

1 Gospel of John – Who, What, Why, When?

◆ **Written by whom?**

- Almost certainly the Apostle John, though the writer never identifies himself. We know the writer was Jewish (he knows all the Jewish customs and the layout of Jerusalem prior to its destruction), he was a disciple, a member of Jesus' inner circle, was present at the last supper and was entrusted to care for Christ's mother Mary - and was not Peter. Every early Christian writer says it was written by John the Disciple.

◆ **Written when and where?**

- 85-90 AD – when John was very old but still active - the last of the original twelve still alive.

◆ **Written to whom?**

- To Non-Jewish (Gentile) Christians

◆ **What form?**

- A narrative about certain extremely significant times with Jesus – but not meant to be a complete biography. It is a very structured book designed to engender belief in the reader. Seven miracles are listed specifically to illustrate attributes of Christ. Seven “I Am” statements are listed to illustrate that Jesus is God.

◆ **What's it about?**

- Belief in Jesus who was the Son of God - the “Word”

◆ **Written for what purpose?**

- “These things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God” (20:31)

2 Gospel of John

The theme of the Gospel is belief in the Son who came from the Father.

Who is Jesus?	Seven 'Signs' of Jesus	Seven 'I Am' Statements of Jesus
The word of God (vs. 1.14)	Water into wine (2.1-11)	I am the bread of life (6.35)
The Lamb of God (1.29,36)	Cure of nobleman's son (4.46-54)	I am the light of the world (8.12)
The Messiah (1.41)	Cure of paralyzed man (5.1-18)	I am the door of the sheep (10.7)
The Son of God (1.49)	Feeding of the multitude (6.6-13)	I am the good shepherd (10.11)
The King of Israel (1.49)	Walking on water (6.16-21)	I am the resurrection and the life (11.25)
The Savior of the World (4.42)	Making the blind see (9.1-7)	I am the way and the truth and the life (14.6)
The Lord and God (20.28)	Raising of Lazarus (11.1-45)	I am the true vine (15.1)

3 Contrasts Between the Synoptics and John

The Synoptics (Matthew, Mark and Luke)	The Gospel of John
Chiefly concerned with Jesus' ministry in the north, around Galilee.	Gives more coverage to Jesus' ministry in the south, around Judea
Much emphasis on the kingdom	More emphasis on the person of Jesus
Jesus as Son of David, Son of Man	Jesus especially as Son of God
Anticipation of the church and references to the infant church	Gospel of the maturing church
The earthly story	The heavenly meaning
Jesus' sayings generally short (e.g., parables)	More of the long discourses of Jesus
Comparatively little commentary by the gospel writers	Much commentary by John
Only one mention of a Passover	Mention of three, possible four, Passovers

4 John – Chapter 1:1-28– Scripture Questions

In Genesis, God spoke the creation into existence. In John, God speaks salvation into existence.

1. What was in the beginning? (vs. 1)
2. In him was _____. (vs. 4)
3. What was John's purpose? (vs. 7)
4. What was coming into the world? (vs. 9)
5. What was given to those who believed in Jesus' name? (vs. 12)
6. What did the Word do? (vs. 14)
7. The law was given through Moses. What came through Jesus? (vs. 17)
8. Who came to question John the Baptizer? (vs. 19)
9. Who did John say he (John) was? (vs. 23)
10. Who did John say was coming after him? (vs. 27)

The Gospel of John was written in Greek.

In Greek, the first sentence reads:

“en arche en logos”

“In the beginning was the Word”

To the Jews, “Word” meant ‘God’, as the creator of all things.

To the Greeks, ‘Word’ meant the rational principle of the universe which governs all things.

5 John – Chapter 1:1-28 – What did it mean to them?

- Everything that is and was began with God. Christ, who is God, was with God at the beginning of everything. Before Christ was darkness—after the Creation, there was light.
- John the Baptizer came, to be the witness that Christ was who he claimed to be. Though Christ was (as creator) the owner of all, the people among whom he lived rejected him.
- Jesus was completely human, and completely God. Because we know Christ, we can know God.
- John the Baptizer was questioned by the religious leaders, and he denied that he was the Anointed One, or Elijah, or The Prophet. He told them that his job was to prepare the way for Christ.

Deuteronomy 18:15 has a promise from God that he will send a prophet to his people after Moses. Most Jewish scholars believed that this Prophet would be a forerunner of the Messiah.

6 John – Chapter 1:1-28 - Application Questions

1. The writer of John used terms and ideas familiar to philosophers of the times. These were people who spent their lives trying to figure out how the world began, what the principles of right living were, and how Man fit into the world. How important do you think it is to understand these kinds of ideas? What difference do they make?
2. Our denomination tends to the intellectual over the emotional when it comes to understanding the gospel. How can we get a good balance between these two different brain activities?
3. John used a quotation from Isaiah to explain who he was and what he was doing. Do you have any specific scriptures which come to mind when you are under stress?

7 John – Chapter 1:29-51—Scripture Questions

1. What did John call Jesus when he saw him coming to the river? (vs. 29)
2. Why was John baptizing people? (vs. 31)
3. How did John see the Holy Spirit identify Jesus as the Messiah? (vs. 32)
4. How did John know what the sign meant? (vs. 33)
5. What did John testify? (vs. 34)
6. What did a couple of John's disciples do when they heard John call Jesus 'Lamb of God'? (vs. 37)
7. Who were the two disciples who followed Jesus? (vs. 40)
8. Who was Andrew's brother, and what did Jesus say to him? (vs. 42)
9. Jesus found and called _____, who then called _____. (vs. 43,44)
10. What did Nathanael say to Jesus? (vs. 49)

"The Lamb of God" refers to Christ's sacrificial nature. In Leviticus 14:10-25, the instruction was to use a lamb as an offering to remove guilt.

John's ministry had two purposes: to lead his hearers to repentance and to reveal the Messiah to Israel. This is why he kept baptizing after Messiah was revealed—he still needed to lead his hearers to repentance.

8 John – Chapter 1:29-51—Summary

- John didn't know that Jesus, his cousin, was the Messiah until after the Holy Spirit came down on him as evidence of who he (Jesus) was. But after he did know, he told his followers and people around him about Jesus. He told them that Jesus was the one who would be the final sacrifice that would wipe clean the sins of the world.
- When John told his followers who Jesus was, some of them left to be Jesus' disciples. At first they called him 'Teacher'. Andrew was first. The second wasn't named, but may have been John, the writer of this gospel. Then came Peter, Philip and Nathanael.
- Jesus knew that Nathanael was someone who had been studying the word of God. He told Nathanael that the things that he had learned up to that point were nothing compared to what he would learn in the future.

To 'baptize with the Holy Spirit' means that just as water baptism showed repentance and confession of sin, so the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the seal and driving engine of the new life. Repentance and confession are the conditions on which the believer receives the gift of the Spirit.

9 John – Chapter 1:29-51—Application Questions

1. Jesus asked John's disciples "What do you want?" when they followed him. What do you want from Jesus? What does our church want?
2. Jesus' disciples were mostly introduced to him by other people. Some, like Philip, he called directly. How did you get to know Jesus? Who introduced you, or did he call you directly?
3. The first thing Jesus changed about Peter was his name. Can you remember what changed first for you when you became a believer?

10 John – Chapter 2—Scripture Questions

1. What was the problem (at the wedding) that Jesus' mother wanted him to fix? (vs. 3)
2. How did Jesus protest, and what did Mary tell the servants? (vs. 4, 5)
3. Jesus told the servants to fill the water jars with _____. (vs. 7)
4. To whom did the servants take the wine? (vs. 8,9)
5. How did the toastmaster compliment the wine? (vs. 10)
6. How did Jesus' disciples react to this miracle? (vs. 11)
7. When it was almost Passover, Jesus went to _____. (vs. 13)
8. What did Jesus find in the Gentile's court, and how did he react? (vs. 14-16)
9. What did the temple authorities demand of Jesus? (vs. 18)
10. How did Jesus answer their demand? (vs. 19)
11. What did Jesus really mean by his claim to rebuild the temple in three days? (vs. 22)
12. What else happened in Jerusalem at Passover time? Why did they believe? (vs. 23, 24)

First-century wedding feasts could go on for a week. It was a serious problem to run out of food or drink—the embarrassment could haunt newly wedded couples for years.

Jews who came from far away needed to be able to buy sacrificial animals near the temple. Here, however, they were being sold in the outer court of the temple itself—the one place where Gentiles could come to pray.

11 John – Chapter 2—Summary

One of the author's gifts to his readers is his habit of explaining the actions of words of Jesus while he is telling the story. This is one of the reasons he calls them 'signs' instead of miracles. The emphasis is on the meaning, rather than the showy nature of the event. For example, the water-into-wine sign is for the purpose of revealing his glory, and to encourage belief. As with the other signs, this one reveals something important about Jesus' identity, and creates an attraction to the movement that is beginning to gather around Jesus. Changing water into wine is, in a way, simply what God does all the time in the world. Water, soil, and sun combine to change seeds into food. When Jesus does the change directly, it not only puts his divinity into stark relief, it shows that he is like his father in his ability to care for humanity.

The violence in the second half of the chapter is jarring. Jesus is appalled and angry that the only place available for Gentiles to pray is taken over by a livestock market. This market had, no doubt, grown up gradually: it was probably started as a convenience for those who had traveled a long way to get to the Temple and needed appropriate sacrifices. Whatever the original purpose, it had grown into a commercial enterprise that completely overshadowed the true purpose of the space. Jesus' reaction to the idol worship that had taken over (worship of money and convenience) is a mirror of God's hatred of our lack of understanding of the purpose of worship. Sometimes we need a clean sweep of our assumptions and practices in order to worship him 'in Spirit and in Truth'.

12 John – Chapter 2—Application Questions

1. Jesus changed the water into wine, but no-one but the servants really knew about the change. When he changed you, was it a big change that everyone noticed, or a quiet change? What is most different about you?
2. When Jesus came through the temple court like a hurricane, people were in turmoil, furious. Maybe we are too cautious about the changes we make. Is there something in our church that needs to have whips taken to it?
3. The signs Jesus did were so that people could believe. What kind of sign would really raise your faith?
4. The Jews who challenged Jesus wanted to know how he got the authority to do what he did. What spiritual authorities are you willing to accept? How much proof do you need before you accept someone else's authority?

13 John – Chapter 2—Scripture Questions

1. Where was the wedding that Jesus, his disciples and his mother attended? (vs. 1,2)
2. What was the problem that Jesus' mother wanted him to fix? (vs. 3)
3. What did Mary tell the servants? (vs. 5)
4. Jesus told the servants to fill the water jars with _____. (vs. 7)
5. To whom did the servants take the wine? (vs. 8,9)
6. How did the toastmaster compliment the wine? (vs. 10)
7. Where did Jesus and his disciples (with Jesus' family) travel after the wedding? (vs. 12)
8. When it was almost Passover, Jesus went to _____. (vs. 13)
9. What did Jesus find in the Gentile's court? (vs. 14)
10. How did Jesus react to what he saw in the temple? (vs. 15,16)
11. What did the temple authorities demand of Jesus? (vs. 18)
12. How did Jesus answer their demand? (vs. 19)
13. What did Jesus really mean by his claim to rebuild the temple in three days? (vs. 22)
14. What else happened in Jerusalem at Passover time? (vs. 23)
15. Jesus did not trust himself to those who professed belief only because they saw _____. (vs. 24)

First-century wedding feasts could go on for a week. It was a serious problem to run out of food or drink—the embarrassment could haunt newly wedded couples for years.

Jews who came from far away needed to be able to buy sacrificial animals near the temple. Here, however, they were being sold in the outer court of the temple itself—the one place where Gentiles could come to pray.

14 John – Chapter 2—Summary

- Jesus, his new followers and his mother went to a wedding. When Mary asked him, Jesus turned water into wine (and evidently very good wine, too). No-one but the servants and his disciples knew what he had done, but it was enough to make his disciples really believe in his power.
- Next, the group traveled to Capernaum for a visit. Then Jesus went to Passover in Jerusalem, which all Jewish men were required to celebrate. He was infuriated to find that the outer court of the temple was overrun with animals and bankers.
- Jesus made a whip and turned the whole place upside down, scattering animals and money everywhere. He was outraged that they had turned his Father's house into a marketplace. The Jews present demanded that he prove his authority by showing them a miracle.
- Jesus said, "I'll show you a miracle. Tear down the Temple and I'll put it up again in three days." They thought he meant the physical building, but he meant his body after he was crucified. He already knew how his story would end. Later on, Jesus' disciples remembered what he said—then they understood what he meant.
- A lot of people in Jerusalem saw Jesus doing amazing things, and they were very impressed. Jesus, however, knew that their belief was superficial. He couldn't be fooled by people—he knew what was really in their hearts.

John – Chapter 2—Application Questions

1. Jesus changed the water into wine, but no-one but the servants really knew about the change. When he changed you, was it a big change that everyone noticed, or a quiet change? What is most different about you?
2. When Jesus came through the temple court like a hurricane, people were in turmoil, furious. Maybe we are too cautious about the changes we make. Is there something in our church that needs to have whips taken to it?
3. The signs Jesus did were so that people could believe. What kind of sign would really raise your faith?
4. The Jews who challenged Jesus wanted to know how he got the authority to do what he did. What spiritual authorities are you willing to accept? How much proof do you need before you accept someone else's authority?

16 John – Chapter 3 - Scripture Questions

1. How did Nicodemus know Jesus was from God? (vs. 2)
2. Jesus told Nicodemus that no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of what two things? (vs. 5)
3. Who has gone into heaven? (vs. 13)
4. What did God give the world, for love's sake? Why did he do this? (vs. 16, 17)
5. If you live in the light, what can be plainly seen? (vs. 21)
6. What was the argument that John's disciples reported to him? What were they REALLY worried about? (vs. 25, 26)
7. How did John respond to his disciples' concerns? (vs. 27-30)
8. If someone accepts Jesus' testimony about himself, what do they certify about God? (vs. 33)
9. How does God give the Holy Spirit? (vs. 34)
10. Whoever believes in the Son has _____. Whoever rejects the Son will not see _____. (vs. 36)

17 John – Chapter 3 – What did it mean to them?

A local leader, Nicodemus, came to talk to Jesus. He knew Jesus was a godly person because of what he (Jesus) was able to do. Jesus told him that the only way to really be a part of God's kingdom was to change into a different person. Nicodemus thought this was impossible.

Jesus explained that true repentance (as shown by water baptism) and change of nature (provided by the Holy Spirit) were what made it possible to change to a different person. Jesus said that He, as the Son of Man, would provide through his death the salvation for everyone who believed in him. This belief was not just a mental understanding but an acceptance and commitment to him.

Later, John the Baptist made it clear to his troubled disciples that Jesus' authority was from heaven, and his authority and position were over anyone else. Jesus was sent by God, with all of God's authority and power, and anyone who accepted and believed in him would be a part of God's community forever. Anyone who rejected Jesus would be outside of that community forever, not because God rejected them, but by their own choice.

The author of the Gospel spends a great deal of time talking about dualities, or conflicting ideas. There is no middle ground here: one is either an insider or an outsider, a believer or an unbeliever. Some of the ideas the writer brings up are world above/world below, spirit/flesh, true Israel/Jews, belief/unbelief, light/dark, God/Satan, truth/falsehood, children of light/children of darkness, even love/hate. There was, by this time, a feeling among followers of Jesus that they were isolated and oppressed. John may have been trying to remind his readers that there were eternal consequences to their choices, and that to leave their commitments was to abandon Jesus himself.

18 John – Chapter 3 - Application Questions

1. Does our church ask serious questions of people who attend? How much should we challenge people about their faith?
2. The idea of being reborn, or recreated, as a new type of being is hard to understand. As new beings, we are now part of eternal life with God. What does ‘eternal life’ mean to you?
3. What is the connection in your life between the Holy Spirit and the way you live? Do you know the Spirit is there, or is it something ‘running in the background’ that you aren’t really aware of?
4. John says that people who reject Jesus as God’s Son will not have eternal life. That seems pretty definite. What do you think?

19 John – Chapter 4 - Scripture Questions

1. Jesus and his disciples came to a town called _____ in Samaria where _____ well was located (vs. 4-5)
2. Jesus talked to the woman at the well symbolically about _____ water. (vs. 10)
3. Jesus explained that the kind of water he was discussing would lead to _____ life (vs. 14)
4. Jesus said, “God is _____ and his worshippers must worship him in _____ and _____ (vs. 24)
5. The woman said, “The Messiah ... will explain everything to us.” How did Jesus reply? (vs. 26)
6. How did the Samaritan woman respond to the conversation she had with Jesus? (vs. 28-30)
7. How did Jesus describe the work ahead of his disciples? (vs. 35-38)
8. After Jesus’ two-day visit, why did the Samaritans believe in him? (vs. 42)
9. After the Galileans welcomed Jesus, what did the royal official want? (vs. 47)
10. How did the official’s family respond to the miraculous healing? (vs. 53)

20 John – Chapter 4 – What did it mean to them?

The Jewish people hated the Samaritans (who they considered apostates, traitors and half-breeds) and would often go far out of their way to NOT go through Samaria. The conflict had been going on a long time. When the northern kingdom of Israel was destroyed around 930 BC, the Assyrians carried away most of the people into slavery (especially the upper class). To hold the land, the Assyrians resettled other people who intermarried with the Hebrew people left behind. Eventually, Yahweh worship was spread throughout the populations. The worst offence, however, related to temple worship. The Samaritans built a rival temple on Mount Garazim (with the permission of Alexander the Great) and claimed that this was the true center of worship. The Jews, naturally, said that only the temple in Jerusalem was God's true center. Of course there was a great deal more to the story, but we can easily see that humanity is the same through history: once we stake out a position, we become entrenched in defending that position. Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman, then, was more than a startling change in gender roles (though it was certainly that). His words and actions challenged political and religious positions of his day. He cut through 'the way things are' with a return to 'the way God intended things to be'. Jesus knew that the day was not far off when worship would be centered in who God was, rather than where humanity tried to box him in. The Samaritan desire to learn from the Messiah overrode their suspicion of Jesus' intent. To their credit, Jesus' disciples appear to have accepted their time in Samaria with both obedience and trust in his teaching.

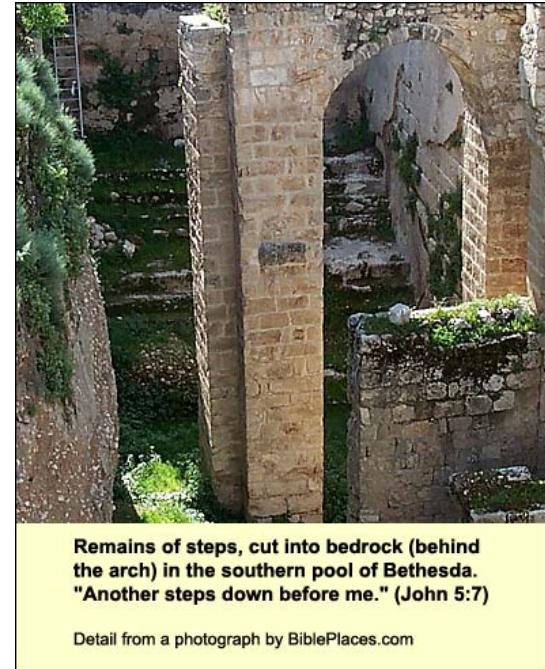
The later story, the healing of the official's child, finds Jesus back in Galilee. (He is actually in Cana, where his first Sign took place.) The official who hears of his return is someone who would have been serving the Romans. The author uses this story, and the story of the Samaritan woman, to point up the differences between Jesus' reception by the Jews and those the Jews considered unworthy. In this way the author prepares the readers for the eventual fulfillment of prophecy that salvation was for all the world.

21 John – Chapter 4 - Application Questions

1. Jesus took his disciples and left when a controversy started up about who was baptizing more. Was there maybe some jealousy on the part of John that Jesus wanted to avoid? Do we ever feel jealousy about churches that are bigger or growing faster? What should we do about these feelings?
2. Jesus promised living water – the Holy Spirit – God in us. How do we know that God's Spirit is really in us? Do you feel like you get in God's way sometimes?
3. Jesus said his 'food', or the motivation to keep going, was to do God's will and finish the mission of bringing salvation to the world. What is your motivation?
4. The Samaritans believed in Jesus when they got to know him. The Galileans were more interested in what he could DO rather than who he WAS. What do the ministries of our church focus on—who Jesus is, or what he can do?

22 John – Chapter 5 - Scripture Questions

1. Where was the pool located, and who was there? (vs. 2-5)
2. What did Jesus ask the invalid, and what did he reply? (vs. 6)
3. What did Jesus tell him to do, and what happened? (vs. 8-10)
4. What did Jesus say to the man when he found him later at the temple, and how did he respond? (vs. 14, 15)
5. What reason did Jesus give for his actions? (vs. 17)
6. Why were the Jews persecuting Jesus? According to Jesus, what can the Son do? (vs. 18, 19)
7. Why did God give the power of judgment to Jesus? (vs. 23)
8. Jesus said, “Whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has _____.” (vs. 24)
9. Verses 25-29 can be read as referring to those who are dead in sin. What will happen to them when they listen, and hear, Jesus? (vs. 25-29)
10. Who testified on Jesus’ behalf? (vs. 31-40)
11. What did Jesus know about the Jews whom he was addressing? (vs. 42)
12. Who did Jesus say was the person accusing the Jews? (vs. 45)



Remains of steps, cut into bedrock (behind the arch) in the southern pool of Bethesda. "Another steps down before me." (John 5:7)

Detail from a photograph by BiblePlaces.com

23 John – Chapter 5 – What did it mean to them?

One of the themes in this chapter is ‘witnessing’. The story of the healing in the pool matters because it creates an undeniable witness: an invalid who had been at the pool for 38 years, whom everyone knew was unable to get himself into the water, was healed. Nobody tries to deny that this person was disabled—and was now well. Not only does Jesus do this healing on the Sabbath, Jesus even has him do something to get the attention of the religious leaders—he tells him to carry his mat, something forbidden on the Sabbath! Jesus knows exactly what is going to happen. His power is real, and the healing is real, so the religious leaders grab at the only lever left which is the breaking of a Sabbath rule.

During Jesus’ confrontation with the religious leaders (which happens in the Temple, by the way, in full view of the public), Jesus makes it clear that everything he does is in the power of his relationship with God. He couldn’t have challenged his listeners any more openly! Up to this point, he has acted as a Rabbi—a Rabbi with powers, but still a teacher—and now he is claiming direct authority from God, as well as status equal to God. The religious leaders would not have missed his reference to them as the spiritually dead, either. Jesus knew that those with ‘ears to hear’ would accept him and his claims, but that those who were only in it for the power and control would reject him. Jesus explains that hearing, accepting and believing his words moves people past judgment and into eternal life, from the death of unbelief into the life of belief. At the end of time, everyone will be judged for what they have done in their life on earth, judged by Jesus himself. Jesus was given this authority by God himself.

At the end of this confrontation, Jesus evokes the memory and words of Moses himself, the great Lawgiver. No one listening to him, not the religious leaders or the common people who were there to worship, would miss the significance of Jesus’ claim that Moses had predicted Jesus’ coming and salvation. Everyone there knew the disabled man: everyone there knew that Jesus had healed him. Jesus sealed this witness with the information that Moses, their greatest prophet, supported Jesus’ claims.

No wonder the leaders decided to kill him.

After the destruction of the temple of Solomon in 586 BC, the Jewish scholars substituted the study of the Law for the observance of the temple ritual and sacrifices. They believed that the very study itself would bring them life.

24 John – Chapter 5 - Application Questions

1. The lame man didn't ask for healing. When Jesus asked him if he wanted to be cured, he complained. Then Jesus healed him anyway. Have you known someone who got a blessing they didn't ask for or deserve? Why would God do something like that?
2. The Jews had very strict laws about what could be done on the Sabbath, to the point that human need was less important than keeping the rules. What 'laws' do we have in our congregation that sometimes seem more important than people's needs? For instance, we have an unspoken rule that it be really, really quiet in our worship service. What kind of effect does this have?
3. Why do you accept that Jesus is who he says he is? What do you accept as proof?
4. What sort of testimony about the reality of Jesus does our church provide?

25 John – Chapter 6:1-34—Scripture Questions

1. Why did the crowd of people follow Jesus? (vs. 2)
2. What was Jesus concerned about when he saw the great crowd of people? (vs. 5)
3. How did Philip and Andrew respond to Jesus' desire to feed the people? (vs. 7-9)
4. What did Jesus do with the food from the 'small boy'? (vs. 11)
5. Why did Jesus want the leftover food to be gathered? How much was leftover? (vs. 12-13)
6. Why did Jesus slip away from the people? (vs. 15)
7. How did Jesus approach the disciples after they left for the other shore? (vs. 19)
8. Why did Jesus say the crowd had followed him? (vs. 26)
9. After the people wanted to know how they, too, could perform these miracles, Jesus said, "The work of God is this: to _____ in the one he has sent." (vs. 29)
10. What test did the crowd want Jesus to pass? Who really sent the manna? (vs. 30-32)
11. What is the true bread of God? (vs. 33)

26 John – Chapter 6:1-34—What did it mean to them?

Because Jesus was performing miraculous healings, a large group of people was following him. He asked his disciples (as a test) how to provide food for them. Using a very small meal, he fed 5,000 men and their families. There were 12 baskets of leftovers. The people he fed thought he was the Prophet, come to take back the kingdom from the Romans, so he slipped away.

The disciples took a boat back to the west shore of the Sea of Galilee. When they were half-way across, Jesus walked on the water to them. They were terrified, but he calmed them. The crowd of people following Jesus figured out he was gone, and they took boats and went after him, headed to Capernaum.

After the people caught up with Jesus, they wanted to know how he got there ahead of them. He told them that they didn't want him, but rather they wanted to see more amazing stunts. Specifically, they wanted him to create food. They wanted him to do what Moses had done. He reminded them that it was really God who had given them the manna, and that what they really needed was the Bread of God that came from Heaven and would give life to the world. They didn't really understand that he was talking about himself.

27 John – Chapter 6:1-34—Application Questions

1. Jesus tested Philip by asking how they were going to feed the crowd. Has Jesus tested you? How could you tell? What were the results?
2. Jesus fed a lot of people from a little bit of food. Can you think of a time in our church where a lot has been done from a small start?
3. Have you ever been frightened by something spiritual?
4. What would you do if you saw a miracle?

28 John – Chapter 6:35-71—Scripture Questions

1. How would those who believed in Jesus be affected? (vs. 35)
2. Why had Jesus come down from heaven? (vs. 38)
3. What was the Father's will? (vs. 40)
4. What was the objection of the Jews listening to Jesus? (vs. 42)
5. How did Jesus say that people were able to come to him? (vs. 44)
6. What does the believer have? (vs. 47)
7. How did Jesus describe himself? (vs. 51)
8. What did Jesus' listeners think he was talking about? (vs. 52)
9. What was to be the result of 'feeding' on Jesus' flesh and 'drinking' his blood? (vs. 54)
10. Many of Jesus' disciples were confused, could not understand what he was talking about. What did they do? (vs. 66)
11. What was Peter's confession to Jesus? (vs. 66)

29 John – Chapter 6:35-71—What did it mean to them?

Jesus told his listeners that he was the source of eternal life. He talked in terms of bread and blood, which confused his listeners. He also explained that the only way to achieve eternal life was through him, and that he was authorized in everything he did by God the Father. This made his listeners very angry. They knew his family, evidently, and couldn't accept that he was the Son of God.

Even Jesus' disciples were confused, and some of them left him because they couldn't understand. Jesus said that understanding was given by the Holy Spirit, and that, in fact, those who believed in him were those who were drawn to him by God and the Spirit. Those people had hearts that were ready to follow.

Jesus asked the Twelve if they would stay. Peter spoke for them all, saying "Where would we go? You have the words of eternal life. We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."

30 John – Chapter 6:35-71—Application Questions

1. It appears that a person has to be made ready by God before they can hear and understand Jesus. How did God make you ready and able to believe?
2. We are only able to be alive in Jesus if we use him as ‘food’. Think of it as spiritual life support, with the IVs in us being Bible study and prayer. What other kinds of ‘feeding’ are available to us?
3. The Jews grumbled about Jesus’ claim that he was from heaven because they had seen him grow up. They were too familiar with him to accept what he had to say. Would it be better if our pastors were more distant, less familiar? Would that make it easier to accept what they say as authoritative?
4. Jesus knew Judas would oppose him, and yet he chose him anyway. When we set up committees and ministries, we usually choose people who are (more or less) in agreement about things. Should we deliberately include people that we know will oppose us? Why or why not?

31 John – Chapter 7—Scripture Questions

1. Why did Jesus not want to go publicly to Judea? (vs. 1, 6)
2. Among the people in Jerusalem, what were the differing opinions about Jesus? (vs. 12, 13)
3. Who did Jesus say his teaching came from? (vs. 16-18)
4. The crowd of people knew about the healing of the man from the pool of Bethesda. How did Jesus tell them to judge his (Jesus') actions? (vs. 24)
5. How did the talk among Jesus' hearers shift after a failed attempt to arrest him? (vs. 30, 31)
6. What did Jesus say which was completely misunderstood by the Jews? (vs. 34-36)
7. What was the next confusing thing Jesus said? How does John explain it? (vs. 37-39)
8. How does the confusion about Jesus escalate? (vs. 40-43)
9. Why didn't the temple police arrest Jesus? (vs. 46)
10. Why were the Pharisees so confident that Jesus wasn't a prophet? (vs. 52)

32 John – Chapter 7—What did it mean to them?

In this chapter, the author seems to be highlighting the ways that Jesus caused turmoil and uncertainty among the general population. The Pharisees, professional clergy that they were, were absolutely certain that Jesus was a dangerous troublemaker, someone who was stirring people up and lying to them. The people who heard Jesus, on the other hand, seemed to have open minds. They were confused, true, but they were confused because they knew enough about their faith to realize that Jesus fit the parameters for (at the least) a prophet. He had divine powers, he spoke with authority, he taught about God, he called them to believe. The people who heard were at least willing to consider that he was the Messiah.

John's description of the confusion and uncertainty is clarifying for us. The only way we can be confused is if we are willing to entertain the idea that we don't know everything about God and his plans for the world. The Pharisees (except for Nicodemus) were certain about their knowledge, and were willing to kill Jesus to keep him from upsetting their world view. There is no indication in the text that Jesus explained himself to his listeners: instead, he left them to chew on his words, thinking about their meaning. This, of course, left them open to the teaching of the apostles after Pentecost.

33 John – Chapter 7—Application Questions

1. The people listening to Jesus speak at the temple were confused, both with who he was and with what he was getting at. What kinds of things do people get confused about spiritually today? For example: what is the best way to help people in need?
2. Do our preconceived ideas and knowledge get in the way of deeper spiritual understanding? How?
3. The Pharisees were trying to contain a potentially volatile situation during a big festival. Failure on their part would have brought real trouble from the Roman soldiers. What could they have done differently? How does our church deal with potential disruption?
4. Jesus' brothers told him, "No one who wants to be widely known acts in secret." Is this true? What benefits are gained from publicity? What are the drawbacks?

34 John – Chapter 8—Scripture Questions

1. As Jesus taught in the temple, the Pharisees and teachers brought a woman before Jesus. Of what was she accused? Why were they trying to trap Jesus? (vs. 4-6)
2. How did Jesus challenge the woman's accusers? (vs. 7)
3. Why did the Pharisees say that Jesus' testimony about himself was invalid? (vs. 13)
4. Jesus said, "If you knew me, you would also know _____." (vs. 19)
5. The Jews didn't understand when Jesus said "Where I go, you cannot come." What did he mean? (vs. 21)
6. When would the Jews understand that he was who he said he was? (vs. 28)
7. If you know the truth about Jesus, what will happen? (vs. 32)
8. Who did the Jews believe was their father? Who did Jesus say their real father was? (vs. 39, 44)
9. What did Jesus say about Abraham that made his listeners furious? (vs. 58)
10. How did the people in the temple react to Jesus' claim? (vs. 59)

35 John – Chapter 8 – What did it mean to them?

When Jesus went to the temple to teach, some teachers and Pharisees tried to trap him by bringing before him an adulterous woman. He refused to be trapped, but encouraged anyone with no sin to throw the first stone. Eventually, they all left, and Jesus told the woman to go her way—leaving her life of sin behind. Afterwards, Jesus spoke plainly, telling his listeners that only by listening to and believing in him could they be saved.

The Jews who harassed Jesus refused to accept his word about his authority to say the things he said. Jesus told them that until they accepted him as God's Son, they were cut off from God. They seemed to be unable to understand him. Finally, Jesus told them that when they saw him 'lifted up' (crucified), they would finally understand who he was. He said that God was always with him, because he was always doing what pleased God.

Jesus told the people who claimed to believe him that their lives would show their faith. They thought that because they were descended from Abraham they were therefore safely in God's family. Jesus explained that their behavior showed their family connections—in their case, their behavior showed that they were in Satan's family, opposing God.

The listeners tried to say that Jesus was not a good Jew, and even that he was possessed by a demon. They were appalled that he thought himself better than Abraham, and they were completely confounded by his claim that those who kept his word would never see death. Jesus told them that it was his relationship with God that gave him the authority to say what he did. He was trying to explain that Abraham would have rejoiced in God's purposes being fulfilled through him (Jesus).

When Jesus told the Jews that 'before Abraham was born, I am!' (which meant that he was equal to and one with God), they picked up rocks to stone him to death, regardless of the penalty they might get from the Romans.

36 John – Chapter 8—Application Questions

1. The Pharisees weren't trying to learn anything, they were trying to trap Jesus so they could get him in trouble. What is the right way to question authorities?
2. In our society, people who break civil and criminal laws are supposed to suffer consequences. What should be done with people who break moral laws?
3. "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the things Abraham did." Abraham took a journey of faith, without knowing what the outcome would be. What are a couple of things our church could do that would be wild leaps of faith?
4. The Jews tried to denigrate what Jesus said, saying anything they could think of to keep from admitting that he might be telling the truth. What is the hardest thing about Christianity for you to accept?

37 John – Chapter 9—Scripture Questions

1. What did the disciples want to know about the blind man? (vs. 2)
2. Why did Jesus say it had happened? (vs. 3)
3. What physical method did Jesus use to accomplish the miracle of healing? (vs. 6-7)
4. What were the Pharisees concerned about? (vs. 16)
5. Who did the Pharisees call on for proof about his blindness:? (vs. 18)
6. What did the parents say about their son? (vs. 20-22)
7. How did the formerly blind man answer the Pharisees? (vs. 25-27)
8. What did Jesus do when he heard what had happened to the man? (vs. 35)
9. How did the man respond to Jesus' declaration? (vs. 38)
10. Why did Jesus come into the world? (vs. 39)
11. Jesus said, "If you were blind, you would not be guilty of _____." (vs. 41)

38 John – Chapter 9—What did it mean to them?

When Jesus and his disciples came across a blind man, the disciples wanted to know who was to blame for his blindness. Jesus doesn't assign blame. He says, however, that there is a purpose to his blindness: so that God's work could be shown. People in the ancient world assumed that if people suffered, it was because of angering divinity in some way.

After Jesus healed the man, there was a huge disturbance. The neighbors thought the man might be someone else, the Pharisees were angry that Sabbath law had been broken. The Pharisees even tried to use this healing as a way to discredit Jesus. Keeping the laws was a form of worship. To deliberately break the law was seen as a way of disrespecting God.

The man's parents were afraid of being kicked out of the synagogue, excommunicated. In fact, after the healed man confirmed Jesus as a man of God he WAS excommunicated—excluded from the Jewish community as a dead man. Jesus sought and found the man, who professed his faith and commitment to Jesus. John may have included this story as a way of showing that faith in Jesus meant making a break from previous commitments.

Finally, Jesus made it clear to the Pharisees that their claim to enlightenment and knowledge only showed that they were living in darkness, guilty sinners. This would, of course, have threatened both their authority over their congregations and their sense of security in their identity as people who knew and understood the Lord.

39 John – Chapter 9—Application Questions

1. Why are some people such sticklers for rules?
2. Bad things can happen for many reasons: people may bring it on themselves, someone else does it to them, God may send it to them, and sometimes it is random—stuff just happens sometimes. How do we know, when something happens, what the cause is? Does it actually matter?
3. The man was blind for at least 30 years. How important is our health to God?
4. How does spiritual blindness show itself?

40 John – Chapter 10—Scripture Questions

1. How does the shepherd enter the gate, and why do the sheep follow him? (vs. 2-4)
2. Did Jesus' listeners understand the point he was trying to make? (vs. 6)
3. Jesus said, "I am the _____. Whoever enters through me will be _____." (vs. 9)
4. What does the Good Shepherd do for his sheep? (vs. 10-11)
5. How does a hired hand respond when danger threatens the flock? (vs. 13)
6. What were Jesus' plans for the 'other sheep'? (vs. 16)
7. How did the religious leaders respond to what Jesus was saying? (vs. 19-21)
8. What did the Jews demand that Jesus tell them, and why did Jesus say that they did not believe? (vs. 24-26)
9. The religious leaders said they were not stoning him for his miracles, but because he, a mere man, claimed to be _____. (vs. 33)
10. What evidence did Jesus demand that the Jews consider? (vs. 37-38)

41 John – Chapter 10—What did it mean to them?

Jesus described the relationship between himself and those he came to save: “I have a personal, vested interest in you. Like a shepherd knows his sheep, I know you intimately. If you are mine, you will recognize the truth of what I say. You will trust and follow me. A false teacher, a sheep ‘rustler’, as it were, only wants to use you—they will be no help to you in time of trouble. I will die for you. You will live because of me.”

Jesus’ words about sheep, shepherds, authority from God—all this was too much for the listening Jews. Some thought he was crazy, some thought he had potential. They finally cornered him at Hanukkah and demanded that he say straight out whether or not he was Messiah (with all that implied).

Jesus told them that he HAD told them, but they wouldn’t believe him. They couldn’t believe him because they weren’t his ‘sheep’. Jesus’ sheep were given to him by God, and nobody could take them away. In fact, Jesus said that he and God have one heart and mind. This was too much for the Jews, and they wanted to stone him.

Jesus challenged the Jews to look at the things he had done, if they couldn’t understand and accept the words he said. The evidence of the miracles should have been enough to show the unity between God and himself. This provoked another attempt to arrest him. He left town and went back across the Jordan river. Many people came, heard and believed.

42 John – Chapter 10—Application Questions

1. **Why did Jesus use stories to get his point across?** Isn't it better to just tell straight information if you want people to know something?
2. Jesus said the Jews couldn't understand because they weren't his sheep. That doesn't seem fair. They had been watching and wanting Messiah forever. **Are some people just not *able* to 'get' Jesus?**
3. The Jews wanted Messiah to get rid of the Romans and make them an important nation again. **What do you want from Jesus?**
4. Jesus said that he had come to give his sheep life, more and better life than they ever dreamed of. **What does a 'full and better life' mean to you personally? What does it mean to our church?**

43 John – Chapter 11—Scripture Questions

1. What was wrong with Lazarus? (vs. 1)
2. How did Jesus feel about Martha, Mary and Lazarus? (vs. 5)
3. What did he tell his disciples at first? (vs. 11) What did he tell them next? (vs. 14)
4. When they arrived in Bethany, how long had Lazarus been in the grave? (vs. 17)
5. What did Martha believe, and how was this different to Mary's words to Jesus? (vs. 27-32)
6. After Jesus wept over the grief of his friends, Jesus told them to take away the _____. (vs. 39)
7. After he prayed to God, Jesus said "Lazarus, _____." (vs. 43)
8. Many Jews put their faith in Jesus, but some of them went to the _____ to report. (vs. 46)
9. What was the concern of the Sanhedrin, and what did Caiphas prophecy? (vs. 48-52)
10. What happened while people were in Jerusalem for the ceremonial cleansing? (vs. 56-57)

John – Chapter 11 – What did it mean to them?

Jesus had some very dear friends, Lazarus and his sisters Mary and Martha, who lived in Bethany. When Lazarus became sick, the sisters sent for Jesus. Jesus deliberately stayed away until Lazarus had been dead four days. He did this so that he could raise Lazarus from the dead to give glory to God, and so that he might be glorified through it. There is a long tradition of healers within Israel's history—Elijah and Elisha, especially, were well known. This healing was always seen as an example of Yahweh's power, and used as an example of the way he would heal the nation itself.

Martha met Jesus and spoke plainly to him of her faith. She believed that he had power over death, and that he was the Christ, the Son of God. Mary came and reproached him, saying that if he had been there Lazarus would not have died. The author uses these two attitudes as a way to teach his readers about faith: it is possible to believe and to have doubts at the same time.

After Lazarus was raised from the dead, many of the Jews present put their faith in him. Some, however, went to tell the Pharisees what had happened. The Sanhedrin was summoned and the leaders decided that Jesus must be stopped before his miracles brought down the wrath of Rome on them all.

Caiphas, speaking as high priest, said that Jesus would die for the nation and for the scattered children of God. He did not know that his words were true in a way he could not understand. From that day on, they plotted to kill Jesus.

45 John – Chapter 11—Application Questions

1. The Pharisees and Sadducees were worried about the way the Romans would interpret Jesus' miracles—that they would have their positions and power taken from them because the Romans feared a revolution. How can we be sure that our church worries about the right things? What are the right things to spend our energy on?
2. Jesus wept when he saw how brokenhearted his friends were. What are some of the ways that we share grief with one another?
3. What did Jesus mean when he said “He who believes in me will live, even though he dies”?

46 John – Chapter 12—Scripture Questions

1. At the dinner party in Jesus' honor, what did Mary do, and why was Judas angry about it? (vs. 3-6)
2. When people came to see Lazarus, how did the chief priests react? (vs. 10)
3. When Jesus entered Jerusalem, who did the people say he was? (vs. 13)
4. What did the people who had seen Lazarus resurrected do, and why were the Pharisees alarmed? (vs. 17-19)
5. Why were the Pharisees alarmed? (vs. 19)
6. How did Jesus describe the effect of his coming death? (vs. 24)
7. What happened after Jesus said his soul was troubled? (vs. 27-30)
8. How did the people listening to Jesus object to the idea of him dying? (vs. 34-37)
9. Who were some of the people who believed Jesus, and what did they do with this belief? (vs. 42, 43)
10. Why did Jesus say he had come into the world? (vs. 46)
11. How would those who rejected Jesus be judged? (vs. 48)

47 John – Chapter 12—What did it mean to them?

We get a real feel for the humanity of Jesus through his intimacy with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. They were friends before the death/resurrection of Lazarus, and afterward the bond was even tighter. Maybe the nard perfume was left over from the preparation of Lazarus' body for his funeral. At any rate, Mary understood that Jesus' time was limited. She opted not to wait for his death, with the uncertainty about what would happen after. The author contrasts her devotion with that of Judas, who was unable to see past his own weakness to the eternal need for Jesus.

We forget how often people had arisen, claiming to be the Messiah. We don't know what prompted these claims, only that they always ended badly. The Romans would hold the Jewish leaders responsible for any turmoil caused by local reactionaries, and the Passover was coming soon: the city would be filled with outsiders, and any trouble would be multiplied. The leaders let their fear overcome the knowledge that Jesus was who he said he was. They chose safety over faith.

The notions of mysteries, evil forces, and power were present and accepted in the ancient world. These people, just like us, were concerned about WHY evil existed. They wanted to know what caused bad things to happen. The idea that the 'ruler of the world' would oppose Jesus made perfect sense to the readers of this Gospel. The quotation from Isaiah helped them understand why some people would reject the evidence of their own eyes about Jesus' identity.

Finally, Jesus makes clear that he is not rejecting, judging, or condemning anyone: those who reject him are choosing their own judgment. Regardless of the claims of the leaders, their decision to reject Jesus meant that they were rejecting the God they claimed to follow.

48 John – Chapter 12—Application Questions

1. Judas used a legitimate excuse to cover his greed. How can we tell the difference between a real concern and a rationalization?
2. The disciples didn't understand how the things that happened to Jesus were related to prophecies made long before. When something about Jesus is confusing to you, what do you do?
3. The Jewish leaders were afraid to acknowledge Jesus, even when they believed in him. What does our congregation fear? What is the result of that fear?
4. When Greek (Gentile) people wanted to talk to Jesus, they went through disciples whose names were not Jewish, possibly because they were more comfortable asking these men for help. How can our church make it easier for non-members to get information about us?

49 John – Chapter 13 – Scripture questions

1. The day before the Passover Feast, what did Jesus know? (vs. 1)
2. What kind of confidence did Jesus have? (vs. 3)
3. What happened when Jesus started to wash Peter's feet? (vs. 6-9)
4. How did Jesus expect the disciples to follow his example? (vs. 14, 15)
5. Why did Jesus tell his followers about the betrayal that was coming? (vs. 19)
6. What did Peter ask John to find out? (vs. 24)
7. What did the disciples think Judas was leaving to do? (vs. 29)
8. After Judas left, Jesus said "Now is _____ glorified, and _____ is glorified in him." (13:31)
9. What was the new command that Jesus gave? (13:34)
10. After Peter declared his commitment, what did Jesus tell him? (13:38)

50 John – Chapter 13 – What did it mean to them?

On Thursday of Passover week, Jesus knew his earthly mission was almost over. He spent the last evening with his disciples, teaching them as much as possible in the short time left. He washed their feet, to show them that they must serve each other. He explained that they would be blessed if they followed his example of loving, sacrificial service. Foot-washing was a gesture of respect and humility. Typically it would have been done by an enslaved person or a servant washing the feet of a master.

Jesus warned them of his coming betrayal. His concern was for them, not himself. Even this betrayal and death would be proof of who he was. He emphasized the closeness of himself and God, himself and his true followers. John mentions ‘the devil’, or ‘Satan’, as the cause of Judas’ betrayal. However, it is clear that even before this surrender Judas struggled with the sin of wanting money. This was a case where the inability to serve two masters—God or money—is displayed.

It is interesting that after Jesus emphasizes the need for agape love between his followers, Peter basically ignores this and asks “Where are you going?” It is always easier to move from the difficult ideas to the simpler actions, and Peter is a prime example of this. Jesus knows what is going to happen, that Peter will betray him. However, he also knows the heart of Peter. He knows that Peter’s love for him will bring him back to faithfulness. Judas had chosen (however briefly) the power of earthly things over the power of faith. Peter may have failed in the short run, but in the end he chose faith. The author uses these two men as examples of the choices that his readers had to make: would they choose to bow to human understanding, or would they choose to hold fast to the faith they had been taught?

51 John – Chapter 13 – Application questions

1. Christians should be willing to perform the most menial services for one another. Should they do them in secret, or is it okay to let people know what you have done for them?
2. Jesus knew that the washing was intended to be a picture of spiritual cleansing from evil. What can we do today that would be a vivid, physical picture of this cleaning?
3. Judas betrayed Jesus, literally, into the hands of the priests. How do people betray Jesus now?
4. Is it possible for a congregation to betray Jesus? How?

52 John – Chapter 14 – Scripture Questions

1. Jesus told his disciples five things to reassure them: (14:1-4)
 - a. You trust in _____, trust also in _____
 - b. In my Father's house are _____
 - c. I am going there to _____
 - d. If I go to prepare a place for you, I will _____ and take you _____
 - e. You know the way _____
2. Jesus said, "I am the _____, the _____ and the _____." (14:6)
3. What did Jesus tell the disciples to believe? (14:11)
4. What will we do if we love Jesus? (14:15)
5. Who did Jesus say he would give us, to be with us forever? (14:16-17)
6. What would the Holy Spirit do for believers? (14:26)
7. What did Jesus leave with the disciples so they would not be troubled? (14:27)
8. What would the world learn from Jesus' obedience? (14:31)

53 John – Chapter 14 – What did it mean to them?

After Judas left, Jesus spoke to the disciples about his relationship to God and the bonds that he wanted them to develop between themselves. He wanted them to know what was going to be happening to him.

Peter wanted to go where Jesus went, and Peter believed that he was up to any challenge. Jesus knew that Peter's ambition outreached his ability. Thomas was frustrated, thinking that Jesus was going somewhere here on earth. Philip wanted visible evidence that Jesus and God were connected.

Jesus comforted the disciples, reassuring them that he was coming back for them. He encouraged them that if they kept their relationship with him that there would be no problem following the way. He reminded them that if they saw and knew him, they saw and knew God.

Jesus taught the disciples that if they were focused on continuing his work, anything they asked him to do he would do. Prayers made in Jesus' spirit and with his work in mind would be answered.

Last, but not least, Jesus told them about the Holy Spirit. This spirit would teach, comfort and encourage them. If they (the disciples) truly loved him (Jesus), they would keep his commandments. Their lives would show what they believed, and they would have the peace of confidence in God, the calmness of assurance of salvation.

54 John – Chapter 14 – Application questions

1. The Holy Spirit is called a Counselor, which was a person who helped someone who was in trouble. Who has been a Counselor to you?
2. Obedience is the test of love—not the condition of God’s love for us, but our proof of our love for him. Have you been tested recently? If so, what happened? If you HAVEN’T been tested, what do you think that means?
3. How do you envision the Holy Spirit in yourself? Does it feel like another person nearby, or a series of ‘nudges’ that appear out of nowhere, or the activity of other people that influences you, or something else entirely?
4. In 14:13-14, to pray ‘in Jesus’ name’ means to pray in his authority, as his designated representative. Can we do this, or do you think it was meant only for the apostles?

55 John – Chapter 15—Scripture Questions

1. Jesus called himself the true _____ and God the _____. (vs. 1)
2. What happens to branches that bear no fruit? What is done to branches that DO bear fruit? (vs. 2)
3. Where must we remain if we are to bear fruit? (vs. 4)
4. Apart from Jesus, we can do _____. (vs. 5)
5. If we stay in close relationship with Jesus, how will Jesus respond to our requests? (vs. 7)
6. What was Jesus' command? How is the greatest love demonstrated? (vs. 12, 13)
7. What does Jesus call his disciples, now that he has taught them what he learned from the Father? (vs. 15)
8. Who did the choosing, Jesus or the disciples? (vs. 16)
9. Why is there no excuse for the sin of those who hate Jesus? (vs. 22-25)
10. What would the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit, testify about when it came? (vs. 26)
11. What was the responsibility of the disciples, since they had been with Jesus from the beginning? (vs. 27)

56 John – Chapter 15 – What did it mean to them?

Jesus talks about three relationships: (1) the disciple's relationship with him, (2) their relationship with one another, and (3) their relationship with the world around them. He knew they would soon be a small, separate community with a definite purpose, and he wanted them to be ready for the changes in their lives.

Jesus used the idea of gardening with vines to help them understand that they had to be connected to him in order to fulfill their purpose. If they were successful, they would be disciplined and trained in order to be even better at their jobs.

Jesus commanded the disciples to love one another. The future of their work among other people depended on their attitude toward each other. They were supposed to measure their love for each other against his (Jesus) love for them. Christian friendship is more than casual acquaintance: it is a working partnership.

Jesus reminds the disciples that even though he came on a mission of love, the world at large hates him. The world rejects Jesus—and will reject his disciples—because it does not understand them or want to give up a familiar lifestyle. In the face of this rejection and hatred, disciples must demonstrate and testify about Jesus, using the power of the Holy Spirit.

57 John – Chapter 15—Application Questions

1. What is the ‘fruit’ that Jesus talks about? How do you know if you’ve got any in your life?
2. Jesus wanted us to have his joy in us, that our joy may be complete. What is joy? How does it show itself in your life?
3. Jesus said that he was hated, and that those who followed him would be hated, too. Should our church try harder to make people uncomfortable with their life choices?
4. What does it mean to testify about Jesus? How can our church do this better in our community?

58 John – Chapter 16 – Scripture Questions

1. Why did Jesus tell his disciples all the things in chapter 15? (vs. 1-4)
2. Why did Jesus say it was a good thing for him to go away? (vs. 7)
3. The Holy Spirit (the Counselor) would convict the world of guilt about three things: (vs. 8-11)
 - a. in regard to _____, because men do not believe in Jesus
 - b. in regard to _____, because Jesus was going to heaven where he couldn't be physically seen anymore
 - c. in regard to _____, because the prince of this world (Satan) now stood condemned
4. What would the Spirit do for the disciples? (vs. 13)
5. What phrase was Jesus using that confused the disciples? (vs. 18)
6. Jesus said that while the world rejoiced they would _____, but that their grief would turn to _____. (vs. 20)
7. To what did Jesus compare the future feelings of the disciples? (vs. 21-22)
8. “The Father himself loves you because you have loved _____ and have believed that I came from _____.” (vs. 27)
9. After these words, what did the disciples say? (vs. 29, 30)
10. What did Jesus warn them was about to happen? (vs. 32)
11. Why did Jesus tell them these things? (vs. 33)

59 John – Chapter 16 – What did it mean to them?

In this chapter, Jesus shows the disciples what they must know in order to fulfill their coming mission. He warns them about the coming hatred of others. This hatred is because of ignorance—a lack of personal experience of God and Jesus.

Jesus lets them know that even though his coming departure will make them heartbroken, it is really for the best. And he won't leave them alone—the Holy Spirit will come to them.

The Spirit has three purposes: to convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment; to give the disciples direction and truth; and to reveal Jesus more perfectly.

Jesus explains to the disciples that though the next period of time will be painful, in the end there will be joy for them. After the Resurrection, they will no longer need to ask him questions, but will pray directly to God in the name of Jesus.

Finally, the disciples feel that Jesus is speaking plainly. They re-affirm their belief in him, his mission and his authority. Last, Jesus reassures them that there will be peace for them because of his victory.

60 John – Chapter 16 – Application questions

1. The disciples needed to be taught by the Holy Spirit so they could do their jobs spreading the message about Jesus. What do you think you still need to know or understand before you can do (or finish) your job for Jesus?
2. Which seems more central to successful discipleship—understanding Jesus or obeying him?
3. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would convict sinners of their sin. How does that happen? Are we part of that conviction process for others?
4. Write down one specific thing that you believe the Holy Spirit has taught you. Example: “The Spirit taught me that if I give 10% of my income to the church, I will have enough money to cover my obligations.”

61 John – Chapter 17 – Scripture Questions

1. The Father had granted Jesus authority over who? What is eternal life? (vs. 2, 3)
2. When had Jesus had glory with the Father previously? (vs. 5)
3. What did Jesus' disciples know now? (vs. 7)
4. Since Jesus was not going to be in the world much longer, what did he want the Father to do? Why did Jesus want this? (vs. 11)
5. Why will the world hate (reject) Jesus' disciples? From whom did he want them protected? (vs. 14, 15)
6. In addition to his disciples, for whom was Jesus praying? (vs. 20)
7. What is Jesus requesting for all of those who believe in him? (vs. 21)
8. Why did Jesus want his followers unified? (vs. 23)
9. How long had the Father loved the Son? (vs. 24)
10. To whom had Jesus made the Father's name known? Why did he do this? (vs. 25, 26)

62 John – Chapter 17 – What did it mean to them?

The overall ‘feel’ of this Gospel tells us that there was a community of readers who were familiar with the symbols of the Hebrew Bible and with Greek philosophical ideas. They were experiencing problems with some of the Jewish community, other Christ followers, and a sense that they were alienated from ‘the world’.

This chapter has the longest recorded prayer of Jesus – for his disciples (who he was about to leave behind when he was arrested) and for us (those who would believe in the future). Jesus said that eternal life was this: really knowing the Father and the Son. In this prayer there is encouragement that they are part of an eternal plan, explanation of why they will face trouble, and a reminder of why they were chosen and loved. This would have resonated strongly with John’s readers.

Jesus said he had revealed the Father to his disciples, and that they now belonged to the Father. His disciples would be in the world (not separated from it) but would need the Father’s protection since they would be hated. John’s report on this prayer would make his current readers feel connected to their history as believers and remind them that everything they were struggling with had been foretold by Jesus.

Jesus also prayed for those who would come later (us) that all of us might be unified – that we might be one. This unity was meant to serve as a witness to the world that God had sent Christ into it. Here, also, John is calling his readers to be encouraged because the things they had been experiencing were both expected and necessary. Doing a new thing always brings resistance, and belief in Jesus had the potential to upend the world, so the believers needed to be prepared for the hard work needed.

63 John – Chapter 17 – Application Questions

1. Jesus prayed with his head toward heaven. Why do people pray in so many ways? How can our physical posture affect our prayer? Does it depend on the occasion?
2. Jesus wanted his followers to be unified. What does unity mean? Are we unified? If not, then why not? How seriously should we take this instruction? Should we unify by force if necessary? Why not?
3. What does it mean to really know the Father? How about the Son? Is it different in some way to know the Father or the Son? Is it unsettling to think about ‘knowing’ a divine/invisible person?
4. Wouldn’t it be better if we could be separated from the world? Do believers who live in monasteries or cloistered communities have an advantage? Why or why not?

64 John – Chapter 18 – Scripture Questions

1. Why did Judas know where the disciples were headed? (vs. 2)
2. What did Jesus ask the group that came to arrest him? (vs. 4)
3. How did Simon Peter react to the tension, and how did Jesus rebuke him? (vs. 10-11)
4. How many disciples followed along behind Jesus after he was taken? (vs. 15)
5. How did Jesus respond to the questioning of the high priest? (vs. 20-21)
6. What did Pilate ask Jesus' captors, and how did they answer? (vs. 29-31)
7. What question did Pilate ask Jesus? (vs. 33)
8. Where did Jesus say his kingdom was? (vs. 36)
9. Why did Jesus come into the world? (vs. 37)
10. What famous question did Pilate ask Jesus? (vs. 38)
11. What custom did Pilate suggest be used for Jesus' benefit? (vs. 39)

65 John – Chapter 18 – What did it mean to them?

When Jesus and the disciples left the room where they had celebrated Passover, they went down from Jerusalem and crossed the Kidron Valley up the slope of the Mount of Olives to the Garden of Gethsemane (which means “oil press”). The city was full of visitors in town for the Passover season, and there wouldn’t have been much room. Anyway, neither Jesus or his followers were wealthy, so they most likely were camping outdoors. Because Jesus and the disciples often spent time there, Judas wouldn’t have had much trouble finding them.

Why was Jesus taken to Annas when Caiaphas was high priest? Annas was high priest himself from AD 6 to 15, when he was deposed by the Roman procurator. Four of Annas’ sons were among those who succeeded him. Caiaphas was actually Annas’ son-in-law, and he held the office for 18 years, which was during Jesus’ active ministry. It seems likely that Annas was the power behind the throne.

When Jesus was brought before Pilate, the first question was the normal opening inquiry for a trial under Roman law: “What charges are you bringing against this man?” Pilate would not automatically pronounce sentence without knowing the crime. He was annoyed by the vague answer from the priests, who knew very well that Jesus was not guilty of any crime under Roman law. The reason the priests wanted a Roman crucifixion was that this death would place Jesus under the curse of God. His messianic claims could then be discredited.

66 John – Chapter 18 – Application questions

1. Jesus went with his disciples to a familiar place, an olive grove, to await his arrest. Where do you go for comfort when you know something bad is coming?
2. If we hear the Truth, we are hearing Jesus' voice. Is there a different truth for everyone? Is truth different for you and me?
3. What are some ways that people today deny knowing Christ? Is it possible for a church to deny Christ?
4. Pilate went along with the demands of the priests and their followers, seemingly for political reasons. What can we do when it is scary to go against popular pressure, especially when that pressure seems to contradict what we know about Jesus?

67 John – Chapter 19 – Scripture Questions

1. What was done to Jesus by Pilate and the soldiers? (vs. 1-3)
2. When Pilate displayed Jesus to the chief priests and officials, what did they demand? Why did they want this death? (vs. 6, 7)
3. From where did Jesus say that Pilate received his power? (vs. 11)
4. The Jews shouted, “If you let this man go, you are no friend of _____.” When Pilate said, “Shall I crucify your King?”, the chief priests answered “We have no king but _____.” (vs. 12, 15)
5. What did the notice above Jesus’ head say? How did the chief priest protest? (vs. 19 - 21)
6. How did Jesus care for his mother? (vs. 26-27)
7. What did Jesus do, after he said “It is finished.”? (vs. 30)
8. Why did the soldiers not break Jesus’ legs? (vs. 33) What did they do instead? (vs. 34)
9. Why did these things happen? (vs. 36-37)
10. Who cared for the body of Jesus? (vs. 38-39)
11. What did Joseph and Nicodemus do with Jesus’ body? (vs. 40)

68 John – Chapter 19 – What did it mean to them?

Pilate tried to placate the Jews by having Jesus beaten and humiliated. They were determined not to be satisfied with anything but his death. Pilate knew that Jesus was innocent, but he tried to wiggle out of the situation.

Even in the middle of the interrogation, Jesus tried to reach Pilate. Jesus didn't try to defend himself, and eventually Pilate overcame his fear of what Jesus might do and handed Jesus over to be crucified.

When Jesus was crucified, Pilate had a sign nailed up over his head: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews". It was in three languages so everyone could read it. It made the chief priests angry, but Pilate told them to get over it.

The soldiers took Jesus' clothing, even gambling for the undergarment—which fulfilled a prophecy in Psalms. Jesus asked John to take care of his mother, and Mary lived in John's home from that time onward.

John reports two things that happened just before Jesus' death: Jesus said he was thirsty, and he was given some cheap wine to drink; Jesus said "It is finished" and he gave up his life.

Because the Jews did not want the Sabbath and Passover contaminated, they asked the soldiers to make certain of the deaths, and to take the bodies down. The legs were broken on the two criminals, but Jesus' legs were not broken—he was already dead. One of the soldiers stabbed him, perhaps to make certain he was really dead. Even these small details fulfilled Scripture.

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus, both members of the Sanhedrin and both believers in Jesus, retrieved Jesus' body and prepared it for burial. This public act made it clear that they were friends of Jesus. They treated his body royally, as the king that he was.

69 John – Chapter 19 – Application Questions

1. We don't like to dwell on the horror of the crucifixion. Even John didn't seem to want to write about it. Why do you think God set up his plan to need such an awful death?
2. Even in his pain, Jesus took time to care for his mother. If you knew you were dying, what would you take time to do?
3. Jesus completed his mission, down to the bitter end. Have you ever taken on a task that drained you? What was it? What happened after you finished this task?
4. Joseph and Nicodemus cared for Jesus' body in ways that were normally done by family. Has your family ever failed you? Who took up the slack in your family's place? What did they do for you?

70 John – Chapter 20 – Scripture Questions

1. When did Mary Magdalene go to the tomb? (vs. 1)
2. What did she run and tell Simon & John? (vs. 2)
3. What did Simon & John see at the tomb? (vs. 3-7)
4. Who did Mary see? (vs. 10-14)
5. What did Jesus ask her? (vs. 15)
6. Why was Mary not supposed to hold on to him? (vs. 17)
7. What happened to the disciples on the evening of that first day of the week? (vs. 19-20)
8. What did Jesus give the disciples so they could be sent as Jesus was sent? (vs. 22)
9. Who didn't believe that Jesus had been there? (vs. 24-25)
10. How did Jesus respond to Thomas's doubts? (vs. 27-29)
11. Why did John record the signs that are in this book? (vs. 31)

71 John – Chapter 20 – What did it mean to them?

Mary came to the tomb early Sunday morning. When she found the empty tomb, she ran to tell Peter and John. They ran back to the tomb and found the body gone and all the grave clothes folded neatly. They hesitated to go in, and still did not understand that Jesus was resurrected.

Mary stayed, crying. Angels spoke to her, and Jesus appeared to her and comforted her. Mary went and told the disciples that she had seen Jesus, alive.

Jesus appeared to the disciples in a locked room. He blessed them and gave them the Holy Spirit. He sent them out as the Father had sent him out.

Thomas (who missed Jesus' first appearance) didn't believe that Jesus was alive until a week later. Jesus told Thomas to touch him. Then Thomas believed, and Jesus blessed all those who had not seen him and yet believed.

John says that Jesus did many miracles not recorded. The ones that have been written were recorded so that people could believe in Jesus.

72 John – Chapter 20 – Application Questions

1. Mary, Peter and John were bewildered by what happened. What is the most stunning thing that ever happened to you? How did it change you?
2. Peter, John, Thomas—they were not able to accept what they were told, but needed proof. What proof have you seen that Jesus is real?
3. The disciples were given the Holy Spirit so that they could carry out the commission Jesus gave them. What commission does our church have? What do we need to carry it out?
4. Belief is hard for some people, easy for others. Why do you think that is true?

73 John – Chapter 21—Scripture Questions

1. Seven of the disciples (Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James and John, and two others) decided they were tired of sitting around. What did they do? Were they successful? (vs. 1-3)
2. In the early morning, who was standing on the shore? (vs. 4)
3. How did Jesus help the fishermen? (vs. 5, 6)
4. What did Peter do when he recognized Jesus? (vs. 7)
5. After the others got to shore, what did they see? (vs. 9)
6. What did Jesus do with the disciples? (vs. 10-14)
7. What question did Jesus ask Peter – three times? (vs. 15-17)
8. How did Peter answer the question? (vs. 15-17)
9. Who was Peter concerned about? (vs. 20)
10. What did John say about the many things done by Jesus? (vs. 25)

74 John – Chapter 21 – What did it mean to them?

After seeing Jesus, some time went by. Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James & John Zebedee, John and one other unnamed disciple decided to go fishing one night. They may have been trying to escape the city and the authorities; they may have been discouraged and going back to their old occupation as fishermen. After all, the kingdom they were expecting had not arrived, and they had to make a living.

The next morning, Jesus was on the shore (they didn't recognize him). He told them to cast their nets on the other side of the boat, and they caught so many fish that they couldn't pull the nets back on to the boat. THEN they recognized him, and Peter threw his clothes back on and jumped into the water, swimming back to shore. This episode is similar to the one in Luke 5. Peter's reaction shows his real feelings toward Jesus, his anxious need to show his loyalty.

Jesus cooked breakfast for the disciples. His actions must have reminded them of the Last Supper, but this meal had none of the sacramental feel of that meal. Cooking and eating would have emphasized the humanity he shared with them, and it would have been a strong reminder to the author's readers of his insistence on Jesus' dual nature, divine and human. Jesus asked Peter, "Do you love me?" three times, testing whether or not Peter was really committed to him. Peter said each time that he did love Jesus. Jesus then made what many consider to be a prophecy about the way Peter would die. It told Peter that his path was chosen and immovable. (Jesus also told Peter to 'mind his own business' when Peter asked about John's future!

This gospel was probably written when there were beginning to be many Christian writings shared among believers. The letters of Paul had been collected and circulated, and the other Gospels were known. John closes his book by re-emphasizing the truthfulness of his testimony. Then he speaks of the vast volume of things said and done by Jesus.

75 John – Chapter 21—Application Questions

1. Peter and friends went fishing, maybe to take their minds off all that had happened recently. What do you do to spiritually refresh yourself?
2. When Peter knew it was Jesus, he literally jumped off the boat to get to him faster. Have you ever had a spiritual experience that made your heart race?
3. Jesus questioned Peter closely, perhaps to make Peter look carefully at his commitment. How closely should we question potential church leaders?
4. Peter was told not to worry about what was going to happen to another disciple—he was just supposed to follow Jesus. Should our church mind its own business, ignoring other churches?