a Why not? The Lord is talking about leaving and being put to death. He is also talking about the persecution of His followers and how their ministry will be rejected by the world. No wonder they were upset!

84. More Teaching on the Holy Spirit 16:7-15

16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away:^a for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

7a This is Important and beneficial for you.

16:8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

16:9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;^{ab}

9a “Right now there are, alive, on this earth, more than 2,000,000,000 adult sinners (and that number has increased since Ruckman wrote this- jc) who would rather die and go into Hell, taking their “religion” or their “faith” with them, than accept the CURE for sin. No genuine, fornicating sex pervert wants to stop sinning; he wants you to spend your tax money finding a cure for him that will allow him to keep sinning. All cures for sin are temporary but ONE; it is John 1:12. John 1:12 and 1 Thessalonians 5:23 guarantee a future date where you will be free from sin (its source, its roots, its causes, its practices, its results, and its very PRESENCE [Rev. 20–22]). You want it or you don’t want it. You will take it or you will not take it. It is the Holy Spirit’s job in this age to show you your desperate need for TAKING it.”¹⁵²

9b They are condemned for a sin of omission, something they did not do, which was for them to believe on Christ. You can be damned for what you don’t do as much for as what you actually do.

16:10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father,^a and ye see me no more;

10a In the ascension in Acts 1:8.

16:11 Of judgment,^a because the prince of this world^b is judged.^{cd}

11a Preaching on “judgment” is absolutely vital, just as Paul preached judgment to Felix in Acts 24:25.

11b Satan.

11c At the cross but ultimately in Revelation 20.

11d The Holy Spirit has a three-fold ministry in this age:

1. Reprove the world of sin

A. This is negative- to tell the world what is wrong

B. He defines what is sin (through the law) and accuses the world of sin

i. In so doing, the world has no excuse for their sin (John 15:22,24).

C. This sin is bound up in that they refused to believe on Christ. This sin of unbelief leads to other sins.

2. Reprove the world of righteousness

A. This is positive- to tell the world what is right. But it is also negative, to convince men of their lack of righteousness. In ourselves, we have no righteousness.

i. Isaiah 64:7 **“And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee: for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities.”**

B. He tells the world what is right and demonstrates how the world is “missing the mark”

C. “It is the “unhappy work” of the Holy Spirit in the Church Age to preach what Paul preached to Felix (Acts 24:25). He proves to you that you are NOT righteous, and only one human being

¹⁵² Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, page 461.

ever met the standards of “God’s Righteousness”¹⁵³

D. He would soon return to the Father in the ascension in Acts 1:8 and the world would see Him no more until the Second Coming in Revelation 19. The fact that the Father raised Him from the dead and then received Him back into heaven was the public manifestation that the Father approved the work of Christ and this, in turn, would be a rebuke to His enemies.

3. Reprove the world of judgment

A. To warn what will happen if you ignore the reproofing of sin and righteousness.

i. Acts 24:25 as Paul reasoned to Felix of judgment.

a. Acts 24:25 **“And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.”**

B. Their father, the devil, is judged and they will share in it. He is judged and they would also be judged with Satan and would share his fate.

What the Holy Spirit does NOT do:

1. He doesn’t help your self-esteem
2. He doesn’t pay off your credit cards because you sowed a “seed faith” somewhere
3. He is not a motivational speaker
4. He doesn’t make you speak in gibberish while passing it off as an “unknown tongue” and roll around on the floor in some Charismatic meeting.
5. He doesn’t lead or direct you to attend or join false church or religion.
6. He doesn’t lead you to correct the Bible.
7. He doesn’t help you when you “name it and claim it”.

16:12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.^a

12a They could not understand these words without the help of the Holy Spirit so this would have to wait until Acts 2. But they were also worried, confused and upset and they were in no condition to receive these additional truths that Jesus wanted to tell them. He did not want to overwhelm them further.

16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth,^a is come, he will guide you into all truth:^b for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.^c

13a A title of the Holy Spirit. Since He is God, He must be the Spirit of truth as He cannot be anything else.

13b Not just spiritual truth, but ALL truth. The Holy Spirit guides into the truths of chemistry, calculus, philosophy, astronomy, medicine, politics, economics, history, etc. A Christian must be well-versed in a general education. In better days, schools took a “wheel” approach to teaching, stating that theology was the “Queen of the Sciences” and was at the hub of the wheel. The various academic disciplines would radiate out from the hub like spokes on a wheel.

13c Prophecy and scriptural illumination of Scriptural truths.

“Seven resurrections, seven judgments, seven baptisms, seven mysteries, the dispersion and regathering of Israel, the total destruction of Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas, the formation of

¹⁵³ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, page 462.

the UN, the coming of the Antichrist (his manner, his location, and his methods), the catching out of living saints ahead of the “last day,” the movements of the Holy Spirit East to West geographically, the deadliness of the letter “X” and the numbers “6” and “13,” the bad right arm and eye of the Antichrist, the invasion of Palestine by Moslems and Buddhists (and atheists) from India, China, Japan, Iraq, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Siberia, the New Birth, spiritual circumcision, the Judgment Seat of Christ, the length of the Great Tribulation, the location of the Second Advent, and all the material on the Millennium (more than 300 verses in the Old Testament).¹⁵⁴

16:14 He shall glorify me:^a for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.^b

14a The Holy Spirit glorifies the Christ, not Himself.

14b The Holy Spirit shall show us the things of God and explain it to us.

16:15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.^a

15a The Holy Spirit will take the things and truth of Christ and show it to us and help us to understand it.

85. Jesus Speaks of His Departure 16:16-28

16:16 A little while,^a and ye shall not see me:^b and again, a little while, and ye shall see me,^c because I go to the Father.^b

16a “Notice the monotonous repetition of the phrase “a little while.” It occurs SEVEN TIMES in four verses. The commentators “make a stab at it” by observing that the verses could not have been completely fulfilled in Luke 24; John 20; and Acts 1, but not one of them carried things far enough (again) because he refused to compare Scripture with Scripture. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown say the fulfillment is at the Rapture when Christ comes for His “widowed” church. Wrong again. The Scriptures told you when it would be.

“For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry” (Heb. 10:37). See that “a little WHILE”? Why would anyone on earth have to guess about that date when it showed up SEVEN TIMES in John 16? Daniel’s “Seventieth Week” has seven weeks in it, and the age Peter, James, and John were in was the fifth of seven ages: 1. 4004 B.C. 2. 3004 B.C. to 2004 B.C. 3. 2004 B.C. to 1000 B.C. 4. 1004 B.C. to the birth of Christ. 5. The birth of Christ to A.D. 1000 6. A.D. 1000 7. A.D. 1000 to A.D. 2000 (see 2 Pet. 3:8). “A little while” is a “little while” on God’s calendar (see Rev. 22:12, for example).

Verse 21 explained the proverb to anyone who was given a complete New Testament (A.D. 90), for it identifies the “man child” of Job 3:3 and Revelation 12:5 as denoted in Isaiah 66:7–8; Micah 5:3; and 1 Thessalonians 5:2–3; that reference being to the reaction of the unsaved in the same period of time: the Great Tribulation.

This interpretation will allow any reader to believe verse 23 literally, and with it verse 26: “at THAT day,” for “that day” is within seven years (or less) of showing up in the book of Acts from Acts 1–Acts 7 as we have stated it at least thirty times in fifteen different publications.

Observe how many times the Holy Spirit called your attention to the expression “THAT day” in the Old Testament when dealing with the Millennium or the Tribulation: see Isaiah 23:15, 24:21, 27:1–2,

¹⁵⁴ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, page 466.

31:7; Jeremiah 48:41, 49:22; Ezekiel 24:27, 29:21, 38:14,19; Hosea 2:18; Amos 9:11; Zephaniah 1:15, 3:11,16; Zechariah 12:6,8,11, etc. for a small “ensampling.”

In the Tribulation, Israel is weeping and lamenting (vs. 20) while the world is not only rejoicing (literally: see Rev. 11:10!) but sending “gifts one to another.” The proverb was “veiled” until John wrote: “And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth” (Rev. 11:8–10).¹⁵⁵

16b After the ascension in Acts 1.

16c When? We will see Him again at the Second Coming but these disciples all died millenia before the return of Christ.

16:17 Then said some of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?^a

17a It did sound like a confusing statement! But they asked themselves instead of asking Christ. They were pooling their ignorance instead of going to the One Who could answer their questions.

16:18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? we cannot tell what he saith.

16:19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?

16:20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice:^a and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.^b

20a This is at the crucifixion, death and burial of Christ.

20b The tables eventually turn! At the crucifixion, the believers were sad but the world was glad. At the Second Coming, the believers will be glad and the world will be sad.

16:21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.^{ab}

21a A woman goes through a lot of tribulation to deliver a baby, but when she holds that baby, the pain is forgotten. It was all worth it. When the Church and Christians go through tribulation, the heavenly reward they will receive will make it worth it all.

¹⁵⁵ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, pages 471-472.

21b This could be applied to Revelation 12:1,2.¹⁵⁶ This is not the primary interpretation or application, though. The Lord is simply using a literal example of a woman in labor to illustrate the trials they would go through.

16:22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again,^a and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.^b

22a This separation will only be temporary. There is coming a day when there will be no separation between the believer and Christ.

22b The joy we will have when we see Christ (as death, rapture or Second Coming) is a joy that the world cannot diminish or take away.

16:23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.^a

23a This is Christian's power of attorney. Legally, any person capable of free and intelligent action may act as an agent. The power of attorney means the legal and written authority to transact business for another. One may be a general agent to represent another in all of his business, or a special agent who is authorized to do some specific work, or transact some special business. The agent can act with all authority within the bounds of the legal authorization as much as the one who gave him this authority. All believers have full, legal, redemptive, gospel, blood-bought, promised, and family rights to use the name of Jesus in whatever we need. Free, unlimited, and unqualified use of His name is the church's deposit. Checks will be honored in the amount signed with a steady and unwavering hand. As we are working for Him and representing Him, He gives us all the authority we need to speak and work in His name. If my boss was to send me on a client visit or an industry convention, I would have the authority to speak in the name of my boss and company.

We are sons of God with full authority to act in His name using the authority He gave us. Ambassadors do this (2 Corinthians 5:20 "**Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.**"). What are the duties of an ambassador? An ambassador is a diplomatic official accredited to a foreign sovereign or government, or to an international organization, to serve as the official representative of his or her own country. Ambassadors are ministers of the highest rank, with plenipotentiary authority to represent their head of state. In everyday usage it applies to the ranking plenipotentiary minister stationed in a foreign capital. The host country typically allows the ambassador control of specific territory called an embassy, whose territory, staff, and even vehicles are generally afforded diplomatic immunity from most laws of the host country. He represents the interest of his home country and government in a foreign land.

This is exactly what every Christian is- an ambassador of the Kingdom of Heaven and its Sovereign, the Lord Jesus Christ, to this world. The world does not afford is the respect and "diplomatic immunity" that it does to carnal ambassadors but our duties are similar- we represent Christ and speak on His behalf.

Let's take a closer look at the role of the Christian ambassador, who represents the government of heaven in this foreign land of earth:

1. They represent their government while in a foreign country.
2. Yet as they do this, they retain their citizenship in their home country. They do not carry dual citizenship.
3. They have (or are supposed to have) diplomatic immunity. This is not in effect during times of

¹⁵⁶ See my notes on those verses in the *Pilgrim Way Commentary on Revelation*.

war. This is why Paul is in jail. As an ambassador of the country of heaven, he is not supposed to be treated with such indignity.

4. The embassy in the foreign capital also is supposed to have immunity. The laws and customs of the home country are in effect on the property of the embassy. Heaven has two types of embassies on earth the local church and the Christian home.

5. If citizens of that foreign country want to visit, move to or defect to our home country, they come through the embassy and the ambassador. If people want to know about heaven, the King of Heaven, or move (or defect!) from earth to heaven, they would seek out the embassy and contact an ambassador, who would help them! That is evangelism!

6. The ambassador and his embassy maintain the language and customs of the home country in that foreign land.

7. The ambassador represents his King and government before foreign governments and often transmits messages back and forth.

8. The ambassador is chosen by his government for that post. Several requirements would be needful:

A. He must speak the local language. This is why angels do not preach the gospel. They do not know how to speak to sinners as a redeemed sinner would.

B. He must have a respect for the country he is working in.

C. He must know the local customs and culture.

D. As a representative of his country, he must be a man of good character and conduct.

9. Different kinds of ambassadors:¹⁵⁷

A. Ambassador (in a general sense)- the highest ranking diplomatic representative appointed by one country or government to represent it in another country.

B. Ambassador-at-large- one accredited to no particular country. He may go to any country.

C. Ambassador extraordinary- one on a special diplomatic mission.

D. Ambassador plenipotentiary- an ambassador with special authority to make treaties

E. Also see Ephesians 6:20 **"For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."**

This can also deal with sonship, too. The Roman idea of adoption also comes to mind. Adoption itself is an interesting concept. It is a Greek and Roman practice for it does not stem from the Jewish law, although it was practiced (Moses in Exodus 2:10, Genubath in 1 Kings 11:20 and Esther). But each of these occasions occurred outside of Israel. Paul, who moved in Greek and Roman circles, was more familiar with it than Peter, James or John. Speaking in a secular sense, the motive and initiative of adoption always lay with the adoptive father, who thus supplied his lack of natural offspring and satisfied the desire to perpetuate his family. The process and conditions of adoption varied with the different peoples. Among oriental nations it was extended to slaves (as Moses) who thereby gained their freedom, but in Greece and Rome it was, with rare exceptions, limited to citizens. In Greece a man might during his lifetime, or by will to take effect after his death, adopt any male citizen into the privileges of his son, but with the invariable condition that the adopted son accepted the legal obligations and religious duties of a real son. In Rome the unique nature of parental authority by which a son was held in his father's power, almost as a slave was owned by his master, gave a particular character to the process of adoption. Roman adoption was the process by which a person was transferred from his natural father's power into that of his adoptive father, and it consisted in a fictitious sale of the son, and his surrender by the natural to the adoptive father."¹⁵⁸

"The Hebrew Law Codes made no mention of adoption. The Greek word does not occur in the

¹⁵⁷ From D. A. Waite, *Ephesians: Preaching Verse-by-Verse*, page 192.

¹⁵⁸ *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, page 58.

LXX and in fact, no term corresponding to the Greek word "húiothesia" exists in Hebrew."¹⁵⁹

If we are sons of God, then we have the signet ring of the Father, granting us full rights and authority to transact business in the Father's name and to ask what we may need from His estate so that we may successfully transact whatever business we may need to do in His name.

16:24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name:^{ab} ask, and ye shall receive,^c that your joy may be full.

24a The disciples really had not been praying to Christ at this point but they would after His death and resurrection. They had not really worked for Christ or represented Him (except in Matthew 10). But that would soon change as He would soon be absent from them, but He would leave them with the necessary authority and supplies to speak in His name and to transact business in His name.

24c The ecumenical world hates this as they deeply resent Christ being the only name. They want this authority to be spread around to all world religions and religious leaders.

24c If we are representing Christ as His witnesses, then anything we need to help us to fulfill that deputation would be granted.

16:25 These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs,^a but I shall shew you plainly of the Father.

16:26 At that day^a ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

26a What day is this?

16:27 And ye also shall bear witness,^a because ye have been with me from the beginning.

27a Acts 1:8 **"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."**

16:28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

86. The Disciple's Profession Tested 16:29-32

16:29 His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.

"Finally! You are speaking clearly and we understand what you are saying!" But this is a bigger self-condemnation of the spiritual dullness of the disciples than of the Lord being obtuse. Remember, the Holy Spirit was not yet given so the disciples had no divine help in understanding what the Lord was saying. This is a type of the unsaved man trying to understand spiritual things, as in 1 Corinthians 2:14,

¹⁵⁹ Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, page 61.

But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

16:30 Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

16:31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

16:32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone:^{ab} and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

32a Christ challenges their profession of John 16:32. No doubt they were sincere and meant well, but Christ knew them and their upcoming failure in just a few hours when He would be abandoned by them in the hour of His greatest need. Profession must be tested, else it is no good. Is your faith and profession able to stand against tribulation and persecution? Or what about discouragement, depression, apathy of others, failure, mockery, sickness, poverty, etc?

The prosperity preachers claim that Christianity is nothing more than one success after another and that no Christian should ever suffer want or defeat.¹⁶⁰ This is a lie straight from hell. Let's say someone makes a profession from such a Prosperity Gospel presentation. The "new convert" now makes a profession. He has been told that God will bless him with health and wealth but the eventual problems come, discouraging the new convert. He will come to one of two reactions: 1) he was never really saved or had enough faith because he is suffering trials, or 2) it was all a lie and Christianity is a scam. Either way, he gives up on the faith and renounces his profession. His faith was tested, all everyone's faith is, and he failed because he was not warned ahead of time that the Christian life has MORE trial and tribulation than the life of a sinner, and he was not given the warning or the training and preparation to deal with it.

The Lord's question is designed to make us confront ourselves to make sure that we really are in the faith (2 Corinthians 13:5 **"Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?"**). It is designed to weed out false professions and to strengthen genuine professions.

We ought not to be offended when someone, especially the Lord, asks us questions like this to get us to examine and verify our salvation. It is generally the false professor who resents such challenges, as his faith is too weak to stand scrutiny. "You have to believe me when I tell you I'm saved!" But a strong faith welcomes occasional challenges.

32b This is referring to the disciples scattering and abandoning Him at His arrest. When He would need them most, none of them would be there for Him.

87. Christ Overcoming the World 16:33

16:33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation:^a but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.^{bcdef}

¹⁶⁰ This sounds like Donald Trump's mantra of winning. "You are just going to win and win and win and soon you'll be tired of winning!" This helps explain his fascination with prosperity preachers and his impatience with Biblical preachers who preach truth.

33a These are the daily tribulations of the saint as found in:

1. 2 Corinthians 1:4 **"Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."**
2. 2 Corinthians 7:4 **"Great is my boldness of speech toward you, great is my glorying of you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceeding joyful in all our tribulation."**
3. Ephesians 3:13 **"Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory."**

33b This will be consummated in the Millennium.

33c Christ was the original Overcomer and Christians can also overcome their generation:

1. 1 John 5:4,5 **"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"**

A. One of the characteristics of someone who has truly been born again is that he does overcome the world and is not overcome by it.

B. This defines who the "overcomers" are in Revelation 2:7,11,17,26; 3:5,12,21.¹⁶¹ They who overcome are those who are born of God, who love God and who keep His commandments. They have gotten the victory over their particular, unique generations and the compromises that were offered by the apostates of their day. They had to face "head on" and go against infidelity, modernism, liberalism, atheism, philosophy, Roman Catholic and Protestant persecutions (especially if they were Baptist or Anabaptist), carnality, worldliness, television, radio, jazz music, the United Nations, Republican and Democratic administrations, Civil Wars, the destruction of the Constitution, politics and political parties (all of them), wars, perverted Bible versions, Southern Gospel Music, Contemporary Christian Music, PTL Clubs, Purpose-Driven nonsense, "faith seed offerings", faith healers, etc., etc., etc. They would not give in to these pressures and refused to compromise with them. They stood against these while standing for the Lord and the truth. This is why they are overcomers- they overcame the world, the flesh and the devil.

C. We do not have to try to overcome the world (this age, this fallen system)- we already have, positionally in Christ. We are not striving for the victory, we have it already. This victory over this world comes not of ourselves or from ourselves but rather through God, in His birthing of us into His family. We must overcome the world else we will perish. We must either overcome it or it will overcome us. We are at war with the world and it is with us. If it cannot reclaim us back into its slavery then it will seek to destroy us. Peace and cease-fire are out of the question, so one must destroy the other. There is no other option. Practically, it can be a different story. We must do "hand-to-hand" combat with the world and ourselves on a daily, even a continual basis. The only way we have any hope of victory on this practical level is through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. Only a Christian has any hope of this victory. No unsaved person does, as he does not want this kind of victory over the world since he is still part of it. But Christians can. Yet many professors have little desire to be overcomers when "going along to get along" is so much more profitable. If you doubt that, ask Joel Osteen, Binny Hinn, Kenneth Copeland, Paula White and Joyce Meyer for an example. Compromisers like these overcome nothing as they have no desire to attack the world or their generation, as it

¹⁶¹ I also have a full treatment of "overcomers" in my *Pilgrim Way Commentary on 1,2,3 John*, available for free at www.pilgrimway.org under notes on 1 John 2:13. John is the Biblical writers who deals with "overcomers".

pays too good. We would have to wonder just how “saved” these kind of “Christians” really are. How can they love God and the Scripture while they are refusing to attack this world system? How can they love both God and mammon, when Christ said they couldn’t?

D. Jesus overcame the world (John 16:33) but He had to be crucified in order to secure that victory. This shows that the only way to be an overcomer is to die to self, sin and the world and to not love your life unto the death (Revelation 12:11). This is why Paul spoke of himself as crucified with Christ (Galatians 2:20). You cannot overcome the world until you die to it and you cannot get the victory over yourself until you die to self.

E. We gain the victory over the world system through our faith in God. Faith is our weapon against the flesh, the world and the devil. Not in our faith in ourselves or in anything else, but only through our faith in God. We are in constant battle with this world system as it seeks either to control us, or, failing that, to destroy us. Yet it is through Christ and His power alone that we have the victory over this world system.

2. Revelation 2:7 **“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”**

A. This probably relates to someone not in the body of Christ as we do not need to eat of the tree of life to gain our immortality. It would refer to a tribulation or millennial saint who got saved after the rapture.

3. Revelation 2:11 **“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.”**

A. The second death is the lake of fire (Revelation 20:11-15). This is another non-Church Age passage that is rather a tribulation passage. If so, the “**crown of life**” of James 2:10 may be a Jewish crown given to those who remain faithful in the tribulation (James is a Jewish book, written to the “twelve tribes” (James 1:1). If a tribulation saint does not “overcome” the Antichrist and apostasies then he will lose his tribulation-version of his salvation and he may be hurt of the “second death. Thus, those who do not overcome are threatened with the second death.

4. Revelation 2:17 **“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.”**

A. The overcomer:

- i. Will eat of the hidden manna
- ii. Be given a white stone
- iii. Will be given a stone with a new name that no one knows but the recipient.
 - a. Will we be given new names in heaven?

5. Revelation 2:26 **“And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:”**

A. This is a millennial promise that the overcomer will rule over the nations.

6. Revelation 3:5 **“He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels”.**

A. The overcomer:

- i. Will be clothed in white raiment
- ii. His name will not be blotted out of the Book of Life
- iii. Will have his name confessed by Christ before the angels.

7. Revelation 3:12 **“Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of**

the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."

A. The overcomer:

- i. Will be made a pillar in the temple of God
- ii. He will "no more go out"
- iii. Jesus would write upon the overcomer the name of God and New Jerusalem, probably in the forehead (Revelation 22:4 **"And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads."**). Jesus would then write on him His new name.

a. There is a lot of name-writing going on! To bear and display the name of Christ is one of the highest honors that heaven can bestow. It also is a mark of ownership, an eternal reminder of Who it was Who redeemed us and Who it is to Whom we belong.

8. Revelation 3:21 **"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."**

A. This is another ruling promise for the overcomer, similar to the promise in Revelation 2:26 **"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:"**. There is no such ruling in the church age or tribulation so this must apply to the millennium.

9. Revelation 21:7 **"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."**

- A. He will inherit all things
- B. God shall be his God
- C. The overcomer will be His son

33e The Overcomer is one who gains mastery over the sins and philosophies of his age and he does not let them control his thinking or actions. He gains the victory over the world system as well as his own sinful nature. It is accomplished only by the power of God and by our faith (1 John 5:4). He has declared war on this world system and does everything he can to avoid being overcome by it. Instead, he intends to overcome the world by first overcoming himself and gaining the mastery over his fallen nature through spiritual discipline by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Overcomer must overcome two things:

1. Himself first. He must overcome the world that is within him. He must gain the mastery of and victory over himself and his master sins. This is through the new birth, establishing a walk with God and spiritual discipline. He has no hope of overcoming the world within his heart if he cannot overcome himself first.
2. The world without, the external world system that seek to conform the Christian back into its own image.
 - A. Romans 12:1,2 **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."**

33f How do we overcome the world and this world system?

1. Identify it. You can't overcome it if you can't define it.
 - A. It is ungodly
 - i. Psalm 73:12 **"Behold, these are the ungodly, who prosper in the world; they increase in riches."**

- ii. Galatians 1:4 **"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father:"**
 - iii. 1 John 5:19 **"And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."**
- B. It is wicked and adulterous
 - i. Matthew 16:4 **"A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed."**
- C. It hates Jesus
 - i. John 7:7 **"The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil."**
 - ii. John 15:18 **"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you."**
- D. It hates the followers of Jesus
 - i. John 15:19 **"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."**
 - ii. John 17:14 **"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."**
 - iii. 1 John 3:13 **"Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you."**
- E. This world has a prince and it is Satan
 - i. John 14:30 **"Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."**
 - ii. John 16:11 **"Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."**
 - iii. 2 Corinthians 4:4 **"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."**
- 2. Study it and get to know it. "Know your enemy". You must be familiar with his motives, philosophy and tactics.
 - A. You realize how temporary it is
 - i. Psalm 17:14 **"From men which are thy hand, O LORD, from men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly thou fillest with thy hid treasure: they are full of children, and leave the rest of their substance to their babes."**
 - ii. 1 Corinthians 7:31 **"And they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away."**
 - iii. 1 John 2:17 **"And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."**
 - B. It has a "course".
 - i. Ephesians 2:2 **"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:"**
 - C. Know your Bible so you can spot the differences between the world and the things of God.
- 3. Pray for discernment.
 - A. The world has a spirit which you must learn to recognize.
 - i. 1 Corinthians 2:12 **"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God."**
- 4. Ask God to give you a strong love for spiritual things. The more you love spiritual things, the

less you will love the things of this world.

5. Practice separation from sin and those who are living disobediently.

A. Romans 12:2 **"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."**

B. James 4:4 **"Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."**

C. 1 John 2:15 **"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."**

6. Stay much in the Book and under preaching.

33d Overcomers and overcoming according to Biblical Theology:

1. Gad was an overcomer

A. Genesis 49:19 **"Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last."**

2. Caleb was an overcomer

A. Numbers 13:30 **"And Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it."**

3. Solomon was overcome by the Shulamite

A. Song 6:5 **"Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me: thy hair is as a flock of goats that appear from Gilead."**

4. Some are overcome with wine

A. Isaiah 28:1 **"Woe to the crown of pride, to the drunkards of Ephraim, whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which are on the head of the fat valleys of them that are overcome with wine!"**

B. Jeremiah 23:9 **"Mine heart within me is broken because of the prophets; all my bones shake; I am like a drunken man, and like a man whom wine hath overcome, because of the LORD, and because of the words of his holiness."**

5. Christ overcame the world

A. John 16:33 **"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."**

B. Revelation 17:14 **"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful."**

6. We are not to be overcome by evil but we are to overcome evil with good.

A. Romans 12:21 **"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."**

B. 2 Corinthians 10:4 **"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but spiritual...:-**

7. If a man is overcome, he is brought into bondage

A. 2 Peter 2:19,20 **"While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning."**

8. John writes to young men who have overcome the wicked one

A. 1 John 2:13,14 **"I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I write unto you, young men, because ye have**

overcome the wicked one. I write unto you, little children, because ye have known the Father. I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one."

9. John writes to little children who have overcome through the power of God and our faith.

A. 1 John 4:4 **"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."**

B. 1 John 5:4,5 **"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"**

10. Whoever is born of God overcomes the world

A. 1 John 5:4,5 **"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"**

11. Promise to Tribulation overcomers

A. Revelation 2:7 **"God will give them to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God."**

B. Revelation 2:11 **"He will not be hurt of the Second Death."**

C. Revelation 2:17 **"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."**

i. God will allow him to eat of the hidden manna.

ii. God will give him a white stone with a new name written therein.

D. Revelation 2:26 **"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:"**

i. Also in Revelation 3:21 **"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."**

E. Revelation 3:5 **"He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."**

i. God will clothe him in white raiment.

ii. God will not blot his name out of the book of life.

iii. Jesus will confess that man's name before the Father and the angels.

F. Revelation 3:12 **"Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."**

i. God will make him a pillar in the temple of God, and he shall go no more out.

ii. Christ will write upon him the name of God, and the name of the city of God, which is new Jerusalem.

iii. Christ will write upon that man His new name.

12. The Antichrist will overcome God's people by killing them

A. Revelation 11:7 **"And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them."**

B. Revelation 13:7 **"And it was given unto him to make war with the saints,**

and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.”

13. The overcomer will inherit all things.

A. Revelation 21:7 **“He that overcometh shall inherit all things;1 and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”**

John Chapter 17

In this chapter our Lord prays,

1. For himself, John 17:1-5
2. For the apostles, John 17:6-19; 24-26
3. For all believers, John 17:20-23
4. For the world, John 17:21-23

"I conclude these introductory observations by advising all who wish to study thoroughly this wonderful chapter of Scripture, to consult, if they can, the following works specially devoted to the elucidation of it: viz., "Manton's Sermons on Seventeenth John," 400 folio pages; "George Newton's Exposition of Seventeenth John," 560 pages folio; and "Burgess's Expository Sermons on Seventeenth John," 700 pages folio. These three books, having been written by Puritans 200 years ago, are ignored by some and despised by others. I simply venture the remark, that He who cares to examine them will find that they richly repay perusal. Manton's work especially will bear a comparison with anything written on this chapter since his days. It is curious that the other prayer, commonly called the "Lord's Prayer," has been frequently made the subject of books and expositions, while this much larger "prayer" has been comparatively little handled."¹⁶²

These are the last recorded prayers of Christ on earth. There are no more prayers recorded by any of the gospel writers. The Holy Spirit is not mentioned in John 17. We are not specifically told where the Lord prayed this prayer, but we assume that it was on their way to the Garden of Gethsemane.

There is a lot of Christology bound up in this prayer in John 17:

1. Jesus is the Son of God, 1
2. The Father gave the Son power over all flesh, 2
3. The Father will give eternal life to all Whom He gives to the Son 2
4. The Father sent the Son 4,21,23,25
5. Jesus glorified the Father on earth 4
6. Jesus finished the work on earth that the Father gave Him to do 4
7. Jesus had divine glory along with the Father before the world began 5
8. Jesus was pre-incarnate 5,24
9. Jesus manifested the Father's name on earth 6
10. Jesus have the disciples the words that the Father gave to the Son 8,14
11. Jesus prays for the disciples but not the world 9
12. Jesus is glorified in the disciples 10
13. The Son is one with the Father 11,21,22,23
14. Jesus kept the disciples in the Father's name, and lost none except for Judas 12
15. Jesus is not of the world 16
16. Jesus sanctified Himself for the sake of the disciples 19
17. The Father loves the Son 23,24,26

¹⁶² J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospel of John*.

88. Christ's First Petition; That Jesus may be glorified as the Son who has glorified the Father 17:1-4

17:1^{ab} These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven,^c and said,^d Father,^e the hour is come;^f glorify thy Son,^g that thy Son also may glorify thee:^h

1a In chapter 17, we have our Great High Priest, in the Holy of Holies, alone, before the ark and the mercy seat, interceding before the Father on behalf on His own, like the High Priest alone in the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement in the Tabernacle. Christ here is discharging His duties as a mediator, which is what is involved in His duties as our High Priest. What a privilege it must have been for the disciples to be a witness to such a prayer! The veil is actually pulled back and we can witness Christ at His work before the Father. And such a prayer could not be offered until Judas had left their company.

According to A. W. Pink, in his *Exposition of the Gospel of John*, John Knox had this chapter read to him every day during his last illness, leading up to his death.

You can always judge a man by his last words, a writer by his last book, a composer by his last composition. Jesus shows Himself to be God in the flesh by the depths of this prayer to the Father.

John 17 is the true "Lord's Prayer", not Matthew 6:9-13, which is the so-called "Disciple's Prayer".

There are seven petitions made by the Lord, our Great High Priest (Hebrews 3:1) in John 17:

1. That Jesus may be glorified as the Son who has glorified the Father. (John 17:1)
 - A. Philippians 2:9-11 **"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."**
2. For restoration to the eternal glory (John 17:5).
 - A. Christ had His glory veiled in flesh while on earth, but His full divine glory will be returned to Him after His resurrection. We see this in His appearance to John in Revelation 1.
3. For the safety and deliverance of believers from the world. (John 17:11)
 - A. The world system
4. For the safety and deliverance of believers from the evil in the world (John 17:15)
5. For the sanctification of believers (John 17:17)
 - A. This is a major theme of John 17.
6. For the spiritual unity of believers (John 17:21)
 - A. Not the devil's ecumenical movement but the true unity of all genuine believers, regardless of race, denomination or location. This is what is involved in the Universal Church, and that isn't a "Baptist" church!
 - B. The world has been trying to unify against God ever since the Tower of Babel and they won't quit until the Second Coming.
7. That believers may be with Him in heaven to behold and share His glory (John 17:24).

1b The Lord prays for Himself in John 17:1-5. Christ was much shorter in his prayer for himself than in his prayer for his disciples.

1c Praying in this manner is as valid as the traditional way of closing your eyes and bowing your head. In fact, it might be "bolder" (in a good way) to pray in this manner as it reflects a deeper level of intimacy with God to pray to Him "face to face" in this manner. The Lord prayed this way also in John 11:41, at the tomb of Lazarus. But the publican would not lift up his eyes in this manner in Luke 18:13

because of his awareness of the greatness of his sins. But the Psalmist does lift up his eyes in Psalm 123:1.

"In the garden, when he began his passion, he fell on his face and prayed, Mat. xxvi. 39; but here he lifted up his eyes. When he travailed under the greatness of our sins, his posture is humble; but now, when he is treating with God for our mercies, he useth a gesture that implieth a more elevated and generous confidence. Gestures, being actions suited to the affections, are significant, and imply the dispositions of the heart."¹⁶³

1d Why did Christ pray aloud here? "He might have prayed in silence, but he would be our advocate, but so that he might be our teacher. When he prayed for us, he prayed publicly and with a loud voice, for our comfort and instruction, and to give vent to the strength of his affection by leaving this monument in the church: ver. 13, 'These things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves;' that in all trials and afflictions we might draw consolation from the matter of this prayer. You may observe hence, that it is of advantage to use vocal prayer, not only in public, when we may quicken others, as one bird setting all the rest a-chirping, and we profess we are not ashamed of God or his worship, but in private also."¹⁶⁴

1e "Christ was about to suffer bitter things from the hand of God, and yet he calleth him Father. In afflictions, we must still look upon God as a Father, and behave ourselves as children. Christ felt him a judge, yet counts him a father. God, as a judge, was now about to lay on him the sufferings of all the elect, yet Christ calls him Father, to declare his obedience and trust. The hour was come in which the whole weight of God's displeasure was to be laid upon him; yet, in this relative term, he acknowledgeth his Father's love, and manifesteth his own obedience. We should do so in all our afflictions: - (1) Maintain the comfort of adoption; (2) Behave ourselves as children."¹⁶⁵

1f The Greek perfect tense gives the idea "the hour is fully and finally here, as expected, and there is no getting around it." Many times it was said that Jesus' hour "was not yet come" and thus, no harm could come to Him. There were attempts to kill Christ before this time but the "hour" had not yet come, so no harm could come to Christ then. But when the hour of His sufferings and death finally did arrive, there was no stopping it or avoiding it. This "hour" was determined from eternity past and confirmed by the prophets. In the providence of God, it had finally arrived, when Jesus would begin the actual process of redemption.

But it is only "an hour"! 'The sufferings of God's people are very short. To our sense and feeling they seem long, because carnal affections are soon tired; but the word doth not reckon by centuries and years, but moments: Ps. xxx. 5, 'Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.' All temporal accidents are nothing compared to eternity. The sorrows of our whole life are but one night's darkness: 'This light affliction, that is but for a moment,' saith the apostle, 2 Cor. iv. 17. Set time against eternity, and we shall want words to declare the shortness of it. Our hour will be soon ended. Wait a while and we shall be beyond fears. The martyrs in heaven do not think of flames, and wounds and saws; these were the sufferings of a moment."¹⁶⁶

Christ's actual sufferings in His passion only lasted about 18-21 hours, which is an insignificant amount of time in the light of eternity. We also notice that Christ made no attempt to escape from this "hour". Before, when there were attempts on His life, He escaped, often in a supernatural way. But when the time was come, Christ made no attempt at escape or avoidance. He could have, at any time, but how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled and how would our redemption be accomplished?

¹⁶³ Thomas Manton, *Sermons Upon John 17*.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

1g This is a paradox. How could Christ be glorified if He was to be killed by crucifixion, which was the most dishonorable mode of death available in this day? Christ would be dishonored by crucifixion, as it was the method of execution reserved for the lowest of criminals. Yet God will once again make the wrath of man to please Him. Man meant to dishonor Christ in any and every way possible. But the Father would turn that curse into a blessing, as the cross today is honored as the symbol of Christianity and of the salvation that Christ obtained on it.

This verse makes Mohammad and his "Koran" a liar, where Islam claims that "Allah has no son". Yet Jesus again identified Himself as the Son of God. Someone is lying and we don't have to think two minutes to know who it is. Islam is a fraud, Mohammad is a liar and "Allah" ranks right up there with Santa Claus and the Great Pumpkin.

1h "Glorify me so that I may glorify you." (paraphrased) The only motivation that we should ever have for personal glory is so that we might further glorify God by it. To pray otherwise is selfish.

The Main Theme of the Bible is summarized in Revelation 4:11, **"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."**

17:2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh,^{ab} that he should give^c eternal life^d to as many as thou hast given him.^{ef}

2a As judge. This was given to Christ by the Father as a result of His fulfilling the will of the Father perfectly while on earth.

2b Psalm 72:8 **"He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."**

This "all flesh" not only refers to all men (both saved and unsaved) but all things pertaining to men and the world. In short, the Father has given Christ power and authority over all things. And it makes no difference if this authority is acknowledged or not. An unsaved man may not recognize Christ or His power and authority over him, but it matters not. Christ has still been appointed as judge over that man and the sinner in question has no option- he will submit to the judgment of Christ.

Of course, it is a wise thing for men, regardless of their class or state upon the earth, to submit themselves to Christ and His authority, as laid out in Psalm 2.

2c Only Christ can give eternal life as He is the only One Who can dispense salvation. No church or theological system can give eternal life. No religion can do it. And no religious leader can give eternal life, so this immediately disqualifies the pope, Mohammad, or any other pretender.

And this eternal life is "given" by Christ based on His grace and the election of God. It is not earned and is not given as any sort of reward for the fulfillment of any religious rituals or rites. This again emphasizes the central doctrinal truth that salvation is not by works but by the grace of God.

2d Christ's riches are spiritual and eternal, not temporal and physical. So many total, especially those caught up in the false "prosperity gospel" think that to have the blessing of God on the life means to have lots of money, nice cars and large houses. But these are not the gifts that Christ bestows. Eternal life is of far greater value than any carnal junk that the carnal may desire.

"Give" as a gift, reminding us that salvation is the gift of God as in Ephesians 2:8,9 **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."**

2e Through the election of God unto salvation. The perfect tense shows this election is final, irreversible and cannot be undone. This another testimony of the security of the believer.

Nothing is said here regarding the basis of this election. But the fact that the Father gave the believers to Christ shows that we are the Father's love-gift to the Son.

2f Seven times Jesus speaks of believers as given to Him by the Father (John 17:2,6 twice, 9,11,12,24).

17:3^a And this is life eternal, that they might know thee^b the only true God,^c and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.^{de}

3a This is a verse listed by O. Talmadge Spence in his *Quest For Christian Purity* that he lists as a "guiding verse" for that quest. This is a verse that deals with some aspect of the Christian's growth and pursuit of God.

3b Eternal life is in knowing the Father. No one is saved and no one has eternal life who is not saved and none can be saved unless they have a saving knowledge of the Father. This is not a general, superficial knowledge for all men, even devils, "know" God in some sense. But they know Him only as "God". Only Christians know Him as "Father".

This is not a superficial knowledge of the Father. Everyone has some, basic knowledge of God, even supposed atheists. But such a mere intellectual knowledge is not salvation. It is the personal relationship with the Father that brings eternal life. And how few really know Him, even among the redeemed!

Compare this with Philippians 3:10, "**That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;**" What does it mean to "know" God? This is not to simply know about the Father but to know Him personally and intimately. I know the President of the United States in the sense I know who he is and would recognize him on the street, but that knowledge will not get me into the White House. Many people know about God in that they know who He is, but that knowledge will not get them into heaven. Rather, we need that very deep, very personal, very intimate relationship with the Father that so few Christians ever attain to. So many believers are content to dwell in the outer court of the tabernacle, never approaching the Holy of Holies. They are content to know the Father historically and even theologically, but not personally and experientially. They are "outer-court worshipers". They can say with Paul, "That I may win him and be found in him ". They do want that; but the higher wish, "That I may know him," has not stirred their hearts. They know all the incidents of his life, from his manger to his cross; but they do not know Him.

We know a lot of things and a lot of stuff, but do we know Him? What profit is it if you speak Greek or Latin if you do not know Him? What profit is it if you have the largest church in your state if you don't know Him? What will it benefit you if you should gain the whole (Christian) world if you are ignorant of Him or have no walk or knowledge of Him?

10c "Image for a moment that you are living in the age of the Roman emperors. You have been captured by Roman soldiers...you have been sold as a slave, stripped, whipped, branded, imprisoned and treated with shameful cruelty. At last you are appointed to die in the amphitheater, to make holiday for a tyrant. The populace assemble with delight...You stand alone, naked, armed only with a single dagger- a poor defense against gigantic beasts...But what is this? A deliverer appears. A great unknown leaps from among the gazing multitude, and confronts the savage monster. He quails not at the roaring of the devourer, but dashes upon him with terrible fury, till, like a whipped cur, the lion slinks towards his den...The hero lifts you up, smiles...whispers comfort in you ear and bids you be of good courage, for you are free. Do you not think that there would arise at once in your heart a desire to know

your deliverer? 'Who was my deliverer, that I may fall at his feet and bless him?' You are not, however, informed, but instead of it you are gently led away to a noble mansion house where your many wounds are washed and healed...You are clothed in sumptuous apparel; you are made to sit down at a feast...you rest upon the softest down. The next morning you are attended by servants who guard you from evil and minister to your good. Day after day, week and week, your wants are supplied...There is nothing that you can ask which you do not receive. I am sure that your curiosity would grow more and more intense till it would ripen into an insatiable craving. You would scarcely neglect an opportunity of asking the servants. 'Tell me, who does all this, who is my noble benefactor, for I must know him?' 'Well, but' they would say, 'is it not enough for you that you are delivered from the lion?' 'Nay,' say you, 'it is for that I pant to know him.' 'Your wants are richly supplied- why are you vexed by curiosity as to the hand which reaches you the boon?'...'It is because I have no wants that...my soul longs and yearns...that I may know my generous loving friend.'"¹⁶⁷

3c There is no other than the God of the Bible. This means there is no "Allah" of the Muslims for "Allah" and Jehovah are obviously not the same person. This is why men hate the gospel as they do, because of these exclusive claims that Jesus makes. He allows no competition, nor does He recognize any other God. Such pronouncements are highly offensive to the modern man with his "inclusiveness" and "sensitivity towards other religions" but Christ cares nothing for any of that. He cares only to make the truth known that there is only one God- the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as revealed in the Bible. It is better to be scandalized by the truth than to be comforted by error.

3d Through the Incarnation, for the purpose of His going to the cross to provide the payment for the sin of all mankind, and to provide redemption and salvation to the human race. This is why Christ is called an "apostle" in Hebrews 3:1. An "apostle" is literally "one sent with a commission". Christ was sent by the Father with the commission to secure salvation for mankind on the cross.

3e What Christ prays that we would know:

1. The Father, as the only true God
2. His Son, Jesus Christ, Whom the Father sent

17:4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.^{ab}

4a This is how Christ glorified the Father while on earth- by fulfilling His will in complete and total obedience. There is no better way to glorify the Father than to finish the work that He gives us to do and to fulfill His will. Everything that the Son did on the earth was for no other purpose than to glorify the Father. We occasionally may glorify the Father in the things we do, but too many times, our motivation is to glorify ourselves, our church, our theological system or our denomination/fellowship.

If you are going to glorify the Father so that man can see it, then you must do that work on earth. You will glorify God in heaven but sinners on earth will not be able to see it, so that will have no practical value in glorifying God as a testimony to the lost. And it will always be more difficult to glorify the Father on earth because we will be doing so through the infirmity of our flesh. It will be easy to glorify the Father in heaven with a glorified body, assisted by the angels, but can we do it on earth, in a body of flesh, with no encouragement from the world but rather persecution?

4b The work Christ did on earth was the fulfilling the demands of the law and securing the redemption of humanity on the cross, while glorifying the Father. But Christ had not yet gone to the cross. How then

¹⁶⁷ Charles Spurgeon, "Do You Know Him?" in *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, volume 10, pages 61-62, sermon 552.

could Christ have finished the work? Remember, the Father is not limited by time. In the mind of the Father, Christ had already fulfilled the work of the cross although in our concept of linear time, He had yet to be crucified. Only God can operate outside the constraints of time, seeing what will happen and considering it to have happened. In the mind of God, it was already done because He foresaw that Christ would do it.

This work was “finished”, which matches Christ’s cry in John 19:30. Redemption was finished and no human effort or religious rites or works could be added to it to “improve” it. But works-based religions do not believe this, as they teach that you must do something or continually do certain works to maintain and keep your salvation, if you have it at all. Only a plan of salvation based on the grace of God and the finished work of Christ takes verses like these seriously.

89. Christ’s Second Petition: For Restoration to His Eternal Glory 17:5-10

17:5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me^a with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.^{bcd}

5a Christ, as God, could glorify Himself, but on earth, He would do nothing without the Father and not except by the Father. The Son is under the Father while on earth, so if the Son is to be glorified, then it must be the Father Who does it. While on earth, Christ did no miracles in His own power and relied totally and completely upon the power of the Holy Spirit for all things. Thus, Christ, as the Son of Man, will not glorify Himself. We cannot glorify ourselves unless the Father does it, so Christ, as man, will not glorify Himself without the Father. And we should not try to glorify ourselves. We have no justification to glorify ourselves for who are we? And what are we? And just what have we done to magnify ourselves? Every man speaks well of himself but a faithful man (or witness) who can find (Proverbs 20:6)?

5b This is a reference to the pre-incarnate glory of Christ that He possessed, as God, before His incarnation. “Before the world was” would be a reference to eternity past, before the creation of Genesis 1:1. This shows the eternality of Christ from eternity past (compare Micah 5:2 **“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”**), as Christ did not have His “beginning” at the incarnation but rather, existed for all time. Thus, cults like the Jehovah Witnesses are in gross error when they claim that Christ had a beginning in time.

At His incarnation, Christ temporarily laid down this divine, eternal glory in order to become a man (as seen in Philippians 2:7,8 **“But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”**). But now, He anticipates having this glory restored as soon as He finishes glorifying the Father through His obedience to the death of the cross.

5c All repetitions in prayer are not to be counted vain repetitions; Christ prayed, saying the same words (Matthew 26:44 **“And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.”**), and yet prayed more earnestly.

5d This glory will be seen and experienced by every saved sinner in the Church Age. Every lost person will see this divine glory at the Great White Throne judgment and will be forced to acknowledge it before they are cast into the Lake of Fire.

17:6 I have manifested thy name^a unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world:^b thine they were,^c and thou gavest them me;^d and they have kept thy word.^e

6a Through miracles and teachings.

6b In this context, the disciples, minus, of course, Judas, who never did “belong” to Christ for the simple reason that Judas was obviously never saved. The perfect tense of this verb shows that this act of the Father giving these men to the Son is a final, completed act that cannot be reversed or amended. Here is a good view of the security of the believer. Once we have been given to Christ by the Father, that act is not revocable. Once you are given, you are given for eternity. The Father would not give to the Son, only to turn around and take it back. Naturally, if the “giving” is not based on any human effort (and there is no indication in this chapter that it is), then the “safekeeping” is likewise not based on any human effort. Salvation is by the grace and power of God, as is our safekeeping and security.

6c They belonged to the Father by right of creation and by right of redemption, through their election and the Father's foreknowledge of their faith in Christ. But all men are God's, at least through His right of creation of them. But that is not enough to get anyone saved.

6d When this occurred is never really told in the Scripture.

6e Judas never did, of course, but the other eleven disciples did, to varying degrees up to this point. But after the resurrection, these eleven disciples will keep the Word unto the death. These men were not perfect in their belief and devotion (especially up to this time) but they had not rejected the teachings of Christ as the Jews had.

It is interesting that the perfect tense is used to describe the “keeping” of the Word by the apostles. As we will see in the book of Acts and through early church history, none of these eleven men ever renounced or abandoned their profession, even unto painful martyrdom and exile. They would occasionally stumble in their ministry and Christian walk, as they were still sinners and frail, but their keeping of the Word was a settled and completed fact in the eyes of God.

17:7 Now they have known^a that all things whatsoever thou hast given^b me are of thee.^c

7a As a schoolmaster, when he has taught a student his lesson, looks for his reward when the work is done. What is that reward? That the student has learned the lesson. That always brings a sense of satisfaction to the teacher. So Christ also must have felt a large degree of satisfaction that these eleven men, from all kinds of differing and various backgrounds, had learned the lessons that He had taught them for the past three years.

7b The use of the perfect tenses shows that the disciples had accepted these words of Christ in an absolute sense and would not later recant them or abandon them. If there had been such a possibility, then an imperfect or an aorist tense of these verbs might have been used.

7c The Lord dealt with this in John 16:29-32. They probably knew about the veracity of Christ's claims before, but only in an academic manner. They believed- with the head- that Jesus was the Messiah and the Son of God, but that belief had yet to really translate itself into a meaningful external manifestation. Had that truth changed their lives? Made them better men? Improved them morally? If not, then they hadn't really “believed” with the heart. But once we move away from that mere “head belief” and develop a “heart belief”, then we will see these fruits of such belief- obedience to the will of God, sacrifice, discipleship, a denial of self and a renunciation of the things of this world- for starters.

17:8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me;^{ab} and they have received them,^c and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.^{def}

8a As a faithful witness should. Christ did not give His own words (although He certainly could, as He was God!) but He gave them the words that the Father had given Him. We have those words faithfully and accurately preserved in English in the Authorized Version. If you don't know where these words are, how can you keep them?

These are **"the words of eternal life"** (John 6:68). These are the words we are supposed to keep (John 14:23 **"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."**). These are the words Paul warned us to hold fast (2 Timothy 1:13 **"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."**). The word of truth is something you can read which is why you were told to study it (2 Timothy 2:15 **"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."**) and search it (John 5:39 **"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me."** and Acts 17:11 **"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."**). Christ makes three references to these "words" in this chapter, in 17:8, 14, 17.

Christ was faithful in giving the words of the Father accurately and without compromise. We are not always faithful in our witnesses. See the problems that Moses had in Exodus 4 and 5, where he trimmed the divine message to Pharaoh and the grief that resulted from his unfaithfulness in the words of God.

Our faithfulness in giving the words of the Father is seen in the charges to Ezekiel in Ezekiel 3 and 33. Ezekiel is to be a faithful watchman-pastor to both sinner and saint and blood would be required at his hands if he proved to be unfaithful in this charge.

8b There is an election here, but we must always remember that God bases His election unto salvation on His foreknowledge, according to 1 Peter 1:2 **"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied."** There is the paradox between the election of God and the free will of man in salvation. Although we have a lot of trouble reconciling these truths, God has no such difficulty. What we cannot reconcile on earth will be made plain to us in glory.

8c They received, believed and accepted these words. Except for Judas. The world certainly did not. The Sanhedrin did not. The Pharisees (with a few exceptions, like Nicodemus and Joseph) and Sadducees did not. Herod did not. Nor did Pilate. But these eleven men had received and kept these words and that put them on a far different plane than the great and learned men of their generation. A man who receives the words of God is always a greater man than he who does not. No doubt their faith was still weak, as all of them would forsake Christ in the hours that would follow. Thomas would be slow to believe the resurrection. These men still had a long way to go in their spiritual growth and walk with God, yet Christ still commends their faith to the Father as He knows how they will turn out in the end. Thankfully, we do not have to be perfect to get such a commendation from Christ.

Salvation and sanctification require receiving and believing the words of God. There is no salvation without these words. There is no sanctification without these words. They must be preached faithfully and accurately, then received and applied to the life. Always remember to make a practically application to all doctrine, otherwise these words become mere head-knowledge that will have little

impact on the life.

8d See remarks under John 17:7.

8e "Observe, the word is the proper means to work faith. We see here the apostles had no other means of salvation than Christ's word; when Christ giveth an account of their faith, he doth not mention his miracles, but his doctrine. Again, he doth not speak only of the internal manifestation of the Spirit, 'I have manifested thy name;' but also of the outward revelation, 'I have given to them the words which thou gavest me.' We have a general saying, Romans 10:17, 'Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.' This is the usual method and way of grace's working; God will insinuate the efficacy of his Spirit by outward counsel and instruction, and by the ear transmit his grace to the heart... Those that think the word will not work without miracles, and therefore expect a reviving of miracles, to authorize that ministry which they mean to receive. Vain thoughts! In the primitive times, when miracles were in force, we read of some converted by the word without miracles, but of none converted by miracles without the word: Acts 11:20,21, **'Some of Cyprus and Gyrene, when they were come to Antioch, spake unto the Grecians, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them; and a great number believed, and turned to the Lord.'** They wrought no signs, only preached the Lord Jesus. There is not one instance in the whole word of any one converted by a single miracle. It is natural to us to idolize visible helps and confirmations. Those mentioned Acts 11 were not apostles, but private brethren, who in that extraordinary time used their gifts, and were successful... It stirreth us up to attend upon the word; it is God's instrument: Rom. 1:16, **'I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God to salvation, to every one that believeth;'** the meaning is, it is a powerful instrument to work faith; as the first sermon that ever was preached, after the pouring out of the Spirit, converted three thousand souls. An angel could slay a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in a night by his own natural strength; but it is easier to kill so many men than to convert one soul. All the angels in heaven, if they should join all their forces together, they could not convert one soul to God; but yet this power will God discover in the ministry and co-operation of weak men. Those that do not delight to hear the word have no mind to see the miracles of grace. The power is of God, yet it is wonderfully joined with the word; it is not enclosed in it, but sent out together with it when God pleaseth. It is God's ordinance, and under the blessing of an institution."¹⁶⁸

8f This again shows that Christ's doctrine was not His own but was of the Father. Christ, as God, could have preached of Himself and of His own doctrine and it would still be just as true, but He was very careful to simply repeat what the Father had told Him and to be a good and faithful messenger, to do nothing but deliver the message without adding to it or embellishing it. How very difficult this is, to keep ourselves out of such messages! The only duty of a mailman is to deliver the mail, not to interpret it or to analyze it or to determine if such messages ought to be delivered.

17:9^a I^b pray for them:^c I pray not for the world^d but for them which thou hast given^e me; for they are thine.

9a Christ prays that His disciples may be (a) kept, (b) sanctified, (c) united, (d) and be with Him in glory. Four more important things cannot be desired for believers.

9b Emphatic.

9c As our Great High Priest, it is one of the duties of Christ to pray for His own, to intercede for them

¹⁶⁸ Thomas Manton, *Sermons on John 17*.

before the Father's throne. They will need the intercession of Christ in the days and years ahead, as they will go out and preach to a hostile world. Their faith must be strengthened, even in the face of martyrdom, so Christ prays that they will be equal to the days that lie ahead of them. And if Christ prays for His own, how much more should we pray for the brethren?

Christ was very concerned for these eleven men Whom He would soon leave. He would no longer be with them physically. As any leader of a ministry, He was very concerned about what He had left behind and the people Whom He had trained. What would they do with Him? The Founder of a ministry dies. What will God do with it now, with the next generation of that ministry? Will God raise up a qualified man to continue the ministry and its burden? Christ is praying along these lines. He said in John 14-16 that He would send the Holy Spirit Who would stand in Christ's place and continue to provide the leadership, illumination and power for the church to continue the work that Christ started.

9d This is not the world of lost men, whom Christ will soon die for and whom He came to seek and to save and to call to repentance. This is a reference to the world system, the thoughts, opinions and philosophies that make up a generation. This is what is antichrist. This is what opposes itself against God as it is under the control and domain of the god of this age, Satan. God has never made any provision of the salvation of the world system but has always condemned it and will bring it under total and final judgment during the tribulation period and will quash it during the Millennium. Christ has given up on this world system and has left it for judgment while saving sinners out of that world system. Any Christian who prays for America (or this world system) instead of for the born-again, regenerated Christians that are in America is wasting his breath and is displaying the Spirit of Antichrist. If Christ wouldn't pray for the world, why should you? The world system killed Jesus and persecutes His saints, so He will not pray for them. The world cares nothing for the Church so why pray for it? The world has no love for you, your God, your church or your Bible. God is not interested in helping out the system that He gave to Satan (Luke 4:6 **"And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it."**), since they wanted him as their "god" (2 Corinthians 4:4 **"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."**). God is interested in delivering people out of this world system.

The Christian is to pray for those in authority (1 Timothy 2) but only so Christians can carry out our witnessing without getting arrested, tortured, or murdered. We basically pray for the government to leave us alone and let us live our lives. Ronald Reagan used to say "The most terrifying words you can hear are 'I'm from the government and I'm here to help you.'" We can and should pray for the salvation of unsaved souls in the world, but that is about as far as it should go. We are told to pray for "the peace of Jerusalem" (Psalm 122:6 **"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee."**) but not the peace of Washington, Moscow, Beijing, Berlin, London, Paris, New Orleans, Chicago or any other city.

Since the world rejected God and accepted Satan as their "god" (2 Corinthians 4:4), Jesus would not pray for it. The world cannot be saved or reformed. It can only be judged. This is why we will get a new heaven and a new earth after the Millennium.

Jesus will not pray for the world because He was not of the world (John 17:14,16 **"I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world...They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."**). He will not pray for the United Nations, NATO, the Vatican religio-political system, the Republican or the Democratic Party, the NFL or Major League Baseball, false religion, economic systems, attempts at "world peace" and one world government, but He will pray for you! He will pray for the weakest and most obscure believer on the planet.

9e The Greek perfect tense is used here. When the Father gave these believers to the Son, it was a final, permanent act, never to be reversed. Hence the security of the genuine believer. Once a man is

saved and truly saved, his status with God is fixed, settled and permanent, never to be altered or changed. In short, salvation cannot be lost once it has been granted.

17:10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine;^a and I am glorified in them.^b

10a That which belongs to the Father belongs to the Son and vice versa. There is no keeping anything from the other within the Godhead. We are still the Father's since all that the Son has, the Father also has.

10b May it be so in us! May Christ be able to glorify Himself in our lives and through our bodies on earth! This should be the consuming passion of all believers, not to be after their own glory but that they may be able to glorify Christ in all they say and do. It is amazing to think how we should be able to glorify Christ at all, with all of our faults and shortcomings. Yet these eleven men managed to do so by their desire for discipleship and their following Christ, even as imperfect as all that was.

But do you fear that there is little that you can do for God? Your lot in life is a private one. Those in the magistracy and ministry have more opportunity to glorify Christ, you may think, but what can you do? God will be glorified by every man in his way and place. We must not speak of our rank or station in life. Christ is glorified by your diligence and faithfulness in your private place. Godly workers, even servants, what an ornament are they to the gospel! There is no station so private but you may do something for Christ, to bring up your children in the nurture of the Lord, to instruct your employees, your neighbors, your fellow-workers, is great work. But have you labored, but to little purpose? Success in the work is not your responsibility, but God's. We must mind our duty, and leave the success to God; we shall not be responsible for lack of success, but want of endeavors: We may have the crown of faithfulness, if not the fruit.

We must glorify Christ as we would the Father, for He is equal with the Father. We cannot give Christ a "second-hand" reverence and worship, as if He was not fully God. This is the sin of cults like the Jehovah Witnesses and their spiritual fathers, the Arians. They dishonor Christ by refusing to recognize Him as fully God, equal to the Father in all things.

"There is a noted story of Amphilochius, bishop of Iconium; when the Arians, who denied the godhead of Christ, had freedom of their meetings and lectures and disputes, under Theodosius the Great, to the great disturbance of the church, and the emperor could by no means be drawn to suppress them, Amphilochius, after he had tried all other means without effect, found out a way worthy of record, saith Theodoret, whereby to make the emperor sensible of the evil of his toleration. One day as he came into the palace, and the emperor and his son Arcadius were standing together, whom he had lately made joint-emperor with himself, Amphilochius saluteth the father with accustomed reverence and humility; but when he cometh to the son, he speaketh to him as to a private child, and stroking his head, saith, 'How dost thou, my child?' without other expression of civil honour and reverence. The emperor was exceeding angry at the contempt, and that he had not given his son equal honor with himself, and therefore, after many rebukes, causeth him to be dragged out of the palace with disgrace; and as they were pulling and haling him, he, turning to the emperor, said, O emperor! after this manner, and infinitely more, is God the Father angry with those that do not honor his Son equal with the Father, but make him less in nature and dignity. By this sensible conviction the emperor was touched in conscience, and with tears embraceth the good old man, and presently maketh a law against the Arians, in which, under a great penalty, he forbiddeth their public meetings and lectures against the godhead of Christ, and by the blessing of God was confirmed in the true religion, in which before he staggered and wavered."¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁹ Thomas Manton, *Sermons on John 17*.

Christ is glorified in us:

1. Passively, by the fact that we are known to be Christians, so our public testimony and profession is a continual glorification of Christ, in that we testify to the world that we have chosen Christ and His gospel and have, by extension, rejected this world system and its god.
2. Actively, by our works and witnesses in the world, that sinners may see and consider.

90. Christ's Third Petition: For the safety and deliverance of believers from the world 17:11-14

17:11 And now I am no more in the world,^a but these are in the world,^b and I come to thee. Holy Father,^c keep through thine own name^{de} those whom thou hast given me,^{fg} that they may be one, as we are.^{hi}

11a In about 36 hours, Christ would leave this world through His death on the cross. He would soon leave this world physically.

11b The eleven would be left behind as none of them would die, yet. Christ leaves but He leaves His disciples in the world to carry on the work that He started. Why leave His disciples in the world? Why not take a believer immediately to heaven upon his conversion? How then would Christ be glorified on earth unless there were Christians on earth to speak of and show His glory? How will the gospel be preached and the knowledge of God be spread to this generation unless there were Christians on the earth to undertake such duty?

11c It is the height of blasphemy for the pope to take this title for Himself. It may only be used by the Father, not by some Roman imposter with delusions of divinity. Every pope is one of the most unholy people there are! Holiness belongs only to God and it cannot be appointed to a mere sinner, especially a great sinner like a pope or other false religious teacher. Any pope is one of the most unholy of men, as he attempts to steal the glory that belongs to Christ through the titles he claims.

11d Not in Allah's name. Allah couldn't keep his own set of car keys, much less anyone's soul.

11e This is another prayer for the security and the safekeeping of all genuine believers. It is the Father who keeps us (Jude 24 **"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,"**). We do not keep ourselves as we are not able to keep ourselves.

11f Watch over them physically and spiritually. Protect them, guide them, encourage them, strengthen them spiritually and deepen them in the things of God. These eleven men would need such divine enabling and strengthening for the ministries and the sufferings that awaited them. Christ is continually concerned for the physical and spiritual welfare of His people who are still in the world and in the physical domain of Satan here on earth. They must be prayed for and interceded for, the ministry Christ takes upon Himself, as He will leave so great a work to no one less than Himself. He will not delegate it to a mere angel or cherub but the Son of God will bear that ministry Himself.

11g Election does play into this, as does the free will of man in salvation. Both are Biblical truths, although they seem to be a paradox.

11h Not in some sinful ecumenism that the world is always pushing, but in a true Biblical unity and ecumenism of heart and spirit, that does actually exist between all genuine believers, regardless of

denomination or theological system. Such a unity is vital for the Remnant Church to go on and do its work of faithful witness in the earth. And we will need each other more than ever in the dark days that lie ahead of us, as we approach ever closer to the Tribulation and the unveiling of Antichrist. May we develop a true and genuine Whitefield Spirit among the Remnant in these last days! George Whitefield and Charles Spurgeon are two great examples of men who would fellowship with a man as long as his heart was right, even if there were disagreements about some points of doctrine. The Calvinist Whitefield fellowshiped with the Arminian Wesley. Spurgeon had men working in his ministry who practiced infant baptism and who were not Baptists. But their hearts and walks were such that these men were worth fellowshiping. We Baptists tend to have a very severe sectarian spirit, that if a man is not a Baptist that we cannot fellowship him. This exclusive attitude has done great harm to the Body of Christ and has caused unnecessary divisions and hurt feelings among these good brethren.

11i See John 17:21.

17:12 While I was with them in the world, I kept^a them in thy name:^b those that thou gavest me I have kept,^a and none of them is lost,^c but the son of perdition;^{de} that the scripture might be fulfilled.^f

12a There are two different words for “kept: in this verse:

1. First use- Strong’s #5083 tereô; to attend to carefully, take care of, to guard, to keep, one in the state in which he is, to observe
2. Second use- Strong’s #5442 phulassô; to guard, to watch, keep watch, to protect one from a person or thing, to keep from being snatched away, preserve safe and unimpaired, to guard from being lost or perishing. So this could be rendered “I have preserved them and I have guarded them, and I am still doing it”.

12b The safekeeping of the believer is done by Christ through the Father’s name. The imperfect tense shows an ongoing, uncompleted action. Jesus has kept them and is still keeping them. His work of safekeeping is an ongoing work on our behalf.

“Here are four infallible theological truths regarding the believer’s eternal life.

1. If God cannot keep him eternally secure, the plan of salvation is a farce.
2. If God cannot keep him eternally secure, the promises given to him in Romans, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians are valueless.
3. If God cannot keep him eternally secure, the power of God would be limited.
4. If God cannot keep him eternally secure, Christ’s intercession (Rom. 8:26–27 and here, John 17:9,20) is of no avail; it is useless.”¹⁷⁰

12c Christ loses none who come unto Him in salvation and to whom the Father gives Him (see John 6:36). If you are genuinely saved, then you are genuinely secure.

12d The reason why Jesus “lost” Judas was because Jesus never had Judas in the first place. There is nothing to suggest that Judas ever accepted Christ as Savior.

12e A title for Judas. This shows that he was not saved as no saved man would ever merit such a title.

“Son of Perdition” is also a title used for the Antichrist in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 **“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;”**, where he is also called the “man of sin”. Judas was

¹⁷⁰ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on John*, page 484.

simply not some mere apostate who never acknowledged Christ. He was filled with the very devil himself (see Luke 22:3 where Satan entered into Judas. Nowhere in scripture is it said that Satan ever entered into anyone else). But why would Jesus choose Judas for an apostle, knowing who Judas was- or would become? The answer is never told us. But Jesus did not choose Judas out of ignorance for Jesus makes it clear in John 6:70,71 that He knew Judas was "a devil", **"Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas Iscariot the son of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve."**

12f Which Scripture? Probably Psalm 41:9 (**"Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me."**) and Psalm 109:6-19.

Is Judas the Antichrist?

There are many similarities between the career and characteristics of the Antichrist and that of Judas Iscariot that many have wondered what connection might exist between them. Is it possible that Judas might actually have been or will be the Antichrist.

We believe based on the information given to us by the Scripture that there is a very strong connection between the two.

In Psalm 55:11-14, we read **"For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company"**. This prophecy of the betrayal of Judas shows us just how close Judas was to Jesus. Judas was a friend and Jesus even called him that at his arrest in Matthew 26:50.

John 17:12 suggests that the Antichrist will be Judas reincarnated. Here, Judas is termed by Christ as the "The Son of Perdition". Who is Judas, as revealed by Scripture? He was a "man" (Matthew 26:24). But was he more than a man? In John 6:70 we read, **"Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a Devil?"** In no other passage is the word "devil" applied to anyone but to Satan himself. Judas was identified by Jesus as the Devil incarnate, just as the Lord Jesus was God incarnate.

As we have seen in John 17:12 Christ termed Judas "the Son of Perdition", and in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 we find that the Antichrist is similarly designated as "That Man of Sin...the Son of Perdition". These are the only two places in the Bible where his name occurs, and the fact that Judas was termed by Christ not a "son of perdition", but "the Son of Perdition", and the fact that the Man of Sin is so named shows that they are probably one and the same person.

In Revelation 11:7 we have the first reference to "the Beast": "The Beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit". Here the Antichrist is seen coming forth from the Abyss. The Abyss is the abode of lost spirits, the place of their incarceration and torment, as seen in Revelation 20:1-3, and Luke 8:31. The "deep" in Luke 8:31 is the "abyss". How did he get there? and when was he sent there? When Judas Iscariot killed himself! In Acts 1:25, Peter says, **"that he may take part of this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place"**. Of no one else in the Bible is it said that at death he went "to his own place".

In Revelation 17:8 we read, **"The Beast that thou sawest was, and is not: and shall ascend out of the Bottomless Pit, and go into perdition"**. Viewing this as a declaration of the Antichrist, what does it tell us about him?

1. He "was". He was alive at one point.
2. He "is not". At the time John wrote, he was dead.
3. He shall "ascend out of the Bottomless Pit". This is yet future.
4. He shall "go into perdition". Another yet- unfulfilled prophecy.

This would fit Judas. At one point, he was alive, when John was. But at the time John wrote this, Judas was dead. But John then says he's coming back again by his ascension out of the pit, only to be returned to it (and worse) later.

Also, “Judas Iscariot” means “Judas from Kerioth”. “Kerioth” is a location in Moab (Jeremiah 48), so Judas is not a full-blooded Jew, but was a “half-breed Jew”. “Judas” shows he is probably from the tribe of Judah- just like Jesus was!

17:13 And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.^a

13a Christ also has a concern in the mental, spiritual and emotional well-being of His own. He wants us to be happy in the things of the Lord, not to be depressed, discouraged or downcast. Seasons of depression are to be expected among men, but they should be temporary things that quickly pass when we remember our relation to the Father, the promises that He made to us and His watch care over us.

17:14 I have given them thy word;^a and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world,^b even as I am present not of the world.^c

14a We have the Incarnate Word of God giving out the eternal Word of God in preached and taught form to His disciples.

14b Something is VERY WRONG if this generation and world system loves the church or the Christian. It means that there has been compromise somewhere and it wasn't the world that compromised. The world never compromises with the Church but the Church is so very quick to compromise with the world in order to gain favor, money, praise or protection from persecution. Many contemporary churches do all they can to make themselves appealing to the world, from using contemporary Christian music to going casual to having skits and concerts instead of preaching. These churches are guilty of gross compromise. Christ never went out of His way to try to accommodate the world. In fact, He seemed to deliberately antagonize it by refusing to compromise and by being very candid with it. So should we be. A true, Biblical, local church should be spoken against, slandered, lied about and, at the very best, barely tolerated in its community. Woe unto you when all men shall speak well of you (Luke 6:26 **“Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.”**)!

The world has hated the righteous since the Fall. Cain hated Abel. The world hated Noah. Lot couldn't stand Abram. The Philistines hated Israel. The prophets were persecuted, and many were martyred. The same is true with the apostles. The Lord was hated by the Sanhedrin. And church history is replete with examples of groups (especially the Baptist groups like the Donatists, Waldensians and Anabaptists) enduring great persecutions at the hands of both Romanists and Protestants. So what makes us imagine that we can gain the smile of the world if we hold to the same practices and doctrines as our spiritual forefathers did? The world killed them. They would do the same with us if they could.

The world hates us because we are not of the world. We are not one of them. We have accepted and embraced that doctrine and life that the world has rejected. We have separated ourselves from the world and, as a result, have renounced it and condemned it. Whenever a Christian abandons the world, he condemns it by means of his rejection. No one likes to be rejected, condemned or abandoned, so the world will naturally react strongly against anyone who leaves the City of Destruction and launches out on a spiritual pilgrimage to the heavenly Mount Zion.

People tend to discriminate against foreigners in their land anyway. Look at how the Irish, the Africans, the Chinese, and today, the Arabs, were treated in this country in years past. If they were not “White Anglo-Saxon Protestants”, they were looked upon with fear, uncertainty and suspicion. Spiritually, as pilgrims, we are also foreigners in this world. We have different customs, history, dress and language, so the worldling will look upon us with the same attitude.

14c Christ was in the world but not of it, as we should be as well. We live in this world system and must

buy, sell, work in and circulate in it. But we are not a part of its anti-God philosophy not do we cooperate with its program. We also do not think as the world thinks. The world has its priorities, we have ours. They think that things like the Super Bowl, Grammys, elections, movies and music, and the like are important and worth dedicating time, resources and energies into. The Christian disagrees. He places the priority on prayer, communion, fellowship, service and discerning and doing the will of God. Anything that does not lend itself to these is deemed unimportant. With such opposite philosophies, it is no wonder that the world and the Church cannot (or should not) get along.

91. Christ's Fourth Petition- For the safety and deliverance of believers from the evil in the world 17:15,16

17:15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world,^a but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.^b

15a How else could we witness to the world and save sinners out of the world unless we were in the world with the lost, in order to witness to them? We are not to be taken out of the world like monks, as then we cannot influence or engage our generation.

Also, we are left in the world for our maturity, so that we may know the exceeding sinfulness of sin so that we may avoid it, to have our love tested and deepened and so that we may learn to love God and follow Him in the midst of a fallen and sinful world system.

15b Christ prays that we would not be taken out of the world system but that we would be kept and protected from the evil of this world system. This "evil" not only includes physical protection but also protection from being infected by the philosophies of this world system. If we fell out to the thinking and practices of this world, it would do great spiritual harm to us, so protection spiritually is just as important as physical protection.

17:16^a They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

16a This summarizes and repeats John 17:14,15.

92. Christ's Fifth Petition- For the sanctification of believers 17:17-20

17:17^a Sanctify^{bc} them through thy truth:^d thy word is truth.^e

17a This is a classic verse listed by O. Talmadge Spence in his *Quest For Christian Purity* that he lists as a "guiding verse" for that quest. This is a verse that deals with some aspect of the Christian's growth and pursuit of God.

17b "Sanctification" is the process of making someone holy. It starts with an unholy sinner at salvation. At the moment of salvation, the sinner is made positionally holy in Christ. Positionally, that new saint will never be any holier in Christ than he is at that time. But then, the process of practical sanctification begins, where that positional holiness is worked out and manifested in a practical and visible way in the life of the saint. And the goal of the truth of God is not wisdom, as in Greek or worldly philosophies, but holiness.

17c "**sanctify**" is in the Greek imperative mood, showing there is an urgency to this request by Christ on behalf of His followers. Our sanctification should be an urgent thing with us, for it is really all that we

should be worrying about in our lives. If we are not practically holy, everything in our Christian walk and service will miscarry. The Christian should be putting the majority of his efforts into developing and improving his relationship with Christ and in working out his own salvation with fear and trembling. Doing the actual work for Christ (in the work of the ministry) is a secondary thing. Work follows relationship and sanctification. But many people have the cart before the horse. Many believe that if they get busy and do a lot of works, then that will make them holy, or at least improve their sanctification and relationship with God. But they have it backwards. Our practical sanctification will manifest itself in good works that are of a high spiritual quality. Works do not sanctify. Only Christ sanctifies. But our works flow out of that sanctification.

Christ wants this of us. This is the will of God for you, even your sanctification (1 Thessalonians 4:3 **“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:”**). Yet how do Baptists and Fundamentalists and other Bible believers ignore this! All they can talk about are soulwinning, church growth and bus routes. But Christ prays regarding our sanctification and this is the will of the Father for us. We should major on the things that Christ deems to be important! We should not let the errors and the excesses of the Pentecostals and Charismatics keep us away from these blessed truths.

This doctrine is avoided by most preachers and churches, especially the “independent fundamental Baptists”. It was never a favorite doctrine of the modern Fundamentalist movement although it was stressed by the Fundamentalists prior to 1920.¹⁷¹ It is a hard doctrine and one that brings much conviction to both the preacher and the hearer. It is much safer and more popular to just focus on prophecy or “soul winning” sermons, yet our churches languish in apostasy and carnality, even while they grow numerically.

17d The Word of God is the active agent in sanctification. There can be no salvation of the sinner without the Scripture. There can be no sanctification of the saint without the Scripture.

How does the Word of God bring about sanctification? The more we read the Bible, study the Bible, believe the Bible, apply the Bible and take the Bible seriously for our lives, the more the Word of God brings us to Christ-likeness, which is what sanctification really is (Romans 8:29 **“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”**).

17e Nothing else is. Nothing else can be. No word of man can be truth as man is fallible, sinful and limited in his knowledge and wisdom. But since God suffers from none of the defects, any word from Him is truth, for it cannot be otherwise, since God Himself is truth. Of course, this verse will disqualify any other “religious text” from being truth. Excluded then are the Quran/Koran, the Book of Mormon (and other Mormon “scriptures” such as *Doctrines and Covenants*), *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, *Watchtower* and *Awake!*, the Hindu and Buddhist texts, the Talmud, and so on.

1. The Spirit is truth in John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13, 1 John 5:6.
2. The Bible is called the “Word of Truth” in 2 Timothy 2:15, 2 Corinthians 6:7, Ephesians 1:13, Colossians 1:5.
3. The Church is the pillar and ground of truth in 1 Timothy 3:15.
4. Christ is the truth in John 14:6.
5. The Word sanctifies those who obey it.
6. The Word of God does not merely “contain” truth, it is Truth.

¹⁷¹ It must be remembered that the Fundamentalist movement developed in the 1870s as a holiness movement, coming from a renewed interest in the Second Coming because of the work and writings of the Plymouth Brethren. The burden arose after the spiritual declines after the Civil War and was manifested as “In the light of the Second Coming, how should we live?” This is dealt with in *In Pursuit of Purity* by David Beale. Fundamentalism degenerated into more of a “fight” movement in the 1920s as it battled the theological liberalism in the seminaries.

7. If sanctification is through the word, how can you be sanctified if you don't have the word? We believe we have the word preserved for us in English in the Authorized Version. It is amazing how many Christians have no idea where the words of God are or in what version they can be found.

A Survey of Sanctification, an unfolding in Biblical Theology

1. First use- Exodus 13:2, where the firstborn of Israel, of both man and beast, were sanctified to God. He had a special claim on the firstborn.

A. Exodus 13:2 **"Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine."**

2. Israel was to be sanctified. To that end, they "washed their clothes", showing that sanctification has an idea of the washing of filth, dirt, and, by extension, sin.

A. Exodus 19:10 **"And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes,"**

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

3. The priests must be sanctified

A. Exodus 19:22 **"And let the priests also, which come near to the LORD, sanctify themselves, lest the LORD break forth upon them."**

B. Exodus 28:41 **"And thou shalt put them upon Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him; and shalt anoint them, and consecrate them, and sanctify them, that they may minister unto me in the priest's office."**

4. Things that are roped off or marked off are said to be sanctified

A. Exodus 19:23 **"And Moses said unto the LORD, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for thou chargedst us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it."**

5. Partaking of the offerings and sacrifices led to sanctification

1. Exodus 29:33 **"And they shall eat those things wherewith the atonement was made, to consecrate and to sanctify them: but a stranger shall not eat thereof, because they are holy."**

6. To anoint something, or someone, was to sanctify it

A. Exodus 29:36 **"And thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin offering for atonement: and thou shalt cleanse the altar, when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt anoint it, to sanctify it."**

7. God does the work of sanctification

A. Exodus 29:44 **"And I will sanctify the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar: I will sanctify also both Aaron and his sons, to minister to me in the priest's office."**

B. Exodus 31:13 **"Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I am the LORD that doth sanctify you."**

C. Leviticus 20:8 **"And ye shall keep my statutes, and do them: I am the LORD which sanctify you."**

D. Leviticus 21:8 **"Thou shalt sanctify him therefore; for he offereth the bread of thy God: he shall be holy unto thee: for I the LORD, which sanctify you, am holy."**

E. Ezekiel 20:12 **"Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them."**

8. Man does some work of sanctification

A. Exodus 30:29 **"And thou shalt sanctify them, that they may be most holy: whatsoever toucheth them shall be holy."**

9. We are to sanctify ourselves

A. Leviticus 11:44 **"For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify**

yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

B. Leviticus 20:7 "Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the LORD your God."

C. Numbers 11:18 "And say thou unto the people, Sanctify yourselves against to morrow, and ye shall eat flesh: for ye have wept in the ears of the LORD, saying, Who shall give us flesh to eat? for it was well with us in Egypt: therefore the LORD will give you flesh, and ye shall eat."

D. Joshua 3:5 "And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the LORD will do wonders among you."

E. 2 Chronicles 29:5 "And said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites, sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place."

10. We are to sanctify God publicly

A. Numbers 20:12 "And the LORD spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."

B. Isaiah 29:23 "But when he seeth his children, the work of mine hands, in the midst of him, they shall sanctify my name, and sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and shall fear the God of Israel."

11. Israel was to sanctify the Sabbath

A. Deuteronomy 5:12 "Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee."

B. Nehemiah 13:22 "And I commanded the Levites that they should cleanse themselves, and that they should come and keep the gates, to sanctify the sabbath day. Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy."

12. The house of God is to be sanctified

A. 2 Chronicles 29:5,17 "And said unto them, Hear me, ye Levites, sanctify now yourselves, and sanctify the house of the LORD God of your fathers, and carry forth the filthiness out of the holy place...Now they began on the first day of the first month to sanctify, and on the eighth day of the month came they to the porch of the LORD: so they sanctified the house of the LORD in eight days; and in the sixteenth day of the first month they made an end."

13. God's name is to be sanctified

A. Ezekiel 36:23 "And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes."

14. God sanctifies Israel

A. Ezekiel 37:28 "And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore."

15. Sanctification through the Word of God

A. John 17:17 "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

16. Sanctification through the truth

A. John 17:19 "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."

17. Whole sanctification

A. 1 Thessalonians 5:23 "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

18. Sanctification by Christ

A. 1 Corinthians 1:30 **"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption:"**

B. Hebrews 13:12 **"Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate."**

19. We are to sanctify the Lord personally

A. 1 Peter 3:15 **"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:"**

20. God's will for us is our sanctification

A. 1 Thessalonians 4:3 **"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:"**

21. Salvation through sanctification

A. 2 Thessalonians 2:13 **"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth:"**

"The biblical doctrine of sanctification is both the most neglected and the most misunderstood doctrine of the Christian life... If it is neglected then the Christian convert is left marooned on the island of evangelism; if it is misunderstood then it will hinder the hope of revival among the saints. No doctrine has suffered more at the hands of the believers identified with Christianity in spite of the fact that this necessary and precious teaching must become the experimental doctrine of the church, having presupposed the appropriation by faith, of the fundamentals of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus.

The King James Version uses both the word "sanctification" and "holiness" from the singular Greek word "hagios". In the former word, the passages speak more of the entrance, crisis, and appropriation of sanctification; in the latter word, the passages speak more of the process, quest, and fruition of holiness in the life of the Christian believer. Of course, both of these are the results of a Divine Depositum placed in access for the believer at the time of the new birth or regeneration. Everything follows only as the biblical teaching of redemption is received by the Christian believer. In our time, the charismatics have substantially isolated and/or a separated neo-pentecostal teaching of "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" away from the new birth. This is confirmed by their fellowship with the Roman Catholic charismatics who relate their neo-pentecostal teaching of "the baptism of the Holy Spirit" and the glossolalia with the sacrament of "infant baptism" by the church.² In reality, The new birth is sanctification or cleansing begun, and the subsequent process of sanctification perfects (bringing to maturity) the work of holiness in the Christian life. The Romanist then proceeds to refer to this "baptism of the Holy Spirit" and glossolalia as merely a renewing of that which was begun in the former sacrament of baptism.

The neglect of the doctrine of sanctification will lead to the libertinism of the flesh; the misinterpretation of this doctrine will lead to the legalism of the flesh. In either direction, the flesh survives and has dominion over the Christian life; whereas in the understanding and appropriation of biblical holiness, through the grace of the Lord Jesus, the war of the flesh ceases in its dominion (lordship of the flesh) over our lives, and the believer begins his "walk" in the Spirit with the Savior. To do nothing with the doctrine of sanctification will lead to the undoing of the Christian life itself and carnality and backsliding will result.

In the last half of the twentieth century, evangelism has been overdone to the neglect of the Christian life itself, of which holiness is most needed. This deficit in this doctrine has opened up the doors of scandal, fornication, abortion, euthanasia, immodesty, and a host of other detriments to the testimony and victory of the church. We must no longer divorce ecclesiastical separation from personal separation or else we will truncate orthodoxy away from orthopraxy. Also, we must be sure that in our presentation of this doctrine of holiness that we do not overemphasize the subjective aspect of

sanctification away from the objective holiness of Almighty God Himself. We have for too long pushed American evangelism as the priority, and now we have come to a time of a great need of revival. Evangelism is for the saving of the sinner; revivalism is for the sanctifying of the church. We must also remember that genuine evangelism is a result of the spirituality of the church, not the mere product of the pragmatic salesmanship of the public relations officer of an overzealous administrative church board. Thus, the past agenda of a failing pulpit and church has demanded a biblical agenda in the urgency of the holy presence of God manifested in a revival of holiness among God's people.

No minister is worthy of his calling in every sense of the word. Every preacher is vulnerable to the charge of hypocrisy. In fact, the more faithful a preacher is to the Word of God in his preaching and his life, the more liable he is to the charge of hypocrisy. Why? Because the more faithful a man is to the Word of God the higher the message is that he will preach. The higher the message the further he will be called to see the need of a holier life. The more he becomes accountable to God, through His word, the more he will see the need of the holiness of God, and the unholiness of himself. Of course, in turn, these principles become embedded in the congregation of saints who worship near such a preaching pulpit, and therefore all of God's people are urged to the likeness of their Holy God. He, and He alone, is the source of holiness; this is revealed through His Word.

It is a mere self-righteousness to assume that because a person is drawn to holiness, as his quest in life, in study, in meditation, and prayer, that he is thereby a holy man. The source of that deep hunger and quest is only because the source of the holiness lies in God and He alone maketh His people holy through the atoning sacrifice of His dear Son, the Lord Jesus.

Before we further the definition of sanctification, we must further the practical observations and preliminary scene. There can be no biblical sanctification merely applicable to either the negative or the positive side of the biblical principle of holiness. The motive of militancy must not be the end and goal of our Christian testimony. Militancy is only one ingredient of our Christian life. The Christian life, itself, is much larger, and sanctification is a provision in the atonement which includes much more than a fight. "Holiness is also the honoring of Christ; the battle is only a means to that end. It is that end of exalting and honoring Christ that dictates the means to that end.

The most important English words in the Holy Scriptures which deal with the teaching of sanctification, in our King James Version, are: holiness, sanctification, hallowedness, cleansing, and purity. Of course, we may include separation under other Hebrew and Greek word studies, but in reality, "separation" should be thought of as only one aspect of the larger doctrine of sanctification and holiness. "Separation," with its cognates, is used about 84 times in the Old Testament, and 12 times in the New Testament.

The more prominent words are: sanctification, holiness, and purity. In each of these three words there is a divine consistency between the Old Testament Hebrew word *qodesh*, and the New Testament Greek word *hagios*. Here again, with all of the cognates, the former is mentioned about 721 times in the Old Testament; and the latter, with all of its Greek cognates, mentioned in the New Testament about 225 times.

Qodesh, in the word study, is clearly seen in the following definition. The Semitic languages have two separate original forms of the root. The one signifies 'pure' and 'devote,' as in Akkadian *qadistu* and in the Hebrew *gades*, 'holy.' The word describes something or someone. The other signifies 'holiness' as a situation or as an abstract, as in Arabic *al-gaddus*, or 'the most holy or most pure.' In Hebrew the verb *gades* combine both elements: the descriptive and the static. The traditional understanding of 'separated' is only a derived meaning, and not the primary.

On the other hand, *hagios*, as it is revealed through the Greek word in the New Testament, has been made more friendly and acceptable by the heart of the Christian. Of course, the incarnation and virgin birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, into a time, space, history of human events brought the holiness of God now imputed and imparted to believers through the satisfaction of the righteousness of the Father in accepting the Sacrifice of His Son on the Cross of Calvary. We should expect this revelation of *hagios*, because of redemption, to bring this to pass to the glory of God. *Hagios* is the Greek word that

was selected, in the Septuagint, for the Hebrew word qodesh.

Hagios, in the word study, is defined as signifying (a) separation to God (I Corinthians 1:30; etc.), (b) the resultant state, the conduct befitting those so separated (I Thessalonians 4:3,4,7),...`Sanctification' is thus the state predetermined by God for believers, into which in grace He calls them, and in which they begin their Christian course and so pursue it. Hence they are called `saints.'

Hagios is a word of rarest use in Attic Greek...Its fundamental idea is separation, and consecration and devotion to the service of Deity. But the thought lies very near, that what is set apart from the world and to God, should separate itself from the world's defilements, and should share in God's purity; and in this way `hagios' speedily acquires a moral significance.

William Barclay, in his *The Daily Study Bible* commenting on First Peter, 1:4-16, defines hagios with "the root meaning is different. That which is different from ordinary things." He furthers his definition setting forth that "the Temple, the Sabbath, and the Christian are all different from all other buildings, other days, and other men."

God has given His people impressive words in qodesh and hagios, both used 946 times, translated in the KJV as holiness, sanctification, purity, including the various cognates. Thus, we see about 1,000 times holiness is actually mentioned in the Bible.

Seven Steps of Sanctification

The spiritual and theological path from the dead sinner to the walking saint, and on into heaven, is marked by at least seven progressive steps in the doctrine of sanctification. They are:

1. Potential sanctification

A. John 17:17 **"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."**

2. Positional sanctification

A. 1 Corinthians 1:2 **"Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:"**

3. Experiential (crisis) sanctification

A. Romans 6:1-14 **"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."**

4. Expansional (growth) sanctification

A. Romans 8:1-5 **"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in**

Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit."

5. Perfectional (maturity) sanctification

A. 1 Thessalonians 5:23 **"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."**

6. Glorificational (in heaven) sanctification

A. Revelation 22:11 **"He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still."**

7. Eternal sanctification throughout the Eternal Golden Age

A. Revelation 4:8 **"And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."**

Unless Almighty God gives us a mighty revival, a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon our personal lives, we will see and hear of more fornicators in our pulpits, as well as more divorces among the leaderships of our churches. The lack of personal sanctification and the reverence and worship involving the holiness of God is evident to a wholesale proportion. Another evidence is marked by our love for and mishandling of the Lord's monies. Stewardship is waning among us; integrity and ethics are rarely seen. Sanctification includes these, too.

More and more ministers believe that personal failure, in morals and ethics, does not mean the failure of their ministry. There is no ministry without a sanctified messenger. There is a false, unsanctified assumption that the sins of fornication and embezzlement are natural instead of sinful, and that the Lord expects our ministries to survive no matter what the Pastoral Epistles say about the character, principles, and sanctification of the leadership. The Holy Bible, revealed by our Holy God, still retains the same principles of godliness and sanctification, and the sanctification of church leaders is more exacting for them than any other persons involved in the Christian life. We look for the least grace in the least saint, but the most grace in the Christian leader.

Some argue that King David was allowed to continue as king after his adultery with Bathsheba and the blood guiltiness of Uriah the Hittite. But the fact of the matter remains that what a king did do, a New Testament prophet and church leader may not do. How often have we heard it said in the words of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, "If God calls you to be a prophet and preacher, do not stoop to be a king." So, being a king is not our only model.

The charismatics have falsely emphasized that the gifts and callings of their leaderships are without repentance and discontinuance even if they fornicate or embezzle the so-called Lord's monies. Of course, this assumption presumes to abandon the holiness of God in personal separation and sanctification.

Our fundamental view of sanctification must reach its conclusion in the nobility of our view of holiness. We believe it was correctly rendered in the resolutions of our World Congresses of Fundamentalism to include the separatist position. It is biblical; it is needed. Whether or not every historical fundamentalist since the end of the nineteenth century actually formulated a written statement of separation or not, does not change the fact that they did indeed practice separation. The separation of their sanctification remains on record. It has been our testimony. Some were "defrocked" from the Princeton Presbyterian Seminary. That was a forced separation set forth by the apostate system.

Others suffered a voluntary separation, such as many of the Baptists. Both of these groups suffered separation as puritans in growing apostate systems. Still others, as pilgrims to the growing apostasy, simply commenced independent churches and Bible colleges and seminaries, and suffered historic separation as children of those who witnessed the sorrow of their parents who had been puritans in the decaying apostate condition in the earlier part of the generation. But all were separatists, practicing separatists; and thus, the doctrine of separation was established. And that practice and proclamation must still remain among us. Some have defected, but the practice and proclamation still remain among us. May God preserve this noble truth among us until the end.

The Christian life is like a sacred art, always dedicated to law, order, design, purpose, beauty, and spiritual decor; constantly setting forth a heart desiring godliness, piety, dignity, character, and ethics. It is measured not from the gutter of the world, and contemporary mood, but rather from the top of heaven and the glory of Christ.

There is no art without nobility. We must measure our orthodoxy from the bottom foundation of the Rock of Ages; but we must measure our ethics from the top of the glory of Christ. Unfortunately, we live in a time of slob-culture, slob-conversations, slob-art forms, and even some slob-conversions to Christ. Unfortunately, this has been seen among both practicing sinners and professing saints.

We must never measure all individuals in the Body of Christ according to our own limited understanding of a certain manner, method, or dogmatism of stand for fundamentalism. The Body of Christ is too versatile; the capacity of our own individual vessel, too small. Otherwise, holiness is violated and self survives in the pride of place, face, and estranged grace, misplaced by too great a personal confidence in self."¹⁷²

"Four great principles may be gathered from this text.

(a) The importance of sanctification and practical godliness. Our Lord specially asks it for His people. Those that despise Christian life and character, and think it of no importance so long as they are sound in doctrine, know very little of the mind of Christ. Our Christianity is worth nothing, if it does not make us value and seek practical sanctification.

(b) The wide difference between justification and sanctification. Justification is a perfect and complete work obtained for us by Christ, imputed to us, and external to us, as perfect and complete the moment we believe, as it can ever be, and admitting of no degrees. Sanctification is an inward work wrought in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, and never quite perfect so long as we live in this body of sin. The disciples needed no prayer for justification: they were completely justified already. They did need prayer for their sanctification; for they were not completely sanctified.

(c) Sanctification is a thing that admits of growth; else why should our Lord pray, "Sanctify them"? The doctrine of imputed sanctification is one that I can find nowhere in the Word of God. Christ's imputed righteousness I see clearly, but not an imputed holiness. Holiness is a thing imparted and in-wrought, but not imputed.

(d) The Word is the great instrument by which the Holy Ghost carries forward the work of inward sanctification. By bringing that Word to bear more forcibly on mind, and will, and conscience, and affection, we make the character grow more holy. Sanctification from without by bodily austerities and asceticism, and a round of forms, ceremonies, and outward means, is a delusion. True sanctification begins from within. Here lies the immense importance of regularly reading the written Word, and hearing the preached Word. It surely, though insensibly, promotes our sanctification. Believers who neglect the Word will not grow in holiness and victory over sin."¹⁷³

17:18 As thou hast sent^a me into the world,^b even so have I also sent^a them into the world.^{cde}

¹⁷² O. Talmadge Spence, "The Biblical Doctrine of Sanctification, Parts 1,2,3." Straightway, June, July, August 1997.

¹⁷³ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on John*, volume 2, pages 149-150.

18a This is what an “apostle” is- one sent by another with a commission. The Father sent the Son into the world to purchase salvation on the cross for fallen man. In this sense, Christ was an apostle, (Hebrews 3:1). This was the primary burden of Christ’s earthly ministry. Everything else (teaching, healing...) was secondary to this.

“sent” (both uses) Strong’s # 649 apostellô; to order (one) to go to a place appointed, to send away, dismiss. It has the idea of “sent with authority or with a commission”. We get our word “postal” from this, one we authorize to deliver a message or a letter.

18b Christ was sent into the world because the world was lost. Doctors are sent to where the sick patients are. Prophets were sent to Israel whenever the nation had deep spiritual needs. A Savior was sent to where sinners needed to be saved.

18c As Christ was sent into the world as an apostle, so were these men. They were sent into the world but not as part of the world, but still separate from the world, to testify to that world of sinners about the salvation that is in Christ. It is here that these 11 men become “apostles”, and not just “disciples”.

18d We are sent into the world:

1. To be witnesses

A. Acts 1:8 **“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”**

2. To make disciples

A. Matthew 28:19 **“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:”**

3. To glorify the Father

A. 1 Corinthians 10:31 **“Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.”**

But they are not fit to be sent out into the world until they have been sanctified (17:17), in the same way that the priests were not ready to minister until they had been consecrated (Exodus 29).

18e The Devil also sends his witnesses into the world. These are preachers and prophets whom God has not sent. They either sent themselves or Satan sent them to sow discord and confusion among God’s people. This was a problem that Jeremiah seemed to be plagued with, as God complains about these false teachers numerous times in that prophecy, in Jeremiah 14:14,15; 23:21,32; 27:15; 29:9. In apostate days leading up to judgment, the number of false teachers seems to multiply. The more apostate a people are and the closer to judgment they are, the more public teaching of error there is. This observation shows just how close the United States is to ultimate judgment.

17:19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself,^a that they also might be sanctified through the truth.^b

19a Not to become holy or more holy, as Christ was already holy, even in human form on earth. This would carry the idea of separation and dedication unto the will of and service to the Father.

“Consecrate” would be a good way to think of it. Of course, Christ had already done this before now, as He was always totally dedicated to the will of the Father, but not He re-sanctifies Himself for the sake of the apostles. As their Master sanctified Himself unto the Father, so must these men do likewise and all that come after them. If we are going to live for God and walk with God, we must sanctify ourselves (continually) to the Father. In so doing, we separate ourselves from the flesh and the world, for

sanctification and separation are always from something unto something.

19b See John 17:17. The only basis for sanctification is the truth as revealed in the Scriptures.

17:20 Neither pray I for these alone,^a but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;^b

20a Not just for these eleven men in the same room with Christ at this point. Christ had many other sheep to bring into the fold, both Jew and Gentile, that He must also pray for.

20b This involves all other believers as well, even including us. Christ prays for us in the same way that He prayed for the original apostles.

93. Christ's Sixth Petition; For the spiritual unity of believers 17:21-23

17:21 That they all may be one;^{ab} as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us:^c that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.^d

21a This is a true, Biblical ecumenism, not the false one that is in such strength today, which is really nothing more than a "Back to Rome" movement. Rather, the Lord is praying for and desiring a true Biblical unity and ecumenism of heart and spirit, that exists between all genuine believers, regardless of denomination or theological system. Such a unity is vital for the Remnant Church to go on and do its work of faithful witness in the earth. And we will need each other more than ever in the dark days that lie ahead of us, as we approach ever closer to the Tribulation and the unveiling of Antichrist. May we develop a true and genuine Whitefield Spirit among the Remnant in these last days! George Whitefield and Charles Spurgeon are two great examples of men who would fellowship with a man as long as his heart was right, even if there were disagreements about some points of doctrine. The Calvinist Whitefield fellowshipped with the Arminian John Wesley. They disagreed over Calvinist theology but both still loved each other. When Whitefield died, it was Wesley who preached his funeral sermon. Charles Spurgeon had men working in his ministry who practiced infant baptism and who were not Baptists. But their hearts and walks were such that these men were worth fellowshiping. We Baptists tend to have a very severe sectarian spirit, that if a man is not a Baptist that we cannot fellowship him. This exclusive attitude has done great harm to the Body of Christ and has caused unnecessary divisions and hurt feelings among these good brethren.

I learned to appreciate this spirit while a student at Foundations Theological Seminary in Dunn, North Carolina when I attended from 1992-1994. Dr. O. Talmadge Spence started that school where anyone could come who had the heart (not the denominational identification) for the truth. I've tried to maintain such a spirit in my own ministry since.

21b See John 17:11. We can also see this in Galatians 3:28 where Paul writes "**There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.**" All Christians are one in Christ. We still have a wide diversity of practices, beliefs and worship, but all truly born- again people have a oneness in worship of God, love of God, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and destiny in heaven.

21c The unity that exists within the Godhead should be the model for the desired unity that should exist within the church and among believers. It was like this in Acts 4:32 ("**And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.**"). Why not again?

21d This unity among believers is for both a testimony to the world and evangelistic. One reason why we see so few saved today is because of this lack of unity in the church. We are split up into hundreds of denominations, and even sub-divisions within the denominations. There are Baptists and then there are certain kinds of Baptists and neither one will fellowship with the other. The Arminian and the Calvinist can't get along. The premillennialist and preterist hurl anathemas at each other all the day. Two men won't fellowship because they attended different, "rival" colleges. Is this what Christ prayed for? This division is based more on personality and pride rather than a love for the "truth", as it is often portrayed. You can love and fellowship a brother, even if he doesn't agree on everything doctrinally or if he attended another college. As long as his heart is right and loves God, he should be fellowshiped in order to fulfill this prayer.

17:22 And the glory which thou gavest me^a I have given them;^b that they may be one, even as we are one:^c

22a Probably Christ's earthly glory, as He had His own glory, as God, before His incarnation.

22b Any glory that we might have comes not from ourselves or our abilities or our accomplishments. We have no glory in and of ourselves. We might glorify ourselves to men but that is nothing more than worms impressing worms with wormy things. Such things mean nothing to God. If we are to be promoted or glorified, it must be of and by God, else it will mean absolutely nothing.

22c The desire for unity among the believers is repeated again. This obviously weighs heavily on the Lord's mind for Him to keep mentioning it in His prayer to the Father.

17:23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one;^a and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

23a That the union of the believers may be complete. Christ prayed there may be no discords or contentions or divisions within the body. A machine is in harmony when it has all its parts and is in good order when there is no portion of it wanting. It is important to notice how preoccupied Christ is concerning the union of his people as he drew near to death. He saw the danger of strifes and contentions in the church. He knew the imperfections and sins of even the best of men. Thus, He took occasion, when he was about to die, to impress the importance of union on his disciples.

Unity brings spiritual maturity and vice-versa. This perfection comes when you are not offended over the slightest theological disagreement between brethren and can work around them. The perfect man will realize that among genuine believers, there is more that unites us than divides us. A spiritually immature believer separates over the smallest trifle and is intolerant of any theological or practical disagreements. Many Baptists are like this. They will only fellowship with Baptists and will only preach with Baptists (their kind of Baptist). They believe that only a Baptist church (their kind of Baptist church) is the right one and all non-Baptist churches (and any Baptist church that does not meet their level of orthodoxy) is apostate. They will only read and use writers that are of the same theological stripe as they are. They will not go outside their camp or tribe to use good information and books by other men. "Baptist Briders" tend to be very immature in this regard.

A summary of John 17:21-23:

1. Christ prays that we may be one- 21
2. The Father is in Christ and Christ is in the Father- 21
3. Christ prays that we may be one with both the Father and the Son- 21

4. The goal of this unity is that the world might believe that the Father has indeed sent the Son- 21,23
5. Christ gave the disciples the glory that He has- 22
6. Christ is in us- 23
7. The Father is in the Son- 23
8. Christ prays we may be perfect in one- 23
9. The Father loves these disciples as He loves the Son- 23

94. Christ's Seventh Petition; That believers may be with Him in heaven to behold and share His glory 17:24-26

17:24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am;^a that they may behold my glory,^b which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.^c

24a Ultimately, in heaven. Jesus promised to come back for us and to take us where He was in John 14.

24b One reason why we go to heaven- to be able to see the glory of God in all of its unfettered brilliance. We cannot see this now, as it would overwhelm us in our current human bodies with its limitations. But in our glorified bodies, we will be able to gaze upon the full glory of God without it destroying us.

24b Again, because Christ is eternal, without beginning. He was with the Father from as far back in time as we can imagine, and then even beyond that.

17:25 O righteous Father,^a the world hath not known thee:^b but I have known thee,^c and these have known that thou hast sent me.^d

25a Righteousness is an attribute of God- that He is righteous and right in all His ways.

25b They have no desire to as the world hates the Father. The world has a basic knowledge about God in that that He exists, and some understanding of His nature and attributes, but they do not know Him in an intimate, personal level that the Son does or that Christians do. This level of knowledge is only possible through the new birth and the indwelling and revelation by the Holy Spirit to the believer.

25c And no one knows the Father like the Son does and no one can know the Father like the Son does. Christians do have a knowledge of God in our own limited, human way, but we can never approach this level of knowledge and communion that the Son has of the Father, even in a glorified body.

25d See John 17:18.

17:26 And I have declared unto them thy name,^a and will declare it:^b that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

26a He did this constantly during His three-year public ministry. Christ declared it,

1. By His birth. In Bethlehem, by his lowly birth, the stable, the manger, the visitation by the shepherds and the Magi.
2. By his private life. His thirty years at Nazareth as He grew to manhood, finding favor with God and man, in taking care of His family after the death of Joseph.

3. By His words and teachings. They are few in comparison with what might have been received, yet they are enough to declare the name of the Father. most fully.
4. By His works. His life was one of miracles; and all of these illustrative of the Father's character; all of them declarations of the Father's name.
5. By His death and resurrection. His cross and grave, His attitude in His sufferings and death, all of them declared the Father's name.

26b After the resurrection, as He is now doing through the Church.

John Chapter 18

95. Arrest and Betrayal of Jesus 18:1-9, see also Matthew 26:36, 47-56; Mark 14:32, 43-50; Luke 22:39, 47-53

18:1 When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron,^a where was a garden,^{bc} into the which he entered, and his disciples.^d

1a It was a small rivulet about 6 or 7 feet wide in a deep ravine about 200 yards from the wall of Jerusalem, beyond which the Mount of Olives began with a steep slope. It was the sewer outlet of the city and was dry except during rains. This is where David crossed when he was betrayed (2 Samuel 15:23 **"And all the country wept with a loud voice, and all the people passed over: the king also himself passed over the brook Kidron, and all the people passed over, toward the way of the wilderness."**).

"That he went over the brook Cedron. He must go over this to go to the mount of Olives, but the notice taken of it intimates that there was something in it significant; and it points, (1.) At David's prophecy concerning the Messiah (Psa 110:7), that he shall drink of the brook in the way; the brook of suffering in the way to his glory and our salvation, signified by the brook Cedron, the black brook, so called either from the darkness of the valley it ran through or the colour of the water, tainted with the dirt of the city; such a brook Christ drank of, when it lay in the way of our redemption, and therefore shall he lift up the head, his own and ours. (2.) At David's pattern, as a type of the Messiah. In his flight from Absalom, particular notice is taken of his passing over the brook Cedron, and going up by the ascent of mount Olivet, weeping, and all that were with him in tears too, 2Sam 15:23, 30. The Son of David, being driven out by the rebellious Jews, who would not have him to reign over them (and Judas, like Ahithophel, being in the plot against him), passed over the brook in meanness and humiliation, attended by a company of true mourners. The godly kings of Judah had burnt and destroyed the idols company of true mourners. The godly kings of Judah had burnt and destroyed the idols they found at the brook Cedron; Asa, 2Ch 15:16; Hezekiah, 30:14; Josiah, 2Kin 23:4, 6. Into that brook the abominable things were cast. Christ, being now made sin for us, that he might abolish it and take it away, began his passion by the same brook. Mount Olivet, where Christ began his sufferings, lay on the east side of Jerusalem; mount Calvary, where he finished them, on the west; for in them he had an eye to such as should come from the east and the west,"¹⁷⁴

AV	ESV	LSV
1 When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.	1 When Jesus had spoken these words, he went out with his disciples across the brook Kidron, where there was a garden, which he and his disciples entered.	1 When Jesus had spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples to the other side of the Kidron Valley, where there was a garden, into which He entered with His disciples.

The LSV has "Kidron Valley" instead of the "brook Cedron". A valley is not the same thing as a brook.

1b The name of this garden was "Gethsemane," which means "an olive press." This means that God chose a place for His Son to have His life squeezed out of Him like olive oil.

Compare Luke 22:44 **"And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."** That is called "prayer" and involved the

¹⁷⁴ Matthew Henry.

agony of the Lord's soul. He prayed so earnestly that the sweat was falling off Him as though He was bleeding.

1. This is no "saying or reading of prayers" or bowing your head over the dinner table. This is no "Hail Mary" or a rote recitation of the "Lord's Prayer" muttered on a Sunday morning in some Romanist "church". This is the "holy of holies" or prayer that we can only observe but not enter in to.
2. "This, dear reader, is where the psychiatrist enters, making notes and mumbling something about the poor fellow being "psychotic" or a "manic depressive" type. There he is, stretched out on the floor. He has not shaved today. He hasn't eaten. His face is down. His eyes are closed; the fingernails grip the floor boards. The tongue-in groove is wet with tears. The man's nose is stuffed with mucous from crying, so he cannot pray distinctly; and between moans and sobs, an occasional word comes through—"Lord, if there is any way it can be done..." "Lord, is there no other way..." "Lord, for Christ's sake, have mercy on me and hear me!" "Lord, why can it not be answered..." Here in Gethsemane, the blood, sweat, and tears roll; here, one verse in the book of Job is of greater comfort than a thousand masses, missals, meetings, and mother-confessors. Jesus is praying."¹⁷⁵
3. An outline of this kind of prayer would be:
 - A. It was a solitary prayer.
 - i. There are some circumstances where no one can help you and no one can pray with you- you are going to have to go into Gethsemane alone!
 - B. It was a submissive prayer.
 - i. **"not my will, but thine, be done."**
 - ii. The Lord gave Himself totally over to the will of the Father.
 - iii. Prayer changes our will concerning the will of God. It helps us to understand it and accept it.
 - C. The prayer is a Scriptural prayer.
 - i. It was addressed to the Father alone.
 - ii. At no point in Scripture do we ever see Jesus or anyone else praying to anyone other than the Father. No one ever rattled off a single "hail Mary" in the New Testament.

1c Humanity fell in a garden, so the process of redemption must begin in a garden.

1d John passes over Christ's prayers and agony in the garden.

18:2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples.^a

2a Gardens are great places to pray and the Lord must have come here often to pray and meditate. Judas knew the Lord's habits and movements and knew that He would probably come to this garden eventually.

18:3 Judas then, having received a band of men^a and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.^b

3a 600 men.

¹⁷⁵ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on Matthew*, pages 754-755.

3b A band of men to arrest one teacher? Judas knew that he would need all the help he could get to arrest Jesus. If Jesus resisted, a Roman legion wouldn't be sufficient to arrest Him.

AV	ESV	LSV
3 Judas then, having received a band <i>of men</i> and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.	3 So Judas, having procured a band of soldiers and some officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, went there with lanterns and torches and weapons.	3 Judas then, having received the <i>Roman</i> cohort and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, *came there with lanterns and torches and weapons.

The LSV is more technical, using "cohort" instead of a "band":

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

4a Jesus made no attempt to hide or escape. He was now fortified by His prayer in the garden to meet everything that He had to face.

18:5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth.^a Jesus saith unto them, I am he.^b And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.

5a It was dark or near dusk, so the officers may not have been able to recognize Christ.

5b The "he" is in italics in verses 5,7,8, If it is not read, Jesus is saying "I AM", which is a title of His deity in Exodus 3:14. The mere mention of the name is enough to knock the entire squad down. Jesus unveils the full power and majesty of His divine nature in the uttering of these two words. He "tones it down" in verse 8 and no one is knocked over but no one learns their lesson. You would think they all would have run in terror after the first divine manifestation but they all "stand their ground" in the face of omnipotence.

AV	ESV	LSV
5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, <i>I am he.</i> And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.	5 They answered him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus said to them, " <i>I am he.</i> " Judas, who betrayed him, was standing with them.	5 They answered Him, "Jesus the Nazarene." He *said to them, " <i>I am He.</i> " And Judas also, who was betraying Him, was standing with them.

"Jesus of Nazareth" The LSV has "Jesus the Nazarene". Same in John 18:7.

18:6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.^a

6a See Psalm 27:2 "**When the wicked, even mine enemies and my foes, came upon me to eat up my flesh, they stumbled and fell.**"

18:7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.^a

7a Jesus is never called “Jesus of Bethlehem”, which was His true hometown. He was raised in Nazareth and that would be His identification.

18:8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:

18:9 That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none.^{ab}

9a After they were knocked down, Judas gets up, steps forward, and kisses the One who just knocked him flat (Matthew 26:47-49 **“And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people. Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast. And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him.”**). Jesus had just demonstrated that He could have destroyed them all with a word, but Judas STILL follows through with his betrayal. Judas has just seen and FELT a demonstration of the power and wrath of a Being in whose presence he had been for forty-two months. Now he had Christ’s Deity demonstrated right to his face; it was aimed at him to prevent him from doing what he was doing. He simply brushed it aside like Pharaoh brushed aside forty-two months of plagues, diseases, deaths, property destruction, dead cattle, ruined crops, sores, and storms, and went right on his wicked way after burying his son. Oh, the infinite depravity of man, to be so bold in the face of his Creator!

9b This is the fulfillment of John 17:12.

96. Peter’s Defense of Jesus 18:10,11

18:10 Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it,^a and smote the high priest’s servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant’s name was Malchus.^b

10a Peter is about to prove his loyalty to Christ. He is ready to die on the spot, but he is not ready to be sacrificed, as His Lord is willing to do. There is a difference!

10b Luke adds a footnote that John doesn’t record. Luke mentions Jesus healed and restored Malchus’ ear in Luke 22:51 **“And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.”**. Let’s see these “faith healers” try that! Jesus healed immediately, without taking into account any faith Malchus might have had. There was no organ to set the mood, no hidden radio receivers in anyone’s ear, no \$50 admission fee at the door, and no “duds” or “misfires”. The Lord didn’t blame the other person if no healing took place (an issue he never had to deal with!).

18:11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath:^a the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?^b

11a Remember, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal (2 Corinthians 10:4 **“For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds”**).

11b While no doubt appreciating Peter’s defense, the Lord tells him to put his sword away. Jesus MUST be arrested and He MUST suffer, endure the wrath of God upon sin and die. He must drink the cup of suffering and death if salvation is to be accomplished. Now was not the time for that. And He

certainly did not need Peter's help. The Lord could have called twelve legions of angels (about 72,000) for His defense if He needed. But if He used His deity to escape this situation, how would any of the Scriptures concerning His death be fulfilled? How could our salvation be purchased?

Matthew 26:53 **"Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?"** A legion consisted of between 4,000-6,000 men. Christ could have called for as many as 72,000 angels to protect Him if necessary, but then how would the Scriptures be fulfilled? One angel could kill 185,000 soldiers in a single night (2 Kings 19:35) and one angel could have destroyed Jerusalem (1 Chronicles 21:15). How much damage could 72,000 angels do, who were protecting the Son of God?

97. Jesus Led Away to Trial 18:12-14

JESUS' RELIGIOUS TRIAL

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Before Annas				18:12-14, 19-24
Before Caiaphas	26:57-68	14:53-65	22:54, 63-65	
Before the Sanhedrin	27:1	15:1	22:66-71	

JESUS' CIVIL TRIAL

	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Before Pilate	27:2, 11-14	15:1-5	23:1-5	18:28-38
Before Herod Antipas			23:6-12	
Before Pilate the second time	27:15-26	15:6-15	23:13-25	18:39-19:16

18:12^a Then the band and the captain^b and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him,

12a Christ is first taken to Annas, Caiaphas' father-in-law. This midnight arrest is contrary to all the laws of jurisprudence in any country except a Communist, Islamic, Fascist, Nazi, or Catholic country (or America today!). No warrant has been issued. No charges have been made or filed. No legitimate court has been convened. All has been done under cover, without notifying the public of charges, arrests, "trial dates," selection of jury, or even the judge. This clandestine "show trial," about to be conducted, contradicts every legal rule given in the Torah. It is set up by religious leaders who have no more actual use or belief in the Law of Moses than they do in the laws of Hammurabi. There will be no "counsel for the defense" at this trial, and every witness called will be a sworn enemy of the "accused."

12b Commander of a thousand soldiers.

18:13 And led him away to Annas first; for he was father in law to Caiaphas,^a which was the high priest that same year.^b

13a "Caiaphas"

1. He was the high priest in the reign of Tiberius Caesar and during the time of the Lord's public ministry. He held the office during the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate, but soon after his

removal from that office was deposed by the Proconsul Vitellius (A.D. 36), and succeeded by Jonathan, son of Ananas. His wife was the daughter of Annas, who had formerly been high priest, and who still possessed great influence and control in religious matters. Caiaphas belonged the Sadducees.

2. The office of the high priest had degenerated to a mere political office, full of the usual political intrigue. The spirituality of the man was not a qualification to hold the office.

13b The High Priesthood was a rotating office, held by different men yearly during this day.

18:14 Now Caiaphas was he, which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.^a

14a And that man would be Jesus. Better He did than the Romans clamp down on any unrest that might follow if He was allowed to continue His ministry.

98. Peter's Denials 18:15-18, 25-27, see also Matthew 26:57-75; Mark 14:53-72; Luke 22:54-71

18:15 And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple: that disciple was known unto the high priest,^a and went in with Jesus into the palace of the high priest.

15a John and Caiaphas knew each other. How they knew each other is not told.

18:16 But Peter stood at the door without.^a Then went out that other disciple,^b which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

16a Peter is still in the area, although withdrawn. We can keep giving him credit for that. Peter is outside with the soldiers warming himself at a fire, and John is on the inside seeing "the trial" first-hand (John 18:15).

16b This "other disciple" is the same as "another disciple: that disciple" in John 18:15. This is John speaking of himself.

18:17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not.^a

17a A "damsel", a young lady, a very weak instrument, asking an innocent question, was something this big, burly fisherman, who was ready to stand alone against dozens of officers, could not handle.

18:18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals;^a for it was cold:^b and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

18a The phrase "a fire of coals" is only used here and in John 21:9. The "fire of coals" on that latter occasion was purposely intended by the Lord to remind Peter of his fall.

18b It does get cold in Israel during the autumn and winter.

99. The Trial of Jesus 18:19-24

18:19^{ab} The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.

19a The “trial” must be read in the light of the procedures laid out in Deuteronomy that are supposed to govern the trial of an offender.

1. In Deuteronomy 19:17, not only are priests to be present, but judges are to preside at official trials; that is, the religious leaders are not capable of giving a fair decision without consulting the civil leaders.

A. Deuteronomy 19:17 **“Then both the men, between whom the controversy is, shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days;”**

2. It is the judge who is supposed to make the inquisition, not the priests.

3. This examination is first to hear of the charges against the accused, then to enquire diligently, then make certain before proceeding.

A. Deuteronomy 17:4 **“And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and enquired diligently, and, behold, it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel:”**

4. Two or three witnesses are necessary, and if their witness is found to be false, they are to receive the sentence that was passed out to the man on trial.

A. Deuteronomy 17:6 **“At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.”**

B. Deuteronomy 19:18-21 **“And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother; Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so shalt thou put the evil away from among you. And those which remain shall hear, and fear, and shall henceforth commit no more any such evil among you. And thine eye shall not pity; but life shall go for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.”**

5. None of these regulations were followed, thus rendering the trial invalid and illegal.

6. There are no witnesses for the defense.

7. There has been a total violation of the Mosaic Law when dealing with blasphemers, as in Deuteronomy 17:4-6, 9. The blasphemer was to be stoned. The witnesses, on whose testimony he had been condemned, were to cast the first stones. After stoning, the blasphemer's corpse was to be hung on a gibbet, taken down that same night, and buried in a common grave.

A. Deuteronomy 17:4-6, 9 **“And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and enquired diligently, and, behold, it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel: Then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, which have committed that wicked thing, unto thy gates, even that man or that woman, and shalt stone them with stones, till they die. At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death... And thou shalt come unto the priests the Levites, and unto the judge that shall be in those days, and enquire; and they shall shew thee the sentence of judgment:”**

8. The witnesses against the accused do not corroborate with each other.

9. There is violence in the courtroom.

10. In a country occupied by the Roman army, the whole procedure was illegal since the Roman government should have charge of arrests, subpoenas, sentences and executions.

11. Capital offenses could be tried by a quorum of twenty-three. A case concerning a false prophet, however, had to be brought before the entire Sanhedrin of seventy-one members. The judges were to

sit in a semi-circle with the president in the middle, so that the faces of each judge might be seen by each of the others.

12. The witnesses were to be strictly separated and examined individually. If the testimony of two agreed, it was taken as valid. When the case involved the death penalty, the witnesses were cautioned as to the consequences of their testimony. They were not allowed to inject their own conjectures or hearsay into the proceedings.

13. In capital cases everything was done to give the accused the benefit or the doubt. Votes for acquittal were to be taken first.

14. Although civil cases could be tried at night, decisions had to be returned during the day. Capital cases could be tried by day only. An acquittal could be pronounced on the day it was reached, but a sentence of condemnation leading to the death sentence could not be given until the next day, allowing time for a change of mind. Capital cases could not be tried on the eve of a sabbath or a feast.

15. On the way to execution, further efforts were made to establish the prisoner's innocence. Four or five times, opportunity was provided for the condemned to bring fresh pleas that might exonerate him. A herald went ahead of the procession proclaiming the name of the prisoner, the name of his father, the nature of his offense, and the names of the witnesses on whose testimony he was condemned. The herald urged anyone who could prove his innocence to step forward.

16. The judge was not impartial and did not try to protect the accused.

17. There was probably no quorum. Nicodemus should have been present if he was not. He would have defended Jesus, which was probably the reason why he was not informed of these events. He must have been very angry when he found out later what had happened without his being told about it.

18. There was no formal arrest warrant.

19. The accused could not condemn himself by his own words but that is exactly what they wanted Jesus to do.

20. Pilate declared that he saw no cause of death in Jesus and that should have been enough to overturn the verdict of the Sanhedrin.

19b "Such a meeting of the Sanhedrin during the night was illegal. Non-capital cases were decided by three and capital cases by twenty-three judges. In non-capital cases they hold the trial during the daytime and the verdict may be reached during the night; in capital cases they hold the trial during the daytime and the verdict also must be reached during the daytime. In non-capital cases the verdict, whether of acquittal or of conviction, may be reached the same day; in capital cases a verdict of acquittal may be reached on the same day, but a verdict of conviction not until the following day. Therefore, trials may not be held on the eve of a Sabbath or on the eve of a Festival-day.

The regular place for the meeting of the Sanhedrin was in the Temple, but they led Jesus away to the house of the High Priest Caiaphas, situated in a place just outside the wall of the city, where all the chief priests and elders and scribes had been summoned to meet. Nor was the legal hour of meeting for trials in the night. Other features in the illegality practiced in the trials of Jesus were: undue haste, seeking or bribing witnesses, neglecting to warn the witnesses solemnly before they should give evidence, forcing the accused to testify against Himself, judicial use of the prisoner's confession, and failure to release the prisoner when there was failure of agreement between witnesses."¹⁷⁶

The Sanhedrin just wanted the pretense of a trial to try to make his execution look to be legal.

18:20 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.

¹⁷⁶ J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, pages 462-463.

18:21 Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.^{ab}

21a “This quiet, dignified, true statement is rewarded with the same slap in the face (vs. 22) that Paul gets before the Sanhedrin (Acts 23:2). An old Japanese proverb says you can always tell who the “loser” is in an argument; he is the first man to lose his temper... Jesus Christ doesn’t lose his temper when His adversaries slap Him. He answers calmly, levelly, and legally: “Bear witness...why smitest thou me?”¹⁷⁷

21a There were thousands of witnesses who would testify of what Jesus taught and did. Why not call some of them as witnesses? But the Council had no time for that.

18:22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand,^a saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?^b

22a Fulfillment of Isaiah 50:6 (“**I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting.**”) and Micah 5:1 (**Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops: he hath laid siege against us: they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek.**”)

22b This was illegal, and the High Priest should have rebuked this officer.

18:23^a Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?

23a When this happened to Paul in Acts 23:2, he retorted “**God shall smite thee, thou whited wall**” and then insulted the High Priest in Acts 23:5. Paul was human and reacted like one when he was being unjustly tried. Jesus made no such protest when He was hit.

18:24 Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.^a

24a “While these things are taking place, as described in Matthew 26:67, something else is taking place about which no Pharisee, Sadducee, Sanhedrin, official, or “high priest” knew anything. You see, from here up until Jesus Christ says “It is finished,” an invisible boxing match is taking place. Jesus Christ has literally “stepped into the ring” with the holder of the World’s Championship for 4,000 years. Jesus is a thirty-three-year-old “contender” for the “Heavyweight Crown.” A fight is beginning in the sight of ten thousand times ten thousand angels, principalities and powers, and “spiritual wickedness in high places” (see Col.2:15; Eph. 6:12). No Roman soldier, no disciple of Christ, no jailer or executioner saw one round of that fight.

Here it is in the words of the “Contender for the Crown”—the Lord Jesus Christ Himself!

“The Lord GOD hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.

I GAVE MY BACK TO THE SMITERS, AND MY CHEEKS TO THEM THAT PLUCKED OFF THE HAIR: I HID NOT MY FACE FROM SHAME AND SPITTING.

For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.

HE IS NEAR THAT JUSTIFIETH ME; WHO WILL CONTEND WITH ME? LET US STAND

¹⁷⁷ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believers Commentary on John*, page 507.

TOGETHER: WHO IS MINE ADVERSARY? LET HIM COME NEAR TO ME

Behold, the Lord GOD will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up" (Isaiah 50:5–9).

The "near context" of that challenge is the "RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD" (Isa. 51:5–6) and God's "NAME" (Isa. 50:10).

Our "captain" (Heb. 2:10; Josh. 5:15) leads us into battle. He does not just give orders: He practiced what He preached—without a physical sword like all Moslems believe in."¹⁷⁸

98. Peter's Denials 18:15-18, 25-27

18:25 And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also one of his disciples? He denied it, and said, I am not.

18:26 One of the servants of the high priest, being his kinsman whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?

18:27 Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.^a

27a While Peter is cursing, swearing, lying and denying Christ, somewhere off in the distance, a rooster crows. That stops Peter dead in his tracks. All the color drains out of his face. He hastily excuses himself and goes out and weeps bitterly, in full realization that he fulfilled the prophecy that the Lord told of him- he DID deny the Lord three times.

100. Jesus Before Pilate 18:28-19:22, see also Matthew 27:1-26; Mark 15:1- 15; Luke 23:1-7, 13-25

Pilate and the Cross John 18:28-19:22 1 Corinthians 2:14 (a sermon outline)

A. The natural, worldly man confronting Christ and the Cross

1. A politician, whose main burden was
 - a. Keeping the peace
 - b. Keeping his job
2. Confronted unexpectedly with Jesus
 - a. Most men are at one time in their life and how few are prepared!
3. Skeptical at the Jews' claim about Jesus
 - a. He knew who he was dealing with
 - b. He was impressed by Jesus
4. Sought to have Jesus released
 - a. Saw no cause of death in Him

B. Pilate knew the hypocrisy of the Jews, that they had delivered Him due to envy- Matthew 27:18

1. But Jesus witnessed a good confession- 1 Timothy 6:13

C. Ultimately, gave in for political expediency-

1. John 19:12,13 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend:
2. You cannot be a friend of Caesar and a friend of the cross

D. How did Pilate see the cross?

¹⁷⁸ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, page 510.

1. He did not understand its significance because he was a natural man- 1 Corinthians 2:14, the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God
2. He probably saw it as nothing more than a tool of execution
3. In this context, it was a way to keep political peace. In order to keep the Jews happy.

E. Pilate sent Jesus to the cross

1. Political appeasement
2. Spiritual appeasement
3. No indication that he ever really came to understand the deeper significance of the cross.

F. Like any other natural man, Pilate tried to avoid the cross. He simply did not want to deal with this situation but there was no way he could avoid it. "What then shall I do with Jesus which is called Christ?"- Matthew 27:22

1. He sent Him to Herod but Herod sent Him back to Pilate- Luke 23:9-12
2. He tried to have the Jews deal with Him but they wanted Christ killed and only Rome had that authority
3. He tried to put up Barabbas, thinking the Jews would certainly choose Jesus over a murderer. That didn't work
 - a. The whipping of Jesus associated with this didn't satisfy the Jews, either
4. In other words, Pilate could not rid himself of this confrontation with Christ. He must decide one way or the other. He decides for the world and against Christ
 - a. He is a man caught between two loyalties, two masters, two options, trying to satisfy both. But he finds what billions of others have found- you cannot serve God and mammon, you cannot please God and man, who can't have the world and the cross. You must choose ONE. Pilate choose and he choose poorly.
 - b. He counted the cost and decided it was too costly to take the cross.
 - c. Pilate did not want to have to deal with this situation but God will often put saint and sinner into situations that they cannot ignore or beg-off. Pilate MUST act, one way or the other. We all will have these situations where inactivity or neutrality will not be an option. And in terms of salvation, every man, when Christ is standing before him, MUST do "something" with Christ.

18:28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment:^a and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.^b

28a It was a long night and now at the crack of dawn, they take Jesus to Pilate for the legal condemnation and death sentence. These Jews could not wait until a "decent hour" to rid themselves of Jesus.

28b They were about to kill an innocent man, but they didn't want to defile themselves while doing it. "They were a match-mate for every Moslem who worries about eating pork with no conscience whatsoever about lying at "summits" (Oslo, Wye, Camp David, etc.), and about shacking up with four women at the same time, and stoning women to death for stepping out on their husbands (A.D. 2004). They are like Catholics who gamble (Bingo) and drink fermented wine (Christian Bros. distillery) with a clear conscience, but are careful to avoid reading any "sinful, wicked material" like books by Avro Manhattan, Paul Blanchard, O. C. Lambert, Peter S. Ruckman, Benjamin Warfield, Harvey Springer, Anthony Zeoli, or "Alberto." "Birds of a feather MURDER together."¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁹ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, pages 515-516.

AV	ESV	LSV
28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment : and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.	28 Then they led Jesus from the house of Caiaphas to the governor's headquarters. It was early morning. They themselves did not enter the governor's headquarters, so that they would not be defiled, but could eat the Passover.	28 Then they *led Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorium, and it was early; and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorium so that they would not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.

“hall of judgment” The LSV uses “the Praetorium”. Also in John 18:33.

18:29^a Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?

29a “Throughout John's account of this Roman trial we see Pilate going in and out repeatedly. We see him:

Outside (18:28-32) to hear the Jews demand the ratification of their death sentence

Inside (18:33-38a) to hear Christ's own testimony to his kingship

Outside (18:38b-40) to make his first declaration of Christ's innocence and to offer them the choice between Jesus and Barabbas

Inside (19:1-3) for the scourging and mockery of Jesus

Outside (19:4-7) for his second declaration of Christ's innocence: "Behold the man!"

Inside (19:8-11) to examine Jesus about the frightening accusation of the Jews that this one claimed to be the Son of God

Outside (19:12-16) for the final capitulation before the Jews and the shameful miscarriage of justice.”¹⁸⁰

18:30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.^a

30a The Jewish leaders sounded offended that Pilate would not take their word that Jesus needed to be put to death, Pilate wants the details- what has this man done to deserve death?

18:31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law.^a The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:^{bc}

31a He didn't know they had just tried Him totally contrary to all of their laws. Pilate sounds like Gallio in Acts 18:12-17. If this was simply a matter of religious laws or interpretations, Pilate didn't care because it would have been out of his jurisdiction.

31b “We did and found Him guilty of death, but we aren't allowed to put Him to death”. They had just finished with an illegal trial, but now they get all concerned that it would be officially illegal for them to put Jesus to death.

31c The Jews had taken it upon themselves to stone anyone breaking their law (John 8:1-11; 8:59;

¹⁸⁰ John Phillips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, page 350.

10:31; Acts 7:59), but in this case they lied and, fearing the people, determined to raise the plea of rebellion against Caesar, throwing the responsibility of the Lord's death upon Pilate. This would exonerate themselves and could claim Pilate was responsible for Jesus' death and not them, in case the people rose up against them. Christ had to die by crucifixion to fulfill prophecy. The Jews did not practice crucifixion and they had no power to do so with criminals that were accused of crimes against the state.

18:32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.^a

32a By going to Pilate, the Jews fulfilled the prophecies that Jesus must be executed by crucifixion. Normally, the penalty for blasphemy was stoning but the Scriptures said Christ must be crucified in Matthew 20:19; 23:34; John 3:14; 8:28; 12:32. If the Jews had stoned Jesus as they did Stephen, the Scripture would have been broken. But the Jews were much more rational and methodical here than they were with Stephen in Acts 7, where they flew on him in a fit of rage.

18:33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?^a

33a "Art thou the King of the Jews?"

1. That was the charge, probably brought about to show Pilate that Jesus was planning sedition. Pilate would have no concern about any charge of blasphemy so the priests have to create a charge that Rome would be interested in- treason and rebellion (per Luke 23:2).

A. If the Jews had brought a charge of blasphemy to Pilate, he would have reacted as Gallio did in Acts 18:12-16. Pilate cared nothing for Jewish religious law as he didn't understand it and had no authority in that area. The Jews are going to have to bring charges that Pilate will pay attention to- sedition.

B. The charges laid out in Luke 23:2 were as follows:

i. **"Perverting the nation."** Yet He healed the nation everywhere He went.

a. In reality, Jesus could save any nation. Even today, many secular Americans blame the Bible, the Church and Christians as being the most harmful and dangerous threats to the nation.

ii. **"Forbidding to give tribute."** Another lie, for He paid His taxes (Matthew 17:24-27).

iii. **"He stirreth up the people."**

a. He's disturbing the peace! He is "troubling Israel" (1 Kings 18:17).

iv. Nothing is said about blasphemy (which was the real charge) as Pilate would not have cared about that.

2. In John 18:29,30, John records "Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man? They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee." The Jews were expecting, or hoping, that Pilate would rubber-stamp their demand to execute Jesus and may have been offended when Pilate refused to roll over and do their bidding. He was determined to search this matter out for himself.

3. Jesus certainly did not look like a king as he stood before Pilate. What kind of a king is this? If Jesus is "King of the Jews" then the Jews are in pretty rough shape! What kind of a "king" allows himself to be treated like this? Has he no followers or army to defend him?

18:34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

18:35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew?^a Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me.^b what hast thou done?

35a "What would I know about all of this? I'm a Roman, not a Jew! Your own people turned you over to me. What have you done to make them so upset?"

35b "Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me." To Pilate, something was strange about that. Normally the Jews, in their bitter hatred of the Roman occupation, were ready to encourage anyone, however wild his claims, who would foster and promote their cravings for national independence. But here, they are giving up one of their own who had made similar claims.

18:36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world:^a if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews:^b but now is my kingdom not from hence.^c

36a Jesus would destroy this world and start another one in the Millennium and beyond. Rome can have this world, for all the good it would do them.

36b But Christ was a King without an army at this point.

36c His kingdom is not earthly but heavenly.

18:37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king.^a To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

37a Jesus does not come right out and admit that He was a king to Pilate.

18:38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?^{abc} And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.^{de}

38a Pilate grunted this out and said it in such a way that he was not expecting or wanting an answer. The religions and philosophers had argued over this question for centuries and they still do. And they still haven't come up with an answer. Today, people still don't know, as most people believe truth is relative and that there is no such thing as absolute truth.

38b In Latin the question "What is truth?" is written, QUID EST VERITAS. If you reverse that it reads EST VIR QUI ADEST, "It is the man before you"!

38c A better question would be "Who is truth?"

38d First verdict by Pilate- "I find no fault in him at all".

38e Faults

1. David was found to have no fault

A. 1 Samuel 29:3 **"Then said the princes of the Philistines, What do these Hebrews here? And Achish said unto the princes of the Philistines, Is not this David, the servant of Saul the king of Israel, which hath been with me these days, or these years, and I have found**

no fault in him since he fell unto me unto this day?"

2. Daniel was found to have no fault
 - A. Daniel 6:4 **"Then the presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel concerning the kingdom; but they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him."**
3. Dealing with faults among the brethren.
 - A. Matthew 18:15 **"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother."**
 - B. Galatians 6:1 **"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."**
4. Some are expert fault-finders
 - A. Mark 7:2 **"And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault."**
5. Christ had no faults
 - A. Luke 23:4 **"Then said Pilate to the chief priests and to the people, I find no fault in this man."**
 - B. Luke 23:14 **"Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and, behold, I, having examined him before you, have found no fault in this man touching those things whereof ye accuse him:"**
 - C. John 18:38 **"Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all."**
 - D. John 19:4 **"Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him."**
 - E. John 19:6 **"When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they went out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him."**
6. There was a fault among the Corinthians.
 - A. 1 Corinthians 6:7 **"Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to law one with another. Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?"**
7. The saints in glory have no fault.
 - A. Revelation 14:5 **"And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God."**
8. Cleanse me from secret faults
 - A. Psalm 19:12 **"Who can understand his errors? cleanse thou me from secret faults."**
9. Confess your faults one to another.
 - A. James 5:16 **"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."**
 - B. We are to confess our faults to our brothers and sisters in Christ and ask for prayer. We confess our sins to Jesus.
10. Suffering for our faults is no real glory.
 - A. 1 Peter 2:20 **"For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently?"**

18:39 But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover:^a will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

39a This was a gesture of good will displayed to the Jews during their Passover season.

18:40 Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.^a

40a “Barabbas”- “Son of the father”. He was a “notable” prisoner according to Matthew 27:16. Barabbas was a murderer and an agitator with no redeeming qualities about him. Pilate brought Barabbas out and stood him next to Jesus, thinking the Jews would certainly choose Jesus, Who had harmed no one, over this murderer. But how wrong he was! Pilate was trying to find a way to release Jesus. Since it was a custom to release a prisoner during the Passover season, Pilate brings out the worst criminal he currently had in custody, Barabbas. He was total scum, a low-life, a very bad person. But standing Barabbas and Jesus together, the contrast couldn’t have been stronger. Surely the Jews would want nothing to do with Barabbas and they would come to their senses and want Jesus released. This may have been what Pilate was thinking and hoping, but he totally misread the mob.

Pilate was surprised at the level of hatred and animosity being displayed toward Jesus. Jesus stood there, calm and dignified. He did not look like that He was any sort of threat and He was not the kind of man to be a troublemaker. So why were the Jews so upset with Him? What evil had He done? If the Jews could have pointed to one specific crime that Jesus had committed, he would have gladly signed the papers authorizing Jesus’ crucifixion. But the Jews could provide nothing. All Pilate was getting was people screaming at the top of their lungs, frothing at the mouth, demanding His execution. Pilate may have feared that if he released Jesus, he would have a full-scale riot on his hands. The mob was calling for Jesus’ blood and if Pilate did not comply, they might come after him next.

JOHN CHAPTER 19

19:1a Then Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged him.^{bc}

1a In one last desperate effort to save the life of an innocent man and to appease the blood lust of the mob, Pilate decides that if he has Jesus scourged, the sight of His suffering and blood would satisfy the crowd. He was wrong, as it only increased their hatred for Christ and made them to demand more.

1b These lashings turn out to be the “stripes” of Isaiah 53 and 1 Peter 2:24, whereby “ye were healed.” The healing is obviously spiritual, from the “disease” of our sins and its effects. It does not automatically translate into physical healing.

1c The Roman soldiers would have used a “cat-of-nine tails” whip. The modern cat o’ nine tails, commonly shortened to the cat, is a type of multi-tailed flail that originated as an implement for severe physical punishment, notably in the Royal Navy and British Army, and also as a judicial punishment in Britain and some other countries. Scourging, called verberatio by the Romans, was possibly the worst kind of flogging administered by ancient courts. While the Jews administered whippings in the synagogues for certain offenses, these were mild in comparison to Roman scourging. Scourging was not normally a form of execution, but it certainly was brutal enough to be fatal in many cases. A person certainly could be beaten to death by the scourge if that was desired. Its purpose was not only to cause great pain, but to humiliate as well. To scourge a man was belittling, debasing, and demeaning. It was considered such a degrading form of punishment that, according to the Porcian (248 B.C.) and Sempronian (123 B.C.) laws, Roman citizens were exempt from it. It was, therefore, the punishment appropriate only for slaves and non-Romans, those who were viewed as the lesser elements in Roman society. To make it as humiliating as possible, scourging was carried out in public.

The instrument used to deliver this form of punishment was called in Latin a flagellum or a flagrum. It was like the old British cat o’ nine tails, except that the flagellum was not designed merely to bruise or leave welts on the victim. The flagellum was a whip with several (at least three) thongs or strands, each perhaps as much as three feet long, and the strands were weighted with lead balls or pieces of bone. This instrument was designed to lacerate. The weighed thongs struck the skin so violently that it broke open. The church historian Eusebius of Caesarea recounts with vivid, horrible detail a scene of scourging he witnessed. He says, “For they say that the bystanders were struck with amazement when they saw them lacerated with scourges even to the innermost veins and arteries, so that the hidden inward parts of the body, both their bowels and their members, were exposed to view” (*Ecclesiastical History*, Book 4, chap. 15).

The victim of a scourging was bound to a post or frame, stripped of his clothing, and beaten with the flagellum from the shoulders to the loins. The beating left the victim bloody and weak, in unimaginable pain, and near the point of death. The flagellum was a much more torturous instrument, the lashes were delivered without any compassion or consideration for the victim’s health. It is no doubt that weakness from his scourging was largely the reason Jesus was unable to carry his cross all the way to Golgotha (Matthew 27:32 and parallels). While the Jews limited the scourging to 39 lashes (Deuteronomy 25:3), the Romans had no such limitation.

19:2 And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns,^a and put it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe,^b

2a These thorns were very sharp, and long spikes, that would have been driven into the skull when the crown was shoved down on Christ’s head.

2b Purple is the color of royalty so this is in mockery of His claims of kingship.

19:3 And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.^a

3a “Now come the blows. Some spit on Him, some slap His face, some pluck out His beard. “Oh, so you’re the Son of God, eh? Then surely you must know everything! WHO HIT YOU? Blind man’s bluff! (Matthew 27:68)”SMACK! SMACK! SMACK!

They have tied a towel around His face so He cannot see (Mark 14:65), and then they paste Him with their palms and fists until the effect is as described in Isaiah 52:14 and 50:6. Jesus, sitting patiently under the abuse, could have called out the name, rank, and serial number of every man in the outfit, but He “reviled not again” (1 Pet. 2:21–23), nor answered (Isa. 53:7).

This is the hour when the “Prince of this World” vents his hatred and wrath on the rightful heir to the throne (John 14:30). (Since the main subject of the Bible is a Kingdom, and that Kingdom has two claimants [Luke 4:6], it is remarkably fitting that at this juncture, the usurper should “pour it on” and try to the limit of his strength to get his Rival to quit.) There is more here than a room full of shouting, cursing, venomous Pharisees “taking it out” on a Prophet named Jesus. There in the early morning light, amidst the slappings, buffetings, blows, and spittle, a soul sits enthroned in the Sinless Son of God and faces another soul in the spirit realm and says to him: “He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? let us stand together: who is mine adversary? LET HIM COME NEAR TO ME!!” (Isa.50:8—note the context!)

Here is an open challenge to “the prince of the power of the air,” the ruler of spiritual darkness, to come into close quarters and “try Jesus for size!” “Let him come near!” To those who have read Jude 9 and 1 Peter 5:8 (and believed them), the challenge is blood curdling. Jesus is stepping “into the ring” with the most powerful being in the universe, outside the Godhead. He is challenging the heavy weight champ for the title, and this heavy weight has never lost a battle until this time. Ten billion championship bouts—ten billion K.O.’s in the first round. Count them!

Adam, hiding.

Eve, lying.

Noah, drunk.

Joseph, lying.

Jacob, swindling.

David, adultery.

Moses, murder.

Daniel, idolatry.

Paul, resisting God’s will.

Peter, cursing.

Lot, backslidden.

Isaac, lying.

Abraham, lying.

Jeremiah, not trusting.

Job, complaining.

COUNT THEM!

That old veteran of ancient days, his majesty “the Devil,” never had any trouble KOing the greatest, best, wisest, and holiest men who ever lived. And now a Man sits before him, blindfolded with spit and blood running down His face, and says: “Who is mine adversary? let him come near!” In he comes, both fists flailing, and brass knuckles on both hands (Job 40:18). Heaven, earth, and hell look on as the greatest conflict that ever took place in human history begins (Col. 2:15).¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on Matthew*, pages 774-776.

19:4 Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.^a

4a Second verdict by Pilate, "I find no fault in him".

19:5 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!^{ab}

5a "Everyone blithely (and oh, my God! how piously!) forgets that the "man" who slept on the ground at night (Luke 9:58) was a first century carpenter for eighteen years (Luke 2–4), and His companions were commercial fishermen. "The man" is a "man's man"—not some mushy, sentimental, bass-speaking sissy swishing around in long robes and teaching "possibility thinking." Behold His life. Behold His death. Behold His enemies. Behold His friends. Behold His influence. Behold His portrait (Song of Sol. 5:11–12; Isa. 53:1–2). "BEHOLD THE MAN!"¹⁸²

5b "The conduct of Pilate was as if he had said, "See! The man whom you accuse is arrayed in a gorgeous robe, as if a king. He has been scourged and mocked. All this he has borne with patience. Look! How calm and peaceful! Behold his countenance! How mild! His body scourged; his head pierced with thorns! Yet in all this he is meek and patient. This is the man that you accuse; and he is now brought forth, that you may see that he is not guilty."¹⁸³

Behold what the sin and depravity of man did to the Son of God! Do you not see the ugliness and the sinful of sin, even upon the Son of God? All of us face this challenge and respond one way or another. We cry either "Crucify him" or "Crown him." There is no middle ground, as Pilate soon found out.

19:6 When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify him: for I find no fault in him.^a

6a Third verdict by Pilate, "I find no fault in him".

19:7 The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.^a

7a The truth finally comes out. Jesus was not being charged with sedition, but for blasphemy. False charges filed, then changed. That should have been enough to demand a new trial.

19:8 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;^a

8a Son of God? What if that was true? This Man was certainly unique and unusual, like no man Pilate had ever seen, and he dealt with a lot of types of men. But this Man was different. His claim to be a king really didn't faze Pilate, as he probably heard many men make such empty claims before. But the Son of God? In the back of Pilate's mind, he may have thought it could be true. How to proceed now?

¹⁸² Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, page 777.

¹⁸³ Albert Barnes.

**19:9 And went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou?^a
But Jesus gave him no answer.^b**

9a Where do you really come from? Are you really a king and the Son of God?

9b You would think Jesus would have taken this opportunity to give a full and clear witness to Pilate, but He instead said absolutely nothing. The truth is that God does not sit in heaven, wringing His hands that someone might not get saved. This foolish picture is presented to lost folks by some "soul winners". They would have you think that Jesus is crying for them to get saved. Ever hear the heart-wrenching but inaccurate poem that has God lamenting "I have no hands but your hands and I have no feet but your feet" in terms of salvation. This is ridiculous. More than once during His earthly ministry Jesus abstained from trying to win His enemies. He never gave an invitation to the Herodians in Matthew 22:15-22, nor to the Sadducees in Matthew 22:23-33, nor to the Pharisees in Matthew 23. Jesus Christ didn't exhibit the "soul winning zeal" that is pronounced today by some as being the only way to be right with God. He stood in front of Herod (Luke 23:9) with His only opportunity to win him to Himself and never said a word! Could Jesus be more uncaring than a 21st century soul winner? Or could it be that the modern soul winner has manufactured a phony piety based on an emphasis on soul winning that even Jesus Christ didn't practice? The Lord knew Pilate was not serious about truth or spiritual things. He was a politician trying to wiggle out of a difficult situation and to save his neck, if not his soul. The silence of God can be more troubling than even a harsh word from God.

19:10 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

19:11 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above:^a therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.^{bc}

11a Every thing Pilate was doing was permitted by God. Every politician and person in authority needs to realize this basic truth. Pilate's authority was derived from Caesar; both Pilate's and Caesar's authority were derived from God. Jesus reminded him that his arbitrary, unjust, and illegal abuse of his authority would not go unrecorded. He had received his authority "from above" and he would be accountable for what he did. This warning was needed by Pilate, who had already allowed one miscarriage of justice in scourging a man he knew to be innocent and was about to permit a worse one.

11b This does not exonerate Pilate but it reveals the Jewish leaders had the greater sin in this case.

11c There are degrees of sin. All unrighteousness is sin (1 John 5:17) but some sins are worse than others.

19:12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him:^a but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar.^b

12a A fourth verdict by Pilate, as he tries to release a man whom he believes is innocent. Four "not guilty" verdicts, but Jesus is still condemned.

12b That did it. It sealed Pilate's fate. His political standing was more important than doing the right thing. The Jews cared nothing about Caesar but the political threats of supporting someone who

claimed to be a king instead of Caesar to make Pilate fold.

19:13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.

19:14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!^a

14a Pilate is challenging the Jews “Would you allow me, or Rome, do this to your king?”

19:15 But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cæsar.^a

15a With this, Israel formally rejects their Messiah and their Messianic hope, and declare that they have put their faith in Caesar. They rejected their King and substituted him with a a grossly flawed Gentile. And they couldn't have picked a worse ruler! But if man will not be ruled by God, then he will be ruled by other men, and politics tends to attract the worst of men.

19:16 Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be crucified.^a And they took Jesus, and led him away.

16a “**crucifixion**” A Persian form of capital punishment that was never used by the Jews. The Romans used crucifixion as punishment for serious crimes such as insurrection and murder. The Romans used a short beam fastened to a long upright one, on which was placed a piece of wood for the feet to rest on. Nails were driven through the hands and feet (Psalm 22:16). The torture was dreadful, and the thirst, great; but in some cases, the victim could take up to three days to die.

Truman Davis, M.D., provides the following description of a crucifixion from the viewpoint of a medical doctor: “The cross is placed on the ground and the exhausted man is quickly thrown backwards with his shoulders against the wood. The legionnaire feels for the depression at the front of the wrist. He drives a heavy, square, wrought-iron nail through the wrist and deep into the wood. Quickly he moves to the other side and repeats the action, being careful not to pull the arms too tightly, but to allow some flex and movement. The cross is then lifted into place. The left foot is pressed backward against the right foot, and with both feet extended, toes down, a nail is driven through the arch of each, leaving the knees flexed. The victim is now crucified. As he slowly sags down with more weight on the nails in the wrists, excruciating, fiery pain shoots along the fingers and up the arms to explode in the brain—the nails in the wrists are putting pressure on the median nerves. As he pushes himself upward to avoid his stretching torment, he places the full weight on the nail through his feet. Again, he feels the searing agony of the nail tearing through the nerves between the bones of the feet. As the arms fatigue, cramps sweep through the muscles, knotting them in deep, relentless, throbbing pain. With these cramps comes the inability to push himself upward to breathe. Air can be drawn into the lungs but not exhaled. He fights to raise in order to get even one small breath. Finally, carbon dioxide builds up in the lungs and in the blood stream, and the cramps partially subside. Spasmodically he is able to push himself upward to exhale and bring in life-giving oxygen. Hours of this limitless pain, cycles of twisting, joint-rending cramps, intermittent partial asphyxiation, searing pain as tissue is torn from his lacerated back as he moves up and down against the rough timber. Then another agony begins: a deep, crushing pain deep in the chest as the pericardium slowly fills with serum and begins to compress the heart. It is now almost over—the loss of tissue fluids has reached a critical

level—the compressed heart is struggling to pump heavy, thick, sluggish blood into the tissues—the tortured lungs are making a frantic effort to gasp in small gulps of air. He can feel the chill of death creeping through his tissues. ... Finally, he can allow his body to die.”¹⁸⁴

19:17 And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha:^{ab}

17a This is Hebrew for “The Place of the Skull.” In Luke 23:33 it is referred to by its Latin name, “Calvary.”

17b “The place of a skull”, what an ugly thing a skull is, with its empty eye sockets and protruding teeth. What a mockery of life. What an appropriate symbol of death. What a parody of a human head, with its flowing locks and dancing eyes and mobile lips and changing expressions and marvelous brain. They led the Lord of life to the place of death.”¹⁸⁵

19:18 Where they crucified him,^{ab} and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.^c

18a Jesus was crucified on Wednesday, on the 14th of the month Abib which was the passover. He most certainly was not crucified on Friday. There is absolutely no way you can get “three days and three nights” from Friday to Sunday. The attempt to squeeze three days and nights from Friday to Sunday is usually made in saying “part of a day can be counted as a whole day” but the language the Lord used does not support that. Also, Jewish sabbaths are not confined to Friday. Any day of the week can be a sabbath, depending on the dates the various festivals fall. I currently work for a company owned by a Jew and the Jewish employees will often take off multiple days in April and October, during their holy seasons, not just Fridays.

18b There is probably nowhere like His crucifixion that Jesus fulfilled prophecy. Following is a list of thirty prophecies fulfilled just at His crucifixion:

	Prophecy	Fulfillment
1.	Genesis 3:15	John 19:18
2.	Exodus 12:46	John 19:36
3.	Psalms 2:2	Mark 15:1
4.	Psalms 22:1	Matthew 27:46
5.	Psalms 22:6	Matthew 27:39-44
6.	Psalms 22:7,8	Matthew 27:39-44
7.	Psalms 22:16	John 19:18
8.	Psalms 22:17	Matthew 27:36
9.	Psalms 22:18	Matthew 27:35
10.	Psalms 31:5	Luke 23:46
11.	Psalms 34:20	John 19:32, 33, 36
12.	Psalms 35:11	Mark 14:56
13.	Psalms 38:11	Luke 23:49
14.	Psalms 41:9	John 13:18
15.	Psalms 69:19	Matthew 27:28, 29

¹⁸⁴ Cited in David Cloud, *Believer's Bible Dictionary*, pages 68-69.

¹⁸⁵ John Philips, *Exploring the Gospel of John*.

16.	Psalm 69:21	Matthew 27:34
17.	Psalm 109:25	Matthew 27:39
18.	Isaiah 50:6	Matthew 26:67
19.	Isaiah 53:3	John 1:11
20.	Isaiah 53:5,6,10	Romans 5:6, 8
21.	Isaiah 53:7	Matthew 27:13, 14
22.	Isaiah 53:7	Matthew 26:62, 63
23.	Isaiah 53:8	Mark 15:1-25
24.	Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:57-60
25.	Isaiah 53:12	Mark 15:27, 28
26.	Daniel 9:26	Matthew 26:24
27.	Amos 8:9	Matthew 27:45
28.	Zechariah 11:13	Matthew 27:9
29.	Zechariah 12:10	John 19:34
30.	Zechariah 13:7	Mark 14:27, 50

18c “Ethelbert Bullinger has proposed that there are FIVE crosses present, not three. The proposition is not as wild as it sounds. He first of all points out that two malefactors and two thieves are present. Although a thief is a malefactor, a malefactor is not necessarily a thief. Bullinger says that the criminals mentioned in Matthew and Mark are not brought to Golgotha until AFTER the garments are divided (Mark 15:27; Matt. 27:38). Further, in John 19:32–33, the soldiers go by two men before they get to Jesus, so there must be five, for Jesus is said to be crucified “in the midst” (see Luke 23:33; Mark 15:27; John 19:18)! If He is between them, then there is a malefactor and a thief on His right and a malefactor and a thief on His left. That isn’t all—it is abundantly clear in the Bible that “5” is the number of DEATH (not grace!): Genesis 5:5; Acts 5:5; Romans 5; three men killed below the fifth rib, Adam opened here for Eve, David’s five stones, Benjamin’s five-fold provision for his mother’s death, and five open wounds in Christ (one in each hand, one in each foot, and one in His side). If that were not enough, there are five pieces of clothing divided at His death (see John 19:23–24). One is made especially so that there CANNOT be six pieces.”¹⁸⁶

19:19 And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.

19:20 This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.^a

20a There seems to be some to be a discrepancy between the inscriptions recorded in the gospels. The four gospels record the inscription as follows:

1. Matthew 27:37 “**And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**” This was written in Hebrew, the language of the Jews. This makes us think that Matthew may have been originally written in Hebrew. This would be a witness to the Jew that this was their King and Messiah that they had crucified.

2. Mark 15:26 “**And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.**” This was written in Latin. Mark, the Gospel to the Romans, was probably originally written in Latin. Latin was the language of the Roman Empire and the government that controlled the world at that time. This reminds rulers that despite their power and authority, they are truly in subjection to a higher King.

¹⁸⁶ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer’s Commentary on Matthew*, pages 830-831.

3. Luke 23:38 **“And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.”** This is written in Greek. Greek was the language of Greece, which represented art and education. Many people put their faith in education, science and self-improvement, but that is a false gospel when one considers the very Son of God on the cross.

4. John 19:19 **“And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.”** This is a combination of all the other gospel texts. John is the universal gospel, so this is the universal witness to all men to look to the cross and One on it for their salvation.

God had each of the gospel writers record only a portion of the full inscription which read: “THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.” Pilate had it written in Hebrew, Greek and Latin to make sure that everyone understood it. This was a universal declaration of the deity of Christ, as well as a universal condemnation of Israel for rejecting Him.

19:21 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.^a

21a This inscription made them look bad, that Rome, at their demand, was crucifying their King, Whom they rejected.

19:22 Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.^a

22a Pilate had finally had enough of these Jews and finally shows something of a backbone. The Jewish leaders kept making demands of Pilate but now, they could push him around no more. This would be similar to the “perfect tense” in Greek, which denotes a final, completed condition or action that cannot be further changed. Pilate wrote what he wrote and may have well believed that Jesus was “King of the Jews” to some degree, and he wasn’t about to change the inscription.

101. Jesus Among the Soldiers 19:23,24

19:23 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat:^a now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.

23a All Jesus possessed at His death were the clothes on His back, yet even that was taken away from Him to further the insult of His death.

19:24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.^a

24a Fulfilling Psalm 22:18 **“They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.”** This is the only instance of gambling in Scripture and its context is in the death of Christ, so it has a very bad connotation. Clothes were more valuable in this day than they would be in our day.

102. The People At The Cross 19:25-27

19:25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.^a

25a Who was at the cross? Comparing the gospel accounts we see that:

1. John alone mentions Mary the mother of Jesus.
2. All three mention Mary Magdalene.
3. Matthew and Mark mention Mary the mother of James and Joses, a woman John describes as the wife of Cleophas. Mark adds the information that her son James was known as James the Less (to distinguish him from James the son of Zebedee).
4. Matthew mentions "the mother of the sons of Zebedee," Mark mentions Salome, and John mentions "the sisters of Jesus' mother." They are all referring to the same woman (thus Salome was Mary's sister, the aunt of the Lord Jesus, and her sons James and John were his cousins).

19:26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

19:27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.^a

27a Joseph was dead and none of his half-brethren believed on Him yet, so Jesus asked John (the only disciple at the cross) to take care of His mother, which He did. How much trust Jesus put in John! I've always believed that John was Jesus' "best friend" on earth.

103. "I Thirst" 19:28,29

19:28 After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.^a

28a One Scripture had not yet been fulfilled and Jesus was mindful of it, the prediction of Psalm 69:21. Then the whole prophetic picture concerning his death would be finished. So he said, "I thirst."

19:29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth.^a

29a Jesus cried for water (John 19:28) and got vinegar instead. He tasted it but would not drink it (Mark 15:23, also see Proverbs 31:4). This vinegar was a stupefying agent designed to dull the senses and grant some relief to the victim, but Jesus needed to keep all of His faculties about Him during these hours.

104. The Death of Christ 19:30-37

19:30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar,^a he said, It is finished:^{bc} and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.^d

30a Jesus "received" the vinegar but did not partake. The vinegar was drugged to put the victim into a

stupor as an act of mercy, to help mask the pain and hasten death. But Jesus must “keep His head” and be in full possession of all of His faculties during His time of the cross, and could partake of the vinegar.

30b This ends the Old Testament dispensation. The New Testament would not start in Acts 2, a period of at least 40 days. The transition between dispensations is not always sharp. There can be a transitional period of varying lengths.

30c “While suffering and dying (for sinners), the Lord speaks seven times. We call these the seven last “sayings.”

1. The word of FORGIVENESS “Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots” (Luke 23:34).
2. The word of SALVATION “And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise” (Luke 23:43).
3. The word of AFFECTION “Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home” (John 19:27).
4. The word of SEPERATION “And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:46).
5. The word of DEHYDRATION “After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst” (John 19:28).
6. The word of CONSUMATION “When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost” (John 19:30).
7. The word of SATISFACTION “And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost” (Luke 23:46).

30d Salvation is now finished. Nothing can be added to it. “Five hundred thousand Catholic “priests,” performing the “sacrifice of the Mass” through eighteen centuries could no more clear one sinner of sin (see Heb. 10:11) than getting baptized ten times a day by a Campbellite “elder.” “IT IS FINISHED.” It was not touched by you or your kin folk, your pastor or your priest, your preacher or your teacher, your “guru” or your Rabbi. Jesus Christ finished “IT” without your advice, help, cooperation, assistance, or consent... Any “finishing touches” that unregenerate sinners added to it simply marred the work or kept people from obtaining it (Matt.23:13).”¹⁸⁷

19:31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) ^a besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away.

31a It was not a regular, weekly Sabbath. It was the Sabbath of “the first day of the feast” (Matthew 26:17, Wednesday, 6 PM). There were two Sabbaths during that week.

19:32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. ^a

32a The whole purpose of crucifixion was to kill the condemned person. The victim was hung by his hands with much of his body weight supported by his feet. With his entire body weight hanging from his arms, he could not breathe. The condemned man would have to lift his entire body with his feet in order to take a deep breath. If the time of the execution was drawing to a close and the guards saw that a

¹⁸⁷ Peter Ruckman, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*.

prisoner was still alive, they would break his legs while he was still on the cross. Weakened from his ordeal on the cross and now without a way to expand his lungs to breathe he would die of asphyxiation. Such a death would be exceptionally horrible. In most executions death comes fairly quickly and the condemned suffers much less. As the crucifixion drew to a close the guards broke the legs of the two thieves who were beside Christ. Verse 33 says that Jesus was already dead so they didn't break His legs, never knowing they were bound by the prophecy of Exodus 12:46 **"In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof."**

19:33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:^a

33a Fulfilling Psalm 34:20 (**"He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken."**), also in John 19:36.

19:34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side,^a and forthwith came there out blood and water.^b

34a Just in case the prisoner wasn't dead, a soldier drove a spear into Christ's side, setting up the fulfillment of yet another prophecy in Zechariah 12:10 **"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."**

34b The "blood and water" came out in such a way to show that Jesus' heart had stopped beating. The blood was the normal result of driving a spear into the body. The "water" may have been the clear fluid around the pericardium.

19:35 And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.^a

35a John was an eyewitness to all of these events and faithfully and accurately wrote them down with the goal that the reader would believe his record. Generating belief in Christ was the major burden of John's writings.

19:36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.^a

36a See John 19:33.

19:37 And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.^a

37a Zechariah 12:10 **"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn."** Zechariah's prophecy may also have an application of the Second Coming, when Israel sees Jesus returning in power and great glory. That is when they have the realization of their national sin of rejecting and crucifying their King and

Messiah.

105. The Burial of Jesus 19:38-42

19:38 And after this Joseph of Arimathæa, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus.^a

38a All four gospels tell of Joseph of Arimathea but we know little about him. He was a rich man (Matthew 27:57), an honorable counselor and an honorable member of the Sanhedrin (Mark 15:43), a good and just man (Luke 23:50). It was another fulfillment of prophecy that Jesus was to be buried by a rich man (Isaiah 53:9). This is the first and final time we see him in Scripture. He does surface at a critical time after Jesus' death. Jesus had more friends and supporters on the Council than most people would have believed, which is usually the case. Joseph was willing to identify himself with someone who had been executed as a criminal and a malefactor.

Joseph was well-known enough and "powerful" enough to be able to secure an audience with Pilate in order to make this request. Normally, Pilate would not have cared about the disposal of the body of a criminal, but we believe that Pilate had more respect for Jesus than was normal, and was willing to grant Him an honorable burial.

19:39 And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, a about an hundred pound weight.^b

39a These spices would provide a pleasing smell that would help stave off the stench of a decaying body in the heat of the Middle East. The myrrh was also used in the embalming process. We saw the association of myrrh with Jesus back in Matthew 2:11.

39b Nicodemus was a believer, one who was probably low-key up to this point, for whatever reason. But now, he didn't care if he was identified as a believer and follower in Jesus. We saw him first in John 3 with his interview with Jesus and the resulting revelation on the new birth. The only other time we see him is in John 7:50 where he is defending Jesus to the Council.

When Jesus was dead, both Joseph and Nicodemus came out in public as disciples. Both were "private" disciples up to this point, probably for fear of losing their positions and influence. There will come circumstances where you say to yourself "I don't care anyone what the world thinks" and you come out in public and make your stand known. Nicodemus took his public stand for Christ, not caring about the consequences. Thus we see the progress of his spiritual life:

1. A secret conversation in John 3.
2. A somewhat timid defense of Christ in John 7.
3. A bold identification with Christ in John 19.

Neither Matthew, Mark nor Luke mention Nicodemus, so it is possible that John knew him personally, and received the additional historical material from him directly.

AV	ESV	LSV
39 And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and	39 Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture	39 And Nicodemus, who had first come to Him by night, also came, bringing a mixture of

aloes, about an hundred pound <i>weight.</i>	of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight.	myrrh and aloes, <i>weighing</i> about one hundred litras.
---	---	---

The LSV uses "litras", which no English reader would be familiar with.

19:40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.^a

40a The Jews simply anointed the body and wrapped it in fine linen, putting the spices and ointments in the folds.

19:41 Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden;^a and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.^b

41a The fall of man took place in a garden. The redemption of man finished in a garden. This tomb belonged to Joseph (Matthew 27:60). Tombs were expensive and prized and Joseph is giving one of his most prized earthly possessions as a grave for Jesus.

41b From a virgin womb to a virgin tomb.

19:42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.^{abcd}

42a Henry Halley in *Halley's Bible Handbook*, describes the tomb. "The tomb is a room 14 feet wide, 10 feet deep, 7 ½ feet high. As you enter, there are, at the right, two graves, one next to the front wall, and one next to the back wall...They are slightly lower than the floor of the room, with a low dividing wall between. The front grave seems never to have been completed. Indications are that only the rear grave had ever been occupied, and that with no marks of mortal corruption. The tomb is sufficiently large for a company of women and two angels to stand inside, with room at the head and feet where an angel could sit (Mark 16:5; John 20:12). a window where, at dawn, the sunlight would fall on the occupied grave, seen at the right of the door...Every item fits the Scripture account.

"Further, according to Eusebius, the Roman Emperor Hadrian, in his persecution of the Christians, A.D. 135, built a temple of Venus over the tomb where Jesus had been buried. Constantine, the first "Christian" Emperor, A.D. 330, destroyed this temple of Venus. General Gordon, in the debris which he cleared away from the tomb, found a shrine-stone of Venus. He found traces of a building that had been erected over the tomb. Above the entrance, two recesses characteristic of Venus temples."

42b They had to work quickly as the Sabbath was quickly approaching. They did a basic job of embalming Jesus' body with the intention of completing it after the Sabbath was over.

42c Where were the disciples? Where was Peter, James, John, Matthew...? "Secret" disciples took care of the preparation and burying of Jesus body while none of the "open" disciples were anywhere to be seen.

42d "In order to see the full meaning of this verse, we should slightly invert the order of the words, and paraphrase them in some such way as this: "In this new rock-hewn tomb, therefore, Joseph and Nicodemus laid the body of Jesus, because it was conveniently nigh at hand, and because the Jews' preparation day, or day preceding the passover sabbath, left them little time, and made it necessary to hasten their proceedings." We may well believe that these two holy men had but little time, when we

consider that our Lord did not give up the ghost till three o'clock, that the day ended at six, and that only three hours were left for Joseph to go to Pilate and get leave to remove the body from the cross, for Joseph and Nicodemus to take the nails out and lift the body from the tree, for wrapping the body in linen with a hundred pounds of myrrh and aloes, and for finally carrying it to the tomb and rolling a huge stone to the mouth of the tomb. When we remember, beside this, that the body of a full-grown man, wrapped in linen with a hundred pounds of additional weight in myrrh and aloes, would be a most awkward and difficult burden for two men to carry, we may well believe that nothing but severe exertion could have enabled Joseph and Nicodemus to finish their labour of love before six o'clock. The wonder is that they managed to do it at all. It certainly could not have been done if they had not got a sepulchre nigh at hand. Again the Holy Ghost appears to me to foresee the objection that there was not time to bury our Lord, and mercifully supplies the words which answer it: "the sepulchre was nigh at hand." Even then we can hardly doubt that John and the women from Galilee must have lent some help. At all events it is distinctly recorded that the women were present, and that they were sitting by and beheld were the body was laid."¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁸ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospel of John*.

JOHN CHAPTER 20

106. The Empty Tomb Discovered 20:1-18

20:1 The first day of the week^a cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre,^b and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.^c

1a Sunday, before sunrise.

1b They wanted to finish the preparation of Jesus' body that Joseph and Nicodemus were unable to do. We wonder where Joseph and Nicodemus were and why they didn't come to complete their task themselves.

"Let us note Mary's courage, and zeal to honour her buried Lord. Not every woman would have dared to go outside the city while it was yet dark, to a grave, and specially during the passover feast, when thousands of strangers were probably sleeping under any slight shelter near the walls of Jerusalem."¹⁸⁹

1c The first thing you would assume is that someone stole Jesus' body, but who would steal a corpse? It is one of the lowest crimes there is. It would be the final indignity upon Christ by the Jewish leaders, if they were responsible.

The whole validity of Christianity depends on that tomb being empty and the body of Christ gone. If Christ's earthly body could be located, it would completely overthrow Christianity.

20:2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved,^a and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.^b

2a John.

2b A natural assumption.

20:3 Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

20:4 So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

20:5 And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

20:6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie,^a

6a What a contrast in personalities between John and Peter. Although John had the courage to follow Jesus into Herod's palace, he hesitates here at the door of the tomb. Peter, who feared to enter the palace and instead ended up denying the Lord, here goes into the empty grave with almost a reckless abandon.

¹⁸⁹ J. C. Ryle, *Expository Notes on the Gospel of John*.

20:7 And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.^a

7a It would make no sense that someone stole the Lord's body. Who would go through all the effort to unwrap Jesus' corpse and fold-up His face napkin neatly if time was of the essence? And if there were Roman soldiers guarding the tomb, why would they have allowed this? Where were those guards anyway? People who attack the resurrection are not "thinking":

1. How did the disciples steal the body (Matthew 28:13 **"Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept."**) when it was guarded by Roman soldiers (Matthew 27:66 **"So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch."**)?
2. If they did, why did they take time to unwrap the grave clothes when their lives depended upon getting out of there as fast as they could? A thief would have taken the body and would have removed the linen wrapping later. Besides, the linen was fastened together tightly around the body and was sealed up with gum and spices, which would have acted like a very sticky glue. Unwrapping the body would have been a long and tedious process.
3. How did they do it during an earthquake (Matthew 28:2 **"And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it."**)?
4. What is the "napkin" (John 20:7 **"And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself."**) doing folded up lying "in a place by itself"? Who would take the time to unwrap a face-covering on a corpse and fold it up neatly and leave it there?
5. If Jesus just "swooned" on the cross and "revived" later, how did He get enough strength to roll back a stone that took two grown men to roll (Joseph and Nicodemus: John 19:42 **"There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' preparation day; for the sepulchre was nigh at hand."** and Mark 15:46 **"And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre."**) who were both in good health. Jesus had lost more than half of His blood before He died, and He "recovered," did He, in the tomb? And then fought His way out between four (or more) Roman infantrymen?
6. Over 500 people saw the resurrected Christ (1 Corinthians 15:6 **"After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep."**).

20:8 Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.^a

8a There was only one logical explanation- Jesus did raise from the dead, as He said He would!

20:9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.^a

9a They did know them as Jesus had mentioned it over and over again. But this would mean that they did not comprehend the fact of what they had just seen, and the Old Testament verses relating to the resurrection had not yet occurred to them.

20:10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

20:11 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre,^a

11a Peter and John may have been convinced of the resurrection, but Mary was not yet convinced.

20:12 And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

20:13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them,^a Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.^b

13a Mary did not recognize them as angels, as angels look like normal men. This is the “vision of angels” mentioned in Luke 24:32 **“And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?”**

13b She had not yet come to the realization of the resurrection. She still thought someone had taken Jesus’ body.

20:14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.^a

14a The resurrected Christ was able to mask His appearance and identity, as He did in Luke 24:16, **But their eyes were holden that they should not know him.**

20:15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

20:16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.^a

16a Mary did not recognize the body but she did recognize the voice of Jesus.

AV	ESV	LSV
16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary . She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master .	16 Jesus said to her, “Mary.” She turned and said to him in Aramaic, “Rabboni!” (which means Teacher).	16 Jesus *said to her, “Mary!” She turned and *said to Him in Hebrew, “Rabboni!” (which means, Teacher).

“Master” The ESV and LSV continue to weaken this to “Teacher”.

20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father:^a but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.

17a He had not yet made the offering of His blood on the heavenly mercy seat, so He could not be

defiled by human contact until He had done this.

20:18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and that he had spoken these things unto her.

101. Christ Appears to the Disciples 20:19-23

20:19 Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week,^a when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews,^b came Jesus and stood in the midst,^c and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.^d

19a Sunday, later that same day.

19b The Jewish leaders weren't really looking for the disciples as none of them were arrested. They figured if they killed Jesus, His movement would disintegrate. But just to be prudent, the disciples decided to "lay low" for a while.

19c Closed doors are no barrier to a glorified body.

19d Christ gives a greeting of peace. He does not give any rebuke or judgment for their unimpressive conduct during His passion and death. There would have to be some personal work with Peter in the next chapter to help him get over his failures in denying Christ as he did.

20:20 And when he had so said, he shewed unto them his hands and his side.^a Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord.

20a Christ bore the wounds of His crucifixion in His glorified body, as an eternal reminder of what He had to suffer to provide salvation. His will be the only marred glorified body in glory. After a great victory, the scars of a conqueror are marks of honor.

20:21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.^a

21a Compare the so-called "Great Commission" from Matthew 28:19 "**Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:**". John simply summarized it here. Christ gave the disciples the spiritual authority they would need to go out into all the Roman Empire in the book of Acts to spread the gospel and to establish the Church. Christ's work on earth was completed and now these disciples were given the authority and the means to continue it.

20:22 And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost:^a

22a Was the Holy Spirit given to the disciples here or Acts 2:3 ("**And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.**")? There are differences between the two events:

JOHN

Happened in private
No apparent manifestation
No tongues
No resulting activity from the disciples
No conversion of anyone

ACTS

Happened in public
Public manifestation ("tongues of fire")
Tongues (languages)
Peter's Pentecostal Sermon
Three thousand saved

"Receive" is given in the aorist imperative tense. They may have indeed received the Holy Spirit in a New Testament sense here but the manifestation of the power of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit would wait until Acts 2. There was no manifestation of the power of the Holy Spirit until Acts 2. The Church does not start here as there is no preaching, evangelism or conversions. Christ is still on earth at this time and it is clear that the Church is not on the earth at the same time as Christ is.

As the Father breathed into Adam to give him his soul and life in Genesis 2:7 ("**And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.**"), so the Lord breathes on (not in) the disciples to impart to them the Holy Spirit. There was no life in Adam until God brethren into Him and there was no spiritual life in the disciples until the Lord breathed on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

It's clear then that the Holy Spirit was not given in the gospels, and so the Church did not start in the gospels. Some Baptists as so desperate to make John the Baptist into the first Baptist that they have to try to move the Church into the gospels, but it simply won't work. Some non-dispensationalists cannot make the necessary theological distinctions and they also have the Church in the gospels, or even earlier. John R. Rice did this, taking the Church all the way back to the Garden of Eden!

20:23 Whose soever sins ye remit,^a they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.^b

AV

ESV

LSV

23 Whose soever sins ye remit , they are remitted unto them; <i>and</i> whose soever <i>sins</i> ye retain, they are retained.	23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."	23 "If you forgive the sins of any, <i>their sins</i> have been forgiven them; if you retain the <i>sins</i> of any, they have been retained."
---	---	--

23a "**remit**". The other versions use "forgive" but the Authorized Version's use of "remit" is interesting. More is involved with "remitting" sins than in "forgiving" sins.

"**Remit**" has a definition of "to lay aside (a mood or disposition) partly or wholly, to desist from (an activity, to release from the guilt or penalty of remit sins, to refrain from exacting remit a tax, to cancel or refrain from inflicting to give relief from (suffering), to submit or refer for consideration, judgment, decision, or action, to restore or consign to a former status or condition, to send (money) to a person or place especially in payment of a demand, account, or draft, to abate in force or intensity.

The word comes from the Latin "remittere", meaning "to send back". It is the relinquishing of an obligation. If a church member sins, the local church can remit any punishment on a case-by-case basis and keep that member in good standing in the church and not discipline him.

23b This authority is given to the entire Church, NOT just to Peter (supposedly the first pope), as he was not the only one in the room. The Church (and by extension, believers) have the authority to judge what is sin and what is not if they make this judgment based on Scripture.

1. Peter used in in Acts 5 with Ananias and Sapphira. He judged them guilty of lying to the Holy

Ghost and both fell down dead.

2. Peter judged Simon in Acts 8:20 **"But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money."**

3. Paul did it in 1 Corinthians 5:3 (**"For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,"**) and 2 Corinthians 2:7 (**"So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow."**) regarding the man living in an incestuous relationship. He was judged in 1 Corinthians 5:3 (**"For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,"**) and forgiven in 2 Corinthians 2:7 (**"So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow."**).

4. Paul judges 1 Timothy 1:20 (Hymenaeus and Alexander), **"Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme."**

5. Paul judges in 2 Timothy 4:14 (Alexander), **"Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works:"**

This includes judging whether someone's repentance regarding a sin they are guilty of is genuine or not. This would apply to any church discipline or restoration work of the church, as in 1 Corinthians 5 and Galatians 6:1 **"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."**

102. Thomas' Unbelief 20:24-29

20:24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.^a

24a See what can happen when you miss church? Why was Thomas not there? We are not told but there was some danger involved in verse 19 so maybe Thomas couldn't make it for reasons that were not his fault.

20:25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.^a

25a I really don't blame Thomas for this. A reliable second-hand testimony is good but he wanted to see for himself and would not believe until he did. Thomas especially wanted proof of something as important as the resurrection since he did not see the resurrected Christ, either at the tomb or in that meeting the week before. He was ready to die with Christ in John 11:16 but was slower to believe that He was alive and that He had defeated death.

20:26 And after eight days^a again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut,^b and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.

26a The Lord let Thomas stew in his stubbornness and unbelief for eight days before resolving his doubts. You knew that the other disciples were working on Thomas constantly but to not avail. Did he think they were lying? What reason would they have to lie to Thomas? He refused to believe the testimony of ten competent witnesses whom he knew personally. Why was Thomas so stubborn about

this? Maybe he thought he was being more spiritual in only accepting evidence he could see. There has to be something deeper at play here in Thomas' heart.

26b Again, closed and locked doors are no hinderance to a glorified body.

20:27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.^a

27a "Seeing is believing but Thomas is also invited to actually handle His glorified body. Christ went out of His way to help Thomas resolves his doubts.

20:28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.^a

28a All doubts were now removed.

20:29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.^a

29a This relates to us. Thomas could look upon the glorified Christ, but we cannot. Thomas refused to rely on the testimony of others but that is all we have. None of us have seen Christ physically. We must depend on the testimony of Scripture for we have nothing else to base our belief upon.

103. "That Ye Might Believe" 20:30,31

20:30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book:^a

30a No comprehensive and exhaustive biography of Christ has ever been written. John's account was highly selective, and he did not include a tenth of the material that he could of, since his goal was not to record everything that Jesus said and did, but to use selected signs and teaching to generate faith in Christ in the reader.

This gave the chance for the writers of the apocryphal gospels to invent their theological fantasies and promote their own pet heresies by claiming to "fill in the gaps" left by the four inspired gospel writers. It did not take these writers long, as multiple false gospels flooded the market in the first two centuries of the church age.

20:31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God;^a and that believing ye might have life through his name.

31a The ultimate goal of John's writings, is to lead you to salvation and to strengthen your faith in Christ. Having declared his intent in writing his gospel, John later redeclares the same intent in his first epistle: "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son

"These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; THAT YE MAY KNOW that ye have eternal life, and that YE MAY BELIEVE on the name of the Son of God" (1 John 5:13).

JOHN CHAPTER 21

Chapter 21 sounds like an appendix to the gospel, as it seems John originally ended his gospel at 20:31, but later felt that he needed to add the account of Peter's restoration. The other gospel writers do not mention the restoration of either Thomas or Peter, but John does.

104. Restoration of Peter 21:1-19

21:1 After these things Jesus shewed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias;^a and on this wise shewed he himself.

1a Sea of Galilee.

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

21:3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing.^{ab} They say unto him, We also go with thee.^c They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

3a Why did Peter want to go back to fishing? Did he still believe he committed the "unpardonable sin" in his threefold denial of Christ? Did he believe he was finished in the ministry and that Jesus would not forgive him? When we experience a major failure in our lives and ministries, depression and a sense of gloom always follow and we always think the worst of our situation. Did Peter feel that the only thing to do was to go back to his old life? How many ministers went to the mission field, only to return a few months later, or try to start a church only to fail, or something similar? Even moral failings can enter into this. A man may have fallen into some sort of disqualifying sin and feel that he has no ministry at all, so why go on? Why keep going to church? You may then go into a secular vocation, with no thoughts of returning to Christian service. You may make money but you will not be satisfied. No matter how much money you make, you'll toil in and for the world, yet catch nothing. You then realize that you must serve God as that is the only way you will have satisfaction, despite your past failures. You may not make much money in the ministry, but you will get quite a haul of fish on the other side of your ship.

3b Notice the change in Peter since his failure in John 18. Up until then, he was brash, arrogant and proud. He boasted that even if all the other disciples were to forsake Christ, he never would (Matthew 26:35 "**Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples**"). But he did fail. Satan hit him at his weakest point, where Peter's master sin was, his pride. His denials hit Peter hard as he wept bitterly over it (Matthew 26:75 "**And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly**"). Now here he is, a few weeks later. There has been no recent appearance by the resurrected Lord. Peter, thinking his ministry may be over, decides to go back fishing. Later in the chapter, where Jesus is restoring him, there are no bold and brash declarations by Peter, just a heartfelt assurance by Peter that he did love the Lord. This is the ministry of sin towards us. Even this bad thing can be used for good by God in our lives.

1. Peter was humbled by his sin. If a man can sin a great sin and not be broken by it, then there is little hope for his genuine and complete restoration.

A. His failure put the old, rash Peter to death, replaced by a wiser Christian.

2. Peter learned that he was no match for the world, the flesh or the devil in his own strength.

Peter was a self-sufficient man but that self-sufficiency died after his third denial of Christ.

A. Jesus was referring to Peter by his old name “Simon” to show the dangers and certain failures in relying upon the arm of flesh to fight your spiritual battles.

3. Once we realize the sinfulness of sin and the harmful and damaging effects it has, it makes us all the more desirous to avoid it at all costs.

A. Yet so few learn this lesson

i. Proverbs 23:35 **“They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I knew it not. felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.”**

4. Sin acts as a warning to others. We see the warnings to us in Noah’s drunkenness, Cain’s anger, Moses’ impatience, Abraham’s lying, Jacob’s scheming, Peter’s pride, Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5 and so on. Their sins and failings act as a warning to us.

A. 1 Timothy 5:20 **“Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.”**

5. We can be restored to spiritual usefulness after our sins.

A. Galatians 6:1 **“Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.”**

A good book to read in this area is *Precious Remedies Against Satan’s Devices* by Thomas Brooks, one of the old Puritan writers.

3c The other disciples may have felt the same as Peter. While Peter was the only one to deny Christ, none of the others put on a very good show during His passion. John was at the cross, but even he could have done better. Peter was leading his friends by his example, except that he was leading them in the wrong direction. Never underestimate your influence on your friends and family. But after Peter’s restoration, there is no record of him going fishing again.

21:4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore: but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.^a

4a Jesus was able to mask His identity.

21:5 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

21:6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find.^a They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

6a Now how could this stranger know that? And what difference would it make if they were fishing from the port or starboard side of the boat? But they did it anyway and they ended up with more fish than they could handle.

21:7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord.^a Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his fisher’s coat unto him, (for he was naked,^b) and did cast himself into the sea.

7a This is John, who recognized Jesus.

7b Not fully dressed. Peter was probably fishing in just his shorts, with no shirt.

21:8 And the other disciples came in a little ship;^a (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits,^b) dragging the net with fishes.

8a Peter, impulsive as ever, jumps into the water and swims to shore, leaving the task of dragging the haul of fishes to the others. The last thing Peter cared about at this moment were the fish. When he saw Jesus, Peter forgot the fish.

8b Probably about 135 yards.

21:9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there,^a and fish laid thereon, and bread.^{bc}

9a Peter saw that and thought “whoa!” He saw a similar fire when he denied the Lord in John 18:18,25. Peter was trying to forget about warming himself at the enemies’ fire and the first thing he sees when he gets to land is a fire of coals.

9b A typical Jewish breakfast, as the men had been working all night.

9c If they thought they would have to return to fishing for their livelihood, Christ should them that He would supply their needs as long as they were in His service.

21:10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

21:11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three:^a and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

11a There have been all sorts of speculation and conjectures about the meaning of “one hundred and fifty three”. It may have a deep spiritual meaning or it may mean nothing at all. The Bible gives us no insight on this question. God gave this specific number for a reason but He does not tell us what this reason is.

21:12 Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

21:13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

21:14 This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

21:15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?^a He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.^b He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.^c

15a “Do you love Me more than these fish, the source of your livelihood and your vocation in our old life? Do you love Me more than your old life?” Peter was living in his old life, which is why Jesus called him by his old name, Simon.

15b Since Peter denied Him three times, the Lord wants to get three confessions out of Peter.

15c The Lord says “lambs” in 21:15 but “sheep” in 21:16 and 17. Why the change? Whatever the reason, Peter is to “feed” them, but the young believer/new convert and the older saint. This is the genuine pastoral ministry, to watch over and feed sheep, not to chase goats. “Soulwinning” is everyone’s “job”, not just the pastor’s. The pastor is to read, study, pray and meditate so that he can feed the believers placed under his care. The “feeding” here is to feed with the Bread of Life, the Bible. What do you feed the flock? You feed them that which helps them grow (1 Peter 2:2 **“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:”**), get built up (mature) in the faith (Acts 20:32 **“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.”**), and make them **“wise about salvation”** (2 Timothy 3:15).

The pastor feeds his people:

1. Bread

A. Luke 4:4 **“And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.”**

2. Meat

A. Hebrews 13:9 **“Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.”**

3. Milk

A. 1 Peter 2:2 **“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:”**

4. Honey

A. Psalm 119:103 **“How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!”**

5. Apples

A. Proverbs 25:11 **“A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”**

6. Water

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

7. Strong meat

A. Hebrews 5:14 **“But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”**

21:16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.^a He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

16a Jesus knew Peter loved Him but sometimes, you just need to say it. Our wives and children know we love them, but when is the last time we told them? The last time we actually said it?

21:17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.^a Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.^b

17a Peter had been passionate in his denial of Christ, and here, he is just as passionate about his love and devotion for Christ. Peter was grieved as Jesus kept pressing the question, almost as if He didn't believe Peter's responses and assurances.

17b It sounds like Peter was restored. Later on, Paul would deal with these matters in 1 Corinthians 5, 2 Corinthians 2 and Galatians 6:1 **"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted."** Which of us haven't failed somewhere? Which of us does not have secret sins that have not been uncovered by God? In ourselves, no man meets the requirements of 1 Timothy 3. Here, Jesus restores a man who denied Him three times and cursed while doing it. The Lord had some "funny" ideas about who qualifies for the ministry and who doesn't.

21:18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.^a

18a This is a prophecy of the kind of death Peter would die, and it sounds like a crucifixion. But the idea that Peter was crucified upside down in the Circus Maximus in Rome after serving as the first "pope" has absolutely no historical or Scriptural basis. Peter never forgot this prophecy when he mentions it in 2 Peter 1:13-15 **"Yea, I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance; Knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath shewed me. Moreover I will endeavour that ye may be able after my decease to have these things always in remembrance."**

21:19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.^a

19a After the restoration and prophecy of his death, Jesus then tells Peter to "follow me". No promises of a huge church and a comfortable parsonage. No promises of health or wealth. Peter's "following" would be one of labor, trial and eventually martyrdom.

105. "Follow Thou Me" 21:20-23

21:20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?^a

20a This is John.

21:21 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do?^a

21a Peter would have enough to worry about his own life and ministry without worry about what John would do.

21:22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.^a

22a "Peter, you let me worry about John. All you have to worry about is following me!"

21:23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?^a

23a It's interesting how these kinds of rumors and misunderstandings get started. This became a "church tradition" that John would not die until Christ came, which obviously did not happen. It is true that John got a vision of the end of the world in Revelation, but he did physically die long before the Second Coming. This shows the reliability of "church traditions".

106. John's Second Conclusion 21:24,25

21:24^a This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.^{bc}

24a John writes a second conclusion, to be compared to his first one in 20:30,31.

24b John was an eyewitness to these things and he verifies that they were true. Nothing beats or is better than an eyewitness. John did not get any of his information second-hand but is a primary source for the material in his book.

24c Who is the "we"? Others, like John, who believed although they may not have been eyewitnesses. While the other apostles were dead by this time, some of the 500 eyewitnesses of the resurrected Christ were still alive so they could also give testimony. Plus there were the believers who, while not eyewitnesses, experienced the things written by John and who could give testimony to a changed life and to answered prayer through faith in Jesus Christ. You do not have to be an eyewitness to testify to the truth of a thing. I do not remember the Apollo 11 moon landing in 1969 but I believe it happened through the credible testimony of those who did see it, the recorded evidence and those who were involved in it.

21:25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.^a Amen.

25a No comprehensive and exhaustive biography of Christ has ever been written. John's account was highly selective and he did not include a tenth of the material that he could of, since his goal was not to record everything Jesus said and did, but to use selected signs and teaching to generate faith in Christ in the reader.

This gave the chance for the writers of the apocryphal gospels to invent their theological fantasies and promote their own pet heresies by claiming to "fill in the gaps" left by the four inspired gospel writers. It did not take these writers long, as multiple false gospels flooded the market in the first two centuries of the church age.

Could we with ink the ocean fill,
and were the skies of parchment made;
were ev'ry stalk on earth a quill,
and ev'ryone a scribe by trade;
to write the love of God above
would drain the ocean dry;

nor could the scroll contain the whole,
though stretched from sky to sky ("The Love of God", by Frederick Lehman)

"To the reader who has, under God, been helped and blest by this Exposition, we would say, Do everything in your power to make this work known to others. You owe it to your fellow-Christians so to do. Why should not many of them be instructed and gladdened, too? These books are not published as a commercial venture. The demand for this class of literature is tragically small. It takes from five to ten years to sell sufficient for the publisher to get back the bare costs of printing and binding. Nor is advertising of much avail. It is the personal word that counts. If you can do so conscientiously, earnestly recommend these volumes both by word of mouth and by letters, to your Christian friends, to your Pastor, to Sunday school teachers and other Christian workers. Bear them in mind when making a present to a friend. Another good way of interesting others is to loan your own copies, thus others may be induced to purchase for themselves.

And now, dear reader, my work in composing this commentary and yours in going through it (the first time, at least) is now finished; but there remains the improvement which ought to be made of it, and the account which must yet be given to God, for He "requireth that which is past" (Ecclesiastes 3:15). It is by attending to the former that we shall be prepared for the latter. I have not written for the sake of providing mere religious entertainment, and we trust that you have read with some higher motive than simply to fill in a few spare hours. Unless each of our hearts has been drawn out in warmer love, deeper devotion, and purer worship unto Him whose manifold glories give lustre to every page of Holy Writ; unless the result of our studies of John's Gospel leads both writer and reader to clearer visions of and more whole-hearted obedience unto the Word made flesh, our labors have been in vain."¹⁹⁰

¹⁹⁰ A. W. Pink, *Exposition of the Gospel of John*.

WORKS CITED

- Archer, Gleason, *Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible*
Barclay, William, *The Daily Study Bible*
Baxter, J. Sidlow, *Explore The Book*
Brooks, Thomas, *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices*
Bullinger, Ethelbert, *The Companion Bible*
Cereghin, John, *Pilgrim Way Commentary on the Song of Solomon*
Cereghin, John, *Pilgrim Way Commentary on Matthew*
Cereghin, John, *Pilgrim Way Commentary on Philipians*
Cereghin, John, *Pilgrim Way Commentary on Revelation*
Ciarrocca, Richard, *An Exposition of John 10:9.*
Clarke, Adam, *Commentary on the Bible*
Cloud, David, *The Bible Believer's Dictionary*
Dake, J. Finis, *Dake Reference Bible*
Gipp, Samuel, *A Practical and Theological Study of John*
Green, Oliver, *Commentary on the Gospel of John*
Henry, Matthew, *Commentary on the Whole Bible*
Jay, William, *Morning Exercises*
Kelly, William, *Notes on John*
Lee, Witness, *Life Study of John*
Lemski, R. C. H., *Commentary on the New Testament*
Lloyd-Jones, D. M., *Romans* (various volumes)
Manton, Thomas, *Sermons Upon John 17*
Pentecost, J. Dwight, *The Words and Works of Christ*
Phillips, John, *Exploring the Gospel of John*
Pink, A. W., *Exposition of The Gospel of John*
Robertson, A. T., *Robertson's Word Pictures of the New Testament*
Ruckman, Peter, *Bible Believer's Commentary on John*
Ruckman, Peter, *Bible Believer's Commentary on Matthew*
Ruckman, Peter, *Bible Believer's Commentary on Mark*
Ruckman, Peter, *Bible Believer's Commentary on Proverbs*
Ruckman, Peter, *Ruckman Reference Bible*
Ruckman, Peter, *The Christian's Handbook of Biblical Scholarship*
Ruckman, Peter, *The Christian's Handbook of Manuscript Evidence*
Robertson, A. T., *Word Pictures in the New Testament*
Ryle, J. C., *Expository Thoughts on John*
Scroggie, W. Graham, *The Unfolding Drama of Redemption*
Shepard, J. W., *The Christ of the Gospels*
Spence, H. T., *The Canon of Scripture*
Spence, H. T., *Confronting Contemporary Christian Music*
Spence, O. Talmadge, *The Quest For Christian Purity*
Spurgeon, Charles, *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*
Van Doren, W. H., *A Suggestive Commentary on St. John*
Vance, Laurence, *Archaic Words and the Authorized Version*
Vincent, Marvin, *Word Studies in the New Testament*

Waite, D. A., Ephesians: *Preaching Verse-by-Verse*
Wilmington, Harold, *Wilmington's Guide to the Bible*
Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible
<https://www.thefreedictionary.com>

About the Author

Dr. John Cereghin was saved on February 9, 1978 at the age of 13 after being raised in the Roman Catholic church. He was saved after listening to a program on missionary shortwave radio station HCJB from Quito, Ecuador. He left the Catholic church in 1983 and joined Maranatha Baptist Church in Elkton, Maryland in 1985. In 1986, she transferred from the University of Maryland to Maryland Baptist Bible College, earning the first doctor's degree awarded by the school in 1995. Dr. Cereghin also earned his Master of Theology degree from Foundations Theological Seminary in 1994.

Dr. Cereghin's ministry background includes working at Radio Station WOEL-FM in Elkton, Maryland (1986-1998), teaching in various capacities at Maryland Baptist Bible College in Elkton, Maryland from 1988-1998, also serving as Dean of Men, Registrar and Academic Dean, and pastoring Queen Anne's Baptist Church, Centreville, Maryland (1989-1990), Charity Baptist Church, Mebane, North Carolina (1994-1995) and Grace Baptist Church in Smyrna, Delaware (1998- present).

Dr. Cereghin is married to the former Teresa Pigott of Greenwood, Nova Scotia, Canada and they have four children and four grandchildren.

Booklist on John

\$ *Biblical Viewpoint*, Bob Jones University
@ *Commenting and Commentaries*, Charles Spurgeon
% *The Minister's Library*, Cyril Barber
The Master's Seminary Journal, The Master's Seminary
^ *The Treasure House of Good Books*, James Alexander Stewart
! Matheson, Keith, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/blog/top-5-commentaries-on-the-gospel-of-john/>
& Still Water Revival Books
+ Reformed Books Online at <https://reformedbooksonline.com>
Tools for Teaching and Preaching the Bible by Stewart Custer
\$\$ Themelios Magazine
**D. A. Carson, *New Testament Commentary Survey*
@@ *Johannie Writings and Apocalyptic, an Annotated Bibliography* by Stanley Porter and Andrew Gabriel
%% *Commentaries for Biblical Expositors* by James Rosscup
!! Reviewed by the author, Dr. John Cereghin

\$ Alford, Henry. *John* in Vol. I. of *The Greek Testament*, 4 volumes, 1871 (reprint. Moody, 2 vols.). Pp. 50-73, 677-924. Concise comments on the Greek text. He defends John's authorship (pp. 50ff); stresses that Christ was "very God" in the beginning (p. 681); holds that Lamb of God comes from Isa. 53:7 (p. 696); thinks that the Lord spoke 3:16 (p. 718); stresses the preexistence and divine being of Christ (pp. 801-02); terms chaps. 14-17 the most holy place (p. 846); thinks "I will come again" refers to both death and the second coming (p. 849); argues that falling from grace is possible (p. 858); thinks the fall of the soldiers was a miracle (p. 884); defends the reality of the resurrection (p. 905).

@ Anderson, Robert, *Practical Exposition of John*. 2 vols., 1841. By an evangelical clergyman: sound, but not very original.

\$ Appleton, George. *John's Witness To Jesus*, 1955, 96 pages. Brief liberal meditations. He thinks that the Book was written by a disciple of John (p. 9); says the author witnesses to Christ that others may believe (pp. 11-12); makes Christ the author of whatever is true in the Vedas, Upanishads, etc. (p. 19); calls the early confessions of faith "outbursts of exalted hope" (p. 23); stresses that the New Testament uses the word knowing to mean more than merely gaining information (p. 40); explains the falling down of Jesus' arresters as merely surprise at Jesus' courage (p. 79).

%% Ashton, John, ed. *The Interpretation of John*, 1997. Ashton furnishes an introduction on "The Problem of John," and 14 chapters by German scholars with various critical views from Bultmann on. The work can help advanced users see much about opinions when specialists theorize on this gospel. Only a few devoted to probing critical channels will stay at the work and be able to follow it and find varying degrees on benefit.

@ Augustine, *Commentary on John*. 2 vols. of Works of Augustine. Homilies on the Gospel

and First Epistle of John. To the wise a mine of treasure. Augustine is often fanciful; but even his fancies show a master-mind. Much that passes for new is stolen from this prince of theologians.

& One of the greatest church fathers, Darling writes that Augustine's works "discover a vast extent of genius, great accuracy and penetration, accompanied with much force and energy" (*Cylopaedia Bibliographica*, p. 134). This set on John covers a vast number of topics including comments on the sweetness of knowing Christ, Satan's judgement, the Father seen in Christ, sanctification in the truth, the joy of the Lord, Christ before Pilate, the Arian and Sabellian heresies, the cross of Christ, how men become sons of God, the sin of rebaptizing, standards for ministers, Christ clearing the temple, the Bride of Christ, Judas, Christ's equality with God the Father, the last judgment, the Christian's use of his mind, Christ rebuking unbelief, the Donatists, how Jesus baptized, faith, the will, service, the law, abiding in the Father's love, and much more. 1038 pages.

\$ Barclay, William., *The Gospel of John.*, 2 volumes, 1955, 309, 338 pages. A liberal exposition that provides good background. He admits the Gospel stresses both the humanity and deity of Christ (I, xxixf.); calls O. T. "bloodthirsty and savage" (1,16); denies that Jesus is identical with God, but in him we see what God is like (I, 17, 56); often gives word studies (I, 44, 46, 49, 52, etc.); warns against imaginary contradictions between John and the Synoptics (1,93); does not think that Jesus could know the past of another (I, 140); admits Jesus was the Son of God (II, 60); claims it does not matter whether Jesus really raised Lazarus or not (II, 119); stresses that in heaven there is room for all (II, 179).

\$ Barrett, Charles Kingsley. *The Gospel According to St. John*, 1962, 531 pages. A thorough commentary on the Greek text; however dry bones with little spiritual perception. He lists words and phrases characteristic of John's style (pp. 5ff.); discusses the theology of John (pp. 56-82); thinks three different disciples of the Apostle John wrote Rev., the Epistles, and the Gospel and circulated them under his name (pp. 113f.); holds that John's interests were theological rather than chronological (p. 117); recognizes that John intended to show that the deeds and words of Jesus are the deeds and words of God (p. 130); thinks that John deliberately switched the cleansing of the temple to the beginning of the ministry (p. 163); holds that the conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus is a dialogue between the church and synagogue (p. 169); admits that Jesus claimed equality with God (p. 214), and repeatedly claimed to be the eternal "I am" (pp. 283, 84, 92); thinks that John has contradictions in his narrative (p. 347); stresses critical and historical difficulties (pp. 363, 379, 437, etc.); is not sure of the historical value of the resurrection narrative in John (p. 466); does not think chap. 21 is by John (p. 480).

** Among the major works on John, one of the best one-volume treatments of the Greek text is still that of C. K. Barrett, in the revised edition (SPCK/WJK, 1988). Although Barrett stands needlessly free from John's historical claims, especially in the Passion Narrative (compare, for instance, A. N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1963] on the trial), this work is nevertheless not only elegantly and lucidly written but also usually profound in its grasp of John's theological message and rightly skeptical about many modern literary and historical reconstructions.

@ @ Contains detailed exegesis of the Greek text that is worth considering regardless of whether one agrees with all of Barrett's conclusions. Follows some older views on John's

Gospel regarding source and background. Barrett provides a lengthy introduction (146 pages), including discussions on the theology and text of this book. Barrett is one of the great English-language commentary writers of the twentieth century.

Beasley-Murray, G. R., *John*. Word Biblical Commentary, 1987, 441 pages. Beasley-Murray, an evangelical with a somewhat critical leaning, has written this competent, usually detailed book on text, grammar, movement of passages, and bibliography. He has a fairly good survey of the relationship between the fourth gospel and the synoptics (pp. xxxv-xxxvii) and argues for leaving the text in its present order instead of rearranging it as Bultmann and others have done (p. xliii). Nevertheless, he sometimes devotes more attention to critical theories than he does to the text of John. Some of his conclusions are subjective, for example, his attributing of "Look, the Lamb of God" (1:36) to John the Baptist and of "who takes away the sin of the world" (1:29) to the evangelist writer (p. lii). Yet he voices his conviction of a high view of the reliability and divine origin of the material (p. liii). He assigns authorship to one of a circle associated with the beloved disciple whom he assumes was not one of the Twelve (p. lxxiv), though within that circle John the Apostle is a possibility. The treatment of the text is good at times, fair at others, and weak in some places. Some examples of the weaker places are his cursory discussion of "born of water and of the Spirit" (3:5), an even thinner discussion of 3:14-15, an unexplained relationship between 10:27 and 10:28-29, his pitiful glossing over the details of 15:2, and a confusing explanation of 20:22.

** Rather thin for the first two-thirds of the Gospel and then becomes very rich indeed, especially in the Passion Narrative. Some readers will be less than convinced by the source-critical "solution" to the challenges of chapter 20. The revised edition of 1999 primarily signals a change in publisher from Word to Thomas Nelson. A quick comparison of the two editions disclosed no change in substance in the actual commentary, though the new introduction interacts with more recent literature.

@ @ Revision of the commentary first published in 1987. Not as detailed as other Word volumes, but offers useful bibliographies at the beginning of each section. Cf. his *John*, Word Biblical Themes (Waco, Tex.: Word, 1989), treating interpretation, the word, signs, Jewish festivals and the upper room discourses, as a theological supplement.

\$ Bernard, J. H. and A. H. McNeile, *The Gospel According to St. John*. 2 vols. International Critical Commentary, 1929. 928 pages. A critical study of the Greek text. He holds that John the Elder, not the Apostle, is the author (p. lxiv); surveys the Christology (pp. cxxiiff.) and doctrines of John (pp. cxlviiff.); admits that John taught that Christ was both God and Man (pp. 19-20); does not think that John really said "Behold the Lamb" etc. (p. 46); holds that the brethren of Christ were sons of Joseph by a first wife (p. 86); thinks John misplaced the time of the cleansing of the temple (pp. 88f.); wants to switch the order of John 5 and 6 (p. 171), sections of John 7 (pp. 258ff), and sections of John 10 (pp. 341ff.); puts John 14 after John 15 and 16 (pp. 477ff.); admits Jesus claimed the timeless being of deity (p. 322); does not think John 17 has the exact words of the Lord (p. 557); thinks the falling to the ground means no more than that they recoiled in fear (p. 586).

@ @ Bernard, a Latin scholar, brought his knowledge of the ancient world to bear on John's Gospel. This remains one of the most comprehensive commentaries available and rejects scholarship of the early twentieth century, even though much critical thought has moved beyond it. Bernard's commentary was under revision, but the author completed only

one volume before his death. See John F. McHugh, *John 1–4*, ICC (ed. Graham N. Stanton; London: T & T Clark, 2009).

\$ Berkeley, James P., *Reading the Gospel of John*, 1958. 290 pages. A liberal interpretation which sometimes manifests astonishing insight into the Greek text. He stresses that "Jesus is the Son of God" is the topic of the Book (pp. 10f.); denies the Romanist view that John 6 teaches sacramentarian truth (p. 54); re-arranges the order of the Gospel to improve its meaning (p. 101); emphasizes the need for prayer, love, obedience (p. 109); holds that the Holy Spirit convicts, not convinces the world (p. 136); stresses that Jesus always confronts the world as the Son of God (pp. 210f.); argues that the Son imparted Himself, not the Holy Spirit, to His disciples (p. 228); by his definition of Spirit teaches Modalism (p. 268); does not think that the same writer wrote both John and Revelation (p. 260).

@ Besser, Rudolph, *Biblical Studies on John*. Translated from the German by M. G. Huxtable. 2 vols., 1861-62. "The character of this commentary is practical and devotional. There are often very exquisite devotional passages, and a vein of earnest piety runs through the whole work." Literary Churchman.

%% Blum, Edwin, *John*, in Bible Knowledge Commentary, 1985. Though limited to conciseness, Blum poured much expertise into this, so it is a good survey, often helpful on problems, connections, and exegetical points. Blum on such texts as 15:2a takes what has come to be called a lordship salvation perspective.

\$ Boice, James Montgomery. *The Gospel of John*. 4 volumes, 1975. 443 pages. Volume I is an exposition of John 1-4. He stresses that Jesus is God (pp. 21ff.) and Man (pp. 29ff); holds that all unregenerated men are spiritually dead (p. 47); attacks the idea of the universal fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man (p. 87); gives parallels to Christ's tabernacling in the O. T. tabernacle (pp. 102ff.); interprets "only begotten" as unique (p. 116); warns against merely non-verbal witness for Christ (pp. 132f); denies that baptizo must mean "immerse"; holds rather that it refers to a change of identity (pp. 162-68); stresses that no rite ever enters into the essence of Christianity (p. 177); thinks Jesus Christ Superstar beautiful (p. 190); denies that Jesus was a revolutionary (pp. 205ff.); uses striking illustrations (pp. 260-62); refers with approval to Billy Graham and Christianity Today (pp. 332f).

\$ Bonar, Horatius. *Studies in the Gospel of John*. 1869, 110 pages. Devotional meditations. He warns against seeing in Jesus merely a teacher instead of a Savior (pp. 154f); stresses that the words of Scripture are verbally inspired (p. 30) and that discipleship brings genuine knowledge of the truth (p. 51); defends the doctrine of the Trinity (pp. 54f); shows the attracting power of Christ (pp. 67f); describes Christ's peace (p. 89); warns against ritualism (p. 100).

%% Borchert, Gerald, *John*, New American Commentary, 2 volumes, 1996ff. The evangelical introduction of more than 90 pp. concludes that John the Apostle provided the material and a loving scribe wrote it (90) in the A. D. 90's (93). Vol. 2 deals with Johannine themes and theology. Borchert uses word meaning and grammar to conclude that 1:1 refers to Jesus being God. Usually he explains verses well, but at other times he falls short and disappoints (cf. on

3:5-8; 10:28-29). His wide reading allows him to illumine points. The commentary is often helpful, yet several other works explain more to help teachers, preachers, students and lay people.

\$ Brown, David. *John* in Volume V of *A Commentary Critical, Experimental, and Practical*, ed. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown. 1869, pages 346-486. A conservative exposition. He stresses the deity and humanity of Christ (pp. 346, 348), the "all embracing efficacy" of the sacrifice of the Lamb (p. 352) and His absolute knowledge (p. 361); thinks that 8:1-12 is genuine but a real textual difficulty (pp. 400ff); stresses the divine personality of the Spirit (pp. 4481); shows the majesty of Christ's style of praying (p. 454); lists the seven words from the cross (pp. 470-74); calls John's Gospel the "Sun of the Scripture" (p. 486).

\$ Brown, Raymond E. *John* in Volume 29, 29A of *The Anchor Bible*, 1966, 1970. 1354 pp. A thorough liberal interpretation. He thinks that the Gospel went through five stages of authorship (pp. xxxivff.); and that just as Isaiah had three authors over 200 years so John had several authors and editors (pp. lxxxviiff.); holds that the prologue is an early hymn (pp. 3ff.) and that a redactor added 1:6-9, 15 (p. 35); translates monogenes "the only Son" (p. 17); imagines that John the Baptist thought that Jesus was Elijah, who was before Him (p. 64); finds Catholic symbolism of Mary in John 2 (p. 107); thinks John errs in placing the cleansing of the temple at the beginning of ministry (p. 118); sees the hand of several authors in John 3 (p. 136); labels 7:53-8:11 "a non-Johannine interpolation" (p. 332); thinks that John 14-16 is not a unity (p. 582), that John 17 was later added by a redactor (p. 745), that the falling of the soldiers was "a Johannine theological construction," not historical (p. 811), and that a redactor added John 21 (p. 1080).

!! I have this in my library along with Brown's commentary on John's epistles. I only keep them as an example of outright unbelief and unsanctified scholarship.

\$\$ Bruce, F. F., *The Gospel of John, Introduction, Exposition and Notes*, 2018, 437 pages. F. F. Bruce, a veritable prince among evangelical Bible expositors in our time, has become so widely known and appreciated that a highly favourable review of another commentary by him is almost a foregone conclusion. The qualities which have distinguished Bruce from the beginning, as a commentator on biblical texts, shine forth even more resplendently within the pages of this most recent commentary. These qualities include a constant endeavour to get at the actual (linguistic and theological) meaning of the text, a precise knowledge of matters pertaining to historical and geographical backgrounds and to literary contexts, an astuteness in dealing with textual difficulties, and a prose style which is unpretentious, fluent, and pleasing—indeed a style which embodies a simple elegance all its own.

While a broadly-conceived evangelical orthodoxy governs Bruce's treatment of this fourth Gospel, it never stifles his capacity to illuminate the text in wonderfully fresh and stimulating ways; Bruce is, on the one hand, not inhibited by traditional interpretations which have become almost entrenched in evangelical conservative commentaries—to wit, his independent analysis of the words for 'love' (phileo and agapao) as used in chapter 21 of the Gospel. On the other hand, the 'assured findings' or critical questionings of scholars with a more liberal orientation do not ever intimidate him, no matter how learned such may presume to be. Bruce's thorough-going acquaintance with other (non-biblical) literature—which includes the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds, the Qumran writings, rabbinical commentaries,

Jewish Gnostic writings, Philo and the Neoplatonists, the Church Fathers, Eusebius, and Roman historians, to mention only the most conspicuous examples—serves him very well, sometimes casting new light on a specific (Jewish or Hellenistic) custom, habit of thought, or attitude, and at other times opening a window somewhat farther on theological meanings or thrusts intended by the Johannine evangelist. The author's literary alertness and sensitivity enable him to catch elements of dramatic tone and development in John's Gospel—elements such as irony (especially), suspense, and variety—and to acknowledge the creative abilities of the 'Johannine writer' more clearly than is the case in most recent commentaries on this Gospel.

Form (literary) and source criticism do not play a significant role in the actual exegesis, but Bruce's commentary, especially its endnotes, leave little doubt about the author's full and intelligent awareness of critical issues raised by other commentators such as Raymond Brown, B. Lindars, B. Olsson, and Ernest Käsemann. Concerning source criticism, as it applies to this Gospel, Bruce tellingly remarks, in the 'Introduction', that the 'signs and the discourses are too interdependent to be sorted out into separate sources' (p. 5).

The over-all thrust of the fourth Gospel, as Bruce conceives of it, is to show at a variety of levels that the 'deeds and words of Jesus are the deeds and words of God'; its overall theme is the manifold witness to and revelation of 'the divine glory of Christ'. And in his verse by verse exposition, he frequently suggests how particular happenings and/or statements recounted in this Gospel are directly or indirectly (sometimes symbolically) linked to the primary theme.

It is interesting to learn that this exegetical study began (some thirty years ago) within the pages of two little-known periodicals, *The Bible Student* and *The Witness*. But from these humble beginnings has come what must be regarded as one of the richest and most insightful commentaries on the Gospel of John presently available to us in the evangelical world. There is no doubt in this reviewer's mind that the hope expressed by Bruce in the preface to one of his earliest endeavours at 'commentary making' (Commentary on the Book of Acts in the NIC series) will be more than realized in the case of this, his latest commentary: 'that whatever I have heard in the course of this study, not only of the voice of Luke (read John) but of the Word of God, may be caught by some of my readers also in the second half of the twentieth century.'

\$ Bultmann, Rudolf, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary*, 1971, 744 pages. A study in form-critical unbelief. He thinks John is in the wrong order and so mixes the text that the publisher must include a table to help the reader find passages (p. xiii); thinks that the Bible is just like Gnostic mythology (p. 28); refers to the legend of the virgin birth (pp. 62-63), the miracle story at Cana (pp. 115, 119), the myth of the coming Paraclete (p. 558), the mythological ideas of the ascension and parousia (p. 581); calls the statement about the unity of the Father and the Son mythological (p. 282); thinks that John 17 presents the prayer not of the "historical Jesus" but of the church community (p. 522); attacks the whole doctrine of the resurrection of the Lord (pp. 687ff.); calls some verses a clumsy addition (p. 260).

** A provocative classic of continental scholarship but not very helpful to the preacher. Moreover, scholarship has moved on, and both Bultmann's severely precise source criticism and his view of gnosticism have been so thoroughly shown to be deficient that in retrospect it is hard to see why this commentary exercised the influence in academic circles that it did.

@ @ Bultmann proposes signs, sayings, and passion sources for John's Gospel. This

commentary, originally published in 1941, has been valued for its application of historical, literary, and philosophical criticism, as well as its unique theological exegesis. The commentary is based on the Greek text. This English edition includes an introduction to John's Gospel by Walter Schmithals, as the original had no introduction. Some may wonder about why this commentary, with its many unusual features (including transposing of chapters), has had such tremendous influence. This is probably because of the force of the scholarship behind Bultmann's work, the influence of German scholarship up to that time on New Testament studies, and the existential element so poignant at the time of its writing. As an initial response to Bultmann and his theory of displaced sections, see W.G. Wilson, "The Original Text of the Fourth Gospel: Some Objective Evidence against the Theory of Page Displacements." JTS 50 (1949): 59–60. There has been much further discussion since. Early advocates of displaced order in the English-speaking world were F. Warburton Lewis, *Disarrangements in the Fourth Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1910) and F.R. Hoare, *The Original Order and Chapters of St. John's Gospel* (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1944).

%% Burge, Gary, *John*, Evangelical Commentary on the Bible, 1989. Although brief, Burge shows awareness of issues and often uses his space well to provide help.

%% Burge, Gary M., *John*, NIV Application Commentary, 2000. A Wheaton College professor seeks to interpret John in its Jewish flavor, i.e. with sensitivity to the OT rooting and Palestinian Judaism of Jesus' day. He uses such materials to see the Messianic aspects. Burge offers different views on some of the problems, such as "water and Spirit" in 3:6, and Peter's responses in 21:15-17. He gives background custom as for the events of the festival when Jesus invited drinking from Him (7:37-39), and footwashing in chap. 13. This does not mean that in all verses comments are adequate (cf. 15:2, 6, for example) to nail details down distinctly, or look at views. Since this series often just sums up passages, remarks on some verses can be difficult and slow to be located, or at times not be there due to the generalities. Some key verses are handled too quickly, or only partially (cf. 10:28, 29). The comments are sufficient at times, but not consistently enough to put the work among the more dependable.

\$ Calvin, John, *Commentary on the Gospel According to John*. 2 volumes, 1553, 457, 346 pages. Old but valuable comments. He stresses the eternal divinity of Christ (I, 25); argues that Logos means "the Speech" (I, 26); attacks the "Papists" (I, 41, 73, 75, etc.); stresses the two natures of Christ as God and Man (I, 46); warns against exalting Mary as the queen of heaven (I, 841); interprets "water" as the purification produced by the Holy Spirit (I, 111); attacks the Anabaptists (I, 145); stresses that God elects those who are saved (I, 252); argues for the divine power of those who are saved (I, 417); warns of the dreadful judgment of God on the reprobate (II, 42); holds that "I come again" refers to the second coming at the day of judgment (II, 83); holds that Christ prays as the divine Mediator in John 17 (II, 165); draws from the falling of the soldiers the conclusion that the voice of Christ will be dreadful and alarming to the wicked on the day of judgment (II, 191ff.)

Carson, Donald A., *The Gospel according to John*, 1991, 715 pages. This is an excellent commentary from an evangelical with a breadth of scholarly study and a keen awareness of recent literature. He gears the work for teachers and preachers, but it is readable for laypeople

too. It has an 84-page introduction with characteristics of the gospel, the "how to's" of its interpretation, its genuineness, purpose, doctrinal distinctives, and other matters. Technical notes and comments appear, but more attention goes to following the flow of the text and drawing out doctrinal principles. Some will rate this at the top of evangelical works or in close contention with the similar work by Leon Morris.

! To date, the Pillar New Testament Commentaries have been consistently excellent. They are all thorough and readable, a rare combination in commentaries. I believe the consistent excellency of the series is largely due to the fact that D.A. Carson is the general editor. His own contribution on the Gospel of John set the bar very high for the other contributors. This commentary shows Carson's usual exegetical care and insight. It is an example of conservative evangelical scholarship at its best. Very highly recommended to any who want to understand better the Gospel of John.

\$ Chrysostom, John, *Homilies on the Gospel of St. John*, in volume XIV of *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Philip Schaff, 1956. 334 pages. Interesting expositions from the 4th century. He claims that John was a poor fisherman but was divinely inspired to write (p. 5); stresses the eternal preexistence of the Logos (p. 11) and the fact that "only begotten" (monogenes) proves the co-eternity of the Son with the Father (p. 53); teaches baptismal regeneration (pp. 881); stresses that Christ was of the same essence with the Father (p. 133); urges men to dig beneath the surface of Scripture in searching it (p. 147); omits 7:53-8:11 (p. 187); warns against slavery to the fear of men (p. 254); argues that Christ permitted the soldiers to arrest Him (p. 307); teaches the reality of the heavenly robes (pp. 321f.).

\$ Darby, J. N., *Notes on the Gospel of John*, n.d. 288 pages. Expositions by a famous leader of the Plymouth Brethren. He stresses the deity of the Lord Jesus (pp. 1ff.) and His character as Lamb of God (pp. 21f.); shows His divine intelligence (pp. 28); holds that water symbolizes the word applied by the Spirit (pp. 341); gives unequal expositions (2 pages on John 2; 32 pages on John 3); stresses that Christ set aside Judaism by Himself, the true priest, the true king, etc. (pp. 206f.); holds that the key to John 17 is the word "Father" (p. 236); contrasts the sacrifice of Christ in each of the Gospels (pp. 262ff.).

!! As with all of Darby's works, as well as any commentary from a "Brethren" writer, the remarks are not as deep as we would like, and the paragraph-by-paragraph format is difficult to use. A verse-by-verse format would have been much better.

\$ Dodd, Charles Harold. *The Interpretation of the Fourth Gospel*, 1953. 478 pages. A liberal commentary. Holds that John's thought is close to the Hermetic literature, but not borrowed (pp. 10-53); distinguishes John's thought from Philo's (pp. 54-73); discusses possible Rabbinic, Gnostic, and Madaean influence (pp. 74-130); lists leading ideas of John: eternal life (pp. 144ff.), truth (pp. 170ff.), Spirit (pp. 213ff.), Logos (pp. 263ff.), etc; holds that the language applied to the Lord is highly mythological (p. 294); thinks that the woman of Samaria symbolizes the syncretistic cults of Samaria (p. 313); calls John 7-8 "a collection of miscellaneous material" (p. 345); thinks that John 1-12 exhibits a structure that manifests "the highly original ideas of the author" (p. 389); holds that "I come again" does not refer to the second coming but to the union which eternal life will bring after Jesus' resurrection (p. 405); claims that John is free from the prodigies found in the Synoptics that are connected with the passion (p. 425); thinks that John carefully composed discourses to teach theology (p. 445).

\$ Dods, Marcus. *John* in Volume I of The Expositor's Greek Testament. 1907, pages 655-872. A brief but careful exposition of the Greek text. He defends Johannine authorship (I, 655-78); stresses the preexistence and creative power of the Logos (1,683); in 3:5 interprets "water" as cleansing (1,714); holds that Christ has the divine prerogative of judging (I, 740); stresses that Christ is the eternally existent one (1,782); defends the reality of the raising of Lazarus (I, 802); interprets "I come again" as fulfilled in the death of believers (I, 822); holds that the falling down of the soldiers was a natural event (1,847); argues that Christ accepted Thomas' confession (I, 866).

@ Drummond, D. T. K. *Exposition of the Last Nine Chapters of John*, 1850. Good, but not very striking.

@ Dunwell, Francis Henry, *Commentary on the Authorized Version of John, compared with the Sinaitic, Vatican, and Alexandrian Manuscripts, and also with Dean Alford's revised translation*, 1872. The notes from various authors are good, and the various readings are useful; but we fail to see any very special value in the volume. The interpretation of the Third of John is eminently unsatisfactory; Mr. Dunwell teaches Baptismal Regeneration.

@@ Edwards, Mark. *John*. Blackwell Bible Commentaries, 2004. A reception-history commentary on John's Gospel, discussing the history of commentary on the book by tracing it through various Christian authors through the centuries. Reception-history is a recent development in New Testament studies, but it waits to be seen what impact it will have on exegesis, as it tends to be a collection of chronologically ordered quotations of previous interpreters.

\$ Eerdman, Charles R. *The Gospel of John*, 1916. 178 pp. A brief conservative exposition. He stresses that Jesus is the divine, unique Son of God (p. 8); suggests that the three great ideas of John are testimony, faith, and life (p. 23); calls the miracle at Cana an act of creation (p. 27); thinks that 7:53-8:11 is "a true apostolic tradition introduced by some editor of the Gospel" (p. 75); stresses that Jesus was "either a deceiver or the divine Son of God" (p. 82); stresses eternal security (p.97); warns against thinking that sin produces happiness (p. 134); encourages faith in the blessed hope of Jesus' coming (p. 177).

!! Evans, Ralph, *Collected Writings*. Includes his *Meditations on John's Gospel*. Plymouth Brethren. He worked with John Nelson Darby when he visited Canada.

\$ Gaebelein, Arno Clemens, *The Gospel of John*, 1936, 414 pages. An exposition by a well-known fundamentalist. He defends the deity of Christ (p. 11), His sinlessness (p. 23), His preexistence (p. 136), His bodily resurrection (p. 381); attacks unitarianism, Christian Science, Russellism (p. 14), postmillennialism (p. 31), modernists (p. 42), Romanists (p. 75), Spiritists (p. 260), ultra-Calvinists (p.314); holds that all O.T. manifestations of God were of God the Son (p. 27); thinks that the miracle in Cana shows Christ as the Omnipotent Creator (p. 48); defends the paragraph of the woman taken in adultery (pp. 154f.); regards John 17 as the most precious portion of the Gospel (p. 311); holds that the Lord was crucified on Friday (p. 373).

!! Gipp, Samuel C., *A Practical and Theological Study of the Gospel of John*, 2001, 520 pages. Popular, fundamentalist treatment of John. Gipp has been influenced by Peter Ruckman (Gipp graduated from Ruckman's Bible Institute in Pensacola, Florida) and the commentary shows it. Not verse-by-verse as Gipp skips over many passages. Gipp is not deep, but he does have interesting thoughts and some good practical applications, although these can be quite unorthodox.

\$ Godet, Frederic. *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 2 volumes, 1886, 559, 551 pages. A very thorough exposition. He discusses the Apostle John (I, 29-53); holds that the ruling idea of John is the incarnate Logos (I, 66); defends Johannine authorship (I, 167-204); stresses the eternity, personality, and deity of the Logos (I, 245f.); argues that Jesus as the Lamb of God fulfills the type of the Servant of Jehovah in Isa. 53 (I, 312); defends the miracles of Christ (I, 472); identifies the rivers of living water as streams of new life flowing from the hearts of the believers through gifts of the Spirit (II 78); regards 7:53-8:11 as an interpolation (II, 84f.); argues that Christ exists in an absolute, eternal, divine sense (II, 122); stresses the eyewitness nature of John's description of the raising of Lazarus (II, 190); thinks the promise "I come again" refers to the coming of the Holy Spirit (II, 270); holds that John 17 was spoken on the way to Gethsemane (II, 291); calls John 17 the prayer of the High-Priest of mankind, "who begins His sacrifice by offering Himself to God" (II, 323); defends the reality of the bodily resurrection of the Lord (II, 426ff.).

!! Greene, Oliver B., *The Gospel of John*, 3 volumes, 1966. Written by the well-known evangelist and radio preacher from The Gospel Hour. Popular expositions, based on the King James Version, but giving too much credence to so-called "Greek scholarship". Greene frequently attacks the King James readings based on what the "Greek texts" and the "Greek scholars" say. Greene knew little, if any, Greek, so he should have left it alone instead of blindly accepting the comments of the Greek scholars that he could not critique. Greene also had a habit of relying too much on Albert Barnes, even plagiarizing him at times in some of his other works. I cannot recommend this work because of these flaws, even if Greene is occasionally useful.

\$ Gutzke, Manford George, *Plain Talk on John*, 1968, 213 pages. Devotional and practical messages. He calls Christ the eternal Son of God (p. 12); stresses the reality of the miracles (p. 25); thinks that water and spirit refer to repentance and faith (p. 34); holds that every man is a sinner (p. 39); defends the authenticity of 8:1-11 (p. 94); stresses the certainty of heaven (pp. 143-44), the nature of peace (pp. 150f.), the vicarious substitutionary death of Christ (p. 195), and His bodily resurrection (pp. 198ff.).

@@ Haenchen, Ernst. *John*. 2 volumes, 1984, 674 pages. Incomplete at his death, this commentary is varied in its treatment and detail because it was compiled from notes left by Haenchen. Rejects fairly standard mid-twentieth century German scholarship on John's Gospel. The introduction usefully focuses upon the history of scholarship both ancient and modern.

%% This is a translation from a German work of 1980, *Das Johannes Evangelium: Ein Kommentar*. Liberal in orientation, he holds to three authors, one for the gospel of miracles,

one an evangelist, and one an ecclesiastical supplementer. So, he sees some of the account as added from church tradition by a redactor (3:20-21; 6:51-58, etc.). Much critical theory appears, picking and choosing on subjective bases. Since Haenchen worked on the manuscript from 1954 until around 1975, the year he died, his use of other scholarly literature often does not bring things up to date to 1975. However, lengthy bibliographies added after his death draw things into the 1980's and have value for earnest researchers as they read with due awareness of the liberal slants. Haenchen's work on Acts also is respected.

%% Harrison, Everett F., John, *The Gospel of Faith*, 1962. This work is contained in The Everyman's Bible Commentary Series and is concise as it provides a well-written, easy-to-read survey and overview. Along this line it is helpful.

\$ Harrison, Paul W., *The Light That Lighteth Every Man*, 1958. 329 pages. Devotional studies by a former medical missionary to Arabia. He defends Jesus' humanity and divinity (p. 18); stresses that Jesus loved to associate with men (p. 29); interprets passages in the light of present-day Arabian customs (p. 39); thinks that "water" symbolizes repentance (p. 49); emphasizes the iron legalism of the Pharisees (pp. 154, 169); warns against human religious zeal (p. 205); calls John 17 the apex of the whole New Testament (p. 290); interprets the grave clothes as an empty shell collapsed (p. 324).

%% Heading, John, *What the Bible Teaches: John*, Ritchie New Testament Commentaries, Volume 6, 1988, 349 pages. This work and others in the Ritchie series are distributed in the States by Loizeaux Brothers, Neptune, NJ. The series is ten volumes, taking a stand on inerrancy and premillennial dispensational interpretation, even a pre-tribulational rapture. It is very simple, geared for some lay readers, and does not reflect a breadth of study though it has many helpful comments. The bibliography (pp. 15-16) is heavily evangelical and quite turned to older works such as by David Brown, E. W. Bullinger, J. N. Darby, F. Godet, Matthew Henry, William Kelly, F. B. Meyer, J. C. Ryle, etc. It overlooks some key details, such as "born of water and of the Spirit" (3:5), and reads in some fanciful things that are not the point, as having the lifted brazen serpent "retaining the purity and metallic perfection of brass that remained uncontaminated," so that it might speak of Jesus' "infinite divine perfection" (p. 62). It neglects aspects that are important, as in being silent about looking to be healed in Numbers 21, and believing in John 3. In 15:2, the branch not bearing fruit represents a saved person who needs to be "lifted up by exhortation... to rise to spiritual heights (Colossians 3:1-4) ..." (254). Yet 15:6 refers to a mere professor (255).

% Hendriksen, William, *A Commentary on the Gospel of John*, 2 volumes, 1953. A thorough treatment based on the original text, and representative of the finest evangelical scholarship.

%% Trained in the Christian Reformed tradition, Hendriksen is thoroughly conservative and believes in plenary verbal inspiration. He served for ten years as Professor of New Testament Literature in Calvin Seminary. His introductions are quite extended and carefully written. In his commentary, which is very usable, he first presents a brief synthetic outline of a section, follows up with a detailed discussion verse-by-verse, then gives a survey of the argument in that section. His footnote discussions show a wide breadth of reading. He is usually quite helpful on problems, Greek word meanings, and matters of history, culture or geography. There are many stimulating sermon hints and devotional thoughts.

He is good in presenting several different views to a question and documenting them thoroughly. He is amillennial in matters pertaining to the kingdom (cf. his comment on 10:16 as well as his book *More Than Conquerors*, pp. 222ff.). Though the author is very helpful in the Greek, the manner of discussion can be extremely valuable to the layman.

@ Hengstenberg, E. W., *Commentary on John*. 2 volumes, 1868. Like others of this author's works: solid, but dry.

%% This work, recently reprinted, has much judicious material tying the thought to Old Testament background theology. At times it is very provocative. Hengstenberg is one of the towering older names, well-known for Christology of the Old Testament, for example.

% Hobbs, Hershel, *An Exposition of the Gospel of John*, 1968. Expounds the gospel from a Biblical viewpoint.

% Hoskyns, Edwyn Clement, *The Fourth Gospel*, 1947. A masterful study, but not in the conservative tradition.

@ @ A classic commentary in English-language scholarship. This commentary had a major influence upon post-war commentary writing in Britain. Hoskyns was the translator of Karl Barth's commentary on Romans, and so he brought awareness of German theology and scholarship to his commentary.

\$ Howard, Wilbert F., and A. J. Gossip. *John* in Vol. VIII of *The Interpreter's Bible*, 1955, pages 435-811. A thorough liberal exposition. They admit an early date, but think the Gospel was mixed up in assembling the final copy (p. 442); although admitting that N.T. writers portray Christ as a "magnific" figure (p. 464), they wish to change the term God to divine when applied to the Son (479); stress Christ's faith in ordinary people (p. 486); think that Christ healed by suggestion (p. 538); doubt the historicity of the raising of Lazarus (pp. 648-49); prefer the view that there is room for all in the Father's house (p. 699); hold that the teaching of Buddhism is worthy of being put alongside that of Christ (p. 765).

% Hunter, Archibald Macbride, *According to John*, 1968. A work of unquestioned scholarship which, while basically evangelical, follows a critical approach to the Scriptures leading to some unreliable conclusions.

@ Hutcheson, George, *Exposition of John*, 1841. Excellent; beyond all praise. It is a full-stored treasury of sound theology, holy thought, and marrowy doctrine. Exhaustive, in the typical Puritan style.

% Kelly, William, *An Exposition of the Gospel of John*, 1898. Working from the text of the Revised Version of 1881, and supplementing this with his own translation, Kelly provides an informative and satisfying exposition.

!! Not verse-by-verse by paragraph-by-paragraph, which makes the commentary good for reading but difficult for study and reference. There is an expanded third edition with additional material added by E. E. Whitefield. Kelly includes critical notes and corrects

Authorized Version readings when the mood hits him.¹⁹¹ He spends too much time telling the reader what the “uncials” say. We really don’t care.

\$ Kent, Homer A., Jr. *Light in the Darkness*, 1974, 239 pages. Brief paragraph expositions. He defends Johannine authorship (pp. 14-22); attacks the Jehovah's Witnesses (p. 27); emphasizes Greek phrases (p. 32); includes a number of photographs to illustrate the text (pp. 30, 51, 57, 71, 73, 87, 109, 121, etc.); defends the deity of Christ (pp. 91, 129); defends the genuineness of 7:53-8:11 but not its place in the text (p. 122); also defends the resurrection of Christ (pp. 215-18); includes a thorough bibliography (pp. 231-39).

! Keener, Craig S., *The Gospel of John*, 2003, 1636 pages. Keener’s massive two-volume commentary is an impressive achievement. As with his commentary on Matthew, Keener’s focus is on setting John within his first century context. He does so admirably. The commentary is so exhaustively researched that its footnotes are a virtual reference work. Keener also includes an extensive bibliography (over 150 pages). Those who are doing in-depth study of John cannot afford to be without this outstanding work.

** Very impressive. There are few questions Keener has not addressed. Despite the sheer quantity of material, the writing is accessible, so the work can be skimmed until you reach what is of immediate interest to you. It may function in our generation as Brown functioned in the previous generation: the breadth of learning and the bibliographical richness combine to make the work indispensable for the serious student.

! Kostenberger, Andreas J., *John*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, 2004. Standing in the tradition of Carson and Morris, Kostenberger has provided a fine conservative and evangelical commentary on the Gospel of John. This is a solid, thorough, and practical work that will be of benefit to students and pastors.

%% Laney, J. Carl, *John*, Moody Gospel Commentary, 1992, 407 pages. This initiated a new, conservative paperback series under general editor Paul Enns, who has written in the Bible Study Commentary (Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Ezekiel). Laney, Professor of Biblical Literature at Western Conservative Baptist Seminary, Portland, OR, shows keen awareness of textual and critical matters, also historical and cultural aspects, and theme (belief and unbelief, with 20:30-31 on the purpose). He writes clearly, verse by verse, explaining the main issues and applying lessons in well-organized homiletical sections, aiming primarily to help teachers and preachers. He meets many of the problems head on and discusses them clearly. He sees 15:2a as referring to a nominal, so-called Christian who is not saved and is cut off, and 15:6 to this kind of person also. Jesus breathing on the disciples in 20:22 is a temporary giving of the Spirit to enable until Pentecost. Overall this is a good survey, competently done.

\$ Lange, John Peter, *John*, Lange's Commentary on the Holy Scriptures. 1871, 654 pages. A conservative Lutheran commentary. He sets forth the symbolism of the Gospel (pp. 18ff.); defends the genuineness (pp. 24ff.); stresses the deity and humanity of Christ (p. 49); gives

¹⁹¹ 1The Plymouth Brethren writers were not defenders of the Authorized Version but were infected with modern, destructive textual criticism. John Nelson Darby’s criticisms of the Authorized Version and Luther’s German version are laid out in *The Darby Bible and Its History: Its Purpose, Principles of Translation, and Progress* by Giles Despins.

the history of the term Logos (pp. 55f.); attacks the idea that the Lord made grape juice at Cana (p. 111); teaches a general resurrection (p. 192); stresses the unity and inspiration of Scripture (p. 334); shows the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit (p. 442); holds that the knowledge of God includes knowledge of Christ (p. 514); stresses the lordship and deity of Christ (p. 622).

\$ Laurin, Roy L. John: *Eternal Life*. 1972, 287 pages. A devotional commentary. He stresses the new birth (p. 15), Christ's preexistence (p. 20), baptism by immersion (p. 27), election and predestination (pp. 86f.); attacks the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man (p. 43); shows that Jesus claimed equality with God (pp. 71, 134); quotes liberals with approval: Tillich (p. 105), Luccock (p. 143), Buttrick (p. 208); stresses the divine personality of the Spirit (p. 205); lists the seven last words (pp. 245ff.); lists the traditional deaths of the apostles and evangelists (pp. 284f.).

!! Lee, Witness, *Life Study of John*, 1985, 612 pages. Part of the commentary series on the entire Bible, from the Watchman Nee/Witness Lee group and teachings. Mainly orthodox but some teachings will sound strange to Western readers as this series of commentaries embodies a more Oriental/Chinese view of Scripture.

\$ Lenski, Richard Charles Henry, *The Interpretation of St. John's Gospel*, 1942, 1444 pages. An exhaustive Lutheran commentary. He stresses the absolute deity and preexistence of Christ (pp. 33f., 671), His human and divine natures (pp. 72f.), the fact that only begotten refers to the eternal generation of the Son, not merely the incarnation (pp. 77ff., 96f.); attacks immersion (pp. 117ff., 281, etc.); defends verbal inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible (pp. 130, 767); holds that Christ cleansed the temple twice (p. 211); teaches a general resurrection and judgment (pp. 397f.); stresses the sacraments (p. 516); holds that 7:53-8:11 was early oral tradition inserted into John (p. 592); allows loss of salvation (p. 1038); stresses the miraculous power of Jesus' word; thinks that several hundred men fell down at Jesus' word (pp. 1180f.); holds that Jesus arose through the burial clothes, leaving them lying flat (pp. 134).

+ Lightfoot, John, *A Commentary on John from the Talmud and Hebraica*. Lightfoot was a mid-1600's reformed divine who was invited to the Westminster Assembly. He mined the Jewish writings for anything and everything that may be of help in understanding the New Testament. Here are his results. This is the only work of its kind in English; the scholarly, more complete work (vol. 1, Mt; vol. 2, Mk-Jn) that has improved, in some ways, upon Lightfoot, done in the early 1900's by H. Strack and P. Billerbeck, has still not been translated out of the German. If one is interested in seeing the results of the use of the Jewish writings in relation to the gospel accounts, see Edersheim's *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, who thoroughly makes use of them from his encyclopedic knowledge of the Jewish writings from his orthodox Jewish upbringing his life's work as a scholar.

\$ Lightfoot, R. H. *St. John's Gospel*, 1956, 368 pages. A liberal commentary. He does not settle authorship (pp. 1-7); discusses the background (pp. 42ff.) and the portrait of the Lord in the Gospel (pp. 56ff.); thinks that John presents the Lord's Person from the divine side (pp. 78f.); interprets "only begotten" as unique (p. 86); stresses that the theme of water runs like a silver thread through the early chapters, (p. 121); contrasts the raising of Lazarus with the

Lord's resurrection (p. 225); thinks that there was only one anointing of the Lord during His ministry (p. 235, note); shows that John stresses the identity of the body of the risen Lord with the body that suffered (p. 330); argues against Dodd that John presents the Lord as the true Passover Lamb (pp. 349-56).

@@ Lincoln, Andrew T. *The Gospel According to Saint John*. BNTC, 2005. Pays attention to issues of recent discussion, such as the literary character of the Gospel (which Lincoln has explored elsewhere, including in a major monograph; see 295). Contains a 90-page introduction. An update of a previous volume in the BNTC/HNTC series (J.N. Sanders, *The Gospel According to St. John*, edited and completed by B.A. Mastin, BNTC [London: A & C Black, 1968]; see also Sanders' "Who Was the Disciple Whom Jesus Loved?" pages 72–82 in *Studies in the Fourth Gospel*, edited by F.L. Cross [London: Mowbray, 1957], where he argues for a John, possibly John Mark, as the disciple). Lincoln's commentary was the subject of debate regarding the purpose of commentary writing, and of this commentary in particular. See JSNT 29.3 (2007): 303–372, with contributions by David Horrell, John Nolland, Margaret MacDonald, John Riches, Adele Reinhartz, and Wendy North, with Lincoln responding.

\$ Lindars, Barnabas. *The Gospel of John*. New Century Bible, 1972, 648 pages. Liberal comments on the R.S.V. He thinks the modern reader will have difficulty with John's world view (pp. 24-25); denies that author was John the Apostle (p. 34); thinks the prologue and John 6, 11, and 17 were added in a second edition of John (pp. 50, 379, 515); does not think that the miracle at Cana is historical (p. 124); terms the brazen serpent account a "legend" (pp. 157f.); denies that Jesus intended a reference to the divine name in claiming "I am" (p. 336); thinks that raising of Lazarus is "a fresh piece of creative writing" (p. 386); holds that John's account of the triumphal entry is of little help in reconstructing what really happened (p. 421); does not regard the falling of the soldiers as a fact (p. 541); thinks John 21 was added later (p. 618).

** A model of concise writing, offering its own solution to the development of the Fourth Gospel in a theory of developing sermon notes; but it cannot compete with the longer works, and it is sometimes pretty dry. Lindars adopts a pretty skeptical stance toward the claims of this Gospel, reading it instead (as is pretty common today) as primarily a reflection of the theology of the church toward the end of the first century.

%% Lloyd-Jones, D. M., John 17. 4 volumes: *Saved in Eternity* (17:1-5); *Safe in the World* (17:6-19); *Sanctified Through the Truth* (17:17-19); and *Growing in the Spirit* (17:17-24), 1988-89. These expositions, which overlap on verses, are from 1952-53 messages. Lloyd-Jones, Westminster Chapel's minister for around thirty years in London, helps other pastors and lay readers find much devotional stimulation for spiritual triumph by dwelling on their position in God's grace. Cf. other works on John 17 under Rainsford in this section. Lloyd-Jones is best, Rainsford next, then Wiersbe and Brown.

\$ Luthardt, Christoph Ernst, *St. John's Gospel, Described and Explained According to Its Peculiar Character*, 1876-1878. An informative and thorough study. While not as scintillating as Leon Morris' work, it should be purchased if found.

\$ Luther, Martin. *Sermons on the Gospel of St. John* in Vols. 22, 23, 24 of Luther's Works. 558, 448, 448 pages. Sermons preached at different periods from 1530-1538 on John 1-4, 6-8, 14-

16. He defends the doctrine of the Trinity (22,5-6); attacks a Deistic view of creation (22, 28-29); stresses that the sin of the world lies on Christ, the Lamb of God (22,168); attacks the infallibility of the pope (22, 262); stresses the need of eating Christ's body and drinking His blood (23, 14); urges the distinction between justification by faith and "the papist" doctrine of works (23, 58); holds that sermons should be tested to see if they agree with the Word of God (23, 191); finds comfort in the promise that He prepares a place for us (24, 27f.); stresses that our faith is centered in Christ as God (24, 97f.); argues that it is most necessary to prune heretics from the True Vine (24, 204); warns against choosing Mary or a saint as an intercessor (24, 307); stresses the office of the Holy Spirit in guiding preachers of the Word (24, 362).

\$ Luthi, Walter. *St. John's Gospel*. 1960, 348 pages. Expository messages preached in Germany during World War II. He stresses that Christ is eternal (p. 2) and that the church is a pilgrim, alien church in the world (pp. 121); holds that John remembered the exact time that he first met the Lord (pp. 21f.); thinks that the miracle at Cana was an act of creation (p. 24); stresses being born again and the washing of baptism (pp. 41f.); refers to a general judgment (p. 81); warns that true faith makes one an outcast from society (p. 122); also warns against crusading against wrongs in the world and forgetting the Good Shepherd (pp. 1441); holds that Lazarus was restored to life and died again (p. 161); thinks that Communion cleanses in place of foot washing (pp. 1801); warns that the clergy will be the first to persecute the true church (p. 220); attacks the idea that the falling of the soldiers was legendary (p. 277).

\$ McClymont, J. A. *St. John*. New Century Bible. n.d., 352 pages. Brief comments, tinged with liberal ideas. He defends Johannine authorship (pp. 2-29); stresses Christ's "Divine pre-existence and His agency in creation" (p. 115); terms the incarnation the most profound mystery of the Christian faith (p. 120); holds that Christ twice cleansed the temple (pp. 138f.); does not think that Christ foresaw the apostasy of Judas (p. 189); thinks 7:53-8:11 is a genuine tradition, but not by John (p. 200); holds that though Christ claimed preexistence, He did not know everything (pp. 212, 241); thinks the promise "I will come again" refers to the Holy Spirit (p. 276).

\$ Macaulay, J. C., *Devotional Studies in St. John's Gospel*, 1941. 285 pages. A devotional exposition. He sets forth the eternity, personality, and deity of Christ (p. 17); uses numerous anecdotes (pp. 25-26, 40-41, 54-55, 59, 61, etc.); teaches the doctrine of the Trinity (p. 50); gives a premillennial interpretation of the resurrection and judgment (pp. 77f., 121); urges men to seek the Lord while He may be found (p. 166); stresses that the answer to the world's hatred is witness (p. 200); holds that Christ asked of the Father as an equal in John 17 (p. 209); thinks that the grave clothes looked as if the body had evaporated (p. 268).

\$ MacGregor, G. H. C. *The Gospel of John*, 1928, 446 pages. A critical interpretation. He thinks John was interested not in history but spiritual truth (p. xx) and made no attempt to give the exact words of the Lord (p. xxiii); holds that the author was not John, but a follower of the beloved disciple, who in turn was a follower of John (p. xlviii); thinks the Logos was divine, but not God (p. 4); terms the Logos doctrine a vain attempt to define a truth (p. 16); holds that the author put his own words into John the Baptist's mouth (p. 28); calls the miracle at Cana "unintelligible and purposeless" (p. 48); thinks parts of John are misplaced (pp. 56, 165, 191f.,

etc.); thinks the author was influenced by the mystery religions (p. 70) and was not accurate (p. 115); does not think that Christ really raised Lazarus (p. 253); places John 15, 16 before 14 (pp. 286ff.); does not think the Gospel accounts of the resurrection can be harmonized (p. 354); denies the authenticity of John 21 (p. 367).

\$ Maclaren, Alexander, *The Gospel of St. John*, 231 pages. Brief expository studies. He stresses the eternal existence of the Word (p. 3); holds that the miracle at Cana manifested Christ as Creator and Sustainer (p. 23); stresses the deity of Christ (p. 51); argues that Christ's sinlessness proves His truth in speech (p. 94); terms the raising of Lazarus the "crowning miracle" (pp. 1121) warns that the organized church may become the worst enemy of Christ's true church (p. 159); in John 17 stresses three petitions: "glorify", "keep", "sanctify" (p. 170); attributes the falling of the soldiers to a momentary shining forth of Christ's divine glory (p. 183).

% Marsh, John, *Saint John*, 1977. First published in England in 1968, this form-critical work contains an extensive introduction, a brief commentary and evaluative notes, covering problems in the text. Judicious.

\$ Meyer, Frederick Brotherton, *The Life and Light of Men*, n.d., 251 pages. Devotional expositions of John 1-12. He urges personal devotion to the eternal divine Word (p. 11); exhorts believers to recognize the body as the temple of God (pp. 651); stresses the need of being born again (p. 73); maintains the Lord's consciousness of His deity (p. 108) and of His death bringing glorification (p. 227); warns the believer against the spiritual conflict with the world and the prince of the world (pp. 240ff).

\$ Meyer, Frederick Brotherton, *Love to the Uttermost*, 1898, 254 pages. Warmly devotional expositions of John 13-21. He meditates on the blessings of the place prepared: heaven (pp. 28ff.); urges improving our praying (pp. 52f.); defends the doctrine of the Trinity (pp. 59f.); discusses the gift of peace (pp. 87f.); urges abiding in Christ (pp. 100ff.); calls John 17 "the most precious fragment of the past" (p. 142); stresses the miraculous nature of the soldiers' falling down (p. 159); lists the seven last words from the cross (pp. 208ff.).

\$\$ Michaels. J. Ramsey, *The Gospel of John*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, 2010, 1132 pages. This massive commentary is the net result of five decades of teaching and writing in the area of Johannine studies by the professor emeritus of religious studies at Missouri State University. We find evidence of Michaels's longstanding specialization in this area in the twelve articles he authored that dealt with aspects of the Fourth Gospel, ranging from 1966 to 2004. One senses a certain relief in his bringing this magisterial work to completion in his retirement, after his smaller commentaries on John (his Good News Commentary of 1984, based on the GNB, and his New International Biblical Commentary of 1989, based on the NIV). It is a privilege to sit at the feet of an inspiring specialist and catch his infectious enthusiasm for the text itself. Scholarly theories about the text flourish and fade but the text is permanently luxuriant. Interestingly, he found Bultmann's commentary to be the most useful, not because of that scholar's theories about source, redaction, and displacement, far less his overall rejection of the Gospel's theology, but because of his acute attention to detail and his perceptiveness in reading the Gospel as it

stands.

While the Introduction is relatively short (42 out of 1,058 pages of text), it includes the standard issues of authorship (the author's anonymity is "both conspicuous and deliberate," p. 24), date (? 70–100 AD, p. 38), location ("there is no way to be certain," p. 38), structure ("Structure in John's Gospel . . . is largely in the eye of the beholder," p. 37), and relation to the Synoptic Gospels ("much of what is implicit in the other three Gospels becomes explicit in John," p. 30). In fact, he recommends that this Introduction be read last, just as he wrote it after finishing the commentary itself.

The four brief pages on "Theological Contributions" to NT theology focus on two matters: (1) the pervasive emphasis on "Jesus as God's unique Envoy or messenger, simultaneously claiming for himself both Deity and obedient submission to Deity" (p. 39) and (2) the role of God the Father as the initiator and goal of Christian salvation. This role, he believes, "is rarely noticed or appreciated by interpreters" (p. 39). People believe in Jesus as a result of being "born of God" or "born from above." God is working in a person's life before that person "believes" or "comes to the Light" (cf. 3:21; 6:37, 44, 65; 9:3). "Those who, in Emily Dickinson's words, 'choose the Envoy—and spurn the groom' have failed to understand the Gospel of John" (p. 42). There is, I believe, a similar tension in NT theology as a whole and in Paul's theology in particular, where the "center" or coordinating theme seems to be not the person and work of Christ, as fundamental as they are, but God the Father's salvation through his Son and his Spirit.

Each section is headed by Michaels's own translation, which well reflects the simple directness of John's Greek style, with its avoidance of artificial rhetorical flourishes, sophisticated vocabulary, and long complex sentences. Reading Michaels's exegesis of verses or passages generally regarded as both difficult and important (such as 1:18, 29; 5:18; 12:39–41; 14:28; 20: 17, 22), I found his treatment to be always insightful and creative even if not always totally convincing. He constantly probes the text with original questions and graciously interacts with alternative views. Commendably, he is not hesitant to break with exegetical tradition. For example, he speaks of a "preamble" (1:1–5) rather than of a "prologue" (1:1–18) and of "the light" rather than "the Word" as the major theme in that preamble (p. 45). As for John 21, he observes that "the transition between John 20 and 21 is not inconsistent with other narrative transitions in the Gospel" (p. 1024), noting the repeated phrase "all these things" (meta tauta) in 5:1; 6:1; 7:1; 21:1.

Not all evangelical readers will be satisfied with Michaels's stance on the question, "Does the Gospel of John put words in Jesus' mouth?": "Perhaps so, though not as often as some might think, and when I conclude that it does, my job as a commentator is to leave them there" (p. xii). But few will disagree that in this Gospel there is an inextricable blend of historical reminiscence and theological reflection.

The reader will not find here a comprehensive bibliography on this Gospel (Keener's commentary provides that), or detailed analyses of key terms (such as Brown's commentary gives), or an overall discussion of historical issues (for this see C. L. Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel* [Downers Grove: IVP, 2001]), although there are full indexes of subjects, Scripture references, and early extrabiblical literature. But if one wishes an up-to-date, creative but careful exegesis of a given passage, with copious cross-references to other Johannine and biblical passages, there will not be disappointment. With its greater length and detail, this volume has an edge over other recent non-technical commentaries on John such as those by Lincoln, Borchert, Whitacre, Köstenberger, Beasley-Murray, Moloney, and

Witherington—what an embarrassment of riches we now have! In Michaels's most recent contribution to the study of the Fourth Gospel we are offered a balanced, nourishing, and very generous meal of Johannine fare, prepared by a master chef and served up appetizingly. Enjoy the meal!

** The writing style is superb, and insights abound on just about every page. Michaels is committed to unpacking the text as we have it, and therefore he studiously avoids addressing many important historical issues.

%% Mitchell, John G., *An Everlasting Love. A Devotional Study of The Gospel of John*, 1982. At the age of 90, the founder of Multnomah School of the Bible gives his readers some of the heartwarming fragrance of Christ he has long taught at Bible conferences, in the classroom, and as pastor of the Central Bible Church, Portland. The book is written as the man from England's Tyneside district spoke, simply and to the heart, moving verse by verse. There is much for the lay reader and refreshment from a lighter source for the pastor or teacher who also spends time in heavy, detailed analyses. Mitchell frequently makes pointed applications, offers illustrations, and ties things of Scripture together helpfully. He does not always nail down the meanings of verses specifically (cf. 17:15; 20:22 etc.).

\$ Morgan, G. Campbell. *The Gospel According to John*, 1933, 333 pages. A careful and helpful exposition. He organizes the Gospel by the places and signs manifested (pp. 7-8); stresses the signs (pp. 89,95, etc.); holds that we cannot account for the life of Jesus on the ground of that which is purely natural (p. 134); does not think 8:1-11 is by John but is still true (p. 146); stresses that Christ claimed eternal existence (p. 161); gives an apt illustration of Christ the Door (p. 177); holds that Lazarus was restored to life, not resurrected (p. 201); stresses that an entire cohort of soldiers fell down at Jesus' word (p. 278); holds that the grave clothes had fallen flat rather than being unwound (pp. 301).

\$ Morris, Leon, *The Gospel According to John*, 1971. 936 pages. A most thorough exposition. He defends the apostle's authorship (pp. 8-30); is uncertain about the date, suggesting before A.D. 70 (p. 34); defends the deity of Christ (p. 77) and the incarnation (p. 102); lists seven who witness to the Lord (p. 90); defends the reading "only begotten God" in 1:18 (p. 113); has additional notes on Logos (pp.115ff.), the world (pp. 126ff.), Son of Man (pp.172f.), Paraclete (pp. 662ff.), defends the doctrine of the wrath of God (p. 249); stresses that Jesus claimed deity (pp.466, 473); defends the resurrection of Jesus (pp. 830ff.) and links it with His deity (p. 857).

! Morris's commentary on the Gospel of John quickly became a standard of conservative evangelical scholarship on the book. In 1995, a completely revised and updated edition was published bringing the classic work up to date. Morris's work may have been overshadowed by more recent commentaries, but it remains one of the best and should be consulted.

** An encyclopedic treatment from the strictly "earthly-historical" view of Jesus's ministry. Morris is one of the major conservative commentaries on John, and its footnotes are a mine of quotable material. Sometimes the style is choppy, and some theological and historical questions are not probed very deeply.

@ O'Connor, W. A., *Commentary*, 1872. In this translation the first verse runs thus: "In origin the Word was, and the Word was the Deity, and the Word was Deity." Who likes this, or

understands it? The notes do not charm us.

Phillips, John, *Exploring the Gospel of John*, 1988. 425 pages. This articulate exposition relates well to life. It is the product of one of the fine Bible conference leaders and prolific writers of today. He is an evangelical and organizes his work well by following his outline step-by-step. It is, however, a puzzle why the outline comes at the end rather than at the beginning. A pastor or lay reader will derive help in following the flow of thought through John and in a light exposure to some of the book's problems. It possibly would serve best in daily readings.

!! This commentary is based on the Authorized Version but Phillips will correct the Authorized Version reading a few times.

% Pink, Arthur Walkington, *Exposition of the Gospel of John*, 3 volumes, 1945. An extensive, enriching devotional study. Ideal for those who intend to preach a series of sermons through this Gospel.

!! Very wordy and Calvinistic. Pink says in 100 words what others could say in 50 words. One wit remarked "Life is too short to read Pink". But if you have the patience, he can be profitable if you can deal with his Calvinism and anti-dispensationalism.

%% Before his death in 1952, Pink was a voluminous writer for the magazine, *Studies in the Scriptures*, which was published for 31 years. His expositions are non-technical and clearly intended for lay readers. Textual problems are for the most part untreated, but Pink does grapple seriously with doctrinal difficulties. He is conservative, Calvinistic, and switched from dispensationalism to amillennialism in his later years (compare his book *The Redeemer's Return* with his later *Exposition of Hebrews* and *Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount*.) Ralph Keiper has written in *Eternity* (April, 1955, p. 32): "His works show hours of study; each line is filled with information and blessing. His books are not shallow. His studies fill the soul with 'strong meat' which needs to be well digested." His work on John has sometimes been called the best among older more detailed books on the English text.

% Plummer, Alfred, *The Gospel According to St. John*, Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges, 1889. Brief expository notes.

%% Rainsford, Marcus. *Our Lord Prays for His Own*, 1950. 476 pages. This highly-esteemed older work of 1895 is by one of the finest expositors of the nineteenth century, sought after by men such as D. L. Moody. Rainsford, from Ireland, pastored St. John's Church (Belgrave Chapel) in London from 1886 to 1897, the year he died. Verse by verse he has a gold mine here, giving insight on most of the details of the great prayer. One pastor told this writer that Rainsford's book was the best on prayer he had read and that he made it a point to go through it afresh every year, finding himself often in tears as he identified with Jesus praying.

\$ Reith, George, *The Gospel According to St. John*. 2 volumes, 1889, 197, 178 pages. A warmly devotional exposition. He defends the authenticity (pp. xxi-xxviii); defines "only begotten" as showing Jesus Christ's eternal, necessary, and essential relation to the Father (I, 14); emphasizes that Christ saves "not from but in life's common paths" (I, 38); makes familiar verses glow (3:16: I, 51-52); teaches the eternal co-existence of the Father and the Son (I, 84) and the preexistence of the Son (II, 22); stresses the divine infallibility of the Scripture (II, 49, 126); teaches Christ's return for His own (II, 90); defends the doctrine of the

Trinity (II, U4).

\$ Reynolds, H. R., and T. Croskery, *John in The Pulpit Commentary*. Ed. H. D. M. Spence and J. S. Excell. 1896, 1097 pages. Homiletical expositions. They argue for Johannine authorship (I, xliii-lxxxvii); discuss alleged discrepancies between the Synoptics and John (I, lxxxviii-cxxviii); stress that the Logos is God in essence and eternal being (I. 7); warn against "morbid asceticism" in interpreting the miracle at Cana (I. 81); deny that baptism of itself can save (1.136f.); teach a general resurrection and judgment (I. 217); defend the eternal preexistence of Christ (I.217); think "I come again" refers to Christ's resurrection and the sending of the Paraclete (II, 220); claim that John 17 "surpasses all literature" in setting forth the personality of the God-Man (II, 340); interpret the soldier's falling as a miracle (II, 381).

!! Rice, John R., *The Son of God*, 416 pages. Popular commentary but not much meat. Rice was a better evangelist than he was a commentator. He wanted to be recognized as a scholar, but he simply wasn't one.

\$ Richardson, Alan. *Gospel According to Saint John.*, 1959, 220 pages. Brief liberal commentary. Leaves open the question of authorship; admits striking parallels between Johannine writings. Doubts the genuineness of the miracle at Cana; holds that John 3 teaches baptismal regeneration (p, 68f); sees symbolism of baptism at the pool of Bethesda; sees the eucharist in the feeding of 5,000; thinks the raising of Lazarus gives a truth "by means of a story that is not literally true" (137) and rejects it because Synoptics do not record it (139); holds to the reality of the resurrection (210); denies the genuineness of 153 fish.

\$\$ Ridderbos, Herman, *The Gospel of John, a Theological Commentary*, 735 pages. Herman Ridderbos' commentary on the Gospel of John demonstrates that mature theological reflection, conversant with the theological heritage of the church, and insightful exegesis, attentive to the biblical text, nurture each other in rich and fruitful ways. The subtitle of Ridderbos' comprehensive work on John—'a theological commentary'—aptly captures its dual purpose. It is a commentary, and thus aims to elucidate and explain the actual text before it, in this case the Gospel of John as we have it in its present canonical form. But as a theological commentary, the work offers far more than a description of the theology of the Fourth Gospel, although it does that as well. This commentary actually engages in theological reflection with and on the text. Although Ridderbos pursues his goal rather differently, his commentary is a major theological work, such as the classic older commentaries of Hoskyns and Bultmann offered in other guises.

Ridderbos dispenses with some of the traditional trappings of the commentary genre. He does not discuss in any detail vexing questions such as authorship, audience, date, and so on, nor does he engage in speculative theorizing on the possible origins of the Gospel. It is clear that Ridderbos is conversant with the issues and questions. But the task of the exegete, as he sees it, is to engage the text 'as the Christian Church adopted it' (xiii). Nevertheless, he does open the book with what he terms a theological introduction to the Gospel, and here one will immediately discover the deft hand of a sure exegete with critical, historical, and theological sensitivities all brought to bear on the discussion.

The proof of any commentary is in using it. Does the commentary helpfully open up difficult passages? Does it force us to think carefully about the text? Does it ultimately help the

reader to engage the very subject matter of the Gospel itself? Time and time again, as one delves into Ridderbos' commentary, the reader will find these questions answered affirmatively. In spite of the many commentaries on the Gospel. Ridderbos is able to offer fresh insight into it. He is no slave to recent fashion in interpretation of John, although clearly willing to avail himself of insights into the text which historical and critical methods can afford.

So, for example, as one reads his discussion of the prologue (Jn 1:1–18). one finds that Ridderbos can ably discuss such critical questions as the sources and historical background which may lie behind the prologue. But this discussion is added almost as an appendix, where Ridderbos treats and discusses the views of major commentators on this question. In the commentary itself, Ridderbos lays out his reading of the text. He typically does not address difficult texts by laying out all the possible options, and showing the arguments for and against each one. Rather, he allows his reading of the text, in dialogue with other views, to remain the main feature of the commentary, relegating more technical discussions to virtual excursions and footnotes. Thus, for example, a rather detailed and lengthy discussion of 'The History of Religions Approach' to the prologue and of 'The Logos and "Wisdom" ' are included, but in smaller print, and in between the actual exposition of the text. The material is there: but Ridderbos does not burden his exegesis with too much focus on these technical matters. In reading the commentary one often has the distinct impression of reading theology more than exegesis. Ridderbos offers theological reflection on and elucidation of texts for which the actual preliminary exegetical study often lies buried beneath the surface of the commentary. Precisely here the commentary is refreshing and useful. In grappling with Ridderbos' theological implications and conclusions one will be forced to rethink previous exegetical decisions.

Ridderbos' work is not for the faint of heart. He expects a lot from the reader and assumes quite a lot about the readers' knowledge of critical issues in interpreting the Gospel, of theological matters, and Greek grammar and syntax. Because he does not address introductory issues (such as authorship, date, and so on) in any systematic fashion, the student will have to ferret these out from the commentary, if they are matters of primary concern. Not likely to be a beginning students' first choice, the commentary will be most useful to those who have a good working knowledge of the Gospel and the issues involved in its interpretation, and want to probe once more the theological depths of the Fourth Gospel with a sure guide. Here Ridderbos will not disappoint.

Reith, George. *The Gospel According to Saint John*. 2 vols., 1889. 197, 176 pp. Reith defends this Gospel's authenticity (pp. xxi ff.); defines "only begotten" as showing Jesus Christ's eternal, necessary and essential relation to the Father (I, p. 14); emphasizes that Christ saves "not *from* but *in* life's common paths" (I, p. 38); makes familiar verses glow (3:16, I, pp. 51-52); teaches the eternal coexistence of the Father and the Son (I, p. 84) and the preexistence of the Son (II, p. 22); stresses the divine infallibility of the Scripture (II, pp. 49, 126); teaches Christ's return for His own (II, p. 90); and defends the doctrine of the Trinity (II, p. 114).

!! Ruckman, Peter, *The Bible Believer's Commentary on John*, 2005, 636 pages. Reads like transcripts from sermons or classroom lectures, which means that this kind of commentary will not be as valuable as Ruckman's "written" commentaries. He is sparse on some verses and over-emphasizes others. Good thoughts and applications, based on the Authorized Version, but not one of his better works. Dispensational and premillennial.

!! Ryle, J. C., *Expository Thoughts on John*, 2 volumes, 1869. Practical expository thoughts and applications. He will occasionally correct the Authorized Version and gives too much respect to liberal scholarship. He is weak in his "defense" of 7:53-8:11.

\$ Sanders, J. N., and B. A. Mastin, *The Gospel According to St. John*. Harper's Commentaries, 1968, 480 pages. A liberal commentary. He thinks that John's theology differs from that of Jesus (p. 19); holds that the author was John Mark, later called John of Ephesus, and distinguishes him from the beloved disciple, Lazarus (pp. 50f.); does not think John the Baptist called Jesus the Lamb that takes away sin (p. 93); stresses that some passages are "clumsily expressed" (pp. 184, 263); leaves open the possibility that Lazarus was not really dead (p. 274); is not sure of the historical value of John 13 (p. 319); holds that the order of some passages has been reversed by editors (p. 335); translates Paraclete "champion" (p. 345); thinks John 17 is an ideal prayer using traditions (p. 366); holds that John 21 was added later (p. 440).

@@ Schnackenburg, Rudolf. *The Gospel According to St. John* (3 volumes), 1965–1992. A detailed commentary from a European Roman Catholic perspective. Schnackenburg has extensive treatment of virtually all issues in the Gospel, especially theological ones. The introduction alone is 206 pages.

% Scroggie, William Graham, *St. John, Introduction and Notes*, Study Hours Series, 1931. Brief, suggestive studies. Devotional.

@ Shepherd, R., *Notes on the Gospel and Epistles of John*, 1796. Though the author opposed Socinianism, we cannot but regard his views as an introduction to that heresy. The spirit of the book is vicious.

%% Smith, D. Moody., *John*, Abingdon NT Commentary, 1999. In fairly detailed work, Smith often states his own view, with or without support (for the latter, cf. on 3:5, "born of water and spirit"), at times with nebulous remarks (15:2a, 6). Instead of going verse by verse, discussions are general and may or may not touch on specific issues in verses. The work too often is below average and cannot compare favorably with many other commentaries.

!! Smith, Hamilton, *The Last Words: An Exposition of Chapters 13-17 of John's Gospel*. Plymouth Brethren. Smith writes succinctly but he has good material.

% Smith, Jonathan Ritchie, *The Teaching of the Gospel of John*, 1903. A worthwhile treatment, but one that has been out of print for many years.

\$ Strachan, R. H. *The Fourth Gospel*, 1917, 1941, 345 pages. Liberal commentary. He admits that Jesus is portrayed in John as a divine-human person (pp. 4-5); thinks John wrote the raising of Lazarus as an act of "creative artistry" (p. 29); denies Johannine authorship (p. 88); thinks that the story of Nicodemus belongs at the close of the public ministry (p. 129); holds that Jesus' claim of "I am" means only that He will not share his place as Mediator with anyone (p. 217); thinks that two different versions of the upper-room discourse were edited together

(pp.271ff.); holds that "I come again" refers to death and the coming Holy Spirit (p. 280); thinks that John 17 is based on a prayer of Jesus as interpreted by a Christian prophet (pp. 289-99).

\$ Tasker, R.V. G., *The Gospel According to St. John*, Tyndale Commentaries, 1960, 237 pages. Brief conservative commentary. He defends Johannine authority, not authorship (pp. 11ff.); gives brief outline (pp. 39-40); holds that Jesus cleansed the temple twice (p. 61); thinks that 7:53-8:11, though genuine, was not an original part of John (p. 110); stresses the Lord's divine nature and preexistence (p. 120); attacks the idea of rearranging the order of chaps. 14-16 (p. 170); terms John 17 "the prayer of the great High Priest" (p. 188); distinguishes between the beloved disciple and the evangelist (p. 217); holds that the grave clothes were "still lying in their original folds, untouched by human hands yet no longer containing the crucified body" (p. 221).

\$ Tenney, Merrill C. *John: The Gospel of Belief*, 1948. 321 pages. A study guide to John. He lists the seven signs (pp. 30-31); gives a chart to show the divisions of John (pp. 40-41); stresses the things predicated of the Logos: eternity, personality, deity (pp. 64-65); holds that is called "only begotten God in 1:18 (p. 72); stresses the unique relation between the Father and the Son (pp. 1061); regards 7:53-8:11 as genuine, but not by John (pp. 137-38); argues that Christ was deity (p. 168); stresses the adequacy of the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus (pp. 280ff); concludes with several topical studies (pp. 297ff) and a bibliography (pp. 317).

@ Tholuck, Augustus, *Commentary*. 1860. More spiritual than is usual with German theologians, and quite as scholarly as the best of them.

@ Tittman, K. C., *Commentary*, 1844. Horne, in speaking of this work in the German, without endorsing all Tittmann's opinions, declares it to be the most valuable commentary on John extant in so small a form. Our judgment is less commendatory.

@ Traheron, Bartholomew, *An Exposition of a Parte of S. Johannes Gospel made in sondrie readings in the English Congregation*, 1558. Very rare. A little quaint old book. Not intrinsically worth the price, nor a tenth of it.

\$ Turner, George A., and Julius R. Mantey. *The Gospel According to John*, n.d. 420 pages. An Arminian, New-Evangelical exposition. They commend Albert Schweitzer (p. 1) and E. Stanley Jones (p. 288); defend John's authorship (pp. 19- 26); give helpful charts on the Word (p. 55) and "I am" statements (p. 213); stress the vicarious, substitutionary sacrifice of Christ (p. 71); attack racial prejudice (p.110) and limited atonement (p. 146); teach a general resurrection (p. 76) and the deity and humanity of Christ (pp. 139, 163, 195); urge the doctrine of prevenient grace (p. 168); state that 7:53-8:11 is not part of the text (p. 188); hold that "friendly people gladly helped Jesus escape as he left the temple" (p. 200); think that chapter 21 was added later, but by John (p. 402).

@ van Doren, W. H., *Suggestive Commentary on John*, Vol. I., containing chap. I-IX. 1872. Men who read this volume do not preach the better for so doing, it is not Mr. Van Doren's fault; they must be Van Dolts by nature, though they may ignore the family name.

\$ van Ryn, August, *Meditations in John*, 1949, 205 pages. Brief devotional studies from John. He stresses that the theme of John is belief in Christ as the Son of God (pp. 11ff.); lists a number of "sevens" in John (pp. 16f.); discusses three doors (pp. 31ff.), three days (pp. 4 1ff.); "I am—seven great claims" (pp. 43ff.); distinctive Johannine words: "sent" (pp. 631), "whence" (pp. 69 ff.), "now" (pp. 83f.); great themes in John: "The lie—ancient modernism" (pp. 106ff.), "Life, light, and love" (pp. 109ff.), "the Holy Spirit" (pp. 1171); "An ocean in a drop—John 3:16" (pp.131ff.); "One thing I know" (pp. 149ff.).

\$ Vine, W. E., *John: His Record of Christ*, 1948, 192 pages. Brief expository notes. He stresses that Christ is creator and Author of life (p. 9) and is the eternally preexistent Son (p. 13); sees the miracle at Cana as foreshadowing millennial glory (p. 19); holds that the Lord claimed deity (p. 41); stresses that there are two resurrections (p. 44); teaches the Rapture and the tribulation period (pp. 62, 128); urges believers to be Spirit-filled (p. 78); holds that heaven is the destiny of the church (p. 104); stresses the equality of the Son with the Father (p. 158); gives an index of Greek words (pp. 1911).

\$ Westcott, Brooke Foss. *The Gospel According to St. John*. 1881, 404 pages. The best single commentary on John. He defends Johannine authorship (pp. v- xxxii); discusses the symbolism of the Gospel (pp. lxxvff.); stresses that the absolute, eternal immanent relations of the Persons of the Godhead are the basis for the revelation of the Word (p. 2); holds that in Christ eternity and time, the divine and the human are reconciled (p. 10); thinks that the water that became wine came from a well, not waterpots (p. 38); teaches baptismal regeneration (p. 50); stresses that God's enabling does not destroy man's freedom (p. 104); teaches Christ's timeless existence (p. 140); does not regard 7:53-8:11 as genuine (pp. 141ff.); calls the raising of Lazarus a revelation of Christ's divine glory (p. 164); thinks that "I come again" refers to Christ's coming in the Paraclete, His coming at death for the believer, and His second coming (p. 201); holds that John 17 was prayed in the temple courts before crossing Kidron (p. 237); thinks the falling of the soldiers showed that the Lord chose to give Himself up to them (p. 258); defends the Johannine authorship of John 21 (p. 299).¹⁹²

@ @ One of the first major modern commentaries on John's Gospel, reflecting the then major developments in textual criticism, such as the use of an eclectic Alexandrian text (Westcott and Hort's). The commentary was published posthumously and uses the (revised) notes Westcott had prepared for an earlier commentary (1881) on the English text (*The Gospel According to St. John* [London: John Murray, 1919]). This commentary is in the classical commentary tradition of providing detailed notes on the Greek text. Westcott believed in traditional Johannine authorship and historical reliability of the Gospel. See his *An Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, 8th ed. (London: Macmillan, 1895; 1st ed., 1851) 253–313.

^ Whitelaw, Thomas, *Exposition of John*, 1888. This volume is a model for all expositors. If one had a set of books on the different Books of the Bible, written in the same fashion as

¹⁹² It makes us wonder how Westcott's commentary could be "the best single commentary on John" when even the reviewer at Bob Jones University [Stewart Custer?] points out so many liberal and heretical positions in the commentary. Why this commentary wasn't classified as "critical" instead of "conservative" is beyond me. We strongly disagree with this assessment.

Whitelaw's John, there would be no need for Bible schools.

%% Witherington, Ben, II., *John's Wisdom. A Commentary on the Fourth Gospel*, 1995, This paperback of 411 pages discusses features of ancient biographies and views John, comparatively, as a biography in a dramatic mode for Christian use in evangelism (4). The writer feels that John uses familiar elements and techniques from the Greco-Roman theater to reveal Jesus' deity (5). He believes that the fourth evangelist used material that the beloved disciple, apparently not the Apostle, had brought into a unit (6-16). Much of the introduction narrows to usefulness mostly to scholars as it assesses theories about sources and engages in much subjective conjecture. One gains the impression that this commentator feels that the gospel writer gave some material for his own purpose and not because it is historically accurate and factual where he puts it (37). One who tries to see verse by verse help can become frustrated in the ponderous general discussions that bounce around, and with the vagueness (cf. for example on 15:6). Many will lay it aside to use works that in more instances get specific about expounding verses.

\$ Yates, Kyle M., *Preaching from John's Gospel* 1964. 181 pages. Expository sermons from John. He defends Johannine authorship (p. 2); stresses that Jesus is the eternal Son of God (p. 6) and that His deity is shown by the phrase "God only-begotten" in 1:18 (p. 12); holds that even the morally sinful, when saved, can witness (p. 46.); shows that the Son is equal to the Father (p. 58); calls 7:53-8:11 an authentic incident in the life of Jesus (p. 80); distinguishes Mary of Bethany from others (p. 113); holds that "I come again" includes Christ's resurrection, His sending the Holy Spirit, and His second coming (p. 129); stresses that the falling of the soldiers was supernatural (p. 153); thinks that the grave clothes looked "as if he had evaporated from them, leaving no disturbance" (p. 168).