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Comments are welcomed and may be emailed to Curtis.D.Byers@gmail.com.

A STUDY OF

THE

GOSPEL OF JOHN

CURTIS BYERS
1998

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN
PART I: JOHN 1-6
SYLLABUS

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◆

ACTIVE READING: The scripture narratives deserve our very best study and any study must begin with a good reading of the text. During this study, an *active reading* of the text will be emphasized. Active reading takes place when the reader, *with pencil in hand*, constantly asks questions (*Who?, What?, When?, Where?, Why?*) while reading. Relationships between parts of the text are noted, key words are identified, and paragraph breaks are determined. Several readings are often necessary. To assist in this, the text of the New King James Version (NKJV) will be included with each lesson with wide margins on each side for notations.

THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

[Outline by F.F. Bruce, *Adapted*]

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 - i. In Jerusalem at the Passover (2:13 - 3:21)
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- B. JESUS AND THE SAMARITANS (4:1-42)
- C. HEALING OF THE NOBLEMAN'S SON (4:43-54)
- D. MINISTRY IN JERUSALEM (5:1-47)
 - i. Healing at the Pool of Bethesda (5:1-9a)
 - ii. The Father and the Son (5:9b-29)
 - iii. The Son's Credentials (5:30-47)
- E. MINISTRY IN GALILEE (6:1-71)
 - i. The Feeding of the Multitude (6:1-21)
 - ii. The Bread of Life (6:22-71)
- F. MINISTRY IN JERUSALEM (7:1 - 10:39)
 - i. Feast of Tabernacles (7:1 - 8:59)
 - ii. The Healing of the Blind Man (9:1-41)
 - iii. The Shepherd and the Flock (10:1-39)
- G. FINAL PHASE OF JESUS' MINISTRY IN THE WORLD (10:40 - 12:50)
 - i. Beyond Jordan (10:40-42)
 - ii. Raising of Lazarus (11:1-46)
 - iii. The Fateful Council (11:47-53)

- iv. Jesus' Wilderness Retreat (11:54)
- v. Last Days in Jerusalem (11:55 - 12:50)

IV. JESUS REVEALS THE FATHER TO HIS DISCIPLES (13:1 - 17:26)

- A. THE LAST SUPPER (13:1-30)
 - i. The Foot Washing (13:1-17)
 - ii. The Traitor in the Camp (13:18-30)
- B. THE UPPER ROOM DISCOURSES (13:31 - 16:33)
 - i. Departure and Reunion (13:31 - 14:31)
 - ii. The Lord and His People (15:1 - 16:33)
- C. THE PRAYER OF CONSECRATION (17:1-26)

V. PASSION AND TRIUMPH (18:1 - 20:31)

- A. THE PASSION NARRATIVE (18:1 - 19:42)
 - i. Arrest in the Garden (18:1-11)
 - ii. Chief-Priestly Inquisition (18:12-24)
 - iii. Peter's Final Denial (18:25-27)
 - iv. Trial Before Pilate (18:28 - 19:16a)
 - v. Jesus on the Cross (19:16b-25a)
 - vi. Crucifixion, Deposition and Burial (19:31-42)
- B. THE RESURRECTION NARRATIVE (20:1-29)
 - i. The Empty Tomb (20:1-10)
 - ii. Appearance to Mary of Magdala (20:11-18)
 - iii. Appearance to the Disciples (20:19-23)
 - iv. Appearance to Thomas (20:24-29)
- C. PURPOSE OF THE RECORD (20:30,31)

VI. EPILOGUE (21:1-25)

- A. THE CATCH OF FISH (21:1-11)
- B. BREAKFAST BY THE LAKE (21:12-14)
- C. PETER'S NEW COMMISSION (21:15-19)
- D. THE BELOVED DISCIPLE (21:20-23)
- E. FIRST POSTSCRIPT (21:24)
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THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

		PROLOGUE	
		WITNESS OF JOHN	
		FIRST DISCIPLES	
		WATER TO WINE (CANA)	
<u>FIRST YEAR</u> (OBSCURITY)	1ST PASSEVER (JOHN 2:13)	CLEANSING OF TEMPLE	
		NICODEMUS	
		WOMAN AT THE WELL	
		HEALING-NOBLEMAN'S SON	
		REJECTION AT NAZARETH	6
			CHAPTERS
<u>SECOND YEAR</u> (POPULARITY)	2ND PASSEVER ? (JOHN 5:1)	HEALS LAME MAN	
		JESUS' RESPONSE TO JEWS	
		FEEDING OF 5000	
		WALKING ON WATER	
		"I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE"	
<u>THIRD YEAR</u> (OPPOSITION)	3RD PASSEVER (JOHN 6:4)	AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES	
		WOMAN CAUGHT IN ADULTERY	
		"I AM THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD"	
		SONS OF ABRAHAM	
		HEALING OF BLIND MAN	
		"I AM THE DOOR"	5
		"I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD"	CHAPTERS
		JEWS ATTEMPT TO STONE JESUS	
		"I AM THE RESURRECTION/LIFE"	
		RAISING OF LAZARUS	
<u>THE LAST WEEK</u>	4TH PASSEVER (JOHN 11:55)	THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY	
		THE LAST SUPPER	
		UPPER ROOM DISCOURSES	
		"I AM THE WAY/TRUTH/LIFE"	9
		"I AM THE TRUE VINE"	CHAPTERS
		THE COMING OF THE SPIRIT	
		PRAYER OF CONSECRATION	
		THE PASSION NARRATIVE	
		THE RESURRECTION NARRATIVE	
		THE PURPOSE OF THE RECORD	1
		EPILOGUE	CHAPTER

LESSON 1

INTRODUCTION

I. WHAT IS A GOSPEL?

- A. Gospel is an Anglo-Saxon word meaning “good news” which translates the Greek term *euangelion* from which we get our word “evangelist”.
- B. Thus, the term “gospel” originally referred to the message preached. That message was the salvation available in Jesus Christ. Later, it was applied to the first four books of the New Testament canon, presumably because these books (the Gospels) contained the basis of the good news (the gospel).

NOTES: 1. Justin Martyr (d. AD 165) was the first to use the plural form Gospels. Over 50 books called Gospels were written by the fifth century.

2. The original books of the New Testament did not have titles. It was in the second century that the first titles were given to the Gospels. These titles had the form “According to _____” (e.g., “According to Matthew”, etc.). Later, these titles were expanded to “Gospel according to _____”.

II. IS JOHN THE APOSTLE THE AUTHOR OF THIS GOSPEL?

- A. The Gospel of John, like all the Gospels, is anonymous.
- B. External Evidence for John’s Authorship: The writings of the early Christians (c. AD 150 and later) are unanimous in ascribing the authorship to the apostle John. However, these writings are at times mistaken and cannot be automatically taken as authoritative.
- C. Internal Evidence for John’s Authorship: One scholar (B.F. Westcott) who supports the view that John wrote this Gospel made the following series of arguments from the contents of the Gospel itself:
 - 1. The author was a Jew.
 - 2. The author was a Jew of Palestine.
 - 3. The author was an eyewitness.
 - 4. The author was an apostle.
 - 5. The author was the apostle John.

During the course of study, these arguments will be examined, but it must be acknowledged that evidence of this nature is often inconclusive.

- D. Conclusion: When all is said, it has to be concluded that we can not know with certainty that John, the apostle, wrote the Gospel of John. However, since there is nothing in the book that contradicts this possibility, we will for the sake of discussion consider John the author.

III. WHY DID JOHN WRITE HIS GOSPEL?

- A. John 20:30-31: *“And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.”*
- B. Question for further study: Did John write this book to be primarily read by Christians or non-Christians? On the surface, the above passage appears to suggest that the readers were non-Christians with the intent of persuading them to become believers. However, the consolation that Christians have received from this Gospel through the centuries argues for the possibility that the same purpose was desired for its early Christian readers.

IV. WHEN DID JOHN WRITE HIS GOSPEL?

- A. The Gospel itself does not provide any direct statements regarding its origin. Consequently, dates from AD 65 to 100 have been suggested by those who hold to John’s authorship, with AD 90 to 100 being the most commonly held view.
- B. During the early part of this century, it was common for radical scholars to deny John’s authorship and to place the date of writing in the late second century. But the discovery in this century of a small portion of one leaf from an Egyptian codex containing John 18:31-33 has been dated at AD 130, thus forcing the date of composition back to the first century or early second century. Incidentally, this is the earliest known fragment of any NT book.

V. COMPARISON TO THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

- A. *Synoptic* means “seen together”. Matthew, Mark and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels because their content, and even their wording, is very similar.
- B. Note the following comparison:

<u><i>The Synoptics</i></u>	<u><i>The Gospel of John</i></u>
Brief sayings of Jesus are common	Longer Discourses
Parables are common	No parables are recorded
Galilee is the primary location	Jerusalem is the primary location
Casting out of demons is common	No casting out of demons is recorded
<i>Unique to the Synoptics:</i>	<i>Unique to John:</i>
Jesus’ Baptism	Water to Wine
Jesus’ Temptations	Nicodemus
Transfiguration	Ministry in Samaria
Institution of Lord’s Supper	Resurrection of Lazarus
	“I Am” Sayings

LESSON 2: JOHN 1:1-18

THE PROLOGUE

John begins his Gospel with an overview of what he wants his readers to know and understand about Jesus. Thus, this prologue introduces themes which will be elaborated upon and illustrated throughout the Gospel.

ACTIVELY READ JOHN 1:1-18

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- ◆
- 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 - 2 He was in the beginning with God.
 - 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.
 - 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
 - 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend^a it.
 - 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.
 - 7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.
 - 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.
 - 9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.
 - 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.
 - 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.
 - 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:
 - 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
 - 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt^b among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.
 - 15 John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'"
 - 16 And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.
 - 17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
 - 18 No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him.

NOTES:

a Or, "overcome" (NRSV)

b The Greek word for "dwelt" literally means to "pitch a tabernacle", thus suggesting that the glory of God that previously dwelt in the temple and tabernacle now was in the person of Jesus.



THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

1. What three things are stated about the “*Word*” (Gk. *logos*) in verse 1?
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)

2. What is the phrase “*In the beginning*” reminiscent of?
What did the *Word* do “*in the beginning*”? (v.3)
What is John’s reason for telling us this? (v.10)

3. What is the purpose or function of a *word*?

Thus, why is Jesus called the *Word*? (consider verses 14, 18)

4. Why did God send John as a witness? (v.6-7)

5. What are the keywords in this prologue? [Keywords are those words which best identify the author’s theme.]

6. According to the prologue, list the things Jesus ‘brought’ to mankind when he “*became flesh*”?

7. A paradox is a statement that seems contradictory. Identify the paradoxes contained within the prologue.

8. Summarize the Prologue with a brief, concise statement.

LESSON 3: JOHN 1:19-34**THE WITNESS OF JOHN**

John, like the synoptic writers, introduces the work of Jesus by first reporting the work of John the Baptist. Although the Synoptics emphasize John's call for repentance, John highlights the *testimony* of John concerning Jesus (note the first and last verses of this section).

ACTIVELY READ JOHN 1:19-34

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- 19 Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?"
- 20 He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."
- 21 And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No."
- 22 Then they said to him, "Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"
- 23 He said: "I am 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Make straight the way of the LORD," ' as the prophet Isaiah said."
- 24 Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees.^b
- 25 And they asked him, saying, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"
- 26 John answered them, saying, "I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know.
- 27 "It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose."
- 28 These things were done in Bethabara^c beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.
- 29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!
- 30 "This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.'
- 31 "I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."
- 32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him.
- 33 "I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'
- 34 "And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."

NOTES:

- a* John uses the term "*the Jews*" (68 times) much more frequently than the Synoptic writers (about 5 times each). Usually, John uses the term to describe the *Jewish leaders* who were opposed to Jesus.
- b* "Now those who were sent were *from the Pharisees*" (cf. NRSV) can also be translated "*of the Pharisees*" (KJV), or "Some Pharisees who were in the deputation asked..." (REB).
- c* The reading *Bethabara* is found in some texts; stronger evidence supports the reading *Bethany* (ASV, etc.). The identifying clause "beyond the Jordan" is given to distinguish it from the Bethany near Jerusalem (cf. John 11:18). However, the exact location of this city is unknown.
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MAP WORK: Find Bethabara (or Bethany) [check as many maps as you have].

1. From the questions asked of John, who did the Jewish people expect to appear? (compare Luke 3:15; John 6:14; 7:31,40-41)
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
 - a. Are these references to the *same* person, or three *different* people?
 - b. What does the Greek word “*Christ*” [= Hebrew, *Messiah*] mean?
 - c. What was the expectation concerning Elijah? (cf. Malachi 4:5)
 - d. But, Jesus said that John was the prophesied Elijah (Matthew 11:13-14; 17:10-13; Luke 1:17). So, why did John say he wasn’t?
 - e. What was the expectation concerning “*the Prophet*”? (cf. Deuteronomy 18:15-19)
2. After rejecting the various identifications suggested by the Jews, how does John identify himself? (compare §21 Matthew 3:3 // Mark 1:2-3 // Luke 3:4-6)

Read Isaiah 40:3-5. In that context, what did it mean to “*Make straight the way of the LORD*”?

In John’s case, how did he prepare the Lord’s way?

3. Baptism was not unknown to the Jews. Proselytes were often baptized upon converting to Judaism. However, proselyte baptism was self-administered (i.e., they baptized themselves). John’s baptism was unique in that John himself baptized those who submitted to his teaching (hence, we read of “*John’s disciples*” (John 3:25)). Apparently, this is the reason why the Jews thought John was the Messiah (v.25). In responding to the

- Jews, John contrasts his baptism with that of Jesus'. What is the difference in their baptisms? (compare v.26 and 33).
4. Upon seeing Jesus on "*the next day*", John addresses Jesus as "*The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.*" [This identification by John may have intended to be reminiscent of Isaiah 53:7, 12.] By what means did John know that Jesus was the "Son of God?"
 - a. When did the Spirit of God descend upon Jesus like a dove? (§24 Matthew 3:13-17 // Mark 1:9-11 // Luke 3:21-22)
 - b. What did the heavenly voice say at this event?
 5. The synoptic writers record additional information on the ministry of John the Baptist. Luke's account is representative of the Synoptics. Read Luke 3:1-22. List the main points in Luke's account which supplement John's account.

LESSON 4: JOHN 1:35-51

THE FIRST DISCIPLES

This section of the gospel tells how some of John's disciples became disciples of Jesus. The actual call of the disciples to become Jesus' apostles takes place later. It was necessary for this transition from John to Jesus take place.

ACTIVELY READ JOHN 1:35-51

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- ◆
- 35 Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples.
 - 36 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"
 - 37 The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.
 - 38 Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, "What do you seek?" They said to Him, "Rabbi" (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), "where are You staying?"
 - 39 He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour^a).
 - 40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.
 - 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ).
 - 42 And he brought him to Jesus. Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, "You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas^b" (which is translated, A Stone).
 - 43 The following day Jesus^c wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me."
 - 44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.
 - 45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote; Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."
 - 46 And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."
 - 47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!"
 - 48 Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you."
 - 49 Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"
 - 50 Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you, 'I saw you under the fig tree,' do you believe? You will see greater things than these."
 - 51 And He said to him, "Most assuredly^d, I say to you, hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man."

NOTES:

- a The Jews divided the period of *daylight* into 12 equal ‘hours’, thus, the length of each hour depended upon how long the sun shone. Hence, the common statement that the Jewish day began at 6 am and ended at 6 pm is only approximately true.
- b *Cephas* is a transliteration of the Aramaic word *Kepha*, which means ‘rock’. *Petros* is the Greek equivalent of *Kepha*, hence the name Peter.
- c Instead of “The following day *Jesus* wanted to go to Galilee, and *He* found Philip and said...”, the Greek text literally says “The next day *he* decided to leave for Galilee and found Philip. *Jesus* said to him...” Thus, it could have been Simon or, more probably, Andrew who decided to go to Galilee and who found Philip.
- d Literally, the Hebrew expression “*Amen, Amen*”; thus the Hebrew term was transliterated into the Greek text. ‘Amen’ denotes certainty, steadfastness. Interestingly, in the Synoptics, the expression always occurs in the singular; whereas in John’s Gospel it always occurs as a double.



MAP WORK: Locate Galilee, Bethsaida and Nazareth.

1. What three expressions are translated by the author?
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)

What does this imply about the readers of John’s gospel?

2. What did Andrew and Philip both do upon hearing Jesus?
3. Andrew, Philip, and Nathaniel give testimony concerning Jesus. For each one, write the testimony and the one to whom it was given.

Testimony

Given to Whom

Andrew

Philip

Nathaniel

4. Philip questioned whether “*anything good could come out of Nazareth?*” Was he demeaning Nazareth, or did he have something else in mind? (compare John 7:40-43)

5. It has been suggested that verse 51 alludes to Genesis 28:10-17. If so, what is the possible connection?

6. List all the titles used to describe Jesus that are found in the first chapter of John.

Question to Ponder: We are only told the name (Andrew) of one of the two disciples who left John the Baptist and began to follow Jesus. It has been suggested that the other, unnamed disciple is John, the writer of this Gospel. What support for this view can be given?

LESSON 5: JOHN 2

THE BEGINNING OF SIGNS

Two episodes are recorded in John 2: Jesus' first miracle at the wedding feast in Cana and Jesus' attendance at the Passover feast in Jerusalem.

ACTIVELY READ JOHN 2

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- ◆
- 2:1 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.
 - 2 Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.
 - 3 And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."
 - 4 Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."
 - 5 His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."
 - 6 Now there were set there six waterpots of stone, according to the manner of purification of the Jews, containing twenty or thirty gallons apiece.
 - 7 Jesus said to them, "Fill the waterpots with water." And they filled them up to the brim.
 - 8 And He said to them, "Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast." And they took it.
 - 9 When the master of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and did not know where it came from (but the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom.
 - 10 And he said to him, "Every man at the beginning sets out the good wine, and when the guests have well drunk, then the inferior. You have kept the good wine until now!"
 - 11 This beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory; and His disciples believed in Him.
 - 12 After this He went down to Capernaum, He, His mother, His brothers, and His disciples; and they did not stay there many days.
 - 13 Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.
 - 14 And He found in the temple^a those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the moneychangers doing business.
 - 15 When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables.
 - 16 And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!"
 - 17 Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up."
 - 18 So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?"
 - 19 Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple^b, and in three days I will raise it up."

- 20 Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple^b, and will You raise it up in three days?"
- 21 But He was speaking of the temple^b of His body.
- 22 Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.
- 23 Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did.
- 24 But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men,
- 25 and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.

NOTES:

a "Temple" (Gr. *hieron*) refers to the entire temple complex.

b "Temple" (Gr. *naos*) refers to the sanctuary.



MAP WORK: Locate Cana, Capernaum, and Jerusalem.

1. In the reading, did you find any clues that suggest the readers of this letter are Gentiles?
2. For whom did Jesus perform this miracle?

What is meant by the observation "*and His disciples believed in Him*"? Did they not believe in him earlier?

3. Consider John's summary statement in verse 11. How did Jesus manifest his glory?
4. How many brothers did Jesus have? (cf. Matthew 13:55)
5. When was the Passover celebrated?

6. Why would there be animal merchants and moneychangers doing business in the temple complex?

What was inappropriate about this practice?

Was Jesus' reaction appropriate?

Would it be appropriate for us to react in a similar way to the actions of those who abuse the things of God?

7. Consider John's observation in verses 21 and 22. Did the disciples of Jesus fully understand the sayings and actions of Jesus when they occurred?

LESSON 6: JOHN 3:1-21

NICODEMUS

Jesus teaches Nicodemus, a teacher of Israel, a lesson he should have known.

ACTIVELY READ JOHN 3:1-21

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- ◆
- 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.
 - 2 This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."
 - 3 Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again^a, he cannot see the kingdom of God."
 - 4 Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?"
 - 5 Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit^b, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.
 - 6 "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
 - 7 "Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'^a
 - 8 "The wind^c blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit^c."
 - 9 Nicodemus answered and said to Him, "How can these things be?"
 - 10 Jesus answered and said to him, "Are you the teacher of Israel, and do not know these things?
 - 11 "Most assuredly, I say to you, We speak what We know and testify what We have seen, and you do not receive Our witness.
 - 12 "If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how will you believe if I tell you heavenly things?
 - 13 "No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven^d.
 - 14 "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,
 - 15 "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 should not perish but have everlasting life.
 - 17 "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.
 - 18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.
 - 19 "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.
 - 20 "For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.
 - 21 "But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

NOTES:

- a The Greek word *anōthen* can be translated “again” (KJV, NASV, REB), “anew” (ASV, RSV), or “from above” (JB, NRSV).
- b Or, “water and spirit” (REB). The definite article “the” is not in the text, and whether “spirit” should be capitalized or not depends on the meaning of the phrase in this context.
- c The Greek word *pneuma* may be rendered “breath”, “wind”, or “spirit” depending upon the context.
- d The clause “who is in heaven” is absent from the oldest manuscripts.



1. Nicodemus is mentioned three times in John’s Gospel (3:1, 7:50, 19:39). What do we know about Nicodemus from this account in John 3? [“A ruler of the Jews” probably means that he was a member of the Sanhedrin.]

Could it be that Nicodemus served as an illustration of those John describes in the preceding verses (2:23-25)? If so, what does this tell us about Nicodemus?

2. John states that Nicodemus came to Jesus “by night”. Why? [Be careful in answering.]

More importantly, *why* did Nicodemus come to Jesus at all?

3. What did Nicodemus say he *knew* about Jesus? (3:2) How did he know this? (compare Acts 2:22; 10:38)
4. Review NOTE a above regarding the expression “born again” (v.3). Which translation (“born again”, “born anew”, or “born from above”) fits best with the context? [The Greek expression is usually translated “from above”, e.g. John 3:31; 19:11; James 1:17; 3:15; 3:17]
5. Is to “see the kingdom of God” (v.3) the same as “entering the kingdom of God” (v.5)?

How does one “see” and “enter” God’s kingdom?

6. The expression “born of the water and the Spirit” has been interpreted in a multitude of ways. A few of the common interpretations are as follows:
 1. The reference is to Christian baptism (water) and the giving of the Spirit, cf. Acts 2:38, Titus 3:5.

2. The reference is to John's baptism (water) and the baptism with the Spirit by Jesus, cf. John 1:26-33.
3. The reference is to purification (water) and the transformation of the heart (spirit), cf. Ezekiel 36:25-26.
4. The reference is Spirit baptism; water is a symbol of the Spirit, cf. John 7:38-39.

What are the strengths and weaknesses of each view?

7. In verse 8, Jesus draws a parallel between the blowing of the wind and the birth of the Spirit. What is his point?
8. In verses 14 and 15, Jesus alludes to Moses lifting up the "serpent in the wilderness". Where is this event found in the Old Testament and what is Jesus' point in this comparison?
9. Jesus' final response to Nicodemus begins in verse 10, but where does it end? Many believe that Jesus continues speaking through verse 21 (cf. quotation marks of the NKJV). Others believe that Jesus' response ends in verse 15 and that verses 16-21 are John's remarks (e.g. RSV). What do you think?
10. Why did God send Jesus to this world? What was God's motivation?
11. In verses 16-21, a comparison is made between two groups of people. For each of the following expressions used to describe one group, what is the corresponding expression used to describe the other group?

"eternal life" : _____

"light" : _____

"does the truth" : _____

What themes in this section are similar to those introduced in John's prologue (John 1:1-18)?

LESSON 7: JOHN 3:22-36

THE DECLINE OF JOHN

John again records an event involving John the Baptist. In fact, he is the only Gospel writer to record this particular event. The purpose of the record is not, however, to tell us something more about John, but rather serves to highlight John the Baptist's continuing witness to Jesus.

ACTIVELY READ JOHN 3:22-36

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- ◆
- 22 After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He remained with them and baptized.
 - 23 Now John also was baptizing in Aenon^a near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized.
 - 24 For John had not yet been thrown into prison.
 - 25 Then there arose a dispute between some of John's disciples and the Jews^b about purification.
 - 26 And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified; behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him!"
 - 27 John answered and said, "A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven.
 - 28 "You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent before Him.'
 - 29 "He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled.
 - 30 "He must increase, but I must decrease.
 - 31 "He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all.
 - 32 "And what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony.
 - 33 "He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true.
 - 34 "For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God^c does not give the Spirit by measure.
 - 35 "The Father loves^d the Son, and has given all things into His hand.
 - 36 "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

NOTES:

- a* Name means "springs".
 - b* Or, "a Jew" (NRSV).
 - c* Literally, "he" (ASV, RSV).
 - d* The Greek term for "loves" in this passage is *agapao*.
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- ◆

MAPS: Locate Aenon and Salim.

1. Verse 22 is interesting in that it tells us that Jesus, like John, baptized those that came to him. What additional information does John 4:1,2 give about this?
2. John's disciples are disturbed by the success that Jesus was having. John responds by making two points. Identify these two points.
 - 1)
 - 2)
3. In verse 24, John provides the chronological note that these events took place before John the Baptist was imprisoned. The Gospel of John does not record any additional events of John the Baptist including his imprisonment, but the other Gospel writers do. To complete our understanding of John's work, read the two additional events recorded in the following passages and make notes.

§57 Matthew 11:2-19 (// Luke 7:18-35)

§71 Mark 6:14-29 (// Matthew 14:1-12 // Luke 9:7-9)

4. Write a statement that summarizes the person and work of John the Baptist.
5. In verses 31-36, several statements are made about Jesus. Some describe his role, others his person. List the various statements made about Jesus.

The punctuation of the NKJV suggests that verses 31-36 were spoken by John the Baptist. Other translations (e.g. RSV) end John the Baptist's remarks at verse 30. What do you think?

6. One particular statement made about Jesus is that "*For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure*" (v.34). As given in *Note c* above, the last phrase actually says "*for he does not give the Spirit by measure*". However, most would agree that the pronoun "*he*" refers to God. Does verse 35 support this view?

What does it mean for God to give to Jesus the Spirit without measure? Consider the following passages in their context:

Isaiah 11:2; 42:1; 61:1

John 1:32,33; Luke 3:22

Luke 4:1, 14, 18

7. The statement in verse 36 is very similar to at least two earlier statements that John has recorded in his Gospel. Find and record those passages.

Question to Ponder: If John's baptism was preparatory for Jesus, then what was the baptism that Jesus' disciples performed for? It has often been wondered whether those baptized by John would have to be rebaptized after Jesus's death. Does the fact that Jesus and his disciples baptized have any bearing on this question?

LESSON 8: JOHN 4:1-42

THE WOMAN AT THE WELL

This is the second discourse of Jesus that John records. Jesus is returning to Galilee and passes through Samaria. As a result, many of the Samaritans believed in him.

ACTIVELY READ JOHN 4:1-42

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- ◆
- 4:1 Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John
 - 2 (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples),
 - 3 He left Judea and departed again to Galilee.
 - 4 But He needed to go through Samaria.
 - 5 So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.
 - 6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.
 - 7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."
 - 8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.
 - 9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans."
 - 10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."
 - 11 The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?"
 - 12 "Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"
 - 13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again,
 - 14 "but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."
 - 15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw."
 - 16 Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here."
 - 17 The woman answered and said, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You have well said, 'I have no husband,'
 - 18 "for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly."
 - 19 The woman said to Him, "Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.
 - 20 "Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship."
 - 21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father.
 - 22 "You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.

- 23 "But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.
- 24 "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."
- 25 The woman said to Him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things."
- 26 Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am He."
- 27 And at this point His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?"
- 28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men,
- 29 "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?"
- 30 Then they went out of the city and came to Him.
- 31 In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat."
- 32 But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know."
- 33 Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him anything to eat?"
- 34 Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.
- 35 "Do you not say, 'There are still four months and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest!
- 36 "And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together.
- 37 "For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.'
- 38 "I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors."
- 39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did."
- 40 So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.
- 41 And many more believed because of His own word.
- 42 Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard Him and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."

NOTES:

- a Or, better "*Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans*" (NRSV) with the implication that "*Jews do not share drinking vessels with Samaritans*" (REB).



MAPS: Locate Samaria, Sychar, and Jacob's Well.

1. Why would the Pharisees' knowledge that Jesus (through his disciples) was baptizing more people than John cause Jesus to want to leave Judea?

2. The long-standing animosity between the Jews and the Samaritans is reflected in verse 9.
 - a. Use a Bible dictionary or encyclopedia to find the origin, history and religion of the Samaritans. On a separate sheet of paper, record as much relevant information as you can find.

 - b. One aspect of the Samaritan religion is suggested in verse 20. What mountain is the woman referring to?

 - c. Another aspect is mentioned in verse 25. The Samaritans also looked forward to another prophet like Moses. The name they gave to this prophet was Taheb. It is to this "*Messiah*" that the woman probably had referenced. If so, how could Jesus affirm that he was the messiah for which they looked? Is it unusual for Jesus to be so open in his affirmation that he is the Messiah?

3. What does the expression "living water" (v.10,11) mean? cf. Jeremiah 2:12,13

Why is it an appropriate metaphor for the point that Jesus is making to the woman?

4. Consider Jesus' statement that "*true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth*" (v.23). What did Jesus mean?

5. How is Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman and, later, with his disciples similar to the conversation he had with Nicodemus?

6. In view of John's purpose in writing this gospel (20:30,31), why is this conversation with the Samaritan woman recorded?

LESSON 9: JOHN 4:43 - 5:18

HEALINGS

In this section, Jesus performs two healings, one in Galilee and another in Jerusalem. The Galileans readily accept Jesus whereas the Jewish rulers in Jerusalem seek to kill him.

ACTIVELY READ JOHN 4:43 - 5:18

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- ◆
- 43 Now after the two days He departed from there and went to Galilee.
 - 44 For Jesus Himself testified that a prophet has no honor in his own country.
 - 45 So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast.
 - 46 So Jesus came again to Cana of Galilee where He had made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman^a whose son was sick at Capernaum.
 - 47 When he heard that Jesus had come out of Judea into Galilee, he went to Him and implored Him to come down and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.
 - 48 Then Jesus said to him, "Unless you people see signs and wonders, you will by no means believe."
 - 49 The nobleman said to Him, "Sir, come down before my child dies!"
 - 50 Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your son lives." So the man believed the word that Jesus spoke to him, and he went his way.
 - 51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him and told him, saying, "Your son lives!"
 - 52 Then he inquired of them the hour when he got better. And they said to him, "Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him."
 - 53 So the father knew that it was at the same hour in which Jesus said to him, "Your son lives." And he himself believed, and his whole household.
 - 54 This again is the second sign Jesus did when He had come out of Judea into Galilee.
 - 5:1 After this there was a feast^b of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.
 - 2 Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate^c a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches.
 - 3 In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water.
 - 4 For an angel went down at a certain time into the pool and stirred up the water; then whoever stepped in first, after the stirring of the water, was made well of whatever disease he had.^d
 - 5 Now a certain man was there who had an infirmity thirty-eight years.
 - 6 When Jesus saw him lying there, and knew that he already had been in that condition a long time, He said to him, "Do you want to be made well?"
 - 7 The sick man answered Him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; but while I am coming, another steps down before me."

- 8 Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your bed and walk."
- 9 And immediately the man was made well, took up his bed, and walked. And that day was the Sabbath.
- 10 The Jews therefore said to him who was cured, "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for you to carry your bed."
- 11 He answered them, "He who made me well said to me, "Take up your bed and walk.'"
- 12 Then they asked him, "Who is the Man who said to you, "Take up your bed and walk'?"
- 13 But the one who was healed did not know who it was, for Jesus had withdrawn, a multitude being in that place.
- 14 Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you."
- 15 The man departed and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him well.
- 16 For this reason the Jews persecuted Jesus, and sought to kill Him, because He had done these things on the Sabbath.
- 17 But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."
- 18 Therefore the Jews sought all the more to kill Him, because He not only broke the Sabbath, but also said that God was His Father, making Himself equal with God.

NOTES:

- a Greek word is "*royal*" suggesting that the "*nobleman*" was associated with Herod Antipas, tetrarch ("*king*", Mark 6:14) of Galilee.
- b The feast is not identified, but every possible feast has been suggested. Some manuscripts have "the feast" instead of "a feast", which, if true, might suggest either Passover or the Feast of Tabernacles.
- c In the Greek, only the adjective "*Sheep*" is given; the noun has to be supplied. The text could allow the following word "*pool*" being the appropriate noun, hence "*the Sheep pool*" (JB, NEB), or reference may be to "*the Sheep market*" (KJV), but in light of Nehemiah reference to "*the Sheep gate*" (Nehemiah 3:1,32; 12:39) most translations supply the noun "*gate*".
- d The last phrase of verse 3 ("waiting...") and the whole of verse 4 is not found in the earliest Greek manuscripts.



1. Review:
 - a. Which "*two days*" are referred to in verse 43?
 - b. When was Jesus "*at the feast*" (v.45)? What did John record about Jesus' activities at the feast?
2. Consider verses 44 and 45. To what "*country*" was Jesus referring as not being accepted in? In contrast, what did the Galileans think of Jesus? Why?

3. Is verse 48 a rebuke to the nobleman? [Note the NKJV has “*Unless you people...*” whereas the KJV translates “*Except ye...*”. What’s the difference?]
4. In verse 49, the nobleman’s statement reflects the extent of his faith. What two things does he assume that Jesus must do in order for his child to be healed?

1)

2)

How does Jesus show the error of one of these assumptions? [In the Gospel of John, it is not until the case of Lazarus (John 11), that Jesus shows the error of the other assumption.]

5. If the healing of the nobleman son is the “*second sign*”, what was the first sign? Is this only the second miracle that Jesus had performed to this point of his ministry? If not, then why is this called the second sign?
6. Did the OT “*law*” forbid the carrying of one’s bed on the Sabbath? (cf: Exodus 20:10; Numbers 15:32-36; Jeremiah 17:21-27)
7. Does verse 14 teach that there was a connection between the physical infirmity of this man and his sin? [Be careful. Is physical infirmity ever the result of sin?]
8. What two reasons are given by John for the Jews trying to kill Jesus?
 - 1)
 - 2)
9. As background to verse 17, the Jews would agree that God worked continuously (providence, etc.), even on the Sabbath, but the Jews did not charge God with violating the Sabbath. The Jews concluded from Jesus’ statement about His Father, that Jesus made “*Himself equal with God*” (v.18). What did they mean by this statement: that Jesus was putting himself on a plane with God, or that Jesus claimed to be God himself?
10. Compare the two healings in this lesson. What is different about the two cases?

LESSON 10: JOHN 5:19-47

JESUS ANSWERS THE JEWS

This discourse of Jesus is directed toward those Jews who upbraided Jesus for healing a man on the Sabbath. Jesus justified his action on the basis that His Father had never stopped working and therefore that He, the Son, worked also (5:17). This discourse expands this thought.

ACTIVELY READ JOHN 5:19-47

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- ◆
- 19 Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.
 - 20 "For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel.
 - 21 "For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.
 - 22 "For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,
 - 23 "that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.
 - 24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.
 - 25 "Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.
 - 26 "For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself,
 - 27 "and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.
 - 28 "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice
 - 29 "and come forth; those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.
 - 30 "I can of Myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.
 - 31 "If I bear witness of Myself, My witness is not true.
 - 32 "There is another who bears witness of Me, and I know that the witness which He witnesses of Me is true.
 - 33 "You have sent to John, and he has borne witness to the truth.
 - 34 "Yet I do not receive testimony from man, but I say these things that you may be saved.
 - 35 "He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.
 - 36 "But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish; the very works that I do; bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.

5. Is there any difference between “*life*” and “*everlasting (or eternal) life*” in the Gospel of John as, for example, in verses 21 and 24? (Compare 1:4; 3:15,16; 4:14, 36)

6. In the context of the Son giving life, this passage speaks of two “*resurrections*” (i.e. death to life).
 1. What type of “death” is spoken of in verses 24-27? [Note the phrase: “*the hour is coming, and now is,...*”]

 2. What type of “death” is spoken of in verses 28-29? [Note the phrase: “*the hour is coming,...*”]

7. For what two reasons has God given Jesus the role of judge? (v.23, 27)
 - 1)

 - 2)

8. In verse 31, Jesus acknowledges that he cannot testify for himself. However, Jesus provides four other witnesses who can and do testify that Jesus is sent from God. Who or what are these four witnesses?
 - 1)

 - 2)

 - 3)

 - 4)

LESSON 11: JOHN 6:1-21

FEEDING OF THE 5000

This account of Jesus feeding the 5000 is the first account that John records which is also recorded by the synoptic writers.

ACTIVELY READ JOHN 6:1-21

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- ◆
- 6:1 After these things Jesus went over the Sea of Galilee, which is the Sea of Tiberias^a.
 - 2 Then a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His signs which He performed on those who were diseased.
 - 3 And Jesus went up on the mountain^b, and there He sat with His disciples.
 - 4 Now the Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near.
 - 5 Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, "Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?"
 - 6 But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do.
 - 7 Philip answered Him, "Two hundred denarii^c worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little."
 - 8 One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him,
 - 9 "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?"
 - 10 Then Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.
 - 11 And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted.
 - 12 So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost."
 - 13 Therefore they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten.
 - 14 Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world."
 - 15 Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to the mountain by Himself alone.
 - 16 Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea,
 - 17 got into the boat, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was already dark, and Jesus had not come to them.
 - 18 Then the sea arose because a great wind was blowing.
 - 19 So when they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near the boat; and they were afraid.
 - 20 But He said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid."
 - 21 Then they willingly received Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land where they were going.

NOTES:

- a About AD 20 Herod Anitpas founded a city on the west shore of the Sea of Galilee and named it Tiberias in honor of the Emperor Tiberias. Later, the sea also took on the name *Tiberias* as well, but maybe not until after the ministry of Jesus.
- b Or, “*hillside*” (REB), now known as the Golan Heights.
- c A denarius was the common wage for a laborer (cf. Matthew 20:2), hence “200 *denarii*” was about “*eight months’ wages*” (NIV).

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- ◆
1. In the reading, did you find any clues that suggest the readers of this letter are Gentiles?

 2. These events are also recorded in §72,73,74,75 Matthew 14:13-36 // Mark 6:32-56. Compare these accounts to John’s and note the *major* differences.

 3. Why did the multitudes follow Jesus?

 4. John records that this event took place shortly before the Feast of the Passover. John, nor the synoptic writers, tell of Jesus going to this Passover. Why did Jesus not go? (cf. John 7:1-9)

 5. Is there any significance about “*twelve baskets*” of food being left?

 6. Why would the people conclude from seeing this sign that Jesus was the expected “*Prophet*”? [Hint: Who was the “*Prophet*” suppose to be like? (cf. Deuteronomy 18:15-19) What similar thing had the earlier prophet done?]

 7. John’s account of Jesus walking on the water gives less information than the accounts of Matthew and Mark and no commentary is given by John as to impression this made on the disciples. Why is this account given by John?

LESSON 12: JOHN 6:22-71

“I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE”

The multitudes follow Jesus desiring to be fed again. Jesus offers himself as the Bread of Life from heaven, but his offer is rejected by those who refuse to believe on him. Only John records this pivotal discourse.

ACTIVELY READ JOHN 6:22-71

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- 22 On the following day, when the people who were standing on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other boat there, except that one which His disciples had entered, and that Jesus had not entered the boat with His disciples, but His disciples had gone away alone;
 - 23 however, other boats came from Tiberias, near the place where they ate bread after the Lord had given thanks;
 - 24 when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they also got into boats and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus.
 - 25 And when they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, "Rabbi, when did You come here?"
 - 26 Jesus answered them and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.
 - 27 "Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him."
 - 28 Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?"
 - 29 Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."
 - 30 Therefore they said to Him, "What sign will You perform then, that we may see it and believe You? What work will You do?"
 - 31 "Our fathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"
 - 32 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.
 - 33 "For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."
 - 34 Then they said to Him, "Lord, give us this bread always."
 - 35 And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.
 - 36 "But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe.
 - 37 "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.
 - 38 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.
 - 39 "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

- 40 "And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."
- 41 The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven."
- 42 And they said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven'?"
- 43 Jesus therefore answered and said to them, "Do not murmur among yourselves.
- 44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.
- 45 "It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.
- 46 "Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father.
- 47 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.
- 48 "I am the bread of life.
- 49 "Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead.
- 50 "This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die.
- 51 "I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."
- 52 The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?"
- 53 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.
- 54 "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.
- 55 "For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.
- 56 "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him.
- 57 "As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me.
- 58 "This is the bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever."
- 59 These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.
- 60 Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard this, said, "This is a hard saying; who can understand it?"
- 61 When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, "Does this offend you?"
- 62 "What then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before?"
- 63 "It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.

- 64 "But there are some of you who do not believe." For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him.
- 65 And He said, "Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father."
- 66 From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.
- 67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Do you also want to go away?"
- 68 But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.
- 69 "Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
- 70 Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?"
- 71 He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.
- ◆ —————

1. Again, what themes are present in this account that were introduced in the Prologue?

2. Jesus responds to the question posed by those who sought him with the accusation that they sought him "not because [they] saw the signs, but because [they] ate of the loaves and were filled" (v.26). What does this statement indicate about the purpose of the miracles? [Compare verse 29.] And what does this say about why John always uses the word "sign" instead of "miracle"?

3. The multitudes challenge Jesus to perform a sign such as that performed by Moses in giving the manna. Presumably, what they were requesting was a continuous provision of food like Jesus had provided the previous day. Jesus responds by a series of three statements which leads them to the conclusion he wished. Note the sequence:
 - 1) v.32 "Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you _____."
 - 2) v.33 "For the bread of God is _____ and gives _____."
 - 3) v.35 "I am _____."
 - 4) v.38 "I have _____."

The multitudes had no objection to the first two statements; in fact, they request that Jesus give this bread to them. It is only after the third statement that they "*complained about Him*" (v.41). What was their complaint?

4. This statement “*I am the bread of life*” is the first of seven “*I am*” sayings in John’s Gospel.
 - a. What did Jesus mean by saying that he is the bread “*of life*” or that he is “*living bread*”? (Compare v.47-48.)
 - b. How does one “eat” of this bread? (v.35, 47)
5. Jesus repeatedly said that only those that the Father “*gives*” (v.37,39), “*draws*” (v.44), or “*grants*” the right (v.65) can come unto Jesus. How does God do this? (cf. v.45)
6. In elaborating upon his being the “*bread of life*”, Jesus speaks of his disciples eating his flesh and drinking his blood. His disciples respond by saying “*this is a hard saying; who can understand it?*” (v.60). Jesus also understands that they were *offended* by this teaching? What is “*hard*” or “*offensive*” about this message?
7. What result did Jesus’ message have on those who followed him?

Was this result intentional or unintentional on the part of Jesus?
8. What similarities are there between this lesson and the lesson when Jesus taught the woman at well in Samaria? (cf. John 4)

Question to Ponder: When Jesus speaks of eating his flesh and drinking his blood is he referring to the Lord’s supper which he later institutes? Be prepared to defend your answer.

LESSON 13: JOHN 1 - 6

REVIEW

PLEASE TRY TO ANSWER AS MANY QUESTIONS AS POSSIBLE BEFORE LOOKING AT PREVIOUS LESSONS OR THE BIBLICAL TEXT OF JOHN.

LIST THE CHAPTER WHERE EACH OF THE FOLLOWING IS FOUND.

- _____ 1. Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus.
- _____ 2. Jesus heals the Nobleman's son.
- _____ 3. Jesus calls his first disciples.
- _____ 4. Jesus feeds the 5000 men (plus women and children).
- _____ 5. John the Baptist's first witnessing for Jesus.
- _____ 6. Jesus talks with the woman at the well.
- _____ 7. Jesus changes the water to wine.
- _____ 8. Jesus heals the man at the pool of Bethesda.
- _____ 9. Jesus cleanses the temple.

WHO SAID THE FOLLOWING:

1. "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" _____
2. "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God;..." _____
3. "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did." _____
4. "It is the Sabbath; it is not lawful for to carry your bed." _____
5. "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish..." _____
6. "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." _____

NUMBERS!

1. How many of John's disciples initially followed Jesus? _____

2. How many waterpots did Jesus change to wine? _____
3. How long had it taken to build the temple? _____
4. How many husbands did the woman at the well have? _____
5. How long did the man have his infirmity that Jesus healed at the pool? _____
6. How many baskets of bread were gathered after Jesus fed the 5000? _____
7. How far had the disciples traveled in the boat when Jesus came to them? _____

MATCH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING EVENTS WITH THE CITY THAT IT OCCUR.

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| ___1. John baptized people. | a. Cana |
| ___2. Jesus talks to the woman at the well. | b. Capernaum |
| ___3. Nobleman pleads for his son's life. | c. Bethabara |
| ___4. Jesus heals the man with an infirmity. | d. Jerusalem |
| ___5. The city where the disciples were going when Jesus walked to them on the water. | e. Sychar |

SHORT ANSWER

1. How do we know that John is the author of this Gospel?
2. What is the purpose of John for writing this Gospel? Give text to support.
3. What are the main themes of the Prologue (John 1:1-18)?
4. What are the various expressions, titles, etc. used to describe Jesus in this section of John's Gospel?